

EFFECTS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT APPRAISAL SYSTEM (PMAS) ON PUBLIC SERVICE IN TANZANIA. A CASE OF PEPMIS USAGE IN DODOMA CITY COUNCIL

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of the Performance Management Appraisal System (PEPMIS) on public service performance in Dodoma City Council, Tanzania, in response to concerns about weak accountability, unclear performance expectations and uneven service delivery from public servants in the public sector. The aim was to determine whether PEPMIS has effects on public service in a local government context. The study was guided by goal-setting theory, which posits that clearly defined, measurable objectives, continuous feedback and fair evaluation processes contribute to improved performance. The study adopted a pragmatic research philosophy, as well as a mixed methods approach with an explanatory sequential design. In the first (quantitative) phase, a structured questionnaire was administered to 351 staff members selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation of different departments and cadres. In the second (qualitative) phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with heads of department selected purposively to provide interpretive explanations of survey patterns. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and a linear regression, supported by diagnostic tests for normality, homoscedasticity and construct validity (Cronbach's alpha, KMO, Bartlett's test and factor analysis). Qualitative data were analysed through inductive content analysis to identify recurrent themes on how PEPMIS shapes day-to-day management and service delivery. The findings show high employee agreement that PEPMIS clarifies performance targets, aligns individual tasks with organisational goals, enhances understanding of strengths and weaknesses, motivates improved effort and supports professional development (overall mean \approx 4.43, SD \approx 0.53), hence PEPMIS has effects on public service. Content analysis revealed that PEPMIS is perceived to strengthen goal setting and future planning, increase transparency and reduce bias in appraisal, facilitate continuous feedback and performance monitoring, build commitment and responsibility, identify skill gaps for capacity-building, improve task distribution and workload management, and provide an objective basis for promotion and career progression. Regression analysis confirmed that the Performance Management Appraisal System has a positive and statistically significant effect on public service performance ($Y = 0.30 + 0.23X_1$), indicating that improvements in PEPMIS are associated with measurable gains in service effectiveness. The study recommends that Dodoma City Council deepen the use of PEPMIS for participatory goal

alignment; enhance its developmental and feedback functions; further institutionalise fairness, transparency and grievance mechanisms; formally integrate appraisal results with training, capacity-building and promotion decisions; and continue investing in system usability and user support, while encouraging wider replication and longitudinal evaluation in other Tanzanian public sector contexts.

Keywords: Performance Management Appraisal System, PEPMIS, Public Service, Performance Appraisal, Dodoma City Council, Tanzania.

1. INTRODUCTION

Managing performance, being a process of setting goals, monitor, assess and reward employees, is the key concern in both private and public organizations globally. In public organisations, performance management is a reflection of accountability, efficiency and improved service delivery to the public (Hajnal & Staroňová, 2021; Salam, 2021). This reflection has been shaped by New Public Management practices which focused on quality service delivery using private sector techniques in public service (Johnsson et al. 2021, Hajnal & Staroňová, 2021). In delivering services, public organisations faced challenges such as poor service delivery, value for money, the need to unlock employee potentials and desirable behaviours. All of these compelled governments to adopt performance management practices in public service (Vivona & Lewis, 2023; Vidé et al., 2022). Therefore, public organisations consider performance management as a significant approach in aligning and measuring strategic goals which are translated from corporate, team and individual level. Through proper motivational strategies and the presence of effective performance management systems, public organisations are confident in realizing the cause of their establishment.

Performance management as a concept does not occur by itself, the presence of performance management systems guarantee the whole process of planning, monitoring, rating and rewarding performance in organizations (Ibrahim et al.,2023; DeNisi et al., 2021). Performance management systems refer to a well designed framework specifically focusing on improving performance through planning, monitoring, rating and rewarding individuals and teams in relations to their accomplishment in an organization (Shahab, 2023). In the presence of effective performance management systems, public sectors do appraisal in the process of achieving both results and accountability. Thus, performance appraisal systems are part and parcel of performance management systems.

Several countries in Europe, America, Asia and Africa illuminate the practices of performance appraisal systems, which are widely analyzed through the lens of reforms and implementation dynamics, ranging from shifts between incentive models associated with NPM and more developmental approaches in post-NPM thinking (Hajnal & Staroňová, 2021; Barbieri et al., 2021).

From the European experience, there is evidence on how appraisal systems are operationalized within state institutions. For instance, in Hungarian state-run hospitals identifies limitations in the maturity of measurement and evaluation routines, indicating that while objective data can inform appraisal practices, there are still significant gaps (Sárga & Kása, 2023). Therefore, PMAS in

Europe must be understood as both a product of administrative reform doctrines and an institutional practice shaped by multi-level governance and sectoral constraints in implementing robust performance measurement and appraisal mechanisms Hajnal & Staroňová, 2021; Ongaro, 2022).

In American context, the importance of social context and organizational processes in determining appraisal process within public organizations is considered essential. The use of participatory approaches in planning and discussing appraisal methods such as key performance indicators and balanced scorecard is common in the United States and beyond (Zhou, 2021; Barbieri et al., 2021). Thus, PMAS is a system whose effects depend substantially on relational governance (trust), participatory design, and recognition practices that shape employee responses to appraisal processes (Mulvaney & Kianicka, 2022; Vivona & Lewis, 2023; Vidé et al., 2022).

In China, historical-institutionalist analysis of public hospital performance appraisal highlights how administrative and market-driving forces interact, while also documenting challenges such as coordination flaws among administrative departments (Li et al., 2022). The use of methods such as a balanced scorecard is emphasised in national appraisal indicators in China's public hospitals, illustrating complexities in governance (Yao et al., 2025). Beyond China, public-sector appraisal focus on how appraisal fairness and trust shape public sector attitudes as noted in Saudi Arabia (Alotaibi, 2024). Finally, Asian scholarship reflects the digitalization of performance management, including discussions on utilizing big data to reform outdated HR practices Wei & Deng, 2023).

