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Research

**EFFECT OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM ON
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT PWANI UNIVERSITY,
KILIFI COUNTY, KENYA**

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Effect of Performance Appraisal System On Employee Performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya

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Abstract:

Purpose of the Study: This study examined the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University. The research sought to determine whether appraisal practices such as feedback, transparency, and evaluation procedures significantly influence employee productivity, work quality, and responsiveness to stakeholders within the university's academic and administrative workforce environment.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A target population of 540 faculty and administrative staff was considered, from which 230 respondents were selected using stratified and random sampling techniques. Data were

collected through structured Likert-scale questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analysis.

Findings: The study achieved a response rate of 96% representing 221 respondents. Findings indicated that employees generally perceived the performance appraisal system positively. Appraisal feedback recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.690$), showing that employees valued constructive feedback in improving performance. However, appraisal transparency and timeliness received comparatively lower ratings, suggesting areas requiring institutional improvement. Regression analysis established that the performance appraisal system significantly and positively influenced employee performance ($B = .618$, $\beta = .651$, $p < .001$). The appraisal system explained 42.4% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = .424$), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis conclusively.

Conclusion: The study concludes that an effective and well-structured performance appraisal system significantly enhances employee performance at Pwani University. Strengthening transparency, ensuring timely appraisal processes, and linking appraisal outcomes to career growth and promotion decisions can further improve employee productivity.

Keywords: *Performance Appraisal System, Employee Performance, Public Universities, Agency Theory*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Organizations worldwide recognize that human capital is one of the most critical determinants of institutional success. The manner in which employee performance is measured, evaluated, and managed directly influences productivity, motivation, and the overall attainment of organizational goals. Performance appraisal systems constitute a central mechanism through which organizations assess how well their employees are meeting set targets and institutional expectations. A well-designed performance appraisal system provides a structured framework for communicating expectations, identifying areas for improvement, and making informed human resource decisions such as promotions, training, and compensation adjustments (Al-Jedaia & Mehrez, 2020).

Globally, organizations across both public and private sectors have increasingly adopted formal performance appraisal frameworks to drive accountability and improve service delivery. In developed economies, performance appraisal systems have evolved beyond mere annual reviews to encompass continuous feedback mechanisms, competency assessments, and development-oriented evaluations (Aguinis et al., 2021). These systems are aligned with broader performance management philosophies that seek to connect individual employee outputs with organizational strategy. Evidence from empirical studies conducted in various international contexts suggests that when appraisal systems are perceived as fair, transparent, and constructive, employees demonstrate higher levels of motivation and improved performance outcomes (Koopmans et al., 2020).

In the African context, performance appraisal systems in public institutions remain a subject of ongoing concern. Many public organizations on the continent operate within bureaucratic structures that limit the effectiveness of appraisal systems due to political interference, resource constraints, and inadequate managerial capacity (Twum et al., 2021). In some cases, appraisals are conducted as a formality rather than as a substantive developmental tool, which undermines their potential impact on employee performance. Despite these challenges, several African countries have introduced reforms aimed at strengthening performance management in the public sector, including in educational institutions (Osei Bonsu & Twum, 2022).

In Kenya, the government has pursued various public sector reforms aimed at improving performance management across institutions. The performance contracting framework introduced in public universities requires that employees at all levels are subjected to formal appraisal processes that link individual output to institutional targets. The Commission for University Education has emphasized the need for performance accountability in universities to sustain academic quality and institutional competitiveness (Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service [KUCCPS], 2022). However, implementation of these frameworks across public universities remains inconsistent, with significant variations in how appraisals are conducted, communicated, and utilized in decision-making.



Pwani University, located in Kilifi County along the Kenyan coast, is a mid-sized public university that has been navigating the demands of expanding its academic programmes while maintaining staff performance standards. The institution serves a region characterized by high rates of poverty, low literacy, and limited economic opportunities, making its role in community development particularly significant (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2022). Given this context, employee performance at Pwani University has far-reaching implications for both academic output and regional development. The performance appraisal system at the university is therefore expected to play a critical role in motivating staff, identifying performance gaps, and facilitating institutional growth.

