

Exploring the Effectiveness of the Performance Management System in Appraising Teachers' Performance in Botswana

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Abstract

A key challenge for organisations, including schools, is enhancing employee performance. Performance Management Systems (PMS) help assess and improve employee behaviour, skills, and contributions to organisational success. This study examined the effectiveness of PMS in appraising teachers' performance by exploring academic staff's understanding of its purpose, impact on performance, implementation challenges, and possible interventions for improvement. Using a qualitative phenomenological design grounded in interpretivism and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, this study conveniently selected ten teachers from five schools in Botswana's Southeast region. Data were collected through interviews and analysed thematically. Findings showed that the purpose of PMS was to evaluate and improve teachers' performance through coaching, mentoring, and supervision. However, PMS failed to achieve its intended impact due to several challenges, including limited resources and misalignment between its structure and the education sector. These findings underline the need to standardise PMS, recruit specialised PMS staff, and involve teachers in all facets of PMS planning and implementation.

Keywords: Performance management systems, performance appraisal, Botswana, performance improvement, secondary education.

1.0 Introduction

Managing the performance of people is crucial because they are the primary source of value in schools and other organisations (De Waal & Van der Heijden, 2015; Almulaiki, 2023; Siraj & Hagen, 2023; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development [CIPD], 2024a). This entails creating a culture that encourages continuous improvement of behaviours and skills, which in turn contribute to organisational success (CIPD, 2024b). To assess the performance of their employees and ensure maximum performance, numerous organisations adopt performance management systems (PMS) for this purpose. According to CIPD (2022), such an assessment is undertaken for two significant reasons. First, data obtained through performance assessment could be used to motivate employees, set objectives, hold them accountable, and influence their pay and performance. Additionally, performance assessment data could be used for developmental purposes to inform decisions on resources and training. It is, therefore, essential for organisations, particularly those that operate in today's dynamic and technological environments, to have an effective and efficient PMS (Chandra & Saraswathi, 2018).

Following poor service delivery in government ministries and departments (Ramakele & Koloi-Keaikitse, 2016), the Republic of Botswana introduced PMS to improve performance within the country's public service (Bulawa, 2012). Similarly, PMS was introduced in Botswana schools to improve academic performance through enhanced pedagogy (Orapeleng, 2018). Both PMS and its newer version, called Performance Management and Development (PMD), are aimed at attaining desired behaviours and results. This can be achieved by executing well-formulated performance expectations, intensifying coaching, ensuring two-way communication between the supervisor and

supervisee, and improving continuous professional training opportunities and performance rewards (Directorate of Public Service Management, 2020). These efforts aimed to develop holistic learners through efficient and effective teaching and learning.

Botswana continues to face a decline in education quality due to poor service delivery (Makwinja, 2017; Seikanto et al., 2024). Thusi (2023) argues that an effective PMS could help address this through improved training, appraisals, employee engagement, and performance recognition. However, evidence from other sectors shows that PMS often fails due to a lack of implementer skills (Thusi, 2023), with 70% of initiatives failing at the implementation stage (Noronha et al., 2016). Moreover, the concept remains relatively new in education (Naomee, 2020), and no study has examined PMS within Botswana's education sector. This gap, alongside post-COVID-19 shifts in teaching and learning (Mogatle et al., 2023), underscores the need to explore the effectiveness of PMS in schools. This study, therefore, aimed to assess the effectiveness of PMS in Botswana's education system and identify areas for improvement in its use.

1.1 Research objectives

In its assessment, the study specifically aimed to:

- (1) Ascertain academic staff understanding of the purpose of PMS in schools.
- (2) Evaluate the impact of PMS on academic performance.
- (3) Explore the challenges of PMS implementation in schools.
- (4) Assess interventions that could be implemented to address the challenges hindering PMS implementation in schools.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Definition of key terms

Performance Management System (PMS): The PMS is a system that provides a consistent and integrated approach to managing and rewarding performance (Qureshi et al., 2010). In the context of this study, PMS is viewed as a tool for measuring teachers' performance to reward them effectively.

Motivation: Motivation refers to the willingness to try aimed at achieving a particular goal (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). In this study, motivation refers to the act of encouraging teachers to work harder by providing reasonable rewards for their efforts.