African studies report established PMS architectures in some countries but frequent challenges with capacity, resources, politicisation and measurement validity that limit system impact (Silidion & Rutenge, 2024; Tyokwe & Naicker, 2021). In Nigeria, a question whether appraisal practices achieve governance and performance objectives is examined (Sakpere, 2022). However, proper adoption and utilization of performance appraisal systems have been common recently. East African research emphasizes appraisal as a tool for service delivery improvement, connecting appraisal practices with outcomes in public vocational institutions (Kizito et al., 2022; Otonda et al., 2022).

In Tanzanian performance appraisal system is part and parcel of public service reforms reflected through the introduction of the Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) in 2004 which was intended to replace the confidential appraisal method (Fredrick et al., 2025). Despite many benefits of OPRAS that include fairness, openness, cascading link of strategic goals with individuals (Matoka, 2023), the system was noted ineffective as there was weak linkage between appraisal outputs and managerial decisions (Paul, & Bago, 2022; Mtasigazya, 2021) and thus was replaced by Public Employees Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS) in 2024 (Silidion & Rutenge, 2024). PEPMIS represents a recent national effort to digitalise and standardise employee appraisal and link performance to rewards, training, and managerial feedback; field studies report both promise and problems in deployment.

Historically, Tanzania has been moving from one performance appraisal system to another, starting with confidential system prior to the year 2000, to OPRAS from 2004 to 2024, and now PEPMIS (Silidion & Rutenge, 2024). Some challenges noted in PEPMIS such as lack of training,

stakeholder involvement, perceived fairness and weak integration with HR processes (Kalifumu & Njunwa, 2025). Therefore, this study intends to examine the effects of Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS) on Public Service, in this light the system concerned is PEPMIS.

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1 Theoretical Literature Reviews

Performance management process constitutes goal setting, monitoring, rating and rewarding. Essentially, the process can be critically assessed in the lenses of goal setting theory as this study intends to examine the effects of performance management appraisal system (PMAS).

Goal-Setting Theory (GST), was mainly developed by Locke and Latham since 1960s with notable milestone in 1990, focusing on explaining how clear and well-designed goals can improve people's work performance (Rahman, 2025; Pop et al., 2021; Priyambodo et al., 2024). The theory says that goals guide people's attention and effort towards important tasks, which helps them perform better (Priyambodo et al., 2024; Rahman, 2025). GST is therefore not just a management tool; it is a broader theory of motivation that performance management and appraisal systems can put into practice through goal setting, monitoring, and feedback (Rahman, 2025; Vassilev et al., 2024; Kizito et al., 2022).

Originally, GST was developed in organizational psychology by Locke and Latham, but it is now used in many areas, such as sports, where goal-based interventions have been shown to improve athletes' performance (Pop et al., 2021). Recent work stresses that GST is still relevant in modern organizations that use digital tools, remote work, and systems like OKRs to manage performance (Rahman, 2025; Zhang, 2023).

GST rests on several key assumptions. Performance depends on how goals are designed and on the conditions in which they are pursued. The main principles are: goal specificity (clear goals), goal difficulty (challenging but realistic goals), goal commitment (agreement and buy-in), feedback, and task complexity (Rahman, 2025). The theory argues that specific and challenging goals increase motivation and performance, especially when people believe they can achieve them (self-efficacy) (Priyambodo et al., 2024; ZAM et al., 2024).

GST has several strengths for in a performance management. First, It offers clear concepts that help managers turn broad organizational aims into measurable targets and review processes (Rahman, 2025). This fits well with the idea of appraisal as a systematic way to evaluate performance, support decisions like training, and align personal goals with organizational goals (Pranathi et al., 2025). Secondly, GST has also been successfully applied in many settings, including public services and schools in East Africa, where studies show links between clear standards, appraisal practices, and better service delivery (Sirkoï et al., 2021; Kizito et al., 2022; Okoth, 2022).

However, there are important weaknesses and limits. Public-sector environments are complex and often face heavy procedures, competing goals, and tensions between control and staff development (Hill & Plimmer, 2024). These factors can make it hard to set truly clear, meaningful goals and provide useful feedback, reducing the motivational impact that GST expects (Rahman, 2025; Hill

& Plimmer, 2024). Studies also show that when goals are vague, employees may game the system or misuse performance information to get better ratings rather than improve real performance (Choi & Park, 2021). In sectors like health care, coercive use of performance targets and measures can backfire and cause dysfunctional behavior, so goals and feedback work better when they are enabling and learning-oriented, not purely punitive (Anders, 2024; Hill & Plimmer, 2024; Rahman, 2025). Other research highlights that fair procedures, good communication, and enough resources strongly affect whether appraisal systems actually work, suggesting that GST needs to be combined with ideas about fairness, legitimacy, and capacity (Njuguna & Kisilu, 2023; Chemjor, 2025; Makumi et al., 2021; Hill & Plimmer, 2024).

2.2 Empirical Literature Reviews

Public organisations around the world are under constant pressure to show results, treat staff fairly, and use resources well. One of the main tools used to respond to these demands is the performance management and appraisal system (PMAS). Different countries in America, Europe, Asia and Africa use different models such as paper-based, electronic, developmental, incentive-focused the outcomes have been mixed to manage and appraise performance in their organisations.

Research from the Americas highlights both the potential of structured performance management and the problems that arise when reforms are poorly aligned with organisational realities. In the United States, Rothmann and Cooper (2022) examined the Performance Management System (PMS) at the Arkansas Department of Health. They used the Performance Management Self-Assessment Survey (PMSAS), a standard tool recommended by the US Public Health Foundation and the Public Health Accreditation Board. This tool helped the department systematically review its performance management components, identify strengths and weaknesses, and highlight areas where quality improvement was needed. Their study shows that structured self-assessment can help public agencies detect gaps in PMAS design and implementation and guide targeted improvements.

