



An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) to Secondary School Teachers in Arusha City, Tanzania

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Abstract: *This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of management and supervision process of Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS). The researchers adopted survey design to study 10 out of 26 public secondary schools in Arusha City, Tanzania. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 214 sampled teachers of which 197 (92.1%) returned the questionnaire and 17 (7.9%) questionnaires were not returned. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics through mean scores. The study revealed that secondary school teachers perceived that the management and supervision process of OPRAS was not effective. The study also revealed that the heads of secondary schools didn't coach, mentor and counsel their teachers about OPRAS. Teachers didn't sign annual performance agreements and account for their performance; the teachers didn't receive copies (feedback) of their performance development of mid-year and annual reviews and didn't comment on their performance appraisal report. Furthermore, the discussions on the attainment of teachers' annual overall performance between teachers and their supervisors were not being witnessed by observers. The researchers recommended that Local Government Authorities and Policy makers in educational sector need to train supervisors on OPRAS so that they may acquire the basic knowledge, skills and competence required for its effective implementation. Heads of secondary schools should coach, mentor and counsel their teachers about OPRAS. Also during appraisal and review process, both supervisors and teachers should be involved and supervisors should provide feedback to their subordinates. Moreover, Government authorities need to be committed to the OPRAS as a tool of measuring teacher's performance.*

Key words: Appraisal System, Open Performance Review, Teacher Performance

Introduction

Performance appraisal system refers to the process of identifying, measuring, evaluating and developing the work performance of employees in the organization so that the organizational goals and objectives are more effectively achieved. According to Gupta (2011), formal evaluation of employees is believed to have its historical adoption for the first time shortly after the First World War (1914-1918) in which the industrial workers in the United States were evaluated. The aim of appraisal system then was to improve and motivate performance and encourage competition and possible reward for

good work performance. However, the system has changed overtime significantly and is now being used in different organizations. In India for example, Dauda (2018) explain that almost all industries try to focus on workers' output of their staff by assessing the process done. According to studies done in secondary schools in Kenya by Danku, et al (2015) and Demissie (2015) and Gikungu, Karanja and Thinguri (2014), performance appraisal system has features like openness, fairness, trust, and qualified staff to perform it.

Performance Appraisal (PA) has been synonymous with performance review and performance

evaluation. In Tanzania, the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) is currently known as OPRAS standing for Open Performance Review and Appraisal System. The Government introduced the use of the Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) in July 2004, through Establishment of the Circular No.2 of 2004. OPRAS replaced the Closed Annual Confidential Report System (CACRS) which was characterized by absence of feedback and poor help to the employees (United Republic of Tanzania, 2013). Taylor (2015) asserts that the Closed Annual Confidential Report System (CACRS) was highly confidential and bureaucratic in nature, hence failed to promote performance improvement and accountability in the public service. OPRAS is conducted using the form TFN, 832, which has the performance agreement between the employee and the supervisor and which shows the performance objectives of an individual employee's concern as related to the organizational objectives.

United Republic of Tanzania (2013) declares that it is thus mandatory for all Ministries, Independent Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and Regions to introduce OPRAS and make it operational in the public service which has to be open and transparent. Studies done in Tanzania such as Marco (2011), Mpululu (2014) and Chimazi (2018) concerning the effectiveness of performance appraisal practices in public secondary schools indicated that the implementation of the process was ineffective. The ineffectiveness of the process was due to biasness, the system being carried out secretly by supervisors contrary to what is expected of the procedure for open performance appraisal, low level of understanding about OPRAS between supervisors and supervisees which was attributed to lack of adequate training and seminars on how OPRAS operates inadequate resources and absence of feedback.

Related Literature and Studies

This section presents a review of theoretical and empirical studies based on literature pertinent to the open performance review and appraisal system (OPRAS) and teachers' performance in line with the research questions.

