



Research Article

Evaluating the Impact of the Public Employee Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS) on Teacher Performance in Tanzania: A Critical Review

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Abstract

Technological innovations have revolutionized educational systems globally, with performance management systems emerging as vital tools for aligning individual teacher performance with broader institutional objectives. In Tanzania, the Public Employee Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS) was introduced to enhance teacher performance by integrating goal-setting, monitoring, and feedback processes within a centralized digital platform. However, despite its potential, PEPMIS faces significant challenges, including data integrity issues, insufficient training, and inconsistencies in aligning performance ratings with rewards. This study provides a systematic literature review of PEPMIS and its impact on teacher performance in Tanzania, guided by the Management by Objectives (MBO) framework. The review explores PEPMIS's role in goal setting, performance monitoring, feedback mechanisms, and the rewards system, identifying key obstacles and offering recommendations for improving the system's implementation. The study contributes to the broader discourse on performance management systems in developing countries and provides practical insights to optimizing the system to enhance educational outcomes.

Keywords: PEPMIS, Teacher performance, performance management system education technology, teacher evaluation, public sector, accountability

Introduction

The Technological advancements have significantly transformed various sectors, including education, where they have introduced new methods for managing, teaching, and assessing performance. In the 21st century, technology has become a fundamental component of modern education systems, shaping how teachers and administrators approach learning and teaching (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). Integrating digital tools within education aims to enhance teaching effectiveness and improve learning outcomes, making educational systems more responsive to global challenges.

One such innovation is the Public Employee Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS), a technological platform designed to track, monitor, and evaluate the performance of public employees, including teachers (Van Dooren et al., 2015). In



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Tanzania, the government's introduction of PEPMIS represents a concerted effort to modernize public service delivery, particularly in the education sector. PEPMIS seeks to improve teacher performance by facilitating goal-setting, continuous monitoring, and the provision of feedback through a centralized digital platform (Utumishi, 2023). This reflects a broader governmental attempt to enhance accountability and effectiveness within the public sector by integrating performance management systems into the education sector.

Despite its potential, the success of PEPMIS in achieving its intended outcomes remains under-researched. The system has been heralded for its ability to streamline performance management, yet several challenges may hinder its effectiveness. These challenges include data integrity issues, insufficient training, **and** inconsistencies in performance evaluation and rewards (Mwita & Andrea, 2019). In many developing countries, performance management systems often face such challenges due to limited resources and technical capacities (Mungai & Kwena, 2020), and Tanzania is no exception.

This systematic literature review aims to critically examine the role of PEPMIS in enhancing teacher performance in Tanzania. The review is guided by the Management by Objectives (MBO) theory, initially proposed by Drucker (1954), which argues that organizational success is primarily determined by clearly defined objectives and active performance management. MBO emphasizes goal setting, performance monitoring, and feedback—critical components embedded in the PEPMIS framework. This study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on performance management systems in education by addressing the gap in empirical research on the system's impact. The review will also identify practical solutions to the challenges encountered in implementing PEPMIS, offering insights for policymakers and educational administrators on optimising the system for better teacher performance and improved academic outcomes in Tanzania.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework: Management by Objectives (MBO)

The Management by Objectives (MBO) theory provides the theoretical framework for understanding how PEPMIS functions. According to Drucker (1954), MBO is a management strategy in which employees and supervisors collaborate to set clear objectives, with performance evaluations based on achieving these objectives. The principles of MBO are embedded in PEPMIS, where teachers are expected to align their individual performance goals with the broader objectives of their schools and the education system at large (Antoni, 2005). In theory, MBO allows for greater accountability and self-directed improvement, which is critical in professions such as teaching, where outcomes are often difficult to quantify.

However, MBO's success depends on effective communication, regular feedback, and a supportive organizational culture (Rogers & Hunter, 1991). In the Tanzanian context, the challenge has been the inconsistent application of these principles, as school administrators often fail to provide timely and constructive feedback to teachers (Mpululu, 2014). Furthermore, the unique complexities of the education sector—where performance outcomes are influenced by a wide range of external factors, such as student

background and resource availability—make it challenging to apply MBO principles in a straightforward manner (Ilomo & Anyingisye, 2020).

Performance Management Systems in Education

Performance management systems (PMS) in education are not unique to Tanzania. Globally, such systems enhance teacher performance, streamline administrative processes, and improve student outcomes (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). For instance, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) has been implemented in South Africa to improve accountability and teacher development. However, as with PEPMIS, issues such as poor training, inadequate follow-up, and teacher resistance have been documented (Motilal, 2016). Similarly, in Kenya, the introduction of Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) faced significant challenges due to a lack of technical support and the perceived punitive nature of performance evaluations (Waweru & Orodho, 2014).

In Tanzania, PEPMIS was designed to address some of these common challenges by automating performance tracking and providing a structured framework for goal setting, monitoring, and feedback (Utumishi, 2023). Yet, its effectiveness in achieving these goals has been mixed. Several studies highlight issues such as the subjectivity of evaluations and the lack of meaningful professional development opportunities, which undermine the system's potential to foster teacher growth (Matete, 2016; Mwita & Andrea, 2019).

Challenges in Implementing PEPMIS

The implementation of PEPMIS in Tanzania has faced numerous challenges, many of which mirror those encountered in other performance management systems worldwide. One major issue is the integrity of data collected through the system. According to Mwita & Andrea (2019), errors in data entry and inconsistencies in performance monitoring have significantly affected the accuracy of teacher evaluations. These errors are often attributed to the limited technological capacity of schools, particularly in rural areas, where access to reliable internet and electricity is constrained (Samwel, 2018).

Another significant challenge is the lack of adequate training for both teachers and school administrators. Mpululu (2014) found that many teachers were not properly trained on using PEPMIS, leading to confusion and resistance. Moreover, without proper training, administrators are often unable to provide the kind of constructive feedback that is essential for professional growth. This lack of capacity-building within the system has hindered its effectiveness and contributed to the perception that PEPMIS is more punitive than developmental (Tommy et al., 2015).

Finally, there are significant concerns about the reward system linked to PEPMIS. The alignment between performance ratings and tangible rewards is often unclear, leading to frustration among teachers. Studies by Samwel (2018) and Ilomo & Anyingisye (2020) show that teachers frequently feel that their efforts are not adequately recognized, diminishing their motivation and engagement with the system.

Methodology

This study adopts a systematic literature review methodology to explore the role of PEPMIS in enhancing teacher performance in Tanzania. The review followed established

protocols for conducting systematic reviews, ensuring a rigorous and comprehensive synthesis of the available evidence (Higgins & Green, 2011). The literature search was conducted using databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science, with a focus on studies published between 2000 and 2023. Key search terms included “PEPMIS,” “teacher performance management,” “Tanzania education performance systems,” and “performance management in Sub-Saharan Africa.”

Inclusion criteria required that studies specifically examine performance management systems in education, focusing on Tanzanian contexts or comparable Sub-Saharan African countries. Articles that did not address these criteria were excluded. The final sample included peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, and policy briefs that provided empirical data or theoretical insights into the functioning of PEPMIS and similar systems.

Once relevant studies were identified, thematic analysis was employed to extract key themes related to goal setting, monitoring and feedback, professional development, and challenges in implementation. This approach allowed for a critical evaluation of the factors influencing the success or failure of PEPMIS and a comparison with other performance management systems globally.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study are arranged thematically to reflect critical areas of focus within the Public Employee Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS) and its impact on teacher performance in Tanzania. Each theme corresponds to essential components of PEPMIS, including goal setting, performance monitoring, feedback mechanisms, professional development opportunities, performance rating and rewards, and the challenges associated with its implementation. The review synthesizes the insights from the literature, offering a comprehensive understanding of how PEPMIS influences teacher performance and identifies areas for improvement.

Planning and Goal Setting

The literature indicates that goal setting is central to PEPMIS, helping teachers organize their work around clear objectives (Matete, 2016). Studies by Ghavifekr & Rosdy (2015) demonstrate that goal setting plays a critical role in enhancing motivation and providing a sense of direction in educational settings. However, in the Tanzanian context, the application of this process has been inconsistent. According to Mpululu (2014), teachers often receive unclear or contradictory goals from school administrators, which undermines their ability to align their efforts with institutional objectives.

In line with Management by Objectives (MBO) theory, clearly defined goals are essential for organizational success (Antoni, 2005). However, the success of goal setting within PEPMIS depends on the ability of school administrators to communicate and follow up on these goals effectively. Studies by Matete (2016) and Mwita & Andrea (2019) suggest that teachers struggle to maintain alignment with institutional goals without consistent monitoring and feedback, leading to a gap between intended and actual performance outcomes.

Monitoring and Feedback

Effective monitoring and feedback are critical for the success of any performance management system. PEPMIS is designed to continuously monitor teacher performance, offering data-driven insights that can help identify areas for improvement (Utumishi, 2023). However, the review highlights significant challenges related to the accuracy of this monitoring. Mwita & Andrea (2019) found that errors in data entry and the subjectivity of evaluations frequently compromise the system's effectiveness. This is particularly concerning in rural schools, where technological limitations exacerbate these issues (Samwel, 2018).

Moreover, the relationship between teachers and their evaluators plays a significant role in the perceived fairness and utility of the feedback provided. Studies by Tommy et al. (2015) and Zhang (2012) emphasize that teachers are less likely to engage with the system meaningfully when evaluations are perceived as biased or punitive. This finding is consistent with the international literature on performance management, which shows that constructive and supportive feedback is essential for fostering professional development and enhancing performance (Motilal, 2016).

Development and Review

One of the key promises of PEPMIS is its potential to identify opportunities for teacher professional development. However, the literature reveals that this potential is largely unrealized in the Tanzanian context. According to Ilomo & Anyingisye (2020), while the system is designed to provide feedback on areas for improvement, there is often little follow-up regarding actual developmental support. This lack of support undermines the system's ability to foster meaningful professional growth.

International comparisons highlight the importance of linking performance evaluations to structured professional development opportunities (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). For instance, in countries where performance management systems are integrated with continuous professional development programs, teachers are more likely to view the system as supportive rather than punitive (Waweru & Orodho, 2014). The failure to provide such opportunities within PEPMIS is a significant weakness that must be addressed if the system is to achieve its intended outcomes.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study offer significant insights for policymakers, educational administrators, and researchers concerned with improving teacher performance in Tanzania and similar contexts in developing countries. The adoption of PEPMIS represents an ambitious attempt by the Tanzanian government to modernize its public education system and enhance teacher performance. However, the study highlights several critical areas that need urgent attention to ensure the system achieves its desired outcomes.

Policy Implications

At the policy level, this study suggests that data integrity and system reliability are key concerns that need to be addressed for PEPMIS to function effectively. The inaccuracies in data entry and performance evaluations reported by teachers highlight systemic weaknesses that could undermine the system's credibility and long-term sustainability. As such, the Tanzanian government must invest in improving the technological infrastructure supporting PEPMIS, particularly in rural and resource-constrained schools, where challenges such as unreliable internet access and limited technical capacity exacerbate existing inefficiencies (Mwita & Andrea, 2019).

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of professional development in any performance management framework. Without sufficient opportunities for teachers to develop professionally, the potential of PEPMIS to foster growth and improvement remains untapped. In collaboration with educational institutions, the government should design and implement comprehensive professional development programs that are directly linked to the feedback provided through PEPMIS. Such programs would help bridge the gap between evaluation and capacity-building, ensuring teachers have the skills and support needed to meet performance expectations (Ilomo & Anyingsise, 2020).

Implications for Educational Administrators

For school administrators, this study highlights the need to improve the communication and feedback mechanisms within PEPMIS. Teachers reported a lack of constructive feedback, negatively impacting their engagement with the system. Administrators must adopt a more supportive and developmental approach to performance evaluations, ensuring that feedback is both timely and constructive and geared towards fostering professional growth (Tommy et al., 2015).

In addition, administrators must address the perceived subjectivity of the evaluations within PEPMIS. Teachers' concerns about biased assessments indicate a broader issue of trust between staff and evaluators. Implementing more transparent and objective evaluation criteria could help mitigate these concerns, thereby enhancing teachers' acceptance of and engagement with the system (Rogers & Hunter, 1991). It is also essential to provide continuous training for administrators to ensure they can effectively use PEPMIS to support teachers, rather than merely applying punitive measures (Zhang, 2012).

Implications for Teacher Motivation and Engagement

Teacher motivation is a crucial factor in the success of any educational reform. The inconsistencies in the reward system linked to PEPMIS have significant implications for teacher morale. Without a clear and transparent linkage between performance outcomes and rewards, teachers will likely become disengaged, ultimately hindering their performance. Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) emphasizes recognizing and rewarding employees' efforts as a key motivator. The absence of a fair reward system within PEPMIS thus represents a missed opportunity to harness teachers' intrinsic motivation to improve their performance (Samwel, 2018).

By addressing these critical gaps—particularly in professional development, feedback, and reward structures—PEPMIS can better align with global best practices in performance management and contribute to sustained improvements in the quality of education in Tanzania.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This systematic literature review has critically examined the role of the Public Employee Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS) in enhancing teacher performance in Tanzania. The findings indicate that while PEPMIS holds significant potential for improving the alignment between individual teacher efforts and broader educational objectives, its effectiveness has been compromised by several operational and systemic challenges.

The study underscores the importance of data integrity in performance management systems. The reported inaccuracies in data entry and performance evaluations seriously threaten the system's credibility and ability to provide reliable assessments of teacher performance. Without accurate data, the primary functions of PEPMIS—such as goal setting, monitoring, and performance reviews—are severely undermined. The technological infrastructure supporting PEPMIS, particularly in rural areas, remains a critical area for improvement. Additionally, the lack of professional development opportunities for teachers has been identified as a major shortfall of the system. While PEPMIS is designed to facilitate continuous feedback and identify areas for improvement, these opportunities are often not accompanied by targeted professional development, leaving teachers without the necessary resources to improve their skills.