Apart from the US, in Brazil, Elvira and Bruno-Faria (2021) examined how performance appraisal policies for civil servants work in Brazil's federal service. Through an ex-post policy evaluation and qualitative case studies of key actors and institutions, they found that the policy's effectiveness was weakened at several stages of the policy cycle. Structural factors such as strong job stability, frequent supervisor turnover, and a weak managerial culture led to resistance and made appraisals formalistic and superficial. In other words, even when a performance appraisal policy exists, implementation failures and organisational constraints can turn it into a symbolic exercise rather than a driver of better performance.

While American experience focuses strongly on implementation and governance, European research sheds light on how the purpose and design of appraisal systems affect employee attitudes and engagement. At a broad comparative level, Hajnal and Staronova (2021) analysed performance appraisal models in the civil services of 18 European Union countries. Using survey data from top civil servants, they investigated whether "incentivising" or "developmental" approaches dominate. They found that incentive-related and development-related features are actually two separate dimensions rather than opposite types. This leads to a four-part classification

of systems: incentivising, developmental, symbolic, and “want-it-all”. Their key message is that designers should treat incentives and development as independent design choices. Viewing them as mutually exclusive can result in symbolic or incoherent systems that weaken accountability and service outcomes.

Additionally, in Italy, Vidè, Micacchi, Giacomelli, and Barbieri (2022) studied whether seeing appraisal as developmental affects work engagement among Italian civil servants, and whether this works through perceptions of fairness (“appraisal justice”). An online survey of 1,482 civil servants was analysed with structural equation modelling. The results showed that when employees believe appraisals are meant to help their development, their engagement is higher. This effect is partly explained by interactional justice, how respectfully and fairly they feel treated during the appraisal interaction. Procedural and distributive justice were not significant mediators. The study suggests that emphasising development and respectful treatment in appraisal design and practice can improve engagement.

The Asian studies bring technology and digitalisation to the centre, showing how e-government and e-HRM systems can support merit, transparency, and performance but also their limits. In Indonesia, Natalia, Absah, and Harahap (2022) analysed an e-performance application and competency assessment system in the Department of Communication and Information of Labuhanbatu Regency. Using a census of 42 civil servants and path analysis, they found that the e-performance system, competency assessment, and job satisfaction each had positive and significant effects on employee performance. Job satisfaction acted as an intervening variable, meaning that the system partly works by improving how employees feel about their work. This suggests that when e-performance platforms are well implemented and supported, they can not only improve monitoring but also enhance job satisfaction and performance.

From the Indian experience, Naqvi, Sareen, and Sharma (2022) looked at what happens when public organisations move from paper-based to web-based e-HRM portals. They studied three large Indian public sector organisations using two-phase surveys of 506 employees, comparing perceptions before and after the portal was introduced. They found that overall views of assessment quality did not change significantly. However, employees perceived more transparency and directness in the assessment process after the portal was in place. The study suggests that e-HRM can increase clarity and openness, but technology alone does not change deeper attitudes about fairness or quality unless other reforms (such as training, culture change, and better criteria) are also introduced.

In African performance management practice, the issues of digital potential, standardisation, and the importance of capacity and leadership are critical. In Uganda for example, a study conducted in Bunyangabu District by Uganda Ministry of Health (2023) examined whether standardised performance management practices can improve health worker performance and health service indicators in district facilities. Using a before-and-after mixed-methods design that included training, supervision, and mentorship, the study recorded significant improvements. For example, knowledge of target-setting increased from 15% to 80%, staff attendance rose from 62% to 88%, and postnatal care at six weeks improved from 26% to 53%. These results show that when

performance management is backed by training, supervision, and ongoing mentorship, it can quickly translate into better service delivery outcomes.

In Zambia, Kasongo (2022) analysed how performance appraisal methods affect employee and organisational performance at the Zambia Revenue Authority. The mixed-methods study used questionnaires, interviews, and secondary data. The findings indicated that, in principle, performance appraisal procedures have many potential benefits. However, implementation gaps, both procedural and managerial limited these benefits in practice. The study highlighted the crucial role of top and middle management engagement, strong implementation fidelity, and follow-through on appraisal results if performance management systems are to support real organisational improvement.

Tanzania in addition provides a rich set of cases that pull together many of the themes seen in other regions such as digitalisation, fairness, training, infrastructure, and the link to actual performance. A study conducted in the Tanzanian Judiciary by Silidion and Rutenge (2024) investigated employees' perceptions of the Public Employees' Performance Management Information System (PEPMIS), using expectancy theory as their framework. In a quantitative case study of 142 judiciary staff, selected through stratified, simple random, and purposive sampling, they found that employees generally viewed PEPMIS as effective. Perceptions were shaped by fairness and accuracy of the system, timely feedback, users' skills, clear procedures, links to goals and rewards, and the availability of training. The study suggests that when users see the system as fair, understandable, and aligned with rewards, PEPMIS can support accountability and performance, provided training, policy enforcement, and workload management are maintained.

Furthermore, Komba (2024) explored teachers' views of PEPMIS in government secondary schools in Mzumbe Ward, again drawing on expectancy theory but using a qualitative case study approach. Through purposive interviews with 13 teachers from two schools, the study found that PEPMIS improved administrative efficiency and professional development. However, its effectiveness was constrained by concerns over fairness and transparency, limited training, technical system problems, and unstable network connections. This case underlines that for digital PMAS to work in practice, issues of infrastructure, training, fairness, and feedback must be actively addressed; otherwise, even potentially useful systems may generate frustration and partial use.

The above reviewed literature demonstrates that PMAS implementation across different geographical contexts faces both common and context-specific challenges. Despite the growing body of research on PMAS, significant gaps remain in understanding the specific effects of performance management systems in local government contexts, particularly in developing countries. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the effects of PMAS on public service in Dodoma City Council, with specific focus on PEPMIS usage.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a pragmatic research philosophy, which emphasizes the use of methods that best address the research questions rather than adherence to a single philosophical tradition (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Pragmatism was selected because it supports methodological

pluralism and allows researchers to combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to solve real-world problems and generate practical knowledge (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Morgan, 2014). This philosophical stance is particularly appropriate for investigating the effects of PMAS on public service delivery, as it requires both numerical measurement of outcomes and contextual understanding of implementation experiences.

