

**ASSESSING EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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**BY**

**MARTIN M. SILUMBU**

**STUDENT NO: 200226657**

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**SUPERVISOR: DR. BOTSWIRI OUPA TSHEKO (UNIVERSITY OF  
BOTSWANA)**

## **ABSTRACT**

This research sought to assess the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the Performance Management System (PMS) in the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MRICO). It also aimed to achieve the following research objectives: to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the PMS; to explore whether the PMS motivated employees to perform better and to identify the major problems facing the PMS. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) implemented the PMS in 2015, with the aim to develop and create a performance oriented culture, and sustain motivation among employees. To that end, concerns on whether employee attitudes and perceptions affected PMS functionality had not been answered. Therefore, this narration prompted the study.

The research adopted a mixed methods approach. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilised to gain in-depth knowledge on the topic. A triangulation paradigm was utilised wherein the quantitative research validated the qualitative research findings. A sample size of 80 respondents was statistically determined and targeted out of the workforce of 300 employees at the Ministry. Stratified random sampling technique was utilised to select the sample size. The research aimed for a sample of 16 respondents in management positions and 64 in non-management positions. Of the 80 emails sent, 64 were sent successfully while 16 bounced back and only 54 respondents completed the questionnaire. 10 emails were not responded to. Primary data was collected through an expert reviewed structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions and telephone interviews. Secondary data was collected through a review of books, journals and reports. The data collected was analysed using SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0, to categorise the collected data into meaningful information that involved cross-tabulations and bar graphs.

The study revealed that attitudes of non-compliance to set standards do affect the PMS. The study concluded that PMS principles were inadequately enforced, by part because of poor comprehension of the system. So far, the PMS has little consequence in inspiring better performance. It was recommended that the scheme should be treated with the seriousness it required for it to operate with excellence. Understanding the system's policies and procedures should, therefore, be prioritised.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

APA :	American Psychological Association reference convention
CPST :	Centre for Public Service Training
Government :	Government of the Republic of Namibia
MIRCO:	Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation
OPM :	Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia
PA :	Performance Appraisal
PAS :	Performance Appraisal System
PMP :	Performance Management Process
PMS :	Performance Management System
SPSS :	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
The Ministry :	The Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation
WASCOM :	Wages and Salary Commission

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- To my colleagues for their significant contribution and participation in this research.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late father Joseph Liseli Silumbu (1932-2011) who always believed in me.

## DECLARATIONS

I, Martin M. Silumbu, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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..... Signature  
Martin M. Silumbu

Date.....

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1 Background of the study**

This research assessed the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the Performance Management Systems (PMS) in the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO). In the aftermath of Namibia's independence in 1990, work performance in Government was measured using the Merit Assessment and the Efficiency rating system. The system operated on the basis of rewarding employee attributes with promotion. As such, performance was measured based on incidents that occurred during the reporting period. In the end, the system did not meet its delivery objectives. This was because, the scheme focused more on rewarding employee qualities rather than assessing the impact of those attributes. Therefore, a need to realign the system to one that would better manage work performance in the public sector emerged.

The Wages and Salary Commission (WASCOM) recommended an alternative system termed the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) in 1996. PAS was considered as an incentive based system that would motivate employees by means of monetary reward. Following a lack of sufficient training prior to implementation and a supporting organisational culture, WASCOM suspended PAS in 1998 (Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia, 2011). To that end, the onus to introduce a workable solution to better evaluate work performance in the public service remained wanting. Subsequently, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) with the assistance of the Centre for Public Service Training (CPST), conducted a training needs assessment among senior management across the public service of Namibia (Office of the Prime Minister,

Republic of Namibia, 2011). The Performance Management System (PMS) was, therefore, identified and implemented as the correct measure and tool to improve and manage work performance in the public service of Namibia.

Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011, p23-24) underlined the PMS as a systematic approach that aimed to translate organisational intent into team objectives and individual result to improve performance. Furthermore, PMS intends to achieve organisational objectives through a shared understanding of results, values and priorities. PMS manages performance through contract rather than demand in a manner that focuses on strategic competency development and the processes between teams and individuals.

The Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011) outlined the purpose and use of the Performance Management System to:

- Provide a framework for strategic planning and management;
- Develop, improve and articulate a shared understanding of organisational objectives, priorities and values;
- Join the organisation together through the integration of organisational objectives, and individual results;
- Provide processes to improve work planning and channels of communication;
- Ensure understanding, empower staff and improve team and individual performance through clarification of roles, accountabilities, responsibilities, and expectations;
- Provide for the identification, prioritising, development and coaching of competencies and individual potential;
- Create a performance oriented culture and sustain motivation;

- Underpin a culture that supports achievement and calculated risk taking, rather than one that seeks to blame or find fault;
- Encourage the early identification and turnaround of unsatisfactory performance through coaching and support;
- Serve as input for recognising and rewarding of above solid performance; and
- Attract and retain skilled staff.

The people of Namibia overwhelmingly and willingly gave the Government the mandate to consolidate past reforms and pursue the lofty ideals set out in Vision 2030. The Performance Management System (PMS) is one such reform that was identified and implemented with the aim to transform Namibia's public service into a performance driven organisation. The main idea of PMS stands to change employee attitudes and behaviour towards service delivery in the public service of Namibia.

Attaining the aims of the PMS reform require a shared vision of Government's objectives, priorities and values. That way, clarified roles, accountability, responsibility and expectations would empower employees to deliver tangible results. Therefore, modelling an effective performance management system centres on top management's ability to establish clear-cut expectations that guides employee commitment. That said, PMS success greatly depends on top management commitment and the ability with which the system is used effectively. Therefore, getting employees on-board, should be key in achieving excellent system functionality.

The Performance Management System (PMS) stands as a work performance tool applicable to all civil servants appointed under the public service Act, Act no. 13 of 1995. Given the above narrative, it was of great significance for the researchers to

determine the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the PMS. This is because, the mentioned attitudes and perceptions could potentially influence the system's effectiveness. Through determining employee attitudes and perceptions, the research aimed to help us understand whether the Performance Management System (PMS) improved service delivery in Namibia's public service, particularly in the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Armstrong and Taylor (2014) argue that, the introduction of performance management systems was predominantly focused on implementation rather than how employees perceived the system. This was because of the excessive attention placed on the design of the system, rather than how employee attitudes influenced the system once implemented. The assumption that employees are likely to respond positively to a newly implemented performance management system, justifies the excessive attention mentioned (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Government institutions have on occasion received criticism for poor services rendered. To that end, the PMS was implemented with the aim to develop and create a performance oriented culture, and sustain motivation among employees. However, concerns about whether employee attitudes and perceptions of non-compliance to PMS policies and procedures, affected the system, had not been answered. Thus, there was a need to examine the system to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the system and whether the system remained consistent with its objectives.

The success of a performance management system relies on how it is used and the attitudes and perceptions towards it. Therefore, employee receptiveness and

supportiveness of a given PMS depend on various factors. By and large, if presented and viewed as a path for personal development and an opportunity for career growth, a PMS is inclined to succeed. However, should employees respond negatively or not appreciate the value of a performance management system, this could adversely influence the systems' effectiveness.

### **1.3 Research objectives**

The main objective of the study was to establish the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the Performance Management Systems once implemented. Based on the statement of the problem, the research aimed to achieve the following research objectives:

- To determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influence the PMS;
- To explore whether the PMS motivates employees to perform better as intended;
- To identify the major problems facing the PMS in the MIRCO;

The researcher planned to achieve the above objectives by establishing the way in which the Performance Management System was operated and to determine the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the scheme.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The research contributes to the body of knowledge in the PMS discipline. First, it aimed to provide the Ministry of International Relations and Corporation, policy makers and other stakeholders with information on how to institutionalize applicable solutions to better the Performance Management System where possible. Secondly, this research is of significance as it provides a ministerial assessment of the behavioural influence on the scheme's functionality in MIRCO. Furthermore, it is a

foundational stepping-stone for other researchers to carry out further in-depth research on this important topic.

Worth noting is that employee attitudes and perceptions towards a performance management system commonly depend on noticeable outcomes in motivational incentives. That said, in the body of knowledge it is widely accepted that aligning positive incentives to the application of a performance management system frequently leads to positive outcomes in employee performance.

### **1.5 Limitation of the study**

The research was confined within the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, due to the time limitation prescribed to complete the thesis. Ideally the entire public service could have been covered.

Because the PMS was still relatively new in Government, it posed experience limitation in terms of whether participants understood the concept well enough to sufficiently provide useful information for the study.

### **1.6 Delimitation of the study**

The research was limited to the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. The Ministry was selected among the 35 line-ministries and agencies of the Government of the Republic of Namibia. The research concentrated on employees' perceived view of the Performance Management System (PMS). For convenience and practicality, an expert reviewed closed-ended questionnaire was administered to respondents in two job levels, namely those in management and non-management positions. Management positions consist of employees' at the most senior level, from Permanent Secretary to Deputy Director Level. Non-management positions consist of those employees at the category of Chief to junior employees to Cleaner level. The

questionnaire was purposely simplified to draw willingness from the participants in completing the survey. Bryman and Bell (2011) concludes that careful consideration should always be given to the research problem and its focal point, to distinguish between what was relevant and what was not relevant to the research. In the researchers' view, all irrelevancies to the research problem were dealt with in the statement of delimitation.

### **1.7 Chapter outline:**

This research paper is divided into six main chapters. Chapter one provides a brief introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, significance and limitations of the study as well as the delimitation of the study. The remaining chapters of this study has been structured as follows: Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework of various authors work on performance management, while the methodology adopted and applied in the study is presented in chapter three. Chapter four presents the study findings on the research objectives, while the conclusion and recommendation arising from the findings and areas for further research are given in chapter five. Chapter six outlines the references of the study.

### **1.8 Summary**

Performance Management is not as simple as it seems, many a times organisations identify one or more factors as challenging when operating a performance management system. These challenges frequently include issues that relates to implementation, functionality, employee engagement and change management. These factors are relevant to the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation and require the greatest attention which if not addressed could cause the Performance Management System to fail.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined the foundations and objectives of the study. The purpose of this literature is to provide an overview of contemporary issues in performance management systems. PMS has become a popular subject in Namibia's public service. Government has hosted many conferences which primarily discussed services delivery in the public sector. PMS is viewed as a major transformational reform towards service delivery. This literature is outlined as follows: The first part of the chapter gives a brief narration of contemporary issues in PMS. Existing PMS models are then presented. This include, examining employee attitudes, motivation and problems in performance management. Finally, a brief overview that integrates motivational theories with PMS is given.

The dynamic nature of the work environment ever places pressure on work designs and how those designs influence performance. The evolution of work designs in today's competitive work environment is being shaped by rapid change in the modus operandi of business. This has compelled Namibia's public service to re-assess its internal and external opportunities. The implementation of tools such as performance management system as catalyst for change, has become the norm in today's demanding work environment. In this dissertation, the researcher discussed the following important topics.

#### **2.2 Performance Management**

Predominantly performance management is assumed to mean the same thing as performance appraisal (Armstrong, 2016). However, significant differences exist

between the two concepts. A closer examination of the two reveals that performance management involves a much wider, continuous and, more comprehensive process that clarifies mutual expectations, emphasizing on the support role of supervisors (Armstrong, 2016). Performance appraisal provides a focal point for the consideration of key performance and development issues (Armstrong, 2016). This include performance review meetings which is the means through which performance management elements of agreement, measurement, feedback, positive reinforcement and dialogue are put to good use. Performance appraisal (PA) therefore, forms part of the formal assessment and rating of individuals, usually at an annual review meeting (Armstrong, 2016). Quintessentially, the common misconceptions that exists in the interpretation of the two concepts is that one stands as a process whilst the other, a function that falls within the overall process.

Over the years, performance management has received its fair share of criticism. Armstrong (2016) argued that many a time performance management was discredited because it was run predominantly as a top down and largely bureaucratic system owned by the human resource department. However, recent studies have shown that the criticism levelled against performance management occasionally emanates from poor management rather than the system itself. This was well articulated by (Armstrong, 2016) who argued in support of using performance management as an instrument that systematically influenced change by analysing and measuring worker performance over time (including communicating that assessment to individual employees).

Performance management work best when built on excellent leadership and high-quality relationships between supervisors and employees (Bluen, 2013). This argument was reinforced by (Baird, Schoch, & Chen, 2012) in their study on

performance management system effectiveness in Australian local government. The scholars found that teamwork was associated with greater employee empowerment and delegation of decision-making power. This included autonomy in performing tasks that led to greater commitment amongst employees. Armstrong (2016), however, emphasised on the design of performance management systems to have a lasting influence on the scheme's effectiveness. He argued that, the systems' design ought to be guided by cooperate values and culture. Therefore, performance management should be an instrumental reform that drives efforts from corporate values in obtaining solutions that works.

Studies show that performance management is a mainstream tool that supports supervisors to manage, motivate and monitor employee performance. Baird, et al. (2012) explains that a relationship exists between multidimensional performance measures and reward (team work/respect for people influence input/outcome). Despite these findings, many organisations still find it difficult to effectively implement performance management systems that works. Baird, et al. (2012) stressed the need for PMS to enable organisations to plan, measure and control performance in order to achieve desired results. Therefore, it is imperative for organisations to ensure that employees understand what is expected of them, from both dimensions of input/outcome and behaviour.

Grote (2002) motivates performance management as one of the most powerful instruments that mobilises the energy of every employee and focus their efforts on the organisation's mission, vision and values. Frequently, performance management systems are labelled as routine chores mandated by the human resource department. Grote (2002), however, argue that, taken seriously and used well, the experience of performance management could be understood for what it is, an on-going value

process and not just a mere ritual. Despite the merits of the PMS, the scheme predominately receives poor judgment because of how it is implemented and run.

The application of PMS through standardised performance assessments functions as a measure of quality in employee performance. That way, discussions on attributes that include input/output and behavioural aspects affecting the PMS could be harmonised. While many studies have examined contemporary PMS issues on evaluation/measurement, implementation, employee engagement, leadership focus, and compensation, in a review of literature (Baird, 2017) highlighted the existence of a lack of consensus in the actual consequences of such systems. In his study on the effectiveness of strategic performance measurement systems (Baird, 2017) suggested for managers to focus on dimensions of financial, internal, customer, learning and growth measures in achieving system effectiveness.

At base level, PMS is commonly viewed as a mere performance evaluation tool. A much closer examination, however, reveals that PMS functions as a catalyst for change. All-in-all PMS supports performance improvement through motivation, guiding and rewarding employee performance. Although critics of the system consider the performance management process time consuming and bureaucratic, the criticism levelled merely signals a need to re-align of the PMS with the organizational goals. Despite the mentioned shortcomings however, the bottom-line remains, which is that performance management endeavours to add value, manage and improve employee performance.

