

# The Effect of Performance Appraisal System on Employee Performance in the Education Sector: A Case of Selected Schools in Mwense District of Luapula Province, Zambia

Oniver Makombo<sup>1</sup>, Brian Nakalonga Mubemba<sup>2</sup>, Chanda Chansa Thelma<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of National Registration Passports and Citizenship, Mansa, Zambia.

<sup>2</sup>Rockview University, Lusaka, Zambia, School of Postgraduate Studies

<sup>3</sup>Chreso University, Lusaka, Zambia, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

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**Abstract:** Overview: The study examined how structured evaluations influence the productivity and job satisfaction of educational professionals. It investigated the impact of performance appraisal systems on employee performance in the education sector in Mwense district, Zambia.

**Body of Knowledge:** Performance appraisal systems are critical tools for assessing employee effectiveness, providing feedback, and identifying areas for professional development. In the education sector, these systems can significantly impact teacher motivation, instructional quality, and student outcomes. The study explored the mechanisms through which appraisals enhance or hinder performance, considering factors such as the clarity of criteria, frequency of evaluations, and the role of feedback.

**Methods:** The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The study was conducted at four selected schools in Mwense district, with a sample size of 110 respondents including Officials from DEBS Office, School Administrators, Teachers, and Support Staff. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Thematic and statistical analysis was employed to come up with graphs and charts as a way of analyzing the data obtained. Additionally, analytical tools such as, tables, graphs, and pie charts were used to interpret the qualitative and quantitative data, processed using software; SPSS and Microsoft excel.

**Results:** Effective performance appraisal systems are found to significantly enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction, leading to improved teaching quality and student outcomes. The clarity of performance criteria and the fairness of the evaluation process are crucial in fostering a positive response from educators. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as potential biases in evaluations and the need for continuous training for appraisers to ensure accuracy and objectivity.

**Recommendation:** The Ministry of Education to ensure that there is adequate staffing levels in schools to match up with teacher-pupil ratio which leads to effective performance.

**Keywords:** Appraisal System, Education Sector, Effects, Performance Criteria, and Reward System.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Performance appraisal is defined as a systematic process that helps to evaluate past and current employees' performance and identify employees' potential for further growth and advancement within the organization's career ladder (Igbojekwe & Ugo-Okoro, 2015). Understanding the impact of performance appraisal systems on employee performance was crucial for enhancing productivity, motivation, and overall organizational effectiveness (Meyer, 2019). This indicated that if the performance appraisal system (PAS) was successfully carried out in an organization, employees would be able to know how well they performed and what was expected of them in the future in terms of effort and task direction through an

established plan for performance improvement. In general, performance appraisal is a useful tool for understanding and assessing employee skill and potential.

In the public service sector, performance appraisal plays a critical role in evaluating employee performance and providing feedback for development and improvement (Armstrong & Taylor, 2019). Zambia, like any other developing country, joined the global trend of instituting public sector reforms in its administrative systems to meet the human capital challenges of the 21st century, where the performance of employees had to be measured and managed. The public sector reforms in Zambia focused on improving performance management and institutionalizing strategic performance management in the Zambia public service. In the case of Zambia, Chanda et al (2024)' study recorded that the reform efforts included the Public Sector Reform Programme (PSRP) and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as prescribed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the auspices of economic stabilization measures. PSRP in Zambia was launched in November 1993, and its goal was to improve the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the Public Services to the people of Zambia.

The education sector is a pivotal component of societal development, encompassing a broad range of activities aimed at delivering knowledge, skills, and values. It includes various levels of formal education, such as primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, as well as informal and non-formal learning environments. The sector is influenced by multiple factors, including government policies, socio-economic conditions, technological advancements, and cultural contexts (Chanda, 2024). Effective education systems prioritize quality teaching, equitable access, and inclusive practices to cater to diverse learning needs. Additionally, performance appraisal systems within educational institutions play a critical role in enhancing employee performance, ensuring that educators and administrative staff are motivated and aligned with the institution's goals. Continuous professional development, robust infrastructure, and innovative teaching methodologies further contribute to the success and improvement of the education sector, ultimately leading to the socio-economic growth and empowerment of individuals and communities (Chikumbi & Simwinga, 2018).

In the Zambian public service, the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) was used to report on employee performance. However, in 1997, the Zambian Government embarked on the Public Sector Management Program Support Project (PSMPSP), whose purpose was to improve performance management and institutionalize strategic performance management in the public service (World Bank, 2016). The government acknowledged that the Annual Confidential Reporting System (ACR) on individual performance was just a matter of routine, serving little purpose and leading to the loss of confidence in its credibility by both the employee and the government. As a result, in 1997, the government established a legal framework to institutionalize Annual Performance Appraisal Systems (APAS) through the Performance Management Package (PMP) and included (APAS) in the Terms and Conditions of Service for Public Service to develop and introduce new instruments for measuring individual performance. This was the performance management tool being used in the public sector, including the education sector.

Performance criteria are the specific standards and benchmarks used to evaluate employee performance within an organization (Muleya et al, 2024). These criteria typically encompass various dimensions such as job knowledge, quality of work, productivity, communication skills, teamwork, and adherence to company policies. In the education sector, performance criteria might also include teaching effectiveness, student engagement, curriculum development, and professional development. Mubanga & Chola (2017) alluded that establishing clear and measurable performance criteria is crucial for an effective performance appraisal system, as it ensures that evaluations are objective, consistent, and aligned with organizational goals. Moreover, well-defined criteria provide employees with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and the areas in which they need to improve, ultimately leading to enhanced performance and professional growth. The effectiveness of the performance appraisal system directly influenced employee motivation and job satisfaction, leading to effective employee performance and overall organizational performance. However, there was a lack of comprehensive research on the effects of performance appraisal systems within the education sector of the public service sector, particularly in the context of Mwense District. Therefore, there was a need to examine the effects of performance appraisal on employee performance, and this study intended to fill this research gap by examining the relationship between performance appraisal systems and employee performance in the District.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

Performance appraisal is credited with encouraging employee loyalty, fostering teamwork, impacting other human resource functions positively, and also positively involved in employee motivation. Owing to the role these factors played in attaining organizational goals, many organizations invested in performance appraisals (Martinez et al, 2022).

