STAFF APPRAISAL AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN UGANDA

A CASE STUDY OF UGANDA MARTYRS UNIVERSITY, NKOZI

BY

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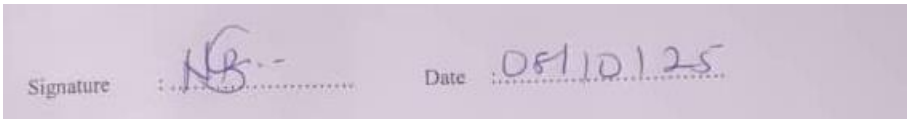
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DECLARATION

I, Babra Nakitende, affirm that this dissertation is the result of my original work, written through my independent research and efforts. It has not been presented for any academic qualification at any other institution or university.



Babra Nakitende

APPROVAL

This dissertation has been submitted for the award of the Degree of Master of Business Administration of Nkumba University under my supervision.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Dr. Ben Kamya Kintu; my late mother, Janet Lukwago; my husband, Jjunju Francis; all my brothers and sisters; and, most importantly, to all my children.

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KEY DEFINITIONS

Staff appraisal: Staff appraisal is a formal process through which an institution evaluates and documents the performance, strengths, and development needs of its employees to enhance organizational effectiveness (Nassazi, 2019).

Performance evaluation criteria: Performance evaluation criteria are the specific standards or benchmarks set by an organization to measure how well employees achieve expected tasks and goals (Okolie & Omeluzor, 2020).

Job performance: Job performance refers to the effectiveness and efficiency with which an employee accomplishes assigned duties and contributes to organizational objectives (Nabukeera & Kaggwa, 2021).

Appraisal methods: Appraisal methods are systematic approaches or techniques, such as rating scales, self-assessments, and 360-degree feedback, used to assess employee performance (Kipkoech & Cheruiyot, 2020).

ABREVIATIONS USED

UMU……..Uganda Martyrs Universty

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between staff appraisal and job performance of private universities in Uganda particularly in Uganda Martyrs University. The objectives were: to examine the relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University; to evaluate relationship between appraisal methods and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University; and to assess relationship effect of continuous feedback on job performance of Uganda Martyrs University. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design and employed a mixed methods research approach. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select 92respondentswho were drawn from a population of 120individuals. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 for analysis using descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. Results show that performance evaluation criteria had statistically positive significant relationship with job performance (r=.786, p=.000), appraisal methods had statistically positive significant relationship with job performance (r=.345, p= .000) and continuous feedback had a statistically positive significant relationship with AIQ (r=.614, p= .000).

It was concluded thatperformance evaluation criteria were found to be a greater predictor of job performance with Adjusted R Square of .612 compared to continuous feedback with Adjusted R Square of .366 and appraisal methods with Adjusted R Square of .345.

The study recommended that human resource department must ensure comprehensive communication of these criteria during staff induction programs and through continuous training workshops to improve staff understanding and acceptance. It was also recommended that departmental heads and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that appraisal processes consider both individual contributions and team achievements to foster collaboration and shared accountability. It was recommended that strategic planning and performance management units need to ensure feedback is clearly linked to individual development plans and aligned with UMU's strategic objectives, reinforcing purpose and motivation among staff.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses of the study, scope of the study, the significance of the study and the arrangement of the study.

Background to study

The study was about staff appraisal and job performance of private universities in Uganda with specific interest in Uganda Martyrs University.

Conceptual background

Staff appraisal, also known as Job performance appraisal, is a formal assessment of an employee's work Job performance over a specific period. According to Armstrong (2020), staff appraisal is a systematic process used by organizations to evaluate employees' contributions and identify areas for improvement. Dessler (2019) defines it as a structured method of measuring an employee's job Job performance against set standards to guide decisions on promotions, training, and rewards. Similarly, Noe et al. (2021) describes staff appraisal as an essential human resource practice that helps managers assess employee adaptive performance and provide necessary support for career development.

Staff appraisal in the current study was discussed in the form of performance evaluation criteria, appraisal methods, and continuous feedback. Performance evaluation criteria refer to the specific standards or benchmarks used to assess an employee's job performance, often focusing on key areas such as quality, productivity, and interpersonal skills (Aguinis, 2019). Appraisal methods are the approaches or techniques used to evaluate employee performance, which can include

traditional methods like rating scales or more modern techniques like 360-degree feedback, where peers, subordinates, and supervisors assess the employee (Torrington et al., 2021). Continuous feedback refers to ongoing communication between managers and employees regarding performance, offering real-time insights and guidance to foster growth and improvement, rather than relying solely on annual reviews (Bakker et al., 2020).

Job performance refers to the ability of an individual, group, or organization to achieve desired outcomes in line with specific goals and expectations. According to Armstrong (2020), Job performance is the accomplishment of assigned tasks based on set standards, task performance, and adaptive performance, reflecting how well employees contribute to organizational success.

Dessler (2019) defines Job performance as the extent to which an individual fulfills job responsibilities and meets established criteria, which can include productivity, quality of work, and adherence to deadlines. Similarly, Noe et al. (2021) describe Job performance as the measurable actions and behaviors of employees that directly impact an organization's success, highlighting the importance of both individual effort and teamwork.

Job performance can be assessed using three key measures: task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance.

Task performance refers to the employee's ability to carry out the specific duties and responsibilities of UMU staff in their job description, focusing on the quality and efficiency of completing assigned tasks (Campbell, 2020). Adaptive performance is the ability to adjust and respond effectively to changes in the work environment, such as new tasks, technologies, or organizational changes, reflecting an individual's flexibility and problem-solving skills (Pulakos et al., 2023). Contextual performance involves behaviors that contribute to the overall organizational environment, such as teamwork, initiative, and helping others, which are not

directly part of the job description but enhance the workplace atmosphere and culture (Borman &Motowidlo, 2022).

Theoretical background

The study anchored on the Expectancy Theory which was advanced by Victor Vroom in 1964 and the Goal-Setting Theory which was advanced by Edwin Locke (1968).

The Expectancy Theory, developed by Victor Vroom in 1964, assumes that individuals are motivated to act in a certain way based on the expected outcomes of their actions. The theory is built on three main assumptions: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Vroom, 1964).

Expectancy refers to an individual's belief that effort will lead to desired job performance. Instrumentality is the perception that good job performance will result in specific rewards. Valence is the value of an individual place on those rewards (Lunenburg, 2021). The theory suggests that employees are more likely to be motivated if they believe their efforts will lead to good job performance, which in turn will result in meaningful rewards (Isaac et al., 2022).

Expectancy Theory was highly relevant in staff appraisal, as it helps organizations design performance evaluation systems that motivate employees. Effective staff appraisal should ensure that employees clearly understand how their efforts translate into job performance and rewards (Lawler, 2023). Organizations should provide fair and transparent appraisal systems where rewards, such as promotions or bonuses, are linked to actual Job performance (Pinder, 2022). If employees perceive that their hard work will not lead to meaningful rewards, their motivation may decrease, leading to poor Job performance (Robbins & Judge, 2021).

Therefore, applying Expectancy Theory in staff appraisal can enhance employee engagement, productivity, and overall organizational Job performance.

The Goal-Setting Theory, developed by Edwin Locke in 1968, assumes that setting specific and challenging goals leads to higher Job performance. The theory is based on five key assumptions: clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Clarity means that goals should be clear and well-defined. Challenge suggests that more difficult goals lead to better Job performance as long as they are attainable. Commitment refers to an individual's dedication to achieving the goal. Feedback ensures that employees understand their progress and can adjust their efforts. Task complexity acknowledges that overly complex goals may reduce motivation if not broken down into manageable steps (Latham, 2022). The theory suggests that properly set goals increase motivation and focus, leading to improved Job performance (Locke, 1968).

The Goal-Setting Theory was highly relevant in informing Job performance, as it helps organizations and individuals set effective goals that drive productivity. When employees have clear, challenging goals, they are more likely to be focused and motivated, leading to better Job performance (Latham & Pinder, 2020). Organizations can use this theory to design Job performance management systems that align employees' goals with organizational objectives, ensuring continuous improvement (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Additionally, providing regular feedback helps employees stay on track and make necessary adjustments to their Job performance (Mitchell & Daniels, 2023). By setting well-structured goals and offering support, organizations can prosper.

Historical background

Globally, the concept of job performance has evolved significantly over the decades. In the early 20th century, job performance was closely linked to industrial efficiency and productivity. The

rise of scientific management by Frederick Taylor emphasized standardized tasks and output measurement (Taylor, 2021). Over time, this narrow view expanded to include worker satisfaction, motivation, and organizational behavior. The Hawthorne Studies of the 1930s marked a turning point by highlighting the social and psychological aspects of work performance (Mayo, 2023).

In recent years, the global shift towards knowledge economies has pushed job performance metrics to focus more on innovation, creativity, and emotional intelligence (Borman &Motowidlo, 2020). Technology, globalization, and diversity have further shaped the modern understanding of job performance, making it a multidimensional concept.

In Africa, the historical development of job performance was largely influenced by colonial labor structures, where performance was associated with obedience and physical output (Hope, 2021). After independence, many African nations sought to build local administrative systems, but weak institutional capacity often led to poor performance.

However, with economic reforms in the 1990s, many countries began restructuring public sectors to enhance efficiency and accountability. For example, Ghana and Nigeria introduced performance management systems in their civil services, aiming to link pay to performance and improve service delivery (Kiragu&Mukandala, 2022). Today, African nations are increasingly investing in employee training, performance appraisals, and ICT-based management systems to improve job performance across sectors (Amstrong& Baron, 2022).

In East Africa, job performance has experienced significant transformation, particularly in response to public sector reforms (Therkildsen, 2021). During the post-independence period, East African countries like Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda focused on nation-building with large public sectors that often suffered from inefficiencies. Structural Adjustment Programs in the

1980s and 1990s forced these nations to adopt more performance-oriented governance. For example, Kenya introduced the Performance Contracting system in the early 2000s to hold public officers accountable, improving efficiency in ministries and state agencies (GOK, 2022). Today, job performance in East Africa is increasingly influenced by results-based management, digital tools, and a push for transparency and accountability.

In Uganda, job performance has mirrored the country's political and economic changes. During the 1970s and early 1980s, political instability negatively affected public service performance, with limited resources and low morale among employees (Langseth, 2022). The introduction of Public Service Reform Programmes in the 1990s aimed at enhancing efficiency, transparency, and employee performance. For instance, Uganda introduced the Results-Oriented Management (ROM) framework to monitor and evaluate performance in ministries and local governments (Ministry of Public Service, 2022). More recently, technology, such as the Human Capital Management System, is being adopted to track attendance, manage payroll, and improve performance among civil servants.

Contextual background

Staff appraisal is a key human resource management practice that enhances employee Job performance and institutional adaptive performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Uganda Martyrs University (UMU), like other higher education institutions, implements staff appraisal to assess employee contributions, set Job performance goals, and improve service delivery. Effective staff appraisal provides feedback, identifies training needs, and fosters professional growth (Mullins, 2019). However, the success of staff appraisal depends on proper implementation, fairness, and employee participation. At UMU, there are mixed reactions

regarding the adaptive performance of staff appraisal, raising concerns about its impact on employee motivation and overall institutional Job performance.

The current status of staff appraisal at UMU reflects both strengths and weaknesses. The university has adopted periodic Job performance reviews, self-assessment reports, and supervisor evaluations as key appraisal methods (Nakabugo et al., 2021). However, some staff members feel that the process lacks transparency and fairness. Research suggests that for an appraisal system to be effective, it must be based on clear Job performance indicators and involve both employees and supervisors in decision-making (Biron et al., 2020). At UMU, the level of employee engagement in the appraisal process remains limited, leading to dissatisfaction and resistance from some staff.

Despite the structured appraisal processes, UMU faces several challenges in implementing effective staff appraisal. One major gap is the inconsistency in feedback and follow-up actions after Job performance evaluations. According to Kagaari and Munene (2020), staff appraisal in Ugandan universities is often conducted as a routine exercise rather than a developmental tool. Additionally, limited training for supervisors on objective appraisal methods leads to biases in evaluations. Another challenge is the lack of incentives and career development opportunities following Job performance appraisals, which reduces employees' willingness to actively engage in the process (Mugisha, 2020).

The root of the problem at UMU stems from weak policy enforcement, inadequate resources, and a lack of commitment from some stakeholders. A study by Nkata (2020) found that in many Ugandan universities, staff appraisal policies exist on paper but are not effectively implemented. In cases where appraisals are done, feedback is either delayed or ignored, leading to frustration

among staff. Without clear appraisal structures and actionable outcomes, employees become demotivated, which negatively affects their productivity and overall university Job performance.

To improve staff appraisal at UMU, there is a need for a more transparent, participatory, and well-resourced appraisal system. Training supervisors on fair assessment methods, providing timely feedback, and linking Job performance evaluations to promotions and professional development can enhance staff morale (Armstrong, 2019).

A well-structured appraisal system contributes to improved staff motivation, better service delivery, and overall institutional growth. Addressing the current gaps will ensure that the appraisal process at UMU is effective in promoting both employee development and university excellence.

Statement of the problem

Effective staff appraisal ideally leads to improved employee Job performance, increased motivation, and overall organizational success by providing clear feedback, setting achievable goals, and promoting professional development (Mullins, 2019).Uganda Martyrs University has implemented periodic job performance reviews, self-assessments, and supervisor evaluations to enhance staff appraisal; however, the university's overall job performance still falls short of set goals (Nakabugo et al., 2023).

According to the University Human Resource Annual Report (2024), average task performance scores among academic and administrative staff dropped from 78% in 2022 to 65% in 2024, indicating a 13% decline in meeting job responsibilities and quality standards. Similarly, adaptive performance, measured by the ability to handle curriculum changes and digital learning transitions, fell from 74% in 2022 to 59% in 2024, reflecting staff difficulties in responding to

change (Uganda Martyrs University Quality Assurance Report, 2024). Contextual performance, including teamwork, cooperation, and extra-role behaviors, declined from 81% in 2022 to 68% in 2024, highlighting a reduction in positive behaviors that support a productive work environment.

If the poor job performance at UMU remains unsolved, it will lead to reduced academic credibility, declining student enrollment, lower graduate employability, and weakened institutional reputation, ultimately affecting the university's long-term sustainability (UMU Quality Assurance Report, 2024). It was based upon this evidence that the researcher will undertake this research to provide practical recommendations on how to improve job performance

Purpose of the study

To understand and improve appraisal effectiveness in boosting employee motivation, job satisfaction and overall performance as well as to align individual and organizational goals especially between staff appraisal and job performance of private universities in Uganda. It focused on the case of Uganda Martyrs University.