Another significant concern raised in this review is the perceived subjectivity of the performance evaluations. Many teachers expressed doubts about the system's fairness, citing issues such as biased appraisals and a lack of transparency in how performance scores are assigned. This perception of subjectivity has contributed to widespread resistance to PEPMIS among teachers, who view the system as punitive rather than supportive of their professional growth.

The study also reveals that the reward system within PEPMIS is insufficiently aligned with performance outcomes. Teachers reported inconsistencies in how performance was rewarded, leading to frustration and disengagement. The lack of a clear, transparent link between performance and incentives not only demotivates teachers but also undermines the very purpose of the performance management system.

PEPMIS has the potential to significantly enhance teacher performance in Tanzania by fostering accountability and aligning individual teacher efforts with national educational goals. However, its success is contingent upon addressing the identified challenges. By improving data integrity, providing comprehensive training for both teachers and administrators, and establishing a fair and transparent reward system, PEPMIS can fulfill its intended role as a tool for enhancing teacher performance and, by extension, improving the overall quality of education in Tanzania.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this systematic review, several key recommendations emerge that can guide future improvements in the implementation and effectiveness of PEPMIS.

These recommendations focus on addressing the operational challenges, enhancing teacher engagement, and ensuring that the system fosters professional development and accountability.

First, the Tanzanian government must improve **the technological infrastructure** supporting PEPMIS, especially in rural and underserved schools. The study highlights significant issues with **data integrity**, such as errors in data entry and unreliable internet connections, which hinder the accurate assessment of teacher performance. To address these challenges, the government should invest in upgrading technological resources, such as providing reliable internet access, better data management tools, and continuous system updates to minimize errors. Regular audits should be conducted to ensure that the data collected through PEPMIS accurately reflects teachers' performance, and any discrepancies should be addressed promptly.

Secondly, the issue of **insufficient training** for both teachers and administrators must be addressed to ensure the successful use of PEPMIS. Many teachers reported that they were inadequately trained on how to use the system effectively, which has led to confusion, resistance, and inconsistent application of the performance management tools. Comprehensive national training programs should be developed, focusing on the technical aspects of using PEPMIS and performance management principles such as setting meaningful goals, providing constructive feedback, and using data to drive professional development. Administrators, in particular, need to be equipped with the skills necessary to provide fair and supportive evaluations and meaningful feedback that fosters teacher growth rather than creating resentment.

Another key recommendation is the **establishment of a transparent and objective evaluation framework** within PEPMIS. Teachers expressed concerns about the subjectivity of their performance evaluations, which has eroded trust in the system. To mitigate these concerns, developing clear, objective criteria for evaluating teacher performance is crucial, ensuring that assessments are based on measurable outcomes rather than subjective judgments. This can be achieved by creating standardized evaluation rubrics, incorporating multiple sources of feedback (such as peer reviews and student outcomes), and offering teachers opportunities to appeal their evaluations if they feel they have been mistreated. By enhancing transparency in the evaluation process, the system can foster greater trust and buy-in from teachers.

The study also highlights the importance of **improving the feedback mechanism** within PEPMIS. Teachers reported receiving little constructive feedback, limiting their professional growth opportunities. To address this, a structured and consistent feedback process should be implemented, where teachers receive regular, detailed, and actionable feedback on their performance. Administrators must be trained to deliver this feedback in a supportive and developmental way, rather than punitive. Feedback sessions should be seen as opportunities for reflection and goal-setting, helping teachers identify areas for improvement and providing them with the resources they need to succeed.

Additionally, it is critical to develop a **fair and transparent reward system** that links teacher performance directly to incentives. Many teachers expressed frustration over the inconsistencies in how rewards were distributed, with some high-performing teachers feeling that their efforts were not adequately recognized. A performance-linked reward

system should be established, where teachers who consistently meet or exceed performance expectations are recognized through promotions, salary increments, or other forms of professional recognition. This reward system should be applied consistently across different regions and school types to ensure fairness and equity. Furthermore, the criteria for receiving rewards should be clearly communicated to teachers so that they understand how their performance is being evaluated and rewarded.

Finally, **teacher involvement** in the design and refinement of PEPMIS is crucial for its long-term success. Teachers are the primary users of the system, and their insights and experiences can help identify areas for improvement that may not be apparent to policymakers or administrators. By actively involving teachers in the ongoing development of PEPMIS—through focus groups, feedback sessions, and pilot programs—the system can be made more responsive to their needs and more user-friendly. This participatory approach can also foster greater buy-in from teachers, as they will feel more invested in the system's success if they have a say in its design.

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