Despite the importance of performance appraisal systems in improving employee performance, there was a lack of empirical research on their effects within the public service sector in Mwense District. The existing literature was limited, and the specific impact of performance appraisal systems on employee performance remained unclear. A study conducted by Kasonde & Mutti (2020), on the public service sector in Zambia identified a significant gap in the understanding of the effects of performance appraisal systems on employee performance in specific regions. Their research highlighted the limited empirical research conducted in these areas, emphasizing the need for more investigation to assess the relationship between performance appraisal systems and employee performance within the Zambian context. The study emphasized the importance of conducting local research to inform policy and management practices tailored to the unique needs of different regions in Zambia. Hence, this study aimed to build upon the research conducted by Ibid (2020) by focusing specifically on Mwense District, a region that had received limited attention in terms of performance appraisal research.

### 1.2. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- Evaluate the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance in the education sector in Mwense District, Zambia.
- Identify the factors influencing the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service sector in Mwense District, Zambia.
- Evaluate recommended strategies for improving the performance appraisal system to enhance employee performance in the education sector in Mwense District, Zambia.

### 1.3. The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the effects of the performance appraisal system on employee performance in the education sector of the public service sector, with a focus on Mwense District, Zambia.

### 1.4. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Expectancy Theory. The theory was developed by Victor Vroom in 2021 which suggested that individuals were motivated to exert effort based on their beliefs about the relationship between effort, performance, and outcomes. According to this theory, employees' motivation to perform well was influenced by three key factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy referred to an individual's belief that putting in effort would lead to successful performance. Instrumentality referred to the perception that successful performance would result in desired outcomes or rewards (Kluger & DeNisi, 2020). Valence referred to the value an individual placed on the outcomes or rewards associated with successful performance. By applying the expectancy theory, the research examined how employees' perceptions of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence in relation to the performance appraisal system influenced their motivation and subsequent performance within the Ministry of Education in Mwense District.

### 1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is significant as it has brought together a deep understanding of the issues surrounding motivation and morale with the ultimate result of high productivity. It was believed that this research could be helpful to the Zambian civil service, development agencies, and other Non-Governmental Organizations that required Human resources. The research focused on highlighting the effects of performance appraisal on employee performance and issues that government employees found to be demotivating when it comes to performance appraisal and how best the appraisal system could be implemented to improve motivation for the quality delivery of services in the selected schools in Mwense district. From an academic perspective, this study added to the existing body of knowledge on the effects of performance appraisal systems on employee performance. By specifically focusing on the education sector in Mwense District, it filled a significant research gap as there was limited empirical research in this specific context. The findings of this study also enriched the understanding of the relationship between performance appraisal practices and various aspects of employee performance, such as job satisfaction, motivation, productivity, and overall job performance. Furthermore, the practical implications of this study were equally important. The study findings provided valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers and practitioners within the education sector and the public service sector. By examining the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of Mwense District, the findings of this study will guide policymakers in making informed decisions regarding the design and

implementation of performance appraisal practices. Additionally, practitioners will benefit from understanding the factors that influenced the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system, enabling them to develop strategies for improving employee performance. Ultimately, the study aimed to contribute to enhancing the overall productivity, motivation, and organizational effectiveness within the education sector of the public service sector in Mwense District.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design selected for this study was a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative component involved the use of structured surveys to collect numerical data on employee perceptions of the performance appraisal system, employee motivation, and job satisfaction. The qualitative component employed semi-structured interviews to gain in-depth insights into participants' experiences, challenges, and suggestions regarding the performance appraisal system. This mixed-methods approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and triangulation of data for more robust findings (Banda et al, 2017). The study was conducted at the four selected schools in Mwense district, namely Mwense Secondary School, Sunshine Secondary School, Nsakaluba Primary, and Mwense Primary School, including the District Education Board Secretary's Office (DEBS), in Mwense District of Luapula Province. The target population for the study was 1100, with a sample of 110 respondents; comprising 2 Officials from DEBS Office, 4 School Administrators, 60 Teachers, and 44 Support Staff. The study utilized questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to collect data. For the quantitative data obtained through structured questionnaires, statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS software to generate descriptive statistics while for the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews, thematic analysis was employed to come up with graphs and charts. The study upheld research ethical considerations such as voluntary participation of the respondents, anonymity, confidentiality, honesty, and right of privacy.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following findings and discussions were presented according to set research objectives:

### 3.1. The Relationship Between Performance Appraisal Practices and Employee Performance in the Education Sector

Data collected from the study revealed that performance appraisal practices are a fundamental aspect of human resource management that can significantly influence employee performance, particularly in the education sector. These practices involve the systematic evaluation of employees' performance and the provision of feedback to enhance their effectiveness and productivity. Understanding the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance is crucial for educational institutions aiming to improve their educational outcomes and overall organizational efficiency. The study revealed Training and Professional Development was at 35%, Goal Setting and Clarity at 25%, Recognition and Rewards at 20%, Accountability and Performance Monitoring at 10%, and Feedback and Development at 10%.