### **2.3 The Performance Management Process**

Several activities fall within the performance management process, this include: objective setting, feedback, performance review /appraisal and employee development

(Ashdown, 2014). The performance management process (PMC) quintessentially begins with translating institutional aims into clear-cut individual goals. These goals would then be realized through following set quarterly or annual targets. This mandates employee at all levels to be aware of how their role fits in the overall organisations' objectives. Pulakos, (2009) suggested that performance management systems should give supervisors and employees the opportunity to dialogue. This dialogue would primarily entail setting acceptable and unacceptable work parameters, which include setting targets to be achieved and factors to mitigating undesired performance. Because standard setting forms the basis on which acceptable performance is measured and developmental needs are identified, it requires the greatest attention in employee engagement.

PMS is a valuable and necessary tool in the workplace. However, (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014) argued that as a human resource strategy, performance management promised more than it achieved. This was because badly designed or poorly implemented performance management schemes typically communicates entirely different message from what is expected. Fundamentally, it is not only badly designed or poorly implemented tools that pose a challenge, but how these tools are utilised, managed and the commitment towards the scheme. To inspire an effective performance management system, work expectations should be clearly defined and articulated.

Performance management should be a well-articulated process that oversees and evaluates work performance with defined employee roles and timelines (Pulakos, 2009). That way, human resource decisions would be based on performance ensuring fairness in the evaluation process. Pulakos, (2009) conferred that, the PMS process varies widely in the way performance planning, performance development,

performance review and management are carried out. Therefore, focus should be on how best to harmonise the fundamental stages of the Performance Management Cycle (PMC) in achieving value addition. Facilitators of PMS should therefore, adopted a holistic approach in PMC.

Many a times, organisations consider performance evaluation, as the overall measure of performance. However, (Bluen, 2013) noted that to be effective, the evaluation process should be considered an integral part of the overall PMC. He argued that, as an on-going process the PMC involved more than just evaluation, it encompassed planning, assessment, feedback, and employee development. As such, PMC is not autonomous to issues of measuring performance. The aim of performance management, therefore, should be to look back over-time and review performance, then look ahead to goals and targets for the next period. It is with these overall checks and balances that learning, and development requirements are identified (Bluen, 2013). To gain greater insight into the performance management process, the five stages of the performance management cycle are illustrated in figure 2.1 below:

Figure 2.1 The Performance Management Cycle



(Armstrong & Taylor, 2014)

Approaches to the performance management processes vary from organisation to organisation. Best practice studies show that, essentially all systems contains variation in the steps as modelled in Figure 2.1. However, what is common, is that all PMC contain well-articulated processes with clear structures (Pulakos, 2009). Being a natural management process, PMC follows core activities of planning, execution, monitoring and reviewing performance. The ability to harmonise these activities, is the cornerstone of many performance management systems. The stages of PMC are explored in greater details as follows.

### **2.3.1 Performance Planning**

Performance planning emanates from performance agreements. Expectations are defined in profiles that specifies key result areas; this include knowledge, skills and abilities and behavioural competencies required to perform (Armstrong, 2016). For performance management to add value, adequate planning should be in place (Ashdown, 2014). Therefore, performance planning require alignment with the organization's overall objective. What is important in performance planning, is to align individual goals with the strategic goals of the organisation. This include deliberations on key issues that affect employee performance. Presenting employees with the opportunity to utilise their knowledge and skills, imparts responsibility and commitment to organisation. According to the Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011), performance planning the Achilles heel of any performance management system. Agreed expectations should consistently be achieved and competencies should aligned with the organization's strategic plan. Performance planning is outlined in the following steps:

#### **a) Performance Agreement**

An assessment of past performance leads to the analysis of future requirements.

Performance agreements are modelled on what must be measured and the competencies required to measure performance (Armstrong, 2016). It is important therefore, for these measures and requirements to be fully agreed upon. Baron and Armstrong (2008) shared that performance agreements forms the basis for feedback, assessment and developmental opportunities within the performance planning process. Consensus between supervisors and employees should be agreed upon to achieve expected results.

Focused performance agreement essentially outlines key activities that are likely to add value (Ashdown, 2014). When an employee moves into a new role for example, value addition is based on specified job requirements within the job analysis process. The bottom-line is that a strong alignment in result-oriented goals defines accountability and operations, clarifying how work activities contribute to the overall objective. In summary performance agreement should aim to inculcate the culture of performance assessment while focusing on results (outputs and/or outcomes) and link those results to the overall objectives at ministerial, departmental, directorate, divisional and/or sectional level (Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia, 2011).

b) **The Job Analysis**

Job analysis guides the formulation of performance agreements. The focus is on key activities or responsibilities that considers issues of qualities, competencies and behaviour (Ashdown, 2014). Job Analysis should thus, be well articulated and specify aspects of job role or task to be performed. Commonly, the output of job analysis has been the job description. Predominantly, job descriptions summarised tasks in a job, identifying reporting lines and areas of responsibility. Therefore, job descriptions are an essential guideline in developing performance planning. This argument was

supported by (Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia, 2011) who suggested that positions in Offices/Ministries and Agencies should be guided by job descriptions that clearly outlines the purpose of the job, competency profile, job requirements and job responsibilities.

The way outcomes are managed should be defined through responsibilities, because when responsibilities are not clear employees lose focus. Moreover, limiting responsibility to specific tasks results in ineffective evaluation processes. Opponents of job descriptions have criticised these statements from various standpoints. According to Ashdown (2014), because organisations work in an environment of rapid change, job descriptions became obsolete almost as soon as they are agreed upon. It is argued that, in some instances job descriptions lack flexibility. However, some organisations have worked around limitations of job descriptions by adding flexibility clauses that include statements like and other administration duties. Ideally job descriptions should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they keep in step with current job requirements.

c) **Development Plan**

Development plans provide a learning programme which individuals are expected to follow. Development plans incorporates a wider set of learning and development activities such as self-managed learning, coaching, and monitoring (Armstrong, 2016). Employees require development plans to focus their individual development. To achieve commitment and support, the purpose of the development plan should be clarified and communicated (Ashdown, 2014). The Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011) suggested that, the mandate of performance agreements should only apply, when employees meet the required competencies. These competencies could therefore, be acquired on the job. For employees to gain

experience in the disciplinary process for example, they should attend disciplinary meetings and through that, acquired the necessary experience for accountability. However, irrespective of competency levels, employees should be responsible in their job roles. So far, there has been a shift in the way development activities are carried out. Development planning has shifted from a controlled activity to one that requires partnership in the work environment, wherein responsibilities are shared.

### **2.3.2 Performance Execution**

Performance execution centres on managerial and employee responsibilities. Aguinis (2014) argues that both employees and supervisors have a duty to fulfil the process of performance execution. He explained that, not only should employees be committed to goal achievement, but should also take a proactive role in getting feedback. In that sense, the burden of responsibility to give feedback does not only rest on the supervisor. Therefore, employees are obliged to openly communicate and prepare for the evaluation process (Aguinis, 2014). Thus, employees should do frequent and realistic self-evaluations. On the other hand, supervisors bear important responsibilities such as observing and documenting performance and updating employees on their progress.

In shared responsibilities, Pulakos (2009) argues that because certain organizations were accustomed to employees who achieved exceptional results, many a times those employees were extremely difficult to work with. As a result, such defiance could disrupt the functionality of the Performance Management System. From a different standpoint, Bussin (2014) explained how some employees were extremely helpful, considerate and interpersonally effective, but yet never achieve any important results. These discrepancies in behaviour therefore require attention and management in-line with performance. Therefore, behavioural management should receive priority at all

levels to enhance commitment.

### **2.3.3 Performance Assessments**

According to Bluen (2013), performance assessment depends on predetermined organisational standards. These benchmarks allows for an important assessment of individual performance. Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011) concludes that the process of performance management should not only be a matter of completing forms, but rather a fundamental factors that drives performance dialogue, feedback, assessment and development. This argument is supported by the expectancy theory, which advocates for employees motivation. Employees are greatly motivated when performance assessments forms the basis for human resource decisions such as pay increase, promotions, and feedback. This important theory would therefore, be an essential reform in guiding the performance management process, particularly on the relationship that exists between efforts and reward.

Aguinis (2014) highlighted the necessisty for both the employee and the supervisor to go through performance assessments. He based his argument on the belief that employee engagement had beneficial influence on the evaluation process and that it increased ownership and commitment. A greater likelihood of using assessment information productively was motivated, when both the employee and manager actively partook in the assessment process. Murray (2010) pointed out that evaluating work performance worked best when based on dialogue and when prominence was placed on success rather than failures in performance. Employee involvement would, therefore, provide important information ahead of time before the performance review. Information with the inclusion of self-rating measures to reduce defensiveness during an assessment meeting, would result in increased levels of acceptance of the assessment's accuracy and fairness. Armstrong (2016) argued that performance

assessment should identify high-flyers and those that fail to meet acceptable standards. A summary of performance levels could be measured as follows.

- *Exceptional performance*: exceeds expectations and consistently make an outstanding contribution that significantly extends the impact and influence of the role;
- *Well-balanced performance*: meets objectives and requirements of the role, consistently performs in a thoroughly proficient manner;
- *Barely effective performance*: does not meet all objectives or role requirements of the role, significant performance improvements are needed;
- *Unacceptable performance*: fails to meet most objectives or requirements of the role; shows a lack of commitment to performance improvement or lack of ability, which has been discussed prior to the performance review (Armstrong, 2016).

For the assessment process to work well, employees should understand the goals and objectives of the assessment. That way, it simplifies the employees' perspective of the assessment in representing their performance. Therefore, employee expectations should be reviewed at the beginning of the performance management cycle (Pulakos, 2009). Predominately, the process of performance assessment works best when simplified; this is because unnecessary complexities in rating forms and other evaluation procedures lead to frustrations.

Frimpomaa (2014) undertook a study for his qualification in a Master of Business Administration degree, to evaluate employee satisfaction with the performance management system in Vodafone Ghana. The study evaluated employee reactions to performance assessments. The findings of the study recorded that understanding

fairness in performance assessment and practices was extremely important because employees' satisfaction was strongly associated with organisational commitment.

Other drawn conclusions were that performance assessment results are beneficial depending on factors such as employee perceptions of target outcome and utilization of assessment information. As a result, employees would be receptive and supportive of a given performance management program if they perceived feedback to be useful in improving their performance (Mullins, 2007). Therefore, employees would embrace and contribute meaningfully to performance management system when the scheme is presented as a path for personal development and an opportunity for career growth.

The study carried out by Frimpomaa (2014) offer a rare chance for supervisors and subordinates to have "time out" for a one-on-one discussion of important work issues that could otherwise not be addressed. It is widely accepted that, when performance assessment is done exceptionally, both supervisors and subordinates would report the experience as beneficial and positive (Frimpomaa, 2014).

Development in performance management, therefore, offers an opportunity to focus on work activities and goals, identify and correct existing challenges, and encourage better performance. That way, organization performance is collectively enhanced. For many employees, an official performance assessment interview could be the only opportunity they get to have exclusive, uninterrupted access to their supervisor (Frimpomaa, 2014). Therefore, the value of this intense and purposeful interaction between supervisors and subordinates should be reinforced by management support.

#### **2.3.4 Performance Reviews**

Performance review provides a focal point for the consideration of key performance

and developmental issues (Armstrong, 2016). Therefore, performance review should be rooted in the reality of individual employee performance. Ashdown (2014) concurred with the above argument, emphasising that performance review provide the checks and balances that form the basis for employee evaluation. It is through these evaluations that feedback is formulated, informing on employee performance. For feedback to be effective, it should be considered as a two-way communication process that requires a joint responsibility. For example, supervisors should give constructive and useful feedback in a candid and timely manner. Employees on the other hand, should seek feedback to understand their performance level and take corrective action. However, for feedback to have the most value it should be given near the review, (Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia, 2011), because it would not help the employee to receive the feedback after a longer period.

The pillars of the performance management process include monitoring and feedback. These principals play a fundamental role in the continuous engagements process between employee and supervisor. The Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011) confirms that monitoring and feedback are effective when prompt, specific and when it covers both the positive and negative aspects of the performance assessment process. Therefore, the focus of performance review should be on continuous improvement and not only accentuating on employee shortcomings.

Progressively, it is significant to consider employee moods when giving negative feedback. This is because for employees, accepting negative feedback involves a trade-off between short-term and long-term costs and benefits (Bluen, 2013). Therefore, assessing the immediate emotional costs of negative personal information against the long-term benefits of gaining useful feedback is crucial for employees to accept negative feedback. Employee attitudes have the potential to change outcomes in

performance reviews (Bluen, 2013). For example, considering positive moods when giving feedback could function as a buffer and enable employees who perform below expectations to both accept, and better handle the emotional costs of the negative feedback (Bluen, 2013). On the other hand, giving feedback without considering the impact of negative moods could increasingly lead to employees contesting the negative feedback. Therefore, emotional intelligence should be central to the feedback process.

Studies have shown what most supervisors have long accepted, which is that, the mood employees are in while receiving feedback greatly affects the relative weight they assigned to the feedback. For example, the emotional cost in contrast to the information benefits of receiving the negative feedback. Aguinis (2014) cites an example where a study that involved more than 200 teachers in Malaysia found that when the teachers received positive feedback, they reported greater satisfaction with performance management system, even when they received low performance ratings. Therefore, the focus should be on the fact that employees are apprehensive of the manner of both receiving and giving performance information.

Aguinis (2014) argued that despite the diminutive consideration performance reviews received, this process should be regarded as the “Achilles’ heel at the centre of the performance management process.” This was because many supervisors were uncomfortable in providing performance feedback, particularly in circumstances when employee performance was deficient. As a result, this high level of discomfort, often translates into anxiety and the avoidance of assessment interviews by supervisors. The described discomfort could however be mitigated by sufficiently preparing managers on the performance review process. Armstrong (2016) outlined twelve (12) golden rules for conducting performance review meetings as follows.

- *Be prepared:* managers should prepare by referring to a list of agreed objectives and their notes on performance throughout the year;
- *Work to a clear structure:* the meeting should be planned to cover all the points identified during preparation, and sufficient time should be allowed for a full discussion;
- *Create the right atmosphere:* a successful meeting depends on creating an informal environment in which a full, frank but friendly exchange of views can take place;
- *Provide good feedback:* individuals need to know how they are getting on and feedback should be based on factual evidence;
- *Use time productively:* the review should test understanding, obtain information, and seek proposals and support;
- *Use praise:* if possible managers should use praise for some specific achievements but this should be sincere and deserved;
- *Let individuals do most of the talking:* this helps them feel that they are getting a fair hearing;
- *Invite self-assessment:* this is to see how things look from the individual's point of view and to provide a basis for discussion;
- *Discuss performance not personality:* discussion on performance should be based on factual evidence, not opinion;
- *Encourage analysis of performance:* analyse jointly and objectively why things went well or badly and what can be done to maintain a high standard or to avoid problems in the future;
- *Don't deliver unexpected criticisms:* feedback on performance should be immediate and should not wait until the end of the year;

- *Agree measurable objectives and a plan of action*: the aim should be to end the review meeting on a positive note (Armstrong, 2016).

The golden rules highlighted should be straightforward and clear enough, but the rules are only effectively by following this type of approach with the Performance Management System. Moreover, this approach underscores the importance of securing management support and the need to accentuate developing and introducing employee engagement and training.

