

Public Personnel Performance Appraisal System (PPPAS)

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Abstract: *Public personnel administration* which is that specialized sub field of public administration, concerns itself with the role of civil service in developing societies; classification of positions and ranks; recruitment, selection, placement and retention; training; promotions; and utilization of human resources, pay and service conditions (S.B. M. Marume; 1983 and 1988), for the purposes of meeting the needs of **institutions**, employees and outside groups (W. Fox and Ivan H. Meyer. 1995:95 and S. B. M. Marume 2016). And public personnel administration scientists, practitioners and researchers who are charged with the **human resources responsibilities** must have a clear and sound understanding, amongst other things, of the personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS). They should also know the full implications of the following **fundamental public personnel performance appraisal question:**

It is a traditional approach that is characterized by:

- (a) mere **evaluation**, excluding the **planning and development function**;
- (b) being linked with the **financial rewards and sanctions**; and
- (c) being **impersonal, bureaucratic, top down, secretive and centralized** excluding participation of the employee being assessed?

From the close analysis of the literature available, personnel psychologists industrial, scientists and researchers strongly contend that:

- (a) **if the personnel appraisal approach is traditional evaluation, then it can hardly be humanistic and motivating to an employee.**
- (b) **instead such a personnel appraisal approach must be focusing more on filling forms giving quantitative rather qualitative information and data.**
- (c) **the obvious question arising from this is: what influence would such a public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS) have on an employee's future performance?**
- (d) **it must be understood that a performance appraisal system is a management tool which can help motivate and effectively utilize human resources and it includes public personnel performance planning (PPPP), appraisal and counselling as essential elements.**

Key Terms: public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS), utilization of human resources, employee and institutional needs, traditional approach, motivation, planning and counselling.

Acronyms

1	PPPAS	:	Public Personnel Performance Appraisal System
2	HRM	:	Human Resources Management
3	PPP	:	Personnel Performance Planning
4	PPA	:	Personnel Performance Appraisal
5	PA	:	Performance Appraisal
6	PBS	:	Person-Based Systems
7	PAP	:	Performance Appraisal Process
8	PPAS	:	Personnel Performance Appraisal Systems
9	BARS	:	Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scales

I. Introduction

Effective human resources management (HRM) is essential for optimally attaining individual and organizational goals. **Leadership** has to ensure proper integration of various activities and harmonious functioning directed towards organizational goals. High motivation is most essential for ensuring commitment of human resources to the given aims and objectives. The key to motivation lies in integrating organizational **vision, mission, core values and goals** and **individual objectives**. Therefore, a personnel manager or administrator has to concentrate on basic human resources management (HRM) tasks such as planning, development, compensation and evaluation.

Evaluation includes **personnel performance planning (PPP)**, **appraisal** and **counselling** which are critical in effective HRM. This article concentrates on **the public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS)**.

II. Purpose Of Article

The purpose of this article is **to examine** the public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS) in public institutions that embrace **central government departments, metropolitan and provincial councils and local authorities**, as well as **parastatal institutions and bodies inclusive of universities and technical colleges**.

III. Objectives

After studying this article, we should be able to understand and appreciate:

- (a) the concept of public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS).
- (b) the objectives, uses, and characteristics of a personnel appraisal system.
- (c) important considerations in designing a public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS).
- (d) the appraisal process, approaches and techniques.
- (e) attributes considered when evaluating performance.
- (f) designing appraisal formats.
- (g) the role of performance evaluation researchers.

Sessional training material

This article can be used as a university sessional training material for those interested in public personnel performance appraisal systems [PPPAS] in public institutions: **local, provincial and metropolitan**, and **central institutions** as well as **international civil services**; and to encourage the introduction of PPPAS in all public authorities.

IV. Personnel Performance Appraisal [PPA]

Leading scientists: most pertinent to the specialized activity of personnel performance appraisal system[PPPAS] include:

• E. Graig	• R. Schneier	• W. Beatty
• L. S. Baird	• L. J. Nickel	• Oberg and Monga
• Rao	• W. Fox	• Ivan H. Meyer
• Pattern	• S.B.M.Marume	• J.J.N.Cloete

• Definitions and meanings of relevant terms and concepts

Various but closely related terms and concepts are given to enrich the discussion on: **performance appraisal, performance indicators, personnel benefits, compensation and interview**.

Firstly two closely relevant concepts need to be defined: performance and performance appraisal.

W. Fox and Ivan H. Meyer (1995:94) view the concepts of **performance** as the way in which planned action takes place or objectives are reached; operational behaviour directly related to the organization's effectivity:

$$\text{Performance} = \text{ability} \times \text{motivation}$$

$$\text{"A"} = \text{B} \times \text{C} = \text{BC}$$

Explanations

*A represents performance

*B represents ability

*C represents motivation

Performance Appraisal [PA]:

- (a) A system of personnel evaluation which reviews a personnel member's performance over a fixed period of time against mutually agreed targets and objectives.
- (b) Specific evaluation with respect to an individual's progress in completing specified tasks.
- (c) Together with that person reviewing a person's performance against mutually agreed targets and objectives (**Fox and Meyer**, 1995: 94)

But Marume and Madziyire (2016) view **performance appraisal** as:

- (a) a system of specifically evaluating an employees work for a fixed period of time
- (b) by a supervisor measuring against mutually agreed targets and objectives
- (c) for the purpose of determining whether tasks were actually performed
- (d) according to set measures and standards
- (e) in order to implement the institutional reward system

Secondly, the term **performance indicators**; can be evaluated through two basis criteria: person based and performance based.

- (a) **Person-based systems [PBS]**: assess an employee's personality traits, characteristics and attitudes and this may lead to subjective assessments. In such a system employees are compared against other employees or against some absolute standards.
- (b) While **performance-based systems**; measure each employee's behaviour against previously established behaviours (**Fox and Meyer**, 1995: 94 -95).