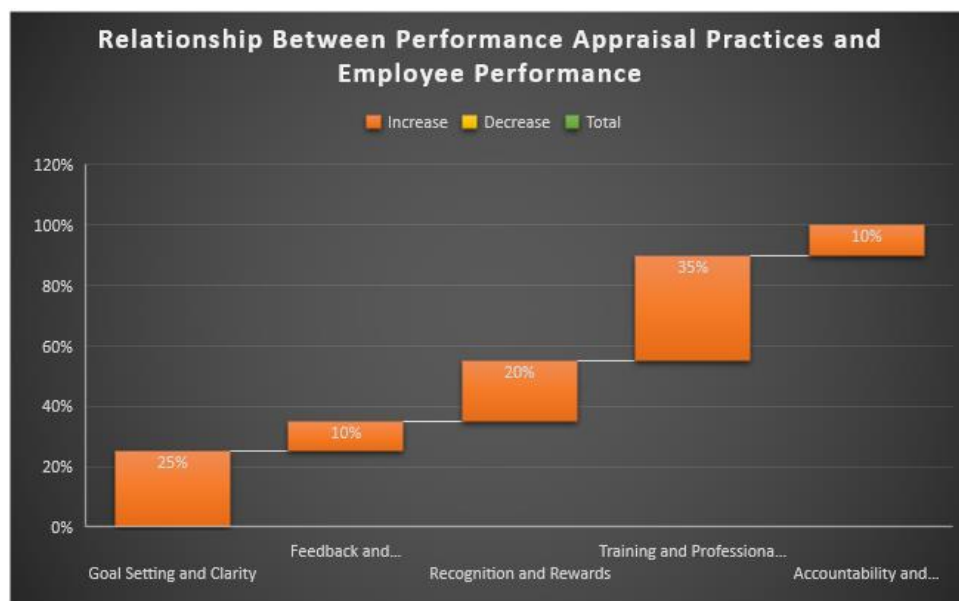


Figure 1: The Relationship Between Performance Appraisal Practices and Employee Performance

According to study results, training and professional development play a critical role in the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance in the education sector. Bashir et al (2018)' study noted that effective performance appraisal systems not only assess employees' current performance but also identify areas where further training and development are needed. By offering targeted professional development opportunities, educational institutions can address skill gaps, enhance teaching effectiveness, and promote continuous professional growth. This, in turn, leads to improved employee performance as educators feel more competent and confident in their roles. Additionally, when employees see that their professional development is a priority, it can increase job satisfaction, motivation, and retention, further contributing to a positive impact on overall performance in the education sector. Chanda (2024) associated this retention to student retention at a university which she referred to as the ability of an institution to keep its students enrolled from the time they first enter the university until they complete their intended program of study. Additionally, the study noted that clear and specific goals, established through a well-structured performance appraisal system, provide educators with a concrete understanding of expectations and performance standards. This clarity helps align their efforts with institutional objectives, fostering a sense of direction and purpose (Brown & Jones, 2019). Furthermore, when teachers are involved in goal-setting processes, it enhances their commitment and motivation to achieve these targets. Consequently, this collaborative and transparent approach not only improves individual performance but also contributes to the overall effectiveness and quality of education in the district.

The respondents noted that recognition and rewards play a crucial role in linking performance appraisal practices to employee performance in the education sector in Mwense District, Zambia. One of the teachers expressed that:

*“Recognizing and rewarding high performance can boost employee morale and motivation. Acknowledgment of achievements can foster a positive work environment and encourage continued excellence”.*

Effective performance appraisals that include recognition and rewards can significantly motivate educators, enhancing their job satisfaction and commitment. By acknowledging and rewarding outstanding performance, educational institutions foster a positive work environment that encourages continuous improvement and professional growth. Becker (2020) added that this recognition not only boosts individual morale but also sets a benchmark for others, promoting a culture of excellence. Furthermore, when educators feel valued and appreciated, they are more likely to engage actively in their roles, resulting in improved teaching quality and better student outcomes (Chanda, 2024). Hence, integrating recognition and rewards into performance appraisal systems can be a powerful strategy to elevate overall employee performance and drive educational success in Mwense District.

Moving on, the findings recorded that in Mwense district, Zambia, accountability and performance monitoring play a critical role in the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance in the education sector. Effective performance appraisal systems are designed to hold educators accountable for their responsibilities, providing a structured framework to evaluate their contributions and progress (Chirwa et al, 2019). Through consistent monitoring and assessment, these systems ensure that teachers meet established educational standards and goals. By setting clear expectations and regularly reviewing performance, educators receive constructive feedback, which can foster professional development and improve teaching practices. Accountability mechanisms, such as regular appraisals, help identify areas needing improvement and recognize outstanding performance, thereby motivating educators to enhance their effectiveness. This systematic approach not only supports individual growth but also contributes to the overall improvement of educational outcomes within the district (Kabungo & Sinyinza, 2017). As a result, the integration of accountability and performance monitoring within appraisal practices is pivotal in driving teacher performance and, subsequently, the quality of education provided to students in Mwense district.

The supervisors from DEBS office alluded that feedback and development are critical components of the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance in the education sector. Effective performance appraisals provide educators with constructive feedback that highlights both their strengths and areas needing improvement, fostering a culture of continuous professional growth. This feedback not only helps teachers refine their teaching strategies and methodologies but also identifies opportunities for professional development and training, which are essential for enhancing their skills and competencies (Chanda, 2023). One of the supervisors pointed out that:

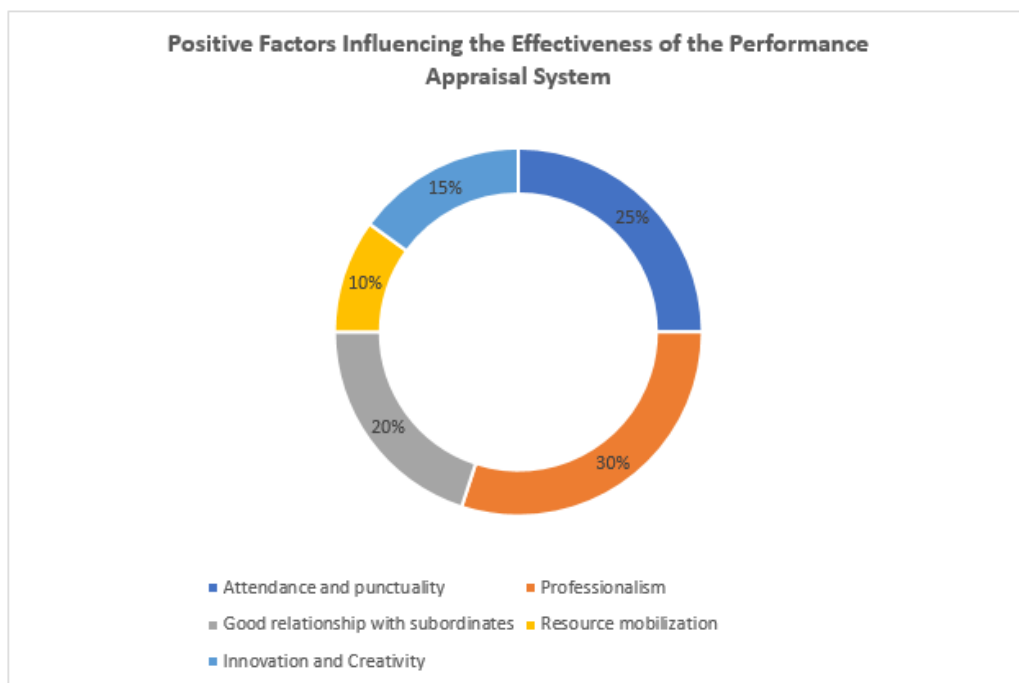
*“Regular, constructive feedback helps employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement. This Developmental feedback can lead to professional growth, skill enhancement, and better job performance”.*

Moreover, regular and transparent feedback mechanisms can boost teacher morale and motivation, as they feel valued and supported in their professional journey (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Consequently, when performance appraisals are leveraged as tools for constructive feedback and development, they can lead to significant improvements in teaching quality and overall educational outcomes in Mwense district.

### 3.2. Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of the Performance Appraisal System in the Education Sector of the Public Service Sector

#### 3.2.1. Positive Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of the Performance Appraisal System in the Education Sector of the Public Service Sector

Respondents were asked to identify positive factors that affect the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector. Professionalism was recorded at 30%, Attendance and punctuality at 25%, Good relationship with subordinates at 20%, Initiative, Innovation and Creativity at 15%, and Resource mobilization at 10%. Figure 2 below summarized these findings.



**Figure 2: Positive Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of the Performance Appraisal System**

According to results in Figure2 above, attendance and punctuality are critical factors influencing the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service in Mwense District, Zambia. Chanda (2024)' study indicated that consistent attendance and punctuality among educators ensure that teaching and learning processes are uninterrupted, contributing to the overall productivity and efficiency of educational institutions. Regular presence of teachers fosters a stable learning environment, enhancing student performance and engagement. Additionally, punctuality demonstrates professional commitment and reliability, which are essential criteria in performance evaluations. Effective performance appraisals that consider attendance and punctuality can identify and address issues related to absenteeism and tardiness, promoting accountability and encouraging a culture of responsibility among educators (Alvessoni & Paz, 2020). Consequently, this can lead to improved educational outcomes and a more motivated and disciplined workforce in the education sector. Moreover, when there is mutual trust and respect between supervisors and their subordinates, it fosters an open and transparent communication environment, enabling honest feedback and constructive discussions during the appraisal process. Such relationships encourage employees to be more receptive to evaluations and recommendations, which can lead to improved performance and professional development. Additionally, positive relationships can reduce the apprehension and anxiety typically associated with performance reviews, making the process more collaborative and less punitive. This supportive atmosphere helps in setting clear performance expectations, aligning individual goals with

organizational objectives, and ensuring that performance appraisals are viewed as a tool for growth rather than just a bureaucratic requirement (Boxall & Purcell, 2019). Consequently, good relationships between supervisors and subordinates contribute to a more effective and meaningful performance appraisal system, ultimately enhancing employee performance and organizational efficiency in the education sector.

Administrators alluded that professionalism is a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service sector in Mwense District, Zambia. High levels of professionalism among educators and administrators ensure that the appraisal process is conducted with integrity, fairness, and transparency. One of the administrators explained that:

*“Professionalism fosters a culture of accountability and continuous improvement, as educators are more likely to engage constructively with feedback and commit to their professional development. It also ensures that performance appraisals are based on objective criteria and evidence, reducing biases and enhancing trust in the system”.*

Furthermore, professionalism supports adherence to established procedures and standards, which is essential for the credibility and consistency of the appraisal process. By promoting ethical behavior, dedication, and competence, professionalism significantly contributes to the overall effectiveness and credibility of the performance appraisal system, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes (Ayinde & Sani, 2019).

The study results also showed that initiative, innovation, and creativity play pivotal roles in influencing the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service sector in Mwense District, Zambia. Zohaib et al (2024) revealed that educators who exhibit initiative are proactive in identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes that enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Innovation allows for the adoption of new methods and technologies that can make the appraisal process more efficient and effective, ensuring that performance metrics are accurate and reflective of actual teacher performance. Creativity fosters a dynamic environment where unique solutions are developed to address challenges, encouraging continuous professional growth and development among teachers. These factors collectively contribute to a more responsive and adaptive performance appraisal system, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes and greater overall effectiveness in the public service sector (Van Waeyenberg et al, 2017). Moreover, the respondents stated that effective performance appraisals require adequate resources, including trained personnel, financial support, and appropriate tools and technologies. In Mwense District, resource constraints can hinder the proper implementation and functioning of the appraisal system. Limited funding can affect the training and development of appraisers, as well as the acquisition of necessary materials and technology, such as software for tracking and managing appraisals (Chanda, 2024). Moreover, insufficient resources can lead to delays in the appraisal process, affecting the timeliness and relevance of feedback provided to educators. This, in turn, impacts the overall motivation and performance of teachers, ultimately influencing the quality of education delivered. Therefore, addressing resource mobilization challenges is essential for enhancing the effectiveness of performance appraisals and improving educational outcomes in public service sector (Goštautaitė & Sliburytė, 2015).