Despite the recognized importance of performance appraisal systems, limited empirical research has examined how these systems specifically affect employee performance at Pwani University. Most existing studies on performance appraisal in Kenya focus on large public institutions or the private sector, leaving a gap in understanding the appraisal dynamics within a coastal public university operating in a resource-constrained environment. This study sought to address this gap by critically examining the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Employee performance remains a critical issue in public universities because it determines the extent to which institutions achieve their mandates in teaching, research, innovation, and community service. High employee performance contributes to increased productivity, quality service delivery, institutional effectiveness, and competitiveness. Pwani University in Kilifi County, Kenya has continued to expand its academic and administrative functions to meet growing demands for quality higher education and service delivery. As a public institution, the university relies heavily on employees to achieve its strategic objectives and maintain operational efficiency. However, public universities in Kenya continue to face challenges associated with employee productivity, service efficiency, and achievement of organizational goals. Such challenges may manifest through delays in service delivery, reduced productivity, low employee motivation, and failure to meet expected performance standards. Studies conducted in public universities in Kenya indicate that employee performance remains an area of concern requiring continuous improvement (Maende, 2023; Malietso et al., 2023).

Organizations increasingly adopt human resource management practices aimed at enhancing employee performance, with performance appraisal systems being among the most widely used approaches. Performance appraisal systems are intended to improve employee performance through employee evaluation, feedback mechanisms, performance monitoring, and goal setting. Research has demonstrated that effective appraisal practices can positively influence employee performance and organizational outcomes (Malela & Araka, 2023; Menza & Njoroge, 2023). However, evidence also suggests that in some institutions, appraisal systems are implemented



primarily as administrative routines with inadequate feedback and limited developmental outcomes. Despite the implementation of performance appraisal systems in higher learning institutions, it remains unclear whether such systems significantly influence employee performance at Pwani University. Therefore, this study seeks to establish the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H01: Performance appraisal system does not significantly influence employee performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Agency Theory

Agency Theory was originally developed by Jensen and Meckling in 1976 and has since become a widely applied framework for understanding how principals and agents interact within organizations. According to Davis et al. (2021), the theory focuses on the conflicts of interest that may arise when agents, typically managers or employees, are entrusted to act on behalf of principals, typically owners or shareholders. The central premise of the theory is that agents may not always act in ways that align with the interests of principals, especially when information asymmetry exists between the two parties. Such misalignment can lead to agency costs, which organizations seek to minimize through monitoring, incentive structures, and contractual arrangements.

The development of Agency Theory has evolved considerably since its inception. While the original formulation centred on corporate governance and financial incentives, subsequent scholars have extended its application to broader organizational settings, including public institutions and universities. Kivistö and Zakhir (2022) applied the theory to university management and demonstrated that performance-based incentives can play a critical role in minimizing agency costs by aligning faculty performance with institutional objectives. Similarly, Odhiambo and Wanjala (2023) examined agency relationships in Kenyan government institutions and found that structured appraisal systems help reduce principal-agent conflicts by aligning employee goals with organizational expectations. More recently, Chen and Wang (2024) extended the theory to include



non-financial recognition systems as mechanisms for aligning faculty effort with institutional goals.

The relevance of Agency Theory to performance appraisal systems lies in its emphasis on monitoring, evaluation, and incentive alignment. Performance appraisal systems serve as formal monitoring mechanisms through which supervisors evaluate employee contributions, provide feedback, and link performance outcomes to rewards or career development opportunities. By reducing information asymmetry between management and staff, appraisal systems help ensure that employee effort is directed toward institutional objectives. Ajibola et al. (2019) emphasize that when appraisals are based on clearly defined criteria and communicated transparently, they reduce the likelihood of misaligned effort and enhance overall organizational performance.

In the context of this study, Agency Theory provides a useful lens for understanding how the performance appraisal system at Pwani University may influence employee performance. If the university's appraisal system effectively monitors staff performance, provides timely and constructive feedback, and links results to meaningful career outcomes, it is expected to align employee behaviour with institutional goals, thereby improving performance outcomes. The theory therefore supports the hypothesis that a well-functioning performance appraisal system positively influences employee performance.