Specific objectives

1 To examine the relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.
2 To evaluate relationship between appraisal methods and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.
3 To assess relationship effect ofcontinuous feedbackonjob performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University?
2. What is the relationship between appraisal methods and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University?
3. What is the effect of continuous feedback on job performance of Uganda Martyrs University?

Study hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no statistically significant relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance.

Hi_1: There is a statistically significant relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance.

Ho_2: There is no statistically significant relationship between appraisal methods and job performance.

Hi_2: There is a statistically significant relationship between appraisal methods and job performance.

Ho_3: There is no statistically significant relationship between continuous feedback and job performance.

Hi_3: There is a statistically significant relationship between continuous feedback and job performance.

Scope of the study

Content scope

This research explored staff appraisal and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University; the independent variable was discussed in terms of performance evaluation criteria, appraisal methods and continuous feedback. These elements were discussed in how they relate to the dependent variable of the study measured by task performance, adaptive performance and contextual performance.

Geographical scope

The study was carried out at Uganda Martyrs University located in Nkozi, Mpigi District, Central Region of Uganda, approximately 75 kilometers west of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, with geographical coordinates of Latitude: 0.0167° S, Longitude: 32.0167° E.

Time scope

The period from 2021 to 2024was considered as the context of understanding the phenomenon under study because this was the period when the university was significantly hit with problems of low job performance levels.

Significance of the study

University management:

This study may provide insights into the adaptive performance of current staff appraisal systems, allowing management to make informed decisions on improving employee engagement, productivity, and retention, ultimately leading to better institutional Job performance.

Academic staff:

Academic staff may benefit from a more transparent and fairer appraisal system that recognizes their contributions and helps identify areas for professional growth, leading to enhanced job satisfaction and career development.

Support staff:

Indirectly, support staff may benefit from a more efficient and motivated staff, as improvements in staff Job performance can result in higher-quality teaching and better academic support, enhancing their learning experience.

Government and accreditation bodies:

By identifying the gaps in staff appraisal and Job performance, the study may provide recommendations for improving standards in private universities, which could influence policy development and accreditation practices.

Future researchers:

The findings of the study may serve as a reference for future research in the field of staff appraisal, job performance management, and higher education management, particularly in the context of private universities in Uganda.

CHAPTER TWO

STUDY LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents the existing literature about the study variables of staff appraisal and job performance. The literature review is organized thematically in line with each study objective to determine the conceivable relationships and gaps in past studies.

Literature survey

Anyango (2023) conducted a study titled performance management and job performance of academic staff at Makerere University, Uganda. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 184 academic staff members, including 174 lecturers selected through random sampling and 10 administrative staff and heads of departments chosen purposively. Data collection was carried out using self-administered questionnaires and interview guides. The findings revealed significant positive relationships between each performance management dimension and job performance, leading to recommendations for university management to enhance goal-setting processes, strengthen performance appraisal implementation. The current study identifies a knowledge gap where Anyango's study predicted job performance, yet the current study is based on staff appraisal; the study is expected to fill the identified gap.

In another study, Ankunda and Mureebe (2018) explored the effect of appraisal standards setting on job performance in private Universities in Uganda, focusing on Kampala International University Bushenyi Campus and University of St. Joseph Mbarara. A self-administered questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data from 60 administrative staff members. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean distribution, and

regression analysis, were employed to analyze the data. The results indicated a significant relationship between appraisal standards and job performance, highlighting the importance of clear appraisal criteria. The study recommended enhancing appraisal standards and ensuring staff awareness of these standards to improve performance. Even though Ankunda and Mureebe's study was conducted in a private university such as the current study, there exists a knowledge gap since they focused on appraisal standards setting yet the current study is on staff appraisal and job performance.

Arinaitwe et al. (2023) conducted a study titled human resource development practices and job performance of academic staff basing on a case of Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Southwestern Uganda. Using descriptive research design, data was collected from a sample of 150 respondents through a questionnaire survey and analyzed quantitatively. The findings revealed that while training and promotion had a positive and significant influence on job performance, the impact of performance appraisal was not significant. The study concluded that the implementation of performance appraisal was weak and recommended that university administrators strengthen performance appraisal processes, prioritize training, and give significant attention to promotions to enhance academic staff performance. Arinaitwe's study has a knowledge and methodology gap; their study predicted job performance with human resource development, yet the current study is using staff appraisal and adopted a descriptive research design, yet the current study will adopt a cross-sectional research design.

Theoretical review.

There are a number of motivation theories among which include; Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Hertberg two factor theory, reinforcement theory, self-determination theory.expectacy

theory and goal setting theory. According to my research I found expectancy and goal setting theories to be the most relevant as discussed below.

The Expectancy Theory

The Expectancy Theory of motivation argues that individuals are driven to perform based on the expectation that their effort will lead to desired outcomes. First, the theory emphasizes that people are more likely to be motivated when they believe their effort will result in high performance and that this performance will lead to valued rewards (Vroom, 1964). This is particularly relevant in workplaces where employees need assurance that hard work translates into tangible benefits such as promotions, salary increases, or recognition (Lunenburg, 2021). Second, the theory highlights the importance of perceived fairness in rewards. If employees see a strong link between their performance and the rewards they receive, they will be more engaged and productive (Porter & Lawler, 1968). Moreover, the theory acknowledges that motivation varies among individuals based on personal goals and preferences (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2021).

The Expectancy Theory is highly relevant to staff appraisal because it explains how employees' motivation is influenced by the perceived connection between effort, performance, and rewards. According to Vroom (1964), employees will be more committed to their work if they believe that their effort will lead to good performance and that this performance will result in meaningful rewards. In staff appraisal, managers can use this theory to design evaluation systems that clearly link job performance to incentives such as promotions, salary increases, or professional growth opportunities (Lunenburg, 2021). When employees perceive fairness in the appraisal process and trust that their efforts are accurately assessed, they are more likely to be motivated to improve their performance (Porter & Lawler, 1968).

While Expectancy Theory explains motivation through the link between effort, performance, and rewards (Vroom, 1964), it does not specify how goals influence performance. This gap necessitates the adoption of Goal-Setting Theory, which emphasizes that clear, specific, and challenging goals enhance motivation and productivity (Locke & Latham, 1990). Expectancy Theory also assumes employees are rational decision-makers but overlook factors like unclear expectations or lack of feedback (Lunenburg, 2021). Goal-Setting Theory addresses this by highlighting goal clarity, commitment, and feedback as key to performance improvement (Locke & Latham, 2002). Therefore, integrating both theories provides a more comprehensive understanding of staff appraisal and motivation.

The Goal-Setting Theory

The Goal-Setting Theory argues that setting specific, challenging, and clear goals leads to higher performance by directing attention, increasing effort, and enhancing persistence (Locke & Latham, 1990). Studies show that employees who set well-defined goals perform better than those with vague or easy targets because clear goals create a sense of purpose and accountability (Latham, 2022). Additionally, goals improve motivation when they are accompanied by feedback, as employees can track progress and adjust their efforts accordingly (Locke & Latham, 2002). The theory also highlights the role of goal commitment, where individuals are more likely to achieve objectives when they find them meaningful and personally relevant (Lunenburg, 2021). Furthermore, organizations that implement structured goal-setting practices see increased productivity and job satisfaction, as employees feel more engaged and driven to succeed (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003).

The Goal-Setting Theory is highly relevant to job performance because it emphasizes that clear, specific, and challenging goals improve employee focus, effort, and persistence (Locke &

Latham, 1990). Research shows that employees who set well-defined goals are more productive and motivated because goals provide direction and a sense of achievement (Lunenburg, 2021). Additionally, the theory highlights that feedback is essential for tracking progress and making necessary adjustments, which enhances performance over time (Locke & Latham, 2002). Organizations that implement structured goal-setting strategies see improved task performance, as employees are more engaged and committed to meeting performance targets (Latham, 2022). Therefore, Goal-Setting Theory provides a practical framework for improving job performance by ensuring employees have clear objectives, motivation, and appraisal methods.

The Goal-Setting Theory has several strengths and weaknesses in explaining job performance and motivation. One key strength is that it provides a clear and practical framework for improving performance by emphasizing specific, challenging goals that enhance motivation, focus, and persistence (Locke & Latham, 1990). Research shows that well-set goals lead to higher productivity and job satisfaction (Lunenburg, 2021). Additionally, the theory highlights the importance of feedback, which helps employees adjust their efforts and stay motivated (Locke & Latham, 2002). However, a major weakness is that overly difficult goals can cause stress, reduce motivation, or lead to unethical behavior as employees prioritize results over ethical considerations (Ordonez et al., 2019).

Literature review.

Performance evaluation criteria refer to the standards and benchmarks organizations use to assess employee job performance. Scholars argue that when criteria are clearly defined, relevant, and aligned with organizational goals, they significantly improve employee performance (Aguinis, Pulakos et al., 2020). For instance, goal-specific evaluations give employees a sense of direction and help focus their efforts. However, not all evaluation systems are effective. According to

DeNisi and Murphy (2022), overly complex or vague criteria may confuse employees and create stress, thereby reducing job performance. This highlights the importance of balancing detail and clarity in performance evaluation systems.

A key strength of well-designed performance evaluation criteria is their ability to foster motivation through feedback and recognition. Research shows that when employees understand how they are being judged and receive regular, constructive feedback, they are more likely to improve (Yong & Tuckey, 2023; Lira et al., 2022). Yet, some scholars argue that feedback can be counterproductive if perceived as biased or unfair. For example, Kluger and DeNisi (2021) found that in certain cases, feedback led to decreased motivation when it was negative or lacked clarity. Thus, while feedback is essential, its impact heavily depends on how it's communicated.

Objective performance criteria such as sales volume or output levels are often praised for reducing bias and promoting fairness in evaluation. These quantifiable metrics allow for easier comparison and assessment (Hamzah et al., 2020). Nonetheless, critics note that not all job roles can be evaluated objectively, especially those involving teamwork, creativity, or emotional labor.

As such, using only quantitative measures can lead to misrepresentation of an employee's actual contributions (Tziner&Rabenu, 2020). A combination of objective and subjective criteria may therefore be more comprehensive. Subjective evaluation criteria like leadership potential or communication skills allow for a more holistic understanding of employee performance. These are especially useful for roles that require interpersonal skills or innovation (Kuvaas et al., 2020).

However, the downside of subjective evaluations is the risk of bias and favoritism. Rater biases, personal relationships, or poor training in evaluation methods can distort the results (Sullivan &Alexander, 2023). Thus, training evaluators to apply criteria consistently is crucial for minimizing these weaknesses.

Another debated aspect is the frequency of performance evaluations. Annual appraisals are common, but research indicates that more frequent assessments can lead to better job performance by offering timely feedback and adjustments (Cappelli & Tavis, 2021). Conversely, critics argue that continuous evaluation may be overwhelming and reduce employee autonomy. According to Bailey and Fletcher (2023), employees may feel micromanaged, leading to stress and job dissatisfaction. Therefore, organizations must balance the need for regular feedback with the need to respect employee independence.

Cultural factors also influence the effectiveness of performance evaluation criteria. In collectivist cultures, for example, evaluations that emphasize group performance may be more effective than those focusing on individual achievements (Zhang & Jia, 2021). In contrast, individualist cultures may respond better to personal performance metrics. This suggests that criteria must be adapted to the cultural context of the organization or workforce. Ignoring these differences can result in misaligned incentives and decreased performance (Park & Farman, 2023).

Technological advancements have also reshaped performance evaluations, introducing digital tools and analytics for better tracking and accuracy. Platforms like 360-degree feedback and performance dashboards are believed to improve transparency and employee engagement (Garg & Rastogi, 2021). However, some scholars warn that over-reliance on automated systems may reduce human judgment and overlook qualitative aspects of performance (Biron et al., 2023). Hence, a blended approach using both technology and human insight may be the most effective.

The alignment of performance evaluation criteria with strategic goals is crucial. Employees perform better when they see a clear link between their work and organizational success (Kaplan & Norton, 2023). Misalignment, however, can create confusion and reduce commitment. For

instance, if evaluations reward individual success in a team-oriented organization, it may promote unhealthy competition rather than collaboration (= Al-Karaghouli&Bajwa, 2022).

Thus, evaluation criteria must reflect and support the organization's core values and mission

Performance evaluation criteria are vital tools in determining the effectiveness of employees, and their influence on job performance is significantly shaped by their clarity and relevance. According to Rasheed et al. (2022), performance appraisal systems that include specific, measurable, and attainable criteria help reduce ambiguity and enhance job outcomes by aligning employee efforts with organizational goals. In contrast, Kim and Holzer (2020) argue that vague or overly generalized criteria can demotivate employees, leading to reduced performance due to perceived unfairness or lack of clear direction.

The alignment of evaluation criteria with job roles is also a critical factor in improving employee performance. As observed by Ahmed and Khan (2023), when evaluation standards reflect the actual job description and required competencies, employees are more likely to meet expectations and improve productivity. However, inconsistencies between evaluation criteria and job realities often result in dissatisfaction and reduced motivation, as pointed out by Park and Hassan (2021), who found that mismatched performance metrics can lead to employee disengagement and reduced work output.

Feedback quality within performance evaluations also significantly impacts job performance. Tariq and Ding (2021) emphasize that timely and constructive feedback helps employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement, thus enhancing their performance. Conversely, Zhang and Liao (2021) found that performance evaluations lacking in detailed feedback may contribute to confusion, low morale, and diminished job performance, especially when employees are uncertain about what is expected.

The frequency of performance evaluations also plays a role in influencing job performance. Khan and Aslam (2023) argue that regular evaluations promote continuous improvement and accountability among employees. On the other hand, Ntim and Opoku (2022) caution that overly frequent evaluations may lead to employee stress and "evaluation fatigue," reducing overall performance and satisfaction. Cultural and organizational context further shapes how performance evaluation criteria influence job performance. As highlighted by Mburu and Ogolla (2020), in collectivist cultures, group-based criteria may be more effective than individual-based assessments in motivating employees. In contrast, Kato and Kodama (2021) suggest that in highly individualistic work environments, personalized metrics are more strongly correlated with increased job performance, showing the need for contextual adaptability in evaluation systems.

Another dimension of critical analysis lies in the objectivity of performance criteria. Objective measures such as sales numbers or task completion rates are generally linked with higher perceived fairness and improved job outcomes, according to Oyeyemi and Ibrahim (2022). In contrast, subjective measures like behavioral traits may lead to bias and lower employee trust in the system, as discussed by Leung and Lin (2020), thereby potentially reducing job performance.