### **3.2.2. Negative Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of the Performance Appraisal System in the Education Sector of the Public Service Sector**

Respondents were asked to identify negative factors that affect the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector. The respondents mentioned Lack of adequate teaching materials to be at 35%, Shortage of teachers at 25%, Bad work culture at 20%, and Bad work relationships at 20%. The study results revealed that one of the significant challenges affecting the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service sector is the lack of adequate teaching materials. This issue hampers the ability of educators to deliver quality instruction and achieve desired learning outcomes. Chanda (2023) observed that when teachers are not provided with sufficient resources, including textbooks, instructional aids, and other educational tools, their capacity to implement effective teaching strategies is significantly compromised. This deficiency not only affects the quality of education but also impairs the accurate evaluation of teacher performance, as appraisers may struggle to assess the impact of teaching when fundamental materials are lacking (Ahmed et al, 2019). Consequently, the performance appraisal system's ability to enhance educational standards and support teachers' professional growth is undermined, further perpetuating a cycle of inadequate educational delivery and reduced student achievement in the district.

The administrators explained that with an inadequate number of teachers, the existing workforce is often overburdened with high student-to-teacher ratios, which leads to increased workloads and stress. One of the respondents narrated that:

*“This situation makes it challenging for teachers to meet performance expectations, as they struggle to balance teaching responsibilities with administrative tasks”.*

Consequently, performance appraisals may not accurately reflect a teacher's capabilities or efforts, as the evaluations are conducted under suboptimal conditions. Moreover, the scarcity of teachers can lead to inconsistent and irregular appraisals, further undermining the appraisal system's credibility and its role in professional development and accountability (Akhavan, et al, 2017). This shortage also restricts opportunities for personalized feedback and targeted support, essential components for improving teaching quality and enhancing student outcomes. Additionally, the findings noted that bad work culture significantly hampers the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems in the education sector of the public service sector in Mwense district, Zambia. This negative work culture is characterized by lack of motivation, poor communication, and inadequate feedback mechanisms among employees and management (Miyoba et al, 2024). When employees do not feel valued or recognized for their contributions, their engagement and productivity decline, undermining the purpose of performance appraisals. Furthermore, favoritism and bias in appraisals create mistrust and resentment among staff, leading to a toxic work environment. Without a supportive and transparent work culture, performance appraisals fail to accurately assess and enhance employee performance, ultimately impacting the overall educational outcomes (Mudenda, 2016).

Teachers pointed out that bad work relationships significantly undermine the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system in the education sector of the public service sector. When relationships among staff members, including between educators and administrators, are strained, it leads to a lack of trust, communication barriers, and reduced collaboration (Chanda et al, 2024). These tensions can foster a hostile work environment, making it challenging to provide and receive constructive feedback during appraisals. The lack of mutual respect and understanding further exacerbates the situation, causing appraisals to be viewed with suspicion and resentment rather than as opportunities for growth and development. Consequently, the intended purpose of performance appraisals to enhance employee performance and professional development is compromised, leading to a demotivated workforce and ultimately impacting the overall quality of education delivered in the district.

### **3.3. Strategies for Improving the Performance Appraisal System to Enhance Employee Performance in the Education Sector**

Supervisors were asked to recommend strategies that can improve employ performance. Below were their responses;

- Continuous monitoring of employees is required, as opposed to one year.
- Give awards to deserving employees which will lead to a motivated work force.
- Encourage under performers to work hard and improve.
- Provide necessary materials to employees to help them achieve their targets.
- Upgrade employees who have improved their education.
- Setting clear and achievable goals.
- Align performance appraisal with organizational goals.
- Regular communication and feedback.
- Provide incentives and commendations to deserving employees.
- To increase number of teachers to reduce on the teacher - pupil ratio.
- Improve working environment.
- Goal setting.
- Review job descriptions.
- Consistence in appraisals.
- Maintain good work relationships.



The suggested strategies encompass a comprehensive approach to enhancing the performance appraisal system and improving employee performance in the education sector. Implementation should involve collaboration, transparency, and continuous evaluation to ensure effectiveness and relevance in the dynamic educational landscape of Mwense District.