A mixed methods research approach was employed to integrate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis within a single study. Mixed methods research provides complementary perspectives on the same phenomenon, enabling breadth from quantitative measures and depth from qualitative inquiry (Giroux, 2020; Oisso, 2023). This approach enhances explanation, triangulation, and the legitimacy of inferences for complex organizational phenomena such as performance management systems (Oisso, 2023). Specifically, the study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, which consists of an initial quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase intended to explain or expand on quantitative results (Giroux, 2020; Wilson, 2020). This two-phase sequence was selected because numerical results from the survey needed further contextual and interpretive explanation through interviews with key informants (Ashley, 2020; Wilson, 2020).

The study was conducted at Dodoma City Council in Tanzania, which served as the case study location. The target population comprised all staff members employed at Dodoma City Council, representing diverse cadres and departments affected by the PEPMIS usage. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 351 staff members selected using stratified sampling technique. Stratified sampling ensures representation across different organizational strata and enhances the generalizability of findings within the study context (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with 11 Heads of Departments (HoDs) selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was appropriate for the qualitative explanatory phase because it targets informants with specific expertise and experience who are best able to illuminate and explain patterns discovered in the quantitative phase (Alnassar, 2016; Hosseini, 2016).

Quantitative data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation, were computed to summarize the central tendency and dispersion of scale-based survey responses (Field, 2018). These measures are commonly used to describe survey domain scores and communicate the magnitude and variability of responses (Field, 2018). Inferential statistics were conducted through regression analysis to estimate relationships between independent variables and outcomes and to test the significance of predictors (Eiró-Gomes & Raposo, 2020). Regression analysis is routinely applied in mixed methods studies to identify significant predictors and effect sizes in the quantitative phase, informing which findings warrant follow-up in the qualitative phase (Eiró-Gomes & Raposo, 2020). Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed through content analysis, which involves systematic coding and categorization of textual data to identify themes, patterns, and meanings related to the research objectives (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013).

Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to throughout the research process. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board before commencing data collection. Informed consent was secured from all participants, who were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Data were stored securely and accessed only by the research team. These ethical safeguards are essential in mixed methods research as each phase raises procedural and inferential ethical concerns that affect participant protection and the quality of inference (Giroux, 2020).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The researcher was interested to know the respondents' understanding about the effects of performance management appraisal system (PMAS) on public service performance in Dodoma City Council. The findings are hereby presented as per the collected responses through a 5 point likert scale questionnaire with ranges 1.00–1.80 = Strongly Disagree, 1.81–2.60 = Disagree, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 3.41–4.20 = Agree and 4.21–5.00 = Strongly Agree. Thereafter, respondents were asked five (5) specific questions based on their knowledge on performance management appraisal system as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Effects of Performance Management Appraisal System on Public Service

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Implication
The appraisal system (PEPMIS) helps define my performance targets	4.6444	.65875	Strongly Agree
The appraisal system (PEPMIS) helps align my tasks with the organization's objectives.	4.8000	.50168	Strongly Agree
The performance appraisal system (PEPMIS) helps me understand my strengths and areas for improvement.	4.1778	.59166	Agree
The appraisal system (PEPMIS) motivates me to perform better in my job.	4.3111	.46554	Strongly Agree
The results of my performance appraisal (PEPMIS) are used for my professional development.	4.1778	.59166	Agree
Average	4.4257	.53476	Strongly Agree

Source: Researcher (2026)

The overall results show that the Performance Management Appraisal System (PEPMIS) is working well in Dodoma City Council. The average mean of 4.43 out of 5, with a low standard deviation of 0.53, means most employees agree that PEPMIS supports their work and helps manage performance in a positive way. This suggests that the system is not just known to staff, but is also accepted and used in a fairly consistent manner across the council. In general, such high scores indicate that PMAS, through PEPMIS, is likely contributing to clearer expectations, better feedback, and stronger links between individual work and public service delivery in Tanzania.

4.1.1 PEPMIS Helps Define Performance Targets (Mean = 4.64; SD = 0.66)

To begin with, employees strongly agree that PEPMIS helps them define their performance targets. A mean of 4.64 shows that most staff feel the system gives them clear goals and standards, and the relatively low standard deviation indicates this view is widely shared. Clear targets are important in public service because they tell employees exactly what is expected of them and make it easier to measure whether those expectations are met.

This finding is in line with a study by Yadav (2024), which examined how performance appraisal is perceived in a financial services firm. The study found that when appraisal systems clearly show expectations, are fair, and are transparent, employees better understand what they need to achieve and how their work will be judged. Similarly, research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa showed that performance appraisal is used to manage and measure employee performance, and that such systems help organisations seek better ways to enhance performance, implying that clear criteria and targets are central to the process (Mulidzwi et al., 2024). Taken together, these studies support the idea that PEPMIS is helping employees in Dodoma define their performance targets, is likely strengthening clarity and accountability in the Tanzanian public service.

4.1.2 PEPMIS Aligns Tasks with Organizational Objectives (Mean = 4.80; SD = 0.50)

Another clear result is that employees very strongly agreed that PEPMIS helps align their tasks with the organisation's objectives, with the highest mean score of 4.80. This means staff not only know what to do, but also understand how their daily activities support the wider goals of Dodoma City Council. The very low standard deviation shows that this is a shared view across respondents. In a public service setting, this alignment is critical because it ensures that individual efforts contribute directly to service delivery priorities and government plans.

This pattern reflects what was found in a study on performance appraisal practices at Eldoret Water and Sanitation Company in Kenya. That study reported that tools such as management by objectives and 360-degree appraisal are used specifically to influence and improve employee performance, and they help management in decision-making and policy formulation, which only works well when individual goals are linked to organisational aims (Wanjiru & Odenyo, 2024). In a broader review of the purposes of performance appraisal, Lameque and colleagues (2023) showed that appraisal is a foundation for many human resource decisions—such as salary increases, training, and dealing with poor performance—and stressed that appraisal purposes are closely tied to helping the organisation meet its strategic objectives. These studies confirm that PEPMIS in Dodoma is serving as a bridge that connects what employees do each day with what the council is trying to achieve overall.

4.1.3 PEPMIS Helps Employees Understand Strengths and Areas for Improvement (Mean = 4.18; SD = 0.59)

The third finding indicates that employees generally agree that PEPMIS helps them understand both what they are doing well and where they need to improve, with a mean of 4.18. While slightly lower than the first two items, this is still a strong positive rating, and the standard deviation suggests that most people share this opinion. Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses is essential for personal growth, better performance, and more targeted support from supervisors.

This result concurs with Abdikheir et al. (2023) in their study conducted in Wajir County Government, Kenya, which examined how performance appraisal feedback relates to employee performance. The researchers found that appraisal feedback, when used properly, is closely linked to better employee performance, indicating that such feedback helps workers see what they are doing right and what needs to change. Likewise, a study by Achara (2023) in Ghana on performance appraisal systems and teacher effectiveness showed that teacher appraisal can improve teaching and learning by boosting professionalism and diligence. The study noted that appraisal is used to check and support teacher performance, which naturally includes identifying strengths and development needs so teachers can improve classroom outcomes. These studies imply that, by helping staff in Dodoma see their strong points and improvement areas, PEPMIS is playing a similar developmental role and can support better quality public service.

4.1.4 PEPMIS Motivates Employees to Perform Better (Mean = 4.31; SD = 0.47)

The fourth result shows that employees agree that the appraisal system motivates them to perform better in their jobs, with a mean of 4.31 and a low standard deviation of 0.47. This means that, for many staff, PEPMIS is not just an administrative exercise; it actually encourages them to work harder, improve their output, and take their responsibilities more seriously. Motivation is vital in the public sector, where resources are often limited and service demands are high.

Evidence from a study on the performance management and appraisal system in Buldana Urban Co-operative Credit Society in India by Nihatkar and Gadve (2026) is consistent with this. The study found that, although formal appraisal mechanisms existed, their effectiveness for motivation depended on communication, feedback, training, and linking appraisal results with rewards and career development showing that well-designed systems can positively affect motivation when these elements are present (Nihatkar & Gadve, 2026). Another study on human resource management practices in Kenyan state-owned banks reported that performance management and reward management are among the practices used to improve organisational performance, suggesting that when performance management is well executed, it contributes to better employee motivation and results (Gatheru & Karanja, 2025). Impliedly, these findings support the view that PEPMIS, as experienced by employees in Dodoma, is acting as a motivational tool that can help lift performance levels in the public service when it is clearly explained and fairly applied.

4.1.5 PEPMIS Results are Used for Professional Development (Mean = 4.18; SD = 0.59)

Finally, the findings reveal that employees agree that the results of their PEPMIS appraisals are used for their professional development, with a mean of 4.18. This shows that staff believe appraisal outcomes are not simply filed away, but are connected in some way to training, skills development, or career growth. In a public service context, this is important because continuous development of staff improves the capacity of the organisation to deliver better and more efficient services.

In this regard, Yadav (2024) showed that employees' perceptions of performance appraisal include views on fairness, transparency, feedback effectiveness, alignment with organisational goals, motivation, and job satisfaction. The study highlighted that when appraisal is perceived as fair and linked to meaningful outcomes, employees see it as useful for their own growth and performance,

rather than just a control tool. Similarly, a study by Wanjiru and Odenyo (2024) on Eldoret Water and Sanitation Company in Kenya emphasised that performance appraisal practices are significant for management decision-making and policy formulation, which often involves identifying who needs training, who should be rewarded, and where staff development is required to sustain organisational success. By echoing these patterns, the Dodoma findings imply that PEPMIS is being used not only to judge performance but also to guide professional development pathways, which can strengthen skills, improve morale, and, in the long run, enhance the quality of public service delivery in Tanzania.

4.2 Content Analysis

This content analysis explores the effects of performance management appraisal system (PEPMIS) on public service in Dodoma City Council, based on responses from twelve (12) heads of department to the question “What are the effects of performance management appraisal system (PEPMIS) on public service in your department/organization?”

4.2.1 Methodology

The study used inductive content analysis whereby the short responses were coded into recurring categories such as “goal alignment, transparency, feedback, commitment etc.” These categories are treated as the main “effects” of PEPMIS as experienced by departmental heads. One respondent could contribute to multiple categories. This approach is consistent with recent qualitative work that systematically codes interview data to identify patterns in experience and perception (Navabinejad et al., 2024; Saadati et al., 2023).

4.2.2 Findings from the Content Analysis Based on Content Categories

Goal Setting, Alignment and Future Planning

The analysed findings from the interviewees suggested that one of effects of the performance management appraisal system (PEPMIS) on public service is enhancing goal setting, alignment and future planning in public service. This is evidenced by responses from five (5) heads of department who confirmed the matter. Specifically, Respondent 1 and 3 asserted that “PEPMIS helps in assessment and foreseen the future plan activities.” On the same issue, Respondent 2 revealed that “PEPMIS aligns organization goals with individual efforts.” Additionally, Respondent 7 said that “PEPMIS Helps to set department goals and objective.” The 8th respondent also said that “PEPMIS helps create specific and measurable” tasks and supports goal attainment through daily, weekly and monthly reports.

These statements imply that PEPMIS is perceived as a tool for translating organizational goals into individual and departmental objectives, structuring work into specific, measurable tasks as well as supporting forward planning through ongoing assessment.

The above findings concur with Anosisye and Nyoni (2024), who examined sustainability challenges in Tanzania’s public sector performance management and highlighted employee participation in goal setting and the implementation of goals as central components of an effective system. Similarly, Pandey (2024) argues that PMS enhance organizational efficacy when they systematically link individual efforts to broader organizational objectives (Pandey, 2024).