Thirdly, personnel benefits: comprise cash allowances paid to civilian and military employees' incident to their employment and payment to other funds for the benefit of employees. Prerequisites provided in kind, such as uniforms or quarters, and payments to veterans and former employees resulting from employment, are excluded.

Fourthly, personnel compensation: comprises gross compensation for services of individuals, including terminal leave payments. This classification covers all payments (salaries, wages, fees) for personnel services rendered to the government by its officers or employees, and compensation for special services rendered by consultants or others (**Fox and Meyer**, 1995:95).

Fifthly, appraisal means the measurement and evaluation of an individual's performance against established standards of performance (Fox and Meyer, 1995:8).

Sixthly, appraisal interview: refers to a discussion following a performance appraisal in which supervisor and employee discuss the employee's rating and possible remedial actions (**W. Fox and Ivan H. Meyer**, 1995:8)

Seventhly, public personnel ;administration is a specialized sub-field of public administration that concerns itself with recruitment, selection, placement, retention and utilization of human (personnel) resources to meet the needs of institutions, employees and outside groups (**Marume**: 1988 and 2016).

Eighthly, instructional Illustrations and Materials demonstrating personnel performance appraisal system as follows:

Exhibit 1: What should a performance appraisal system be?

Exhibit 2: The performance appraisal process

Exhibit 3: Standards and indicators

Exhibit 4: How the performance appraisal system can help?

Exhibit 5: Approaches in performance appraisal.

Exhibit 6: Techniques of performance appraisal

Exhibit 7: During performance appraisal distinguish between

Exhibit 8: Components of appraisal format.

Exhibit 9: Attributes considered in evaluating performance.

Exhibit 10: Performance appraisal systems

Exhibit 11: Appraisal interview

Exhibit 12: Measuring the performance of researchers.

V. Explanations And Descriptions Of Instructions

1. **Show EXHIBIT 1 and discuss:** desirable features of a performance appraisal system. Emphasize the linkage between:
 - (i) Past performance and future planning, and
 - (ii) individual and organisation goals.
2. **Using EXHIBIT 2, discuss:** the process of appraisal stages involved. To begin with, realistic **standards** and **measures** have to be established to differentiate between different levels of performance. Then employees have to be **informed** as to what is expected of them and how their performance will be measured against set standards and targets. Next comes **planning** for realization of performance expectations through use of resources and **monitoring**. Monitoring is to help remove difficulties rather than to interfere. Performance is documented in various ways during the **appraisal stage** and thereafter **feedback** is given. Emphasize that feedback should involve planning for the future as well. On the basis of appraisal and feedback, evaluation **decisions** have to be made, which include rewards or punishments. The final stage is **development of performance**.
3. The performance appraisal system has to be based on clearly specified and measurable standards and indicators. **Who EXHIBIT 3 and discuss** important standards and indicators. **Goals** have to be consistent and mutually decided by the employee and management. If necessary, the appraisal system could be directed towards a particular client. The appraisal system has to be **reliable** and **consistent**, and should include both objective and subjective ratings. The appraisal format should be **practical** and **simple**. The process should be **participatory** and **open**. It should be linked with rewards. Feedback is a important part

of appraisal, and has to be **timely, impersonal** and **noticeable**. Observe that an appraisal system can be effective only if it is accepted by employees and if management is fully committed [full commitment].

4. Performance appraisal has different objectives for management and for the employees. Employees are interested in having an assessment of their work from the viewpoint of personal development, work satisfaction and involvement in the organization. Management assesses the performance of employees to maintain organizational control and disburse rewards and punishment to further organizational goals. Thus, a spirit of mutuality is essential in an effective performance appraisal system. **Show EXHIBIT 4 and discuss:** how a performance system can be useful. For employees, it can impart a better understanding of their job, skills and limitation, and provides an opportunity for self-reflection. It can help identify development needs. It can increase mutuality and strengthen communication between employees and management.
5. **Show EXHIBIT 5 and discuss:** different approaches to performance appraisal. The **intuitive** approach uses perceptions. The **self-appraisal** approach relies on self-evaluation. The **group** approach uses evaluation by a group of persons. The **trait** approach uses the conventional method of evaluation against certain traits. Last is **achievement-based appraisal**, which compares achievement against goals set mutually during the planning process.
6. There are several techniques for performance appraisal. **Show EXHIBIT 6 and discuss** each of these techniques. In the **essay appraisal** method, evaluation is based on an essay type report from a rater who is familiar with the work of the employee being appraised. The **graphic rating scale** uses either quality of work or personal traits. In the **field review method**, effort is made to synchronise different ratings. The rater chooses the best-fit and worst fit statements from a group of statements in the **force choice rating method**. The **critical incident** appraisal method uses critical incidents in evaluating performance. **Management by objectives** involves evaluation against mutually set, realistic goals. In the **work standard approach**, appraisal is for achievements against targets based on mutually agreed output standards. The **ranking method** involves several techniques. In the **alteration ranking** method, individuals are ranked in a descending order of performance. **Paired comparison** involves comparison of every individual in the group with other individuals. In the **man-to-man rating** system, standards are set against actual individuals and then other individuals are matched with them. The **checklist method** involves a pre-scaled checklist of behaviour. **Behaviourally anchored rating scales** use a set of behavioural statements relating to qualities for performance. The **assessment center** is a technique used to predict future performance of the employee and involves performing higher-level duties.
7. Performance appraisal should **help in clearly** distinguishing between **more specific crucial issues** and **broad concerns often expressed as perceptions** (EXHIBIT) 7.
8. **Show EXHIBIT 8 and discuss:** various components of an appraisal format. Inform participants that later on they will be required to design an appraisal format. In designing this format, one must seek information on the attributes to be considered in evaluating performance. These may include personal qualities as well as demonstrate performance.
9. **Show EXHIBIT 9 and discuss:** various personal qualities and demonstrate performance attributes which should be considered in designing an appraisal format. Note that there are problems relating to assessment, identification of appraisal criteria, and policy for performance evaluation.
10. **Show EXHIBIT 10 and discuss:** various problems in a performance appraisal system. These problems may relate to measurement, judgment, policy or organization.
11. **Show EXHIBIT 11** and discuss: the importance of the performances appraisal interview, during which focus is on future planning while giving feedback on past performance. A performance appraisal interview should be properly planned and concluded skillfully. It should be used to efficiently communicate feedback on performance during the previous year.
12. Conclude the session by asking the participants for their criteria for evaluating scientist. Write their responses on the chalkboard and compare them with EXHIBIT 12.