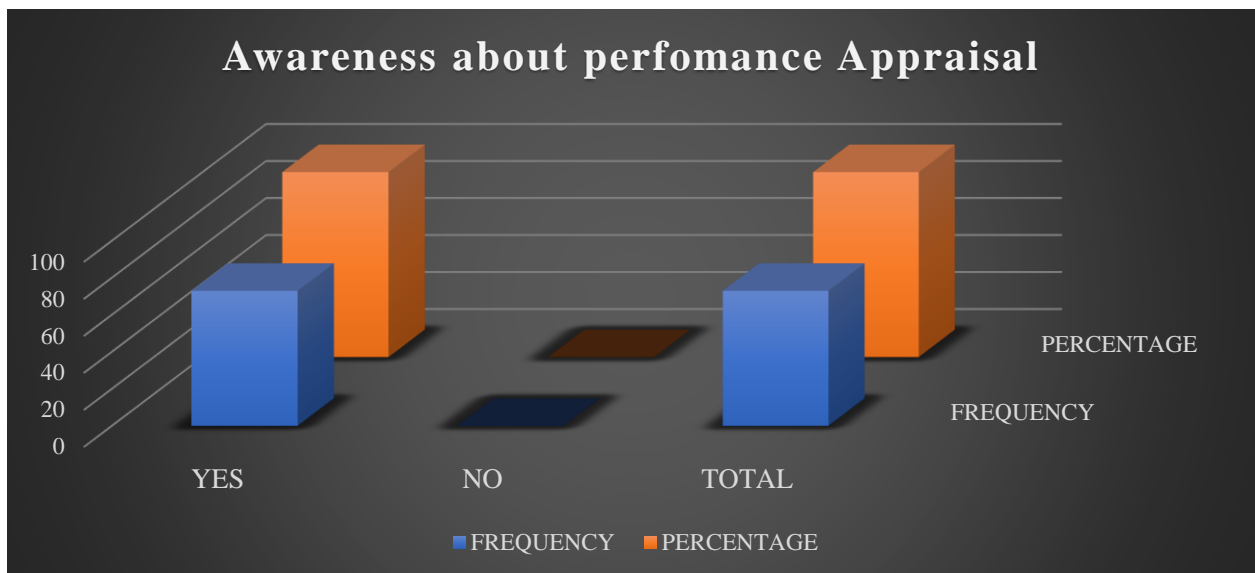
**Questions for Non- Supervisors**

The questions intended to assess the current performance appraisal system in place in the education sector in Mwense District. The following questions were asked:

**1. Are you aware of the current performance system in place?**

**Table 1: Awareness about PA**

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	73	100
NO	0	0
TOTAL	73	100



**Figure 3: Awareness about Performance Appraisal**

This data suggested a positive foundation for the assessment of the current performance appraisal system, with all respondents indicating awareness. The next steps should involve a detailed evaluation to gather insights for potential improvements or affirmations of successful practices

**Q2. How frequently is the performance appraisal conducted?**

**Table 2: Frequency of Conducting PA**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Annually	51	69.9
Biannually	0	0
Quarterly	10	13.7
When need arises	8	10.9
Not sure	4	5.5
Total	73	100

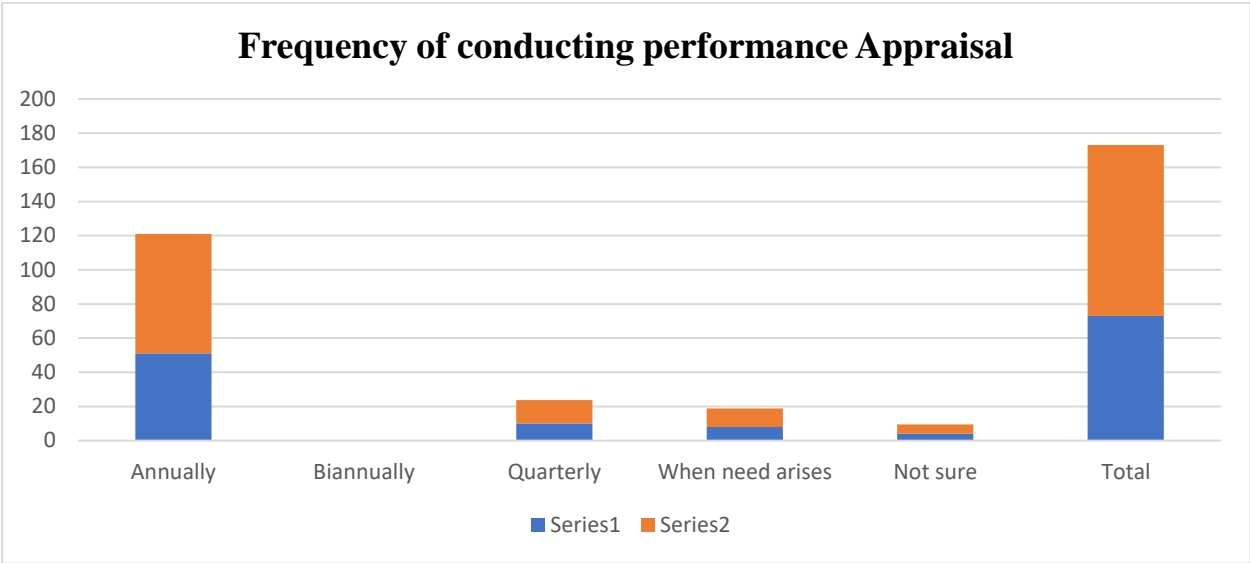


Figure 4: Frequency of Conducting Performance Appraisal

**Analysis:**

**Annual Appraisal Dominance:**

The majority of respondents (69.9%) indicate that performance appraisals are conducted annually.

**Other Frequencies:**

A smaller percentage of respondents report quarterly (13.7%) or ad-hoc appraisals when the need arises (10.9%).

**Absence of Biannual Appraisals:**

Notably, no respondents mentioned biannual (every six months) appraisals.

**Uncertainty:**

A small percentage (5.5%) of respondents' express uncertainty regarding the frequency of performance appraisals.

This analysis provides insights into the current practices regarding the frequency of performance appraisals, highlighting the prevalence of annual appraisals and potential areas for improvement or adjustment based on organizational needs and employee feedback.