Expectancy: Expectancy refers to the probability that efforts will yield a desired outcome (Udai, 2004). In this study, expectancy is viewed as the anticipated reward for hard work

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was theoretically underpinned by Expectancy Theory (ET), developed by Victor Vroom in 1964 (Lunenburg, 2011). According to the theory, individuals determine their actions based on their perceptions, expectations, and motivation, which in turn influence their behaviour (Ogolla & Oluoch, 2019; Hanscom, 2020). Furthermore, it demonstrates that employees are motivated to improve their performance when they believe their efforts will lead to rewards that help achieve both personal and organisational objectives (Skripak et al., 2018; Mulwa & Weru, 2017; Atiku & Kaupa, 2020). However, when performance is not appraised correctly or recognised, employees may feel undervalued, leading to decreased motivation.

In the context of this study, it was assumed that for rewards to be commensurate with performance, it is essential to measure performance accurately. This is why the third research question posed in this study explored the challenges impeding the implementation of PMS to enhance its efficacy in appraising performance. Additionally, a significant aspect of ET is that employees have the option to choose from various alternatives to enhance their performance in their respective areas

(Lunenburg, 2011). This study assumes that when PMS is properly utilised, it not only appraises teachers' performance but also guides them in selecting effective alternatives for improvement.

2.3 Empirical literature review

There are varying views on the meaning of PMS (Dzimhiri, 2008; Armstrong, 2009; Qureshi et al., 2010; Mishra & Sahoo, 2015; Sahu, Jena, & Sarida, 2016; Chahar & Hatwal, 2018). However, these views attest to the fact that PMS is a strategic and integrated approach to managing employees and organisational performance with the achievement of individual and organisational goals in view. Several bodies of literature (Bulawa, 2012; Tshukudu, 2014; Kesarwani et al., 2015; Mahapa et al., 2015; Rao et al., 2019) argued that the primary purpose of PMS is to measure individual performance, provide actionable feedback, measure organisational performance, identify training needs, and review rewards. Furthermore, it serves as a tool for effective planning in organisations. It remains to be seen, however, whether these views resonate with teachers in the Botswana education system. Furthermore, most existing studies on PMS were conducted in the pre-COVID-19 era, thereby raising concerns about their applicability in the post-COVID-19 era, which continues to witness changes in teaching and learning techniques. The first research question posed in this study was, therefore, aimed at understanding the purpose of PMS as experienced by teachers in SE Botswana.

As an educational tool, PMS should not only aim to improve staff performance but also prioritise learners' needs and professional development by ensuring the provision of quality teaching (Page, 2016). The impact of PMS on the academic performance of learners is evident in a study limited to the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (Alshaikh & Alshaikhi, 2021), which examined the effectiveness of PMS on teachers. Through a survey involving 502 teachers, it was observed that teacher performance is considered a key element that requires a certain level of attention. This is because teachers play a critical role in educating children during the early childhood stage, thereby shaping their minds as future adults. Improving the performance of teachers, therefore, translates to improved academic success of learners (Agusiobo & Etukokwu, 2017). It is necessary to evaluate employees using well-defined strategic objectives in the PMS to review their progress and help improve their performance (Jyoti & Moshin, 2020). More so, effective and efficient utilisation of PMS leads to improved academic performance (Atamtürk et al., 2011; Page, 2016; Agusiobo & Etukokwu, 2017; Alshaikh & Alshaikhi, 2021), while poor implementation can result in demotivation of teachers, resulting in poor academic performance of learners (Ngcamu & Ndlovu, 2013; Gordon & Fischer, 2018; Orapeleng, 2018). Although the studies highlighted above demonstrate the impact of PMS on employee performance, this evidence is limited in scope. This may not apply to the Botswana context, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era. This study, therefore, evaluated the actual impact of PMS on learners' performance in Botswana, as reflected in the second research question.

The impediments to implementing PMS are many, including lack of/inadequate training (Dzimhiri et al., 2017; Kelly, 2012; Mohamud & Belle, 2019; Naomee, 2020), poor communication and feedback (Boipono et al., 2014; Ramataboe & Lues, 2018; Boya & Rao, 2019), insufficient resources (Dzimhiri, 2008; Kelly, 2012; Noronha et al., 2016), lack of fairness of PMS (Chineze & Chineze, 2017), and lack of employee engagement (Jugmohun, 2018). In the Botswana context, Molefhi (2015) highlighted several challenges to PMS implementation, including a lack of funding, the government's inappropriate introduction of PMS into the education sector, inadequate training, a mindset issue, and a lack of accountability. It was, however, necessary to explore the current challenges facing PMS implementation, as highlighted in the third research question, due to the dynamic nature of the education process and the significant changes brought about by the global pandemic.