Technological integration in performance evaluations has also reshaped the impact of evaluation criteria on performance. As found by Boateng and Ofori (2021), digital tools allow for real-time tracking of job performance metrics, fostering transparency and motivating employees through ongoing feedback. However, according to Osei and Donkor (2020), over-reliance on automated systems can ignore contextual factors and lead to distorted performance appraisals that negatively affect employee morale and productivity.

The perception of fairness in evaluation criteria is another factor that mediates job performance. Employees who view the appraisal process as fair and unbiased are more likely to accept

feedback and improve performance (Nasomboon&Ussahawanitchakit, 2021). Conversely, Mahapatra and Sharma (2023) argue that perceived unfairness in performance metrics can cause resentment, reduce trust in management, and subsequently lead to lower job performance. The involvement of employees in the development of performance evaluation criteria has shown mixed results. According to Boateng and Appiah (2023), involving staff in the process increases transparency, ownership, and motivation, all of which enhance job performance. However, Zhu and Wang (2020) caution that excessive employee involvement may dilute management control and lead to inconsistencies, potentially weakening the effectiveness of the evaluation system.

Appraisal methods and job performance

Appraisal methods are essential mechanisms through which organizations assess, manage, and enhance employee performance. Traditional methods such as the ranking and rating scales have long been used, though scholars argue their efficacy is limited. Sharma and Verma (2021) argue that ranking systems often foster unhealthy competition and do not provide developmental feedback, which can demoralize employees. Similarly, Guchait and Cho (2019) contend that numerical rating systems can be too rigid, failing to capture the complexity of modern work roles and behaviors, ultimately leading to inaccurate evaluations and reduced job satisfaction.

Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS) are often highlighted as a more advanced appraisal method that links specific behaviors to performance levels. According to Widianto and Mustafa (2022), BARS are superior because they offer clarity and objectivity, which enhances employee understanding and performance outcomes. However, Rahman and Ferdausy (2020) note that while BARS improve fairness, they are time-consuming to develop and may still suffer from biases if raters are not properly trained, thus compromising their reliability and overall effectiveness

The 360-degree feedback method has gained popularity for its holistic approach to performance appraisal. By incorporating feedback from supervisors, peers, subordinates, and even clients, it provides a more rounded perspective on performance. Madueke and Emejulu (2021) highlight that this method increases employee awareness of strengths and weaknesses, thereby enhancing development and performance. In contrast, Kelechi and Okeke (2020) caution that unless the process is confidential and feedback is constructive, it may lead to defensiveness and interpersonal conflict, ultimately reducing performance instead of improving it.

Management by Objectives (MBO) is another appraisal technique that directly connects individual goals with organizational objectives. Boachie-Mensah and Seidu (2019) found that MBO enhances performance by promoting clarity, focus, and motivation among employees. However, Ndirangu and Kwasira (2021) argue that in dynamic environments, MBO can become rigid, making it difficult for employees to adapt to changing priorities, which can negatively affect their performance when flexibility is crucial.

Self-appraisal as a method encourages employee reflection and ownership of performance, often leading to increased self-awareness and motivation. As per Alhassan and Asiedu-Appiah (2020), self-evaluation helps employees understand their strengths and areas needing improvement, encouraging proactive behavior. However, critics like Mwangi and Kimani (2022) argue that self-appraisals can be biased, with employees either overestimating or underestimating their performance, thus leading to inaccurate assessments that may misguide development efforts.

Critical incident appraisal focuses on documenting specific examples of exceptional or substandard behavior. This method is praised by Omolo and Wekesa (2021) for capturing real-time and job-relevant data, which offers meaningful insights for performance improvement. Yet, Nwachukwu and Edeh (2022) argue that it may result in a narrow focus on isolated incidents

rather than overall performance, and could also be subject to recency bias, where only the most recent events are emphasized.

Appraisal methods that involve goal-setting theory are often considered motivational, especially when goals are specific and challenging. As noted by Kang and Kim (2021), such appraisal systems can foster higher productivity by providing clear targets and encouraging goal commitment. However, Edewor and Aluko (2020) point out that when goals are unrealistic or poorly communicated, they may induce stress and lead to burnout, counteracting the intended performance benefits.

Narrative or essay-based appraisals provide qualitative evaluations that can offer rich, detailed feedback. Agyeman and Osei (2021) state that narrative appraisals facilitate a deeper understanding of employee capabilities and challenges, especially in creative or research-driven roles. However, according to Muriithi and Otieno (2022), such appraisals may lack consistency and comparability across employees, reducing fairness and possibly impacting morale and performance.

Technological innovations such as AI-based appraisal systems and real-time performance tracking are reshaping how performance is evaluated. Mensah and Adusei (2022) argue that tech-enabled methods enhance objectivity, speed, and data-driven decision-making, which can positively influence job performance. In contrast, Opoku and Asante (2021) warn that over-reliance on automated systems may ignore contextual factors like emotional intelligence, teamwork, or creativity, which are harder to quantify but crucial for holistic performance assessment.

Graphic rating scales remain a common appraisal tool due to their simplicity and quantitative clarity. According to Ahmed and Uddin (2021), this method allows quick comparisons across

employees and facilitates administrative decisions such as promotions. However, as noted by Kyei and Mensah (2022), this method tends to be overly simplistic, failing to account for qualitative aspects like teamwork and creativity, which are vital for overall performance, especially in knowledge-based sectors.

Forced distribution appraisal methods, which allocate employees into performance categories, are credited for promoting merit-based advancement. Bayo and Hassan (2021) observed that this system motivates high performers while identifying underperformers for development. On the other hand, Eze and Okon (2022) criticize this approach for potentially penalizing competent employees simply due to a fixed quota system, which may lead to reduced morale and disengagement among staff.

Competency-based appraisal methods, which assess performance based on role-specific behaviors and skills, are considered modern and strategic. As indicated by Malik and Kundu (2020), this method aligns performance with organizational capabilities and fosters long-term employee development. Nonetheless, Onyema and Agada (2022) argue that competency models are often subjective and require intensive training for raters to ensure fairness, without which the system loses reliability and credibility.

Continuous performance appraisal systems are being adopted to replace annual appraisals in many progressive organizations. They are believed to foster agility and real-time feedback, which boosts employee responsiveness and productivity (Thomas &Asare, 2021). However, Mbarika and Nwosu (2022) point out that the continuous nature may overwhelm both managers and employees, causing appraisal fatigue and a shift from developmental intent to merge documentation.

Checklist methods, where managers indicate the presence or absence of specific traits, are seen as efficient in standardized job roles. According to Rajendran and Pillai (2020), they ensure consistency and minimize rating bias. However, Achieng and Mugisha (2022) observe that the lack of contextual explanation in checklist methods often renders the appraisal mechanical, missing out on situational nuances that could inform more tailored developmental interventions.

Project-based performance appraisal, which evaluates employees based on outcomes of specific tasks or projects, aligns well with matrix and project-based organizational structures. Igbokwe and Alade (2021) found this method enhances accountability and performance tracking on complex deliverables. Still, Ouma and Tumwine (2022) note that external factors often influence project outcomes, meaning poor performance may not always reflect employee inefficiency, thereby skewing appraisal results.

Trait-based appraisal methods focus on evaluating employees based on inherent characteristics such as dependability, initiative, and honesty. Udo and Ekpo (2021) support the approach for roles requiring ethical or interpersonal competencies, which are often hard to measure directly. Conversely, Yeboah and Nkansah (2022) argue that trait-based evaluations are highly subjective and prone to personal biases, often resulting in questionable validity and strained supervisor-subordinate relations.

Team-based appraisal systems are increasingly used in collaborative work environments to evaluate collective outputs and dynamics. As per Njuguna and Gacheri (2021), they foster group cohesion and share responsibility, which improve overall job performance. However, Abdu and Garba (2022) caution that this method can mask individual performance disparities, potentially demotivating top performers who feel their efforts are undervalued when success is distributed equally.

Narrative-critical appraisals, a blend of narrative feedback and critical incident tracking, are emerging as a hybrid method. According to Pereira and Soares (2021), this method enables different feedback by combining structured and descriptive elements, thus enhancing developmental value. However, Chibueze and Anene (2022) critique its time-consuming nature and dependence on the rater's writing skills, which may lead to inconsistencies in quality and usefulness across departments.

Continuous feedback and job performance

Continuous feedback in the form of staff appraisal has gained prominence as an effective approach to improving job performance. It involves providing employees with regular assessments of their work, offering constructive feedback, and setting new goals for improvement. According to Shieh (2019), continuous feedback helps in identifying performance gaps and can lead to more focused improvements in employee skills and behavior. This approach is often contrasted with traditional performance evaluation criteria, which may not provide timely or actionable feedback. In this review, the relationship between continuous feedback and job performance will be critically examined by comparing and contrasting existing scholarly views.

The importance of feedback in enhancing job performance is widely acknowledged in organizational behavior literature. According to Kluger and DeNisi (2022), feedback serves as a crucial tool for improving motivation and performance, as it helps employees understand how their work aligns with organizational goals. Continuous feedback, which provides more frequent interactions between supervisors and subordinates, is seen as a means of maintaining a high level of employee engagement (London, 2023). By receiving immediate feedback, employees are more likely to correct mistakes and adjust their efforts to align with performance expectations.

Moreover, the continuous nature of feedback fosters an environment of ongoing development, unlike annual appraisals that may be seen as one-off events.

However, some scholars have raised concerns about the efficacy of continuous feedback in improving job performance. For instance, Seibert and Kraimer (2021) argue that the effectiveness of feedback depends on how well it is received by employees. If feedback is perceived as overly critical or inconsistent, it may demotivate employees, negatively impacting job performance. Furthermore, feedback overload, where employees are bombarded with too much information, may lead to confusion and decreased performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2022). It is essential, therefore, that feedback is delivered constructively and tailored to the individual needs of employees for it to be effective.

Another critical issue in the literature is the role of the feedback provider in the continuous feedback process. According to Eisenberger and Stinglhamber (2021), the relationship between the supervisor and employee plays a significant role in determining the effectiveness of feedback. Positive supervisor-employee relationships characterized by trust and respect tend to result in more effective feedback delivery and better job performance outcomes. Conversely, when feedback is delivered by supervisors who lack interpersonal skills or have a strained relationship with employees, the feedback may be perceived as less credible or useful (Bashir &Ramay, 2020). This suggests that the quality of the feedback relationship is just as important as the frequency of feedback in influencing job performance.

Comparing continuous feedback with traditional performance appraisals further highlights the advantages and limitations of the former. While traditional performance appraisals are often scheduled once or twice a year, continuous feedback is a more dynamic approach, providing opportunities for employees to make real-time improvements (Pulakos et al., 2022). Continuous

feedback also encourages a more collaborative approach to performance management, where employees actively engage in discussions about their strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, traditional performance appraisals tend to be formal, top-down assessments that may not offer opportunities for ongoing dialogue or immediate corrective actions (Aguinis, 2019). This difference in approach can significantly affect employee motivation and performance outcomes.

Furthermore, continuous feedback has been linked to greater employee satisfaction and retention. According to DeNisi and Kluger (2020), when employees receive regular feedback, they are more likely to feel valued and engaged in their roles. This sense of recognition can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and a lower likelihood of turnover. Moreover, continuous feedback systems allow employees to see tangible evidence of their progress, which can boost their confidence and motivation to perform well. However, the literature also suggests that continuous feedback may not always result in positive outcomes. For example, feedback that focuses solely on shortcomings without acknowledging accomplishments can lead to employee burnout and dissatisfaction (Kuvaas, 2023).

In addition to enhancing employee engagement and motivation, continuous feedback has been associated with the development of employee skills and competencies. Research by Tannenbaum and Yukl (2022) suggests that feedback helps employees identify areas for skill development and provides them with the information needed to improve their performance. Continuous feedback offers employees the opportunity to refine their skills over time, leading to better overall performance. By contrast, traditional performance appraisals may fail to provide actionable feedback that can be directly applied to improving job performance.

However, it is important to consider the context in which continuous feedback is implemented. For instance, industries that are fast-paced and require constant adaptation may benefit more

from continuous feedback compared to more static work environments. In such contexts, feedback helps employees adjust their approaches quickly and remain aligned with organizational goals (Shin & Konrad, 2019). However, in environments where tasks are routine and performance expectations are well-defined, continuous feedback may not be as necessary, and traditional appraisals may suffice (Kuvaas, 2023).

While much of the research emphasizes the benefits of continuous feedback, there is still significant debate over the degree of frequency and intensity of feedback that yields the most favorable job performance outcomes. In some cases, excessive feedback can lead to negative psychological outcomes, such as stress or a feeling of being micromanaged. For example, a study by Hattie and Timperley (2022) suggests that feedback should be provided in moderation, as constant or overly detailed feedback may overwhelm employees, reducing their ability to focus on core tasks. This finding highlights the need for a balanced approach where feedback is neither too scarce nor too abundant. In fact, it has been suggested that employees should be given sufficient time to process feedback before receiving additional input, allowing them to internalize suggestions and implement changes effectively (Baker & Emory, 2020).

Moreover, the impact of continuous feedback on job performance can vary depending on the nature of the job and the individual preferences of employees. Research by Judge and Bono (2021) indicates that employees with high levels of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation tend to respond more positively to feedback, utilizing it to enhance their performance. On the other hand, individuals with lower levels of self-confidence may interpret feedback more negatively, leading to decreased motivation and poorer job performance (Tepper, 2020). Therefore, it is important for organizations to tailor feedback systems not only to job roles but also to individual

employee characteristics, ensuring that feedback is delivered in a way that aligns with their personal preferences and developmental needs.

Another important consideration is the cultural context in which feedback is provided. Studies suggest that the effectiveness of feedback can be influenced by cultural differences in communication styles and power distance. For instance, in collectivist cultures, employees may value indirect feedback or group-based feedback over direct, individual evaluations (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2021). In contrast, employees in individualistic cultures may prefer more direct and frequent feedback (Hofstede, 2020). Therefore, when implementing continuous feedback systems, organizations must consider the cultural background of their workforce to ensure that feedback is received positively and contributes to enhanced job performance.

The technological advancements of the 21st century have also impacted on the implementation and effectiveness of continuous feedback. Digital platforms and performance management software have made it easier for organizations to collect and deliver feedback in real-time (Stone, 2020). These tools provide a more efficient and streamlined way of giving feedback, allowing employees to track their progress, set goals, and receive immediate responses to their work. However, while these technologies offer numerous advantages, they also come with potential downsides. For instance, digital feedback may lack the personal touch of face-to-face communication, which can affect the perceived sincerity and effectiveness of the feedback (Gartner, 2020).