**Q3. Have you ever undergone a performance appraisal interview from the time you joined the Education sector?**

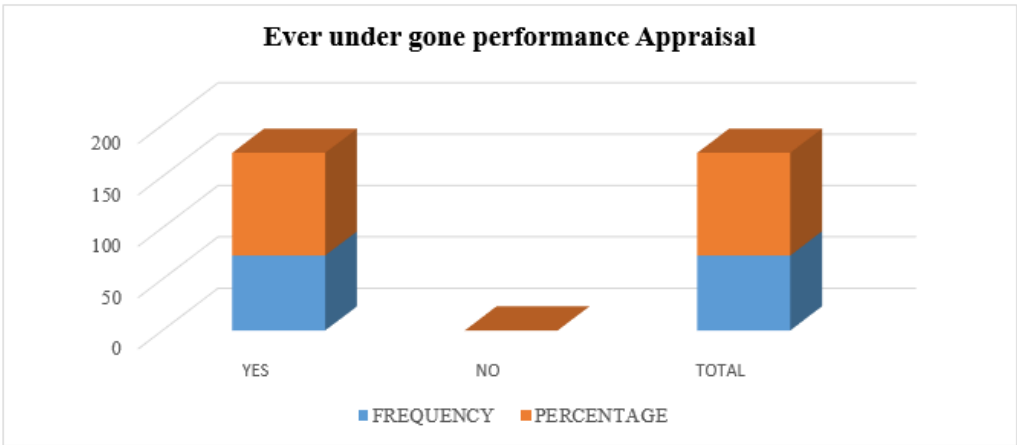


Figure 5: Ever Undergone Performance Appraisal

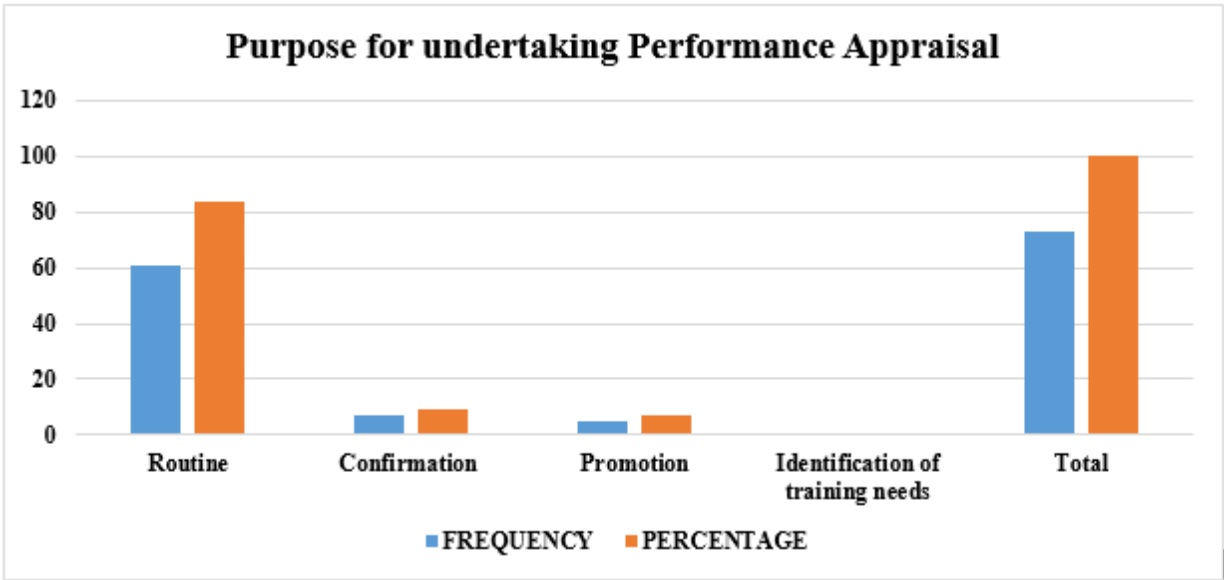
**Analysis:**

Universal Experience: All respondents (100%) have undergone a performance appraisal interview since joining the Education sector.

The data suggests a widespread and positive engagement with performance appraisal interviews in the Education sector, with every respondent having experienced such interviews. This underscores the importance and regularity of performance appraisal practices within the sector.

Continuous efforts to enhance the quality, fairness, and effectiveness of performance appraisal interviews can contribute to employee satisfaction, motivation, and overall organizational success

**Q4. If your answer is (a) Yes to the above question (3), what was the purpose of the performance appraisal interviews you underwent?**



**Figure 6: Purpose for undertaking Performance Appraisal**

**Analysis:**

**Predominance of Routine Appraisals:**

The majority of respondents (83.5%) underwent performance appraisal interviews for routine purposes. This suggests that routine evaluations are a common and primary focus of the performance appraisal process.

**Confirmation and Promotion Purposes:**

A smaller percentage of respondents underwent performance appraisals for confirmation (9.6%) and promotion (6.8%) purposes. This indicates that while routine assessments are prevalent, confirmation and promotion assessments are also significant components of the performance appraisal process.

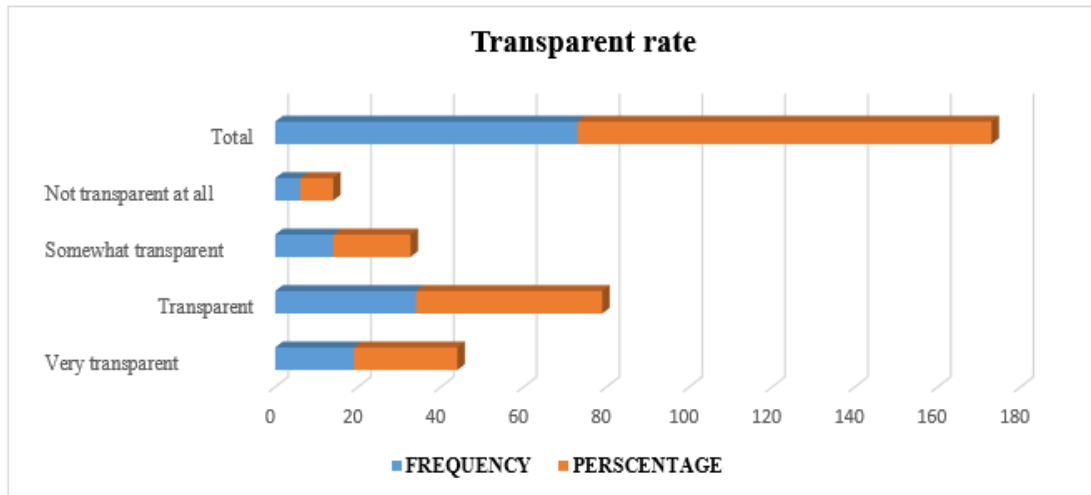
**Zero Responses for Identification of Training Needs:**

Notably, none of the respondents reported undergoing performance appraisals for the specific purpose of identifying training needs. This may suggest that training needs assessment is conducted through other channels or that employees are not explicitly aware of this aspect in the performance appraisal process.

