

AN ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR
NON-ACADEMIC MEMBERS OF STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

MASTER OF ARTS (HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT)

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the text of this thesis entitled: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS USED FOR NON-ACADEMIC MEMBERS OF STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI is my own work and has never been submitted by anyone for an academic award.

MOSES MWENYE

SIGNATURE

AUGUST 2008

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

We, the undersigned, certify that we have examined and recommend to the Postgraduate Studies and Research Committee and Senate for acceptance of this thesis entitled: “AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS USED FOR NON-ACADEMIC MEMBERS OF STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI” submitted by MOSES MWENYE in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts (Human Resource Management).

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Mrs Agnes Mwenye, who only needed to live seven more months to see me get a job at home with the University of Malawi, Chancellor College and two years and two months to see me in my own car.

Till we meet again in His glory, Amen!

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ABSTRACT

The study assesses the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic members of staff.

The study employed a quantitative approach using a questionnaire with structured questions. In the study, ten administrative members of staff and one hundred and twenty Clerical, Technical and Support (CTS) members of staff were sampled. In addition, eleven supervisors (Heads of Section and Department), six authorities (CTS Promotions Committee members), five management members, and two members of the University Workers Trade Union (UWTU) were sampled giving a total of one hundred and fifty-four respondents, representing about ten percent of the total non-academic workforce. Data was analysed using SPSS and Microsoft excel computer programme.

The study reviewed the work of other authors in the area of performance appraisal. The literature review focused on the nature and meaning of performance appraisal; key methods of performance appraisal; problems facing effective performance appraisal and how to overcome them.

According to findings of the study, the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi do not conform to contemporary performance appraisal thus affecting the performance of the non-academic members of staff. Since the non-academic members of staff support academic staff, an effect on their performance affects that of academic staff thus contributing to the crisis for higher education. This lack of conformity to contemporary performance appraisal is supported by the following findings. First, some non-academic employees are appraised in absentia while others are appraised in their presence. In addition, the performance measurement is not continuous as it is done once in a year and often when one applies for either promotion or meritorious increments. Furthermore, authorities do not set job descriptions, objectives or performance standards against which the performance of the employees can be measured, and they do not give feedback to CTS members of staff when results of the performance assessment are unfavourable.

In addition, the study found that the performance appraisal methods used for non-academic members of staff are not objective. Among other issues, lack of objectivity is manifested by the fact that there are inconsistencies among raters and across departments and institutions of the University of Malawi. The study further found that promotion and award of meritorious increments are sometimes based on other factors other than work performance. These factors include: long service, carrying out personal assignments for the supervisor, sexual favours, attainment of higher qualifications, giving gifts to authorities and nepotism. The study also found that some supervisors do not understand the appraisal method used and that the performance appraisal method used is not suitable for use by non-academic members of staff of different classes.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CTS	Clerical, Technical and Support
A & A	Academic and administrative
MIM	Malawi Institute of Management
PSLC	Primary School Leaving Certificate
JC	Junior Certificate
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
ASA	African Studies Association
UWTU	University Workers Trade Union
MBO	Management by Objectives
BARS	Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scale
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-specific
US	United States
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study assesses the performance appraisal system for non-academic staff in the University of Malawi. The central argument in the study is that the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi do not conform to contemporary performance appraisal thus affecting the performance of the non-academic members of staff. Due to the fact that non-academic members of staff support academic staff, an improvement needs to be done to the performance appraisal system and methods for the non-academic staff because an effect on their performance affects that of academic staff resulting indirectly into a contribution to the crisis for higher education.

This chapter introduces the study. It gives a brief background of the University of Malawi, gives vision and mission of the University of Malawi, describes staff categorisation, outlines the problem statement, objectives of the study, describes the methodology used and gives the organization of the presentation of the study.

1.2 BRIEF BACKGROUND

The idea that Malawi should have a university was first conceived soon after the country became independent in 1964. At Government's request, the American Council on Education and the then British Inter-University Council on Higher Education Overseas surveyed the educational needs of the country. The University of Malawi was founded in October 1964, under the University of Malawi (Provisional Council) Act, which was later replaced by the University of Malawi Act of 1974. The Act was further amended in 1998. Teaching started on 29th September 1965 with a total enrolment of ninety students (University of Malawi Calendar: 2007).

The University has expanded over the years and the student population is now over 5000. At the moment the University has five constituent colleges, namely: Chancellor College, The Polytechnic, College of Medicine, Bunda College of Agriculture and

Kamuzu College of Nursing. The University Office, which is the headquarters of the University of Malawi, coordinates these colleges (University of Malawi Calendar: 2007).

A Principal who is aided by a Vice Principal, a Registrar, a Finance Officer, Deans and a Librarian heads each college. The College Registrars, Finance Officers and Librarians are also representatives of the University Registrar, Finance Officer and Librarian respectively. The Principal is the Chief Executive at College level while the Vice Principal is the head of academic affairs. The College Registrar is the chief administrator and the College Finance Officer is the custodian of all assets and liabilities at college level (MIM Report on the reform of the University of Malawi: 1995).

1.3 VISION AND MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

Just like many organisations, a vision and mission guide the University of Malawi. The vision of the University of Malawi is to be an academic institution providing relevant world-class education, research and services for sustainable development of Malawi and the world (University of Malawi Calendar: 2007) while the mission of the University of Malawi is to advance knowledge, promote wisdom and understanding and provide services by engaging in teaching and research and by facilitating the dissemination, promotion, and preservation of learning responsive to the needs of Malawi and the world (University of Malawi Calendar: 2007). Performance appraisal uses performance standards and objectives set for employees. These stem from the objectives of the organisation that are derived from its mission and vision. The study will show whether the performance appraisal of non-academic staff is derived from the vision and mission of the University of Malawi.

1.4 STAFF CATEGORISATION

The University of Malawi has two broad categories of staff: academic staff and non-academic staff. Academic members of staff include staff associates, assistant lecturers, assistant research fellows, lecturers, research fellows, senior lecturers, senior research fellows, associate professors and professors. Non-academic staff members are categorized into two: administrative staff and clerical, technical and support (CTS)

staff. The administrative staff members include administrative assistants, assistant registrars, registrars, assistant finance officers, finance officers, librarians and assistant librarians (Conditions of Service for Academic and Administrative Staff: 2007). The clerical, technical and support (CTS) staff members include, but not limited to, accountants, accounts assistants, secretaries, executive officers, library assistants, clerical officers, technicians, cooks, security guards, kitchen assistants, messengers, cleaners.

The academic qualifications for academic staff are a bachelor's degree, an honours degree, a master's degree and a doctoral degree (Conditions of Service for Academic and Administrative Staff: 2007). However, according to Conditions of Service for CTS staff (2007) the qualifications for CTS staff are quite diverse and they include a Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC), a Junior Certificate (JC), a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE), a diploma, a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree (obtained on the job). There are also isolated cases where CTS members of staff have no educational qualifications at all. Some cannot even write and use the thumb instead of signing when collecting their wages (Chancellor College Wages Sheets: 2007).

Within the academic and non-academic staff members, there are four salary structures: management salary structure, academic staff salary structure, administrative staff salary structure, and support staff salary structure (University of Malawi Salary Structure: 2006). Management salary structure accommodates the Vice Chancellor, the Pro-Vice Chancellor, College Principals, the University Registrar, the University Finance Officer, the University Internal Auditor and the Deputy University Registrar. It is a structure for the University of Malawi's top authorities. In this salary structure, the Vice Chancellor, the Pro- Vice Chancellor and College Principals are academic members of staff while the rest are non-academic members of staff.

The academic staff salary structure, as the name suggests, is for academic members of staff except those that are in Management. It has five grades listed below with their academic qualification requirements.

- Staff Associate/ Assistant Lecturer (Bachelor's degree/ Honours degree)

- Lecturer (Master's degree/ PhD)
- Senior Lecturer (Master's degree/ PhD)
- Associate Professor (Master's degree/ PhD)
- Professor (Master's degree/ PhD)

The administrative staff salary structure is for College Registrars, Finance Officers, Librarians and their assistants. The salary structure has eight grades with grade eight (8) as the lowest and grade one (1) as the highest. The minimum entry qualification for staff in this structure is a bachelor's degree (Conditions of Service for Academic and Administrative Staff: 2007).

The support staff salary structure takes care of all clerical, technical and support staff. It has ten grades ranging from A to J with A as the lowest and J as the highest. According to Regulations and Conditions of Service for CTS Staff (2007), direct entry qualifications for support staff are as follows:

- A– No qualification
- B – Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC)
- C – Junior Certificate (JC)
- D – Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)
- F – Diploma from a recognized institution
- H – Bachelor's degree from a recognized university

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Africa is experiencing a crisis of unprecedented proportions in higher education. Most African universities were in the 1960s and 1970s held as agents of mobilization and economic growth. However, they are now tumbling down under the pressures of diminishing financial resources (Atteh: 1996). While the entire African continent is facing a crisis in higher education, the crisis is deep in sub-Saharan Africa. The sub-Saharan African countries, of which Malawi is one, now face declining public expenditure on higher education, deteriorating teaching conditions, decaying educational facilities and infrastructures, recurrent student unrest, erosion of

universities' autonomy, shortage of experienced and well trained lecturers, lack of academic freedom, and an increasing rate of unemployment among university graduates (World Bank: 1988). El-Khawas et al (1998) stress that the fiscal constraints faced by many countries coupled with increasing demand for higher education has led to overcrowding in classrooms, deteriorating infrastructure, lack of resources for non-salary expenditures, such as textbooks and laboratory equipment, and a decline in the quality of teaching and learning. Kenya and Ethiopia are singled out as clear cases of the crisis that has plagued higher education in Sub Saharan Africa (Wagah: 1999).

This crisis is also true for the University of Malawi. Msiska (2005) argues that the University of Malawi faces the following problems: chronic shortage of academic staff resulting into high student to lecturer ratio; scarcity of basic learning resources; poor terms and conditions of employment for lecturers, in particular low salaries resulting into brain drain and a poorly motivated teaching force; inadequate and obsolete teaching materials; inadequate and deteriorating physical facilities; inadequate funding from government; and large class sizes.

Several proposals have been made to contain the crisis. At the 38th annual meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA) held in Florida, more than ten participants from African universities examined some of the problems and solutions affecting African higher education (Etuk: 1996). Key solutions that were examined are: make universities free from state control; build university presses and book publishing houses; intensify global linkages and affiliations; improve conditions of service for academic staff; build new infrastructure; and increase budgetary allocations for higher education.

All these solutions and the preceding literature focus on the academic staff side of higher education and leave out the non-academic staff side of the universities. However, it should be borne in mind that academic members of staff do not operate in a vacuum. Non-academic members of staff support the academic members of staff in the discharge of their duties. Academic members of staff need efficient and effective administrators, finance officers, technicians, librarians, messengers, secretaries, clerks, and computer operators and so forth in order to deliver their duties effectively and efficiently. Therefore, an attempt to deal with the crisis by suggesting solutions on the

academic side, leaving out the non-academic side may not be a complete approach to dealing with it.

It is from this premise that this study looks at the crisis by focusing on non-academic staff. It is a known fact that the performance of a supporting employee affects that of a core employee. Therefore, the performance of non-academic members of staff who are essentially support staff members in a university is critical because it affects the performance of academic members of staff who are core staff. Since the performance of employees is measured by an appraisal system, it is important that the performance appraisal system and methods for non-academic staff should be reliable. Therefore, the study assesses the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic staff in the University of Malawi.

The performance appraisal method used to assess academic members of staff tends to be clear and objective such that the academics know whether they are eligible for promotion and other awards or not. In fact, because of the clarity and objectivity of the method, the academics exactly know what to do in order to be rewarded. For example, they know how much research; outreach; teaching; and publishing one has to do in order to be promoted from Lecturer all the way through the ranks to Professor. The clarity and objectivity of the performance appraisal method guide the academics to apply for promotion and meritorious increment(s) award when they are personally satisfied that they have met the laid down requirements. The promotion and development of academics is thus dependent on oneself.

However, something seems to be wrong with the performance appraisal method for non-academic staff. The Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) study on the reform of the University of Malawi (1995) confirms this as it found out that length of service in a particular grade for non-academic staff seems to be the predominant criterion for promotion. Sometimes some non-academic staff members get surprised that they have not been promoted when performance appraisal results are out and end up taking some action. For instance, during the years 2004, 2005 and 2006, twenty-seven complaints including four anonymous letters complaining of unfairness in performance appraisal of non-academic members of staff were written to the authorities (Records from College Registrars' Offices) for non-academic staff promotions were registered and

quite a few non-academic members of staff sought the authorities' verbal explanations when they did not get the expected award. These are symptoms that something is wrong with the system and instruments of performance appraisal for non-academic staff members, which could affect their performance and in turn contribute to the crisis by affecting the performance of academic members of staff. An assessment of the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic staff is therefore necessary.

The key questions that have to be addressed are: what system and methods of performance appraisal are used for non-academic members of staff? What are the major strengths and challenges facing the system and methods? How can the system and methods be improved?

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the performance appraisal system for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi in order to ascertain whether or not the performance of non-academic staff affects the performance of academic staff.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

In order to achieve the general objective of this study, the following specific objectives were set.

- (a) To establish whether the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic staff conform to contemporary performance appraisal system and methods.
- (b) To determine the objectivity of the performance appraisal system and methods for non-academic staff.

- (c) To ascertain supervisors (raters) understanding of the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic staff.
- (d) To identify factors, which affect the performance appraisal of non-academic staff other than performance at work.
- (e) To establish the suitability of the performance appraisal system and methods for use by non-academic staff of different classes.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Study Design

In this study, a group-randomised design was used. This involves categorising respondents into heterogeneous groups and identifying them at random in each group (Trochim: 2006). To achieve this design, non-academic staff were grouped by department or section then by category and randomly selected. A randomised design is strong in internal validity and that is why it was chosen in this study (Trochim: 2006).

1.7.2 Population

The population of interest for this study was non-academic staff, heads of department, heads of section, CTS Promotion Committee members and management.

Since the study seeks to assess non-academic staff performance appraisal system and instruments, it was imperative that administrative and CTS staff members serve as part of the study population. The heads of section and department are the raters of the non-academic members of staff during the performance appraisal exercise. This is a very critical role in the appraisal process and therefore the heads had to be a component of the population. When all is said and done by both the employees and their supervisors (heads), the performance appraisal forms are submitted to the CTS Promotions Committee and Academic and Administrative (A and A) Staff Appointments Committee at College level and later, for selected CTS categories (H to J) and all administrative staff to the University-wide Committee. It is these committees that scrutinise the assessments and

recommendations made by the heads. This, therefore, made it necessary that the committee members form part of the study population.

1.7.3 Sample

The University of Malawi has one thousand six hundred and sixty-five (1665) non-academic members of staff of which sixty-seven (67) are administrative members of staff and one thousand five hundred and ninety-eight (1598) are CTS members of staff (CTS Staff List: 2006 and Academic and Administrative Staff List: 2006). In terms of gender, there are eleven (11) female and fifty-six (56) male administrative members of staff. There are also three hundred and ninety-seven (397) female and one thousand two hundred and one (1201) male CTS members of staff (CTS Staff List: 2006 and Academic and Administrative Staff List: 2006).

In the study, ten administrative members of staff and one hundred and twenty CTS members of staff were sampled. In addition, eleven supervisors (Heads of Section and Department), six authorities (CTS Promotions Committee members), five management members, and two members of the University Workers Trade Union (UWTU) were sampled giving a total of one hundred and fifty-four respondents, which is nearly ten percent of the total non-academic staff workforce.

1.7.4 Sampling Technique

The sample was chosen at random in a stratified manner by targeting all sections and departments. Stratified random sampling, which is also called proportional or quota random sampling, involves dividing the study population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup. The major advantage of using a stratified random sampling technique is that it enables all subgroups of the population to be represented and not just the overall population (Trochim: 2006). In this study, five Assistant Registrars, eleven Heads of Department/ Section, six members of the CTS Promotions Committee, two UWTU members were identified at random. In addition, non-academic staff lists were used and names of ten administrative staff members and one hundred and twenty CTS members of staff were identified at random in every homogeneous group from sections and departments using the computer. During the sampling exercise in every

homogeneous group, a formula was used to ensure equal representation (ten percent) in terms of percentage. The homogeneous groups included: Library Assistants, Security Guards, Technicians, Cooks, Cleaners, Messengers, Accounts personnel, etc.