## **2.4 Motivation and Performance Management**

One of the most important decisions to consider when designing a performance management system should be what the system aims to achieve. Predominately, performance management supports pay decisions, leadership commitment, behavioural management, promotion, and employee development. In achieving important goals, performance management should help communicate expectations and enhance employee performance. The significance of performance management was well articulated by (Armstrong, 2016) who wrote that: the real concept of performance management's focus should be to create a shared vision on how to manage people and obtain solutions that work. This would help individuals understand and recognize their role in contributing to the overall organisational objectives. Armstrong (2016) argues that the alignment of objectives through a cascading process, where objectives flow from the top-down and from the bottom-up, provides an opportunity for goal formulation within the framework of the organization. In that sense, agreeing on objectives has the potential to change employee behaviour. In other words, the supervisor-employee relationship should be a partnership in which responsibility is shared and mutual expectations are clearly defined (Armstrong, 2016).

Frimpomaa (2014) explained how performance management could be used as an effective managerial strategy. She claimed that performance decision and actions that include reward, promotion and employee recognition for exceptional performance should be the focus of management in employee motivation. Frimpomaa (2014) argued that if employees perceived performance management as an unreasonable attempt by management to exercise closer supervision and control over tasks employees performed, various reactions would result. Among those reactions, employees would be inclined to develop negative perceptions of PMS. In that sense, organizations should encourage employee participation, ensuring that the assessment process is fair.

Getting the best out of people should primarily be the responsibility of managers and team leaders who should exercise effective leadership (Armstrong, 2016). However, the responsibility to motivate employees also rests on Human Resource specialists to create an environment that is conducive to high performance. For that reason, Human Resource specialist should introduce policies and practices that encourage employees to achieve expectations, if not more. Employees therefore require a drive to achieve expectations. This involve the type of motivational factors such as intrinsic factors where employees are driven by competency and self-determination or extrinsic reward based motivation.

#### **2.4.1 Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivational factors are fundamental in the application of the performance management system, since focus is placed on the interest, enjoyment and willingness of employees to partake in work activities (Ashdown, 2014). Armstrong (2016) explained that intrinsic motivation takes place when individuals consider their work to be important, interesting and challenging. In addition this involves giving employees

a reasonable degree of autonomy (freedom to act), and opportunities to achieve, and advance in developing their skills and abilities. Therefore, if individuals are engaged in intrinsic activities, their motivation would not be driven by financial reward. Performance management system should help distinguishing between employees with higher self-esteem, self-belief and those with low self-esteem to help identify areas that required attention. That way, less effort would be given to those whose abilities would most likely lead to high levels motivation.

Bussin (2014) suggested that while a series of performance assessment play a fundamental role in high potential nominations, far too often organizations rely on the process as the primary source of information. To inspire the performance transformation, organizations should, therefore, consider factors other than reward. For example, factors that includes evaluating behavioural preferences, aptitude, emotional intelligence, and engagement as well as career aspirations as motivational factors. Organizations should supplement the analysis of performance information with reliable and valid measurement tools such as multi-rated assessments and psychometric tests. Job-responsibilities should, therefore, provide sufficient variety, complexity, and challenge to enhance the skills of individuals (Armstrong, 2016).

#### **2.4.2 Extrinsic Motivation**

In emerging markets, performance assessment and reward have been closely linked to motivation. Bluen (2013) deliberates on performance assessment and reward as significant bread and butter issues falling within the field of management. He argued that, it was essential for these concepts to be well understood and effectively implemented to achieve success. Prowse and Prowse (2009) supported this argument adding that, linking performance assessments with reward would motivate employees and commits them to the assessment process.

Undoubtedly a well-designed and functional reward system is an efficient way to enhance employee motivation. Extrinsic motivation occurs when individuals are driven by incentives such as increased pay, praise and promotion or punishment such as disciplinary action, withholding pay, or criticism (Armstrong, 2016). Therefore, extrinsic motivational factors should be utilised to establish what drives employees. For example, establishing whether employees are driven by outcomes or the process of getting the job done itself would help identify the interests of employees and what areas need improvement (Ashdown, 2014).

Murray (2010) supported incentive pay as an effective motivational strategy, particularly when performance was measured based on individual effort. However, the subjective nature of performance measurement renders individual performance less effective, particularly when assessment is based on teamwork. It was for that reason (Bussin, 2014) underlined the argument that, it was of no consequence, nor was it possible or necessary to satisfy individual needs but rather, focus should be placed on the organisations' objectives. However, a happy employee is a productive employee, therefore, investing time in the process that would help employees excel in their work would benefit the organization.

### **2.4.3 Employee Development**

Aguinis (2014) argues that performance management systems should help employees develop and improve their performance, addressing long-term career goals and aspirations. However, if supervisors lack the skills to help employees accomplish their goals, PMS is less likely to assist them develop their performance. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2014), improving PMS functionality require reviewing employee goal and implementing plans that works.

Traub (2013) assessed the traits of man and woman supervisors in employee development. His findings were that, in performance assessments, man as supervisors focused more on performance and not on career development. In contrast, the complete opposite held true for women supervisors. On the other hand, (Jacobs, 2012) suggested that development standards should not solely depend on the supervisor, but also on set standards. Pulakos (2009) argued that, employee development should be guided by consistent job requirements on which employees are hired on. Employee development should, therefore provide individuals with sufficient training and career development opportunities.

Vast literature exists in the body of knowledge exists that exams employee commitment. Pulakos (2009) argued that, employee commitment was the most important determinant of whether PMS would achieve its maximum benefit. On the other hand, (Armstrong, 2016) asserted that it was unwise to expect employee commitment as the means to make a direct and immediate impact on performance. These studies centre on organizational commitment and its relation to job performance and motivational outcomes. The common findings and implications of these studies show that employee commitment or willingness to support PMS strategies was key in achieving productivity in any organization (Rafael, 2014).

Ashdown (2014) argues that, coaching and development were some of the fundamental principles of the PMC. Based on her empirical findings, she stressed that on-going coaching and development supported a responsive approach to the implementation of PMS. Therefore, these findings could not over-emphasise the importance of the influence top management has on PMS success.

#### **2.4.4 Top Management Support**

Pulakos (2009) deliberated on the effect of top management presence and commitment to performance management. She stressed that modelling an effective PMS should centre on the ability of top management to establish clear-cut expectations for employees at all levels. A strong management commitment, therefore, would yield a better chance for program success. Therefore, poor management support would to some level diminish the PMS's significance. If the scheme is to have a serious stance on performance, management support should be evident. A stronger leadership commitment, has the potential to achieve greater the level of employee commitment and system success.

Organizations with a strong performance management culture predominantly educate management teams on their role in leading the effort. That way, standards and expectations would be adhered to. System success, therefore, greatly depends on top management and the ability with which individuals utilise the system (Ashdown, 2014). Therefore, getting all employees on-board is crucial for PMS success. Therefore, they exists a need for management to instil a sense of ownership and commitment in the workforce. Focus should, thus, be on improving communication, building good collaboration among officials and ensuring that employees have clear and constant feedback on performance.

#### **2.5 Motivation Theories Underpinning Performance Management**

Motivation theories offer insight on how to improve employee performance. A range of theories of motivation exists which supports the performance management process. This study focused on three such theories that are strongly linked to performance management.

### **2.5.1 Goal Setting Theory**

When objectives do not mirror actual work done and set goals seem somewhat ambiguous and timeless, the Goal-setting theory would be an instrumental reform in setting a structure that directs actions. Aguinis (2014) outlined the significance of the goal theory to focus on four elements that connects goals to performance outcomes: 1) that they direct attention to priorities; 2) that they stimulate effort; 3) that they challenge people to bring their knowledge and skills to increase their chances of success; and 4) that the more challenging the goal, the more people would draw on their full repertoire of skills. This theory, therefore, supports setting and agreeing on objectives, that directs outcomes.

Locke and Latham (1990) argued that, goals had a pervasive influence on employee behaviour and performance in the management practice. The Goal-setting theory therefore, should be utilised to align employee goals to behaviours in managing performance. It is widely accepted in the Goal-setting theory that employees were most likely to perform when challenges were defined. Ashdown (2014) supported that it was not sufficient to have an objective to achieve, if that objective did not require an effort or did not stretch us to use our skills and knowledge base. Ashdown (2014) suggested that difficult and specific goals result in higher levels of performance than easy ones. Therefore, supervisors have the responsibility to provide employees with clearly defined, challenging but attainable objectives. Predominately, goals that are too difficult, unrealistic and beyond reach would likely lead to stress and frustrations. Therefore, this theory is relevant to performance management because it helps to shape and lead employees utilise their full potential.

Some of the benefits of putting the Goal-setting theory in practice are outlined (Ashdown, 2014):

- *Provides direction*: Employees with goals to attain are likely to navigate obstacles in pursuit of the goals;
- *Motivating Employees*: Quantified goals drive commitment to accomplish set targets;
- *Facilitates Planning*: Goals create the impetus for strategic planning and task assignments, therefore employees require specific goals to evaluate progress;
- *Quicker Results*: It reduces the tendency to veer off course by creating a step-by-step plan to accomplish the set goals (Ashdown, 2014).

### **2.5.2 Control theory**

The Control Theory was relevant to this research because it advocates for feedback after submission of performance reviews. This theory, therefore, presents a solid foundation for critically assessing and monitoring the feedback elements in performance management. The Control Theory places attention on monitoring and feedback as a means of shaping employee behaviour (Aguinis, 2014). Therefore, inconsistency between what was done and what was expected would be employees appreciate through feedback. Monitoring as a result focuses on adherence to set standards. Feedback is an on-going process that provides a platform for corrective action on below par performance. The Control theory, therefore, could be an instrumental reform in harmonising performance to outcomes, since positive feedback encourages more of the activity that it follows. Equally negative feedback discourages activities that it follows, but only when feedback is immediate.

According to Ashdown (2014), regular feedback reassures employees that their efforts would lead them, and that feedback information could change behaviours. This theory suggests that performance management should provide a communication channel that

identify, minimise and remove performance barriers. Therefore, feedback should be linked to individual performance so that where gaps exist, development plans could be implemented to mitigate divergences.

### **2.5.3 Social Cognitive Theory**

The Social Cognitive Theory was important to this research from the perspective of the Office of the Prime Minister as the central agency and leader of Government business. Aguinis (2014) viewed that the social cognitive theory centred on the concept of self-efficacy. This suggests that what people believed they could or could not do, powerfully influenced their performance. The Office of the Prime Minister fits in as an instrumental organ of Government that could develop and strengthen positive self-belief in the Public Sector. Employees do not only respond to environmental factors, but also seek to actively partake and contribute to their own motivation and development. Employee behaviour as a result could influence the level of success or failure in performance management. For example, when employees favour a control tool, success would most likely be imminent, however, negative attitudes could potentially have detrimental effects on PMS.

Ashdown (2014) argued that the biggest strength of behaviourism as it relates to Social Cognitive Theory was its application and easy administration. Some of the advantages of the Social Cognitive Theory are outlined as follows (Ashdown, 2014):

- *Behavioural Capability*: Employees are likely to learn from the consequence of their behaviour, which directly affects the environment in which they operate. This means employees learn from their past experience which factors into whether positive or negative behavioural action would be repeated;

- *Observation Learning*: Employees model behaviour that is regarded as successful from other employees;
- *Reinforcement*: This refers to the internal and external responses to individual behaviour that affects the likelihood of continuing or discontinuing a certain task;
- *Self-efficacy*: The level of personal confidence in the individual's capability to successfully perform a task;
- *Expectations*: Past experience influences reinforcement and expectations, all of which shape whether an individual employee would engage in certain activities. Expectations therefore could be driven from previous experience and on the value placed on outcome (Ashdown, 2014).

The Social Cognitive Theory, therefore, could be an instrumental reform in behavioural change within the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, particularly in assisting employees accept the PMS as a model for change. The highlighted theories are crucial in understanding the process that affects motivation. In addition it is clear that reward and punishment is the best instrument with, which to change behaviour (Armstrong, 2016).

## **2.6 Challenges in Performance Management**

In different organizations employees and managers predominantly bemoan the ineffectiveness of their PMS. According to Pulakos (2009), a survey carried out on PMS challenges showed that three out of ten workers agreed that their organization's PMS helped to improve performance. The result of the survey also showed that less than 40% of individuals believed the systems established clear performance goals,

generated honest feedback or used technology to streamline the process. While these results suggest poor perceptions and application of the systems (Pulakos, 2009) discussed that it was not poorly developed tools and processes that caused difficulties, rather difficulties arose because, at its core, performance management was a highly personal and often threatening process to both employee and supervisor.

Employees frequently resent the superficial nature of supervisors who lack the required skills, because often times they tend to be biased by simply going through the periodic ritual of assessment (Armstrong, 2016). Murray (2010) supported the above argument confirming that for a workplace to function a straightforward and honest assessment of performance should be done. Therefore, employees should know what is expected of them, if they are to live up to expectations (Murray, 2010). It is occasionally criticised that performance assessment unnecessarily undermines morale and reinforces a command-and-control structure. This was further supported by (Murray, 2010) who deliberated on assessments to have negative influence on corporate performance, and an obstacle to straight-talk relationships. Apart from system challenges however, most employees suffer from a problem of self-deceit, considering themselves as above average.

Armstrong and Taylor (2014) supported the view that, labelling people as 'average' or 'below average', or by any equivalent terms, was both demeaning and demotivating. This argument resonates with (Pulakos, 2009) who claimed that to perceive a PMS as fair, employees should be part of the solution. Therefore, performance management should not only be about measures that critique employee's past actions, but should be a measure that avails the opportunity to set goals and expectations for the period ahead. According to Messer and White (2006), employee perceptions of fairness affect their likelihood to demonstrate organizational citizenship. Meaning that, perceived

unfairness and ineffectiveness in the PMS leads to counterproductive behaviours among employees.

According to Aguinis (2014), research consistently found 50% of supervisors to be less effective in helping underperforming employees improve their performance. When employees lack confidence in PMS, facilitators of the system should be held accountable. Traub (2013) highlights that, while performance assessment for decision-making and employee development were certainly related, one important caveat to consider was that the two were rarely supported equally. Furthermore, (Traub, 2013) explained that if PMS was utilized for decision-making, assessment information would most likely be utilized for pay increases, promotions, transfers, assignments, reductions in force or other administrative human resources actions. On the other hand, (Traub, 2013) posits that when PMS was utilized for development, assessment information would be utilized to guide training, job experiences, mentoring and other developmental activities to improve capabilities. Although a possibility exists to have PMS that serve both decision-making and development purposes, in most cases it is difficult to achieve both because of supervisor limitations in the required skills.

Considerable data exists in the body of knowledge on some of the contemporary issues in performance management (Pulakos, 2009; Baron & Armstrong 2008) for example, pointed to attitudes and perceptions of line-managers who frequently critic the PMS process as bureaucratic and time-consuming, to not help the systems' objectives. Predominately, the performance management debate is characterized by a general lack of rigorous evaluation on what makes PMS work and how it contributes to the bottom line performance. The work of (Locke & Latham, 1990), suggests that employees with clear and unambiguous performance goals report significant improvement in their

performance. Although studies on the impact of the goal-setting theory suggests consistently strong results in relation to other inspirational levers such as pay rewards and leadership behaviour, organizations nonetheless devote minimal effort on this important theory.