This data provides insights into the primary purposes for which performance appraisal interviews are conducted within the institution, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that addresses routine evaluations, career progression, and potential training and development opportunities.

**Q5. How would you rate the transparency of the performance appraisal process?**

The study aimed to determine the transparency of performance appraisal. Figure 7 showed the results as follows: the response was that 25% said it was very transparent, 45% transparent, 18.7% said somewhat transparent and 6% said not transparent at all.



**Figure 7: Transparent Rate**

**Analysis:**

**Diverse Perceptions:** Respondents provided varying opinions on the transparency of the performance appraisal process, indicating a range of perceptions within the sample.

**Majority Transparency:** A majority (72.6%) of respondents rated the transparency of the performance appraisal process as either "Very Transparent" or "Transparent."

**Concerns About Transparency:** A combined 27.4% of respondents rated the transparency as either "Somewhat Transparent" or "Not Transparent at All," suggesting that a significant portion has reservations about the level of transparency.

The data provided valuable insights into the perceived transparency of the performance appraisal process. Addressing concerns and continuously striving for improvement can contribute to a more effective and trusted performance appraisal system.

The findings from the examination of the performance appraisal system within the education sector of Mwenze District revealed a complex web of challenges and opportunities. One prominent issue highlighted is the tendency for the appraisal process to disproportionately focus on employees' shortcomings rather than their achievements. This unbalanced approach can foster a sense of demoralization among staff, as they may feel undervalued and underappreciated for their efforts. Addressing this imbalance requires a fundamental shift in the appraisal culture towards one that recognizes and celebrates both successes and areas for improvement in a constructive manner (Agyemang & Kyei, 2019).

Moreover, the restrictive nature of the Performance Appraisal Form (APAS form) emerges as a significant impediment to effective communication and feedback exchange between employees and their evaluators. The rigid structure of the form may stifle employees' ability to fully express themselves and provide nuanced insights into their performance (Aigbomian & Aigbomian, 2017). Consequently, there is a clear need for a more flexible and inclusive format that encourages open dialogue and facilitates a deeper understanding of individual strengths and challenges.

A related issue is the prevalence of negative comments without accompanying solutions or constructive feedback. Such criticism, devoid of actionable guidance, can leave employees feeling disheartened and directionless in terms of how to address their perceived shortcomings. To counteract this detrimental effect, there is a pressing need for evaluators to adopt a more supportive and developmental approach, offering specific recommendations for improvement and collaborating with employees to create actionable plans for growth (Chirwa & Nkhoma, 2019). Furthermore, the absence of regular feedback

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loops and effective communication channels exacerbates the disconnect between employees and their evaluators. Without ongoing dialogue and engagement, employees may feel isolated and disconnected from the appraisal process, leading to a sense of disengagement and disillusionment with organizational objectives. Thus, fostering a culture of transparent communication and continuous feedback exchange is paramount to bridging this gap and cultivating a more inclusive and participatory appraisal environment (Vroom, 2021).

Additionally, the findings underscore the importance of consistency and fairness in the application of the performance appraisal system. Variability in evaluation standards and practices can breed confusion and resentment among employees, undermining their trust in the fairness and integrity of the process (Chen & Li, 2021). To mitigate this risk, organizations must invest in comprehensive training programs for managers and evaluators, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct objective and unbiased assessments. Furthermore, the lack of clear criteria for evaluation and the infrequent monitoring of teacher performance contribute to ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding performance expectations. Without a clear roadmap for success, employees may struggle to navigate the appraisal process and understand how their contributions align with organizational goals. Therefore, establishing transparent performance metrics and implementing regular performance reviews are essential steps towards fostering a culture of accountability and clarity within the organization (Cerasoli et al, 2018). The findings also revealed that to improve the performance appraisal system, employees need to be motivated by implementing motivation strategies like award systems. It also revealed that introducing electronic way of appraising is cardinal in order for the system to be transparent and provision of required materials including human resource to reduce on teacher-pupil ratio. Implementing these will result in the successful performance appraisal system leading to higher employee performance for the betterment of the organization.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study revealed a robust performance appraisal system in Mwense District's education sector, praised by supervisors for its benefits. However, it suggested increasing appraisal frequency for continuous feedback. The system's alignment with PSMD guidelines is crucial, but ongoing monitoring is needed. Non-supervisory staff's engagement is also important. The system's effectiveness is influenced by factors like communication, resource allocation, motivation, employee involvement, and bias mitigation. However, there are some issues that affect performance appraisals negatively such as inadequate staffing, lack of adequate teaching materials, and lack of motivational strategies. Addressing these factors holistically can improve the system's quality and fairness, fostering a culture of excellence.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are actions that should be taken on the basis of the findings of this study:

- The Ministry of Education through the District Education Board Secretary's Office (DEBS), in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive review to understand the system's strengths and weaknesses.
- The Ministry of Education, to revise the appraisal frequency from annual to quarterly.
- The Ministry of Education to ensure there is adequate staffing levels in schools to match up with teacher-pupil ratio which leads to effective performance.
- District Education Board Secretary's Office (DEBS) office to provide incentives to deserving employees in order to motivate them.
- The ministry of Education to ensure that required resources are always available in schools.

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**Authors' Short Biography**

	<p><b>Oniver Makombo</b> specializes in Administration and Human Resource Management. She has worked as a Registrar for more than 10 years at the District level and currently at the Provincial Level in the Ministry of Home affairs and Internal Security.</p>
	<p><b>Brian Nakalonga Mubemba</b> specializes in Economics and Business Studies. He has taught at the Secondary school level for 33 years and at the University level for 8 years now. Currently, he is lecturing at Rockview University under Business Department.</p>
	<p><b>Chanda Chansa Thelma</b> specializes in Political and Social Sciences as well as Education. She has lectured and still lecturing at the University level under the school of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education.</p>

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