1.7.5 Data Collection Tools

This study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was generated from the respondents that were randomly identified. The secondary data was generated from performance assessment forms that were submitted to the office of the Registrar by Heads of Department/ Section and Directors of Centres in 2004, 2005 and 2006. These were a great source of information especially with regard to the understanding of the performance appraisal method by both raters and those rated.

The primary data for this study was gathered by simple interviews, questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The simple interviews were used to generate data from the employees some of whom have low education. The simple interviews addressed two objectives: identifying factors that affect the performance appraisal of non-academic members of staff other than performance at work and establishing the suitability of the performance appraisal system and instruments for non-academic staff of different classes.

In-depth interviews were used to collect data from management and members of the Promotions Committee. These are well-educated people who could handle the in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews enable one to ask many, long, sequenced, complex, open-ended questions (VS Program and Station Review Guide: 1999). These addressed two objectives in the study: determining the objectivity of the performance appraisal system and methods and ascertaining supervisors' understanding of the performance appraisal system and methods. Members of the Promotions Committee and management are the ones that deal with the appraisal forms and therefore better placed to judge whether the supervisors (raters) understand the performance appraisal method for non-academic staff. They would also know whether the performance appraisal method is objective or not.

Questionnaires were used to get data from the supervisors (Heads of Section or Department) who rate the employees. The reason was to ensure independence and freedom otherwise they might give biased or defensive responses if subjected to an interview. These addressed

three objectives: determining the objectivity of the performance appraisal system and methods; identifying factors that affect the performance appraisal of non-academic members of staff other than performance at work; and establishing the suitability of the performance appraisal system and instruments for non-academic staff of different classes. An examination of the CTS performance appraisal forms submitted to the Registrar's Office helped to address the following objectives: finding out whether the performance appraisal system and instruments for non-academic staff conforms to modern performance appraisal methods; finding out whether supervisors understand the performance appraisal method used for the non-academic staff (CTS categories) and establishing the suitability of the performance appraisal method for use by non-academic staff of different categories.

1.7.6 Data Analysis

The data generated in this study was analysed using SPSS computer package. A data entry clerk was engaged to enter and code the data in the computer and conclusions were drawn from the results processed through the computer. Data collection tools were designed carefully to ensure that valid and reliable results were obtained in the study.

1.7.7 Limitations of the Study

The study had problems and limitations. Finances were certainly a limiting factor. Owing to this limitation, it was not possible to visit all the colleges of the University of Malawi. Data was thus collected from three colleges: Chancellor College, Polytechnic and Kamuzu College of Nursing. The conclusions drawn may therefore not be completely (one hundred percent) reflective of the whole University of Malawi.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study has been presented in four chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by giving the background of the University of Malawi, vision and mission of the university, staff categorization, problem statement, objectives of the study and methodology. Chapter two reviews the work of other authors in the area of performance appraisal. The literature review focuses on the nature and meaning of performance appraisal; key methods of performance appraisal; problems facing effective performance appraisal and how to overcome them.

Chapter three gives the findings of the study. The study found that: the University of Malawi uses the performance appraisal system for non-academic members of staff in a manner that does not conform to modern performance appraisal practice; the performance appraisal system used for non-academic members of staff is not objective; promotion and award of meritorious increments are sometimes based on other factors other than work performance; some supervisors do not understand the appraisal method used; and the performance appraisal method used is not suitable for use by non-academic members of staff of different classes. Chapter four concludes of the study. It draws conclusions based on the findings of the study.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced the study. It has given a brief background of the University of Malawi, vision and mission of the University of Malawi, description of staff categorisation, an outline of the problem statement, objectives of the study, description of the methodology used and it has also given an outline of the presentation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature of other scholars. It explains the meaning of performance appraisal; describes key performance appraisal methods; outlines problems facing effective performance appraisal and how to overcome them.

2.2 NATURE AND MEANING OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Many authors have defined and explained performance appraisal. Longenecker and Pringle (1984) define performance appraisal as a measurement of how effectively the organisations' human resources are being used. They argue that performance appraisal should link rewards, such as promotions or merit raises, to actual performance. They further argue that performance appraisal should provide feedback to each individual in the organisation on his or her job performance. Most employees desire to know exactly where they stand and how their supervisors rate their job performance. Performance appraisal should also show the employee how to improve his or her performance. It should also enable managers to maintain accurate, objective records of employee performance to defend themselves against possible charges of discrimination in discharges, promotions and salary increases.

Similarly, Winston and Creamer (1997) define performance appraisal as an organisational system comprising deliberate processes for determining staff accomplishments to improve staff effectiveness.

In addition, Schneier and Beatty (1979) define performance appraisal as the process of identifying, measuring and developing human performance in organisations. They argue that performance appraisal tries to give feedback to employees to improve subsequent performance; identify employee-training needs; document criteria used to allocate organisational rewards; form a basis for personnel decisions e.g. salary (merit) increases, disciplinary actions, etc; provide the opportunity for organisational diagnosis and development; facilitate communication between employees and administrators; and validate

selection techniques and human resource policies to meet Equal Employment Opportunity requirements.

According to Winning (1995), performance appraisal is a tool to help in the development of the person being rated. For the tool to work, Gomez Mejia et al (2004) argue that effective management of human performance in organisations requires more than formal reporting and annual ratings. A complete appraisal process includes informal day-to-day interactions between managers and workers as well as formal face-to-face interviews. Creamer and Janosik (in press) also argue that performance appraisal is not about a single event, such as completing a standard review form, but rather a process that is ongoing. Appraisal activities should connect the process to organizational functioning and have as their focus staff improvement, not simply salary adjustment.

The supervisor is required to conduct an interview with the worker to provide feedback, one of the most important parts of the appraisal process. Many managers derail the performance appraisal, particularly if they do not have good news to impart. The Human Resource department can help managers by training them in conducting interviews and giving them advice on thorny issues. Since formal appraisal interviews typically are conducted only once a year, they may not always have substantial and lasting impact on worker performance. Of greater significance than the annual interview is informal day-to-day performance management. Supervisors who manage performance effectively generally tend to share four characteristics. They explore the causes of performance problems; direct attention to the causes of problems; develop an action plan and empower workers to reach a solution; and direct communication at performance and emphasize non-threatening communication (Gomez Mejia et al, 2004).

Rue and Byars (1977), define performance appraisal as a process that involves determining and communicating to employees how they are performing their jobs and establishing a plan for improvement. The definition has two key elements, determining performance and communicating performance. This means that having assessed the performance of employees, feedback must be given and proposals for improvement must be made known to the employees. If properly conducted, performance appraisal should not only let employees know how well they are presently performing but also should clarify what needs to be done to improve performance.

The uses of performance appraisals are many. According to Rue and Byars (1977), the uses include: making decisions relating to merit pay increases, promotions, layoffs and firings. Performance appraisal information can also be used to determine both individual and organisational training and development needs. Performance appraisals are also used as a means of communicating to employees how they are doing and suggesting needed changes in behaviour, attitude, skill or knowledge. This type of feedback clarifies for employees the job expectations held by the manager. Often this feedback must be followed by coaching and training by the manager to guide an employee's work efforts.

Similarly, Caron (2007) argues that performance appraisal is used for many purposes including: deciding promotions; determining transfers; making termination decisions; identifying training needs; identifying skill and competency deficits; providing employee feedback; and determining reward allocations.

Although there is no rule regarding the frequency of performance appraisal in a year, it is recommended that informal performance appraisals be conducted two or three times a year in addition to the annual performance appraisal (Rue and Byars: 1977).

The Association of Business Executives (2006) defines performance appraisal as a snapshot of progress and achievement as seen at a particular time, with ideas about improvement for the coming period. It is argued that the competent manager will constantly monitor staff performance and make realistic comments on a day-to-day basis to assist and develop their effectiveness. Furthermore, it is pointed out that staff appraisal schemes are concerned with taking stock of the present situation, reviewing past performance, and planning for the future. This is done by reviewing past performance in the job during the preceding period; building an action plan for the next period i.e. identifying realistic aims and targets, together with the necessary actions and support required to achieve them and dates for their achievement; and looking into the future thus enabling longer term plans to be formulated.

Gomez Mejia et al (2004) argue that performance appraisal is the identification, measurement and management of human performance in organisations. Identification of employee performance means determining what areas of work that the manager should be examining when measuring performance. A rational and defensible identification requires a measurement system based on job analysis. Thus, the appraisal system should focus on

performance that affects organisational success rather than performance – irrelevant characteristics such as race, age or gender. Performance measurement entails making managerial judgments of how good or bad employee performance was. Good performance measurement must be consistent throughout the organisation. That is, all managers in the organisation must maintain comparable rating standards.

On management of human performance in organisations, Gomez Mejia et al, (2004) argue that performance appraisal should be more than a past-oriented activity that criticises or praises workers for their performance in the preceding year. Rather, appraisal must take a future oriented view of what workers can do to achieve their potential in the organisation.

Although the first step in the performance appraisal process, which is identifying what is to be measured, seems simple at first glance, it can be quite complicated. For example, take a manager who tries to identify performance dimensions for factory workers. The first dimension might be quantity of articles produced. However, it might turn out that worker X produces the largest number of articles but of less quality than worker Y. Therefore, quality might be another performance dimension. In the process the manager might also discover that worker Y relates badly with colleagues despite the quality articles he/she makes. Another necessary performance dimension may be interpersonal relation. This process might continue until a satisfactory number of dimensions are identified. This process is similar to job analysis, a mechanism by which performance dimensions should be identified.

Some authors have focused on explaining why organisations should have an appraisal system and what is appraised. For example, Torrington et al (1987) argue that performance appraisal can be used to improve current performance, provide feedback, increase motivation, identify training needs, identify potential, let individuals know what is expected of them, focus on career development, award salary increases and solve job problems. It can also be used to set out job objectives, provide information for human resource planning and career succession, assess the effectiveness of the selection process, and as a reward or punishment in itself. Mondy, et al (1981) argue that the overriding purpose of any performance appraisal system is to improve the overall effectiveness of the organisation by identifying training and development needs of employees, improving communication between superiors and subordinates, and providing a basis for pay increases, promotion,

demotion and transfer decisions. In addition, Torrington et al., (1987) argue that the purpose of performance appraisal systems is to measure a variety of things but it is not easy to exhaust the list of what is appraised. They are sometimes designed to measure personality, sometimes behaviour or performance, and sometimes achievement of goals.

While there are so many definitions and explanations of performance appraisal, for purposes of this study, the definitions and explanations adopted are those advanced by Gomez Mejia et al and Rue and Byars. The explanations are interlinked and complement each other very well. They meet all the objectives of this study.

2.3 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL METHODS

Numerous techniques for measuring performance have been developed over the years. In this section, only those methods that are commonly articulated by many authors will be examined.

2.3.1 Relative and Absolute Judgments

Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) classify performance appraisal measurement into two broad categories and these are relative and absolute judgments. On one hand, appraisal systems based on relative judgment ask supervisors to compare an employee's performance to the performance of other employees doing the same job. Relative rating systems have the advantage of forcing supervisors to differentiate among their workers. Without such a system many supervisors are inclined to rate everyone the same, which destroys the appraisal system's value (Gomez-Mejia et al, 2004). Relative appraisal methods include ranking method, paired comparisons method and forced distribution method.

The disadvantages of relative rating systems outweigh their advantages. Relative judgments do not make clear how great or small the differences between employees are. Second, relative judgments do not provide any absolute information, so managers cannot determine how good or poor employees at the extreme rankings are. For instance, relative ratings do not reveal whether the top-rated worker in one work team is better or worse than an average worker in another work team. Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) further argue that the worst rated worker in one team may be a better performer than the average – rated worker in another

team that has a poorer overall level of performance. This problem is illustrated in figure 1 below.

ACTUAL	RANKED WORK	RANKED WORK	RANKED WORK
10 (High)		Jill (1)	Frank (1)
9			Gray (2)
8		Tam (2)	Lisa (3)
7	Mark (1)	Sue (3)	
6	Pam (2)		
5			
4	Joyce (3)	Greg (4)	
3	Bill (4)	Ken (5)	Cindy (4)
2	Richard (5)		Steve (5)
1 (Low)			

Table 1: Rankings and performance levels across work teams

Source: Gomez-Mejia et al, (2004): Managing Human Resources

Mark, Jill and Frank are the highest – ranked performers in their respective work teams. However, Jill, Frank and Gray are actually the best overall performers.

Third, relative ranking systems force managers to identify differences among workers where none may truly exist. This can cause conflict among workers if and when ratings are disclosed. Finally, relative systems typically require assessment of overall performance. The big picture nature of relative ratings makes performance feedback ambiguous and of questionable value to workers who wish to benefit from specific information on the various dimensions of their performance.

On the other hand, absolute judgment is appraisal format that asks supervisors to make judgments about an employee's performance based solely on performance standards. Absolute methods of performance appraisal include rating scales, checklist, and forced

choice system. Other key methods of performance appraisal are: critical incident, management by objectives (MBO), essay and behaviourally anchored rating scales (BARS).

In a landmark study, Locher and Teel (1977) found that the three common appraisal methods in use are rating scales, essay methods and results-oriented or Management by Objectives (MBO) methods. They argue that fifty-six percent (56%) of managers use rating scales, twenty-five percent (25%) use essay methods, thirteen percent (13%) use results-oriented methods and six percent (6%) use the rest of the methods. Figure two below shows this data graphically.

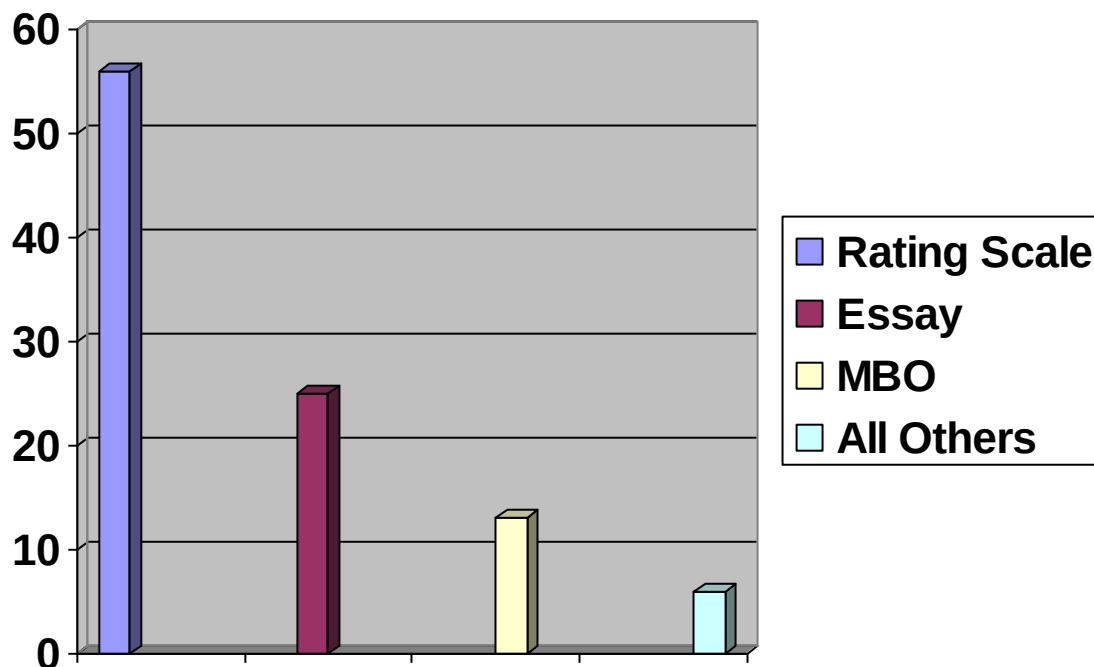


Figure 1: Graph showing a survey of use of appraisal methods by Managers

2.3.2 Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

BARS use careful job analysis to determine the behaviours required for a particular job. Caron (2007) argue that for any particular job, BARS involve identifying a complete range of relevant job behaviours and a design of the appropriate performance dimensions.