### **2.6.1 Employee-Supervisor Relationship**

According to Bussin (2014), knowing what is relevant to employees cannot be achieved behind closed boardrooms. Often times, an alarming mismatch existed between what human resources and line management understand and what employees believe to be important. Therefore, employee opinions in the workplace require measurement to identify and indicate their level of engagement. It could be argued that employee engagement inspires a drive to perform at consistently high levels, although the PMS process is viewed as threatening. Uncertainties with PMS predominately arise from a lack of understanding and by-part inadequate supervisors.

Aguinis (2014) on the other hand suggested that the reluctance of supervisors to provide candid feedback and honest discussions was because of fear of reprisal or damaging relationships with the very individuals they count on to get work done. Predominantly, a common verdict exists among employees that supervisors lack the skills to discuss performance reviews and are ineffective at coaching. Additionally, employees commonly view PMS as cumbersome, bureaucratic and time consuming for the value added. For that reason, both managers and employees consider PMS as an unnecessary evil of work life that should be minimized rather than an opportunity that achieves individual and organizational outcomes. Sound use of PMS would yield a positive, daily conversation that leads to better results and improved individual performance.

Pulakos (2009) pointed to the fact that despite its relevance, PMS was not living up to its promise in most organizations. The major reason for this was that, most PMS focused almost exclusively on assessment. Too often, PMS are human resource led processes, which consumed time and energy with little discernible benefit (Bluen, 2013) In addition, in his review (Pulakos, 2009) suggested that if performance management was utilised to deliver performance based pay for example, it could become the focus of tension and anxiety, as well as feelings of inequity or resentment. Applied badly PMS becomes a binary, human resource administered annual verdict on individual performance.

However, handled well, PMS becomes a way that guides excellent performance wherein a drive for continuous improvement is shared. According to Pulakos (2009), a PMS that attempts to achieve too many objectives is likely to die of its own lack of focus and weight. Therefore, the purpose for PMS should consider factors such as business needs, organizational culture and the integration of other management processes (Pulakos, 2009).

Recent studies place attention on effective implementation of the PMS. The biggest challenge, however, remains the issue of system commitment and management. Central to this research was the argument that, other factors that affects the functionality of PMS particularly after implementation should be considered. This includes the issue of system user behaviour, knowledge and commitment. Ashdown (2014) concurred with the above argument clarifying that an effective tool and processes was certainly not a sufficient condition for an effective PMS. Therefore, performance management should focus on what really matters, which is how effective the scheme should be utilized and how seriously managers and employees take it.

## 2.7 Summary

The research examined the effect of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the PMS once implemented. The PMS process was reviewed and contemporary issues in PMS discussed. For example, contemporary issues that relates to employee perception of employee-supervisor relations, frequency and quality of feedback, clearness in expectations and set-goals. Some of the setbacks discussed include a lack of adherence to performance standards and how top management commitment affects PMS. High level of supervisor discomfort and poor system application was also reviewed.

PMS perceptions among employees has the potential to influence long-term effectiveness of the system. Therefore, positive perceptions of PMS is likely to achieve consequences, such as acceptance of the evaluation process and the assessment process. That way, employees would appreciate the value in the PMS process and consider it to be more than a mere ritual mandated by the human resource department.

PMS should create an environment wherein employees perform based on intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivational factors. Therefore, motivational theories were integrated to explain how behavior influenced performance and what drives employees. The research showed that, system success depend, first on top management commitment. In the literature, it was reviewed that, a strong leadership commitment leads to greater chance of system success. Therefore, if performance management is to be effective, positive PMS perceptions should be nurtured among employees. Organizations should therefore operate and demonstrate a strong ethical stance in managing people. When this is done and PMS is correctly applied and effectively implemented, performance management is likely to result in improved service delivery in the Ministry.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the methodology that the researcher used to conduct the study in terms of the research design, population, sample as well as the instruments that were used in collecting the data. Ethical consideration is also outlined in this chapter. The research design applied in the study involved an empirical investigation on the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the Performance Management System.

Frequently, the introduction of performance management systems focusses more on the design and implementation rather than how employees use the system. This carries profound implications for both employees and the organizations. Generally, employees consider performance management systems to have direct implications, as far as rewards and recognition is concerned. As a result, the process of evaluating work performance frequently need to be realigned with an organisations' objectives.

The Merit Assessment and the Efficiency Rating System applied in Government after Namibia's independence in 1990. Despite its good intentions, the system did not meet its delivery objectives. As a result, the Performance Management System (PMS) was implemented as the correct measure and tool to improve and manage performance in the public service of Namibia (Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia, 2011). Therefore, a need was identified to examine the system to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the Performance Management System and whether the system remained consistent with its objectives.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research adopted a mixed method approach, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. That way the researcher had the benefit of using both methods to explore the research problem. Bryman and Bell (2011) argues that, the choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority given to a range of dimensions of the research process. Therefore, a triangulation paradigm was utilised, wherein the quantitative research validated the qualitative research findings. Bryman and Bell (2011) further argue that qualitative research accentuates on words rather than quantification in the collection and analyses of data. In other words, as a research strategy qualitative research reflects an inductive, constructive, and interpretive method in validating the research process. Qualitative research design was therefore, essential to this research as it assisted the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the attitudes and perceptions held towards the Performance Management System in the Ministry.

Quantitative research strategy was also utilised in this research study. Quantitative research places emphasis on quantification in the data collection process and analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). That way, the research strategy adopts a deductive and objective method incorporating a natural science model of the research process. The quantitative approach was relevant to unlock and better understand the connection between the variables assessed on employee perceptions of the PMS.

The researcher believed that mixed method approach was suitable for this research, reason being, the qualitative and quantitative approaches are beneficial together in developing rational ideas on employee perceptions, as well as to give greater prominence to the strength of the data collection process and analyses.

### **3.3 Population**

The population for the study involved the entire workforce of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. Bryman and Bell (2011) explained that in research, population is the universe from which a sample is to be selected. Therefore, the entire workforce of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation of 300 employees, constituted the universe for this research study. The Ministry was conveniently chosen among the 35 Office/Ministries/Agencies (O/M/As) of Government, because it was the researchers' place of work. The entire population comprised of 60 employees in management and 240 in non-management positions.

### **3.4 Sample**

Bryman and Bell (2011) discussed that sampling signifies a subset of the population that selected for research. Different methods of sampling techniques are utilised to collect data, either probability or non-probability sampling depending on the research design. Being a mixed method research, the sampling strategy selected for this study was stratified random sampling, a type of probability sampling wherein the researcher targeted a two-level strata hierarchy, those in management and non-management positions. The stratified random sampling in the research study involved a process wherein employees were randomly selected from the entire workforce of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. The workforce was divided into categories or strata of those employees in management and non-management positions. The criterion was purposely selected to gauge the workforce's attitudes and perceptions of the Performance Management System. The research further targeted a sample size of 80 respondents from the entire workforce of 300 employees of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation.

Using Yamane's formula for calculating sample size:  $n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e^2)}$

(Yamane, 1976)

Where,  $N$  is the population size and  $e$  is the precision. Let this formula be used for our population, in which  $N = 300$  with  $\pm 9.6$  precision. Assuming a 95% confidence level and taking maximum variability at 50% ( $p = 0.05$ ), we get the sample size as;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e^2)} \text{ (Yamane, 1976)}$$

$$n = \frac{300}{1 + 300(0.096)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{300}{3.7648}$$

$$n = 79.68$$

$\therefore$  the sample size  $n \approx 80$  respondents

The researcher perceived that a sample size of 80 respondents was sufficient to create statistically valid conclusions for the research study. To ensure a balance of views, participants were proportionally selected by randomly selecting each 3<sup>rd</sup> email in management and non-management positions on the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation's database. The research aimed for a sample of 16 respondents in management positions and 64 in non-managerial positions. Of the 80 emails sent, 64 were sent successfully while 16 bounced back and only 54 respondents completed the questionnaire. 10 emails were not responded to, possibly due to the employees' work schedules. The responses collected are shown in Table 3.1 under proportional sample.

Table 3. 1 Stratified Random Sampling Method

<b>Two-level strata hierarchy</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Proportional sample</b>
<b><i>Employees in management</i></b>			
<b><i>Position</i></b>			
<i>Permanent Secretary</i>	1	$\frac{60}{300} \times 80$ = 16 employees	11 (68.75%)
<i>Ambassadors</i>	27		
<i>High Commissioner</i>	8		
<i>Deputy Permanent Secretary</i>	2		
<i>Consul General</i>	3		
<i>Directors</i>	10		
<i>Deputy Director</i>	9		
<b><i>Sub-Total: Management</i></b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16 Employees</b>	<b>Response rate 68.75%</b>
<b><i>Employees in non-management position</i></b>			
<i>Chief Foreign Relations Officer</i>	8	$\frac{240}{300} \times 80$ = 64 employees	43 (67.19%)
<i>Chief Foreign Administration Officer</i>	2		
<i>Chief Human Resource Practitioner</i>	1		
<i>Chief of I.T</i>	1		
<i>Chief Accountant</i>	3		
<i>Chief Learning and Development</i>	1		
<i>Chief Auditor</i>	1		
<i>Senior Accountant</i>	14		
<i>Senior Human Resource Practitioner</i>	10		
<i>Foreign Relations Officer</i>	48		
<i>Foreign Administration Officer</i>	38		
<i>Human Resource Practitioner</i>	12		
<i>I.T Technician</i>	2		
<i>Accountant</i>	47		
<i>Auditor</i>	1		
<i>Learning and Development Officer</i>	1		
<i>Secretary</i>	30		
<i>Driver</i>	9		
<i>Cleaner</i>	11		
<b><i>Sub-Total: Non-Management</i></b>	<b>240</b>	<b>64 Employees</b>	<b>Response rate 67.19%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>54 (67.50%)</b>

For the purposes of data analysis, the collected sample was categorized into levels of

management as shown in Table 3.1. Management positions consist of employees' at the most senior level, from Permanent Secretary to Deputy Director Level. Non-management positions consist of those employees at the category of Chief to junior employees at Cleaner Level.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

The researcher believed that using different procedures for data collection and obtaining information through different sources could argument the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation. The following approach outlines the procedures utilised to enhance the validity and reliability of the data and research instruments. The main instruments utilised in the research was an expert reviewed, structured closed-ended questionnaire and telephone interviews questions. The questionnaire was constructed based on the research objectives and literature review. Similarly, the interview questions were formulated based on the results of the pilot study.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) argues that reliability and validity of a measurement instrument rests on the consistency with which the instrument yields certain results and measures what the instrument intends to measure. Therefore, the questionnaire was carefully developed, eliminating ambiguity in the questions. A five (5) point-level rating scale/ likert scale of measurement was utilised to validate the participants' responses. The different methods of information gathering aimed to supplement each other to enhance the validity and dependability of the data collected.

Predominantly, open-ended questions lead to greater levels of discovery (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Although useful, the difficulty of qualitative data rests in the analyses of the open-ended questions. To facilitate the data analyses process, the researcher made

use of a structured closed-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives outlined herein. In the first instance it was to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the PMS. Secondly, to explore whether the PMS motivated employees to perform better as intended and finally to identify the major problems the PMS faced in the MIRC. The research objectives were applied and measured in sixteen (16) multiple choice questionnaires on a five (5) point-level rating scale/ likert scale of measurement. About 80 questionnaires were electronically distributed to those employees who qualified for the survey.

Furthermore, interview questions were formulated ensuring clarity, understandable and courteous for standardisation. The interview was conducted ensuring that questions were simple and easily understood by respondents. Data on employee opinions on the Performance Management System and employees' attitudes were obtained and respondents' answers verified and matched.

### **3.6 Research procedure**

The research procedure was as follows.

- Key issues and concepts relating to the PMS were identified and incorporated into the structure of the research;
- The survey instrument drafts were constructed and tested on a selected segment of the workforce at the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. The pilot survey was distributed to ten (10) employees, five (5) in management and five (5) in non-management positions at the Ministry;
- After the pilot study was returned, an analyses and comparison of data on the variables of interest was carried out based on the survey response;

- The final survey instrument was developed, and eighty (80) questionnaires administered through email to those who qualified for the survey;
- Interviews were conducted with ten (10) employees in the Ministry, five (5) in management and five (5) in non-management positions. The result of the interview was incorporated in Chapter 4;
- Upon the return of the questionnaire data analyses and tabulations were also carried out making use of the SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0.

The research adopted a mixed method approach. Information on employee perceptions of the PMS was collected. An electronic letter of consent (email) was sent to those employees who qualified for the study, informing them about the aims of the research. An expert reviewed questionnaire containing structured closed-ended questions was administered through email. The questionnaire was formulated to determine the extent to which respondents held a positive or negative attitude or perception of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. A thoughtful decision was made to use email as the means for the survey because it was the most convenient option considering the work schedules of the respondents. Respondents were asked to share their understanding on the functionality of the PMS. Based on the responses, follow-up questions were asked to gauge respondent's belief on the application of the PMS and its sufficiency.

Telephone interviews were also conducted which consisted of a list of questions that were read to respondents. Respondents were encouraged to openly express their opinions. The duration of the interviews ranged between 8 to 10 minutes. It was noted that the telephonic interviews with both employees in management and non-management positions lasted within the set time frame of 10 minutes.

The contextual knowledge generated from the interaction with the respondents in the questionnaire was imported into SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0 for analyses. Cross-tabulations and bar graphs were tabulated according to the respondent's proportionate level in management. This information helped in formulating some of the recommendations and deductions for the research.

All responses were recorded onto a voice recorder during the interview and thereafter transcribed onto an electronic spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was tabulated according to the respondent's level in management. Common responses within each category were color coded to track convergences and disparities from the various telephonic interview responses.

At the end of the interview, respondents were asked to give recommendations on the possible solutions to improve the current PMS. This information assisted the researcher in formulating informed recommendations and deductions for the research study.

### **3.7 Statistical analysis**

In this study both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analyses were utilized to analyze the data. The answers derived from the questionnaires, were utilized to explore knowledge, understanding and employees' attitudes towards the Performance Management System. Data collected was imported into SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0. The responses to the questions were analysed using descriptive statistics in cross-tabulations and bar graphs. In some cases, wherein three-way cross-tabulations were tabulated, an explanatory variable was defined which recoded for example whether respondents were interested in the Performance Management System. Secondly a categorical variable was defined, that for example recorded

respondent's belief whether the Performance Management System was beneficial. Finally, a third control variable was considered, wherein the researcher utilized job level as the control variable. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were formulated and responses classified according to level in management. The elicited responses captured the meaning in the raw data that the researcher utilized to establish the degree of attitudes and perceptions towards the Performance Management System.