Transparency and Bias Reduction in Appraisal

Through the analysed interview data, the study found the enhanced transparency and bias reduction is among the effects of performance management appraisal systems in public service as confirmed by two (2) respondents namely Respondent 2 and 4. Categorically, Respondent 2 said that PEPMIS ensures employees to perform their duties “with fairness and in transparency way.” The assertion was supported by Respondent 4 who revealed that “PEPMIS increases transparency, the system put aside bias during assessment between an employee and supervisors.” In this light, PEPMIS is seen as standardising the appraisal process, providing a shared reference point that can reduce subjective or personalised assessments.

The above findings are supported by Kumari (2024) who noted that perceived fairness is central to whether performance appraisal systems are seen as effective in improving employee performance. Furthermore, Zinnia (2025) provided that newer work on AI-supported appraisal systems in India shows that one of the main promises of technology-enabled performance evaluation is increased objectivity and transparency, although it may introduce new ethical and trust issues.

Feedback, Monitoring and Performance Control

Feedback, Monitoring and Performance Control emerged to be content categories confirmed by four (4) respondents that PEPMIS has a role in providing regular feedback and continuous monitoring. Supporting the findings, Respondent 2 said that “PEPMIS provides regular feedback on all assigned tasks.” On the same vein, Respondent 5 added that “the system keeps employee updated in job performance by building commitment.” Furthermore, Respondent 8 illuminated that “daily, weekly and monthly reports help in tracking progress towards goals.” Finally, Respondent 9 explained that “PEPMIS help to control employee performance through day-to-day implementation of activities and tasks. It also helps to measure the overall performance.”

These comments from interviewees reveal that PEPMIS enables ongoing rather than once-a-year feedback, day-to-day tracking of performance and furthermore provides a more systematic performance control at departmental level. On top of the above, the findings concur with the study by Murthy (2024) who asserts that at Apollo Hospitals, structured feedback loops within the PMS are central to motivating staff and identifying areas for improvement. Additionally, Pathak (2024) similarly shows that in a steel manufacturing firm, performance reviews and bonus systems influence motivation and productivity by providing workers with information about their performance and future expectations.

Employee Commitment, Responsibility and Motivation

Among the highly noted content, the employee commitment, responsibility and motivation take the lead after the collected data through interviews. Out of twelve (12) respondents, seven (7) respondents confirmed that PEPMIS has resulted in increased employee commitment, responsibility and motivation to work, as revealed in the respondents’ statements. For example, Respondent 5 said that “PEPMIS keeps employee updated in job performance by building commitment.” Respondent 6 added that “PEPMIS helps every employee feel committed to accomplish his or her duties, tasks or activities.” On the same concern, Respondent 7 commented

that “PEPMIS is useful in building employee commitment and fostering self-orientation among employees.” Respondent 8 revealed that “the system makes employees feel responsible to their supervisor.” Respondent 11 also supported the idea that “PEPMIS involves all employees to respond to their duties.” Like other respondents on the issue of commitment, Respondent 12 categorically asserted that “PEPMIS helps in building commitment.” Finally, Respondent 3 concludes by saying that “every employee manages to perform the activities distributed through PEPMIS.”

Overall, PEPMIS is perceived as a tool that helps and strengthens psychological commitment to work, sense of responsibility and ownership of tasks and also follow-through on assigned duties. The above findings align with the study by Kumari (2024) that argues that when appraisal systems are perceived as fair, structured and supportive, they can increase employees’ willingness to improve and contribute to organizational goals. In nursing, a study by Ndlovu et al. (2024) noted that a well-managed performance management process can improve job satisfaction and patient outcomes, whereas poorly managed systems can demotivate staff.

Skill Gaps, Training Support and Capacity-Building

In this study, identifying skill gaps, training support and capacity-building were noted as effects of performance management appraisal system on public service. This was confirmed by two (2) interviewees namely Respondent 2 and 4. Respondent 2 said that “PEPMIS helps to identify skill gap that need to be addressed to improve both individual capabilities and overall organization performance.” While Respondent 4 complimented the previous comment by adding that “PEPMIS enhances capacity building trainings; the system enables supervisor to identify training gaps.”

In this light, PEPMIS is understood not only as an evaluative tool but as a diagnostic mechanism to inform capacity-building.

The above is consistent with Paterson et al. (2024) who emphasise that a national performance management system for TVET lecturers must integrate performance appraisal with continuing professional development to improve lecturer quality and national human resource development. Also, Ndlovu et al. (2024) highlight that an effective performance management process should improve the competencies of both managers and professional nurses, not just measure them.

Work Organisation, Task Distribution, Workload and Time Management

Two (2) respondents interviewed confirmed that PEPMIS has effects on public service through enhancing work organisation, task distribution, workload and time management. This means, the use of PEPMIS enhance efficiency at work. This is supported by the statement of Respondent 3 who clearly stated that “PEPMIS facilitate easy distribution of departmental activities and better time management.” In addition, Respondent 7 commented that “PEPMIS helps avoid work overloads.”

All of the above comments indicate that PEPMIS supports systematic allocation of tasks within departments. Also, the use of PEPMIS helps in avoiding the overloading tasks to certain staff and better time planning and tracking.

In line to the above findings, Eze and Ishiwe (2024) found in their study that performance management appraisal leads to structured allocation of departmental activities hence strengthen

effectiveness at work. Similarly, Pathak (2024) found that structured performance appraisal and incentive systems influence worker productivity and the efficient organisation of work in a manufacturing firm.

Promotion and Career Progression

The study found that PEPMIS has led to effective promotion and career progression decisions for public servants in Dodoma City Council. This content was confirmed by two respondents Respondent 9 and 10. Respondent 9 said that “PEPMIS helps to measure the overall performance that help to promote employees.” On the other way, Respondent 10 associate PEPMIS with expectations for promotion. Categorically, Respondent 10 asserts that “An employee has to achieve targets as seen from PEPMIS to be promoted.”

This implies that PEPMIS scores are used (or at least perceived to be used) as a key criterion for promotion in the council.

The above findings concurs with Boruett et al. (2021) who assert that performance appraisal is commonly positioned as a core HR mechanism for informing career growth and development decisions, including advancement pathways. In this sense, target-based scoring can operationalize merit expectations and provide a systematic basis for progression, which employees often interpret as a direct linkage between appraisal outcomes and promotion prospects.