Although continuous feedback is often associated with improved job performance, it is important to recognize that feedback alone cannot guarantee positive outcomes. Job performance is influenced by a variety of factors, including organizational culture, work environment, and individual capabilities (Aguinis, 2019). As Pulakos et al. (2022) argue, continuous feedback

should be viewed as one component of a broader performance management system that includes goal setting, training, development opportunities, and rewards. By integrating feedback into a holistic approach to performance management, organizations can ensure that it complements other initiatives aimed at boosting productivity and employee engagement.

Job performance

Despite numerous efforts to improve job performance, it remains a critical challenge in many organizations. Job performance is often defined as an employee's ability to execute tasks effectively and contribute to organizational success. However, scholars have debated its exact meaning, with some focusing on measurable outputs while others emphasize behavioral and contextual factors (Sonnentag&Frese, 2018). This lack of consensus makes job performance a complex and multidimensional concept that requires a comprehensive approach to understanding and improving it (Campbell &Wiernik, 2019).

Several theories explain job performance, with the Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) model and the Expectancy Theory being among the most widely studied. The JD-R model argues that job performance is influenced by the balance between job demands and available resources, suggesting that excessive demands without adequate resources lead to burnout and reduced task performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). On the other hand, Expectancy Theory proposes that employees are motivated to perform well when they believe their efforts will lead to desired rewards (Vroom, 2019). While both theories acknowledge the role of motivation and support, the JD-R model places greater emphasis on workplace conditions, whereas Expectancy Theory focuses on individual perceptions of rewards and effort.

Job performance is generally categorized into task performance and contextual performance. Task performance involves executing job-related duties, while contextual performance refers to

behaviors that contribute to a positive work environment, such as teamwork and adaptability (Borman &Motowidlo, 2018). Some researchers argue that task performance is the most important aspect since it directly affects productivity (Campbell et al., 2019). However, recent studies suggest that contextual performance is equally significant, as it enhances collaboration and organizational culture, ultimately improving overall task performance (Podsakoff et al., 2018). The debate highlights the importance of considering both aspects when evaluating employee contributions.

Motivation is widely recognized as a key factor in job performance. Intrinsic motivation, which is driven by personal satisfaction and interest in the job, has been found to produce higher performance levels than extrinsic motivation, which relies on external rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2020). However, some scholars argue that a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation leads to the best outcomes, as financial incentives can complement personal engagement (Gagne& Deci, 2019). Although motivation undeniably plays a crucial role in performance, the challenge for organizations lies in designing effective motivation strategies that balance these two approaches (Latham & Pinder, 2018).

Leadership also significantly influences job performance, with transformational and transactional leadership styles being the most commonly studied. Transformational leaders inspire employees by creating a vision and fostering personal development, leading to higher job performance (Bass & Riggio, 2019). In contrast, transactional leadership, which relies on a system of rewards and punishments, has been found to be more effective in structured and routine-based environments (Judge & Piccolo, 2018). While both leadership styles impact job performance, transformational leadership is generally considered more effective in sustaining long-term employee engagement and productivity.

The work environment plays a crucial role in determining job performance, as factors such as organizational culture, job security, and workplace conditions influence employee engagement. A supportive and positive work environment has been linked to increased productivity, while stressful and toxic workplaces lead to burnout and poor performance (Sala nova et al., 2019). Some studies suggest that flexible work arrangements can improve job performance by reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction (Kossek et al., 2020). However, other researchers caution that excessive flexibility may lead to reduced accountability and discipline, potentially lowering performance levels (Allen et al., 2019). These findings suggest that organizations must find a balance between structure and flexibility to optimize employee performance.

Employee training and development are essential for enhancing job performance. Studies indicate that continuous training programs improve both employee competency and job satisfaction (Aguinis&Kraiger, 2019). However, some researchers argue that training alone is insufficient and should be complemented by mentorship and on-the-job learning for greater adaptive performance (Salas et al., 2017). While there is widespread agreement that training improves performance, the debate lies in determining the best methods and approaches to skill development. Organizations that integrate a combination of formal training, mentorship, and hands-on learning tend to achieve the best results in improving job performance.

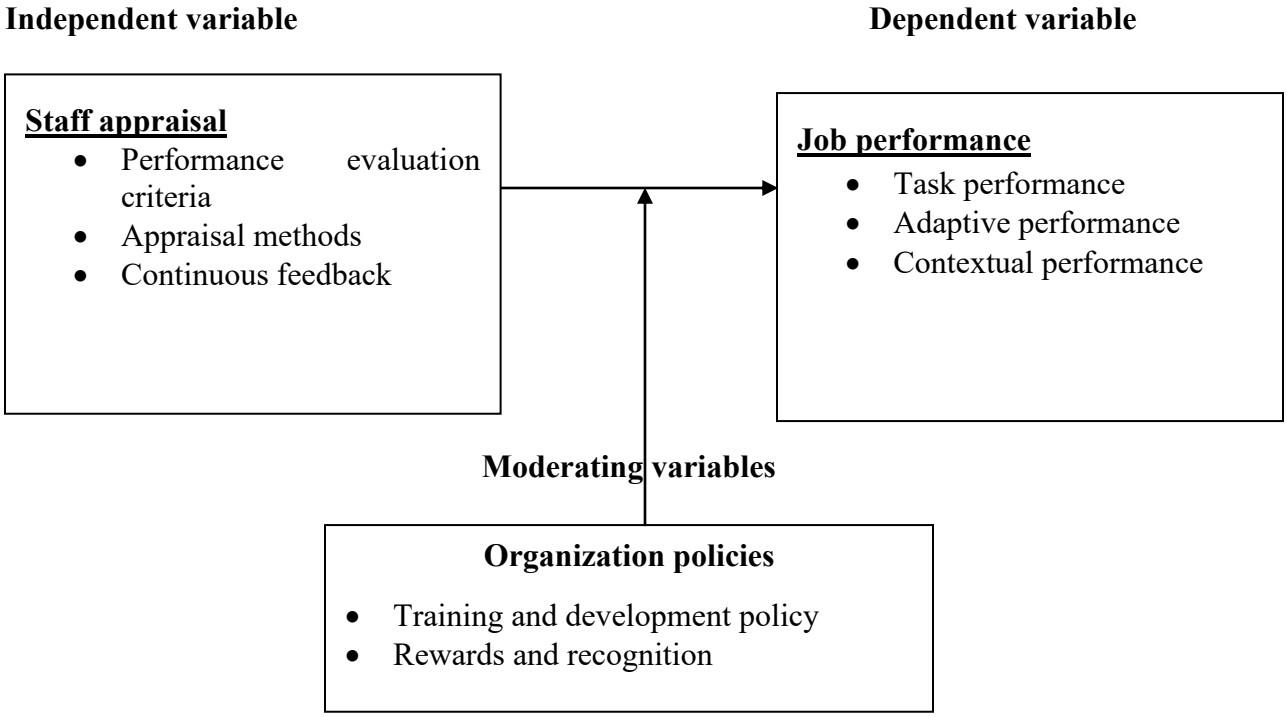
Performance appraisals are commonly used to assess and improve job performance, but their adaptive performance has been debated. Traditional performance evaluation criteria have been criticized for being outdated and ineffective in addressing real-time performance issues (DeNisi& Murphy, 2017).

In contrast, continuous performance management, which involves regular feedback and coaching, has been found to be more effective in improving employee performance (Pulakos et

al., 2019). However, some studies caution that poorly designed performance appraisal systems can create stress and negatively impact employee morale (Fletcher & Williams, 2018). This suggests that organizations need to implement well-structured appraisal systems that focus on employee development rather than punitive measures.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework depicts the relation between staff appraisaljob performance as shown in Figure 2.1:



Source: Adopted from Dijk & Michal (2015) and modified by the researcher, 2025

Figure 2.1: The conceptual framework

The conceptual framework illustrates that staff appraisal, as the independent variable, is a different process encompassing three key dimensions: performance evaluation criteria, appraisal methods, and continuous feedback. These dimensions collectively define how staff performance is assessed, measured, and improved within an organization. Performance evaluation criteria

refer to the specific standards or benchmarks against which employees are judged, such as quality of work, punctuality, or goal attainment. Appraisal methods involve the techniques or tools used to carry out the appraisal, which may include self-assessments, supervisor evaluations, or 360-degree feedback. Continuous feedback emphasizes the importance of ongoing communication between employees and supervisors to support performance improvement and development.

These components of staff appraisal are assumed to influence job performance, which is the dependent variable, reflected in three core dimensions: task performance (the effectiveness with which core job duties are executed), adaptive performance (the ability to respond to change and new challenges), and contextual performance (the behaviors that contribute to the organizational environment, such as teamwork and initiative).

The framework suggests a direct relationship where effective staff appraisal practices lead to enhanced performance across these domains.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The chapter presents the theoretical and practical considerations involved in conducting a data collection study to test the hypothesis about job performance and career management. It discussed the various aspects of research design and its justification. It includes the necessary study tools, data quality assurance, measurement, and analysis.

Research design

This study used the case study design to focus on a particular organization, allowing for a thorough understanding of how staff appraisal influences job performance within Uganda Martyrs University. The design was suitable because it helped explore complex relationships and processes that cannot be fully captured through broad surveys or experiments (Stake, 1995). By examining one case in detail, the researcher gathered rich data through methods such as interviews, document analysis, and observations, which helped explain not just what is happening, but why it was happening. This method is especially useful when studying organizational practices and behaviors, as it provides deeper insights into context-specific factors (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Research approach

A mixed methods research approach involves combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods within a single study to gain a more complete understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach was used in the study to collect and analyze both numerical data (such as survey results) and descriptive data (such as interview

responses) to explore the relationship between staff appraisal and job performance. It wasappropriate because it allowed the researcher to validate findings through different sources, offering both breadth and depth of understanding (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The quantitative data helped identify patterns and relationships, while the qualitative data provided context and deeper insights into how staff appraisal processes are experienced and perceived.

Research strategy

This study relied on a case study approach since it was difficult to establish what goes on in respect to staff appraisal process and job performance in private universities in Uganda. For the reason of effective access, Uganda Martyrs University was selected.

Research duration

A cross-sectional research design was adopted for this study, which involved collecting data at a single point in time to examine the relationship between staff appraisal and job performance in private universities for a period of 3 months. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to capture a snapshot of respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding the appraisal process without the need for prolonged data collection. Additionally, this design facilitated the identification of existing patterns and correlations between appraisal practices and performance outcomes, providing valuable insights that informed policy and managerial decisions in private universities.

Research classification

This study employed explanatory research to investigate the relationship betweenstaff appraisal and job performance in UMU. Explanatory research was chosen for its ability to explore causal relationships and uncover the underlying mechanisms through which staff appraisal strategies

relatewith job performance indicators such as task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance (Anderson, 2019). This study aimed to go beyond describing associations to understanding how and why staff appraisal practices lead to specific outcomes in job performance.

Study population

Study population according to Dylan (2021) this is the total number of respondents from which the sample size is derived. The study population targeted 120 peoplewhoincluded university management, administrative staff, human resource personnel, lecturers and support staff since they are the major participants in the staff appraisal of activities within UMU. These population elements were chosen because they were expected to have enough knowledge required in understanding how staff appraisal affects job performance.

Sample size and selection

The study used the Yamane formula of sample determination (1967:886) to determine the sample size as shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{120}{1 + 1(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{120}{1 + 120(0.0025)}$$

$$n = 92$$

Where

n = Sample size

N= Population size

e = margin of error at 95% confidence level

e = Margin of error/0.05

Table 3.1: Population and sample size distribution

Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling technique
University management	4	4	Census
Administrative staff	8	6	Purposive sampling
Human resource department	5	4	Purposive sampling
Lecturers	35	26	Simple random sampling
Support staff	68	52	Simple random sampling
Total	**120**	**92**	

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Sampling methods

The study used both probability and non-probability sampling methods to select participants. Probability sampling involved selecting participants randomly, giving each member of the population an equal chance of being included, which helped reduce bias and allowed for generalization of results (Etikan&Bala, 2017). On the other hand, non-probability sampling included selecting participants based on specific characteristics or the researcher's judgment, which was useful when targeting key informants or when the population is hard to access (Taherdoost, 2016). This combination was used to ensure that the study gathers both broad and detailed data.

Sampling techniques

The researcher used stratified random sampling to select respondents from university management, administrative staff and human resource department officers as respondents in this study due to their specialized knowledge and role in the appraisal process. As key decision-makers directly involved in staff appraisal process and daily appraisal activities, these participants possessed insights into examining the relationship between staff appraisal process and job performance.

This method ensured task performance and depth in data collection, focusing resources on participants with targeted expertise and relevance to the research question.

Simple random sampling was used to select respondents from lecturers and support staff, the aim was to ensure a representative and unbiased sample from these broader populations. Lecturers and support staff had diverse perspectives on the appraisal process, and simple random sampling allowed for the inclusion of a variety of voices.

Data collection sources

Primary data

Primary data refers to information obtained firsthand by the researcher directly from original sources. In this study, primary data was collected directly from key respondents to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the issue under investigation. This approach allowed the researcher to gather detailed and reliable insights from individuals with direct experience and knowledge of the subject study.

Secondary data

Secondary data, on the other hand, consist of information derived from existing studies, surveys, or research conducted by others. This study incorporated secondary data because it provided pre-validated and credible findings, eliminating the need for the researcher to reassess its accuracy. Using secondary sources enhanced the study by offering a broader context and supporting the analysis with well-established information.

Data collection methods

Interview method

The study employed interviews as a primary data collection method to gain in-depth insight into respondents' perceptions of staff appraisal and job performance. Interviews were used because they allowed for detailed, open-ended responses, enabling the researcher to explore participants' experiences, attitudes, and interpretations in greater depth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, interviews provide flexibility, enabling the researcher to probe further into responses for clarity and richer data (Bryman, 2019). By directly engaging with participants, the study ensured the collection of different and context-specific information that were not captured through structured surveys or secondary sources.

Survey questionnaire method

The study used a survey questionnaire as a data collection method to systematically gather information on staff appraisal and job performance from a broader group of respondents. The survey questionnaire was effective because it allowed for the collection of standardized data, facilitating comparisons and statistical analysis (Saunders, Lewis, &Thorn hill, 2019).

Additionally, survey questionnaires enhance reliability by minimizing interviewer bias and ensuring consistency in data collection (Bryman, 2020). The structured nature of the questionnaire allowed respondents to provide clear and measurable responses, making it an efficient tool for examining patterns, relationships, and variations in perceptions of staff appraisal and job performance.

Document review method

The study also employed document review as a data collection method to analyze existing records, reports, and policy documents related to staff appraisal and job performance. The document review was valuable because it provided historical and contextual insights, enabling the researcher to verify and complement findings from primary data sources (Bowen, 2019). It allowed for an objective analysis of documented policies, appraisal reports, and performance evaluations, offering a broader perspective on trends and practices over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This method was used to examine official documents from organizations, including appraisal guidelines, staff performance reports, and policy frameworks, to identify gaps, inconsistencies, and best practices.