According to Caron (2007) the main advantage of a behaviourally approach is that the performance standards are concrete. Unlike traits, which can have many facets, behaviours across the range of a dimension are included directly on the behavioural scale. This concreteness makes BARS and other behavioural instruments more legally defensible than trait scale, which often uses such hard-to-define adjectives as “poor” and “excellent”. Behavioural scales also provide employees with specific examples of the types of behaviours to engage in and to avoid if they want to do well in the organisation. In addition, behavioural scales encourage supervisors to be specific in their performance feedback. Finally, both workers and supervisors can be involved in the process of generating behavioural scales. This is likely to increase understanding and acceptance of the appraisal system.

In addition, Rue and Byars (1977) also argue that the use of BARS can result in several advantages. First, BARS are developed through the active participation of both the manager and job incumbents. This increases the likelihood that the method will be accepted. Second, the anchors are developed from the observations and experiences of employees who actually perform the job. Finally, BARS can be used for providing specific feedback concerning an employee’s job performance. Dessler (2003) adds that BARS evaluations are relatively consistent, a more accurate gauge and make clear what to look for in terms of high performance, average performance, and so forth.

Behavioral systems have disadvantages. Most notably, the development of behavioral scales can be time consuming, easily taking several months. In addition, BARS take considerable time and commitment to develop. Furthermore, separate rating scales must be developed for different jobs. Another disadvantage of behavioural systems is their specificity. The points, or anchors, on behavioural scales are clear and concrete, but they are only examples of behaviour a worker may exhibit. Employees may never exhibit some difficulty for supervisors at appraisal time. Also, significant organisational changes can invalidate behaviour scales. For example, computerization of operations can dramatically alter the behaviours that workers must exhibit to be successful (Rue and Byars: 1977).

BARS are normally developed through a series of meetings attended by both the manager and employees who are actually performing the job. According to Rue and Byars (1977), three steps are usually followed when developing BARS: the manager and job incumbents

identify the relevant job dimensions for the job; the manager and job incumbents write behavioural anchors for each of the job dimensions including as many anchors as possible for each dimension; and the manager and job incumbents reach a consensus concerning the scale values that are to be used and the grouping of anchor statements for each scale value.

2.3.3 Management by Objectives (MBO)

Management by Objectives (MBO) is a process of agreeing upon objectives within an organisation so that management and employees agree to the objectives and understand what they are. The term “management by objectives” was first popularised by Peter Drucker in his 1954 book “The Practice of Management.”

According to Dessler (2003), MBO requires the manager to set specific measurable goals with each employee and then periodically discuss the latter’s progress towards these goals. Learn Marketing.net (<http://www.learnmarketing.net/smart.htm>) proposes that objectives for MBO must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-specific).

Dessler (2003) suggests six steps for establishing MBO. The steps are: setting the organisation’s goals; setting departmental goals; discussing departmental goals; defining expected results; conducting performance reviews; and providing feedback.

In terms of benefits, Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) argue that MBO provides clear and unambiguous criteria by which worker performance can be judged. It also eliminates subjectivity and the potential for error and bias that goes along with it. In addition, outcome approaches provide increased flexibility. For example, a change in the production system may lead to a new set of outcome measures and, perhaps, a new set of performance standards. Mathis and Jackson (1988) also add that if an employee is involved in planning and setting the objectives, a higher level of commitment and performance may result.

MBO has its own disadvantages. Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) argue that although objective, MBO may give a seriously deficient and distorted view of worker performance levels. Another potential difficulty is the development of a “results at any cost” mentality. Dessler

(2003) adds that MBO is time consuming arguing that setting objectives, measuring progress and giving feedback can take several hours per employee.

2.3.4 Essay Method

In the essay method of performance appraisal, the rater simply writes a brief narrative describing the employee's performance (Mondy, et al: 1981). Archer North and Associates (2006) state that the essay method usually concentrates on describing specific strengths and weaknesses in job performance and suggesting courses of action to remedy the identified problem areas.

According to Archer North and Associates (2006), the essay method is less structured and confining than the rating scale method. Essay method is open-ended and very flexible as it allows appraisers to place emphasis on any issues or attributes that they feel appropriate. However, Mathis and Jackson (1988) argue that the drawbacks with essay method of performance appraisal are that some supervisors communicate in writing better than others, therefore, the quality of the ratings depends on the writing ability of the rater; it is difficult to quantify; and the method can be time-consuming. In addition, Philip (1990) points out that an absence of objective measures by which to determine performance levels is an invitation to tension-ridden employee-employer relations.

2.3.5 Rating Scales

The rating scale is the simplest and most popular technique for appraising performance. It lists traits such as punctuality, reliability, etc, and a range of performance values from unsatisfactory to outstanding for each trait (Dessler: 2003). Locher and Teel (1977) agree that rating scale is the most popular method with fifty-six percent (56%) of organisations using the method. They further agree that rating scale assesses employee attributes such as cooperation, initiative, punctuality, competence, etc, with a scale that has points ranging from "poor" to "excellent". Below is a sample rating scale form.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

For probationary employee review:

Employee Name

Do you recommend that the employee
be retained? Yes ☐ No ☐

Date of employment

Review period: From _____ To _____

Department/Section

For each applicable performance area, mark the box that most closely reflects the employee's performance.

1 = unacceptable 2 = needs improvement 3 = satisfactory 4 = above average
5 = outstanding

PERFORMANCE AREA	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to make job – related decisions					
Accepts change					
Accepts direction					
Accepts responsibility					
Attendance					
Attitude					
Compliance with rules					
Cooperation					
Cost of consciousness					
Dependability					
Initiative					
Quality of work					

Areas for improvement: _____

Supervisor's comments: _____

Employee's Signature

Date

Rating Supervisor's Signature

Date

Table 2: Sample Rating Scale Form

Source: Gomez-Mejia et al, (2004): Managing Human Resources

Archer North and Associates (2006) argue that the greatest advantage of rating scales is that they are structured and standardized. In addition, each employee is subjected to the same basic appraisal process and rating criteria with the same range of responses. This encourages equality in treatment for all appraisees and imposes standard measures of performance across all parts of the organisation.

However, Mathis and Jackson (1988) observe that although rating scale is the most popular method of performance appraisal, it has obvious drawbacks. For example, the descriptive words used may have different meanings to different raters. Words such as initiative, flexibility, e.t.c, are subject to many interpretations. Archer North and Associates (2006) point out that certain traits have a greater relevance in some jobs than in others. For example, the trait 'initiative' might not be very important in a job that is tightly defined and rigidly structured. In such cases, a low appraisal rating for initiative may not mean that an employee lacks initiative. Rather, it may reflect the fact that an employee has few opportunities to use and display that particular trait. Another disadvantage of rating scale is that it assumes that all the true and best indicators of performance are included and all irrelevant indicators are excluded. Caron (2007) also argues that rating scale method of performance appraisal assumes that raters can define and rate traits objectively, but in practice, traits are too broadly defined and so are the criteria for evaluating each trait.

2.3.6 Critical Incident

Dessler (2003) explains that with the critical incident method, the supervisor keeps a log of positive and negative examples of a subordinate's work-related behaviour. Periodically, the supervisor and the subordinate meet to discuss the latter's performance using the incidents as examples. The drawbacks of this method are many. Caron (2007) points out that the degree of objectivity can vary greatly depending on the appraiser and what different appraisers view as critical incidents. Mathis and Jackson (1988) observe that what constitutes a critical incident is not defined in the same way by all supervisors. In addition, producing daily or weekly written remarks about each employee's performance can take considerable time. Further, employees may become concerned about what the superior writes and begin to fear the manager's "black book".

2.3.7 Checklist

The checklist is a simple rating method in which the manager is given a list of statements or words and asked to check statements representing the characteristics and performance of each employee (Mathis and Jackson: 1988). According to Rue and Byars (1977), in the checklist method, the manager answers “yes” or “no” to a series of questions concerning the employee’s behaviour. Figure four below shows sample checklist questions.

Sample Checklist Questions	Yes	No
1. Does the employee come in time?	_____	_____
2. Does the employee have initiative?	_____	_____
3. Does the employee follow instructions?	_____	_____
4. Is the employee reliable?	_____	_____

Table 3: Sample checklist questions.

2.3.8 Forced Choice

Forced choice is a more complex version of the checklist. According to Mathis and Jackson (1988), the rater is required to choose one statement out of at least four that best describes the employee in a particular rating aspect e.g. “cost conscious”. The descriptions of the statements range from “most” to “least” and the statements from which to choose are like multiple-choice answers. Mathis and Jackson (1988) observe that forced choice method is intended to eliminate or greatly reduce the rater’s personal bias. The major limitation of the forced choice method is the difficulty in constructing and validating the statements.

2.4 PROBLEMS FACING EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Managers often fail to ensure accurate measurement of worker performance because of the barriers that stand in the way. The following are the key challenges to effective performance measurement that manager’s face.

2.4.1 Rater Errors and Bias

Gomez Mejia et al (2004) define rater error as an error in performance appraisals that reflects consistent biases on the part of the rater. Halo error, the tendency to rate similarly across dimensions, is one of the most prominent rater errors. Halo and horn errors can cause uniform negative ratings as well as uniform positive ones. Personal bias may also cause rater error. Consciously or unconsciously, a supervisor may systematically rate certain workers lower or higher than others on the basis of race, national origin, gender, age, or other factors. According to Mathis and Jackson (1988), rater bias occurs when a rater's values, beliefs or prejudices distort the rating. For example, if a manager has strong dislike of certain ethnic groups, this bias is likely to result in distorted appraisal information for some people. Mondy et al (1981) add that it is possible for appraising supervisors to have biased feelings about anything from the way employees part their hair to the style of clothes they wear. Some supervisors may also display partiality toward members of a certain race, religion, sex, or age group.

Bias became an issue at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in the early 1980s when a lawsuit, **Segar v. Civiletti**, established that African – American agents were systematically rated lower than white agents and thus were less likely to receive promotions and choice job assignments. The DEA failed to provide supervisors with any written instructions on how to evaluate agents' performance, and virtually all the supervisors conducting the evaluation were white (Gomez – Mejia et al., 2004).

2.4.2 Halo/ Horns Effect

According to the Universal Management Group Incorporation (1999), halo effect is the tendency to be overly influenced by a single favourable factor while horns effect is the tendency to be overly influenced by a single unfavourable factor. Mondy, et al (1981) argue that halo error occurs when the evaluator perceives one factor as being of paramount importance and gives a good overall rating to an employee who rates high on this factor. Mathis and Jackson (1988) suggest that halo and horn effects can be overcome by rating employees on one characteristic at a time and training raters to recognize the problem.

2.4.3 The Influence of Liking

Sometimes supervisors just like certain subordinates knowingly or unknowingly. That is called the influence of liking. The Universal Management Group Incorporation (1999) calls the influence of liking “similar to me” and describes it as the tendency for reviewers to favour people they believe to be similar to them in any job-irrelevant way. Liking can cause errors in performance appraisals when raters allow their like or dislike of an individual to influence their assessment of that person’s performance. Liking is emotional and often unconscious. Therefore, it seems to be established very quickly. Heneman, et al (1989) conducted a study and reported that subordinates who seem to be favoured by their supervisors enjoy a high degree of trust, interaction, support and rewards. This implies that performance ratings have little to do with worker performance and instead are based largely on how much a supervisor likes the employees.

2.4.4 Individual or Group Focus

Throughout the literature review, the assumption is that the appropriate focus of performance appraisal is the individual employee. This is typical of western culture where value is placed on the superstar, the person who stands out from the crowd. However, in organisations, teamwork and cooperation are for the achievement of common goals.

Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) argue that performance appraisal that focuses solely on individual achievement can create serious morale problems among employees working in teams. One person may be an excellent team player who spends time helping coworkers, only to get penalized at appraisal time for not reaching individual objectives.

2.4.5 Leniency, Central Tendency, and Recency

Leniency is the tendency to rate people higher than they deserve (The Universal Management Group Incorporation: 1999). Leniency is more prevalent where highly subjective factors are used as performance criteria. Dessler (2003) defines central tendency as the tendency to rate all employees the same way, such as rating them all average. Central tendency may distort the evaluations, making them less useful for promotions and other purposes. Recency occurs when performance evaluations are based on work performed

most recently – generally work performed one to two months before evaluation (Rue and Byars, 1977). Rue and Byars (1977) argue that leniency, central tendency, and recency errors make it difficult if not impossible to separate the good performers from the poor performers. In addition, these errors make it difficult to compare ratings from different managers. For example, it is possible for a good performer who is evaluated by a manager committing central tendency errors to receive a lower rating than a poor performer who is rated by a manager committing leniency errors.

2.5 OVERCOMING PROBLEMS FACING EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

There are a number of ways that have been suggested to overcome problems facing effective performance appraisal.

Bill Scherer and Judith Segal (2006) argue that in order to overcome performance appraisal problems, organisations with world-class appraisal systems engage in the following practices: make performance appraisal part of the culture; link performance appraisal to organisational objectives; design the system for the unique needs of the organisation; use performance appraisal to build relationships between supervisors and employees; use flexible, customized appraisal forms.

Rue and Byars (1977) suggest that the barriers to effective performance appraisal can be overcome by refining the design of appraisal methods. Unfortunately, Rue and Byars note, because refined instruments frequently do not overcome all the obstacles, it does not appear likely that refining appraisal instruments will totally overcome errors in performance appraisals. Rue and Byars (1977) further suggest that a more promising approach to overcoming errors in performance appraisals is to improve the skills of managers. Suggestions on the specific training that should be given to managers are often vague, but they normally emphasize that managers should be given training to observe behaviour more accurately and judge it fairly. However, at a minimum, managers should receive training in: the performance appraisal method (s) used by the organisation; the importance of the manager's role in the total appraisal process; the use of performance appraisal information; and the communication skills necessary to provide feedback to the employee.

Mohrman, Resnick-West and Lawler (1989) suggest that in order to overcome performance appraisal problems, an appraisal system should address clarity, openness and fairness. First, ongoing evaluations of both the position and the staff member occupying it should be conducted. Second, ensure that job descriptions are reliable, valid, understandable and specific enough to provide direction for staff behaviour. Job descriptions should focus on what the staff member does and what outcomes are expected. These outcomes should be clearly linked to departmental and organisational objectives. Third, ensure that the appraisal system is designed in concert with all stakeholders and open to constant interaction with them. Plans made jointly by staff and administrators have a better chance of working than plans made independently by either party; workable formats that avoid systematic biases are included in the performance appraisal system. Biases include giving preferential treatment to some staff, rating all staff the same, being overly lenient or overly harsh towards some or all staff, and practicing conscious or unconscious racial or gender prejudice.

Brown (1989) offers that the following issues should be taken into account when designing an appraisal system to overcome problems facing performance appraisal. The Chief Executive Officer and the entire management team must be committed to performance appraisal. Members of staff should be involved in determining the appraisal criteria and standards. Members of staff must be involved in planning and implementation of the appraisal processes. The appraisal processes need to be congruent with the organisational climate and the management style of the administrators. Adequate job descriptions based on job analysis should be written, weights must be assigned to job expectations and available expertise for consultation ought to be utilised. The purpose of the performance appraisal system needs to be articulated clearly, the performance appraisal system should be congruent with the staff and management needs and expectations. Finally, a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the performance appraisal system has to be worked out.

Although a number of ways have been suggested to overcome problems facing effective performance appraisal, the literature reviewed has gaps. It largely suggests adoption of one appraisal method for the whole organisation and not separate methods for unique groups or classes of employees within the same organisation. Further, the literature appreciates that each method has drawbacks but does not recommend the best method or use of combined methods to minimize the drawbacks. This study will strive to bridge the gaps.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This Chapter has reviewed the work of other authors in the field of performance appraisal. It has explained the meaning of performance appraisal; described key performance methods; outlined problems facing effective performance appraisal; and suggested how to overcome them.

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter dwells on the presentation of study findings. It presents all the findings generated from the assessment of the performance appraisal system and methods for non-academic staff in relation to the objectives of the study and link them with other studies and literature available. The chapter presents the findings by putting them into five main subheadings: conformity of the non-academic staff performance appraisal system and method to modern performance appraisal; objectivity of the performance appraisal system for non-academic members of staff; raters' understanding of the performance appraisal system/method; other factors affecting performance appraisal other than performance at work; and suitability of the performance appraisal system/ method for use by non-academic staff of all classes.

3.2 CONFORMITY OF THE NON-ACADEMIC STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS TO CONTEMPORARY APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS

In order to establish whether the performance appraisal system for non-academic staff conforms to modern performance system, the study looked at the performance appraisal method used for non-academic members of staff; frequency of performance appraisal exercise; performance feedback; objectives and performance standards; job descriptions; and following rules and regulations instead of performance.

3.2.1 Performance Appraisal System and Methods

The study found that the University of Malawi uses rating scales, (Appendix 1) for its non-academic members of staff in the CTS category and forced choice method with a section for comments under each trait (Appendix 2) for those in the administrative category. According to Dessler (2003), the mixing of the forced choice method with a section for comments under each trait allows the rater to provide several critical incidents. As explained in chapter two, in rating scale method, which is used for CTS staff performance appraisal, the dimensions of performance that are deemed relevant for the job are listed on a rating form and the manager

is asked to rate the employee on each dimension (Gomez Mejia et al: 2004). It should be noted that both the rating scales and forced choice methods are among the contemporary methods of performance appraisal.

The form used for CTS staff has twenty-four attributes, to assess the performance of all categories of CTS members of staff (Appendix 1). The scale for each attribute has five points ranging from “unsatisfactory” to “outstanding” where: one denotes “unsatisfactory” and implies withholding of confirmation; two denotes “satisfactory” and implies confirmation; three denotes “good” and implies award of one meritorious increment; four denotes “very good” and implies award of two meritorious increments; and five denotes “outstanding” and implies award of promotion. All CTS members of staff fill performance appraisal forms that pass through their supervisors for assessment and recommendation for either promotion or award of meritorious increments to the College CTS Promotions Committee. This committee considers and recommends the applicants to either the Principal or the University Registrar depending on grades. Promotion or award of meritorious increments applications for staff in grades A to G are approved by the Principal while those from grade H to J are referred to the University Office where the University – Wide CTS Promotions Committee, that draws membership from all constituent colleges (all College Registrars), meets. The University Registrar chairs this committee.

The form used for assessing the performance of administrative staff has ten attributes that are assessed. Each attribute has four statements from which the appraiser chooses one that fits the employee for that particular trait. Each attribute has a maximum of four points (scoring the first statement four, the second three, the third two and the fourth one) giving a total of forty points for the ten attributes. On each attribute, four points denote outstanding/ excellent performance, three points denote good performance, two points denote fair performance and one point denotes poor performance. Administrative staff members are recommended for promotion if they score a minimum of thirty-five points and for award of meritorious increments if the score is at least thirty points (Appendix 2). The ten attributes are: knowledge of duties; initiative; judgment; capacity for accepting responsibility; organisation of work; management of subordinate staff; management of resources; relations with other members of staff; relations with public/ students; and output. In addition, the form has provision for finding out whether any written warnings have been given to the officer on his/ her work or conduct during the period of the report and whether any improvements have been noted

following such warnings. At the end of the form, just like that of CTS members of staff, there is provision for the supervisor (in this case the Principal or Registrar or Finance Officer or Librarian depending on who is being assessed) to make general comments and recommendations. After that, the Principal presents the form to the College Appointments and Disciplinary Committee for Academic and Administrative staff. This committee makes its recommendations to the University Appointments and Disciplinary Committee that makes the final decision on the application for either promotion or meritorious increment(s).

While the University of Malawi uses contemporary methods of performance appraisal for non-academic members of staff, and the newly approved conditions of service for CTS staff stipulate that the appraisal should be open (CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007) the study found that there was no consistency in the system of appraisal used for non-academic members of staff. This is so because forty-six percent (46%) of CTS staff members interviewed said that their supervisors appraised them in their presence while fifty-four percent (54%) of the CTS staff members said that they were appraised in absentia. This means that the CTS members of staff are appraised using either open or confidential appraisal system depending on the preference of their supervisors.

In addition, sixty percent (60%) of the supervisors interviewed said that they were using an open performance appraisal system to assess the performance of CTS members of staff while forty percent (40%) of the supervisors interviewed indicated that they were using a confidential performance appraisal system. This means that in principle, the University uses open performance appraisal system for CTS staff as dictated by the conditions of service but in practice some supervisors use open appraisal system while others do not have the courage to face their CTS subordinates and assess them in their presence. Probably, this application of double standards is what brings about appeals, complaints and dissatisfaction when the performance appraisal results for CTS staff are out.

All the authorities (100%) interviewed said that the performance of CTS members of staff is assessed using an open performance appraisal system. However, one would be tempted to believe that the authorities assume that all supervisors use the open appraisal system for CTS staff when the truth is that some supervisors are using an open system while others use a confidential system.

Turning to the administrative members of staff, the study found that eighty percent (80%) of the respondents were being assessed in absentia and only twenty percent (20%) of the respondents were assessed in their presence. Unfortunately, the conditions of service for Academic and Administrative staff as well as the form used for assessing the performance of administrative staff do not state whether to use the open or closed system of performance assessment (see Appendix 2 and Conditions of Service for Academic and Administrative Staff: 2007). This explains why supervisors choose to use either open or closed performance appraisal system.

The difference in the application of performance appraisal systems used for non-academic staff means that some members of staff are disadvantaged. In particular, those subjected to the open system have an advantage because they can bargain for better points and the supervisor would naturally find it hard to downgrade a person in a face-to-face situation. On the other hand, those subjected to the closed system are not heard and their supervisors can axe them the way they please. In fact the more reason why some supervisors opt for the closed appraisal system is to hide their harsh rating, which would otherwise be argued against.

It is hard to understand why up to forty percent (40%) of the supervisors for CTS staff members opt for the closed appraisal system when the conditions of service for CTS staff are so clear and explicit that the Head of Department/ Section shall appraise all staff in her/ his Department/ Section in their presence every year (CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007). As for the eighty percent (80%) of the administrative staff that were assessed in their absence one would assume that it is the silence in the regulations and conditions of service governing academic and administrative staff as well as the form used that contribute to this practice. However, that is not a valid excuse since according to Longenecker and Pringle (1984); modern thinking encourages use of open performance appraisal because it shows the employee how to improve his or her performance and enables managers to maintain accurate, objective records of employee performance to defend themselves against possible charges of discrimination in discharges, promotions and salary increases.

In addition, Gomez-Mejia, et al., (2004) give a sample form of graphic rating scales, which the University of Malawi uses for assessing CTS members of staff, showing spaces at the end for both the employee and supervisor who has conducted the assessment to sign after the assessment. This is a clear indication that even the rating scales examined in chapter two are

used for open performance appraisal and that is why the signing by the two parties is done at the end showing an agreement of the assessment made. Unfortunately, the University of Malawi uses contemporary methods in an old and confidential way since the forms used for non-academic staff members have space for the employee to sign before the assessment is done and at the very end there is space for the rater to sign. This is proof that the University of Malawi uses closed system of performance appraisal system despite putting a clause in the new conditions of service for CTS staff propagating use of an open performance appraisal system. The assessment form remains unchanged and therefore the system would still be at the discretion of the supervisor conducting the appraisal. In this day and age where good governance features highly, managers should make transparent decisions (<http://www.opm.co.uk>).

In addition, Mohrman, Resnick-West and Lawler (1989) suggest that an effective performance appraisal system should address clarity, openness and fairness. By choosing to use either open or closed system, the University of Malawi assesses the performance of some of its non-academic members of staff in a manner that does not address clarity, openness and fairness. In other words the performance of some non-academic members of staff is assessed in conformity with modern appraisal system leaving out others. The rating scales and forced choice methods are modern appraisal instruments but used wrongly and inconsistently by the University of Malawi as raters opt to use them in an open or closed manner to assess the performance of non-academic employees.

3.2.2 Frequency of Performance Appraisal Exercise

On the same issue of establishing whether the University of Malawi uses a performance appraisal system that conforms to modern performance appraisal system for its non-academic staff, the study also had a question on whether non-academic staff members are appraised every year. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the CTS staff interviewed said that their supervisors appraised them every year. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of them said they were not appraised every year while eight percent (8%) did not know whether they were appraised every year or not. On the other hand, one hundred percent (100%) of administrative staff interviewed said that they were not appraised every year. They were appraised only when they applied for promotion or meritorious increments taking up to three or four years without performance appraisal. In fact if they do not apply for promotion or meritorious increments, they would not

be appraised at all. Of course regulations and conditions of service for academic and administrative staff are silent on frequency of performance appraisal. On the contrary, CTS conditions of service spell out that all staff must be appraised every year (CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007). However, in practice some supervisors appraise their subordinates every year when others choose to appraise their subordinates when it pleases them to do so. It is clear that there is no uniformity in conducting performance appraisals. For example, appraisal forms submitted to the office of the Registrar at Chancellor College from Maintenance and Transport Sections in 2004, 2005 and 2006 only included members of staff that were recommended and deemed suitable for the award of either promotion or meritorious increments leaving out the other staff members. It is also worth mentioning that all CTS members of staff from the Library and Chemistry Departments at the same College were assessed every year regardless of whether they were due for any award or not (forms submitted to the Registrar's Office).

Failure to assess the performance of members of staff continuously is against modern performance appraisal. Although there is no rule regarding the frequency of performance appraisal in a year, it is recommended that informal performance appraisals be conducted two or three times a year in addition to the annual performance appraisal (Rue and Byars: 1977). Gomez Mejia et al (2004) add that effective management of human performance in organisations requires more than formal reporting and annual ratings. A complete appraisal process includes informal day-to-day interactions between managers and workers as well as formal face-to-face interviews. The least that should be allowed is to assess the performance of staff once a year in line with the provisions of the conditions of service for CTS staff requiring that the Head of Department/ Section shall appraise all staff in her/ his Department/ Section in their presence every year (CTS Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007). However, the University of Malawi authorities and supervisors fail to assess the performance all non-academic staff annually. The luck members of staff are assessed annually while others are not and none is assessed continuously. The problem with appraising staff once in a year is that supervisors may not remember the performance of subordinates for the whole year and the assessment is largely a reflection of recent events. This practice contravenes modern performance appraisal that requires continuous assessment of employees' performance.

3.2.3 Performance Feedback

The study found that the University of Malawi does not give feedback to all non- academic employees when the results of performance appraisal are out. This is contrary to the thinking of Rue and Byars (1977) that argue that appraisals should be used as a way of communicating to employees how they are doing and suggesting needed changes in behaviour, skill and attitude.

One hundred percent (100%) of administrative members of staff are given feedback when results of the performance appraisal are out. The College Principals take the initiative to write both successful and unsuccessful members of staff in their application for promotion or meritorious increments. This is quite commendable although the feedback is only on the results of performance appraisal when it should have been on performance at every stage of the year so that improvements can be made. During the performance appraisal exercise, the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee assesses the performance of administrative staff who have applied for either promotion or meritorious increments based on their performance for the whole year yet nobody during the year takes the initiative to assess the performance of the staff members and advise them accordingly for improvements. Supervisors wait until one applies for promotion or meritorious increments and bring out all ills of the applicant such as lack of initiative, late coming to work, failure to meet deadlines, failure to support academic staff adequately, and so forth. The feedback is thus helpless as there is nothing the staff member can do in that year. Improvements can only be made in the following year although the annoyance of failing to make it in the previous year may make the staff member not to apply for promotion or meritorious increments when in fact the performance has actually improved to the satisfaction of the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee.

Furthermore, all CTS staff members whose applications are unsuccessful are not given written feedback (Records from the Registrars' Offices). Fifty-four percent (54%) of the respondents said that when their applications for promotion or meritorious increments are unsuccessful they get no feedback when the results are out. The rest (46%) get verbal feedback on enquiry from either authorities or their supervisors otherwise they just hear that so and so have been promoted or awarded meritorious increments without them getting communication on their fate.

In the absence of feedback on performance appraisal, one wonders how the University communicates to CTS employees how they are doing and suggest needed changes in behaviour, skill and attitude. Employees are left guessing without knowledge of where they are going wrong so that they can improve. Longenecker and Pringle (1984) argue that performance appraisal should provide feedback to each individual in the organisation on his or her job performance because most employees desire to know exactly "where they stand" and how their supervisors rate their job performance adding that performance appraisal should also show the employee how to improve his or her performance. Torrington et al (1987) state that performance appraisal can be used to improve current performance, provide feedback, increase motivation, identify training needs, identify potential, let individuals know what is expected of them, focus on career development, award salary increases and solve job problems. Schneier and Beatty (1979) argue that performance appraisal tries to give feedback to employees to improve subsequent performance. This is what modern performance appraisal should do.

The study further found that supervisors inform twenty - seven percent (27%) of non-academic staff their strengths and weaknesses very often. Supervisors tell forty – six percent (46%) of the employees their strengths and weaknesses once in a while as part of performance management. On the extreme, supervisors do not tell twenty – seven percent (27%) of the employees their strengths and weaknesses. This means that not all employees are told what they are doing right, what they are doing wrong and what they should be doing. Winning (1995) adds that performance appraisal is a tool to help in the development of the person being rated. Now, if only a few employees are told their strengths and weaknesses very often, it means the developmental aspect is defeated and the majority of the employees are therefore not aware of how they are performing and how they can improve their performance.

As stated in the preceding paragraphs, appraisals should be used as a way of communicating to employees how they are doing and suggesting needed changes in behaviour, skill and attitude. It is only through feedback that employees can make adjustments and improve their performance. At the end of the day improved performance would be beneficial to the organisation as output would be high resulting into an increase in profit margin. In addition, when employees get feedback on their performance, they can identify performance gaps and go for training to bridge the performance gap. By not giving feedback to all non-academic

employees, the University of Malawi does not conform to modern performance appraisal system.

3.2.4 Objectives and Performance Standards

The study established that all non-academic members of staff (100%) are not given objectives and performance standards by their supervisors against which their performance is measured. Ninety percent (90%) of the authorities agreed that no objectives or performance standards are set for non-academic members of staff while ten percent (10%) of the authorities said that they set objectives and performance standards indirectly for non-academic members of staff. For instance, the Finance Officer would ask his/her subordinates to produce certain information or accounts by a given date, the Principal would ask the Registrar or the Finance Officer to produce certain information by a certain date. However, the problem is that the accomplishment of such objectives is not used as a measure of performance in a systematic and documented manner. Eighty-three percent (83%) of the supervisors were honest enough to accept that indeed they do not set objectives and standards against which the performance of their subordinates is measured. Seventeen percent (17%) of the supervisors claimed that they set objectives and performance standards for their subordinates. However, all the supervisors that claimed to be setting objectives and performance standards for their subordinates (17%) could not produce a written set of objectives for any subordinate. In addition, none of the subordinates could produce any written set of objectives. This means that all non-academic members of staff work without a blue print.

In the absence of objectives and performance standards, the whole exercise of performance appraisal is rendered pointless. It would be difficult to differentiate performers from non-performers. As a matter of fact, lack of objectives and performance standards contravenes the ideals of Management by Objectives (MBO). According to Dessler (2003), MBO requires the manager to set specific measurable goals with each employee and then periodically discuss the latter's progress towards these goals. The rating then consists of deciding to what extent the goals have been met. It is clear that in the absence of objectives or performance standards, performance appraisal has no basis. Scherer and Segal (2006) argue that an organisation should link performance appraisal to its objectives. Employees need to have objectives, standards and targets, which is not the case with non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi.

The University of Malawi has a vision, mission and objectives (University Calendar: 2007) but the problem is that the managers at various levels are not managing the University by objectives as evidenced in the lack of objectives for the employees. As management by objectives (MBO) demands, the employees' objectives should have been derived from those of the University of Malawi. This means that the University objectives would be translated into College objectives, then Faculty objectives, then Departmental or Section objectives and lastly employee objectives. Unless this is clearly done at individual level, performance appraisal would not be meaningful for the University of Malawi. Performance cannot be appraised in the absence of objectives, performance standards and targets for the non-academic members of staff.

3.2.5 Job Descriptions

The study also found that not all non-academic members of staff are served with job descriptions. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the respondents said that they were not served with a copy of their job description. This means that as many as eighty-five percent of the employees do not know what they were specifically employed for. Fifteen percent (15%) of the non-academic employees claimed that they were served with copies of job descriptions although only two percent (2%) produced them.

Sixty percent (60%) of the authorities also agreed that not all non-academic members of staff were served with copies of job descriptions to guide their job performance. Ninety percent (90%) of the supervisors (raters) claimed that all their subordinates were served with copies of job descriptions. This is a sharp contrast to the eighty-five percent (85%) subordinates who said that they were not served with job descriptions and those that claimed were served with job descriptions but failed to produce them. The main reason why ninety percent (90%) of the supervisors said that all their subordinates were served with copies of job descriptions is fear that an honest answer to the contrary would reflect badly on them because they are the ones that should develop job descriptions for their subordinates.

Mohrman, Resnick-West and Lawler (1989) suggest that an effective appraisal system should ensure that job descriptions are reliable, valid, understandable and specific enough to provide direction for staff behaviour. The job descriptions should focus on what outcomes are

expected and these outcomes should be clearly linked to organisational objectives. However, even the few job descriptions that non-academic staff members produced were not specific and never focused on what outcomes were expected.

In the absence of objectives and performance targets, a job description may guide to assess if employees meet expected outcomes. At least by checking if they do what their job description states they should do, employees' performance can be assessed. The lack of both objectives and job descriptions aggravates the situation making performance appraisal a nightmare and guess work. Probably this explains why year in year out, some hardworking employees get surprised that they have not been promoted when their counterparts who are deemed lazy and non-performers get promoted. There are no job descriptions that would serve as a blue print for assessing the performance of the non-academic employees.

3.2.6 Following Rules and Regulations Instead of Performance

The study also sought views of non-academic employees, their supervisors and authorities on the rule that a person should not be awarded meritorious increments in two consecutive years. According to regulations and conditions of service for CTS members of staff, if a staff member has been awarded meritorious increment(s) the previous year, he/she can be considered for a promotion the following year or vice-versa as long as he/she satisfies the requirements in terms of performance and qualifications (CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007). The regulations do not give any reason for not awarding merit increments in two consecutive years. Probably this lack of reasoning explains why employees, their supervisors and authorities gave different views on the matter. Forty percent (40%) of the authorities agree with the rule that a person should not be awarded meritorious increments in two consecutive years while sixty percent (60%) of them do not agree with the rule. Seventy percent (70%) of the supervisors agree with the rule that a person should not be awarded merit increments in two consecutive years while thirty percent (30%) of them do not agree with the rule. Forty two percent (42%) of the employees agree with the rule while fifty-eight percent (58%) of them do not agree with the rule. The following figure gives a clear picture of the statistics.

Category	Percentage Agreeing	Percentage Disagreeing
Authorities	40	60
Supervisors	70	30
Employees	42	58

Table 4: Statistics of authorities, supervisors and employees agreeing and disagreeing with the meritorious increments rule

The respondents that agree with the rule reason that after the award of meritorious increments one should be awarded a promotion if one's performance continues to be outstanding. Off course the question worth asking is "what if the person's performance is constant in two consecutive years and is given four points which denote two meritorious increments?" On the other hand, those that do not agree with the rule argue that an award is determined by the assessment score (three points = one merit, four points = two merits and five points = promotion) and it does not make sense to deny someone an award of meritorious increment(s) when he/she has qualified for it simply because he/she also qualified for the same in the previous year. This practice implies that the award is also based on length of service and not performance alone. However, Longenecker and Pringle (1984) argue that performance appraisal should link rewards, such as promotions or merit raises, to actual performance. This means that if one's actual performance is good one should be rewarded without looking at other factors such as length of period between awards.

The study further solicited views of employees and their supervisors on the rule that a person should be eligible for promotion after two years from the previous award of promotion (CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service : 2007). Sixty percent (60%) of the supervisors agreed with the rule while forty percent (40%) of them did not agree with the rule saying that they saw no justification for not rewarding an outstanding employee with consecutive promotions. The sixty percent (60%) of the supervisors that saw no problem with the promotion rule argued that if promotions were given out too often, they would lose meaning, remove excitement and push employees to the end of the salary scales when they were still young and had several years of service to retire. The end result would be asking management to consider

adding more salary scales. If management does not add more scales, the morale of the employees would go down due to lack of motivation.

Thirty-three percent (33%) of the employees agreed with the rule that a person should be eligible for promotion after two years from the previous promotion. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the employees did not agree with the rule. The employees gave the same reasons as their supervisors for either agreeing or disagreeing with the promotion rule. According to the rule, besides outstanding performance, length of service between one promotion and another also matters. It does not matter how outstanding one's performance is, if the length of service from the previous one is not due for the next promotion, one may perform the way one pleases knowing that one would lose nothing.

The sixty-seven percent of the employees that did not agree with the promotion rule had an obvious reasoning. They want to benefit as much and as often as possible. But why did sixty percent of both supervisors and authorities see no problem with the promotion rule? Three reasons came out clearly. One is that they do not want to accelerate their subordinates so fast for fear of rendering them unmotivated after reaching the last scale when they still have a long way to go before retirement. The other is fear that by promoting the subordinates based on performance without regard for service between promotions, the subordinates would accelerate fast and get too close to them. Naturally, supervisors that have gone through hard times to be where they are would not want to see their subordinates rise so easily. The other reason is that performance appraisal should not always be seen as a tool for awarding merit increments and promotions.

Outstanding performance can be recognized in different ways such as compliments, change of jobs from less challenging to more challenging ones, etc. Torrington et al (1987) agree that performance appraisal can be used to improve current performance, provide feedback, increase motivation, identify training needs, identify potential, let individuals know what is expected of them, focus on career development, award salary increases and solve job problems. Unfortunately, the University of Malawi uses performance appraisal more for assessing suitability of applicants for either promotion or meritorious increments and less for the rest of the other uses mentioned above. This is contrary to modern performance appraisal.

The study showed that currently when members of staff reach the last scale of their category, nothing is done to reward them for further outstanding performance. CTS members of staff that are in scale J have reached the last scale and are no longer eligible for promotion no matter how outstanding their performance may be. Similarly administrative members of staff that reach scale 1 have reached the last scale in their category. Fortunately there was no administrative staff member who was in scale 1 at the time of the study. In addition, academic members of staff that reach the rank of professor are no longer eligible for promotion because they have reached the last salary scale in the academic staff category (University of Malawi Salary Structure: 2006). It does not matter how many publications a professor comes up with, he/she cannot be promoted to any further rank.

While there was no administrative staff member who was in scale (one) 1 at the time of the study, there were a few professors in the University of Malawi and a few CTS members of staff that were in scale J (Staff records in the Offices of Registrars). Since the study is on non-academic staff, the focus was on CTS staff members that had reached the last salary scale, J. Considering that Longenecker and Pringle (1984) argue that performance appraisal should link rewards to performance, it may be unfair to deny rewards to CTS members of staff that are in scale J when their performance is outstanding simply because they have reached the last salary scale. At the same time, such staff members need to appreciate that they have been rewarded enough and simply need to continue working hard to demonstrate that they really deserve to be at the top of the salary structure in their category.

Four percent (4%) of the respondents agreed with current practice that nothing should be done to CTS members of staff that reach the last salary scale (J) in the CTS staff category regardless of their outstanding performance. The reason given was that such staff members have nowhere to go in the salary structure and should appreciate that they have reached the top most possible salary scale in their category. Off course that reasoning overlooks the fact that such staff members have no motivation and keeping them at the bar of scale J where they cannot even earn automatic annual increments can be quite frustrating. The only benefit going to such staff would be a general salary increase or adjustment affecting everyone in the system. Nineteen percent (19%) of the respondents suggested that CTS staff that reach scale J and continue performing outstandingly should be placed into the academic and administrative salary scales depending on the nature of their work, i.e. academic salary scale if their work is closely related to academic work and administrative salary scale if their work is closely

related to administrative work. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the respondents proposed that an additional salary scale (K) should be created to cater for CTS staff in scale J whose performance demands that they be promoted to another scale. Thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents recommended adding more notches to scale J to accommodate award of meritorious and annual increments before quickly reaching the bar. The following graph illustrates these proposals.

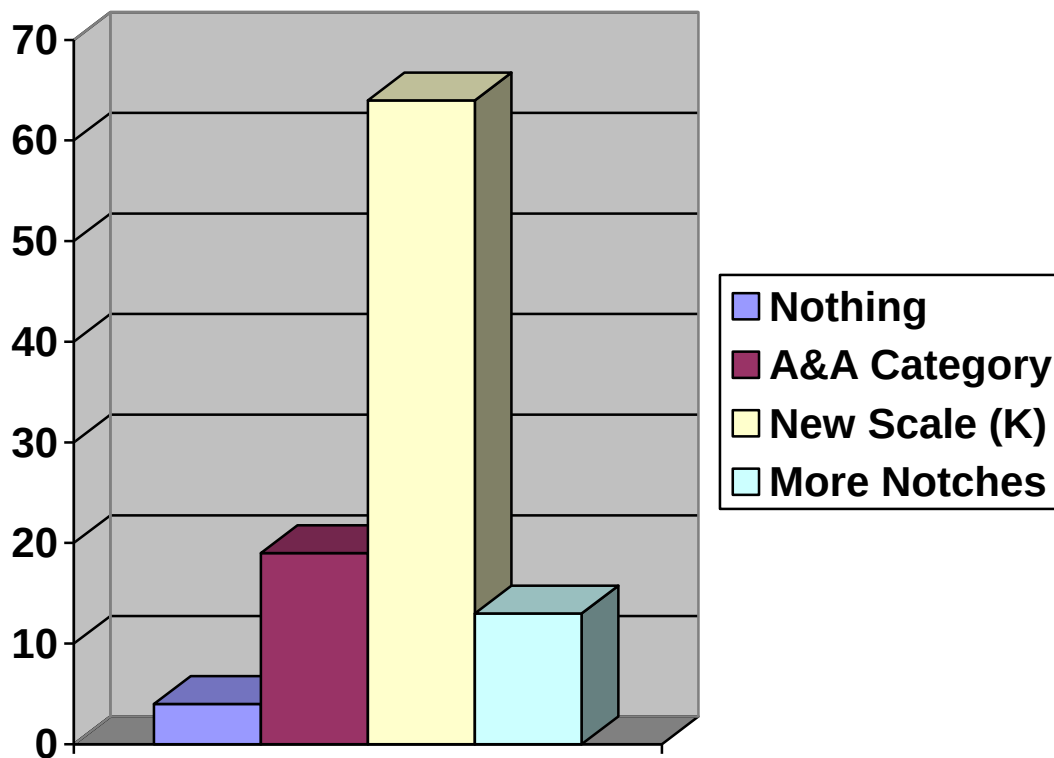


Figure 2: Graph showing proposals for outstanding CTS staff in scale J

The proposal for crossing over staff from CTS category to Academic and Administrative staff category may not be easy to achieve because it would mean changing conditions of service since the two categories are governed by different conditions of service (CTS staff conditions of service & Administrative and Academic staff conditions of service). Naturally, those that belong to the academic and administrative staff categories would resist such a proposal as it invades their territory. They too would wish to invade the next lucrative category of management staff when they become professors and publish more academic work or reach administrative scale one. Creating an additional salary scale within the same structure looks

fine in the short run. However, with time the staff in scale J would still find their way to the last notch in the newly created salary scale. Adding more notches would have the same consequences as adding new scales to the same structure.

3.3 OBJECTIVITY OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL METHOD USED

In order to determine the objectivity of the performance appraisal methods for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi, the study looked at consistency of raters; consistency across departments and institutions; objectivity of the rating scale; serving intended purposes; participation of trade union leaders in CTS staff promotion/ meritorious award meetings; reconsidering recommendations of CTS staff in scale H and above during a University-wide session; and deserving and non-deserving candidates.

3.3.1 Consistency of the Raters

Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) advise that good performance measurement must be consistent throughout the organisation. That is, all managers in the organisation must maintain comparable rating standards. A consistent performance appraisal method is objective. To that end, the study specifically asked the non-academic members of staff whether their performance could be rated the same by different supervisors. Forty-five percent (45%) of them indicated that their performance could not be rated the same by different supervisors arguing that some supervisors are tough; others are moderate while others are lenient. All authorities (100%) also said that there was no way different supervisors could rate the performance of an individual the same putting forward the same arguments made by forty-five percent (45%) of the staff members that felt that they could not be rated the same by different supervisors. Eighty percent (80%) of the raters (supervisors) agreed that indeed no one's performance could be rated the same by different supervisors, again advancing the same arguments as the authorities and forty-five percent (45%) of the employees.

However, fifty-five percent (55%) of the employees challenged that their performance could be rated the same by different supervisors arguing that since their performance would be the same, they did not see why the rating would differ. Probably what these employees may be unaware of is that different supervisors can have markedly different evaluation standards. For

instance, a rating of five from an “easy” supervisor may actually be lower in value than a rating of four from a “tough” supervisor (Gomez-Mejia et al: 2004).

From the responses given by forty-five percent (45%) of the employees, eighty percent (80%) of their supervisors and one hundred percent (100%) of the authorities, it can safely be deduced that the performance appraisal system for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi is not objective as it does not guarantee comparable and consistent rating standards throughout the University. The lack of objectivity of the performance appraisal method means that it does not conform to modern performance appraisal methods.

3.3.2 Consistency across Departments and Institutions

The study also found that there was no consistency across departments and institutions of the University of Malawi as there are some departments and institutions where non-academic members of staff are promoted or awarded meritorious increments more often than other departments. Fifty percent (50%) of the supervisors argue that there are some departments where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and meritorious increments more often than other departments. Ten percent (10%) of the supervisors, however, argue that there are no departments where non-academic members of staff are promoted more often than their colleagues in other departments. The remaining forty percent (40%) of the supervisors do not know whether there are certain departments whose non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and merit increments more often than other departments. The employees themselves echo the observations made by their supervisors. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the employees agree with the supervisors who claim that there are some departments whose non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and merit increments more often than other departments. Fourteen percent (14%) of the employees support the view of the supervisors that feel that there is no department whose non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and meritorious increments more often than other departments. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the employees do not know whether there are some departments whose non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and merit increments more often than other departments.

The employees mention Administration (thirty-one percent), followed by Maintenance (twenty-four percent), Library (sixteen percent), Security (eleven percent), Accounts (seven

percent), Academic Departments (seven percent), Catering (two percent) and Transport (two percent) as departments whose staff members are promoted or awarded meritorious increments more often. Figure five below shows these statistics:

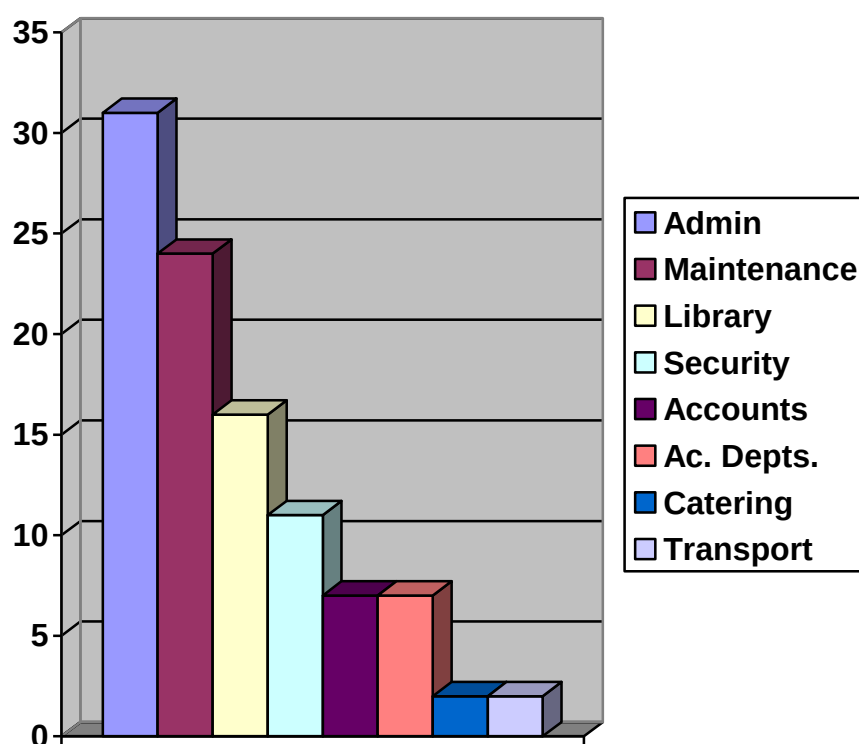


Figure 3: Statistics of Departments and Sections whose staff are awarded more often

It is less surprising that employees perceive that non-academic members of staff in Administration are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than the rest of the departments because the performance appraisal is facilitated by the Administration itself. However, it is worrisome to note that there are indeed some departments deemed to have non-academic members of staff that are promoted more often than others.

The study further found that there are also institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than other institutions. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the employees feel that there are institutions in the University where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than other institutions. Ten percent (10%) of the employees feel that there is no institution in the University where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded

merit increments more often than other institutions. According to them, no institution has an upper hand over the other. Fifty-five percent (55%) of the employees do not know whether or not there is an institution in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions or merit increments more often than other institutions.

The authorities in the various institutions where this study was carried out also shared their views on the matter. Sixty percent of them feel that there are indeed institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and merit increments more often than other institutions. Twenty percent (20%) of the authorities feel that there is no institution in the University where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and meritorious increments more often than the other institutions while another twenty percent (20%) of the authorities do not know whether there are institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded meritorious increments more often than the other institutions.

The supervisors also share the same sentiments. Forty percent (40%) of them agree that there are indeed institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than other institutions. Another forty percent (40%) of the supervisors feel that there are no institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than other institutions. Twenty percent (20%) of the supervisors do not know that there are institutions in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are promoted and awarded merit increments more often than other institutions.

All the authorities that perceived that there is an institution in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and meritorious increments more often than the other institutions named the University Office followed by the College of Medicine. Chancellor College was named as the worst for non-academic staff in the administrative category. Similarly, fifty percent (50%) of the supervisors who perceived that there is an institution in the University of Malawi where non-academic members of staff are awarded promotions and meritorious increments more often than the other institutions named the University Office again followed by the College of Medicine with Chancellor College as the worst for non-academic staff in the administrative category. As regards the employees themselves, forty-eight percent (48%) of them feel that the University Office awards

promotions and meritorious increments to non-academic members of staff of both categories more often than the other institutions of the University of Malawi followed by the College of Medicine with Chancellor College as the worst for non-academic staff in the administrative category. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the employees feel that Chancellor College awards promotions and meritorious increments to non-academic members of staff in the CTS category more often than the other institutions of the University of Malawi.

What is clear is that more employees, supervisors and authorities singled out the University Office as the institution where non-academic members of staff of both categories are awarded promotions and merit increments more often than the rest. Asked to give the reasons, both the employees and their superiors attribute the frequent promotions and award of merit increments at the University Office to the institution's being the headquarters of the University of Malawi. The non-academic members of staff at the University Office work closely with policy and final decision makers in the University of Malawi. This is believed to give them an advantage over others within the University of Malawi.

However, Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) advise that good performance measurement must be consistent throughout the organisation. That is, all managers in the organisation must maintain comparable rating standards. That is not the case with the University of Malawi otherwise there would be no question of certain departments or institutions having their staff promoted or awarded meritorious increments more often than staff in other departments and institutions of the same university. What this means is that the performance measurement of non-academic members of staff is not consistent in all the departments at the various institutions of the University of Malawi implying lack of objectivity.

As a matter of fact, even when it comes to employment, the University Office sometimes places non-academic members of staff in the CTS category in higher grades than the other institutions of the University of Malawi. There was a time when there was confusion between the University of Malawi and Chancellor College when Secretaries at Chancellor College were placed in lower grades than those at the University Office having attended the same interviews. The Secretaries at the college complained and the College Registrar wrote the University Registrar on the matter (Memo from Chancellor College Registrar to the University Registrar dated 4 November 2006).

3.3.3 Objectivity of the Rating Scale

Furthermore, on testing the objectivity of the performance appraisal method, a question was put forward to find out how many non-academic members of staff could genuinely score desired points for promotion. Eighty percent (80%) of the raters indicated that an individual could not genuinely score maximum points on all the traits listed down in the appraisal form. All authorities (100%) agreed with the majority of the supervisors that an individual could not genuinely score an average of five points in the case of CTS staff and four points in the case of administrative staff. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the employees in the CTS category said that an individual could not score an average of five points genuinely because that implies scoring five points on each of the twenty-four dimensions of assessment. In other words one has to be rated “outstanding” in all traits. Similarly, eighty-six percent (86%) of employees in the administrative category agreed that an individual could not score an average of four points, the highest average score for administrative staff (Appendix 2). Of course the administrative members of staff are required to score a minimum of thirty-five out of forty points to qualify for promotion. However, this is not objective enough because to score thirty-five points means scoring four points (outstanding/ excellent performance) in five areas and three points (good performance) in the remaining five areas and that is minimum score.

What it implies to promote an administrative member of staff is for the supervisor to have promotion in mind and rate the person with that thinking otherwise in all objectivity a person might end up scoring thirty points (an average score of three points which denote good performance) and fail to qualify for promotion. If supervisors were to be genuine in their rating, no non-academic member of staff would be promoted as no one would score an average of five points and a total of thirty-five points in the CTS and administrative staff categories respectively. In order to promote their subordinates, supervisors just tick in the maximum score column. In other words, raters are guided by their conscious to promote an individual in order to determine what score to give. Ideally, it should be the results of the rating that should determine whether an employee qualifies for promotion or not. However, owing to lack of objectivity in the appraisal system for non-academic members of staff, the end seems to justify the means when in fact it is the means that should justify the end.

3.3.4 Serving Intended Purposes

The study found that the appraisal form that is used to assess the performance of non-academic members of staff in the CTS category does not serve all intended purposes. According to the form, it is meant to assess the suitability of CTS members of staff for promotion, meritorious increments, training and confirmation. On the other hand, the performance appraisal form for administrative staff only assesses the suitability of an individual for either promotion or meritorious increments leaving out training and confirmation. While the CTS form provides for assessment for training and confirmation, all the respondents in this study said that the CTS performance appraisal form never serves the purpose of assessing training needs and confirmation as the study found that supervisors often write the Office of the Registrar asking for training or recommending confirmation of their subordinates on satisfactory completion of the probation period. On the other hand, all respondents said that the CTS performance appraisal form serves the purposes of recommending the award of meritorious increments and promotion.

Although the performance appraisal system used for non-academic members of staff does not assess training needs, Professors Rue and Byars argue that performance appraisal information can be used to determine training and development needs (Rue and Byars: 1977). Torrington et al (1987) add that performance appraisal can be used to improve current performance, provide feedback, increase motivation, identify training needs, identify potential, let individuals know what is expected of them, focus on career development, award salary increases and solve job problems.

All authorities said that they do not use the performance appraisal system to assess training needs. Similarly, all employees said that they do not use the appraisal forms to ask for training. If anything, they write the Registrar through their supervisors and sometimes directly to ask for training. Asked why the issue of training originates from the training seekers and not the authorities as part of human resource development, lack of scholarships and funds for training were given as reasons. The authorities do not carry out training needs assessment for fear of raising fruitless hopes among the employees. After all, it would be a waste of time to carry out the assessment exercise and send nobody for training. Ironically, all Colleges visited had a budget line on training in their budgets although there was no training plan for non-

academic members of staff in place. Of course the amounts for training in the budget were very small probably justifying why a training plan was not in place.

Basically, the performance appraisal for non-academic members of staff in the CTS category only serves two purposes out of four for which it was designed while that of staff in the administrative category is worse because it was purely designed for two things: merit increment and promotion applications. That is sad considering that modern performance appraisal is supposed to be used for a lot of things outlined above and that the list of uses cannot be exhausted according to Torrington et al (1987).

3.3.5 Participation of Trade Union Leaders in CTS Staff Promotion/ Meritorious Award Meetings

The study found that the leaders of the University Workers Trade Union (a union largely representing CTS staff) participate in CTS staff promotion/ meritorious award meetings at College level. Eighty four percent (84%) of the respondents in the CTS category, one hundred percent (100%) of the union leaders and twenty-five percent (25%) of the supervisors and authorities supported the participation of the union leaders in these meetings arguing that they serve as watchdogs against authorities and supervisors that are not objective in the assessment of their subordinates and that the CTS members of staff have confidence in the results of the meetings in which their union leaders take part. Sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents in the CTS category and seventy-five percent (75%) of the supervisors and authorities argued that it was not necessary for union leaders to attend such meetings because they are after pleasing their subjects and lose objectivity during the meetings. They would like to go out of the meetings and pronounce victory for their subjects.

The arguments for and against the union leaders attending the meetings show one thing and that is lack of objectivity in the performance appraisal system and method. If the performance system was clearly objective, there would be no need for the union leaders to attend the meetings. Probably if Management by Objectives (MBO) was in place there would be less mistrust. Gomez-Mejia et al (2004) argue that MBO provides clear and unambiguous criteria by which worker performance can be judged and it eliminates subjectivity.

3.3.6 Reconsidering Recommendations of Staff in Scale H and Above During a University Wide Session

The study found that recommendations for promotion and meritorious increments for non-academic members of staff in the CTS category in scale H and above are referred to the University Office for further scrutiny during a University wide meeting. The meeting, chaired by the University Registrar, draws all College Registrars together and the recommendations from the Colleges and the University Office are scrutinised during this meeting. On the practice of referring recommendations from scale H to J to the University Office, twenty one-percent (21%) of the respondents supported it while seventy-nine percent (79%) of the respondents criticised the practice.

Without looking at the arguments for or against the practice, it is clear that by referring certain recommendations to the University Office and having others handled at College level, the whole exercise lacks objectivity. The handling of the two categories is bound to be different. No wonder that eighty-eight percent (88%) of the appeal cases for promotion over the period of this study came from the recommendations referred to the University Office and the rest from the College handled recommendations. All this shows lack of objectivity at the two levels, i.e. there is no uniformity due to the lack of objectivity.

Turning to the arguments advanced, those that supported the practice of referring recommendations from scale H to the University Office said that the University wide committee is more objective as it does not serve college interests but university interests. In addition, it ensures uniformity of the standards applied across the University of Malawi. The seventy-nine percent (79%) of the respondents that were against the practice also advanced their own reasons.

First, forty percent (40%) of them argued that referring recommendations from scale H to J to the University Office defeated the concept of decentralisation, which the University of Malawi adopted some years ago (MIM Report on the reform of the University of Malawi: 1995). Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents that argued against the practice said that the Colleges know their staff members better and there was no point taking College issues to a University wide committee that has inadequate knowledge of the members of staff from the

Colleges. Whatever arguments each school of thought advances, it is clear that there is lack of consistence in the performance appraisal for non-academic staff in the University of Malawi.

3.3.7 Deserving and Non-Deserving Candidates

The study found that there were some non-academic staff members that deserved promotion but were not promoted and there were some non-academic staff members that did not deserve promotion but were promoted. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the respondents felt that there were some non-academic staff members that deserved promotion but were not promoted while eighteen percent (18%) of the respondents felt that there were some non-academic staff members that did not deserve promotion but were promoted. While these are feelings of respondents, there could be some truth in the assertions made. There should be a degree of truth that some non-academic members of staff that deserve promotion are not promoted and those that do not deserve promotion end up getting it. This proves further the lack of objectivity in the performance appraisal system/ method used for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi. If the system was objective, the feelings about deserving and non-deserving members of staff not getting promoted or getting promoted respectively would not arise.

3.4 RATERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS

In order to ascertain supervisors (raters) understanding of the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic staff, the study focused on score awarded versus recommendation made and supervisors making impossible recommendations.

3.4.1 Score versus Recommendation

The study showed that some supervisors do not understand the performance appraisal form for non-academic staff especially those in the CTS category. This was evidenced by the fact that sixty percent (60%) of the supervisors said that their rating was not consistent with the recommendations made for their subordinates. In addition, going through appraisal forms submitted to the Registrars' Offices, it was clear that there were indeed inconsistencies between the rating (score given) and the recommendations made. A rating of three denotes

one meritorious increment, four denotes two meritorious increments and five denotes promotion. Some raters would give a score of three and recommend either promotion or two meritorious increments instead of one meritorious increment. Others would give a score of four and recommend either one meritorious increment or promotion instead of two meritorious increments. Interestingly, other raters would give a score of five points and recommend either one meritorious increment or two meritorious increments instead of promotion. For Chancellor College alone, the following table shows the inconsistencies for 2004 for CTS staff.

2004	Promotion (%)	2 Merits (%)	1 Merit (%)
3 Points	29	13	58
4 Points	13	85	2
5 Points	78	22	0

Table 5: Inconsistencies between rating and recommendations for Chancellor College

According to the table, twenty-nine percent (29%) of the supervisors gave their subordinates a score of three points denoting one meritorious increment but recommended the award of promotion. Thirteen percent (13%) of the raters gave their subordinates a score of three points denoting one meritorious increment but recommended the award of two meritorious increments. Fifty-eight percent (58%) did the right thing because they gave their subordinates a score of three points and recommended the award of one meritorious increment. Fifteen percent (15%) of the raters gave wrong scores and recommended the award of two meritorious increments whose correct score is four points. Similarly, twenty-two percent (22%) of the raters gave their subordinates a score of five but recommended the award of two meritorious increments when in actual fact the correct recommendation for five points is the award of a promotion.

This lack of understanding is very serious. You cannot have forty-two percent (42%) of the supervisors not understanding that a rating of three points denotes the award of one meritorious increment; fifteen percent (15%) of them not understanding that a rating of four points denotes the award of two meritorious increments; and twenty two percent (22%) of them failing to understand that a rating of five points denotes the award of a promotion. This

clearly shows that the raters do not fully understand the rating scales of the CTS performance appraisal system.

However, the problem of recommending either promotion or merit award against a wrong score does not occur for staff in the administrative category. The reason is that the authorities that rate them are quite conversant with the system. The Principal, the Registrar, the Librarian and the Finance Officer assess the performance of administrative staff members and these authorities understand the provisions on the performance appraisal form. On the other hand Heads of Department, Heads of Section and Centre Directors who do not take time to understand the provisions on the performance appraisal form rate most CTS members of staff. According to Rue and Byars (1977) a more promising approach to overcoming such errors in performance appraisals is to improve the skills of managers through training. Suggestions on the specific training that should be given to managers are often vague, but at a minimum, managers should receive training in: the performance appraisal method (s) used by the organisation; the importance of the manager's role in the total appraisal process; the use of performance appraisal information; and the communication skills necessary to provide feedback to the employee.

3.4.2 Making Impossible Recommendations

The study further showed lack of some raters' understanding of the performance appraisal system by revealing that they never take time to find out their subordinates' salaries and previous awards to ascertain whether they are eligible for promotion, two meritorious increments, one meritorious increment and indeed no award. Seventeen percent (17%) of the applicants for promotion and merit awards in the CTS category in 2004 did not qualify owing to previous awards and being on top of the salary scale. In 2005 eleven percent (11%) did not qualify and in 2006 nine percent (9%) of the applicants did not qualify for the same reasons. The following graph illustrates these impossible recommendations.

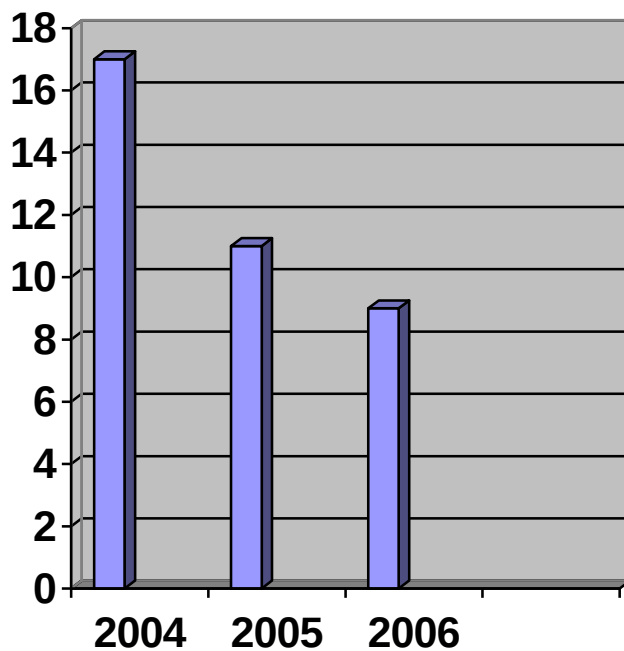


Figure 4: Graph showing impossible recommendations for three years

The decline in the impossible recommendations made shows improved understanding of the raters some of whom sit on the CTS Promotions Committee and learn over the years.

However, some supervisors recommend the award of meritorious increments to subordinates that are on the bar (top of scale) when such staff members are not eligible for anything short of promotion. Other supervisors recommend the award of two meritorious increments to their subordinates when in actual fact they are only eligible for one meritorious increment having remained with one notch to reach the top of that scale (CTS Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service: 2007). This clearly shows that some supervisors just make recommendations for an award that either pleases them or the employee without checking the practicability of such recommendations. As a result of such recommendations, both the supervisor and the subordinate get surprised when results of the performance appraisal come out. In the end the supervisor shifts the blame to the CTS Promotions Committee and indeed the authorities.

According to regulations and conditions of service for CTS members of staff (CTS Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service: 2007), if a staff member has been awarded meritorious increment(s) the previous year, he/she can be considered for promotion the following year or vice-versa as long as he/she satisfies the requirements in terms of

performance and qualifications. In addition, a staff member can qualify for another award of promotion after serving a minimum of two years in between an award of a promotion and the next award. However, some supervisors also have the problem of checking the previous award and ended up making premature recommendations. For instance, some supervisors would recommend the award of promotion when the previous promotion was awarded not more than two years ago. Other supervisors would recommend the award of meritorious increments in two consecutive years. This contravenes Section B, clauses 14 and 15 of the CTS Regulations and Conditions of Service (2007). This lack of checking of salaries and previous awards makes supervisors look ignorant during the CTS Promotions Committee meetings. If only raters took time to check the salaries and previous awards of their subordinates, they would know what award to recommend and when to recommend it.

3.5 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING THE AWARD OF MERIT INCREMENTS AND PROMOTION

Longenecker and Pringle (1984) argue that performance appraisal should link rewards, such as promotions or merit raises, to actual performance. However, this study found that there are other reasons besides performance for which some non-academic members of staff are recommended for promotions and merit awards. Both authorities and employees perceived that there are other factors, apart from performance, for which supervisors recommend some non-academic members of staff for the award of promotion and meritorious increments. The perceived factors are: submission to sexual demands; nepotism; carrying out supervisors' personal assignments; giving money and other gifts to supervisors; attainment of higher educational qualifications; and long service.

3.5.1 Submission to Sexual Demands

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the authorities perceived that some non-academic members of staff are recommended for promotions and merit increases due to submission to sexual demands by their supervisors. This is particularly true for some CTS members of staff. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the employees also gave submission to sexual demands as the reason for which some CTS members of staff get promoted or meritorious increments. It is interesting to note that both authorities and the employees agree that some supervisors recommend promotion of their subordinates in exchange for sexual favours. What this means

is that those that say “no” to the sexual demands could be victimized when in actual fact their performance is good.

The issue of sexual submissions may not generate easy evidence but is widely perceived by both authorities and employees.

3.5.2 Nepotism

On nepotism, twenty-five percent (25%) of the authorities said that some non-academic members of staff are recommended for promotion and merit increments for coming from the same home as their supervisors. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the employees concurred with twenty-five percent (25%) of the authorities by saying that some of their colleagues are promoted or awarded meritorious increments for coming from the same home as the supervisor. What this means is that such supervisors commit rater bias due to nepotism. According to Mathis and Jackson (1988), rater bias occurs when a rater's values, beliefs or prejudices distort the rating. For example, if a manager has strong dislike of certain ethnic groups, this bias is likely to result in distorted appraisal information for some people.

3.5.3 Carrying out Supervisors' Personal Assignments

Fifty percent (50%) of the authorities said that some non-academic members of staff, especially those in the CTS category are recommended for promotion and merit increments for carrying out personal assignments for their bosses. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the non-academic members of staff in the CTS category said that some of their workmates are rewarded for carrying out personal assignments for their supervisors agreeing with fifty percent (50%) of the authorities.

The issue of carrying out personal assignments for supervisors to earn favours such as promotions and meritorious increments, light work, and others is also serious. It is not good that some supervisors send subordinates on several personal errands including carrying out domestic work for the supervisors in exchange for favours as such errands are not job related. At the end of the day, supervisors are blind of performance when assessing suitability of their subordinates for promotion and meritorious increments.

3.5.4 Giving Money and Other Gifts to Supervisors

None of the authorities mentioned giving money and other gifts to supervisors as a reason for recommending award of meritorious increments or promotion to some non-academic members of staff. However, nineteen percent (19%) of the employees said that some non-academic members of staff in the CTS category are promoted and awarded merit increments for giving money and other gifts such as maize, rice, goats, chickens, etc, to their supervisors. Again, it is unprofessional that some supervisors recommend promotions and merit awards to employees that give them money and other gifts such as maize, rice, goats, etc.

3.5.5 Attainment of Higher Educational Qualifications

None of the authorities mentioned attainment of higher educational qualifications as a reason for recommending award of meritorious increments or promotion to some non-academic members of staff. On the other hand, four percent (4%) of the employees said that some of their colleagues are rewarded for attaining higher educational qualifications. Honestly, with a sound staff development plan, it should be a matter of policy to place employees in salary scales commensurate with their qualifications without waiting for a performance appraisal exercise to promote them to the next grade. The problem is that some non-academic members of staff go on training that has not been planned and when they finish it does not become automatic to place them in the next grade or category. In fact eighty percent (80%) of the respondents in the CTS staff category advocated that CTS members of staff that obtain degrees should be placed into the academic and administrative staff categories without any regard to issues of human resource planning.

3.5.6 Length of Service

According to the employees, one percent (1%) of them believed that some non-academic members of staff are promoted for long service while none of the authorities mentioned long service as a reason for recommending award of meritorious increments or promotion to some non-academic members of staff. Some supervisors become lenient and consider the length of service in the same grade as basis for recommending the award of merit increments or promotion. This practice, though minimal, is not good considering that it has nothing to do with performance at work and that some academic members of staff remain in the same grade

for ages as long as they do not have enough publications and research activities to warrant promotion. Figure six below shows statistics of the various reasons given.

	OTHER REASONS FOR PROMOTION/ MERITS	AUTHORITIES	STAFF
1	Submission to sexual demands by supervisors	25%	22%
2	Coming from the same home as the supervisor	25%	26%
3	Carrying out personal assignments for supervisors	50%	28%
4	Giving money and other things to supervisors	-	19%
5	Attainment of higher educational qualifications	-	4%
6	Long service	-	1%
	Total	100%	100%

Table 6: Statistics of other reasons for promotion and merit awards.

All these performance irrelevant factors for which some supervisors recommend some subordinates for promotion or meritorious increments bring bias into the performance appraisal system. Bias became an issue at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in the early 1980s when a lawsuit, **Segar v. Civiletti**, established that African – American agents were systematically rated lower than white agents and thus were less likely to receive promotions and choice job assignments. The DEA failed to provide supervisors with any written instructions on how to evaluate agents’ performance, and virtually all the supervisors conducting the evaluation were white (Gomez – Mejia et al., 2004).

In addition, the tendency of some supervisors recommending the award of promotions and meritorious increments based on reasons other than performance is against modern performance appraisal practice. Gomez Mejia et al (2004) argue that performance appraisal should be rational by focusing on performance that affects organizational success rather than performance irrelevant characteristics such as race, age, gender, ethnic origin, etc. It is sad to note that in an institution of higher learning where excellence should prevail, some supervisors base recommendations for promotion and merit increments on performance irrelevant factors.

3.6 SUITABILITY OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR USE BY NON-ACADEMIC STAFF OF ALL CLASSES

The study found out that the performance appraisal system and method used for assessing the performance of non-academic staff was not suitable for non-academic staff of all classes. While there are two categories of non-academic staff: CTS staff and administrative staff there are numerous classes in the categories. The administrative staff category has the following classes: administrators (Registrar and her/ his assistants), librarians and finance officers (including assistants). The CTS staff category has the following classes (CTS Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service): clerical, executive officer, secretarial, accounting, stores, maintenance, technical, engineering, clinical, catering, domestic, drivers, library, information technology and security. All administrative members of staff are assessed using the same form (Appendix 2) and all CTS members of staff are assessed using the same form (Appendix 1).

In the administrative category, the three classes are unique and need separate appraisal instruments. The work of the Registrar is very different from the work of the Finance Officer and the Librarian. Assessment instruments for the three classes should certainly be different. Take the aspect of ability to meet deadlines. This is more critical for the Finance Officer than the Registrar and the Librarian. Again take the aspect of effective communication. This is more critical for the Registrar than the Finance Officer and the Librarian.

The CTS classes are actually too diverse to use the same appraisal instrument. There are fifteen different classes and most of them with diverse duties. It is not practical to use the same instrument to measure the performance of the Chief Works Supervisor and a Grounds Man or Cleaner. Similarly, you cannot use the same instrument to appraise the performance of staff in security class and secretarial class. Owing to the generalization of the appraisal instrument some assessment areas do not apply to certain classes. To illustrate this fact, let us look at a driver and go through the assessment areas in the following table.

	Assessment Area	Irrelevant	Less relevant	Relevant
1	Output of work	√		
2	Knowledge of work			√
3	Initiative			√
4	Reaction to pressure			√
5	Relationship with colleagues			√
6	Relationship with students and public		√	
7	Attendance			√
8	Punctuality			√
9	Discipline			√
10	Quality of work			√
11	Ability to work without supervision		√	
12	Flexibility	√		
13	Personal hygiene			√
14	Ability to follow instructions			√
15	Reliability			√
16	Judgment			√
17	Self development			√
18	Confidence			√
19	Cost consciousness			√
20	Planning of work	√		
21	Organisation of work	√		
22	Leadership	√		
23	Level of expression		√	
24	Ability to delegate	√		

Table 7: Illustration of need for separate appraisal methods for various classes of staff

Although the remarks against each assessment area are arguable, most of them are correct. With two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the assessment areas being relevant it means the other areas ($\frac{1}{3}$) are not fit to be included in the performance appraisal instrument for CTS staff in the drivers’

class. If this was done with every class of non-academic employees, almost each class would come out unique and justify the need to have separate performance appraisal instruments. In that way, there would be no irrelevant areas as is the case at the moment.

Agreeing with the proposal to have separate appraisal instruments for each class, the CTS performance appraisal form has a clause saying “if area 22, 23 and 24 do not apply to a particular employee, do not rate him/ her in those areas” (Appendix 1). The framers of the form concede that some areas may not be relevant to particular classes of employees. They point out three areas but there are more than three areas depending on the class. The solution, although hard, is to develop independent instruments for each class. It would mean a lot of paper work and orientation of the members of the Appointments Committee, some of whom may not be conversant with all the classes of non-academic employees.

Mathis and Jackson (1988) observe that the descriptive words used in rating scales may have different meanings to different raters. Words such as initiative and flexibility are subject to many interpretations. In addition, both the administrative and CTS staff performance appraisal forms describe each trait but do not give indicators of achievement of the traits to guide the raters on when to award one, two, three, four or five points. In addition, the degree of importance of each trait varies from one class to another and there is need to emphasize special traits for each class of staff. For example, in the CTS category, judgment is more important for drivers’ and clinical classes than clerical class while cost consciousness is more important for accounting and stores classes than the other classes. On the other hand, management of resources is more critical for the Finance Officer than the Registrar and the Librarian. The issue, therefore, goes beyond drawing up separate appraisal instruments to differences in the weighting of key assessment areas for each class.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, key findings of the study have been presented and discussed. All the findings generated from the assessment of the performance appraisal system and method for non-academic staff have been presented in relation to the objectives of the study and linked with other studies and literature available. The chapter has presented the findings by putting them into five main subheadings: conformity of the non-academic staff performance appraisal system and method to modern performance appraisal; objectivity of the performance appraisal

system for non academic members of staff; raters' understanding of the performance appraisal system/ method; other factors affecting performance appraisal other than performance at work; and suitability of the performance appraisal system/ method for use by non-academic staff of all classes.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study. It highlights key conclusions of the study in relation to the findings.

4.2 NON-CONFORMITY OF THE NON-ACADEMIC STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS TO CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

According to findings of the study, the performance appraisal system and methods used for non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi do not conform to contemporary performance appraisal thus affecting the performance of the non-academic members of staff. Since the non-academic members of staff support academic staff, an effect on their performance affects that of academic staff thus contributing to the crisis for higher education. This lack of conformity to contemporary performance appraisal is supported by the following findings. First, while rating scale method is contemporary, the way the University of Malawi uses it is too stingy and impractical. In the CTS staff category, applicants are supposed to score five out of five (minimum 4.5 if converted to the nearest) to qualify for promotion, which is practically impossible forcing raters to keep that at the back of their mind when rating a person they feel should be recommended for promotion. It would be better for the University to consider widening the scale and have something like twenty points on the scale broken down as follows: 1 to 5 points – confirmation; 6 to 10 points – one meritorious increment; 11 to 15 points – two meritorious increments and 16 to 20 points – promotion. Of course those in the boarders would be victims or beneficiaries depending on the boarder but flexibility is achieved and raters would have free minds when assessing their subordinates. The victims in the boarders would be those scoring 5, 10 and 15 points (missing the next award by one point) and the beneficiaries would be those scoring 6, 11 and 16 points (getting the award merely by scoring one point higher than the victims). Secondly, the graphic rating scale, having been widened, should be supplemented by a few essay questions.

In the administrative staff category, two options would be useful. First, it would be better to widen the attributes of assessment otherwise ten are not enough considering the twenty-four

attributes for CTS staff. Again, once that is done, there should be a few essay questions and a section in the conditions of service or a clause on the form itself making it clear that the performance appraisal is open making it compulsory for raters to appraise their subordinates in their presence. Second, it might be worthwhile to try management by objectives (MBO) so that during the appraisal, it is a question of the rater and the subordinate going through the objectives set at the start of the year to see what has been achieved to guide what sort of recommendation should be made. This would easily work if all administrative staff members had clear measurable job descriptions.

The frequency of appraisal in the University of Malawi is another aspect that does not conform to modern performance appraisal. Performance appraisal should be a continuous event and applicable to all staff whether they have applied for promotion or not. As alluded to earlier on, performance appraisal serves a lot of purposes.

According to Schneier and Beatty (1979) performance appraisal tries to give feedback to employees to improve subsequent performance; identify employee-training needs; document criteria used to allocate organisational rewards; form a basis for personnel decisions e.g. salary (merit) increases, disciplinary actions, etc; provide the opportunity for organisational diagnosis and development; facilitate communication between employees and administrators; and validate selection techniques and human resource policies. Therefore, using performance appraisal for purposes of awarding staff meritorious increments and promotion needs to be avoided.

The University of Malawi needs to do something quickly and start conducting performance appraisal of all non-academic staff continuously to serve the outlined purposes otherwise it is not pleasant that fifty-four percent (54%) of the CTS staff interviewed said that their supervisors appraised them every year; thirty-eight percent (38%) of them said they were not appraised every year while eight percent (8%) did not know whether they were appraised every year or not. On the other hand, one hundred percent (100%) of administrative staff interviewed said that they were appraised only when they applied for promotion or meritorious increments that mean that one may not be appraised forever if one does not apply for promotion or merit increments.

Feedback of performance appraisal is another area that needs improvement to make sure that all non-academic members of staff get feedback in writing from the authorities. The study has shown that some non-academic members of staff do not get written feedback on the performance appraisal results. It is only through feedback that employees would improve their performance. It would be better, of course, to come up with a mechanism of providing performance feedback, which is continuous, rather than performance appraisal feedback, which is annual.

The lack of objectives and performance standards need to be addressed as well because it is inconsistent with modern performance appraisal. Bill Scherer and Judith Segal (2006), argue that organisations with world-class appraisal systems link performance appraisal to organisational objectives. The University of Malawi has objectives and it is right and proper that those objectives should be trickled down to individuals. In that way performance appraisal becomes more meaningful. Performance standards, targets and job descriptions are necessary for all non-academic employees so that measurement of their performance has bases.

While some rules such as merit awards not coming in two consecutive years and promotions spaced four years apart are subject to arguments, it should be appreciated that some of the rules are meaningful. For example, when some people reach the last salary scale in their category, the solution is not creating new scales because there will always be individuals in the last scale and others far away from the last scale. Employees just need to appreciate this fact.

4.3 NON-OBJECTIVITY OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS

Attention is needed for lack of objectivity in the performance appraisal method for non-academic members of staff. You cannot have employees with the same performance rated differently simply because some supervisors are tough while others are lenient. This happens because there is no objectivity in the performance appraisal method. The fact is that an objective method would generate the same results regardless of the person conducting the appraisal. Two plus two is four and it does not matter how tough or lenient the person marking the arithmetic is. The University of Malawi managed to put in place a quantified tool

for assessment of eligibility of academic members of staff for promotion and merit awards and it can do the same for non-academic members of staff by setting performance standards and targets against which performance can be measured. In that way, lack of objectivity would be addressed.

With objectivity put in place, there would be no need for watchdogs that come from the trade unions attending CTS staff promotion meetings at College level. Again, the issue of referring recommendations for staff in scale H and above to the University Office would not arise if an objective system/ method was put in place. All applications can be handled at College level. In addition, allegations and suspicions that there are some College departments/ sections and University of Malawi institutions where non-academic members of staff are promoted more often would be minimized if an objective system was put in place. An objective system would also ensure that individuals are rewarded on the basis of performance, nothing else. Issues of employees being rewarded for performance-irrelevant factors such as sexual favours, carrying out personal assignments for supervisors, etc, would rarely come into play.

4.4 RATERS' LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS

From the findings, it is clear that not all supervisors understand the performance appraisal instruments used to assess non-academic members of staff. Training of the raters annually just before the appraisal is done would be useful to overcome the problem. Rue and Byars (1977) emphasize that managers should be given training to observe behaviour more accurately and judge it fairly proposing that, at a minimum, managers should receive training in the performance appraisal method (s) used by the organisation and the importance of the manager's role in the total appraisal process.

4.5 SUITABILITY OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR USE BY NON-ACADEMIC STAFF OF ALL CLASSES

The study found that the appraisal instruments used for non-academic members of staff are unsuitable for use by staff of all classes. The classes are unique and it would be fair to design separate appraisal instruments for each class as already suggested earlier on. Bill Scherer and Judith Segal (2006) encourage managers to design a performance appraisal system for the

unique needs of the organisation. The University of Malawi needs to design a system that is not only unique to the organisation but to the various classes of employees.

4.6 CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRISIS

From the findings generated in this study, it is clear that something has to be done about performance appraisal of non-academic members of staff in the University of Malawi. Some of the frustrations and dissatisfaction that non-academic members of staff display arise from their performance appraisal. Poor performance appraisal system of non-academic members of staff results into poor performance. These non-academic members of staff support academic members of staff in the university and if their performance is poor it affects the performance of the academic members of staff. In the final analysis, the poor performance of the non-academic members of staff contributes to the crisis that has rocked the University of Malawi in particular and African universities in general.

4.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

The study has shown that there are serious problems with the performance appraisal system or method for non-academic members of staff. However, the performance of academic members of staff is assessed by largely focusing on publications and less emphasis is placed on other equally important aspects such as teaching, outreach, and income generation activities. Actually, for academic members of staff there are criteria for promotion and not necessarily performance appraisal system or method. An assessment of the criteria for promotion is a possible area for future research because it too has possible flaws.

4.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the study has been concluded. Conclusions have been drawn on non-conformity of the non-academic staff performance appraisal system to modern performance appraisal; lack of objectivity of the performance appraisal method; raters' lack of understanding of the performance appraisal system; and suitability of the performance appraisal method for use by non-academic staff of all classes.

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APPENDIX 1: APPRAISAL FORM FOR CTS STAFF



**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CTS STAFF APPRAISAL FORM**

This report is for: a) Confirmation
 b) Training
 c) Meritorious Increments
 d) Promotion

SECTION A

(To be completed by Applicant)

1. Name of the employee.....
2. Date of birth.....
3. Date of appointment.....
4. Title of the post.....
5. Grade.....
6. Salary.....
7. Academic/ Professional qualifications.....
8. Technical qualifications.....
9. Duties performed.....
10. Period of report.....
11. Department/ Section.....

SECTION B

(To be completed by Head of Department/ Section)

In relation to work over the past twelve months, please tick appropriate box using the scale given. Do not tick any item, which is not strictly relevant to the job. The following are the ratings.

1. Unsatisfactory
2. Satisfactory
3. Good
4. Very good
5. Outstanding

Please note: Read notes on the next page after Section D

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Output of work					
2	Knowledge of work					
3	Initiative					
4	Reaction to pressure					
5	Relationship with colleagues					
6	Relationship with students and public					
7	Attendance					
8	Punctuality					
9	Discipline					
10	Quality of work					
11	Ability to work without supervision					
12	Flexibility					
13	Personal hygiene					
14	Ability to follow instructions					
15	Reliability					
16	Judgment					
17	Self development					
18	Confidence					

19	Cost consciousness					
20	Planning of work					
21	Organisation of work					
22	Leadership					
23	Level of expression					
24	Ability to delegate					
25	Overall employee performance					

The overall employee performance is to be arrived at by adding numbers in each box and dividing the total by the number of areas that were assessed. If area 22, 23 and 24 do not apply to a particular employee, do not rate him/ her in those areas. Failing to assess the employee in all areas will not affect the total overall performance rating.

a) Total rating (add ratings)	b) Number of areas assessed	c) Overall employee performance (a/b) = c
-------------------------------	-----------------------------	---

SECTION C

Training

a) Training undertaken since last assessment:

.....
.....

b) Training recommended (specify type):

.....
.....

Comments by appraiser:

.....
.....
.....

Signature.....Date.....

General comments/ recommendations by Head of Department/ Section

.....

 Signature.....Date.....

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SECTION D

Recommendation (please tick)

The following are the guidelines for completing this section:

- 5 - Promotion
- 4 - 2 Meritorious Increments
- 3 - 1 Meritorious Increment
- 2 - Confirmation
- 1 - Withhold Confirmation

Overall performance rating

	Confirmation		One Meritorious Increment
	Withhold Confirmation		Two Meritorious Increments
			Promotion to Scale.....

Withhold confirmation for the following reason(s):

.....

Final remarks/ Comments:

.....

 Date.....

University Registrar/ Principal

A. **DEFINITION OF RATINGS FOR COMPLETING A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM**

1. **UNSATISFACTORY**

The employee does not meet requirements or expectations. Fundamental improvement is required. Examples: serious errors in work; volume of work is unacceptable or deadlines are missed; poor working relationships which hinder the work of the Department/ Section.

2. **SATISFACTORY**

The employee generally meets requirements or expectations and performance has usually been adequate. Improvements could be made. Examples: occasional inaccuracies in work; sometimes volume of work does not meet expectations or deadlines are missed; working relationship with some persons could be improved.

3. **GOOD**

The employee consistently meets requirements or expectations, without significant exceptions. Examples: consistently produces accurate work; always produces the required volume of work or meets deadlines; effective working relationships with members of the Department/ Section.

4. **VERY GOOD**

The employee consistently meets and often exceeds requirements or expectations with minimum supervision and takes some initiative.

5. **OUTSTANDING**

The employee consistently exceeds requirements or expectations with no supervision and takes a lot of initiative.

B. GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR COMPLETING A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM

1. OUTPUT OF WORK

Employee completes assigned volume or amount of work within set limits. If incapable of meeting deadlines, the employee informs the supervisor well in advance so that alternative arrangements can be made.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF WORK

Employee well versed in his/ her work, understands what he/ she is supposed to do and has the relevant technical know-how.

3. INITIATIVE

Employee proposes measures, undertakes actions and finds solutions in order to manage more effectively the activities for which he/ she is responsible. The employee anticipates what needs to be done and originates necessary action.

4. REACTION TO PRESSURE

Employee has the ability to perform under pressure.

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH COLLEAGUES

Employee demonstrates cooperativeness, courtesy and a positive attitude towards colleagues and superiors.

6. RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF/ STUDENTS/ GENERAL PUBLIC

Employee establishes and maintains effective relations with all persons encountered in the performance of his/her duties. Employee shows ability to listen, express himself/ herself

clearly and appropriately, states his/ her opinion constructively and requests and considers the opinions of others.

7. ATTENDANCE

Employee works regularly and rarely excuses himself/ herself from work.

8. PUNCTUALITY

Employee is never late when coming to work; performs tasks at the required time and according to established schedule.

9. DISCIPLINE

Employee conforms to established rules and regulations; demonstrates self control and respect.

10. QUALITY OF WORK

Employee submits work, which is consistently accurate, complete, thorough and neat; and pays attention to detail.

11. ABILITY TO WORK WITHOUT SUPERVISION

Employee plans his/ her work and that of subordinates efficiently, follows regulations and procedures, and is self-motivated.

12. FLEXIBILITY

Employee has ability to recognize the merit of new ideas; willingness to adopt these and to change and learn.

13. PERSONAL HYGIENE

Employee observes cleanliness at all times and keeps the work place clean.

14. ABILITY TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

Employee follows directives, regulations and procedures. Employee ensures that tasks assigned to him/ her by supervisor are properly understood and discharged.

15. RELIABILITY

Employee is dependable in the performance of his/ her duties. He/she projects a positive image of the College, accepts the goals and policies of the institution and management decisions. He/ she applies and ensures that these goals and decisions are respected within the bounds of his/ her authority. Employee is trustworthy and self disciplined.

16. JUDGMENT

Employee is discerning, objective, levelheaded and tactful in his/ her decisions and actions and in the application of policies and directives. Employee makes sound decisions consistently.

17. SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Employee has the drive to learn and desire to excel.

18. CONFIDENCE

Employee believes in himself/ herself, his/ her employees and the goals of the organisation. He/she is confident that the work required will get done.

19. COST CONSCIOUSNESS

Employee appreciates the need to avoid wastage in the day-to-day operations. He/she at times initiates cost containment measures in the work environment.

20. PLANNING OF WORK

Employee develops clear, thorough and practical action of the situation and the necessary controls.

21. ORGANISATION

Employee implements plans, establishes priorities, allocates resources, delegates tasks, sets deadlines and uses all available means to attain objectives.

22. LEADERSHIP

Employee effective in getting a group to accomplish a task and in getting management ideas accepted.

23. LEVEL OF EXPRESSION

Employee has the ability to make a persuasive and clear presentation of ideas or facts either orally or in writing.

24. ABILITY TO DELEGATE

Employee provides effective guidance, issues directives and offers advice and support to subordinates in order to attain desired organisational objectives. He/she maintains the respect and trust of his subordinates in a climate of effective working relationships. Gets the best out of his team and properly trains his/ her immediate juniors. He/she considers advice from juniors.

APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION FORM FOR PROMOTION OR MERIT INCREMENT (S) FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Ref: 1/12/3/6/1

Paper 9 (Revised)

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

University Office

APPLICATION FOR PROMOTION OR MERIT INCREMENT(S) FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Please attach a copy of your curriculum vitae to this form

SECTION A

1. Surname: _____
2. Other Names: _____
3. College/Office: _____
4. Present Position: _____
5. Present Grade: _____
6. Present Salary: _____ per annum
7. Award/Grade applied for: _____
8. Date of Last Award of:
 - (a) Merit increment: _____
 - (b) Promotion: _____

9. University of Malawi service

Position	Dates
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

10. Details of previous employment

Position	Dates

11. Academic Qualifications (in sequence, most recent first)

12. Professional qualifications (e.g. special courses)

13. Membership of professional societies, special academic awards etc

14. Examinations for which you are now studying

15. Duties performed

16. Special achievements

17. Names and addresses of 3 referees who may be contacted by the University, if necessary

18.

Signature	Date
-----------	------

SECTION B

(to be completed by the Reporting Officer)

Notes to be read before completion of this part

1. This part should be completed by the most senior supervisor in contact with the officer concerned. 2. Every officer has weak points as well as strong ones, and both should be described, as it is equally important for the officer and the University that both should be reorganized.

19. How long has the officer served under you?

Years	Months
-------	--------

20. Is the information in SECTION A above correct to the best of your knowledge?

YES/NO

Please give details

21. Have any written warnings been given to the officer on his/her work or conduct during the period of this report? YES/NO

22. Has any improvement been noted following such warnings? YES/NO

Please give details

Tick the most appropriate box only. The questions have been arranged to give the following scoring: a – 4, b - 3, c – 2 and d – 1. Candidates will among other requirements be recommended for promotion if they score a minimum of 35 marks and for award of special increments if the score is at least 30 marks.

23.

	Knowledge of duties	Tick	Comment
a	The candidate has outstanding knowledge of the procedures and/or skills necessary to carry out all duties appropriate to the grade		
b	Has good working knowledge of the procedure and/or skills necessary to carry out all duties appropriate to grade		
c	The candidates has fair knowledge of the procedures and/or skills necessary to carry out all duties appropriate to the grade		
d	The candidate has poor knowledge of procedures and/or skills necessary to carry out all duties appropriate to the grade		

24.

	Initiative	Tick	Comment
a	Has an outstanding sense of anticipating what needs to be done and originates necessary action		
b	Has good sense of what needs to be done and originates action		
c	Requires suggestions by the higher authorities before acting		
d	Lacks initiative		

25.

	Judgement	Tick	Comment
a	Proposals or decisions are consistently sound		
b	Proposals or decisions are fairly sound		
c	Occasionally makes sound decisions		
d	Judgement is poor		

26.

	Capacity for accepting responsibility	Tick	Comment
a	Outstandingly self reliant and keen to accept responsibility		
b	Reliable and accepts responsibility		
c	Refers too often to higher authority and awaits direction		
d	Avoids responsibility and requires close supervision		

27.

	Organisation of work	Tick	Comment
a	An outstanding organizer who plans own work and that of subordinates extremely efficient		
b	A good organizer who plans own work and that of subordinates		
c	An occasional organiser		
d	Does not organize own work or that of subordinates		

28.

	Management of subordinate staff	Tick	Comment
a	An excellent supervisor who gets the best out of the team		
b	An average supervisor who gets the most out of the team		
c	Handles team badly with little control		
d	Lacks control		

29.

	Management of resources	Tick	Comment
a	Outstandingly prudent		
b	Prudent		
c	Fairly prudent		
d	Wasteful		

30.

	Relations with other members of staff	Tick	Comment
a	Outstandingly co-operative and helpful		
b	Courteous, tactful and helpful		
c	Occasionally co-operative and helpful		
d	Uncooperative and unhelpful		

31.

	Relations with public/ students	Tick	Comment
a	Outstandingly courteous, tactful and helpful		
b	Courteous, tactful and helpful		
c	Occasionally courteous and helpful		
d	Discourteous, tactless and unhelpful		

32.

	Output	Tick	Comment
a	Outstanding in the amount of work done		
b	Satisfactory output		
c	Falls behind in work		
d	Output unsatisfactory		

33.

(a) General comments and over all assessment

(b) Recommendation for promotion/ merit award

(c)

Signature of immediate

supervisor_____

Name:

Title:

Date:

SECTION C

To be completed by the Principal/University Registrar/University Librarian/Finance Officer as applicable. If Section B is completed by one of these Senior Officers, this part need only be filled as appropriate.

(a)	Are you satisfied with the assessment in SECTION B of this report	YES/NO
Please give reasons		
(b) Any further comments		