Theoretical Literature Review

This study was guided by the Goal Setting Theory of Motivation. According to Locke (1968) the goal setting theory of motivation was introduced in the

late 1960's by Edwin Locke. The theory states that motivation and performance are higher when individuals set specific goals with feedback mechanisms and these goals inform individuals to achieve particular performance levels. Lathan (2016) suggests that in order for employees to benefit from their welfare, they must choose to set goals to achieve, choose the means for attaining those goals and then they must choose to act on the basis of those means. The question that if employees are equal in ability and knowledge then, why some people perform better on work tasks than others? In addressing this question, Lathan (2016) hold that the reason must be motivation and that employees may have different performance goals. With this regard Lathan (2016) presented the need to set specific and difficult goals and outlined the characteristics of successful goal setting, that is clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback and task complexity. They also said that specific goals help bring about other desirable organizational goals such as reducing absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover.

In order for goal setting theory to be a powerful technique for motivating organizational members, Lunenburg (2011) gives practical suggestions for managers to consider when attempting enhancing motivation and performance. These goals need to be specific, difficult but attainable, and accepted. Feedback must be provided on goal attainment, goals must be more effective when they are used to evaluate performance, deadlines should improve the effectiveness of goals, a learning goal orientation should lead to higher performance than a performance goal orientation, and group goal-setting should be as important as individual goal-setting. According to Decenzo and Robbins (2003) on goal setting theory, effective implementation of performance appraisal system (PAS) depends much on supervisor's determination to fulfill employee's desires such as resources, training, promised rewards and to deal with performance problems.

The Goal Setting Theory is related to this study as it focuses on measuring the achievements of the organization in attaining its objectives. While the organization exists to achieve goals, the degree of success that individual teachers have in reaching goals is important in determining organizational effectiveness. Management should therefore appraise employees on the pre-determined goals on which the individuals' objectives and organizational

goals are identified and known to all stakeholders in the organization.

Empirical Literature Review

The teacher performance appraisal system has been subjected to many challenges in different countries. For instance, Mathwasa (2012) in his study in Zimbabwe reported that the implementation of teacher performance appraisal was ineffective. The findings indicated that teachers resisted the system claiming that it was imposed on them without adaptation to local environments. The study also shows challenges concerning the imported system as it lacked pilot-testing, training and meaningful reward systems. As a result, the system seemed to frustrate implementers who found it difficult to use in their daily work. Moreover, Demissie (2015) conducted a study in Wolaita Zone, South Ethiopia where he also found that the implementation of appraisal system was ineffective. The study identified major factors that affected the teachers' performance appraisal. These were lack of validity and reliability of performance appraisal criteria, inadequate classroom observation for performance appraisal, less participation of school supervisors (department heads and unit leaders) in performance the appraisal process, the absence of pre and post-appraisal meeting, more emphasis on the administrative purposes than developmental needs and lack of training on the teachers' performance appraisal schemes. Likewise, the study done by Gikingu, Karanja and Thinguri (2014) in Kenya found out that very few school managers conducted performance appraisal to their employees. The researchers assert that most managers used performance appraisal system as a tool to evaluate employees on a common ground which assist in salary and promotions, decisions, training and development programs only. According to them the main fear of using the system to evaluate employees on one common ground was boring procedures involved. It was also realized that most appraisals done in schools were informal. Therefore, it was agreed that the arisen problems in performance appraisal was mostly due to managers' biasness.

On the other hand, Matunge (2013) conducted a study in Kenya. The study revealed that the performance appraisal system used by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) was simple and had been consistent over time. The researcher realized that all employees of the commission were subjected to the

same standards as far as the performance appraisal system was concerned. However, the study found that the system did not seem to involve all the employees during the evaluation process. The study also revealed problems that led to subjective evaluation of the employees. The identified problems include lack of knowledge of appraises, lack of clarity on the parameters used, lack of communication to enhance feedback on performance and personal differences between appraiser and appraisal. According to the researcher, this was due to ineffectiveness of the management and supervision of appraisal processes. The study therefore recommended that the entire system needs to be repaired since it had some problems that need to be addressed. The study also recommended that the performance appraisal system needs to be reviewed in order to ensure that it bases on ideals that are more realistic.