VI. Demonstrations Of Practical Actions

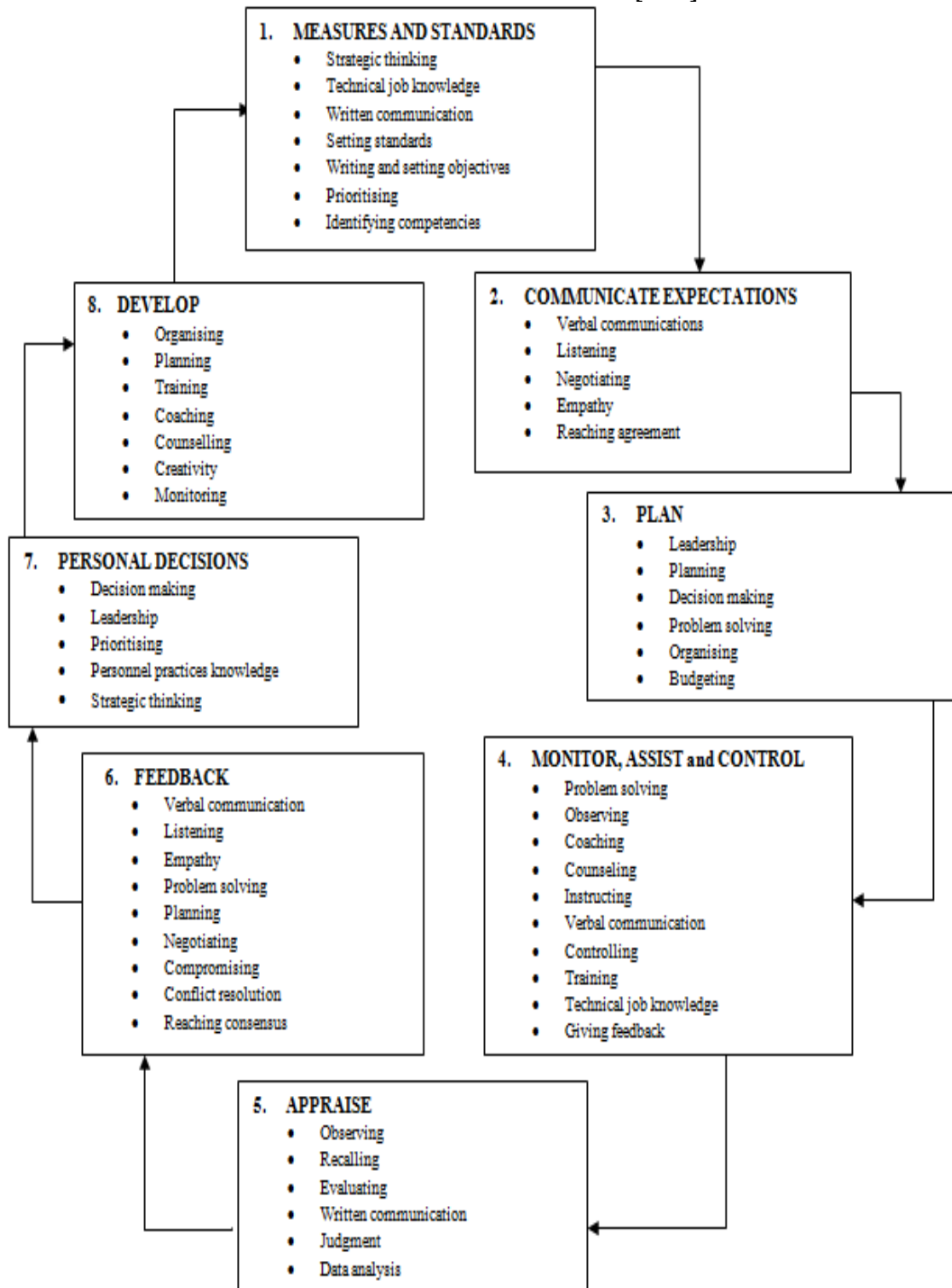
(Aids: overhead projector, chalkboard, flipchart, group discussion, comparisons and summaries).

1. **EXHIBIT 1: WHAT SHOULD A PERFORMANCE SYSTEM BE?**
 - Correlate with the organization's philosophies, mission, aims, values and objectives.
 - Cover assessment of performance as well as potential for development.
 - Look after the needs of both the individual and the institution/organization.
 - Help create a clean environment.
 - Rewards linked to achievements.
 - Generate Information for personnel development and career planning.
 - Suggesting appropriate person-task matching.

Summary of actions

- Performance appraisal should
- evaluate,
 - audit,
 - motivate
 - identify training needs
 - develop the individual and plan for future performance

2. EXHIBIT 2: THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS [PAP]



Source: Graig, E., Schneier, R., Beatty, W. and Baird, L. S. 1986. Training and Development Journal. May, 1986

3. EXHIBIT 3: STANDARDS AND INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

- Mutual goal
- Reliable and consistent
- Accurate and equitable
- Practical and simple format
- Regular and routine
- Participatory and open
- Rewards
- Timely feedback
- Impersonal feedback
- Noticeable feedback
- Relevance and responsiveness
- Commitment

4. EXHIBIT 4: HOW CAN PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM HELP?

- Promote better understanding of an employee; role and clarity about his or her functions.
- Give a better understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to expected roles and functions.
- Identify development need of an employee.
- Establish common ground between the employee and the supervisor.
- Increase communication.
- Provide an employee with the opportunity for self-reflection and individual goal setting.
- Help and employee internalize the culture, norms and values of the organization. This helps develop an identity with and commitment to the organization and prepares an employee for higher-level positions in the hierarchy.
- Assist in a variety of personnel decisions.