To improve the implementation of PMS, there is a need to remove the impediments hindering its implementation (Boipono et al., 2014; Tomno et al., 2018; Rajendran, 2020). Doing so effectively entails considering contextual factors that hinder its implementation, especially in the Botswana context. Following the changes that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to explore teachers' recommendations for improving PMS implementation.

In Kenya, Tomno et al. (2018) argued that to improve PMS, organisations should conduct regular professional training for both supervisors and employees. The training should be coupled with

cross-departmental training, coaching, and mentoring of employees to develop personal skills through induction seminars, workshops and other related organisational activities (Tomno et al., 2018). In Botswana, Boipono et al. (2014) suggested that appropriate “design and implementation, effective communication and feedback, and motivation and clear assessment strategy are essential for the success of PMS” (p. 189). Moreover, Rajendran (2020) summarises the significant steps for improving PMS in an article that addresses the challenges of implementing PMS. These steps include identifying different competencies for different positions, instilling required competencies, installing a system that develops competencies, providing feedback on how team members are effectively applying their competencies, accomplishing tasks to achieve set goals, motivating and rewarding effective performance, understanding why performance does not meet established requirements, and using corrective methods to improve performance. Nevertheless, it is evident that teachers’ perceptions towards the effectiveness of PMS have not been adequately explored following the pandemic, hence the need for this study.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted an interpretivist research paradigm to comprehend respondents’ interpretations of PMS effectiveness (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Based on this paradigm, a qualitative research approach was employed to examine how participants made sense of the study’s phenomenon in their own minds, using their own words (Cropley, 2019). Specifically, phenomenology was best suited for this study because it provided an in-depth description of the concept and experiences of PMS through the views of various participants (Qutoshi, 2018).

The population for this study consisted of teachers in the 27 junior secondary schools (JSS) in the South East (SE) region of Botswana. Teachers were chosen because PMS is used to periodically appraise their performance. JSS in the SE region were conveniently chosen due to ease of access and limited resources (Etikan et al., 2016). Simple random sampling was used to select five schools out of the 27 JSS in the SE region of Botswana. This technique was adopted because all 27 schools were implementing PMS. Although this technique is not widely used in qualitative studies, it is considered the most unbiased sampling technique, and it is necessary for concluding a population from a sample (Sharma, 2017). Convenience sampling was used to recruit 10 participants, two from each school, for the interviews. This sampling method was suitable for selecting participants who were willing to participate in the study and provide the necessary data to answer the research questions (Etikan et al., 2015).

Interviews were used to collect primary data in this study because they enabled the researchers to obtain comprehensive responses for exploring the phenomenon of interest (Block & Erskine, 2012). Interviews can be conducted by telephone, face-to-face, in a focus group, or via email (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the researchers employed a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviews. The interviews were recorded using handwritten notes and audio tapes after due permission from the participants, while the findings were analysed thematically. The analysis was conducted independently by two researchers, who familiarised themselves with the data and identified themes that were subsequently reviewed and defined collectively by the entire research team. The researchers maintained a reflexive approach by examining their role, potential bias and influence during data collection and analysis (Critical Appraisal Skill Programme, 2024). Data saturation was reached in the tenth interview; therefore, no further recruitment of participants was necessary.

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board, Office of Research and Development, University of Botswana. Other ethical considerations, including informed consent, voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, participant anonymity, and confidentiality, were addressed in this study. To maintain anonymity, participants were represented by pseudonyms (1-10) in the order in which the interviews were conducted.

4.0 Findings and discussions

4.1 Purpose of the performance management system

In line with the first research question, the respondents were asked about their understanding

of the purpose of PMS. Recurring words such as effectiveness, enhancement, development, evaluation, guidance, mentoring, reward, appraisal, improvement, and achievement were used by the participants to express their views on the purpose of PMS in schools. The majority of participants argued that the purpose of PMS was to appraise and evaluate performance, ensuring the extent to which objectives are being achieved, to improve service delivery, facilitate effective professional development, supervision, coaching, guidance, and mentoring, and to provide feedback for improvement. This is seen in the words below:

“What I know about PMS is that...umm... It’s kind of what should I call it? A process aimed at tracing performance at work... just working on issues of performance, delivery, how effective people are at work, how they can be assisted to improve to deliver...so on and so on. It is essentially about performance in the workplace. The primary purpose of PMS is to enhance teacher performance, as they must produce good marks and results, which ultimately improve outcomes in schools. PMS intends to improve the quality of education, even though I am not sure if it practically serves that purpose in schools... it was to assist teachers to perform better, ultimately resulting in improved performance in schools, both for the teachers, and that would translate to how the learners perform” (Participant 2).