Data collection instruments

Interview guide

An interview guide was developed and applied to university management, administrative staff, and human resource department officers to ensure a structured yet flexible approach to data collection. This guide contained open-ended questions designed to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and insights into the staff appraisal process and its impact on job performance. Questions directed at university management focused on institutional appraisal policies and their alignment with performance goals, while administrative staff were asked about their personal experiences with appraisals and their perceived effects on motivation and productivity. Human resource officers provided insights into appraisal implementation, challenges, and adaptive performance. This structured approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how different stakeholders perceive and experience staff appraisals within the university setting.

Self-administered questionnaire

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from lecturers and support staff, allowing respondents to complete the survey independently at their convenience. This method was effective as it minimized interviewer bias, ensured anonymity, and encourages honest responses, particularly on sensitive topics such as staff appraisal and job performance (Saunders, Lewis, &Thorn hill, 2019). The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and Likert scale statements to capture measurable data on perceptions of staff appraisal and its influence on job performance. Lecturers responded to questions regarding how appraisal influences their teaching adaptive performance, career growth, and job satisfaction, while supporting staff provided insights on how the process impacts their daily responsibilities and overall work engagement.

Document review checklist

The document review checklist guided the systematic examination of relevant records to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in data collection. Key documents to be reviewed included staff appraisal policies, performance evaluation reports, employee performance records, organizational appraisal guidelines, and human resource management manuals. These documents were analyzed to assess the criteria, frequency, and adaptive performance of staff appraisal processes within the organization. Additionally, policy documents on performance management were examined to identify regulatory frameworks and best practices influencing appraisal systems. Meeting minutes and internal reports on staff performance discussions were reviewed to gain insights into managerial decisions and employee feedback.

Data quality management

Validity of the instruments

In order to establish the validity of the research instruments, the study employed the Content Validity Index (CVI) method. A panel of education sector experts assessed the relevance and clarity of each item within the instrument independently. By calculating CVI scores, the researcher aimed to quantitatively measure how well the instrument aligned with the intended constructs. Adjustments or revisions were made based on expert feedback to enhance content validity (Pilot, 2019).The CVI was computed following Shrotryia and Dhanda's (2019) approach, where the number of items deemed relevant by experts were divided by the total number of items in the questionnaire. A CVI score equal to or greater than 0.7, criterionindicated the validity of the tool (Yusoff, 2019). This method ensured a rigorous assessment of content validity, offering a quantifiable benchmark to determine the instrument's adequacy in measuring the intended dimensions. For coefficients greater than (≥) to 0.7, the tool will be considered to be valid (Yusoff, 2019). The formula for CVI is:

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Total number of valid items}}{\text{Total number of all items}}$$

Table 3.2: CVI results

VARIABLE	Content Validity Index
Performance evaluation criteria	0.734
Appraisal methods	0.750
Continuous feedback	0.720
Job performance	0.721

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The research findings show that the research constructs had all attained Content Validity Index scores of above 0.7, hence being valid and good to be used in the primary research.

Reliability of the instruments

The reliability of the instruments was assessed using the internal consistency technique, in which Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was calculated using the average inter-correlations among the items assessing the idea. According to Amin (2022), any instrument considered to be dependable for data collection had a Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of 0.7 or higher. To this end, the researcher pre-tested each instrument on 9 participants.

The degree to which a research instrument provides consistent data results after repeated tests is measured by its reliability. It discussed how the same metric can have similar. To ensure consistent results, the same instruments were administered to the same respondents after a three-week period (Bond, 2001).

Table 3.3: Cronbach alpha's coefficient results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Performance evaluation criteria	0.710
Appraisal methods	0.730
Continuous feedback	0.720
Job performance	0.740

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The research findings show that the research constructs had all attained reliability scores of above 0.7, hence being valid and good to be used in the primary research

Data presentation

Quantitative data presentation

The collected quantitative data was edited, coded, and cross-checked for completeness using MS Excel before being exported to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencieswere used to summarize and present the data in a clear and interpretable manner. The findings were displayed using tables to illustrate trends and distributions effectively. Additionally, inferential statistics were employed to examine relationships between variables. Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of associations between staff appraisal and job performance, while regression analysis was used to assess the predictive effect of staff appraisal on job performance.

This combined approach ensured both a comprehensive summary and deeper statistical insights into the study findings.

Qualitative data presentation

Qualitative data processing involved coding and thematic analysis to categorize responses into emergent themes. Transcriptions of interviews were meticulously reviewed for accuracy. Findings were presented through textual narratives, thematic summaries, and direct quotations, with an emphasis on thick description to provide rich context.

Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis

Using Microsoft Excel, the quantitative data was cleaned, coded, and cross-checked for accuracy before being exported to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 for analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. Tables and charts

that depicted frequencies and percentages of findings were used to present the quantitative data in numeric form. The study's hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics like correlation and regression analysis.

Qualitative data analysis

The researcher categorized the collected data into themes, which were used to write reports. These reports were done manually and were written in paragraphs. The study used various methods such as logical analysis and content comparisons. The researchers used subjective analysis to enhance the information they presented. This method allowed them to bridge the gap between the collected data and the interviewees' perceptions.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were considered during data collection; the researcher obeyed the rules and rights of the respondents. This was done so as to ensure that the rights to privacy and protection of the respondents are not infringed. Furthermore, in relation to ethics and confidentiality in research, the researcher ensured the responsibility of ensuring that information about the subjects and their results remained confidential and that they were used for no purpose other than the research for which it was intended.

Limitations of the study

The study anticipated unobserved variables that may influence the relationships studied but were not accounted for in the analysis. While it was challenging to capture all potential variables, sensitivity analyses and robustness checks were performed to assess the stability of the findings under different scenarios.

The cross-sectional nature of the study made it challenging to establish causation definitively. While causation cannot be proven in observational studies, the study employed rigorous statistical analyses, including regression models, to establish associations.

CHAPTER FOUR

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Introduction

In this chapter, respondents were asked to provide their background information, and the results are summarized in Tables below:

Response rate

The response rate analysis showed that out of 78 questionnaires distributed, 64 were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 69.5%. Regarding interviews, 14 were planned but only 8 were conducted, reflecting a response rate of 8.6%. This brought the overall response rate to 78.1%. According to Sekaran (2003), a response rate exceeding two-thirds (67%) is considered adequate for generalization. Therefore, the researcher gathered sufficient data to produce a comprehensive and reliable report.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

	Targeted Number	Valid Instruments	Percentage
Questionnaires	78	64	69.5
Interviews guides	14	8	8.6
Total	**92**	**72**	**78.1**

Source: Primary data, 2025

Background characteristics of respondents

This section presents sample characteristics which include

Sample characteristic		Frequency	Percentage
Position held in UCU	Management/ Administrator	5	6.9
	HR officer	13	18.1
	Lecturers	31	43.1
	Support staff	23	31.9
	Total	**72**	**100.0**
Age	20 - 24	10	13.8
	25 - 29	11	15.2
	30 - 34	24	33.3
	35 - 39	20	27.7
	Over 40	7	10.0
	Total	**72**	**100.0**
Sex	Male	42	58.3
	Female	30	41.7
	Total	**72**	**100.0**
Level of education	Masters	28	38.8
	Bachelors	20	27.7
	Diploma	9	12.5
	Certificate	11	15.2
	Others	4	5.8
	Total	**72**	**100.0**
Length of work at UMU	1 – 4 years	19	26.8
	5 - 9 years	22	30.5
	10 - 14 years	18	25.0
	Over 15 years	13	17.7
	Total	**72**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data, 2025

4.1.1 Position Held in UMU

The distribution of respondents by position indicates that lecturers formed the largest proportion (43.1%), followed by support staff (31.9%), HR officers (18.1%), and management/administrators (6.9%). Likewise, the large number of lecturers and support staff provides valid insight into how these appraisal systems affect employee performance across multiple operational levels.

4.1.2 Age of respondents

The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents fall within the 30–34 years (33.3%) and 35–39 years (27.7%) brackets, with fewer participants aged over 40 (10%) or below 25 (13.8%). This suggests that most respondents are mature, likely to have accumulated substantial work experience, and are well-positioned to comment meaningfully on how staff appraisal influences job performance.

4.1.3 Sex of respondents

Out of the 72 respondents, 58.3% were male and 41.7% female. Although there is a slight male dominance, the gender distribution is reasonably balanced, which helps reduce bias and supports the credibility of the responses. Gender diversity in the sample enhances the generalizability and validity of the study findings across both male and female staff at UMU.

4.1.4 Level of education

The educational background of respondents is strong, with the majority holding Master's degrees (38.8%), followed by Bachelor's degrees (27.7%). This high level of education implies that respondents have the capacity to understand, interpret, and respond meaningfully to questions regarding staff appraisal and job performance. Their advanced academic qualifications enhance

the validity of the data, as they are more likely to critically engage with the appraisal processes and articulate how these relate to performance outcomes.

4.1.5 Length of work at UMU

Respondents had varied durations of service, with most having worked at UMU for 5–9 years (30.5%) or 1–4 years (26.8%), while 25% had 10–14 years and 17.7% had over 15 years of service. This range indicates that both newer and long-serving employees were represented, which adds depth to the analysis. Particularly, those with longer tenure are likely to provide historically grounded and experience-based views on appraisal practices, increasing the reliability and comprehensiveness of the data collected.

CHAPTER FIVE

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND JOB PERFORMANCE AT UMU

Introduction

The findings of this chapter are presented in the form of a descriptive statistical analysis that explore the relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

Resultsonperformance evaluation criteria and job performance

Table 5.1: Descriptive results for performance evaluation criteria and job performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The university clearly communicates performance expectations to all employees.	11 (17.2%)	15 (23.4%)	8 (12.5%)	20 (31.3%)	10 (15.6%)
UMU regularly conducts performance evaluations for both academic and non-academic staff.	10 (15.6%)	23 (35.9%)	9 (14.1%)	17 (26.6%)	5 (7.8%)
Employees at UMU receive feedback after their performance appraisals.	6 (9.4%)	21 (32.8%)	15 (23.4%)	16 (25.0%)	6 (9.4%)
The university uses well-defined and transparent criteria for evaluating staff performance.	12 (18.8%)	17 (26.6%)	15 (23.4%)	15 (23.4%)	5 (7.8%)
UMU links performance evaluation results to staff development initiatives and training needs.	10 (15.6%)	19 (29.7%)	11 (17.2%)	17 (26.6%)	7 (10.9%)
The performance evaluation methods used at UMU are fair and free from bias.	6 (9.4%)	11 (17.2%)	17 (26.6%)	22 (34.4%)	8 (12.5%)
UMU involves staff in discussions about their performance and goal setting.	12 (18.8%)	19 (29.7%)	19 (29.7%)	12 (18.8%)	2 (3.1%)
The university uses performance evaluation results in decisions regarding promotions and rewards	14 (21.9%)	25 (39.1%)	6 (9.4%)	15 (23.4%)	4 (6.3%)

Source: Primary data, 2025

The university clearly communicates performance expectations to all employees.

A relative majority of respondents (46.9%) agreed that UMU clearly communicates performance expectations. This suggests that while a sizable portion of staff understand what is expected of them, there is still a significant number (40.6%) who feel expectations are unclear. Clear communication of expectations is a foundational component of effective job performance. Where this is practiced well, it reduces role ambiguity and supports accountability and goal-oriented performance. However, the close divide also suggests room for improvement in making expectations clearer to all staff. One key respondent, at Uganda Martyrs University, that:

> *"At UMU, we strive to communicate performance expectations during on boarding and through periodic staff meetings and appraisal sessions. However, the challenge is consistency across departments. Some supervisors are proactive in setting clear, measurable goals, while others assume staffs understand their roles without much engagement. This creates confusion, especially among new employees or those transitioning to new roles."*

This shows both the efforts made and the existing inconsistencies that contribute to the perception gap between staff regarding performance expectations.

UMU regularly conducts performance evaluations for both academic and non-academic staff.

A majority of 51.5% of respondents disagreed that UMU conducts performance evaluations regularly. This finding points to an apparent gap in routine staff assessment. The absence or irregularity of evaluations may hinder the ability to monitor, guide, and enhance staff performance. Without consistent evaluations, it becomes difficult to identify performance gaps,

acknowledge achievements, or link staff contributions to institutional goals. This can ultimately weaken performance improvement efforts across UMU.

Employees at UMU receive feedback after their performance appraisals.

With 42.2% disagreeing, the majority of respondents indicated that feedback is not consistently provided after appraisals. Feedback is crucial for performance development it helps staff understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Lack of feedback can cause confusion, reduce motivation, and leave staff feeling undervalued. This weakens the developmental impact of appraisals and could negatively affect performance outcomes and job satisfaction at UMU.

The university uses well-defined and transparent criteria for evaluating staff performance.

A majority (45.4%) disagreed that the performance evaluation criteria are well-defined and transparent. This lack of clarity may result in perceived bias, unfair assessments, and mistrust in the evaluation process. When criteria are unclear or inconsistent applied, staff may become demotivated or disengaged, ultimately lowering their performance due to a sense of unfair treatment or confusion about expectations. A key respondent shared concerns regarding the evaluation process:

> *"One of the persistent issues we face is the lack of clarity around how performance is measured. For instance, while we are aware that teaching load and research output are considered, the weight given to each aspect isn't always communicated. Sometimes, you receive feedback that feels subjective or not aligned with your actual contributions. There's also limited opportunity to discuss or contest evaluation outcomes, which makes the whole process feel top-down and opaque."*

This shows how the absence of well-defined and transparent criteria undermines trust and motivation among staff.

UMU links performance evaluation results to staff development initiatives and training needs.

Most respondents (45.3%) disagreed with the assertion that evaluation results are linked to development and training. This disconnect undermines one of the key purposes of performance appraisals to inform capacity building. When staff performance data is not used to tailor training or development efforts, performance improvement stagnates. UMU may be missing valuable opportunities to empower staff and address specific performance gaps through targeted interventions.

The performance evaluation methods used at UMU are fair and free from bias.

A majority of 46.9% agreed that evaluation methods are fair and unbiased, indicating moderate confidence in the integrity of the appraisal system. Fair evaluations contribute positively to job performance because staffs are more likely to trust the process, accept results, and take improvement recommendations seriously. However, the fact that over a quarter of respondents disagreed highlights a lingering perception of bias that should be addressed. A key respondentoffered insight into perceptions of fairness in the evaluation process:

> *"We try to ensure that performance evaluations are based on standardized tools and that supervisors are trained to assess staff objectively. In many cases, this has built a sense of trust among employees. However, I must admit that there are occasional concerns, especially when personal relationships or departmental politics influence outcomes. Some staff feels their contributions are overlooked due to favoritism or lack of visibility*

in decision-making. While the system is designed to be fair, the implementation can vary depending on who is conducting the evaluation."