5. EXHIBIT 5: APPROACHES IN PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

- Intuitive
- Self appraisal
- Group
- Trait.
- Achievement of results

6. EXHIBIT 6: TECHNIQUES OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

- Easy appraisal method
- Graphic rating scales
- Field review method
- Forced choice rating method
- Critical incident appraisal method
- Management by objectives.
- Work standard approach.
- Ranking methods
- alteration methods
- alteration ranking
- paired comparison
- person to person rating
- checklist
- behaviorally anchored rating scales
- assessment centres.

7. EXHIBIT 7: DURING PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL, DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ...

Accomplishments and Activity
Working efficiently and Working effectively
Work and Important work
Working hard and Working smart

Source: Nickle, L. J. 1989. Research Management for Development: An Open Letter to a New Agricultural Research Director San Jose. Costa Rica: ICCA, 1989

8. EXHIBIT 8: COMPONENTS OF THE APPRAISAL FORMAT

- Identification of key performance areas.
- Identification of qualities for job performance
- Self-appraisal
- Analysis
- Discussion
- Identification of training needs
- Action plan and goal setting for the future.
- Final assessment

9. EXHIBIT 9: ATTRIBUTES CONSIDERED IN EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

Personal attributes	Demonstrated performance
Adaptability	Professional knowledge
Appearance and bearing	Administrative ability
Decisiveness	Responsibility for staff development
Dependability	Foresight
Drive and determination	Delegation
Ingenuity	Motivation
Initiative	Morale
Integrity	Control and leadership
Loyalty	
Maturity	
Stamina	
Tenacity	
Verbal expression	
Written expression	

10. EXHIBIT 10: PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEMS

PROBLEMS			
Measurement	Judgment	Policy	Organization
Deciding what to evaluate	Appraising performance	Using the results of the appraisal	Recognizing how managers work and the organization culture
SYMPTOMS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambiguity in roles and responsibilities of each job • Job performance is difficult to quantify • No clear statement of overall objectives of units or the organization • Appraisal contains only numerical indices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagreement on ratings • Official review changes ratings • Appeals grievances, accusations of bias, discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top management fails to reward managers who are excellent in staff assessment and development • Marginal performers receive promotions or salary increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisal forms not completed. • Managers complain about time need • System seen as belonging to the designers, not the users. • Personnel/HR specialist take enforce not adviser role. • System revised frequently
POTENTIAL CURES			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job analysis and credible job description • Outcomes of each job identified • Overall goals set for units and the organization • Train managers to make documented judgments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observable behaviourally based criteria • Performance documented over time • Rater training and practice. • Effective communication of performance expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top management actually uses performance appraisal itself • Policies for performance appraisal consistently applied. • Performance –contingent reward system operates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement performance appraisal using the Performance Management (PM) Model

Source: Graig, E. S., Beatty, R. E., and Baird, L. S. 1986. How to contract a successful performance appraisal system. Training and Development Journal. April: 38-42.

11 EXHIBIT 11: APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

- Planning an interview
 - Tell and sell
 - Tell and listen
 - Problem solving
- Conducting an interview as planned
- Applying good questioning techniques
- Listen intelligently and without prejudice while someone less senior does most of the talking
- Communicating effectively verbally and non-verbally

Source: J. Davies, AFP, FAO, Rome.

11. EXHIBIT 12: MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF RESEARCHERS

- Overall performance
- Quality of output
- Productivity
- Quantity of written work
- Originality of written work
- Recent reports
- Membership in professional societies.
- Recognition for organizational contribution
- Status seeking tendencies
- Current organizational status
- Creativity rating from high-level supervisors
- Overall quality rating by immediate supervisors.

VII. Detailed Discussion And Analysis Of Appraisal System

1. Performance appraisal system: the concept

Performance appraisal is a management tool which is helpful in motivating and effectively utilizing human resources. Assessment of human potential is difficult, no matter how well designed and appropriate the performance planning and appraisal system is.

The performance appraisal system should:

- Be correlated with the organizational mission, philosophies and value system;
- Cover assessment of performance as well as potential for development;
- Take care of organizational as well as individual needs; and
- Help in creating a clean environment by
 - Linking rewards with achievements.
 - Generating information for the growth of the employee as well as of the organization, and
 - Suggesting appropriate person-task matching and career plans

Feedback is an important component of performance appraisal. While positive feedback is easily accepted, negative feedback often meets with resistance unless it is objective, based on a credible source and given in a skilful manner.

A desired competency: Job analysis:

A critically desired competency/skill/ability for a professional public personnel performance appraisal systems [PPPPAS] scientist/researcher/consultant to have in order to be practically useful is **job analysis** and to be **analytical** and **rational**.

A sound knowledge of terminological uses and semasiological analysis: related terms and concepts:

(a) **Job:**

- a group of positions that are identical or similar with respect to their major job tasks

(b) **Job analysis:**

- the produce for determining the duties and skill requirements of a job and the kind of person who should be hired for it.
- the systematic collection, organization, and evaluation of information and data about jobs in an institution

(c) **Job description:**

- a list of job's duties, responsibilities, reporting relationships, working conditions, and supervisory responsibilities - one product of job analysis
- a thorough analysis of the work to be done and the capabilities needed for a job; typically contains these elements -
 - job title
 - duties required
 - responsibilities
 - job qualifications
- a detailed written statement of the purpose, task elements, responsibilities, tools employed for a specific job, and conditions under which the job is performed.

(d) Job specification

- a list of job's human requirements, that is,
 - the requisite education
 - skills [human, technical, cognitive]
 - attitudes [behaviours, personality traits] = another product of a job analysis.

(e) Job institution training [JIT]

Listing each of a job's basic tasks, along with a key point for each task, in order to provide step-by-step training for employees.