### **3.8 Research ethics**

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), writers often differ quite widely from each other over ethical issues and questions. In other words, they differ over what is regarded and not regarded as ethically acceptable. Creswell (2009) clarified that ethical practice involved much more than merely following a set of static guidelines. This is because, often times nearly all research involves elements that are at least ethically questionable. This follows when participants are not given all the details of on the research, or when there is variation in the amount of knowledge about the research. The ethical principles observed in this study are the following:

- *Freedom from exploitation:* Questionnaires were completed anonymously meaning no names were required on the questionnaire, that way the identity of the respondents was protected and not exploited. Careful explanation was provided to respondents about their right to refuse or to participate in the study, and that their participation or refusal would not implicate them in any way whatsoever;
- *The principle of justice:* The principle of justice encompassed the right to privacy. The data collected was only accessible to the researcher, and as a precaution, the data files were kept locked up by the researcher. The data collected was only used for the purpose of the study, and the completed

interview schedules would be destroyed as soon as the research report had been accepted. The research would provide facts, figures, graphs and tables but no names of individuals would appear in the report;

- *Plagiarism-free*: The researcher ensured that the study was plagiarism-free, citing all sources in the research report as required by the American Psychological Association (APA) reference convention.

Rossouw and van Vuuren (2010), argue that ethical decisions should ensure that the interest of all parties that are likely to be affected are considered and respected. Therefore, the burden of responsibility to demonstrate that ethical issues are satisfactorily addressed, firmly rests on the researcher. For this research, ethical decisions were adhered to by ensuring that all activities of the research were conducted in compliance with the fundamental ethical principles list above.

In PMS ethical concerns should be earnestly taken when operationalizing the system. This would ensure that all involved in the process have mutual respect for the system and confidence in it. In that context, the PMS process should encourage employees to internalize cooperate values and attitudes.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter dealt with the research design followed in the research study, addressing the population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument and the data collection procedure. Measures were adhered to, to enhance the validity and reliability of the research results. Ethical concerns which could have had an impact on the survey were also attended to. The purpose of this research was to assess the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the PMS. By identifying and addressing those effects, the PMS functionality could be enhanced.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data obtained from the 54-expert reviewed structured closed-ended questionnaires and telephone interviews questions. Descriptive statistics and bar graphs were generated through SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0 to unlock the meaning in the data collected. The interpretation and judgement of the study findings was outlined in step with the research questionnaires.

The main objective of this research was to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the PMS. In addition, the research intended to examine whether the PMS motivated employees to perform better. It also aimed to identify the major challenges that hinders the PMS.

#### **4.2 Analysis of the research results**

Data analysis was a thought-provoking and complex exercise that involved a process of unlocking raw data into meaningful information. It was anticipated that the research would gather and analyse three kinds of data. In the first instance, document research comprising of information from the reviewed literature which was analysed concurrent with the research. Secondly, survey data consisting of questions with forced choice responses analysed in cross-tabulations. Finally, interview data. The open response data from the interview were context analysed and tallied. The data collected was assembled and typed into SPSS Statistical Software program version 25.0. Descriptive statistics was utilized to generate cross-tabulations and bar graphs in analysing the

association between the assessed variables. Chi – squire test were done to measure levels of significance and confidence between the variables, making use of Phi and Cramer’s V and Gamma. The data from the research instruments are presented as follows:

**4.2.1 Research question:** Are you interested in the Performance Management System process?

Table 4. 1 Employee interest in PMS

Table 4.1 Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job level? * Are you interested in the Performance Management System process?	54	100.0%	0	0.0%	54	100.0%

**Cross-tabulation**

			Are you interested in the Performance Management System process?					Total
			Most Interested	Interested	Neither	Not Interested	Not Interested at all	
Count			1	1	2	6	1	11

Job level?	Management	% PMS interest within Job level?	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	54.5%	9.1%	100.0%
	Non-management	Count	1	2	8	20	12	43
		% PMS interest within Job level?	2.3%	4.7%	18.6%	46.5%	27.9%	100.0%
Total	Count		2	3	10	26	13	54
	% PMS interest within Job level?		3.7%	5.6%	18.5%	48.1%	24.1%	100.0%

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.800 <sup>a</sup>	4	.592
Likelihood Ratio	2.852	4	.583
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.040	1	.153
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error <sup>a</sup>	Approximate T <sup>b</sup>	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.354	.230	1.385	.166
N of Valid Cases		54			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

### Chi-Square Hypothesis test:

Pearson Chi-Square statistics,  $X^2 = 2.800$ , and  $P > 0.05$

$H_o$  : A relationship exists between job level and interest in PMS

$H_a$  : No relationship exists between job level and interest in PMS

Conclusion: with a significant P value of 59.2% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 we fail to reject  $H_o$ , which means that there is sufficient evidence to suggest a relationship exists between job level and interest in PMS at the Ministry.

**4.2.2 Research question:** How do you rate employee comprehension of the PMS at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 2 PMS Comprehension

Case Processing Summary	
	Cases

	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job level? * How do you rate employee comprehension of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations?	54	100.0%	0	0.0%	54	100.0%

### Cross-tabulation

			How do you rate employee comprehension of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations?					Total
			Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very Poor	
Job level?	Management	Count	1	1	2	6	1	11
		% within Job level?	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	54.5%	9.1%	100.0%
	Non-management	Count	1	2	8	20	12	43
		% within Job level?	2.3%	4.7%	18.6%	46.5%	27.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	2	3	10	26	13	54
		% within Job level?	3.7%	5.6%	18.5%	48.1%	24.1%	100.0%
<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>								

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.800 <sup>a</sup>	4	.592
Likelihood Ratio	2.852	4	.583
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.040	1	.153
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.228	.592
	Cramer's V	.228	.592
N of Valid Cases		54	

**Chi-Square Hypothesis test:**

Pearson Chi-Square statistics,  $X^2 = 2.800$ , and  $P > 0.05$

$H_0$  : A relationship exists between job level and PMS comprehension

$H_a$  : No relationship exists between job level and PMS comprehension

Conclusion: with a significant P value of 59.2% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 we fail to reject  $H_0$ , which means that there is sufficient evidence to suggest a relation exists between job level and PMS comprehension at the Ministry.

**4.2.3 Research question:** Have the PMS process benefited employee performance?

Table 4. 3 PMS benefits to performance improvement

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance? * Is underperformance well managed at the Ministry of International Relations? * Job level?	54	100.0%	0	0.0%	54	100.0%

**Cross-tabulation**

				Is underperformance well managed at the Ministry of International Relations?			Total
				Yes	No	Not sure	
Job level?							
			Count	1	2		3

Managem ent	Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	Very or Quite Improved	% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	33.3%	66.7%		100. 0%
		Not Very or Not at All Improved	Count	5	3		8
			% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	62.5%	37.5%		100. 0%
	Total	Count		6	5		11
		% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?		54.5%	45.5%		100. 0%
Non- managem ent	Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	Very or Quite Improved	Count		8	0	8
			% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?		100.0%	0.0%	100. 0%
		Count		30	5	35	

		Not Very or Not at All Improved	% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?		85.7%	14.3%	100.0%
	Total		Count		38	5	43
			% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?		88.4%	11.6%	100.0%
Total	Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	Very or Quite Improved	Count	1	10	0	11
			% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	9.1%	90.9%	0.0%	100.0%
		Not Very or Not at All Improved	Count	5	33	5	43
			% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	11.6%	76.7%	11.6%	100.0%
		Total	Count	6	43	5	54

		% within Have the Performance Management System improved employee performance?	11.1%	79.6%	9.3%	100.0%
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### Chi-Square Tests

Job level?		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Management	Pearson Chi-Square	.749 <sup>b</sup>	1	.387		
	Continuity Correction <sup>c</sup>	.034	1	.853		
	Likelihood Ratio	.754	1	.385		
	Fisher's Exact Test				.545	.424
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.681	1	.409		
	N of Valid Cases	11				
Non- management	Pearson Chi-Square	1.293 <sup>d</sup>	1	.255		
	Continuity Correction <sup>c</sup>	.277	1	.599		
	Likelihood Ratio	2.204	1	.138		

	Fisher's Exact Test				.565	.337
	Linear-by-Linear Association	1.263	1	.261		
	N of Valid Cases	43				
Total	Pearson Chi-Square	1.551 <sup>a</sup>	2	.461		
	Likelihood Ratio	2.545	2	.280		
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.349	1	.554		
	N of Valid Cases	54				

#### Chi-Square Hypothesis test:

Pearson Chi-Square statistics,  $X^2 = 1.550$ , and  $P > 0.05$

$H_o$  : The PMS process do not benefit employee performnace

$H_a$  : The PMS process do benefit employee performnace

Conclusion: with a significant P value of 46.1% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 we fail to reject  $H_o$ , which means that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the PMS process do not benefit employees at the Ministry in all job levels.

**4.2.4 Research question:** Is the PMS relevant in improving employee performance?

Table 4. 4 PMS relevance to performance improvement

<b>Case Processing Summary</b>
--------------------------------

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job level? * Is the Performance Management System relevant in improving employee performance?	54	100.0%	0	0.0%	54	100.0%

### Cross-tabulation

			Is the Performance Management System relevant in improving employee performance?					Total
			Very relevant	Quite relevant	Not sure	Slightly relevant	Not at all relevant	
Job level?	Management	Count	5	3	3	0	0	11
		% within Job level?	45.5%	27.3%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Non-management	Count	0	0	8	4	31	43
		% within Job level?	0.0%	0.0%	18.6%	9.3%	72.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	5	3	11	4	31	54

	% within Job level?	9.3%	5.6%	20.4%	7.4%	57.4%	100.0%
<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>							
		Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)			
	Pearson Chi-Square	40.549 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000			
	Likelihood Ratio	41.702	4	.000			
	Linear-by-Linear Association	34.616	1	.000			
	N of Valid Cases	54					

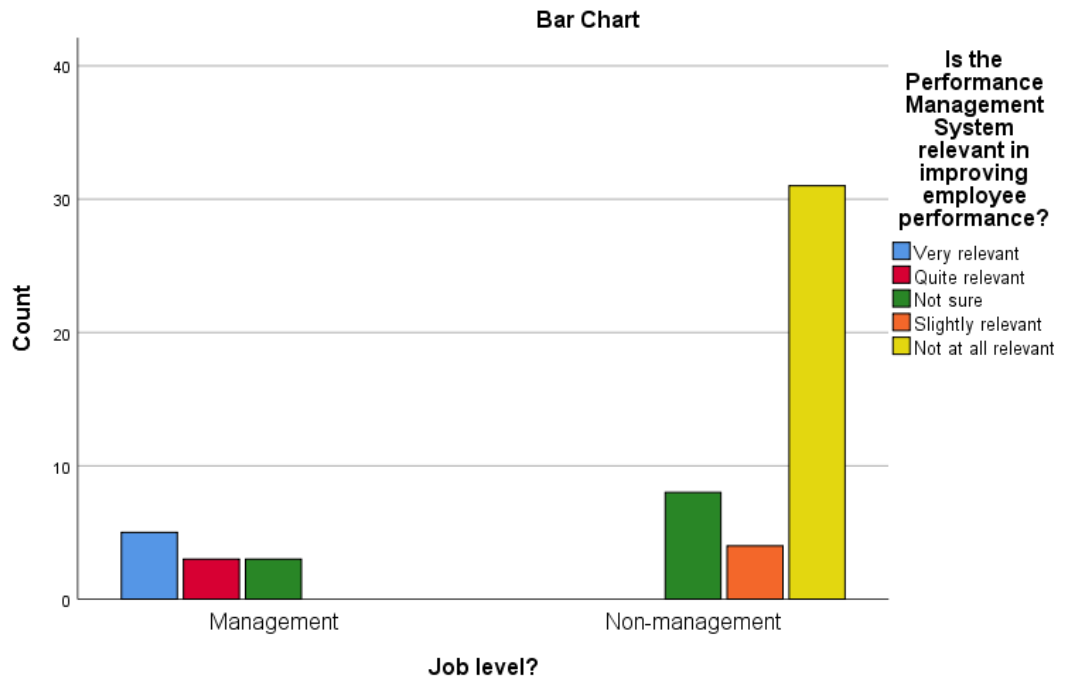
a. 7 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .61.

<b>Symmetric Measures</b>					
		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error <sup>a</sup>	Approximate T <sup>b</sup>	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	1.000	.000	4.934	.000
	N of Valid Cases	54			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 4. 1 PMS relevance to performance improvement



#### Chi-Square Hypothesis test:

Pearson Chi-Square statistics,  $X^2 = 40.559$ , and  $P < 0.05$

$H_o$  : The PMS is relevant in improving employee performance

$H_a$  : The PMS is not relevant in improving employee performance

Conclusion: with an insignificant P value of 0.001% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 we reject  $H_o$ , which means that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the PMS is relevant in improving employee performance at the Ministry at all job levels.

**4.2.5 Research question:** How do you rate supervisor knowledge of the PMS at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 5 Supervisor knowledge rating

<b>Case Processing Summary</b>						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job level? * How would you rate supervisor knowledge of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations?	54	100.0%	0	0.0%	54	100.0%

**Cross-tabulation**

			How would you rate supervisor knowledge of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations?				Total
			Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	
Job level?	Management	Count	2	0	3	6	11
		% within Job level?	18.2%	0.0%	27.3%	54.5%	100.0 %
	Non-management	Count	0	12	1	30	43
		% within Job level?	0.0%	27.9%	2.3%	69.8%	100.0 %
Total		Count	2	12	4	36	54

	% within Job level?	3.7%	22.2%	7.4%	66.7%	100.0%
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### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.552 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	17.654	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	.536	1	.464
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

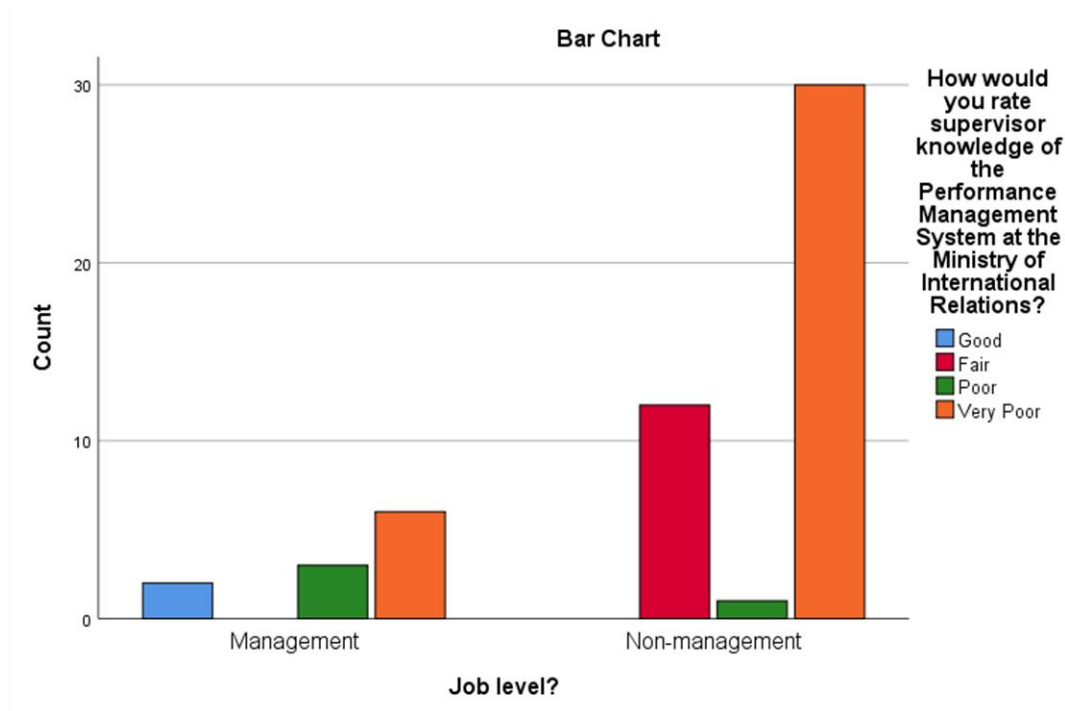
### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error <sup>a</sup>	Approximate T <sup>b</sup>	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.214	.257	.754	.451
N of Valid Cases		54			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 4. 2 Supervisor knowledge rating



#### Chi-Square Hypothesis test:

Pearson Chi-Square statistics,  $X^2 = 18.552$ , and  $P < 0.05$

$H_o$  : Supervisors are knowledgeable on the PMS

$H_a$  : Supervisors are not knowledgeable on the PMS

Conclusion: with an insignificant P value of 0.001% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 we reject  $H_o$ , which means that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that supervisors are knowledgeable on the PMS at the Ministry at all job levels.