This affirms that while the appraisal methods are generally trusted, perceived bias still exists and may affect the system's overall credibility.

UMU involves staff in discussions about their performance and goal setting.

A significant majority (48.5%) disagreed that UMU involves staff in performance discussions and goal setting. Participation in these discussions fosters ownership, motivation, and alignment with institutional objectives. Lack of involvement suggests a top-down evaluation approach, which may alienate employees and reduce their engagement and accountability for their own performance goals, thereby negatively impacting overall job performance.

The university uses performance evaluation results in decisions regarding promotions and rewards.

The overwhelming majority (61.0%) disagreed that performance evaluation results are used in promotion or reward decisions. This weak linkage greatly undermines the motivational role of appraisals. When staff does not see performance tied to recognition or career advancement, they may lack incentive to excel, leading to reduced morale and stagnation in individual and institutional performance.

Correlation analysis for performance evaluation criteria and job performance

The Pearson correlation was run to establish the relationship between performance evaluation criteria and job performance.

Table 5.2: Correlations between performance evaluation criteria and job performance			
		Performance evaluation criteria	Job performance
Performance evaluation criteria	Pearson Correlation	1	. 786**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.786**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Primary data, 2025

From table 5.2 above, the study findings revealed a moderate correlation coefficient of .786** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by (r (64) = .786, P=0.000). This means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables implying that enhanced performance evaluation criteria will lead to changes in job performance.

Regression analysis for performance evaluation criteria and job performance

The researcher ran regression analysis to determine the effect of performance evaluation criteria on job performance, and the results are obtained in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Model Summary for performance evaluation criteria and job performance				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786	.619	.612	.168715
a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance evaluation criteria				

Source: Primary data, 2025

The results presented in Table 5.3 indicate that the adjusted R-squared value was 0.612, indicating that approximately 61.2% of the variation in job performance can be attributed to changes in performance evaluation criteria at a 95% confidence interval. In other words, performance evaluation criteria account for 61.2% of the changes observed in job performance.

CHAPTER SIX

APPRAISAL METHODS AND JOB PERFORMANCE AT UMU

Introduction

The findings of this chapter are presented in the form of a descriptive statistical analysis that explore the relationship between appraisal methods and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

Results onappraisal methods and job performance

Table 6.1: Descriptive results for appraisal methods and job performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA
UMU uses both self-appraisal and supervisor evaluation methods.	8 (12.5%)	24 (37.5%)	15 (23.4%)	13 (20.3%)	4 (6.3%)
Employees at UMU are appraised using performance-based tools.	10 (15.6%)	19 (29.7%)	19 (29.7%)	13 (20.3%)	3 (4.7%)
The university has adopted goal setting as part of its appraisal system.	14 (21.9%)	22 (34.4%)	14 (21.9%)	11 (17.2%)	3 (4.7%)
UMU appraises staff based on both individual and team achievements.	11 (17.2%)	14 (21.9%)	17 (26.6%)	20 (31.3%)	2 (3.1%)
Peer evaluation is part of the appraisal process at UMU.	16 (25.0%)	22 (34.4%)	8 (12.5%)	15 (23.4%)	3 (4.7%)
The university uses rating scales to assess staff performance.	8 (12.5%)	25 (39.1%)	8 (12.5%)	18 (28.1%)	5 (7.8%)
Employees are aware of the appraisal methods used by UMU.	11 (17.2%)	24 (37.5%)	14 (21.9%)	11 (17.2%)	4 (6.3%)
The university trains supervisors on how to conduct fair appraisals	9 (14.1%)	15 (23.4%)	22 (34.4%)	12 (18.8%)	6 (9.4%)

Source: Primary data, 2025

UMU uses both self-appraisal and supervisor evaluation methods.

Half of the respondents (50.0%) disagreed that both self-appraisal and supervisor evaluation methods are used. This indicates limited use of diverse appraisal approaches, especially self-appraisal, which is essential for promoting personal reflection and ownership of performance. A narrow evaluation method limits the robustness of staff performance insights, potentially leading to unfair or one-sided assessments, and negatively impacting staff motivation and development at UMU. A key respondent acknowledgedthat:

> *"At the moment, the dominant method of appraisal is supervisor-led. While there have been discussions about incorporating self-appraisal to encourage reflection and accountability, it hasn't been institutionalized across all departments. Some supervisors informally request staff to assess themselves, but there's no standardized format or policy guiding this. As a result, many employees feel that their own perspectives on their achievements and challenges are not fully considered"*

This emphasizes the underutilization of self-appraisal methods and the need for a more comprehensive and participatory evaluation framework at UMU.

Employees at UMU are appraised using performance-based tools.

A majority (45.3%) disagreed with the statement, suggesting that UMU does not consistently use performance-based tools for appraisals. These tools are key to objectively measuring specific outcomes, targets, and competencies. Their absence implies appraisals may be more subjective, weakening the credibility of the process and possibly resulting in dissatisfaction, reduced motivation, and underperformance among staff.

The university has adopted goal setting as part of its appraisal system.

With 56.3% of respondents disagreeing, the majority indicated that UMU has not effectively adopted goal setting in its appraisal system. Goal setting is a powerful motivator and provides a clear direction for performance expectations. Its absence reduces clarity, hinders strategic alignment, and limits personal accountability thus negatively impacting job performance and staff progress. A key respondent was of the view that:

> *"In my experience, goal setting is not systematically embedded in our appraisal framework. While some departments try to set targets informally at the beginning of the academic year, there is no institutionalized process that aligns individual goals with departmental or university-wide objectives. This makes it difficult for staff to measure their progress or understand how their work contributes to the broader mission of the university. Without clear goals, performance reviews tend to focus more on past activities rather than future development, which limit motivation and personal accountability. Integrating goal setting would bring more focus and purpose to staff efforts."*

This shows the lack of structured goal setting and its implications on performance management and strategic alignment at UMU.

UMU appraises staff based on both individual and team achievements.

Although 34.4% agreed, a slightly larger share (39.1%) disagreed. This suggests a divided perception among staff, with more believing that both individual and team efforts are not consistently recognized. Failure to balance individual and team appraisal undermines collaboration, reduces shared accountability, and may diminish the sense of belonging and team spiritfactors essential for collective performance.

Peer evaluation is part of the appraisal process at UMU.

An overwhelming 59.4% disagreed that peer evaluation is part of UMU's appraisal process. Peer appraisal can foster accountability, teamwork, and continuous feedback. Its absence indicates a highly top-down appraisal structure, which may miss critical insights from colleagues and reduce opportunities for constructive peer support limiting the holistic evaluation of job performance. A key respondent explained the current appraisal structure:

> *"Peer evaluation is virtually nonexistent in our appraisal system at UMU. The process is largely driven by supervisors, which can make the feedback one-sided and sometimes disconnected from day-to-day teamwork dynamics. Peer input could offer valuable perspectives on collaboration, professionalism, and informal contributions that supervisors might not observe. Additionally, while rating scales are used to standardize assessments, these often focus narrowly on quantifiable outputs rather than qualitative feedback from colleagues."*

This insight aligns with the survey results, emphasizing the absence of peer evaluation and the limitations it imposes on a well-rounded appraisal process

A majority of respondents (51.6%) disagreed with the statement, suggesting limited or inconsistent use of rating scales. Rating scales provide structured, quantifiable criteria for performance evaluation. Their limited use could lead to subjective or arbitrary assessments and undermine performance tracking over time, thereby weakening the feedback and improvement process essential to effective job performance.

Employees are aware of the appraisal methods used by UMU.

More than half (54.7%) of the staff indicated they are unaware of the appraisal methods used. Lack of awareness erodes trust in the process and causes disengagement. When staff do not understand how they are being evaluated, they are unlikely to align their actions to performance standards, leading to confusion, dissatisfaction, and inconsistent performance outcomes at UMU. A key respondent expressed concerns about the general lack of clarity regarding appraisal methods:

> *"Many of us are not fully informed about the specific appraisal techniques used or the criteria against which we are evaluated. Often, appraisal procedures are communicated verbally and inconsistently, leaving staff unsure about what to expect or how to prepare. This uncertainty creates anxiety and sometimes distrust towards the process because it feels vague and unpredictable. Without clear understanding, it's hard to take ownership of our performance or engage proactively in development activities."*

This shows how limited awareness undermines staff confidence and engagement with the appraisal system at UMU

The university trains supervisors on how to conduct fair appraisals.

Although the highest response was neutral (34.4%), the combined disagreement (37.5%) was still higher than the agreement (28.2%). This suggests many employees either doubt or are unaware of whether supervisors are trained in fair appraisal practices. If supervisors lack appraisal training, evaluations may become inconsistent, biased, or unprofessional, undermining fairness, demoralizing staff, and affecting performance negatively.

Correlation analysis for appraisal methods and job performance

The Pearson correlation was run to establish the relationship between appraisal methods and job performance.

Table 6.2: Correlations between appraisal methods and job performance

		Appraisal methods	Job performance
Appraisal methods	Pearson Correlation	1	. 345**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.345**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

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

Source: Primary data, 2025

From table 6.2 above, the study findings revealed a moderate correlation coefficient of .345** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by (r (64) =. 345, P=0.000). This means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables implying that enhanced appraisal methods will lead to changes in job performance.

Regression analysis for appraisal methods and job performance

The researcher ran regression analysis to determine the effect of appraisal methods on job performance, and the results are obtained in table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Model Summary for appraisal methods and job performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	. 345	.119	.104	.35615

a. Predictors: (Constant), Appraisal methods

Source: Primary data, 2025

The results presented in Table 6.3 indicate that the adjusted R-squared value was 0.104, indicating that approximately 10.4% of the variation in job performance can be attributed to changes in appraisal methods at a 95% confidence interval. In other words, appraisal methods account for 10.4% of the changes observed in job performance.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONTINOUS FEEDBACK AND JOB PERFORMANCE AT UMU

Introduction

The findings of this chapter are presented in the form of a descriptive statistical analysis that exploresrelationship effect of continuous feedback on job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

Results on continuous feedback and job performance

Table 7.1: Descriptive results for continuous feedback and job performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The university provides continuous feedback to staff on performance.	13 (20.3%)	19 (29.7%)	9 (14.1%)	15 (23.4%)	8 (12.5%)
Staff are regularly engaged in discussions about their strengths and areas for improvement.	11 (17.2%)	14 (21.9%)	10 (15.6%)	23 (35.9%)	6 (9.4%)
Management ensures that feedback is timely and constructive.	6 (9.4%)	14 (21.9%)	13 (20.3%)	27 (42.2%)	4 (6.3%)
The university encourages open communication between staff and supervisors.	4 (6.3%)	17 (26.6%)	13 (20.3%)	26 (40.6%)	4 (6.3%)
Staff receive feedback that helps them align their work with institutional goals.	9 (14.1%)	14 (21.9%)	12 (18.8%)	23 (35.9%)	6 (9.4%)
Management uses feedback to support staff development and career growth.	5 (7.8%)	11 (17.2%)	16 (25.0%)	21 (32.8%)	11 (17.2%)
The university integrates feedback into the appraisal process.	6 (9.4%)	17 (26.6%)	14 (21.9%)	21 (32.8%)	6 (9.4%)
Staff are given opportunities to respond to and act on feedback.	6 (9.4%)	14 (21.9%)	15 (23.4%)	21 (32.8%)	8 (12.5%)

Source: Primary data, 2025

The university provides continuous feedback to staff on performance.

Half of the respondents (50.0%) disagreed that UMU provides continuous feedback. Continuous feedback is essential for reinforcing positive behavior and promptly correcting shortcomings. The lack of regular feedback limits opportunities for performance improvement and may cause uncertainty, demotivation, and a disconnect between expected and actual performance, thereby weakening overall job performance.

Staff is regularly engaged in discussions about their strengths and areas for improvement.

A relative majority of 45.3% agreed that staff is regularly engaged in discussions about their strengths and improvement areas. These conversations are critical for development and motivation, as they affirm staff contributions while also providing direction for growth. Although this is a positive sign, the 39.1% who disagreed indicate that this practice is still not consistently applied across UMU. A key respondent noted:

> *"We do have appraisal meetings where supervisors discuss performance strengths and areas needing improvement with staff. For many, these discussions are motivating and help set clear development goals. However, the frequency and quality of these conversations vary widely depending on the department and individual supervisors. Some managers are very proactive in providing constructive feedback regularly, while others limit these talks to annual reviews or avoid them altogether."*

This confirms both the presence of performance conversations and the gaps in their consistent application at UMU

Management ensures that feedback is timely and constructive.

A clear majority of 48.5% agreed that feedback is timely and constructive. Timely feedback allows staff to make necessary adjustments in real time, which improves their efficiency and productivity. Constructive feedback also builds trust between staff and management. These responses reflect positively on management's role in supporting job performance through effective communication.

The university encourages open communication between staff and supervisors.

A majority of respondents (46.9%) agreed that UMU encourages open communication between staff and supervisors. Open communication fosters trust, clarity, and collaboration. It creates an environment where staff feel heard and supported, leading to improved morale, innovation, and overall performance. The data suggest UMU has made some progress in this area, though not all staff perceive it equally. A key respondent reflected on the communication climate within the university:

> *"There is definitely an effort to promote open communication between staff and supervisors, especially through regular meetings and informal check-ins. Many staff feel comfortable raising concerns and discussing challenges, which helps build mutual trust and fosters teamwork. However, this openness can depend on individual supervisors' leadership styles; some are more approachable and encouraging than others. While progress has been made, not all staff experience the same level of openness, indicating room for improvement in creating a consistently supportive communication culture across all departments."*

This response supports the survey findings by acknowledging efforts made toward open communication while highlighting inconsistencies in staff perceptions at UMU.

Staffs receive feedback that helps them align their work with institutional goals.

A relative majority (45.3%) agreed that feedback helps staff align their efforts with UMU's goals. When feedback is goal-oriented, it enhances strategic focus and performance relevance. This alignment ensures that individual efforts contribute meaningfully to institutional success. However, the relatively high disagreement (36.0%) suggests that alignment is not yet a universal experience.

Management uses feedback to support staff development and career growth.

Half of the respondents (50.0%) agreed that management uses feedback to support staff development. This shows that some effort is made to turn feedback into practical support mechanisms for career growth. When feedback leads to training or professional development opportunities, it promotes motivation, enhances skills, and ultimately improves job performance. A key respondent explainedthat:

> *"We try to ensure that performance feedback is not just a formality but a springboard for targeted development. When appraisal discussions reveal gaps or potential, management often links staff to relevant training programs, workshops, or mentorship opportunities. This approach has helped many employees enhance their skills and feel valued, which boosts motivation and productivity. However, the challenge lies in resource constraints and ensuring consistent follow-up after feedback sessions."*

This emphasizes that management uses feedback to foster development, but also points to areas for improvement in the feedback-to-growth process at UM

The university integrates feedback into the appraisal process.

A majority of 42.2% agreed that feedback is integrated into appraisals. This is essential because linking daily performance feedback with formal evaluations ensures consistency and continuity in performance management. It also adds relevance to appraisals and increases employee buy-in. However, the notable disagreement (36.0%) indicates the integration of feedback remains inconsistent across UMU.

Staffs are given opportunities to respond to and act on feedback.

A majority of 45.3% agreed that staffs are allowed to act on the feedback they receive. This reflects a performance culture where feedback is not one-sided but leads to practical changes and continuous improvement. When staff can respond to feedback, they are more likely to feel empowered and motivated to enhance their performance.

Correlation analysis for continuous feedback and job performance

The Pearson correlation was run to establish the relationship between continuous feedback and job performance.

Table 7.2: Correlations between continuous feedback and job performance

		Continuous feedback	Job performance
Continuous feedback	Pearson Correlation	1	. 614**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.614**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

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

Source: Primary data, 2025

From table 7.2 above, the study findings revealed a moderate correlation coefficient of .614** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by (r (64) =. 614, P=0.000). This means that

there is a significant relationship between the two variables implying that enhanced continuous feedback will lead to changes in job performance.

Regression analysis for continuous feedback and job performance

The researcher ran regression analysis to determine the effect of continuous feedback on job performance, and the results are obtained in table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Model Summary for continuous feedback and job performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	. 614	.377	.366	.35615

a. Predictors: (Constant), Continuous feedback

Source: Primary data, 2025

The results presented in Table 7.3 indicate that the adjusted R-squared value was 0.366, indicating that approximately 36.6% of the variation in job performance can be attributed to changes in continuous feedback at a 95% confidence interval. In other words, continuous feedback accounts for 36.6% of the changes observed in job performance

CHAPTER EIGHT

TOWARDS HARMONIZING STAFF APPRAISAL AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Introduction

This chapter discusses the study's findings in relation to existing literature, examining whether they confirm, expand upon, or differ from previous research. It also highlights the practical implications of the results, linking them directly to the research questions and hypotheses. This section starts with the descriptive results for job performance in Uganda Martyrs University.

Table 8.1: Descriptive results for job performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Employees at UMU meet their job responsibilities effectively.	3 (4.7%)	19 (29.7%)	7 (10.9%)	25 (39.1%)	10 (15.6%)
The university ensures that staff complete assigned tasks on time	5 (7.8%)	18 (28.1%)	20 (31.3%)	15 (23.4%)	6 (9.4%)
Employees at UMU easily adapt to changes in work processes	7 (10.9%)	21 (32.8%)	7 (10.9%)	23 (35.9%)	6 (9.4%)
The university encourages staff to adjust to new roles and technologies	11 (17.2%)	19 (29.7%)	11 (17.2%)	15 (23.4%)	8 (12.5%)
UMU staff willingly help colleagues when needed	11 (17.2%)	22 (34.4%)	12 (18.8%)	13 (20.3%)	6 (9.4%)
Employees at UMU contribute positively to the university's work environment	8 (12.5%	24 (37.5%)	13 (20.3%)	12 (18.8%)	7 (10.9%)
The university promotes teamwork and cooperation among staff	11 (17.2%)	16 (25.0%)	16 (25.0%)	15 (23.4%)	6 (9.4%)
UMU staff go beyond their formal duties to support university goals.	5 (7.8%)	23 (35.9%)	12 (18.8%)	20 (31.3%)	4 (6.3%)

Source: Primary data, 2025

Employees at UMU meet their job responsibilities effectively

The majority of respondents (54.7%) generally agreed that employees at UMU meet their job responsibilities effectively. This indicates that most staff are viewed as committed and competent in carrying out their assigned duties. Such perceptions reflect a positive individual work ethic and suggest that employees possess the necessary skills and motivation to fulfill their core roles effectively. One of the key respondents supported this view by stating,

> *"At Uganda Martyrs University, most staff takes their responsibilities seriously and understand the importance of their roles in supporting the university's mission. For example, lecturers consistently prepare for their classes, meet their teaching schedules, and provide timely feedback to students, while administrative staffs ensure that operations run smoothly even during peak periods like registration and examinations. This level of dedication shows that staffs are not only aware of their responsibilities but also committed to delivering quality work, which has contributed to the overall stability and performance of the university."*

This shows real-life examples of responsibility and accountability among employees at UMU

The university ensures that staff completes assigned tasks on time

A majority of 35.9% of respondents generally disagreed that the university ensures timely completion of tasks. This suggests a gap in institutional monitoring and follow-up systems, possibly due to weak supervision or unclear deadlines. As a result, staff may lack the necessary structure or incentives to consistently meet time-based performance expectations.

Employees at UMU easily adapt to changes in work processes

With 45.3% of respondents in general agreement, most staff at UMU are seen as adaptable to changing work processes. This reflects a flexible and progressive workforce that is open to innovation and transition. Such adaptability is important for sustaining institutional relevance and efficiency in a dynamic educational environment.

The university encourages staff to adjust to new roles and technologies

A total of 46.9% of respondents generally disagreed that UMU encourages staff to adjust to new roles and technologies. This indicates a perceived lack of institutional support for professional growth and digital adaptation. Without adequate encouragement or training, staff may feel unprepared for technological and structural changes, which can hinder job effectiveness. A key respondent stated this concern by saying,

> *"There is limited institutional effort to help staff transition into new roles or adopt emerging technologies. Many departments are still using outdated systems, and when new platforms are introduced like digital learning tools or online administrative portals there is often no formal training or follow-up support provided. Some staff are willing to adapt, but without structured guidance, many feel overwhelmed or left behind, which ultimately affects how effectively they perform their duties."*

This means that nearly half of the staff feels the university does not actively encourage or facilitate technological and role-related adjustments.

UMU staffs willingly help colleagues when needed

The majority (51.6%) of respondents generally disagreed that staff willingly help their colleagues. This reveals a weak sense of collaboration and mutual support among employees,

which may lead to isolation and reduced team synergy. Such an environment can undermine collective job performance and limit the success of group-based tasks.

Employees at UMU contribute positively to the university's work environment

Half of the respondents (50.0%) generally disagreed that employees contribute positively to the work environment. This suggests that many staff may be disengaged or dissatisfied, reducing their influence on creating a healthy and productive workplace culture. A negative or indifferent atmosphere can adversely affect morale, communication, and overall performance outcomes.

The university promotes teamwork and cooperation among staff

A majority of 42.2% of respondents generally disagreed that UMU promotes teamwork and cooperation. This points to a lack of institutional efforts to foster collaborative work practices and shared goals. Weak promotion of teamwork may result in fragmented efforts, inefficiencies, and lower staff unity. A key respondent shared insights that support this finding, stating,

> *"Teamwork is largely dependent on individual initiative rather than structured institutional support. There are very few cross-departmental meetings or collaborative projects encouraged by management, and most units operate independently with minimal interaction. As a result, staff often feels isolated in their roles and opportunities for knowledge sharing or joint problem-solving are missed, which affects both morale and overall productivity."*

This illustrates the lack of formal mechanisms to promote cooperation and reinforces the survey results indicating that teamwork is not actively nurtured by the university

UMU staff go beyond their formal duties to support university goals

According to 43.7% of respondents, staffs at UMU do not generally go beyond their formal duties to support university goals. This indicates limited discretionary effort and reduced organizational citizenship behavior among employees. A lack of extra-role commitment can constrain innovation, institutional development, and long-term performance excellence.

Performance evaluation criteria and job performance

The study revealed several critical gaps in the performance appraisal system at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU). While 46.9% of respondents agreed that performance expectations are clearly communicated, a close 40.6% disagreed, pointing to inconsistencies across departments. Notably, 51.5% of respondents indicated that UMU does not regularly conduct performance evaluations, and 42.2% reported that feedback after appraisals is lacking. A significant 45.4% disagreed that evaluation criteria are well-defined and transparent, and 45.3% noted that appraisal outcomes are not linked to training or development efforts. Although 46.9% agreed the methods used are fair and unbiased, concerns over favoritism and inconsistency remain.

The study revealed that 46.9% of respondents agreed that performance expectations are clearly communicated at UMU, while 40.6% disagreed. This indicates a lack of consistency across departments, which may lead to confusion and reduced staff engagement. Clear communication of expectations is essential for guiding employee behavior and aligning individual efforts with institutional goals. According to Armstrong (2014), clearly stated expectations help reduce role ambiguity and improve performance. Similarly, Aguinis (2019) emphasizes that clarity in appraisal standards leads to increased employee satisfaction and accountability. However, the fact that a considerable number of staff at UMU feel expectations are not clearly communicated shows a gap between policy and practice.

More than half (51.5%) of the respondents disagreed that UMU regularly conducts performance evaluations. Regular evaluations are critical for identifying performance gaps, reinforcing strengths, and facilitating professional development. Studies by Dessler (2020) and Pulakos (2009) support the importance of frequent appraisals, noting that timely reviews enable real-time adjustments and continuous improvement. In contrast, a study by Muchinsky (2012) found that some institutions with irregular appraisals still manage to achieve high performance, provided feedback is continuous and informal. However, in the case of UMU, the lack of formal, routine evaluations appears to weaken the appraisal system's credibility and effectiveness.

A majority of respondents (42.2%) disagreed that feedback is consistently provided after performance evaluations. Feedback is a cornerstone of effective performance management, allowing staff to understand their strengths and areas for improvement. According to London and Smither (2002), feedback that is specific, timely, and constructive leads to enhanced motivation and better performance. Supporting this, Kluger and DeNisi (1996) argue that performance feedback can significantly influence learning and behavioral change. The absence of consistent feedback at UMU may thus contribute to employee disengagement and missed opportunities for performance enhancement.

The study found that 45.4% of respondents disagreed that evaluation criteria at UMU are well-defined and transparent. This lack of clarity can foster perceptions of bias and unfairness in the appraisal process. Research by DeNisi and Williams (2017) shows that unclear criteria undermine employee trust and can lead to dissatisfaction with the evaluation system. In agreement, Erdogan (2002) found that transparent and objective evaluation processes improve employees' acceptance of appraisal outcomes. Contrarily, some studies argue that even when criteria are clear, if implementation is inconsistent, perceptions of unfairness persist (Murphy &

Cleveland, 1995). UMU seems to struggle with both clarity and consistent application of its criteria.

Another critical finding is that 45.3% of respondents disagreed that performance appraisals at UMU are linked to staff development and training. Appraisal results should ideally inform decisions on training needs and career development opportunities. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), effective appraisals help in identifying skill gaps and guiding employees towards targeted capacity building. Further supporting this, Boswell and Boudreau (2002) emphasize the importance of aligning appraisal outcomes with organizational learning strategies. The failure to do so at UMU limits the appraisal system's developmental function and reduces its value as a strategic tool for performance enhancement.

Although 46.9% of respondents agreed that UMU's evaluation methods are fair and unbiased, concerns over favoritism and inconsistency were still reported. This aligns with the findings of Folger and Cropanzano (1998), who state that perceived fairness in performance evaluations directly affects employee attitudes and organizational commitment. Conversely, Jawahar (2007) noted that even when fairness is emphasized, inconsistencies in evaluator behavior can still lead to negative perceptions. At UMU, the mixed responses suggest that while some employees experience fair appraisals, others feel that personal biases or departmental politics influence evaluation outcomes, highlighting the need for standardized training for appraisers.

Appraisal methods and job performance

The findings reveal significant weaknesses in the appraisal practices at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU), particularly in terms of inclusiveness, objectivity, and staff engagement. Half of the respondents (50.0%) disagreed that both self-appraisal and supervisor evaluations are used, indicating a limited and predominantly top-down assessment structure. The exclusion of

self-appraisal reduces opportunities for personal reflection and undermines ownership of performance. According to Grote (2011), effective performance management systems must integrate both managerial and self-assessment components to promote fairness and professional development. The lack of self-appraisal at UMU likely contributes to employee dissatisfaction and reduced accountability.

Additionally, 45.3% of respondents disagreed that performance-based tools are consistently used, suggesting that evaluations may rely heavily on subjective judgment. Performance-based tools, such as key performance indicators (KPIs) and behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS), are essential for ensuring objectivity and aligning assessments with measurable outcomes. As highlighted by Varma, Budhwar, and DeNisi (2008), the use of structured and validated tools minimizes bias and enhances the reliability of appraisal results. The absence of such tools at UMU weakens the credibility of the appraisal process and may lead to perceived favoritism or inconsistencies.

The absence of structured goal setting was another critical issue, as confirmed by 56.3% of respondents. Goal setting provides clarity, direction, and alignment between individual performance and institutional objectives. Locke and Latham (2013) argue that specific, challenging goals enhance employee motivation and performance, particularly when employees participate in setting them. Without institutionalized goal setting at UMU, staff may lack a clear roadmap for achievement, which negatively affects focus, efficiency, and accountability.

Another notable concern is that 39.1% of respondents disagreed that both individual and team achievements are considered during appraisals. An overemphasis on individual performance may hinder collaboration and limit shared responsibility for results. According to Salas, Shuffler, Thayer, Bedwell, and Lazzara (2015), recognizing team-based achievements promotes cohesion,

trust, and mutual accountability, all of which are crucial for academic institutions that rely on interdependent tasks. UMU's limited attention to team accomplishments may be restricting the full potential of collaborative work environments.

Furthermore, peer evaluation is largely absent at UMU, with 59.4% of respondents disagreeing that it is part of the appraisal process. Peer assessments can provide valuable insights into interpersonal skills, teamwork, and day-to-day contributions that may not be visible to supervisors. Leung, Sue, and Morris (2001) emphasize that peer feedback enhances the depth and fairness of evaluations, particularly in knowledge-based environments like universities. The lack of peer involvement at UMU contributes to the top-down nature of appraisals and may result in a narrower, less informed evaluation process.

The study also found that 51.6% of respondents reported that rating scales are not consistently used. Rating scales standardize assessments and reduce subjectivity by anchoring evaluations to observable behaviors and outcomes. According to Smither and London (2009), well-designed rating scales facilitate consistency across departments and improve comparability of performance data. The inconsistent application of such tools at UMU may lead to disparities in evaluation outcomes and diminish the perceived fairness of the process.