Additionally, Oktaviani and Handayani (2025) illuminate that the strength of this linkage in practice is contingent on how appraisal results are institutionally interpreted and enacted within the organizational environment. Importantly, research indicates that promotion opportunities are shaped not only by appraisal scores but also by organizational culture, which mediates whether “outstanding” performance is credibly translated into advancement (Oktaviani & Handayani, 2025).

Overall, the content analysis shows that PEPMIS positively shapes public service in Dodoma City Council by clarifying and aligning individual and departmental goals with organizational priorities, while enhancing transparency and reducing bias in appraisal. The system facilitates regular feedback and performance monitoring, which in turn strengthens employee commitment, responsibility and participation in executing assigned duties. It also enables supervisors to identify skill gaps for targeted capacity-building, improves work organization through better task distribution, workload control and time management, and provides an objective basis for promotion and career progression by linking advancement to the achievement of agreed performance targets.

4.3 Results of the Pilot Study

A pilot test as a preliminary study was carried out to establish the reliability and validity of the data collection tools. The pilot test aims at establishing reliability and content validity of the data collection instruments (Teresi et al. (2021; Ruangsomboon et al., 2024). A total of 351 respondents took part in the pilot study being 10% of the sample size of 351 respondents. This was in line with the general rule of thumb and descriptive research design methodology employed in this research work.

4.3.1 Reliability Test

To ensure the reliability of the data collection instrument for the first objective, Cronbach’s Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the items measuring the Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS). Reliability refers to the degree to which a set of items consistently measures the intended construct. A Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.7 and above is considered acceptable for social science research (Ngirwa, 2020). The pilot study results indicated that the PMAS construct achieved a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.761, which exceeds the minimum acceptable threshold. This result confirms that the questionnaire items were internally consistent and reliable in measuring the effects of the Performance Management Appraisal System on public service performance.

Table 2: Construct Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Number of Items	Comment
Performance Management Appraisal System	0.761	1	Accepted

Source: Researcher (2026)

4.3.2 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. In this study, content validity was established to ensure that the questionnaire adequately captured the Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS) in relation to public service performance. The instrument was reviewed by experts in human resource management, public administration, and research methodology to assess the relevance and clarity of the items. Their feedback informed minor revisions, ensuring that the questionnaire items were clear, relevant, and aligned with the study objective.

Construct validity was assessed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The suitability of the data for factor analysis was examined using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity, as presented in Table 3. The KMO value of 0.782 exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.6, while Bartlett’s Test was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. These results confirm that the questionnaire items validly measured the Performance Management Appraisal System in relation to public service performance.

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity

Measure	Value
<i>Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy</i>	0.782
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	
Approx. Chi-Square	624.318
Degrees of Freedom (df)	120
Sig. (p-value)	0.000

Source: Researcher (2026)

4.3.3 Factor Analysis (Construct Validity)

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to assess construct validity and confirm that the study variables were empirically distinct and appropriately measured. The rotated component

matrix after Varimax rotation, as presented in Table 4, shows that all measurement items loaded strongly on their respective constructs with factor loadings exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating good construct representation (Hair et al., 2019). Items measuring the Performance Management Appraisal System namely goal setting, performance monitoring, and performance appraisal loaded highly on a single factor, confirming the unidimensionality of the construct. Similarly, items measuring public service performance loaded appropriately on their respective factor, validating the dependent variable as a latent construct. The absence of significant cross-loadings further confirms adequate construct validity, demonstrating that the questionnaire effectively measured both the independent and dependent variables and was suitable for assessing the influence of the Performance Management Appraisal System on public service performance.

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix (Factor Loadings)

Items	Performance Management Appraisal System
Goal Setting	0.812
Performance Monitoring	0.845
Performance Appraisal	0.798

Source: Researcher (2026)

4.4 Diagnostic Tests

In the descriptive statistics part, the study shows the mean and standard deviation of the dependent and explanatory variables, including the number of observations for each variable during the period under consideration. However, this section presents the results of the following diagnostic tests: Normality tests (Shapiro–Wilk, Kolmogorov–Smirnov), Homoscedasticity tests (Breusch–Pagan), Linearity test, Outlier analysis, linear regression results and Anova results.

4.4.1 Normality Test

Normality of residuals is an important assumption in regression analysis as it ensures the validity of statistical inference. In this study, the normality of residuals was assessed using the Shapiro–Wilk test and the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, as presented in Table 6. The Shapiro–Wilk test yielded a statistic of 0.978 with a p-value of 0.083, while the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced a statistic of 0.061 with a p-value of 0.200. Since the p-values for both tests exceed the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis of normal distribution was not rejected, indicating that the residuals were normally distributed and that the normality assumption was satisfied.

Table 6: Normality Test Results

Test	Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
Shapiro–Wilk	0.978	0.083
Kolmogorov–Smirnov	0.061	0.200

Source: Researcher (2026)

The graphical outputs further confirmed the normality of residuals. The Normal P–P plot (Figure 1) showed that the observed residuals closely followed the expected normal line, suggesting minimal deviation from normality. Overall, these graphical results, together with the Shapiro–Wilk and Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests, confirm that the regression residuals were approximately

normally distributed, satisfying the normality assumption required for multiple regression analysis in this study.