A study done in Tanzania at Mvomero District by Mpululu (2014) examined management and supervision of appraisal process as important aspects in implementing OPRAS in schools. However, the study found that the implementation of OPRAS was ineffective due to low level of understanding of the appraisal system by supervisors and supervisees negative teachers' perceptions on the (OPRAS) system implementation and failure to use the evaluation feedback by supervisors in decision making.

Marco (2011) considers management and supervision of appraisal process as a weapon to enable employees meet their obligations. However, his study revealed that a performance appraisal practice was ineffective. The researcher also realized that OPRAS was carried out secretly by supervisors contrary to what was expected for open performance appraisal. Teachers were not involved in the whole process of performance appraisal hence supervisors used performance as a punitive measure rather than a developmental tool to measure teachers' performance. Furthermore Chimazi (2018) and Mhando (2016) examined the management of appraisal process as the way to ensure efficiency of the system for teachers' performance. The study revealed that OPRAS implementation to public secondary school teachers in Arusha was ineffective. According to the researchers, the ineffectiveness of the system to teachers was due to the failure of supervisors to involve supervisees in setting and discussing

objectives, low level of understanding on OPRAS among supervisors and supervisees, inadequate resources, absence of feedback and absence of training and seminars on how to fill the OPRAS forms.

Research Methodology

This section describes procedures and plans employed in collecting data during the study. Description of major methodological aspect of the study are also highlighted.

Research Design

The study employed survey research design to assess the effectiveness of open performance review and appraisal system (OPRAS) to secondary schools in Arusha City. According to Kothari (2004) survey research design involves a systematic and comprehensive study of a particular organization or group in order to analyze a particular social problem so that to give appropriate recommendations. Creswell (2012) further considers survey design as procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of the people using questionnaire in order to describe the attitude, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. With this regard, the study employed a

questionnaire to gather data from selected respondents.

Population and Sampling

Arusha City has twenty six public secondary schools. Ten schools with a total number of 214 out of 480 teachers were randomly selected to constitute the sample for participation in the study. The researcher distributed self-administered questionnaires to all sampled teachers of which 197 (92.1%) returned the questionnaire and 17 (7.9%) questionnaires were not returned. Therefore only 197 Teachers responded to questionnaires and such questionnaires were suitable for use in data analysis.

Data Analysis

This study employed quantitative approach in the analysis of the questionnaire items which were in the four- likert scale with responses ranging from strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The mean scores were interpreted as follows: 3.50 - 4.00 = strongly agree, 2.50 - 3.49 = agree, 1.50 - 2.49 = disagree and 1.00 - 1.49 = strongly disagree. Once data was collected from the respondents, it went through data reduction by categorizing manually according to the questionnaire items. Research questions were analyzed by using descriptive statistics which established mean scores for the respective question.

Table 1: Assessment of the Effectiveness of Management and Supervision Process of OPRAS

SN	Item	Mean Scores	Interpretation
1	The head of school do coach, mentor and counsel teachers about OPRAS	2.27	Disagree
2	There is availability of enough resources to implement OPRAS at this school	2.50	Agree
3	I am involved in the process of setting annual performance targets with my supervisor and fill OPRAS Form on time	2.60	Agree
4	There is openness in the process of discussing and setting objectives	2.64	Agree
5	OPRAS mid-year and annual review is being operated at this school	2.57	Agree
6	There is supervisor’s biasness on OPRAS assistance for teachers	1.75	Disagree
7	I do sign annual performance agreements and account for my performance	2.44	Disagree
8	I do receive a copy (feedback) of my performance development of mid-year and annual reviews	2.29	Disagree
9	I do comment on my performance appraisal report	2.32	Disagree
10	The discussion on the attainment of my annual overall performance between I and my supervisor is being witnessed by one observer	2.34	Disagree
Overall Mean Score		2.37	Disagree

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of data was guided by the following research question which was analyzed through descriptive statistics in terms of mean scores: How is the effectiveness of management and supervision

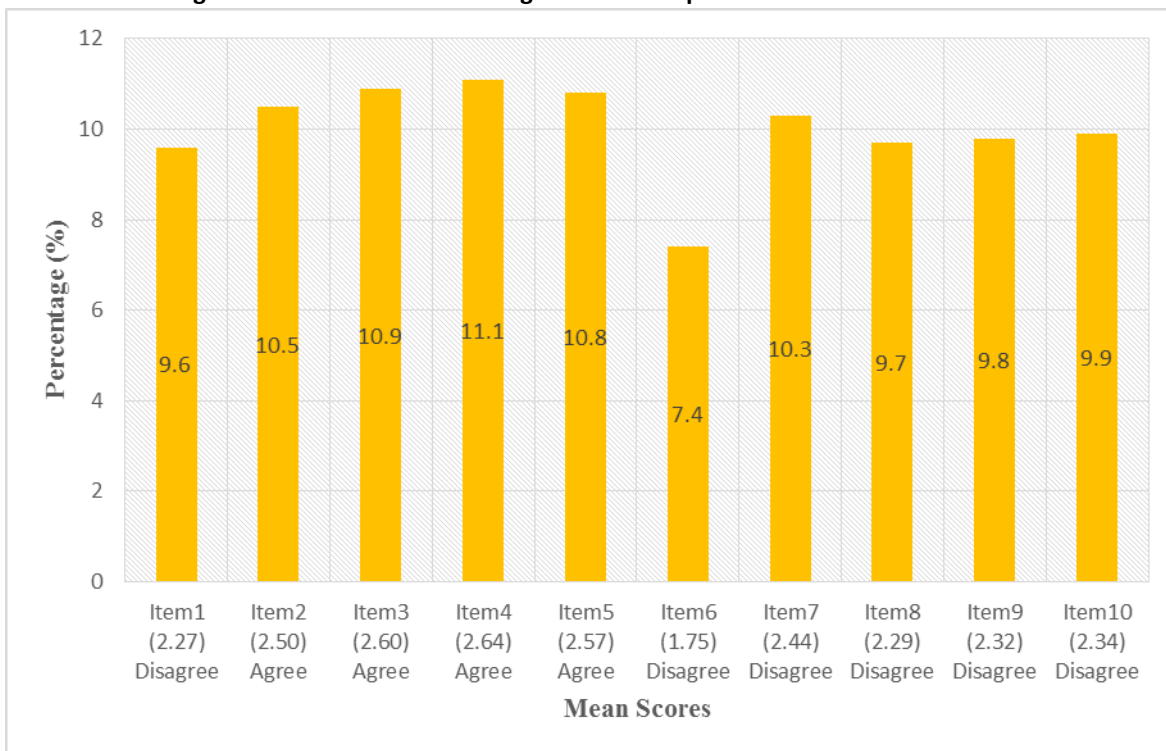
process of OPRAS being implemented in secondary schools regarding teachers’ performance? As it is observed in Table 1, the overall mean score for an assessment of the effectiveness of management and supervision process of OPRAS was 2.37, which means the respondents generally disagreed that

secondary school teachers approved the management and supervision process of OPRAS hence it was perceived ineffective. The description of results for each item can be interpreted and summarized by using a simple bar graph in figure 1.

As seen in Table 1 and Figure 1, item number one was rated 2.27 denoting disagreement. Particularly, respondents disagreed on the opinion that the heads of secondary schools do coach, mentor and counsel teachers about OPRAS. The fact that teachers lacked training from supervisors suggests that they were not only adequately prepared but also lacked knowledge, skills and competencies that are essential for successful implementation of OPRAS (Mpululu, 2014). Therefore, the training in appraisal process should be a continuous process to both novice and experienced teachers so as to ensure its effectiveness. This result is supported by the study findings done in Sikonge District in Tanzania by Simbamwene (2017) that teachers reported that appraisal systems were ineffective due to lack of training from their educational supervisors. Item number two was rated 2.50 denoting agreement. Respondents agreed that there was availability of resources to implement

OPRAS at their schools. The finding in item number three was rated 2.60 denoting agreement. In this respect, teachers agreed that they were involved in the process of setting annual performance targets with their supervisor and filled OPRAS Forms on time. Item number four scored 2.64 denoting agreement. In this regard, teachers agreed that there was openness in the process of discussing and setting objectives with their supervisors. Moreover, item number five was rated 2.57 denoting agreement. Teachers agreed that OPRAS mid-year and annual review were being operated at their schools. On the contrary, item number six scored 1.75 denoting disagreement. Respondents disagreed on the notion that there was supervisors' biasness on OPRAS assistance for teachers. Item number seven was also rated 2.44 denoting disagreement. This means that teachers didn't sign annual performance agreements and account for their performance. The findings in this respect agreed with the study findings done in Kenya by Matunge (2013) that teachers were not signing formal performance appraisal agreements because their supervisors perceived it as wastage of time which decreased teachers' workability.

Figure 1: Effectiveness of Management and Supervision Process of OPRAS



Moreover, item number eight scored 2.29 denoting disagreement. This means that teachers didn't receive copies (feedback) of their performance

development of mid-year and annual reviews at their schools. This finding is similar to that of Momba District in Tanzania by Chimazi (2018) that in the process of implementing appraisal systems,

respondents (teachers) were not receiving appraisal feedback from which they failed to know their performance progress. The United Republic of Tanzania (2013) points out that OPRAS should provide an opportunity for the employee to give feedback to the employer on issues that are encountered during the period of assessment which will bring improvement. Therefore, failure to receive the evaluation feedback results into denying the right of employees to know the challenges encountered during the period of assessment. This study also found that teachers didn't comment on their performance appraisal report with mean score of 2.32 denoting disagreement. Lastly, item number ten was rated 2.34 denoting disagreement. This means that teachers disagreed on the notion that the discussions on the attainment of their annual overall performance between them and their supervisors are being witnessed by an observer. This finding correlates with the study findings of Demissie (2015) in Ethiopia, that there was no openness between supervisors and supervisees in discussing the overall performance as the requirement of the system. The study further declared that most supervisors performed appraisal system secretly. Generally, these findings suggest ineffectiveness of management and supervision process of OPRAS in secondary schools in Arusha City.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This section provides conclusion and recommendations for the study. The overall objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of the open performance review and appraisal system (OPRAS) on teachers' performance in secondary schools in Arusha City.

Conclusions of the Study

In light of the findings, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the study, the researchers came up with the following conclusions:

Secondary school teachers general disagreed that the management and supervision process of OPRAS were effective. However, teachers agreed that, there was availability of resources to implement OPRAS in schools; there was openness in the process of discussing and setting objectives with their supervisors; teachers were involved in the process of setting annual performance targets with their supervisor and fill OPRAS Form on time. They also disagreed that there was no supervisors'

biasness on OPRAS assistance for teachers, which is very good and that OPRAS mid-year and annual review is being operated in secondary schools in Arusha City.

Basing on respondents disagreements regarding various aspects of the management and supervision process of OPRAS, the study concludes that the heads of secondary schools didn't coach, mentor and counsel their teachers about OPRAS; teachers didn't sign annual performance agreements and account for their performance; teachers didn't receive copies (feedback) of their performance development of mid-year and annual reviews; teachers didn't comment on their performance appraisal reports and the discussions on the attainment of teachers' annual overall performance between teachers and their supervisors were not being witnessed by observers.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on conclusions of the study, the researchers came up with the following recommendations to inform policymakers, supervisors, head of schools teachers and other stakeholders in the field of education and quality assurance.

Since OPRAS implementation regarding management and supervision process to secondary school teachers in Arusha City are ineffective, Local Government Authorities and Policy makers in educational sector need to continuously train supervisors and supervisee on OPRAS so that they acquire the basic knowledge, skills and competence required for its effective implementation.

Heads of secondary schools should coach, mentor and counsel their teachers about OPRAS. Also during appraise and review process, both supervisors and teachers should be involved. Supervisors should also provide feedback to their subordinates. This is critical as it will instill a sense of ownership of the system by teachers, leading to its effective implementation.

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