(f) Other related terms

- job characteristics model
- job content and job context
- job design
- job enrichment
- evaluation
- job enlargement
- job posting
- job rotation
- job satisfaction
- job sharing

2. Objectives of performance appraisal

Employees would like to know from a performance appraisal system:

- Concrete and tangible particulars about their work; and
- Assessment of their performance

This would include how they:

- did
- could do better in future
- could obtain a larger share of rewards ;and
- could achieve their life goals through their position

Therefore an employee would desire that the appraisal system should aim at:

- Their personal development;
- Their work satisfaction; and
- Their involvement in the organization

From the point of view of the organization, performance appraisal services the purposes of:

- Providing information about human resources and their development
- Measuring the efficiency with which human resources are being used and improved.
- Providing compensation packages to employees; and
- Maintaining organizational control.

Performance appraisal should also aim at the mutual goals of the employees and the organization. This is essential because employees can develop only when the organization's interests are fulfilled. The organization's main resources are its employees, and their interest cannot be neglected. Mutual goals simultaneously provide for growth and development of the organization as well as of the human resources. They increase harmony and enhance effectiveness of human resources in the organization.

3. Uses of an appraisal system

A properly designed performance appraisal system can (Rao, 1958):

- Help each employee understand more about their role and become clear and their functions;
- Be instrumental in helping employees to better understand their strengths and weaknesses with respect to their role and functions in the organization.
- Help in identifying the developmental needs of employees ,given their role and function;
- Increase mutuality between employees and their supervisors so that every employee feels happy to work with their supervisor and thereby contributes their maximum to the organization;

- Act as a mechanism for increasing communication between employees and their supervisors. In this way, each employee gets to know the expectations of their superior, and each superior also gets to know the difficulties of their subordinates and can try to solve them. Together, they can thus better accomplish their tasks;
- Provide an opportunity to each employee for self reflection and individual goal-setting, so that individually planned and monitored development takes place;
- Help employees internalize the culture, norms and values of the organization, thus developing and identity and commitment throughout the organization;
- Help prepare employees for higher responsibilities in the future by continuously reinforcing the development of the behaviour and qualities required for higher-level positions in the organization.
- Be instrumental In creating a positive and healthy climate In the organization that drives employees to give their best while enjoying doing so; and
- Assist in a variety of personnel decisions by periodically generating data regarding each employee.

In advancing the arguments on why universities and technical colleges as institutions of higher learning should effect performance appraisals, S.B.M. Marume and N.C Madziyire have this to say:

Universities and technical and vocational colleges should put in place performance appraisal systems which are purposefully intended to actively support universities' strategic plans. Performance appraisals should be instituted as quality control and quantity and quality assurance measures. Such performance appraisals should ensure that staff move from a culture of entitlement towards reward earned through performance.

Performance appraisal in universities and technical and vocational colleges, in essence, should seek to monitor and measure the effectiveness of staff in terms of their contributions to teaching and tutoring, research and publications as well as involvement/participation in university and community services.

In order to obtain a credible appraisal of the staff performance effectiveness, a personnel resources performance appraisal form needs to be completed by every staff member. The university should require each staff member to indicate courses he/she teaches and tutors in particular programmes at various levels. It should further require that staff should indicate their achievements in terms of research, consultancy and publications in refereed local, regional and international journals, book chapters and textbooks. The staff members should also be expected to specify their contributions towards producing reading materials of value to the learners; and this should include modules and handouts for learners.

At the end of each quarter the appraiser and appraisee should be expected to review progress in terms of the agreed positions at the beginning of each quarter. Subsequent performance appraisal reviews should focus on the appraisees efforts at improving on the desired performance, knowledge, competencies/abilities/skills, and attitudes as indicated in the performance appraisal.

The researcher should be keen to find at whether the personnel appraisal instruments are able to capture aspects which provide clear indicators to effectiveness, or as audit trail forms whether they are able to measure aspects which are measurable and verifiable. Personnel performance appraisal at universities and technical and vocational colleges should focus on three priority areas, namely, teaching/tutoring, research, and community service. In terms of this, there is the university's priority which is to ensure that staff achieve intended goals in terms of the university's mission, vision, core values and goals, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the staff have their own expectations in terms of what the personnel performance appraisal should achieve.

The two scholars further argue that as a matter of policy, the university policy document should stipulate that each staff member, most particularly the academic staff, should identify his/her key results areas in terms of teaching/tutoring, research, and university and community services. The three aspects should help to show that immediate results are achieved after performing the desired tasks. The staff members as the appraisees should also be expected to achieve medium term results which should constitute outcomes. Further, the appraisees should be expected to focus on the long term objectives which should link up with university goals. In a bid to always remain focused during the performance appraisal process, the appraisees are expected to discuss and agree with their various unit supervisors on the quantity and quality of the intended results. Timelines are set out and agreed upon by both supervisors and supervisees [appraisees]. Quarterly reviews are expected to be carried out to determine the extent to which targets are met, and where targets are not met, further strategies are put in place to meet the intended goals [Marume and Madziyire, 2016]

4. Characteristics of an appraisal system

Performance appraisal cannot be implemented successfully unless it is accepted by all concerned. There should be a common and clear understanding of the distinction between evaluation and appraisal. As **Patten** (1982) argues, evaluation aims at 'objective' measurement, while appraisal includes both objective and subjective assessment of how well an employee has performed during the period under review. Thus performance appraisal aims at 'feedback, development and assessment'. The process of performance appraisal should concentrate

on the job of the employee, the environment of the organization, and the employee him or herself. These three factors are inter-related and inter-dependent. Therefore, in order to be effective, the appraisal system should be individualized, subjective, qualitative and oriented towards problem solving. It should be based on clearly specified and measurable standards and indicators of performance. Since what is being appraised is performance and not personality, personality traits which are not relevant to job performance should be excluded from the appraisal framework.

Some of the important considerations in designing a performance appraisal system are:

- **Goal:**

The job description and the performance goals should be structured, mutually decided and accepted by both management and employees.

- **Reliable and consistent:**

Appraisal should include both objective and subjective ratings to produce reliable and consistent measurement of performance.