Continuous feedback and job performance

The findings indicate mixed experiences with feedback practices at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU). Half of the respondents (50.0%) disagreed that continuous feedback is provided, highlighting a gap in real-time performance guidance. However, 45.3% agreed that staffs are regularly engaged in discussions about strengths and areas for improvement, though 39.1% disagreed, pointing to inconsistency. Positively, 48.5% of respondents agreed that feedback is timely and constructive, and 46.9% affirmed that UMU encourages open communication

between staff and supervisors though variability in supervisor engagement remains. Furthermore, 45.3% agreed that feedback helps staff align with institutional goals and 50.0% confirmed that management uses feedback to support development, despite resource-related challenges.

The findings indicate mixed experiences with feedback practices at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU). Half of the respondents (50.0%) disagreed that continuous feedback is provided, highlighting a significant gap in real-time performance guidance. Continuous feedback is essential for sustaining high performance and ensuring that employees make timely adjustments to their work. As noted by Hattie and Timperley (2007), effective feedback must be ongoing, specific, and goal-oriented in order to foster learning and performance improvement. Without regular feedback, employees may operate without clarity on how their efforts align with expectations, leading to uncertainty and reduced motivation.

Nevertheless, 45.3% of respondents agreed that staffs are regularly engaged in discussions about their strengths and areas for improvement, although 39.1% disagreed—suggesting inconsistency in feedback practices across departments. Employee engagement in performance discussions plays a critical role in motivating individuals and reinforcing productive behaviors. According to Ilgen, Fisher, and Taylor (1979), performance feedback is most effective when it is developmental and includes input from both supervisors and employees. Inconsistent engagement across UMU departments may reflect a lack of standardized feedback mechanisms or varying leadership capabilities among supervisors.

Encouragingly, 48.5% of respondents agreed that feedback at UMU is timely and constructive. Timeliness in feedback delivery enhances its relevance and impact, allowing staff to apply insights promptly. Constructive feedback also fosters a growth mindset and strengthens the feedback-recipient relationship. Shute (2008) emphasizes that for feedback to be effective, it

must be both actionable and immediate, providing specific guidance without being overly critical. The relatively high percentage of agreement on this item indicates that some UMU supervisors are effectively utilizing feedback to support performance, though the practice may not yet be universal.

In addition, 46.9% of respondents agreed that the university encourages open communication between staff and supervisors, though the level of engagement appears to vary. Open communication promotes trust, psychological safety, and improvement in performance. Edmondson (1999) found that open dialogue between staff and leadership creates a climate of learning, innovation, and collaboration. However, if some supervisors are less approachable or responsive, as the variability in responses suggests, these benefits may not be consistently realized across the institution.

Another 45.3% of respondents agreed that the feedback they receive helps align their work with UMU's institutional goals. Goal-aligned feedback ensures that individual contributions support broader strategic objectives, improving organizational coherence and effectiveness. According to DeNisi and Kluger (2000), feedback that connects performance to overarching goals not only improves performance but also enhances organizational citizenship behaviors. However, the fact that over a third (36.0%) of respondents disagreed suggests that this alignment is not yet universally experienced, possibly due to inconsistent communication or lack of goal clarity at the departmental level.

The study also found that 50.0% of respondents agreed that management uses feedback to support staff development and career growth. This suggests that feedback is not merely evaluative but is also being used for coaching and development. Ashford and Cummings (1983) argue that when feedback leads to opportunities such as training, mentoring, or promotions, it

becomes a powerful tool for professional advancement and organizational commitment. Despite this positive trend, resource constraints and follow-through challengeshighlighted in qualitative responsessuggest the need for more structured systems to translate feedback into development opportunities.

CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter comprises of the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study according to the study objectives. The recommendations are on a basis of the findings and relates to advice and the interventions that the researcher feels should be brought to the attention of Uganda Martyrs University to improve job performance. The study ends by presenting the areas that the researcher considers vital for further studies.

Summary of findings

Performance evaluation criteria and job performance

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for performance evaluation criteria and job performance in UMU was r = 0.786, which was positive with probability value (p = 0.01). The regression analysis results further indicated that 78.6% variations in job performance in UMUwere attributed to performance evaluation criteria. In other words, job performance in UMUwas dependent on performance evaluation criteria at78.6%, hence suggesting a high positive relationship between the two variables.

Appraisal methods and job performance

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for appraisal methods and job performance in UMU was r = 0.345, which was positive with probability value (p = 0.01). The regression analysis results further indicated that 34.5% variations in job performance in UMUwere attributed to appraisal

methods. In other words, job performance in UMUwas dependent on appraisal methodsby 34.6%, hence suggesting a high positive relationship between the two variables.

Continuous feedback and job performance

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for continuous feedback and job performance in UMU was r = 0.614, which was positive with probability value (p = 0.01). The regression analysis results further indicated that 19.4% variations in job performance in UMUwere attributed to continuous feedback. In other words, job performance in UMUwas dependent on continuous feedbackof61.4%, hence suggesting a highly positive relationship between the two variables.

Conclusions

Performance evaluation criteria and job performance

The strong association between performance evaluation criteria and job performance at UMU underscores the critical role that clear, structured evaluation frameworks play in shaping employee effectiveness. This relationship suggests that when staff perceive evaluation criteria as well-defined and fair, their performance tends to improve significantly. It reflects that UMU's capacity to drive job performance is deeply influenced by how well these criteria communicate expectations and measure contributions.

Appraisal methods and job performance

The moderate but positive link between appraisal methods and job performance indicates that the diversity and robustness of the appraisal techniques used at UMU affect how well staff engage with the evaluation process and improve their work. The findings imply that appraisal methods, while important, may not be fully optimized or comprehensive enough to capture the full spectrum of performance, which in turn influences overall job outcomes at UMU.

Continuous feedback and job performance

Continuous feedback shows a substantial relationship with job performance, highlighting its role as a key driver for ongoing improvement and alignment with organizational goals. This suggests that UMU staff who receive timely and relevant feedback are more likely to adjust behaviors and enhance their contributions. The findings reveal that feedback mechanisms significantly influence the dynamic between performance management and employee growth within the university context.

Recommendations

Performance evaluation criteria and job performance

University Senior Management and Human Resource Department should collaborate to develop and enforce standardized and transparent performance evaluation criteria applicable to all academic and administrative departments.

Human Resource Department must ensure comprehensive communication of these criteria during staff induction programs and through continuous training workshops to improve staff understanding and acceptance.

Academic and Administrative Department Heads need to regularly review the evaluation criteria within their units and provide feedback to HR for necessary updates, ensuring alignment with changing university goals and job responsibilities.

Quality Assurance and Monitoring Units should establish formal mechanisms to collect and analyze staff feedback on the fairness and clarity of performance criteria, using this data to improve evaluation practices continually.

Appraisal methods and job performance

The Human Resource Department should institutionalize a diverse appraisal system incorporating supervisor evaluations, self-appraisals, and peer reviews to capture a holistic view of staff performance across departments.

The Training and Development Unit must organize targeted capacity-building sessions for supervisors and employees on the use of standardized, performance-based appraisal tools such as rating scales, checklists, and competency frameworks.

Department Heads and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that appraisal processes consider both individual contributions and team achievements to foster collaboration and shared accountability.

The Internal Communications Office should improve transparency by regularly disseminating detailed information about the appraisal methods, processes, and expectations to all staff members'university wide.

Continuous feedback and job performance

Department heads and supervisors should implement structured, regular feedback sessions with staff beyond the annual appraisal cycle to ensure ongoing performance guidance and support.

The human resource and training departments must equip supervisors with skills to deliver timely, constructive, and actionable feedback through workshops and coaching programs.

University Leadership and Departmental Management should foster an organizational culture that encourages open, two-way communication, where staff feel comfortable discussing performance challenges and suggestions without fear of reprisal.

Strategic planning and performance management units need to ensure feedback is clearly linked to individual development plans and aligned with UMU's strategic objectives, reinforcing purpose and motivation among staff.

Suggestions for areas for further research

Exploring how different motivational factors influence staff engagement with appraisal processes and subsequent job performance.

Investigating how various leadership approaches affect the fairness, acceptance, and impact of performance evaluations.

Assessing how digital tools and systems can improve appraisal accuracy, feedback delivery, and staff participation.

Examining how the prevailing organizational culture influences employees' trust and satisfaction with appraisal systems.

Studying how training initiatives, guided by appraisal feedback, affect professional growth and retention of academic and administrative personnel.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am **NakitendeBabra**, a student of Nkumba University pursuing a degree of master in Business Administration and I am currently conducting my research about ***"the relationship between staff appraisal and job performance of private universities in Uganda focusing on the case of Uganda Martyrs University"***. You have been identified as a resourceful person in providing information sought by the study. I request your cooperation in responding to the statements contained in this questionnaire. Any information provided by you will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used for only academic purposes.

Guidelines

For **Section A**, kindly tick in the box that corresponds with your appropriate opinion/response or where appropriate, fill in the spaces provided.

For **Sections B, C, D**, and **E**, tick in the appropriate box that corresponds with the ranking of your levels of disagreement or agreement with the statements based on the Likert Scale given as:

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly Disagree

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Position held in Uganda Martyrs University

Management/ Administrator	HR officer	Lecturers	Support staff

2. Age [years]

20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	Over 40

3. Gender/Sex

Male	Female

4. Level of Education

Masters	Bachelors	Diploma	Certificate	Others …….....

5. Length of work period with UMU [Years]

1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	Over 15

SECTION B: Performance evaluation criteria

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
6	The university clearly communicates performance expectations to all employees.					
7.	UMU regularly conducts performance evaluations for both academic and non-academic staff.					
8.	Employees at UMU receive feedback after their performance appraisals.					
9.	The university uses well-defined and transparent criteria for evaluating staff performance.					
10.	UMU links performance evaluation results to staff development initiatives and training needs.					
11	The performance evaluation methods used at UMU are fair and free from bias.					
12	UMU involves staff in discussions about their performance and goal setting.					
13	The university uses performance evaluation results in decisions regarding promotions and rewards					

SECTION C: Appraisal methods

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
14	UMU uses both self-appraisal and supervisor evaluation methods.					
15	Employees at UMU are appraised using performance-based tools.					
16	The university has adopted goal setting as part of its appraisal system.					
17	UMU appraises staff based on both individual and team achievements.					
18	Peer evaluation is part of the appraisal process at UMU.					
19	The university uses rating scales to assess staff performance.					
20	Employees are aware of the appraisal methods used by UMU.					
21	The university trains supervisors on how to conduct fair appraisals					

SECTION D: Continuous feedback

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5

22	The university provides continuous feedback to staff on performance.					
23	Staff are regularly engaged in discussions about their strengths and areas for improvement.					
24	Management ensures that feedback is timely and constructive.					
25	The university encourages open communication between staff and supervisors.					
26	Staff receive feedback that helps them align their work with institutional goals.					
27	Management uses feedback to support staff development and career growth.					
28	The university integrates feedback into the appraisal process.					
29	Staff are given opportunities to respond to and act on feedback.					

SECTION E: Job performance

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
30	Employees at UMU meet their job responsibilities effectively.					
31	The university ensures that staff complete assigned tasks on time					
32	Employees at UMU easily adapt to changes in work processes					
33	The university encourages staff to adjust to new roles and technologies					
34	UMU staff willingly help colleagues when needed					
35	Employees at UMU contribute positively to the university's work environment					
36	The university promotes teamwork and cooperation among staff					
37	UMU staff go beyond their formal duties to support university goals.					

Thank You

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview guide is designed to collect insights on the factors influencing job performance at Uganda Martyrs University, focusing on three key areas: performance evaluation criteria, appraisal methods, and continuous feedback. The questions aim to explore the perspectives of staff on how these elements contribute to their job performance and how the university's practices in these areas can be improved. Your responses will be invaluable in understanding the impact of these factors on your individual performance and the overall success of the university. Please answer openly and honestly, as there are no right or wrong answers.

Performance evaluation criteria and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

1. How clear and understandable are the performance evaluation criteria used at UMU for staff members?
2. In your opinion, how effectively do the performance evaluation criteria at UMU reflect your actual job performance?
3. Do you feel the criteria used in your performance evaluation are aligned with the university's goals and objectives? Please explain.
4. How do you think the current performance evaluation criteria at UMU influence your motivation and job performance?
5. Can you share any specific examples where the performance evaluation criteria directly impacted on your work performance, either positively or negatively?

Appraisal methods and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

1. What appraisal methods does UMU use to evaluate staff performance, and how familiar are you with them?

2. How would you describe the fairness of the appraisal methods used at UMU in assessing staff performance?
3. To what extent do the appraisal methods at UMU encourage improvement in staff performance?
4. How do you feel about the involvement of self-appraisal and peer evaluation in the overall appraisal process at UMU?
5. In what ways do the results of your performance appraisal influence your day-to-day job performance and overall motivation?

Continuous feedback and job performance of Uganda Martyrs University.

1. How often do you receive feedback on your job performance at Uganda Martyrs University?
2. Can you describe how the feedback you receive impacts your work performance?
3. How do you think the frequency and quality of feedback at the university influence staff motivation?
4. In your view, what role does appraisal methods play in improving the overall performance of the university staff?
5. What improvements could be made to enhance the feedback process to benefit staff performance?

Job performance

1. How would you describe the task performance of your work processes in contributing to the university's overall job performance?

2. In what ways do you ensure that your work is effective in achieving the university's academic and operational goals?
3. How do you think staff performance impacts contextual performance at Uganda Martyrs University?
4. What challenges do you face in maintaining task performance and adaptive performance in your role, and how do you overcome them?
5. What strategies or support systems do you believe could enhance staff performance to improve contextual performance at the university?

APPENDIX III: DOCUMENTARY REVIEW CHECKLIST

Document	**Aspects to Review**	**Reviewed (Yes/No)**
University Strategic Plan	Alignment of staff appraisal with institutional goals and objectives	
Staff Appraisal Policies	Presence of formal appraisal guidelines and procedures	
	Frequency of staff appraisals conducted	
	Integration of continuous feedback in appraisals	
Performance Evaluation Reports	Staff performance assessment criteria	
	Link between appraisal outcomes and professional development	
	Use of appraisal methods mechanisms	
HR Reports & Employee Feedback	Adaptive performance of staff appraisal practices	
	Staff perceptions of appraisal fairness and adaptive performance	
University Academic Reports	Impact of staff performance on contextual performance	
	Relationship between staff task performance and academic success	
University Communication Policies	Methods of communicating goals and feedback to staff	
Training & Development Records	Staff training linked to appraisal feedback	
Annual Institutional Reports	Trends in staff performance over time	