**4.2.6 Research question:** Do you regard a supervisor's knowledge of the PMS important?

Figure 4. 3 Supervisor knowledge

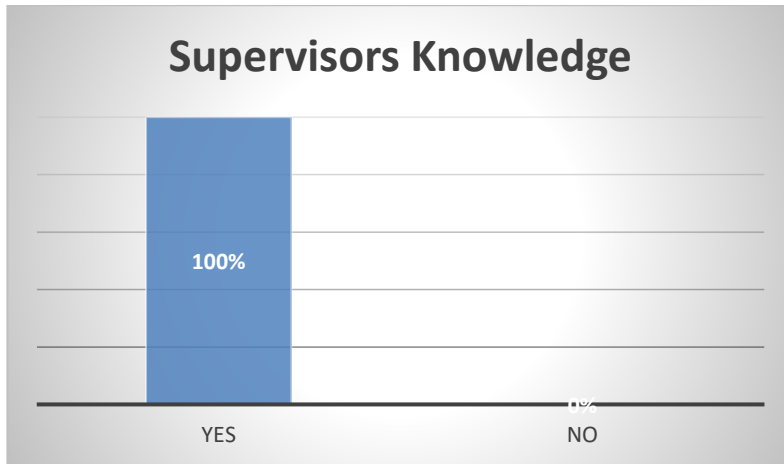


Table 4. 6 Supervisor knowledge

	Yes	No	Not sure	Total
Employees management level	11 (100%)	-	-	<b>11</b>
Employees non-management level	43 (100%)	-	-	<b>43</b>
Total responses	54	-	-	<b>54</b>
<b>Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation</b>				
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	1.00	27.00	27.00	22.62742

Data concerning the importance respondents placed on supervisor knowledge of the PMS was collected. The mean for employees' belief was 27.00 and the standard deviation was 22.62. The smaller standard deviation shows that data on respondents' opinions was closer to the mean. This reflects positive consensus amongst the respondents' belief of the importance of supervisor knowledge on the PMS.

**4.2.7 Research question:** How would you rate supervisor knowledge of the PMS?

Table 4. 7 Supervisor knowledge

	Response by job level
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Response choice	Management	Non-management	Total respondents	
i) Very Good	-	-	-	
ii) Good	3 (27%)	2 (5%)	5	
iii) Fair	-	12 (28%)	12	
iv) Poor	2 (18%)	-	2	
v) Very poor	6 (55%)	29 (67%)	35	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	
<b>Descriptive Statistics Mean and Standard Deviation</b>				
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum 2.00	Maximum 6.00	Median 4.50	Mean 9.00	Standard Deviation 10.50714

Data concerning respondents' belief on supervisor knowledge on the PMS was collected. The mean for employee perception was 9.00 and the standard deviation was 10.51. The greater standard deviation indicates that data on respondents' opinions was spread far from the mean. This confirms a greater level of variation amongst respondents' views regarding supervisor knowledge on the PMS.

**4.2.8 Research question:** Is your work performance assessed against identified goals and objectives?

Figure 4. 4 Performance assessment

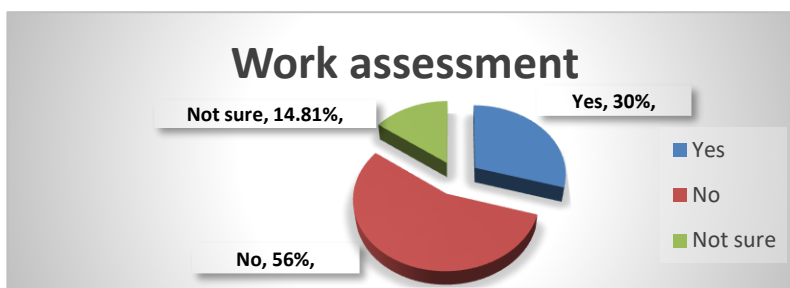


Table 4. 8 Performance assessment

	Yes	No	Not sure	<b>Total</b>
Employees management level	11 (100)	-	-	<b>11</b>
Employees non-management level	5 (11%)	30 (70%)	8 (19%)	<b>43</b>
Total responses	16	30	8	<b>54</b>

Table 4.16 Descriptive Statistics Test Mean and Standard Deviation

<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
2.00	4.00	9.50	13.50	11.26943

Data concerning respondents' belief of the PMS and performance assessment was collected. The mean for employee perception was 13.50 and the standard deviation was 11.27. The small standard deviation indicates that data on respondent's opinions was close to the mean. This confirms a greater level of positive correlation amongst respondents' opinions regarding the performance assessment on PMS.

**4.2.9 Research question:** If your answer to Question 8 is Yes, please tick which of the following goals is identified?

Table 4. 9 PMS and motivation

Response choice	Level in management		
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents
i) Monthly reports are prepared on time	-	-	-
ii) Work schedules are checked	2 (18%)	3 (60%)	5
iii) Improved internal communication	1 (9%)	-	1
iv) Employees are committed to work and achieve desired results	8 (73%)	2 (40%)	10

v) Employees are committed to their work	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Table 4.18 Descriptive Statistics Test Mean and Standard Deviation</b>			
<b>Basic Statistics</b>			
Minimum 2.00	Maximum 5.00	Median 2.00	Mean 3.20
			Standard Deviation 2.77489

Data concerning respondents' belief on the improvement the PMS brought was collected. The mean for employee perception was 3.20 and the standard deviation was 2.77. The small standard deviation indicates that data on respondent's opinions was close to the mean. This confirms a greater level of positive correlation amongst respondents' opinions regarding the improvement brought about by the PMS.

**4.2.10 Research question:** Does the PMS contribute to productivity at the Ministry of International Relations? Please tick relevant space.

Table 4. 10 PMS and productivity

Response choice	Level in management		
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents
i) Almost Always	-	-	38
ii) Often	-	7 (16%)	13
iii) Sometimes	6 (55%)	-	-
iv) Seldom	1 (9%)	2 (5%)	1
v) Never	4 (36%)	34 (79%)	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Table 4.21 Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation</b>			
<b>Basic Statistics</b>			
Minimum 2.00	Maximum 6.00	Median 5.00	Mean 9.00
			Standard Deviation 12.45793

Data concerning the respondents' opinion on the PMS's contribution to productivity was collected. The mean for employee perception was 9.00 and the standard deviation was 12.46. The greater standard deviation reflects that data on respondent's opinions was spread far from the mean. This indicates a greater level of variation amongst respondent's opinions regarding the PMS' contribution to productivity.

**4.2.11 Research question:** How would you rate the incentives in place in place in encouraging individual employee performance?

Figure 4. 5 PMS and motivation

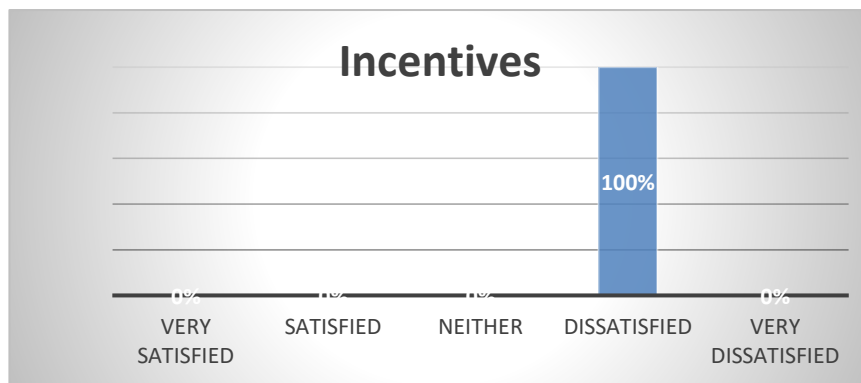


Table 4. 11 PMS and motivation

Response choice	Level in management		
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents
i) Very Satisfied	-	-	-
ii) Satisfied	-	-	-
iii) Neither	-	-	-
iv) Dissatisfied	11 (100%)	43 (100%)	54
v) Very Dissatisfied	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>

Table 4.21 Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation

<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 2.00	Median 27.00	Mean 27.00	Standard Deviation 22.62742

Data concerning the respondents' level of satisfaction of the incentives in place was collected. The mean for the employees' judgment was 27.00 and the standard deviation was 22.63. The small standard deviation indicates that data on respondent's opinions was close to the mean. This indicates a greater level of positive correlation amongst respondents regarding their judgement of the incentives in place.

**4.2.12 Research question:** Has training employees on the PMS contributed to improved individual performance?

Table 4. 12 PMS and motivation

Response choice	Level in management			
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents	
i) Extremely	-	-	-	
ii) Very	3 (27%)	-	3	
iii) Moderately	8 (73%)	35 (82%)	43	
iv) Slightly	-	7 (16%)	7	
v) Not at all	-	1 (2%)	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	
Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation				
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum 2.00	Maximum 5.00	Median 7.00	Mean 10.80	Standard Deviation 13.82751

Data concerning respondents' opinion regarding training being the catalyst for better performance was collected. The mean for employee perceptions was 10.80 and the standard deviation was 13.83. The high standard deviation signifies that data on

respondent's opinions was spread far from the mean. This reflects variation amongst respondent's opinions regarding training as a catalyst for better performance.

**4.2.13 Research question:** Are there corrective measures in place to mitigate poor individual performance?

Table 4. 13 Management of poor performance

	Yes	No	Not sure	<b>Total</b>
Employees management level	2(18%)	5(46%)	4 (36%)	<b>11</b>
Employees non-management level	7(16%)	28(65%)	8 (18%)	<b>43</b>
Total responses	9	33	12	<b>54</b>

Table 4.16 Descriptive Statistics Test Mean and Standard Deviation

<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	6.00	6.00	9.00	9.54987

Data concerning the corrective measures in place for mitigating poor performance was collected. The mean for employees' perception was 9.00 and the standard deviation was 9.55. The slightly greater standard deviation indicates that data on the respondents' opinions was spread from the mean. This reflects some level of agreement amongst respondents' views regarding the corrective measures in place to mitigate poor performance.

**4.2.14 Research question:** What challenges are affecting the PMS and productivity at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 14 PMS challenges

	Level in management

Response choice	Management	Non-management	Total respondents	
i) Poor comprehension of the PMS	1 (9%)	19 (44%)	20	
ii) Non-compliance to set standards	3 (27%)	2 (5%)	5	
iii) Poor communication between supervisor and employees	-	-	-	
iv) Lack of tangible incentive benefits	1 (9%)	9 (21%)	10	
v) Lack of feedback	6 (55%)	13 (30%)	19	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	
<b>Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation</b>				
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	8.00	4.50	6.75	6.5192

Data concerning respondents' belief regarding the challenges facing the performance management was collected. The mean for employee perceptions was 6.75 and the standard deviation was 6.52. The smaller standard deviation indicates that data on respondents' opinions was closer to the mean. This confirms a greater level of agreement amongst respondents regarding the challenges facing performance management of system.

The stand point of those in management positions regarding PMS challenges were outlined as follows:

- Challenges with comprehension of the entire concept.
- The concept was adopted with inadequate planning, for example no feedback mechanisms are in place.
- Inadequate supervision that leads to a lack of needs assessments.
- Lack of motivation factors to interest employee in the PMS.
- Poor work environment, collaboration between supervisors and employees.

The stand point of those in non-management positions regarding PMS challenges were outlined as follows:

- The system is relatively new, employees and supervisors in the Ministry have limited knowledge and understanding of how the system should function and its objectives.
- Insufficient training before and after implementation.
- No recognition for good performers.
- Limited motivation from supervisors.
- The size of the Ministry and the entire Government is an obstacle to the PMS.

**4.2.15 Research question:** Is underperformance well managed at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 15 Management of poor performance

	Yes	No	Not sure	Total
Employees management level	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	-	<b>11</b>
Employees non-management level	-	38 (88%)	5 (12%)	<b>43</b>
Total responses	6	43	5	<b>54</b>
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 4.00	Median 5.50	Mean 13.50	Standard Deviation 16.34013

Data concerning the management of underperformance as a challenge was collected. The mean for employee perceptions was 13.50 and the standard deviation was 16.34. The high standard deviation indicates that data on respondent's opinions was spread

far from the mean. This confirms a greater level of negative correlation amongst respondent's views regarding the management of underperformance as a challenge.

If your answer to Question 15 is Yes, which of the following factors indicate that underperformance is well managed at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 16 Management of underperformance at MIRCO

Response choice	Level in management		
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents
i) Clear work expectations are set	-	-	-
ii) Performance reviews are conducted	-	-	-
iii) Appropriate training is provided	6 (100%)	-	6
iv) Supervision of work is done	-	-	-
v) The role of employees is outlined	-	-	-
Total	6	-	6

**4.2.16 Research question:** Would you consider the following aspects to be major problems of the PMS at the Ministry of International Relations?

Table 4. 17 Major problems associated with the PMS

Response choice	Level in management		
	Management	Non-management	Total respondents
i) Poor understanding of the PMS	2 (18%)	11 (26%)	13
ii) Employee-supervisor relationship	-	-	-
iii) Top management commitment	1 (9%)	-	1

iv) Insufficient motivational factors/ performance incentives	-	8 (19%)	8	
v) Lack of feedback mechanism	8 (82%)	24 (56%)	32	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	
<b>Basic Statistics</b>				
Minimum 2.00	Maximum 6.00	Median 8.00	Mean 9.00	Standard Deviation 8.29458

Data concerning respondents' views regarding the major problems facing the performance management system was collected. The mean for employee perceptions was 9.00 and the standard deviation was 8.29. The smaller standard deviation indicates that data on respondent's opinions was close to the mean. This confirms a greater level of positive correlation amongst respondent's views regarding the major challenges faced.