The major themes that emerged in response to the first research question are presented and discussed in the following sections.

Theme 1: PMS as a tool for performance evaluation and improvement

Findings from the first research question suggest that the primary purpose of PMS is to evaluate and improve teacher performance in order to achieve the desired objectives. This is in line with several bodies of literature (Sahu et al., 2016; Tomno et al., 2018), which argue that PMS is a tool for managing employees’ productivity and facilitating the performance of an organisation. Additionally, it checks abnormalities in individual performance, which may affect the overall goal of an organisation (Rao et al., 2019). A similar view is held by Lunenburg (2011), who argues that, in line with ET, employees must be evaluated to ensure they are performing at their maximum. Moreover, in addition to measuring and managing individual performance, PMS also measures the performance of working teams within an organisation, ensuring they are working towards set goals (Noronha et al., 2016). Furthermore, it helps ensure that individual employees are developed to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders (Tshukudu, 2020). This was why participant 6 described PMS as a “litmus paper”, which is an indicator that shows whether an employee is moving in the right direction or not.

Theme 2: PMS as a tool for reward and professional development

Findings from this study indicate that PMS enhances employee performance through professional development, coaching, mentoring, guidance, and supervision. A similar view is held by Tomno et al. (2018), who argue that PMS is effective in tracking and improving employee productivity, as well as supporting other human resource (HR) functions. Through PMS, the HR department can identify the professional development needs of its employees and make informed decisions on the way forward. Additionally, Sahlin and Angelis (2019) argued that the tool provides a more structured approach to managing organisational operations by measuring performance and offering information that supports informed decision-making. Similarly, Zulystiawati (2014) and Kesarwani et al. (2015) assert that PMS provides career development opportunities for employees, ensuring they are offered induction, training, and development opportunities that enhance their performance within the organisation.

Besides acting as a vehicle for delivering organisational objectives and goals (Seotlela & Miruka, 2014), PMS provides a basis for rewarding employees (Zulystiawati, 2014). In this study, only three out of the ten participants acknowledged that PMS helps create an effective reward system. The three participants, however, argued that they are not rewarded according to their performance. This contradicts the argument by Maimela and Samuel (2016), who assert that PMS serves as a mechanism to align organisational rewards with employee contributions, ultimately supporting the

achievement of organisational goals. It also negates Vroom's ET, which asserts that organisations should consider rewarding employees for their positive outcomes, and rewards should depend on how employees perform (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). Greater effort should, in principle, result in greater reward. However, participants reported that they are not rewarded appropriately, indicating that one of the key objectives of PMS in Botswana, which is to foster a culture of performance and accountability by promoting and rewarding teamwork in the public sector (Bulawa, 2012), has not yet been achieved. Participants viewed PMS as a fault-finding tool, with minimal support provided to help teachers address performance gaps and little focus on learners when evaluating teacher performance. This may explain why most participants felt that PMS does not contribute to improving the quality of education.

The striking finding from the first research question is that participants acknowledge the purpose of PMS in measuring and rewarding performance. However, there are concerns about the extent to which it fulfils its purpose, with the majority arguing that it does not play a role in rewarding performance.

4.2 Impact of PMS on academic performance

In response to the second research question, participants were asked to share their views on the perceived impact of PMS on learners' academic performance. Their responses revealed a single overarching theme- PMS can have both positive and negative effects on academic outcomes as described below.

PMS is a "double-edged sword"

Five participants (1, 2, 7, 9, 10) argued that PMS has failed to make the desired impact on learners' performance. According to them, this is due to a lack of training, poor implementation, inadequate rewards, the inability of teachers to translate the objectives of PMS to learners effectively, and the fact that PMS is more beneficial to new employees.

I would say that performance is now deteriorating, even after the introduction of PMS. The performance is not satisfactory compared to what it was in the past. I would say the performance is deteriorating; it's becoming worse and worse. I don't know the root cause of that, but there is little training for teachers... little training concerning PMS (Participant 1).

The views of the aforementioned participants align with the findings by Ngcamu and Ndlovu (2013), which show that there is no link between PMS and the achievement of objectives in organisations. Additionally, their view supports the claim by Orapeleng (2018) that learners in Botswana do not benefit from the PMS initiative. To effectively implement PMS, there is a need to improve teachers' performance and then translate this improved performance to learners (Agusiobo & Etukokwu, 2017). Failure to translate teachers' performance into learning outcomes is clear evidence that PMS has not achieved its objectives. A similar view is held by Page (2016), who posits that, as an educational tool, PMS should prioritise learners' needs during teachers' assessments. Findings from these five participants suggest that PMS may serve as a tool for monitoring teachers' punctuality, regularity, and dedication to school rules and regulations (Naomee, 2020), rather than being primarily used to assess teachers' performance in relation to learners.

Four of the remaining five respondents (3, 4, 6, and 8) explicitly argued that PMS has had a positive impact on performance in their schools. In contrast, participant 5 argued that although PMS had negative impacts, it had had a positive effect on her.

Yes, I believe so, because every time after an appraisal or a meeting with my supervisors, I tend to see my weaknesses... or maybe not just my weaknesses, but also my strengths. Then I tend to work around them to deliver in my class...yah...because I know there are some aspects, such as time management, that we are being appraised on. After receiving these reviews, they receive feedback, which makes you feel positive, allows you to improve on them, and eventually leads to improved performance in your class (Participant 4).

The impact can be both positive and negative, right? I feel that for me, it had a positive impact because I'm able to track students to check where they are...the baseline...then we come up with the targets to find out where we can go with my students (Participant 5).

The views above indicate that, when effectively implemented, PMS can motivate teachers to meet set objectives by helping them identify their strengths and weaknesses and monitor learners' behaviour. This aligns with one of the core purposes of PMS, which is improving performance by focusing on key result areas derived from the strategic plan (Sharma, 2016).

4.3 Challenges to PMS implementation

Theme 1: Inadequate training and lack of resources

A key challenge hindering the effective implementation of PMS, as highlighted by all participants in this study, is inadequate training. The participants noted that schools often interpret and apply PMS inconsistently and incorrectly, without adhering to any clear standards. This is unsurprising, given that training is essential for helping both employers and employees understand the procedures, objectives, and functions of PMS (Jugmohun, 2018).

They (teachers) are trained enough to do their job, but I don't think they are trained to assess PMS properly. They are not well-trained, and on top of that, I don't think the implementer really understands what they want out of PMS. So the teachers won't be able to do something that the very person who runs the objective is unable to explain (Participant 9).

Perhaps in the implementation, the first stage should be a fully-fledged workshop to teach or guide teachers through PMS. The time is minimal; some will not be able to get it well. Another thing is the interpretation. Some supervisors fail to understand what we are supposed to do during assessment." "Umm...some of us do it for the sake of...of doing it. I think the thing that makes us interpret it differently is that we hear second- or third-hand information, as it comes from the School Head and the Staff Development officer who attended the workshop and then passed the information on to us, which might be distorted. I think that is something that leads to others not getting it correctly. I think if they use a mass workshop for the community or for the employees around, it might be well, and then it takes a week or so to disseminate information (Participant 8).

The challenge of training in PMS implementation is longstanding. Kelly (2012) argued that PMS often fails to achieve its purpose because both employers and employees lack a clear understanding of what the system requires, mainly due to insufficient training. Meanwhile, when head teachers are unclear about the concept of performance management, most of them view it as a tool for monitoring teachers' punctuality, regularity, and obedience to school rules and regulations (Naomee, 2020). This view is supported by Dzimiri et al. (2017), who noted that failure to provide school heads with proper training makes them dictatorial in their supervisory approach, thereby making teachers dislike the programme or resort to deceitful tactics, such as cheating, to satisfy the demands of PMS. Moreover, a lack of essential competencies for implementing PMS is believed to be one of the factors influencing inconsistencies in the implementation of PMS in schools (Machingambi et al., 2013).

Inadequate human and material resources are also major hindrances to the implementation of PMS. According to the participants, little to no votes/funds are dedicated to acquiring resources such as computers, internet, and other materials needed for PMS implementation. Specifically, a participant noted that the situation worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our school lacks sufficient resources to implement PMS, including necessary paperwork, machinery, and other essential items. We only rely on other votes, such as stationery, which are intended to assist learners; we rely on them. So, we don't have a vote specifically for PMS or Staff Development... nothing. Things worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic (Participant 5).

Organisations can't implement PMS properly without sufficient resources (Kelly, 2012; Noronha et al., 2016). The lack of resources required to implement PMS, as seen in this study, confirms initial findings by Bulawa (2011) that resources, such as finances and photocopiers, are hindering the implementation of PMS in Botswana. The absence of votes for acquiring resources to implement PMS is also in conformity with the findings by Dzimbiri (2008), which indicate that the funds allocated for implementing PMS are insufficient to complete the PMS design. These funds are necessary for empowering staff involved in training, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as for rewarding high-performing employees. Therefore, without adequate funding, it becomes challenging to implement PMS effectively.

Theme 2: Negative attitude of teachers towards PMS

Although the participants attributed their negative attitude to PMS to a lack of trained personnel involved in PMS implementation, several other factors, such as a lack of proper mentoring/coaching, a lack of feedback after reviews, a focus on threats and punishment during reviews, and non-involvement of teachers in the planning and implementation of PMS, were highlighted.

The negative attitude towards it stems from the fact that they don't receive any feedback from it; whether it's done or not, life continues to be the same. Eeh...they believe it's just a waste of time because they eeh...they are not developed if they have some shortfalls. If they have done well, they are not rewarded. We believe that it's just a thing to do to tick boxes of the expectations of the Ministry of Basic Education, but for them it doesn't change anything, whether you are not doing well or you are not right, it doesn't change anything, because I think most of them will be having some shortfalls, aah...maybe academically or towards some topics in their particular subjects, and nothing is being done about it. They are not being taken for further studies, they are not being taken to workshops, so I think that is the main reason why we have...they don't have that attachment to it, they take it as something that is not important... obviously it impacts negatively on the students, aah...because, the findings, the PMS findings are not addressed afterwards (Participant 4).

The lack of training, as identified in a previous theme, can contribute to negative attitudes toward PMS. A supervisor who is not well-versed in the principles of PMS is unlikely to effectively mentor or coach their supervisees (Naomee, 2020). They may also struggle to provide the timely and constructive feedback necessary for improving performance. Poor communication before, during, and after performance reviews often leaves employees dissatisfied with the entire process (Ramataboe & Lues, 2018). As noted by Participant 3, the limited feedback may also stem from the fact that reviews are typically conducted at the end of the term, a period when teachers are overwhelmed with marking and recording learners' assessments. A similar concern was raised by Joseph et al. (2020), who observed that teachers felt the timing of the appraisal process was inappropriate, as it typically occurs at the end of the term when they are preoccupied with marking examinations. Furthermore, Boipono et al. (2014) argued that feedback is often not adequately communicated to teachers. When it is, it tends to highlight their weaknesses without offering solutions or support to address those shortcomings. Teachers, therefore, view PMS as a tool for identifying and punishing non-performance, rather than rewarding and improving it.

In organisations where PMS implementation is participative, improved performance is often the result (Noronha et al., 2016). Therefore, involving teachers in the design and implementation stages of PMS is essential (Singh, 2015). Without their involvement, teachers may perceive PMS as an imposed system rather than a tool for professional growth, leading some to adopt deceitful practices to meet its demands (Dzimbiri et al., 2017). Participants in this study also expressed that their exclusion from the PMS process contributed to their negative attitudes toward the system.

The [teaching] profession itself is a unique profession. So, the way we want to implement

PMS in the education system... people tend to compare it to someone in the health service or the Agriculture ministry. So the PMS for teachers, to be honest with you, has to be directed towards the learners themselves, and that's the baseline. Teachers should be involved in designing it (Participant 6).

Similarly, participant 4 argued that teachers will view PMS differently and in a more positive light if they are engaged during the design phase of the system. The lack of involvement of teachers in PMS creates the impression that they do not play a significant role in education policy formulation (Machingambi et al., 2013). It is therefore essential to engage them in the design and planning phase, so that they can see PMS as a means to enhance performance (Maina, 2015). The lack of teacher involvement may also explain why participants viewed the PMS implemented in schools as unsuitable for their needs. They noted that it is overly teacher-centred and lacks critical components, such as classroom observation, that are essential for a comprehensive evaluation.

In summary, the focal findings from the third research question are that the significant challenges hindering the implementation of PMS are a lack of training/workshop, a lack of resources, a negative attitude of teachers towards PMS, a lack of consistency in review, reward and promotion, and a lack of fit of PMS for the education sector. These challenges could be why the findings from the first research question showed that PMS does not play a role in rewarding performance. Moreover, addressing these challenges could significantly enhance the implementation of PMS in the education sector.

4.4 Improving PMS implementation in schools

In line with the final research question, the participants were asked to recommend the steps that could be taken to improve the effectiveness of PMS. Words and phrases such as capacity building, drilling, equipping, refresher courses, and in-service training were used by the participants to express their views on the importance of training for the effective implementation of PMS.

The best we can do is to constantly capacitate the supervisors and most especially the teachers so they know the purpose, and the need for them to have it [PMS] in our school. Qualified personnel should be hired to...to lead the programme, rather than relying on the Senior Teachers' Staff Development, who haven't gone through thorough training (Participant 10)

In addition to addressing key challenges such as a lack of training and resources, participants' views on improving PMS implementation revealed two major themes, which are discussed below:

Theme 1: Specialised PMS Staff

The participants suggested that having specialised PMS staff will improve the effectiveness of PMS because head teachers and senior teachers who have prominent roles to play in its implementation are usually engaged with other administrative and pedagogical duties.

The Senior Teacher 1 has classes to teach, the school head has a lot to do, and PMS will be there...If we have an administrator in schools who focuses solely on PMS, rather than just someone who attends classes or supervises the entire school, it won't work. We do not have enough space in our schools, and I believe that PMS, as a significant entity in improving results, should have an office for the officer. This office should have computers, as we are now dealing with technology, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. You can't be running PMS while you are having just a briefcase that contains much information for maybe 60 or so teachers in your school. You need to have an office that supports data basing and all those things." (Participant 8).

It is not sufficient for policymakers to design PMS and direct school heads to implement it. Participants emphasised the need for dedicated efforts to provide the necessary resources, especially human resources, for effective implementation. They suggested that specific budget allocations be

made for PMS activities. To promote transparency and eliminate favouritism, participants recommended that a panel of adjudicators conduct performance reviews. This highlights the need to hire specialised staff dedicated to PMS in schools. Such measures would help integrate PMS into daily classroom activities, rather than treating it as an occasional routine check. As a result, the concern raised by Khan et al. (2014) that teachers only prepare thoroughly just before reviews could be effectively addressed.

Theme 2: Standardisation of PMS

A significant way to improve PMS in schools is to establish a standard protocol for its implementation. This is necessary because different schools implement PMS without following any standard guidelines. According to Participant 7, standardisation will make the review process objective rather than subjective. Additionally, Participant 8 argued that part of the standardisation process should entail allowing teachers to formulate their PMS objectives rather than imposing them on them.

Something that comes from someone will never have a positive impact than something you create yourself. I think that if we were to create those objectives based on what we are doing and then drive forward, making sure we achieve success, it would be better. Nevertheless, if something comes from upper structures (sighs), then it's going to be difficult for someone to take it through (Participant 8).

The current theme of standardising PMS closely aligns with the earlier recommendation that specialised staff be explicitly employed for PMS implementation. Training these staff members in the PMS design would ensure consistency across schools, leading to a more effective review and reward system. When rewards are directly linked to performance, as supported by both the participants and ET, employees are more likely to recognise the value of PMS (Kelly, 2012), which can enhance their motivation and effectiveness (Mohamud & Belle, 2019). This level of impact is only achievable if PMS is standardised to identify pedagogical challenges, build competencies, and provide constructive feedback on how well team members are applying those competencies to achieve set goals (Rajendran, 2020).

5.0 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This study explored the effectiveness of PMS in appraising teachers' performance. The study, conducted in the Botswana context, is limited by its scope, sample size, and risk of response bias, particularly for data collected via telephone, where visual cues were not available. However, the findings present a contextualised understanding of PMS implementation that can inform education policy and practice.

6.0 Conclusion

This study explored the views of teachers on the effectiveness of the PMS in selected JSS in the SE Region of Botswana. A significant finding is that numerous challenges, including a lack of human and material resources, the absence of standards for PMS implementation, inadequate teacher involvement in design and implementation, and the inappropriateness of PMS for the education sector, have contributed to its ineffectiveness. It is therefore necessary to involve teachers in the implementation and design of PMS, and to recruit PMS staff to help ensure its effective implementation. Further research should be conducted regularly to assess the implementation of PMS and identify any challenges that hinder its progress. Such a study can involve different populations and other levels of learning in Botswana.

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