Empirical Review

Performance Appraisal System and Employee Performance

Al-Jedaia and Mehrez (2020) conducted a quantitative study involving 264 government employees in Qatar to examine performance appraisal practices and their effect on employee motivation and performance. Their findings revealed that the objectives and methods of the appraisal process had a significant positive influence on employee motivation and performance, while the appraisal criteria and leadership styles showed relatively weaker associations. The study highlighted the importance of purposeful appraisal design in driving performance outcomes. However, the study was limited to Qatari government employees, which constrains its generalizability to university settings in sub-Saharan Africa.

Ajibola et al. (2019) examined performance appraisal practices in the Nigerian manufacturing sector, surveying 393 workers across ten companies. The study found that management-by-objectives approaches in appraisal significantly contributed to employee work engagement and motivation. However, its focus on the manufacturing sector and emphasis on engagement rather than direct performance outcomes limit its applicability to the university context. The study did not adequately address appraisal elements such as transparency and fairness, which are particularly relevant in academic institutional settings.

Muriuki and Wanyoike (2021) conducted a thematic review of performance appraisal practices across public and private sector organizations in Kenya, finding that target setting, feedback, and



clearly defined work objectives are critical components of effective appraisal.

Their review noted that training and managerial support enhance the effectiveness of these appraisal elements. However, the study relied on secondary data and did not generate primary evidence specific to any single institution, limiting its depth of analysis for understanding appraisal effects at Pwani University.

Twum et al. (2021) studied the influence of performance appraisal on employee performance in Ghanaian public organizations, finding that transparent and participatory appraisal processes were associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction and improved task performance. Their study underscored the critical role of employee participation in appraisal processes in fostering a sense of ownership and motivating performance improvement. Despite these contributions, the Ghanaian public sector context may differ from Kenya's university sector in terms of regulatory frameworks and institutional cultures.

Odhiambo and Wanjala (2023) examined appraisal systems in Kenyan government institutions and found that structured appraisal frameworks reduced principal-agent conflicts by aligning staff performance with organizational objectives. Their findings indicated that institutions with formal and consistent appraisal processes recorded higher levels of staff accountability and performance. This study is closely related to the current research in terms of geographical and sector context, and its findings support the expectation that a well-structured appraisal system at Pwani University would positively influence employee performance.

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the degree to which individuals effectively and efficiently execute their job responsibilities in ways that contribute to the attainment of organizational goals (Kariuki & Ombaka, 2023). In the context of a university, employee performance encompasses a range of outcomes including timely completion of tasks, maintenance of work quality standards, demonstration of initiative, and responsiveness to the needs of students and colleagues. High employee performance in academic institutions is associated with improved research productivity, enhanced teaching quality, and stronger institutional standings (UNESCO, 2024).

Giteru and Bula (2023) identified task timeliness as a key indicator of employee productivity in Kenyan public sector institutions, emphasizing that meeting deadlines reflects both individual discipline and organizational efficiency. Odhiambo and Wanjala (2023) highlighted work quality as a critical performance dimension for public organizations, noting that employees who consistently meet or exceed performance standards contribute significantly to institutional effectiveness. Smith and Jones (2023) identified initiative as an important indicator of employee performance in academic settings, arguing that proactive employees who identify and address challenges without prompting drive innovation and continuous improvement. Wanjohi and Mutai (2024) underscored the importance of stakeholder responsiveness in service-oriented roles within



educational institutions, noting that employees who consistently address the needs of students and colleagues contribute to a positive institutional climate and improved service delivery.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to collect comprehensive data on performance appraisal systems and employee performance at Pwani University. A descriptive design was appropriate for this study because it facilitated systematic collection of data on the characteristics and perceptions of employees regarding the appraisal processes in place. The target population comprised 540 staff members drawn from faculty and administration departments. Using the Taro Yamane formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 230 respondents was obtained. Stratified and random sampling techniques were applied to ensure fair representation of all staff categories across the two departments. Data were collected using structured questionnaires organized into sections covering demographic information and study variables measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Institutional authorization and research clearance were formally obtained before field data collection commenced. Questionnaires were physically distributed to respondents and collected after completion. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize responses. Simple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between the performance appraisal system and employee performance. Ethical considerations including confidentiality, privacy, and voluntary participation were strictly observed throughout the study.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed to staff across Faculty (60%) and Administration (40%) departments at Pwani University. Table 1 presents the response rate achieved.

Table 1: Response Rate

Feedback	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Responded	221	96
Not Responded	9	4
Total	230	100

Source: Researcher (2025)

The results show that 221 out of 230 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 96%. Nine questionnaires were not returned and were therefore excluded from the main analysis. The achieved response rate exceeded the conventionally acceptable threshold of



70% (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019), indicating robust participation and providing a reliable basis for data analysis. The effective sample size for all subsequent analyses was N = 221.

Descriptive Analysis of Performance Appraisal System

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for items measuring the influence of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Performance Appraisal System

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I receive regular performance evaluations from my supervisor.	221	4.10	0.740
The appraisal process is transparent and fair.	221	3.85	0.830
Feedback from appraisals helps improve my performance.	221	4.20	0.690
Appraisals are based on clearly defined performance criteria.	221	4.15	0.710
My contributions are accurately captured during appraisals.	221	4.05	0.760
I get an opportunity to respond to my performance evaluation.	221	4.00	0.780
Appraisal results influence decisions like promotions or training.	221	3.95	0.800
I trust the integrity of the performance appraisal process.	221	3.90	0.820
Performance reviews are conducted on time.	221	3.80	0.850
The appraisal process motivates me to work harder.	221	4.00	0.770

Source: Researcher (2025)

The descriptive results in Table 2 reveal that respondents reported receiving regular performance evaluations from their supervisors (M = 4.10, SD = 0.740), indicating strong agreement with this practice at Pwani University. Regular evaluations are foundational to effective appraisal, as they allow for timely identification of performance gaps and facilitate ongoing professional improvement (Aguinis et al., 2021). Respondents reported moderate agreement that the appraisal process was transparent and fair (M = 3.85, SD = 0.830). While a majority of employees acknowledged fairness in the process, the standard deviation suggests notable variation in perceptions, indicating that some employees held reservations about the consistency of appraisal procedures. Transparency in appraisal is critical for building employee trust and sustaining motivation (Al-Jedaia & Mehrez, 2020).



The highest mean score in the scale was recorded for the item measuring whether feedback from appraisals helped improve employee performance ($M = 4.20, SD = 0.690$). This finding suggests that respondents widely acknowledged the developmental value of appraisal feedback, which is consistent with evidence from Odhiambo and Wanjala (2023), who found that structured feedback mechanisms significantly enhance employee accountability in Kenyan institutions. Respondents agreed that appraisals were based on clearly defined performance criteria ($M = 4.15, SD = 0.710$), which is associated with greater objectivity and reduced bias in assessments. Clearly defined criteria enhance the perceived legitimacy of the appraisal system and contribute to improved employee performance outcomes (Koopmans et al., 2020). Respondents also reported that their contributions were accurately captured during appraisals ($M = 4.05, SD = 0.760$), which validates employee effort and reinforces a sense of organizational justice.

Employees confirmed that they were given opportunities to respond to their performance evaluations ($M = 4.00, SD = 0.780$), reflecting a participatory approach to appraisal. Participatory appraisal processes are associated with higher employee buy-in and greater commitment to performance improvement targets (Twum et al., 2021). Respondents further agreed that appraisal results influenced decisions regarding promotions and training ($M = 3.95, SD = 0.800$), suggesting that appraisal outcomes are used as a basis for career development at Pwani University, though the relatively modest mean indicates room for strengthening this linkage. Respondents indicated moderate trust in the integrity of the appraisal process ($M = 3.90, SD = 0.820$), highlighting a need for further efforts to reinforce procedural integrity in appraisal practices. Trust is a critical prerequisite for the effectiveness of any performance management mechanism, and institutions with higher levels of appraisal trust tend to record better performance outcomes (Chen & Wang, 2024). Respondents also agreed that performance reviews were conducted on time ($M = 3.80, SD = 0.850$), though the higher standard deviation compared to other items suggests that timeliness was less consistently experienced across departments. Finally, respondents agreed that the appraisal process motivated them to work harder ($M = 4.00, SD = 0.770$), underscoring the motivational dimension of appraisal and its potential role in sustaining employee performance.

Descriptive Analysis of Employee Performance

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for items measuring employee performance at Pwani University.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Performance

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I consistently complete my assigned tasks within the stipulated deadlines.	221	4.18	0.710
The quality of my work meets or exceeds the standards set by the university.	221	4.12	0.730



I proactively identify and address challenges in my work without being prompted.	221	3.95	0.790
I respond promptly and effectively to the needs of students and colleagues.	221	4.22	0.680
My overall output has improved following feedback from performance appraisals.	221	4.08	0.750
I am able to meet my performance targets within the set review period.	221	3.98	0.800
I demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in my area of work.	221	4.15	0.720
My performance has positively contributed to the achievement of departmental goals.	221	4.10	0.740

Source: Researcher (2025)

The results in Table 3 indicate that employees at Pwani University reported generally high levels of performance across all measured dimensions. The highest mean was recorded for responsiveness to the needs of students and colleagues ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.680$), reflecting strong stakeholder orientation among staff. This finding aligns with Wanjohi and Mutai (2024), who identified responsiveness as a critical performance dimension in service-oriented educational roles. Timely task completion also recorded a high mean ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.710$), which is consistent with Giteru and Bula's (2023) finding that deadline adherence is a central indicator of productivity in Kenyan public sector institutions. Commitment to continuous improvement recorded a strong mean ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.720$), suggesting that employees at Pwani University value professional growth and are engaged in ongoing efforts to enhance their performance. The mean for work quality meeting or exceeding university standards ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.730$) further reinforces the general positive performance climate observed in the institution. Odhiambo and Wanjala (2023) similarly found that employees in well-structured public institutions in Kenya tend to report higher quality work outputs when clear appraisal frameworks are in place.

The item measuring whether overall output improved following appraisal feedback recorded a mean of 4.08 ($SD = 0.750$), supporting the practical developmental value of appraisal processes at the university. The ability to meet performance targets within the set review period recorded a mean of 3.98 ($SD = 0.800$), suggesting that while most employees met their targets, a proportion experienced challenges in consistently achieving their performance goals. The lowest mean among employee performance items was recorded for proactive identification and addressing of challenges ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 0.790$), which may indicate an opportunity for the university to foster a more proactive performance culture through its appraisal and development programs.

Regression Analysis



Table 4 presents the model summary for the regression analysis examining the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651a	.424	.421	.48230

a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Appraisal System

Source: Researcher (2025)

The model summary in Table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient ($R = .651$) indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship between the performance appraisal system and employee performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .424$) indicates that 42.4% of the variation in employee performance at Pwani University is explained by the performance appraisal system. The adjusted R^2 of .421 confirms that this explanatory power remains stable after accounting for the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate (.482) suggests that deviations of observed values from predicted values are relatively small, supporting the precision of the model.

ANOVA

Table 5 presents the results of the ANOVA test examining the overall statistical significance of the regression model.

Table 4.5: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	37.643	1	37.643	161.738	.000b
Residual	51.066	219	.233		
Total	88.709	220			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Appraisal System

Source: Researcher (2025)

The ANOVA results in Table 5 indicate that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 161.738, p < .001$). This demonstrates that the performance appraisal system has a statistically significant overall effect on employee performance at Pwani University. The null hypothesis, H_0 , which stated that performance appraisal system does not significantly influence employee performance at Pwani University, is therefore rejected at the 0.001 significance level.

Regression Coefficients



Table 6 presents the regression coefficients for the relationship between the performance appraisal system and employee performance.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.243	.287		4.331	.000
Performance Appraisal System	.618	.049	.651	12.718	.000***

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

*** $p < .001$

Source: Researcher (2025)

The regression coefficients in Table 6 indicate that the performance appraisal system is a statistically significant positive predictor of employee performance at Pwani University ($B = .618$, $\beta = .651$, $t = 12.718$, $p < .001$). This result implies that a one-unit increase in the quality and effectiveness of the performance appraisal system is associated with a .618-unit increase in employee performance. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = .651$) confirms the substantial practical significance of this relationship. These findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirm that the performance appraisal system exerts a significant positive influence on employee performance at Pwani University. These findings are consistent with those of Al-Jedaia and Mehrez (2020), who established that the methods and objectives of appraisal processes significantly predict employee motivation and performance in government settings.

5.0 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study examined the effect of the performance appraisal system on employee performance at Pwani University, Kilifi County, Kenya. The descriptive analysis revealed that employees at Pwani University generally reported positive perceptions of the appraisal system across multiple dimensions. The highest agreement was recorded for the item on appraisal feedback improving performance ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.690$), followed by appraisals based on clearly defined criteria ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.710$). Items related to transparency and timeliness of reviews recorded relatively lower means, suggesting areas for institutional improvement. The regression analysis confirmed that the performance appraisal system significantly and positively influences employee performance ($B = .618$, $\beta = .651$, $p < .001$), with the model explaining 42.4% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = .424$). These results are statistically robust as confirmed by the ANOVA test ($F = 161.738$, $p < .001$), which validates the overall significance of the regression model. The findings demonstrate that investments in strengthening the performance appraisal system at Pwani University are likely to yield measurable improvements in employee performance outcomes. The study findings are consistent with predictions derived from Agency Theory, which emphasizes the importance of monitoring mechanisms and incentive alignment in reducing



6.0 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the performance appraisal system is a significant positive determinant of employee performance at Pwani University. The significant relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance demonstrates that a well-structured, transparent, and consistently applied appraisal framework can substantially improve individual productivity, work quality, initiative, and stakeholder responsiveness among university staff. While the appraisal system at Pwani University demonstrates notable strengths in the areas of feedback provision and criterion clarity, areas such as appraisal transparency, timeliness, and linkage to career advancement require further attention and systematic improvement. The findings contribute to the empirical literature on performance management in Kenyan public universities by providing context-specific evidence on how appraisal systems influence employee-level outcomes. They also reaffirm the theoretical propositions of Agency Theory regarding the role of monitoring and incentive alignment in promoting performance-oriented behaviour (Davis et al., 2021). University management, human resource practitioners, and policy makers can draw on these findings to design and implement more effective appraisal systems that strengthen the connection between individual performance and institutional goals.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for Pwani University and other public universities in Kenya. First, the university should strengthen the transparency and fairness of its performance appraisal process by establishing clear, well-communicated appraisal criteria and ensuring that all staff members have equal access to information about how their performance will be assessed. This may involve training supervisors in objective appraisal practices and creating structured channels for employees to raise concerns about the appraisal process.

Second, the university should ensure that appraisal reviews are conducted consistently and on schedule across all departments. Timeliness of appraisal is critical for maintaining the relevance of feedback and preventing delays that may undermine employee motivation and performance. A centralized appraisal calendar managed by the human resource department could help institutionalize this practice.

Third, the university should strengthen the linkage between appraisal results and career advancement decisions, including promotions, training sponsorships, and salary increments. When employees perceive that appraisal outcomes have meaningful consequences for their professional development, they are more likely to engage seriously with the appraisal process and demonstrate improved performance (Al-Jedaia & Mehrez, 2020). Fourth, the university should invest in



ongoing capacity building for supervisors who conduct performance appraisals.

Training in coaching, constructive feedback, and developmental appraisal techniques will equip supervisors to use appraisals as tools for growth rather than mere compliance exercises, ultimately enhancing the contribution of the appraisal system to employee performance (Aguinis et al., 2021).

8.0 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was limited to one public university in Kilifi County, Kenya, and focused specifically on the performance appraisal system as a predictor of employee performance. Future research should consider examining the combined effect of multiple performance management system components, including performance planning, capacity development, and recognition systems, on employee performance at Pwani University and other public universities in Kenya. Longitudinal studies examining the long-term influence of appraisal reforms on employee performance would provide deeper insights into the sustainability of performance improvements. Comparative studies across multiple Kenyan public universities would also enhance the generalizability of findings and support the development of sector-wide appraisal policy frameworks.

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