

Impact of Performance Management Appraisal Systems on Public Service: A Comparative Systematic Literature Review of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania

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Abstract

The relationship between performance management appraisal and public sector employee performance is generally a positive one, but only when the appraisal process offers clear feedback, transparency, fairness, and connections to professional development; the influence is reduced by the complexity of administering the process, lack of training and capacity for implementation, and low employee trust. In Uganda, peer appraisal, self-appraisal, feedback giving, classroom observation, perceived fairness, and transparency were significant predictors of tutor performance. In Kenya, performance appraisal feedback had a positive and significant relationship with employee performance and implementing performance-contracting was hindered by a long technical procedure, inadequate training, absence of qualified personnel, and resistance to change. The more centralised model in Tanzania and overlapping appraisal instruments in Kenya also have similar implementation issues such as burden, training, perceived subjectivity, and poor links between rating and reward. The evidence thus suggests that appraisal systems can improve the effectiveness of public-service when they are used as a developmental and feedback-oriented management tool, rather than as a compliance tool. Limiting factors are localised samples, self-reported measures, cross-sectional designs, varying definition of outcomes, and contextual studies which are not directly related to Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania. Future studies should focus on comparing nationally representative public-service populations and examining the extent to which outcomes from the appraisal lead to improvements in service delivery that can be measured.

Keywords

Impact, performance, management, appraisal, system, public, service, effectiveness.