The stand point of those in management positions regarding PMS major challenges were outlined as follows:

- Lack of clear vision of the PMS and how it translates into tangible results;
- Non-compliance, departments are not adhering to the PMS policy;
- Quarterly reviews are done but no feedback is received;
- Lack of adequate PMS training opportunities;
- No incentives in place;

The stand point of those in non-management position regarding PMS major challenges were outlined as follows:

- Limited knowledge and understanding of the PMS;
- Objectives do not mirror actual work done;

- Lack of feedback after submission of reviews;
- PMS is not considered a priority area of change;
- Lack of adequate system supervision;

The recommended solutions of those in management position on how to mitigate PMS major challenges were outlined as follows:

- Invest in education and training on the Performance Management System;
- Establish efficient supervision and feedback mechanisms;
- Needs assessments and staff development are key factors;
- System ownership;

The recommended solutions of those in non-management position on how to mitigate PMS major challenges were outlined as follows:

- Monitor and assist underperforming staff members;
- Implement an effective feedback system;
- PMS should be a value addition process and not just a routine chore mandated by the human resource department;

### **4.3 Discussions**

Respondents were asked 16 questions. The first question was based on the need to allocate the respondents into two job categories, namely employees in management and non-management positions. Management positions consist of employees' at the most senior level, from Permanent Secretary to Deputy Director Level. Non-management positions consist of those employees at the category of Chief to junior employees to Cleaner level. This research aimed to assess the effects of employee attitudes and perceptions on the functionality of the PMS in the Ministry of

International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO). It also aimed to determine whether the system enhanced service delivery in the public service of Namibia. Structured open-and closed-ended questionnaires, (Annexure I) were distributed via email to 80 employees of the entire population of 300 employees in the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation. Of the 80 emails sent, 64 were sent successfully while 16 bounced back and only 54 responded by completing the questionnaire. 10 emails were not responded to. Responses to the questions asked in the questionnaire are discussed below.

#### **4.3.1 Interest in the Performance Management System**

The research sought to establish whether the workforce at the Ministry of International Relations had interest in the Performance Management System and if that interest correlates with job level. The result showed that, of those in management 54.5% had no interest in the system, while 46.5% in non-management corresponded similarly. A significant P value of 59.2% using the standard alpha level of 0.05 indicated sufficient evidence to suggest a relation between job level and interest in PMS at the Ministry. A positive conclusion from the finding was that, those at the most senior levels were most likely to support the system. This is a good indication of system success, as highlighted by (Pulakos, 2009) who stressed that modelling an effective performance management system centres on top management commitment and their ability to establish clear expectations. A strong management commitment therefore, would yield a better chance of system success. By and large the huge lack of interest in PMS reflected in the findings is alarming because effective system functionality heavily depends on user commitment.

### **4.3.2 Comprehension of the Performance Management System**

One of the questions was intended to establish whether the workforce in the Ministry of International Relations generally understand performance management. The findings indicated varied responses. 6 in 11, about 54.5% of the respondents in management positions thought individuals had poor comprehension of performance management. At least, 20 in 43, about 46.5% of the sample in non-management were of the opinion that individuals had poor comprehension of performance management. However, those in management positions suggested that their understanding of the systems emanated from their experience.

Baird, et al. (2012) stressed that an effective PMS should enable organisations to plan, measure and control their performance, so that decisions, resources and activities could be properly aligned with strategies to achieve desired results. Therefore, top management should ensure that employees understand expectation from both dimension of input/ outcome and behavioural aspects in relation to system effectiveness. The case in point here is that, despite the experiences claim, respondents' still lack complete comprehension of the system. Respondents in non-management positions felt that the way the system was implemented rendered it ineffective with no serious impact on performance.

### **4.3.3 Benefits of the Performance Management System**

Respondents were asked if the performance management system benefited employees at the Ministry. Most people in management positions, nearly 6 in 11, about 54.5% of those in management who completed the questionnaire said yes. Employees indicated that, they knew what was expected of them, while a lesser quarter of the respondents felt valued, with higher promotion prospects and confidence to use their knowledge

elsewhere. Almost 38 in 43, about 85.7% of the employees in non-managerial positions, disagreed with the sentiments that performance management brought positive change. Other respondents were undecided on whether their personal performance had improved.

Aguins (2014) argue that PMS should help employees develop and improve their performance by addressing long-term career goals and aspiration. However, if supervisors lack the skills to help employees accomplish their goals, performance management is less likely to assist in developing their performance. The contrast in the respondents' views underscores the need to sufficiently integrate incentives within the PMS in the public service.

#### **4.3.4 Relevance of the Performance Management System**

Respondents were asked their opinion on whether they believed the performance management system was relevant at the Ministry of international relations. Most respondents, almost 5 in 11, about 45.5% in management believed it was very relevant, whilst 3 in 11, about 27% were not sure. Most employees, close to 31 in 43, about 72.1% in non-managerial positions disputed the relevance claim, lamenting that the system was being imposed on them and, therefore, it was not at all relevant and it is just something that had to be done. A smaller quarter of the respondents in non-managerial positions, at best 8 in 43, about 18.6% were not sure, while fewer than 4 in 43, about 9.3% thought the system was slightly relevant. To embrace the system, employees need to know what is expected of them, particularly through the supervisor-employees engagement.

Frequently, PMS is labelled as a routine chore mandated by the human resource department. However, (Grote, 2002) agree that taken seriously and used well, the PMS

experience could be understood for what it is, an on-going value process and not just a mere ritual.

#### **4.3.5 Supervisor Knowledge**

One of the questions posed was to understand whether respondents considered supervisors knowledgeable on the performance management system. The findings revealed that, nearly 6 in 11, about 54.5% of the respondents in management positions thought supervisor knowledge on the system was very poor, stating that supervisors need to be confident in their role, while a meagre 2 in 11, about 18.2% believed supervisor knowledge was good enough to support those under supervision. Others justified merit rating to be the fair attribute of a knowledgeable supervisor.

Almost 30 in 43, about 69.8% of employees in non-managerial positions concurred with the majority view of those in management and supported the attribute of confidence in a supervisors' role. Fewer than 12 in 43, about 27.9% believed supervisors' abilities were fair enough to accommodate the views of other. The social cognitive theory qualifies the above assessment, (Ashdown, 2014) argue that people do not only respond to environmental factors but also seek significance in their work, challenges and a reasonable degree of autonomy/ freedom to act.

#### **4.3.6 Importance of Supervisor Knowledge**

A follow-up question was intentionally posed to gauge the respondents' judgement on the importance of supervisor knowledge on the system. When asked, respondents felt supervisor knowledge matters a great deal because they are the facilitators of the system who could influence the outcome of performance assessment ratings. A unanimous consensus was reached from all those in management and non-management positions. The shared sentiments resonate with (Kanyane & Mabelane,

2009), who determined that professionalism, leadership, motivation, communication, attitude, training and reward, are key ingredients of an effective performance management system.

#### **4.3.7 Performance Assessment**

A question was asked as to whether respondents' performance was assessed against identified objectives. Respondents in management positions unanimously confirmed that their performance was weighed in line with set goals.

A majority of 30 in 43, about 70% of the respondents in non-management positions had different sentiments from those in management positions. They pointed out that measurable objectives concerning work performance are not adhere to. Fewer than 8 in 43, about 19% of the respondents in non-management positions, however, were unsure. Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Namibia (2011) argue that the process of PMS should not only be a matter of completing forms, but should involve fundamental factors that include performance dialogue, feedback, assessment and development. The bottom line is that, having no clear measures to distinguish high achievers from those performing below expectations is discouraging.

#### **4.3.8 Identifiable Goals**

A follow-up question was posed to the respondents to identify which goals their performance was assessed against. Almost 8 in 11, about 73% of the respondents in management positions, pointed out that monthly reports are prepared on time, while close to 2 in 11, about 18% identified that employees demonstrate confidence in their work. Another identified factor was that employees are punctual or come to work on time, a goal which fewer than 1 in 11, about 9% of the respondents in management positions ascribed to.

More than 3 in 5, about 60% of the respondents in non-managerial positions revealed that employees demonstrate confidence in their work, while 2 in 5, about 40% of the respondents concurred with those who believed that monthly reports were prepared on time. When employees are committed to their work all else outlined is secondary.

#### **4.3.9 Contributions of the Performance Management System**

Another question posed related to the need to understand if the performance management system contributed to individual performance. When asked in what visible ways performance management contributed to productivity at the Ministry, close to 6 in 11, about 55% of the respondents in management positions felt that sometimes work expectations were clearly defined. However, 4 in 11, about 36% of the respondents felt that the PMS never really contributed and that employees take less time to prepare reports. Less than 1 in 11, about 9% thought departmental reports were more informative, but were seldom utilised.

A majority of 34 in 43, about 79% of the respondents in non-managerial positions believed that the PMS never contribute to performance and that employees take less time to prepare reports. On the other hand, less than 7 in 43, about 16% of those in non-management positions believed work expectations were often clearly defined. Fewer than 2 in 43, about 5% felt that employees were seldom ready to take up responsibility. Some of the attributes associated with an effective performance management system are that: it embraces simplified mechanisms to track performance and interaction between the workforce in managerial and non-managerial positions, this stand resonates with the control theory that presents a solid foundation for critically assessing performance.

#### **4.3.10 Motivation and Performance Management Systems**

A follow up question to respondents was broadened which asked them to indicate which incentives were in place, if any at the Ministry, specifically between performance bonus, promotion, improvement of conditions of service, no incentives at all or performance recognition. A unanimous consensus was reached from both those in management and non-management positions, claiming that there were dissatisfied with the fact that there were no incentives in place at all. Most respondents believed the subject of incentives was a contentious topic in the Ministry. However, the bottom line is that for the workforce and the Ministry to progress, only positive rewards will result in positive outcomes. This resonates with (Frimpomaa, 2014) who claim that performance decisions and actions that include reward, promotion and employee recognition for exceptional performance should be the focal point in employee motivation.

#### **4.3.11 Contribution of Training to Performance**

A follow up question to respondents was posed on how training had contributed to improving individual performance. At least 8 in 11, about 73% of the respondents in management positions felt that training was well received although moderately effective in the Ministry, while 3 in 11, about 27% of those in management positions felt that employees now communicate more and that training very much improved training.

A majority of 35 in 43, about 82% of those in non-managerial positions believed training had moderately improved performance and employees and supervisors now have more open communication. 7 in 43, about 16% believed that individuals seek help when unclear in their work and were of the opinion that, training slightly improved performance. A meagre 1 in 43, about 2% of the respondents in non-

management positions felt training was not at all helpful, but that employees complied to set standards. Better training regarding the function and purpose of the PMS is central to the systems' success. Ashdown (2014) shared that coaching and development are some of the instrumental principals that form the foundation of the PMS process. Based on her empirical findings, she stressed that on-going coaching and development support a responsive approach to the implementation of PMS. Certainly, training would contribute fundamentally to performance improvement in terms of helping employees build confidence in their role.

#### **4.3.12 Corrective Measures**

The other question posed to the respondents required their opinion on whether corrective measures were in place to mitigate undesirable performance. At least 2 in 11, about 18% of the respondents in management positions said yes, pointing out that employees received appropriate training. Supervisors provide much needed input and support and that expectations were communicated on time. 5 in 11 about 46% believed no effective measures were in place. 4 in 11 about 36% of the respondents in management positions were not sure of any such measures. Close to 7 in 43, about 16% of the respondents in non-managerial positions felt yes measures were in place indicating that in fact employees receive appropriate training, whilst 28 in 43, about 65% supported the view that there were no measures in place. The finding revealed that 8 in 43, about 18% of the respondents in non-managerial positions were unsure of the measure in place. Moreover, the real challenge is in the formulation of the methodology on how to enforce the measures in place and ensure that the yardsticks are adhered to.

#### **4.3.13 Challenges Facing the Performance Management System**

Respondents were asked to identify the challenges facing the PMS. Nearly 6 in 11, about 55% of those respondents in management positions outlined the lack of feedback as a challenge. Whilst 3 in 11, about 27% of the respondents believed non-compliance to set standards was a setback. Additionally, less than 1 in 11, about 9% of the respondents felt poor comprehension of the performance management system was a greater challenge and another 9% of the respondents in managerial positions were of the opinion that poor incentives were detrimental to the system's success.

Almost 19 in 43, about 44% of the respondents in non-management position believed that a lack of understanding of the performance management system was a profound challenge. Close to 13 in 43, about 30% however believed a lack of feedback was a dilemma. Nearly 9 in 43, about 21% of the respondents felt poor incentives was worth considering a setbacks. Fewer than 2 in 43, about 5% of the respondents in non-management positions pointed to non-compliance.

Respondents generally agreed that the system was technically adequate, even though, flawed in how it was applied. The employees in non-management positions shared similar sentiments with those in management positions. The common view shared was that the system faced implementation challenges by part due to non-compliance to set standards, lack of feedback mechanisms and the absence of monetary and non-monetary rewards. Predominately, the PMS debate is characterised by a general lack of rigorous evaluation on what makes PMS work and how it contributes to bottom line performance.

#### **4.3.14 Management of Poor Performance**

After challenges had been raised, respondents were asked whether they believed

under-performance was well managed in the Ministry. Close to 6 in 11, about 55% of the respondents in management positions said yes, while 5 in 11, about 45% disagreed.

A majority of 38 in 43, about 88% of respondents in non-management positions argued that underperformance was not at all managed as a challenge, while fewer than 5 in 43, about 12% of the respondents in non-management positions were unsure. The bottom line is to understand the problem in its depth so that solutions can be developed to appropriately manage the challenges.

#### **4.3.15 Major Problems of the PMS**

Respondents were asked what they considered as the major problems affecting the PMS at the Ministry. A poor knowledge of the PMS was indicated to be a major issue. Non-compliance to set standards, for example failure to submit quarterly assessment reports was also outlined. Respondents felt the system lacked feedback mechanisms and had no incentives in place, for example, performance bonuses and pay progression. The problems mentioned affects the system that in turn impact on performance. Of all the challenges mentioned, perhaps the major limiting factor was the lack of sufficient comprehension of the system at all levels, both in management and non-management positions. Therefore reward and punishment is the best instrument with, which to change behaviour (Armstrong, 2016).

#### **4.3.16 Possible Mitigating Factors**

The other question asked to respondents required their opinions on what should be done to improve employee understanding of the PMS in the Ministry. Most respondents believed that education and training was the key factor. Nearly 6 in 11, about 55% of those in management positions agreed with the idea above, whilst the

rest of the respondents opted for top management support and allowing employees to have an input in conducting performance assessments.

Almost 20 in 43, about 46% of the respondents in non-managerial positions concurred with the majority of those in management positions who believed training was the way forward, highlighting commitment to have a fundamental role in system success. The mixed sentiments put forth by respondent's signals a need for better training and workshops on the functionality and purpose of the performance management system.