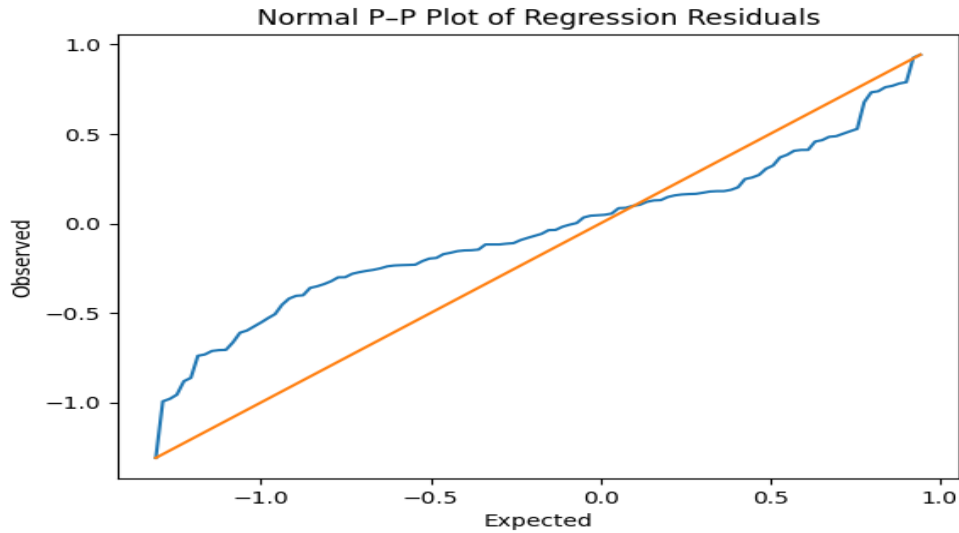


Figure 1. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Residuals

4.4.2 Homoscedasticity Test

Homoscedasticity refers to the assumption that the variance of residuals remains constant across all levels of predicted values (Cameron & Bagchi, 2021). In this study, the assumption was tested using the Breusch–Pagan test and a scatter plot of standardized residuals against predicted values. The results presented in Table 7 show a Breusch–Pagan chi-square value of 1.842 with a significance level of 0.174, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity could not be rejected, implying that the variance of residuals is constant and the assumption of homoscedasticity is satisfied in this study.

Table 7: Breusch–Pagan Test for Homoscedasticity

Test	Chi-Square	Sig. (p-value)
Breusch–Pagan	1.842	0.174

Source: Researcher (2026)

4.4.3 Regression Results

Table 8: Regression Results Summary

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.302	.098		4.215	.006
	Performance Management Appraisal System	.227	.037	.231	1.556	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Public Service

Source: Researcher (2026)

From Table 8, the model constant was 0.302 with a t-value of 4.215. The p-value for the constant was significant at 0.006. This indicates that Public Service is statistically significant in the context of the study. The result implies that, when all independent variables are held constant, the baseline level of Public Service is 0.302 units. The t-value for Performance Management Appraisal System was 1.556 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. Therefore, the study observed that Performance Management Appraisal System has a significant influence on Public Service. The study concluded that the appraisal system, as a component of organizational capacity, positively affects the effectiveness of Public Service in Dodoma City Council. Based on the results from Table 4.7, the following regression model was developed to explain the influence of Performance Management Appraisal System (X_1) on Public Service (Y):

$$Y = 0.30 + 0.23 X_1 \quad (1)$$

Where:

Y = Public Service

X_1 = Performance Management Appraisal System

The regression model in equation 1, illustrates the relationship between Public Service and the Performance Management Appraisal System, The model indicates that, holding other factors constant, a unit increase in Performance Management Appraisal System positively influences Public Service by a factor of 0.23. These results demonstrate that the Performance Management Appraisal System significantly enhances Public Service outcomes in Dodoma City Council when all other factors are held constant.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The findings from the descriptive analysis, content analysis and regression analysis collectively demonstrate that the Performance Management Appraisal System (PEPMIS) has a clear and statistically significant positive effect on public service performance in Dodoma City Council. Descriptively, employees reported high levels of agreement (overall mean ≈ 4.43 , SD ≈ 0.53) that PEPMIS clarifies performance targets, aligns individual tasks with organisational objectives, enhances understanding of strengths and weaknesses, motivates better performance, and supports professional development. The content analysis of heads of department reinforced these quantitative patterns by showing that PEPMIS is perceived to improve goal setting and alignment, increase transparency and reduce bias in appraisal, strengthen continuous feedback and performance monitoring, build employee commitment and responsibility, support identification of skill gaps and capacity-building, enhance work organisation and time management, and provide an objective basis for promotion and career progression. These perceptions are supported by the regression results, which show that the Performance Management Appraisal System is a statistically significant predictor of Public Service performance ($Y = 0.30 + 0.23X_1$), indicating that improvements in PEPMIS are associated with measurable gains in service effectiveness when other factors are held constant. Overall, the mixed methods evidence converges to show that PEPMIS is not merely a compliance tool but a substantive driver of improved performance, accountability and capacity within the public service in Dodoma City Council.

5.2 Recommendations

First, Dodoma City Council should consolidate and deepen the use of PEPMIS as a strategic tool for goal setting and alignment. This entails strengthening participatory target-setting processes at all levels so that departmental and individual targets are explicitly derived from council and national priorities.

Second, the Council should enhance the developmental and feedback functions of PEPMIS. Although staff already recognise that the system helps them understand strengths and areas for improvement, more structured and regular feedback sessions quarterly, rather than only annually would increase its motivational and learning value.

Third, it is recommended that Dodoma City Council further strengthen fairness, transparency and trust in the appraisal process. The Council should clearly communicate appraisal criteria, rating scales and decision rules to all employees, and establish a simple, well-publicised mechanism for lodging and resolving appraisal grievances.

Fourth, PEPMIS should be more deliberately integrated with human resource management functions such as training, capacity-building, promotion and career progression. Since both quantitative and qualitative findings show that staff believe appraisal results influence professional development and promotion, the Council should formalise these linkages in HR policies and guidelines.

Fifth, the Council should continue to invest in strengthening the operational efficiency, usability and support systems surrounding PEPMIS. Respondents highlighted that PEPMIS improves work organisation, task distribution, workload management and time use; to sustain these benefits, regular user training and refresher sessions should be provided, especially when system upgrades occur or new staff join.

Finally, policymakers and researchers should consider extending and refining this work beyond Dodoma City Council. Given the statistically significant and practically meaningful influence of PEPMIS on public service performance found in this study, the central government and other local authorities in Tanzania could use Dodoma's experience as a reference point for scaling or adapting similar practices.

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