- **Practical and simple format:**

the appraisal format should be practical, simple and aim at fulfilling its basic functions. Long and complicated formats are time consuming, difficult to understand, and do not elicit much useful information.

- **Regular and routine:**

While an appraisal system is expected to be formal in a structured manner, informal contacts and interactions can also be used for providing feedback to employees.

- **Participatory and open:**

An effective appraisal system should necessarily involve the employee's participation, usually through an appraisal interview with the supervisor, for feedback and future planning. During the interview, past performances should be discussed frankly and future goals established. A strategy for accomplishing these goals as well as for improving future performance should be evolved jointly by the supervisor and the employee being appraised. Such participation imparts a feeling of involvement and creates a sense of belonging.

- **Rewards:**

both positive and negative – should be part of the performance appraisal system. Otherwise, the process lacks impact.

- **Feedback should be timely:**

unless feedback is timely, it loses its utility and may have only limited influence on performance.

- **Impersonal feedback:**

Feedback must be impersonal it is to have the desired effect. Personal feedback is usually rejected with contempt, and eventually de-motivates the employee.

- **Feedback must be noticeable:**

The staff member being appraised must be made aware of the information used in the appraisal process. An open or transparent performance appraisal process creates credibility.

- **Relevance and responsiveness:**

Planning and appraisal of performance and consequent rewards or punishments should be oriented towards the objectives of the programme in which the employee has been assigned a role. For example, if the objectives of a programme are directed towards a particular client group, then the appraisal system has to be designed with that orientation.

- **Commitment:** Responsibility for the appraisal system should be located at a senior level in the organization so as to ensure commitment and involvement throughout the management hierarchy.

5. Performance appraisal system: The process

Performance appraisal involves evaluation of actual against desired performance. It also helps in reviewing various factors which influence performance. Managers should plan performance development strategies in a structured manner for each employee. In doing so, they should keep the goals of the organization in mind and aim at optimal utilization of all available resources, including financial. Performance appraisal is a multistage process in which communication plays an important role.

Graig, Beatty and Baird (1986) suggested an eight-stage performance appraisal process:

(a) Establishing standards and measures

The first step is to identify and establish measures which would differentiate between successful and unsuccessful performances. These measures should be under the control of the employees being appraised. The methods for assessing performance should be decided next basically, management wants to:

- know the behaviour and personal characteristics of each employee; and
- assess their performance and achievement in the job.

There are various methods available for assessing results, behaviour and personal characteristics of an employee. These methods can be used according to the following stages:

(b) Communicating job expectations

The second step in the appraisal process is communicating to employees the measures and standards which will be used in the appraisal process. Such communication should clarify expectations and create a feeling of involvement.

(c) Planning

In this stage, the manager plans for the realization of performance expectations, arranging for the resources to be available which are required for attaining the goals set. This is an enabling role.

(d) Monitoring performance

Performance appraisal is a continuous process, involving ongoing feedback. Even though performance is appraised annually, it has to be managed 'each day, all year long'. Monitoring is a key part of the performance appraisal process. It should involve providing assistance as necessary and removing obstacles rather than interfering. The best way to effectively monitor is to walk around, thus creating continuous contacts, providing first-hand information, and identifying problems, which can then be solved promptly.

(e) Appraising

This stage involves documenting performance through observing, recalling, evaluating, written communication, judgement and analysis of data. This is like putting together an appraisal record.

(f) Feedback

After the formal appraisal stage, a feedback session is desirable. This session should involve verbal communication, listening, problem solving, negotiating, compromising, conflict resolution and reaching consensus.

(g) Decision making

On the basis of appraisal and feedback results, various decisions can be made about giving rewards (e.g. promotion, incentives, etc. and punishments (e.g. demotion). The outcome of an appraisal system should be used for career development.

(h) Development of performance

The last stage of performance appraisal is 'development or performance', or professional development, by providing opportunities for upgrading skills and professional interactions. This can be done by supporting participation in professional conferences or by providing opportunities for further study. Such opportunities can also act as incentives or rewards for employees.

6 Communication

It is obvious that communication is at the core of an appraisal system. Communication can be either upward or downward.

- **Downward communication** is from upper management levels to lower levels, and passes on judgment of how employees are doing and how they might do even better. As the information flows downward, it becomes more individualized and detailed.
- **Upward communication** is from lower to higher level. Through this process, employees communicate their needs, aspirations and goals. As information flows upward, it has to become brief and precise because of the channels through which it has to pass.

Marume [2016] contends that communication is not **two-dimensional**, which is, **downward** and **upward communication**, but **three dimensional**, namely,

- **downward communication:** the transmission of instructions and other messages, which originate with officials at the head of the institution, through the underlying supervisory levels, until they reach the lowest levels of the hierarchy.
- **upward communication:** sending messages upwards from the lower levels of the hierarchy to the higher management levels. Major obstacles in the way of such communication, include
 - physical distance or inaccessibility;
 - screening, dilution or distortion at each particular level;
 - attitudes of superiors
 - inferior status of subordinates; and

- tradition
- **lateral or horizontal communication:** that is, communication among employees at the same level within a hierarchy or among individual employees at various levels not in a superior/subordinate relationships

These could be relationship of either an infra-or-inter organizational nature. Horizontal barriers or communications problems that occur between person or organizational units of equal status, caused by characteristics of:

- sender
- receiver or
- situation

7. Approaches and techniques in performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is a multistage process involving several activities, which can be administered using a variety of approaches. Some of these approaches are considered below, based on **Einstein** and **LeMere-Labonte**, 1989; and **Monga**, 1983:

- (a) **Intuitive approach:** in this approach, a supervisor or manager judges the employee based on their perception of the employee's behaviour.
- (b) **Self-appraisal approach:** Employees evaluate their own performance using a common format.
- (c) **Group approach:** The employee is evaluated by a group of persons.
- (d) **Trait approach:** This is the conventional approach. The manner of supervisor evaluates the employee on the basis of observable dimensions of personality, such as integrity, honesty, dependability, punctuality, etc.
- (e) **Appraisal based on achieved results:** In this type of approach, appraisal is based on concrete, measurable, work achievement judged against fixed targets or goals set mutually by the subject and assessor.
- (f) **Behavioural method:** this method focuses on observed behaviour and observable critical incidents.

8. Appraisal techniques

There are several techniques of performance appraisal, each with some strong points as well as limitations. Oberg (1972) has summarized some of the commonly used performance appraisal techniques.

(a) Easy appraisal method

The assessor writes brief essay providing assessment of the strengths, weaknesses and potential of the subject. In order to do so objectively, it is necessary that the assessor knows the subject well and should have interacted with them. Since the length and contents of the essay vary between assessors, essay ratings are difficult to compare.

(b) Graphic rating scale

A graphic scale 'assesses a person on the quality of his or her work (**average, above average, outstanding or unsatisfactory**)'. Assessment could also be trait centered and covers observable traits, such as reliability, adaptability, communication skills, etc. Although graphic scales seem simplistic in construction, they have application in a wide variety of job responsibilities and are more consistent and reliable in comparison with essay appraisal technique.

(c) Field review method

Since individual assessors differ in their standards, they inadvertently introduce bias in their ratings. To everyone this assessor-related bias, easy and graphic rating techniques can be combined in a systematic review process. In the field review method, a member of the HRM staff meets a small group of assessor from the supervisor units to discuss each rating, systematically identifying areas of inter-assessor disagreement. It can then be a mechanism to help each assessor to perceive the standards uniformly and thus match the other assessor. Although field review assessment is considered valid and reliable, it is very time consuming.

(d) Forced-choice rating method

Unlike the field review method, the forced choice rating method does not involve discussion with supervisors, although this technique has several limitations. The most common method is to force the assessors to choose the best and worst fit statements from a group of statements. These statements are weighted or scored in advance to assess the employee. The scores or weights assigned to the individual statements are not revealed to the assessor so that she or he cannot favour any individual. In this way, the assessor bias is largely eliminated and comparable standards of performance evolved for an objective. However, this technique is of little value whenever performance appraisal interviews are conducted.

(e) Critical incident appraisal method

In this method, a supervisor describes critical incidents, giving details of both positive and negative behaviour of the employee. These are then discussed with the employee. The discussion focuses on actual behaviour rather than on traits. While this technique is well suited for performance review interviews, it has its drawback that the supervisor has to note down the critical incidents as and when they occur. That may be impractical, and may delay feedback to employees. It makes little sense to wait six months or a year to discuss a misdeed, a mistake or good display initiative.

(f) Management by objectives

The employees are asked to set or help set their own performance goals. This avoids the feeling among employees that they are being judged by unfairly high standards. This method is currently widely used, but not always in its true spirit. Even though the employees are consulted, in many cases management ends up by imposing its standards and objectives. In some cases employees may not like 'self direction or authority'. To avoid such problems, the work standard approach is used.

(g) Work standard approach

In this technique, management established the goals openly and set targets against realistic output standards. These standards are incorporated into the organizational performance appraisal system. Thus each employee has a clear understanding of their duties and knows well what is expected of them. Performance appraisal and interview comments are related to these duties. This makes the appraisal process objective and more accurate. However, it is difficult to compare individual ratings because standards for work may differ from job to job and from employee to employee. This limitation can be overcome by some form of ranking using pooled judgment.

(h) Ranking methods

Some of the important forms of ranking for performance appraisal are given below, based on **Oberg, 1972**; and **Monga, 1983**:

(i) Alteration ranking method:

The individual with the best performance is chosen as the ideal employee. Other employees are then ranked against this employee in descending order of comparative performance on a scale of best to worst performance. The alteration method usually involves rating by more than one assessor. The ranks assigned by each assessor are then averaged and a relative ranking of each member in the group is determined. While this is a simple method, it is impractical for large groups. In addition, there may be wide variations in ability between ranks for different positions.

(ii) Paired comparison:

The paired comparison method systematizes ranking and enables better comparison among individuals to be rated. Every individual in the group is compared with all others in the group. The evaluations received by each person in the group are counted and turned into percentage scores. The scores provide a fair idea as to how each individual in the group is judged by the assessor.

(iii) Person-to-person rating:

in the person-to-person rating, the names of the actual individuals known to all the assessors are used as a series of standards. These standards may be defined as **lowest, low, middle, high** and **highest performances**. Individual employees in the group are then compared with the individuals used as the standards, and rated for a standard where they match the best. The advantage of this rating scale is that the standards are concrete and are in terms of real individuals. The disadvantage is that the standards set by different assessors may not be consistent. Each assessor constructs their own person-to-person scale which makes comparison of different ratings difficult.

(iv) Checklist method:

The assessor is furnished with a checklist of pre-scaled descriptions of behaviour, which are then used to evaluate the personnel being rated (Monga, 1983). The scale values of the behaviour item are unknown to the assessor, who has to check as many items as she or he believes describe the worker being assessed. A final rating is obtained by averaging the scale values of the items that have been marked.

(v) Behaviourally anchored rating scales (BARS):

This is a relatively new technique. It consists of sets of behavioural statements describing good or bad performance with respect to important qualities. These qualities may refer to inter-personal relationships, planning and organizing abilities, adaptability and reliability. These statements are developed from critical incidents collected both from the assessor and the subject.

(vi) Assessment centres:

This technique is used to predict future performance of employees were they to be promoted. The individuals whose potential is to be assessed has to work on individual as well as group assignments similar to those they would be required to handle were they promoted. The judgment of observers is pooled and paired comparison or alternation ranking helps in making an order-of-merit ranking for each employee. It also involves subjective judgment by observers.

A performance appraisal system could be designed based on intuition, self analysis, personality traits, behavioural methods and results based techniques. Different approaches and techniques could be blended, depending on the goals of performance appraisal in the organization and the type of review. For example, management by objectives, goal-setting and work standard methods are effective for objective coaching, counseling and motivational purposes. Critical incident appraisal is best suited when supervisor's personal assessment and criticism are essential. A carefully developed and validated forced choice rating can provide valuable analysis of the individual when considering possible promotion to supervisory positions. Combined graphic and essay form is simple, effective in identifying training and development needs, and facilitates other management decisions.

9. Components of the appraisal format

Key performance areas, self-appraisal, performance analysis, performance ratings and counseling are the important components of a performance appraisal system oriented to development of human resources in an organization. The appraisal format should be designed in consonance with the objectives of the performance appraisal system and generate information on a number of important aspects including (Rao, 1985):

- **Identification of key performance areas:**

The first step in an appraisal process is identifying key performance areas and setting targets for the next appraisal period. This may be done either through periodic discussions or at the beginning of the year, as in research institutions.

- **Self-appraisal by the subject:**

At the end of the appraisal period, employees appraise their own performance against key performance areas, targets and pre-identified behaviour. Information on these issues is provided in an appraisal format. The employees also write their self-evaluation reports and hand them to their supervisors.

- **Analysis:**

The supervisor reflects on the performance of the employee, and identifies the factors which facilitated or hindered the employee's performance. The manager then calls the employee for a discussion to better understand his or her performance and provide counseling of further improvements. During this discussion, appraisal records (such as notes, observations, comments, etc) are exchanged. The manager then gives a final rating and recommendations regarding the development needs on the individual. These are shown to the subject and his or her comments are recorded on the appraisal form. The appraisal form is then transmitted to the personnel department for the necessary administrative action. The personnel of human resource development department use these forms for identifying and allocating training, rewards and other activities.

- **Identification of training needs:**

The use of a development oriented performance appraisal system is based on a good understanding of the concept of human resources development. The need for developing employee capabilities, the nature of capabilities to be developed and the conditions under which these capabilities can be developed have to be appreciated. During the discussion between the supervisor and the employer, the development needs of the subject are identified and goals set for the next period.

- **Identification of qualities:**

The supervisor may also identify qualities required for current as well as future tasks, and assess the employees potential and capabilities to perform jobs at higher responsibility levels in the organisation.

10. Attributes considered in evaluating performance

There are many personality traits which could be considered when evaluating performance, and methods to facilitate such consideration include scaling methods that differentiate employees on a series of given traits. The important personality traits fall into two categories: personal qualities and demonstrated qualities. (Table 1)

Table 1: Personal and demonstrated personality traits.

Personal qualities	Demonstrated Performance Qualities
<p>Adaptability: Adjustment with new or changing situations or people.</p> <p>Appearance and bearing: having good bearing and appearance.</p> <p>Decisiveness: Ability to arrive at conclusions promptly and to decide on a definite course of action.</p> <p>Dependability: Ability to consistently accomplish allocated jobs without supervision.</p> <p>Drive and determination: Ability to execute job vigorously and resolutely, and induce other to do so.</p> <p>Ingenuity: Resourcefulness and ability to creatively devise means to solve unforeseen problems.</p> <p>Initiative: Ability to take necessary and appropriate action independently.</p> <p>Integrity: Ability to maintain an honest approach in all dealings.</p> <p>Loyalty: Ability to faithfully, willingly and loyally support superiors, equals and subordinates.</p> <p>Maturity: understanding and balance commensurate with age and service.</p> <p>Stamina: Ability to withstand and perform successfully under protracted physical strain.</p> <p>Tenacity: Ability to persevere in the face of odds and difficulties.</p> <p>Verbal expression: Ability to express oneself clearly and concisely.</p> <p>Written expression: Ability to express oneself clearly and concisely in writing.</p>	<p>Professional knowledge: Ability to apply professionally knowledge to assigned duties so as to achieve a high standard of performance.</p> <p>Administrative ability: Having administrative ability to use resources economically and judiciously.</p> <p>Responsibility for staff development: Ability to fulfill responsibilities in the development and training of staff.</p> <p>Foresight: Ability to display foresight and plan beyond immediate needs.</p> <p>Delegation: Ability to delegate responsibilities and exercise required degree of guidance and supervision.</p> <p>Motivation: Ability to motivate subordinates effectively to produce desired results.</p> <p>Morale: Ability to maintain morale and look after the management of staff.</p> <p>Control: Ability to exercise control over subordinates and gain their confidence.</p>

11. Management problems in evaluating performance

Some of the important problems faced by managers in evaluating performance are:

- identification of appraisal criteria,
- problems in assessment, and
- policy-related problems.

12. Identification of appraisal criteria

It is quite difficult to decide the criteria for evaluating performance, particularly the performance of those engaged in research activities. Initiative, appearance, tact or organizational skills of researchers are very difficult to assess. While deciding the performance criteria, it is important to simultaneously decide how well people should perform. The aim of the appraisal system is to make informed, accurate and fact based judgments, although some of these judgments may not be quantifiable.

VIII. Summary And Conclusion

8.1 Summary

The public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS), which is both professional and technical activity in public personnel administration, has been systematically dealt with by means of examining practical demonstrations and analysis of:

1. Performance appraisal system : the concept
2. Objectives of performance appraisal
3. Uses of an appraisal system
4. Characteristics of an appraisal system
5. Performance appraisal system: the process

6. Communication
7. Approaches and techniques in performance appraisal.
8. Appraisal techniques.
9. Components of the appraisal format
10. Attributes in evaluating performance
11. Management problems and challenges in evaluating performance
12. Identification of appraisal criteria.
13. Identification of appraisal criteria.

8.2 Conclusion

It is concluded that public personnel performance appraisal system (PPPAS) is a **management tool** which **can help motivate** and **effectively utilize human resources** and does include in its definition and uses **public personnel performance planning (PPPP), appraisal and counselling** as essential elements. It is a **professional activity** which cannot be assigned to the **uneducated, unskilful** and less **humanistic personnel** in units or departments in any public institutions, be they in **local, provincial and metropolitan, central or international institutions, universities and technical colleges included.**

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