#### **4.4 Summary**

Generative themes in this chapter shows that participants expressing their opinions based on their experience with the PMS. The responses reflected the difficulties faced, including the performance transformation. The study findings, indicates that attitudes of non-compliance to set standards do affect the PMS. It was determined that the effects of poor attitudes and perceptions on PMS was that, employees did not value the system enough to give it the seriousness it required. Furthermore, the result also showed that PMS principles were inadequately applied and as a result poor comprehension of the system was evident.

Employees in non-management position considered the system to have little benefit. The study findings revealed that, although, assessment reports were done, there were no consequences after submission of reports, in terms of feedback. This earned the PMS poor judgement. The research shows that, for the PMS to operate with excellence, the scheme should be treated with the seriousness it requires. Thus, a clear understanding of the system's policies and procedures should be incorporated in the daily operations of the Ministry.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The purpose of this chapter was to provide conclusive and recommendatory remarks on the research problem raised. Using the literature review, this study explored the main factors influencing employee perceptions of the Performance Management System.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

The evidence collected was analysed with the aim of answering the statement of the problem, namely, to assess the effects of employee perceptions on the functionality of the Performance Management System (PMS) at the Ministry of International Relations and Corporation (MIRCO). The study also sought to determine whether the system enhanced service delivery in the Ministry and indeed in the Public Service of Namibia. Even though empirical evidence highlights the inherent value of the PMS, often times there remains a persisting and troubling gap between implementation and getting the system to work effectively. In fact, after careful consideration of all the collected evidence, it was determined that attitudes of non-compliance to set standards do affect the PMS. The PMS at the Ministry require a degree of commitment and seriousness for it to function with excellence.

Based on the study findings, the conclusions drawn were that the workforce in the Ministry have little confidence in the PMS. This lack of confidence portrayed could potentially lead to system failure if not addressed. This is because the systems' application was not treated with the seriousness it required. It was determined that the PMS principles that were inadequately enforced rendered the scheme less effective.

This was evident in the study findings, which revealed inadequate supervision and a lack of visible commitment towards the PMS's bottom-line objectives. Therefore, if the PMS is to work effectively, the workforce require motivation with sureness of the scheme's significance in performance improvement. Certainly, more should be done to enhance integration of the systems' application. Facilitators of the scheme should, therefore, re-enforce training and feedback mechanisms that incorporates motivational factors to help build employees confidence in the scheme.

Some officials in the Ministry demonstrated a better understanding of the PMS. However, most employees are still to acquire sufficient understanding of the PMS. The system's success, therefore, greatly depends on top management commitment and the ability with which individuals will utilise it. Top management should, therefore, strive to get everyone on-board as a critical step towards system success.

The challenges facing the PMS in MIRCO were identified as follows:

- Poor understanding of the PMS in the Ministry;
- A gap exists between monitoring and evaluation of the systems' policies;
- Assessment measures are in place with little consequence on set targets. Submitting quarterly assessment reports is considered a routine chore with little consequences. Once reports are submitted no feedback is received;
- Non-compliance to PMS set standards due to inadequate supervision;
- Absence of motivational factors, both monetary and non-monetary rewards. PMS should create an environment where employee assessment and performance is based on intrinsic or extrinsic motivational factors;

- Poor collaboration among officials;

The above conclusions were drawn up based on the evidence collected and the analysis elsewhere. The objectives of the study, namely, to determine whether employee attitudes and perceptions influenced the PMS, to explore whether the PMS motivated employees to perform better as intended and to identify the major problems facing the PMS in the MIRCO, were all achieved.

The study brought to light a better understanding of the possible impact of employee perceptions and how these perceptions influence the PMS, and the various challenges experienced with the systems' application. The bottom line here is that for the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation to succeed in the application of the PMS, only positive rewards will result in positive outcomes.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

This section presents useful recommendations based on the data analysed in the previous chapters 4. The recommendations provided, aimed to assist the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation on how to nurture positive attitudes and perceptions towards the PMS.

The research communicates information on employee perceptions and the PMS's impact on performance and the many flaws it inhabits. The study confirms that attitudes of non-compliance to PMS set standards do affect the PMS in the Ministry. When employees believe PMS has little consequence on performance improvement, it powerfully impacts on their perception of the scheme. The following are the summarised recommendations on how to mitigate some of the listed challenges:

This research found that, a need exists to continually monitor and evaluate the system's policies, specifically on monitoring, training and feedback. Poor comprehension of the PMS was identified as a major barrier for excellent system functionality. The study produced the following recommendations:

- Surely, if PMS is to operate with excellence, the scheme should be treated with the seriousness it requires. Therefore, for desired results, a clear understanding of the system's policies and procedures should be encouraged by considering effective monitoring, training and feedback. Management should, therefore, make it a priority to reinforce corrective measures that supports a strong organizational culture that helps employees internalize cooperate values;
- Facilitators of the PMS should focus on what really matters, which is how effective the system is utilized and how serious employees consider the scheme. Administrators of the PMS should, thus, ensure that compliance to set standards is enforced through sufficient supervision. In addition, clear measurable objectives that commands adherence should be in place;
- PMS training should be at the forefront in providing practical guidance on how the scheme operates. PMS training should not only be confined to administrators or supervisors, rather the entire workforce should be on-board to gain confidence in the system;
- Motivation should be an indispensable part of the PMS. Linking reward and remuneration would commit employees to the cause. That way, employees would know that achieving set-targets directly affects them. Motivational theories, therefore, should be utilized as instrumental reforms that provide

insight and explanation on what drives employees. The Goal Setting Theory for example, could be a fundamental reform in setting a structure that directs action. In the same way, the Control Theory would provide a solid foundation for critically assessing the feedback constituent of the PMS in the Ministry. In addition, the Social Cognitive Theory could provide insight in support of PMS, because what people believe to be important, powerfully impacts on their performance. These theoretical frameworks should be well understood and effectively integrated within the PMS at the Ministry;

- Greater collaboration between supervisors and subordinates should be encouraged to inspire system ownership among officials. Developing greater collaboration would allow officials to embrace the system and have a clear picture of what is expected. Moreover, a strong management commitment would yield a better chance of system success;
- Top management support and commitment is key for success in PMS application.

Considering the above, Performance Management System should not be a routine chore mandated by the human resource department, but should be a reform that inspires excellent service, create a performance oriented culture, and sustain motivation among employees in the Ministry.

Further research is considered necessary in determining whether intrinsic motivation and extrinsic incentives could influence performance in Namibia's public service. To that end, broader research with a much larger sample of the entire civil service could help give a holistic view on the impact of PMS in the public service of Namibia.

## CHAPTER 6

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## ANNEXURE I

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ADMINISTERED BY EMAIL TO EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF NAMIBIA

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY TICKING WHERE  
APPLICABLE WHAT APPLIES TO YOU IN THE SPACE PROVIDED:

1. What is your job classification?

- Management position
- Non-management position

Management positions consist of employees at Permanent Secretary to Deputy Director Level. Non-management positions consist of employees at Cleaner level to Chief.

2. Are you interested in the Performance Management System process? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Most Interested	Employee interest consistently exceed process requirements
2	Interested	Employee interests meet and often exceeds the PMS process requirements
3	Neither	Employee interest consistently meets the PMS process requirements
4	Not Interested	Employee interest meets but often fall short of the PMS process requirements
5	Not Interested at all	Significant improvement needed employee interest do not meet the PMS process requirements

3. How do you rate employee comprehension of the Performance Management System?

Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Very Good	Employee consistently exceed comprehension of the PMS
2	Good	Employee meets and often exceeds comprehension of the PMS
3	Acceptable	Employee consistently meets comprehension of the PMS
4	Poor	Employee meets but often fall short to comprehend the PMS
5	Very Poor	Significant improvement needed employee do not comprehend the PMS

4. Have the Performance Management System process benefited employee performance?

Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	To a Great Extent	Employee performance consistently exceeds normal work requirements
2	Somewhat	Employee performance consistently exceeds normal work requirements
3	Neutral	Employee performance meets the work requirements
4	Very Little	Employee performance does not meet work requirements; minor performance deficiencies
5	Not at All	Employee performance fails to meet work requirements; no change in performance since implementation

5. Do you consider the Performance Management System to be relevant in improving employee performance? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Very relevant	Performance consistently exceeds normal work requirements since implementation
2	Quite relevant	Performance consistently exceeds normal work requirements since implementation
3	Not sure	Performance meets the work requirements since implementation

4	Slightly relevant	Minor performance deficiencies since implementation
5	Not at all relevant	No change in performance since implementation

6. Do you regard a supervisor's knowledge of the Performance Management System important? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Very Important	Supervisor knowledge should consistently exceed performance standards
2	Important	Supervisor knowledge should meet and often exceed performance standards
3	Moderately Important	Supervisor knowledge should consistently meet performance standards
4	Slightly Important	Supervisor knowledge should meet performance standards
5	Not Important at all	Significant improvement needed

7. How would you rate supervisor knowledge of the Performance Management System? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Very Good	Supervisor consistently exceeds performance standards in his role
2	Good	Supervisor meets and often exceeds performance standards in his role
3	Fair	Supervisor consistently meets the performance standards in his role
4	Poor	Supervisor meets but often fall short of performance standards in his role
5	Very Poor	Significant improvement needed

8. Is your work performance assessed against identified goals and objectives?

- Yes
- No

- Not sure

9. If your answer to Question 8 is Yes, please tick which of the following goals are identifiable. Please tick relevant box

- i) Monthly reports are done
- ii) Inconsistencies are identified and controlled
- iii) Work schedules are checked
- iv) Improved internal communication
- v) Employees are committed to work and achieve desired results

10. Does the Performance Management System contribute to productivity at the Ministry of International Relations? Please tick relevant space.

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Almost Always	Performance consistently exceeds normal work standards
2	Often	Performance consistently meet and often exceed normal work standards
3	Sometimes	Performance meets the work standards
4	Seldom	Performance does not meet work standards
5	Never	Performance fails to meet work standards

11. How would you rate the incentives in place in encouraging individual employee performance? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Very Satisfied	Performance consistently exceeds normal work requirements because of bonus
2	Satisfied	Performance consistently meet and often exceed normal work requirements because of promotion prospects
3	Neither	Performance meets the work requirements because of improved condition of service

4	Dissatisfied	Performance does not meet work requirements because of limited incentives
5	Very Dissatisfied	Performance fails to meet work requirements because of no incentives in place

12. Have training employees on the Performance Management System contributed to improving performance? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Extremely	Employee consistently exceeds performance standards after training
2	Very	Employee meet and often exceed normal expectations after training
3	Moderately	Employee consistently meet expectations after training
4	Slightly	Employee meet but often fall short of performance standard after training
5	Not at All	Significant improvement needed

13. Are they corrective measures in place to mitigate poor employee performance?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

14. What challenges are affecting the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations? Please tick relevant box

- i) Poor comprehension of the Performance Management System
- ii) Non-compliance to set standards
- iii) Poor communication between supervisors and employees
- iv) Lack of tangible incentive benefits
- v) Lack of feedback

**15.** Is underperformance well managed at the Ministry of International Relations?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If your answer to Question 15 is Yes, can you rate the management of underperformance at the Ministry of International Relations? Please tick relevant box

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptions	Descriptions
1	Much Better	Employee consistently receive clear work expectations
2	Somewhat Better	Employee meets and often conduct performance reviews
3	Stayed the Same	Employee consistently meets the training requirements
4	Somewhat Worse	Employee meets but often fall short of supervisor requirements
5	Much Worse	Significant improvement needed; employee role is not outlined

**16.** Would you consider the following aspects as major problems of the Performance Management System at the Ministry of International Relations and corporation?

- i) Poor understanding of the PMS
- ii) Employee-supervisor relationship
- iii) Top management commitment
- iv) Insufficient motivational factors/ performance incentives
- v) Lack of feedback mechanism

**ANNEXURE II**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES ON PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ADMINISTERED TELEPHONICALLY TO  
EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
AND COOPERATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF NAMIBIA**

1. Do you understand your job expectations?

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2. Do you understand how your supervisor decides on your appraisal ratings?

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3. Is the Performance Management System helping you to do your job better?

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4. Do you receive useful feedback from your Performance Management System reviews?

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5. Do you consider the assessments of your performance to be consistently fair?

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6. Are there deliverables that you work towards achieving?

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7. Is time spent on performance management worthwhile?

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8. Does the Performance Management System add value to your work performance?

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9. How is better performance rewarded at the Ministry of International Relations?

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10. Have the training needs identified through the PMS benefited you in any way?

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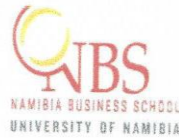
11. What problems can be identified with Performance Management System?

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12. What do you think can be done to mitigate the mentioned problems?

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## ANNEXURE III



06 June 2016

### To whom it may concern

Mr Martin M Silumbu of student number: 200226657 is registered for a Master in Business Administration- Management Strategy at the University of Namibia through the Namibia Business School.

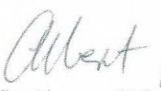
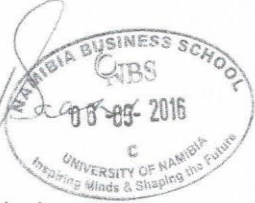
This letter serves to inform you that his research proposal was reviewed and successfully met the University of Namibia requirements.

The student has been granted permission to carry out postgraduate studies research. The University of Namibia has approved the research to be carried out by the student for purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the degree being pursued.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Business School at the University of Namibia.

Thank you so much in advance and many regards.

Yours sincerely

Albert Isaacs, PhD  
Associate Dean  
Namibia Business School  
University of Namibia  
Tel: +246 61 413 500  
Fax: +246 61 413 512  
Email: [albert.isaacs@nbs.edu.na](mailto:albert.isaacs@nbs.edu.na)

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340 Mandume Ndemufayo Ave. – Private Bag 16004 – Pionierspark – Windhoek – Website: [www.nbs.edu.na](http://www.nbs.edu.na)  
Tel: + 264 (61) 413500 – Fax +264 (61) 413512 – E-mail: [info@edu.na](mailto:info@edu.na) – Trust reg. no T263/05

## ANNEXURE IV



The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile

ThD. MBA. HBS | mwakipg@outlook.com

### CONTACT

Namibia Business School  
Windhoek  
mwakipg@nbs.edu.na  
+264813901701

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

25<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**RE: COPYEDITING AND PROOFREADING OF MARTIN MAZILA SILUMBU'S DISSERTATION FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MANAGEMENT STRATEGY)**

This letter serves to confirm that I copyedited and proofread **MARTIN MAZILA SILUMBU'S** Thesis for the degree of **MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MANAGEMENT STRATEGY)** entitled: **ASSESSING EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

I declare that I professionally copyedited and proofread the thesis and removed mistakes and errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. In some cases, I improved sentence construction without changing the content provided by the student. I also removed some typographical errors from the thesis and formatted the thesis so that it complies with UNAM guidelines with regards to borders and page numbering.

I am a language editor authorized by The Namibia Business School and have edited many Postgraduate Diploma, Masters' Thesis and Doctoral Dissertations in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa.

Please feel free to contact me should the need arise.

Yours Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile



greenfield.mwakipesile



@mwakipg



+264813901701



Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile