

**POLITICISATION OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS IN
THE NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**



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DECLARATION

I, Boitshwarelo Nancy Mangonyane, declare that work contained in this research is my own, and that it has never been submitted for a qualification at any institution, whether partly or in full and that all sources utilised have been cited.

B. N. Mangonyane (Mrs)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the weaknesses in performance appraisals and to determine whether it is politicised in the North West Department of Health and Social Development. If used effectively, performance appraisals may improve employee productivity and efficiency as well as motivation and performance. However, if performance appraisal is perceived as unfair and political, it can diminish rather than enhance employee attitudes and performance.

The sample consisted of one hundred and ten (110) respondents that completed an already existing standard questionnaire aimed at determining politicisation in performance appraisals. Some of the results of the study showed that respondents to a large extent believed that performance appraisals are highly politicised. Among others, it is recommended that managers should consider separating assessment for development and assessment for rewards.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NWDOH & Soc Dev	-	North West Department of Health & Social Development
PA	-	Performance Appraisal
PM	-	Performance Management
PMDS	-	Performance Management Development System
PERSAL	-	Personnel Salary System

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Many organisations are aware of the role employees can play as a source of competitive advantage. As a consequence, organisations implement human resource management (HRM) policies and practices that seek to promote employee productivity and efficiency (Brown & Benson, 2005: 99). One of these practices is performance appraisal (PA). If used effectively, performance appraisals (PAs) may improve employee productivity and efficiency as well as motivation and performance. However, if PAs are perceived as unfair, they can diminish rather than enhance employee attitudes and performance. Specifically, perceptions of procedural unfairness in effecting PA can adversely affect employees' organisational commitment, job satisfaction, trust in management, and performance, as well as their work-related stress, organisational citizenship behaviour, theft and inclination to litigate against their employer (Kay, Meyer, & French, 1965 and Latham & Mann, 2006, Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter & Ng, 2001, Judge & Colquitt, 2004, Greenberg, 2001, Werner & Bolino, 1997 *cited by* Heslin & Vande Walle, 2009: 1-2).

If employees believe that the appraisal was undertaken lightly or haphazardly, they may take the process less seriously than they should. Possible legal ramifications exist whenever management is not consistent in its performance appraisal (PA) procedures. A loss of morale or employee productivity may also result from poorly administered PAs (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2006: 266). It is a well known axiom that politics often plays a dominant role in important organisational decisions and actions. Although politics is associated with many events in organisational life, the political nature of these events is either too elusive or too cleverly concealed to be discerned easily (Gioia & Longenecker, 1994: 47-48).

1.2 Background to the study

The notion that people at work should be assessed is eminently sensible. This procedure is potentially of enormous benefit to both the individual and the organisation, in that the feedback provides people a basis to set goals to both evaluate and improve their performance. Why then are both the provider and recipient of this service frequently dissatisfied with the

outcome (Latham, 2007, Greenberg, 1986, 2000 *cited by* Latham, Budworth, Yanar and Whyte, 2008: 220)? Organisational politics is simply a fact of life. For years, personal experiences, hunches, and anecdotal evidence have supported a general belief that behaviour in and of organisations is often political in nature. But it is fair to say that there has been a considerable lack of convergence among organisational scientists concerning exactly what constitutes political behaviour. Some have defined organisational politics in terms of the behaviour of interest group to use power to influence decision making. Others have focused on the self-serving and organisationally non-sanctioned nature of individual behaviour in organisations. Others have characterized organisational politics as a social influence process with potentially functional or dysfunctional organisational consequences or simply the management of influence. Perhaps it is these fragmentations and the differing perspectives that have prompted some scholars to state that “... the meaning of organisational politics remains largely unknown, in spite of the importance of political behaviour to organisational functioning” (Burns, 1961, Gandz & Murray, 1980, Mayes & Allen, 1977, Porter, 1976, and Schein, 1977, Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984 *cited by* Ferris, Russ and Fandt, 1989: 143 – 145).

“Historically, high-performing employees could expect to receive bigger salary increases than their lower-performing peers, especially when annual merit increases were averaging higher as a result of increasing inflation, but today, it has become increasingly more difficult to differentiate between the salaries of individual employees based on high or low performance” (Grigoriadis & Bussin, 2005: 45). This was also uncovered during interviews conducted by Longenecker, Sims, and Gioia (1987 *cited by* Curtis, Harvey and Ravden, 2005: 42), when they uncovered that supervisors are aware of their rating errors and admit to biasing results for political purpose.

PAs represents a central function of HRM. Due to the usefulness of PAs as a managerial decision tool, it depends partly on whether or not the PA system is able to provide accurate data on employee performance, as rating accuracy is a critical aspect of the appraisal process. Although past studies tended to focus on cognitive models for explaining the quality of appraisals, the call for greater emphasis on social and contextual factors in PA research has led more researchers in recent years to consider affective, motivational and political factors. It was assumed that rating errors were made unconsciously, thus researchers concentrated on

developing rating instruments and training that would help supervisors avoid these unconscious errors. Of particular interest is the notion that often, it is not the ability but the motivation of the rater that determines the accuracy of a formal appraisal. Raters may be able yet not want to provide accurate appraisals because it is not in their best interest to do so (Lefkowitz, 2000, Arvey & Murphy, 1998, Cleveland and Murphy, 1992 *cited by* Poon, 2004: 322- 323). Again, managers with different cultural backgrounds appear to view subordinate performance differently (Hempel, 2001: 204).

Many organisations either ignore the existence of politics in the appraisal process or assume that its impact can be minimized if they refine their appraisal instruments. Executives admit that, in appraising others, they often intentionally avoid meeting the goal of accuracy in favour of achieving goals that have more to do with exercising discretion and maintaining departmental effectiveness, that is, they view the appraisal process as a way of achieving desired results, and this priority supersedes their concern for accuracy or playing by the rules. Ironically, these same executives lament that the appraisals they receive, often do not accurately represent their abilities and performance (Gioia & Longenecker, 1994: 48).

Almost every executive has dreaded performance appraisal at some time or the other. They hate to give them and they hate to receive them. Yet like them or not, every executive recognises that appraisals are a fact of organisational life. Because of the important role appraisals play in individual careers and corporate performance, a great deal of attention has been given to trying to understand the process. More recently a flurry of activity has centred on the arcane mental processes of the manager who gives appraisal. Some effort has also been directed toward demonstrating that appraisal is, in addition to everything else, a highly emotional process. When emotional variability gets dragged into the process, any hope of obtaining objectivity and accuracy in appraisal waltzes right out the office door. Taken together, all these approaches apparently lead to the depressing conclusion that accuracy in appraisals might be an unattainable objective (Longenecker, *et al.*, 1987: 183).

Certain organisational processes lend themselves to being viewed as more political than others. They are processes in which managerial discretion is high and which relate to success or failure at work, relationships with superiors, and inter-unit lateral relations. Insofar as an individual, or others positively regarded, may not succeed to the level expected, it is

convenient to believe the decisions were not rational and hence were political. To the extent that processes such as work appraisals, promotions, or transfers rest in fact on ill-defined, poorly known, or ambiguous criteria, such perceptions will be exacerbated (Gandz & Murray, 1980: 248).

According to Analoui (2007: 202-203), many factors go into the performance evaluation process, such as why performance evaluation is necessary, who should benefit from it, what type of evaluation should be used, and what problems might be encountered. Essentially an effective appraisal system not only clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the individual employee, it also enables support and feedback to be given, contributes to the training needs, and professional and personal development of the individual concerned. Again, most researchers have argued that, "... PA in practice, is more of an organisational curse than a panacea". If this is the reality of PA, then how has this confusion happened and what is needed in order to effectively use this vital function of HRM to its full potential?

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the weaknesses in performance appraisals in the North West Department of Health and Social Development and also to determine whether performance appraisals is being politicised.

1.4 Problem statement

The idea that executives might deliberately distort and manipulate appraisals for political purposes seems unspeakable. Yet there is extensive evidence to indicate that, behind a mask of objectivity and rationality, executives engage in such manipulation in an intentional and systematic manner (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 183).

Political behaviours are more likely to occur in work environments characterized by high ambiguity, and the ambiguous nature of many PA situations provides fertile ground for the emergence of politics (Poon, 2004: 323). As mentioned above, perceptions of procedural unfairness through politicizing the process adversely affect employees' organisational commitment, job satisfaction, trust in management, performance, work-related stress, theft and inclination to litigate against the employer. The study therefore seeks to explore the role

of performance appraisals in the development and growth of employees in this environment (Heslin & Vande Walle, 2009: 2).

1.5 Research question

What is the nature and extent of politicisation of PA in the Department of Health and Social Development?

1.6 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

- Investigate weaknesses in the performance appraisals process in the North West Department of Health and Social Development;
- Investigate whether performance appraisals are politicised in the North West Department of Health and Social Development; and
- Make recommendations on how politicisation of performance appraisals can be minimised or eliminated in the North West Department of Health and Social Development.

1.7 Justification for the study

PA is used to measure the actual performance of employees in order to develop and motivate them. However, PA may also be used by many raters as a political process for rewarding and punishing subordinates (Longenecker, *et al.*, 1987 cited by Levy & Williams, 2004: 893). It is important to continue to highlight this matter until a solution is found to correct this anomaly.

1.8 Significance of the study

The results of the study would be of value to both the management and the entire staff of the department. In particular, the results of this study would assist human resources officials who work directly with the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) in the department.

1.9 Scope of the study

This study determines the weaknesses and the extent of politicisation of performance appraisals in the North West Department of Health and Social Development. Particular focus will be on employees on salary levels three to twelve at the provincial head office.

1.10 Definition of key concepts

1.10.1 Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is a formal and systematic process by means of which the job-relevant strengths and weaknesses of employees are identified, observed, measured, recorded and developed (Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk and Schenk, 2003: 372).

1.10.2 Performance management

Performance management is a much wider concept than PA and comprises a set of techniques used by a manager to plan, direct and improve the performance of subordinates in line with achieving the overall objectives of the organisation (Fay, 1990 *cited by* Spangenberg, 1994: 14).

1.10.3 Politics

Politics in this study refers to deliberate attempts by individuals to enhance or protect their self-interest when conflicting courses of action are possible. A political action therefore represents a source of bias or inaccuracy in employee appraisal (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 184).

1.10.4 Appraisal politics

Appraisal politics in this study is defined as a superior's deliberate manipulations of employee ratings to enhance or protect self or department's interest (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987 *cited by* Dhiman & Singh, 2007: 78).

1.11 Delimitations of the study

Due to time constraints, this study was only conducted in the provincial office of the department of Health & Social Development. It would be interesting to know how the districts would respond or what their perception would be on this matter.

1.12 Overview of the study

The chapters in this study are as follows:

CHAPTER 1:	Introduction
CHAPTER 2:	Literature review – Performance Appraisal
CHAPTER 3:	Literature review – Government and Politicisation
CHAPTER 4:	Research Methodology
CHAPTER 5:	Research Results and Analysis
CHAPTER 6:	Conclusions & Recommendations

1.13 Summary

This chapter has introduced the background to the study of performance appraisals as well as politicisation in general. It has dealt with the aim of the study and the problem statement, research questions, objectives, justification, significance and the scope, delimitations and overview of the study. The following chapter reviews literature on performance appraisals.

CHAPTER 2 - PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the following issues: Firstly, it represents a conceptual understanding of performance appraisal (PA), the purpose and objectives, the performance appraisal process and the difference between performance appraisal and performance management. Finally, the importance of PA and the resistance and challenges of PAs are outlined and discussed.

2.2 What is performance appraisal?

Performance appraisal (PA) is a formal, structured system for measuring, evaluating, and influencing an employee's job-related attributes, behaviours, and outcomes. Its focus is on discovering how productive the employee is and whether he or she can perform as effectively or more effectively in the future (Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum, 2002: 360). PA is also defined as a formal and systematic process by means of which the job-relevant strengths and weaknesses of employees are identified, observed, measured, recorded and developed. Its ultimate purpose is to communicate personal goals, motivate good performance, provide constructive feedback, and set the stage for an effective development plan. PA is often referred to as performance measurement, performance evaluation, merit rating, staff assessment, and performance reviews, among others (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2003: 372 & 374).

It is generally conducted annually, with follow-ups as needed. This annual check-up gives a manager an opportunity to spot performance problems before they become serious and to encourage the continuation of good work. An appraisal also helps the employee and manager to focus on goals and performance expectations that affect salary, merit increases, and promotions. Appraisal sessions are both a confirmation and a formalisation of the ongoing feedback that should be part of every manager-subordinate relationship (Leucke, 2006: 78 - 79). In the department, all managers are expected to have a formal performance review with their employees at least twice a year, and a formal performance feedback session once every quarter (Policy on performance management and development – North West Department of Health 2003). The manager's fundamental responsibility is to get results through people, a systematic approach to assessing the human asset at one's disposal is a must. In addition to

providing insights into employee performance. Leucke (2006: 79) further believe that appraisal sessions give the manager opportunities to accomplish other objectives such as to:

- Communicate about goals with their direct reports;
- Increase productivity by providing timely feedback;
- Help the organisation make valid decisions about pay, development, and promotions; and
- Protect the organisation against lawsuits by employees who have been terminated, demoted, or denied a merit increase.

PA has increasingly become part of a more strategic approach to integrating HR activities and business policies and is now a generic term covering a variety of activities through which organisations seek to assess employees and develop their competence, enhance performance and distribute rewards (Fletcher, 2001 *cited by* Kuvaas, 2007: 378). Despite the intensive awareness of the difficulties involved with appraisal, surveys show that managers of both small and large organisations are unwilling to abandon it because they regard it as an important facet in assessing the abilities and skills of workers (Rademan and Vos, 2001).

In many organisations - but not all - appraisal results are used, either directly or indirectly, to help determine reward outcomes, that is, appraisal results are used to identify better performing employees who should get the majority of available merit pay increases, bonuses, and promotions. By the same token, appraisal results are used to identify poorer performers who may require some form of counselling, or in extreme cases, demotion, dismissal or decreases in pay (www.performance-appraisal.com/intro.htm).

2.3 The purpose and objective of performance appraisals

Monyatsi, Steyn and Kamper (2006: 427) are of the view that although there are many similarities in the purposes of appraisals across organisations, the nature of the organisation dictates the type of system of appraisal to be followed. The kind of evaluation/appraisal systems used by institutions often differs according to the purpose for which the evaluation/appraisal is intended.

According to Swanepoel *et al.* (2003: 372 – 373), the overall purpose of appraisal is to provide information about work performance. Jawahaar (2006: 14) sees the purpose of formal

PAs as the provision of clear, performance-based feedback to employees. This information can serve a variety of purposes, which generally can be categorised under two main headings of administrative and developmental purposes, namely:

2.3.1 Administrative purpose

The administrative purpose concern the use of performance data as bases for personnel decision making, including:

- Human resource planning, for example compiling skills inventories, obtaining information regarding new positions to be created, and developing succession plans;
- Reward decisions, including salary and wage increases (or withholding them), merit bonuses;
- Placement decisions such as promotions, transfers, dismissals and retrenchments; and
- Personnel research, for example, validates selection procedures by using appraisals as criteria or evaluates the effectiveness of training programmes.

In the administrative model, the essence of an individual development model for institutional quality assurance lies in the assumption that as an adjunct of individuals improving themselves, greater effectiveness will be achieved for the institution.

2.3.2 Developmental purpose

Developmental PA is mainly focused on giving employees direction for future performance. Such feedback recognises strengths and weaknesses in past performances and determines what direction employees should take to improve. It is essentially a formative, developmental, negotiated, continuous and systematic process intended to help individuals with their professional development and career planning.

The model focuses on developmental functions on the individual as well as the organisational level. Appraisals can serve individual development purposes by:

- Providing employees with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses and on how to improve future performance;
- Aiding career planning and development; and
- Providing inputs for personal remedial interventions.

Organisational development purposes may include:

- Facilitating organisational diagnosis and development by specifying performance levels and suggesting overall training needs (Cascio, 1991 *cited by* Quinn and McKellar, 2002: 74);
- Providing essential information for affirmative action programmes, job redesign efforts, multi-skilling programmes; and
- Promoting effective communication within the organisation through ongoing interaction between superiors and subordinates.

Appraisals remain a sensitive issue, as in considering whether appraisal ‘is a carrot or the stick’. It can easily be interpreted as the latter of the two, with unfortunate consequences. In a developmental model, appraisal will be a genuine dialogic process between appraiser and appraisee involving an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality, while an accountability or administrative model, would on the other hand, foster defensiveness and an attempt to hide weaknesses. Where the developmental model would recognise strengths and identify areas where the individual may be able to improve, an accountability model might focus on the incompetency and assessment of performance. Where a developmental model of appraisal would be formative, continuous and confidential to participants, in an accountability model appraisal would be summative, occasional, and accessible to higher authorities (Quinn & McKellar, 2002: 74).

PAs are designed to cope with the problem of poor employee performance, therefore they should be designed to develop better employees. The results of appraisals influence decisions about the training and development of employees, although not all performance deficiencies may be overcome through training and development (Grobler *et al.*, 2006: 266).

The purpose of PA according to Analoui (2007: 205) may include some or all of the following functions which are to:

- Encourage regular, structured dialogue between employee and line manager, enabling the provision of feedback to the employee being appraised on all aspects of their role;
- Enable past and current performance to be evaluated, with a view to identifying the scope for improvement and how this may be achieved;
- Identify training and personal or professional development needs;

- Provide for the identification of promotion and secondment; and
- Determine performance-based remuneration.

It has been argued that this process cannot be performed effectively unless the line manager or person providing feedback has the interpersonal interviewing skills to provide that feedback to people being appraised. This has been defined as the “Bradford Approach”, which places a high priority on appraisal skills development (Randell, 1994 *cited by* Prowse and Prowse, 2009: 70). This approach identifies the linkages between involving, developing, rewarding and valuing people at work.

2.3.3 Employee measurement and reward

Each employee is unique in the way that they perform. What works for one may not work for others. Performance reviews clearly define areas in which the employee excels and areas where they are weaker. By facilitating performance reviews, managers are able to measure individual contributions relevant to each employee's role. Whether the outcome indicates under performance or over performance by the employee, this is vital information to a manager in order to base promotions, salary increases and further company investment in a particular employee.

2.3.4 Training and career development

Measuring employee's strengths and weaknesses makes further training and career development possible and uniquely refined. It is in the organisation's best interests to ensure ongoing training and career development of each of their members of staff. Not only do performance reviews explain areas where training may be required but they too explain unique motivator's specific to each employee. Each individual is motivated by different resources. For some it is more money, others a display of company investment in their human resources and others are motivated by things completely unrelated to the company itself. Tapping into distinctive ways of keeping employees motivated ensures optimum productivity and empowers each employee. It is for this reason that performance reviews are of such vital importance.

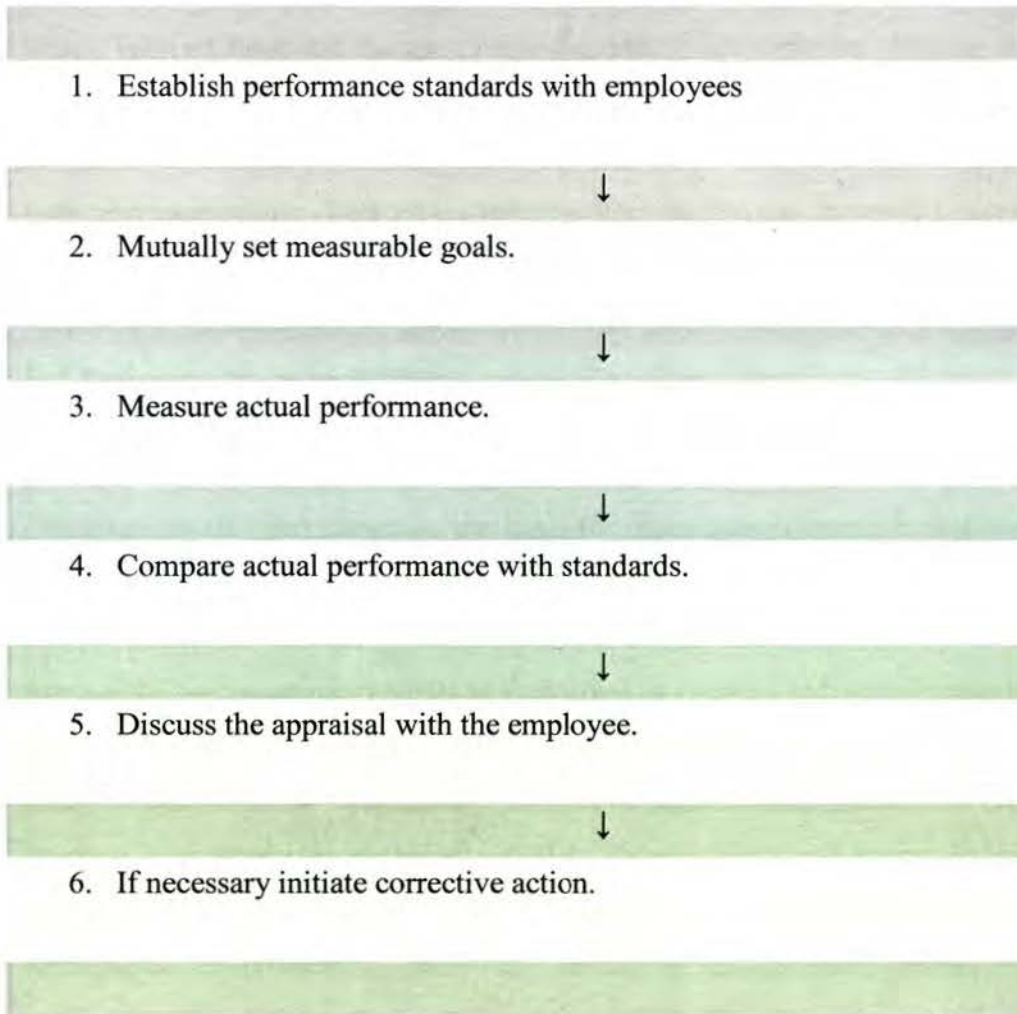
2.3.5 Organisational forecasting and decision making

By facilitating performance reviews, businesses too are empowered. By understanding each individual that makes up a team, employers are able to plan and forecast career paths on a personal basis. By reviewing key performance areas of each employee, an employers are easily able to map a career growth plan for their employees and for the company as a whole. In order to make informed decisions pertaining to promotions and transfers, managers have a vested interest in ensuring the ongoing review of the staff that makes up the organisation. This information is key to managers as they have specific strategies in place that map out the overall success of an organisation based on individual performance and dedication.

2.4 Performance appraisal process

The appraisal process determines how set objectives are achieved in accordance with specific standards. As such it begins with the establishment of clear, sound objectives and measurable performance standards. These evolve from the organisation's strategic direction and, more specifically, the job analysis and the job description. The expectations a manager has in terms of work performance from the employees must be clear and coherent enough so that they can be communicated, and mutually agreed and acted upon in accordance with the established standards. Too often, many jobs have vague and unclear performance standards, as such the employees have to guess what is expected of them. Worse still, the performance standards are often set in isolation from employees and this creates alienation and a lack of identification on their part. It is vital therefore to create a two-way channel of information between the managers and the employees regarding performance standards and expectations as indicated in figure 2.1 (Analoui, 2007: 211-212).

Figure 2.1 Appraisal process



Source (Analoui, 2007: 212)

The appraisal process involves various stakeholders – assessors, assessees, reviewers, human resource department and top management. These stakeholders pursue different goals from appraisal. While the assessee might be interested in higher ratings, the assessors might be interested in rewarding only those subordinates who are close to them (Dhiman & Singh, 2007: 77).

The human inclination to judge can create serious motivational, ethical and legal problems in the workplace. Without a structured appraisal system, there is little chance of ensuring that the judgement made will be lawful, fair, defensible and accurate. There are many reputable sources - researchers, management commentators, psychometricians - who have expressed doubts about the validity and reliability of the PA process. Some have even suggested that the

process is so inherently flawed that it may be impossible to perfect it. At the other extreme, there are many strong advocates of PA. Between these two extremes lie various schools of belief. While all endorse the use of PA, there are many different opinions on how and when to apply it. There are those, for instance, who believe that PA has many important employee development uses, but scorn any attempt to link the process to reward outcomes - such as pay rises and promotions. This group believes that the linkage to reward outcomes reduces or eliminates the developmental value of appraisals. Rather than an opportunity for constructive review and encouragement, the reward-linked process is perceived as judgmental, punitive and harrowing (www.performance-appraisal.com/intro.htm).

The notion of PA has however, become an almost universally accepted fact of life in most organisations. It often serves as the basis for other human resource systems, such as salary management, career development, and selection processes. Because of all of these uses of the PA process, it is increasingly important that leaders more than ever need to improve their managerial and supervisory skills in such areas as creating individual performance standards, getting employee commitment to performance standards, and conducting interim and end of year PA meetings. It is necessary to have a standardised process of implementing PAs because it ensures that each individual is judged fairly and keeps discrimination out of promotions and compensation decisions. It also avoids legal challenges that could result from termination or promotion. Moreover, having a standardised process ensures that job performance expectations are consistent throughout. This consistency will also improve staff morale, and this is a key benefit (www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data).

2.4.1 The importance of performance appraisals

As mentioned above, PA is important to every individual employee's career as well as the life of every organisation. It gives a manager an opportunity to spot performance problems before they become serious and to encourage the continuation of good work. An appraisal also helps the employee and manager to focus on goals and performance expectations that affect salary, merit increases, and promotions. It may also assist managers in developing employees and to assist individual employee's decisions regarding career choices and the subsequent direction of individual time and effort. Additionally, PAs may increase employee commitment and satisfaction, due to improvements and organisational communication. PAs are further used to motivate, direct, and develop subordinates and to maximise access to important resources in

the organisation (Wiese & Buckley, 1998: 233 – 234), and to encourage and guide improved employee performance (Latham & Wexley, 1994 *cited by* Heslin & VandeWalle, 2009: 1).

Performance appraisal benefits to the employer as cited by Analoui (2007: 204) include the fact that:

- Individual differences make a difference to company performance;
- Documentation of performance may be needed for legal defence;
- Appraisal provides a basis for bonus or merit system;
- Appraisal dimensions and standards help implement strategic goals and clarify performance expectations; and
- Appraisal criteria can include teamwork.

These benefits will be difficult to achieve if the members of the organisations do not use the appraisal process in an effective fashion (which appears to be the case all too often when appraisals are applied to managerial personnel). A number of studies suggest that managers regularly find the formal appraisal process to be frustrating, political and a less than meaningful experience, which does not bode well for management development (Longenecker, 1997: 212).

2.4.2 Performance appraisals and productivity

PA is a fundamental requirement for improving the productivity of an organisation's human resources because it is through appraisal, that each individual's productivity is evaluated. It serves as a basis for counselling and developing an individual to maintain or increase productivity (Letsoalo, 2007: 42). Attempts to reach company goals can be realised through the increase of productivity. Higher productivity will increase efficiency in company's operations, while the level of productivity itself is highly influenced by the performance or productivity of the employees. One of the important factors affecting employee productivity is motivation. Work motivation can generate enthusiasm and the drive to work (Prasetya and Masanori, 2010: 84).

According to Francois (2000) and Moynihan (2007) (*cited by* Curtis *et al.*, 2005: 43), to increase productivity, many organisations are now turning to pay-for-performance systems to

motivate employees. However, the issue of whether performance-related pay really improves efficiency and productivity is highly contested. Two opposing views exist both in the private and public sectors whereby it is argued that performance related pay raises individual performance if it is correctly administered, and that it harms individual performance in the case of interesting tasks. Tasks are considered interesting if they are perceived to be challenging, enjoyable and/or purposeful. The conclusion was that, task type is an important moderator of the effect of pay for performance on actual performance (Weibel, Rost and Osterloh, 2009: 389-390).

2.4.3 Effective performance appraisal systems

Effective performance appraisals systems are systems that facilitate employee evaluation, guidance, development and motivation. Employee evaluation focuses on assessing the extent to which employees contribute to organisational success and it also provides a basis for assessing and rewarding employee's value to the organisation. Employee guidance and development refer to the extent to which the appraisal system is successful in highlighting opportunities for employee's growth and development. Finally, employee motivation is the extent to which the appraisal system helps to motivates and drives the employee's behaviour and performance towards the organisational desired goals (Abdullah, Che Rose, Salleh and Kumar, 2007: 159).

According to Migiro and Taderera (2011: 3766), appraisal systems possess certain definitive useful functional and strategic information and results for the organisation, its managers and its employees. However, development of an effective appraisal system is not an easy chore as effectiveness occurs when the appraisal interactions are non-controlling and non-defensive, but are supportive, educative and yet confidential. In an effective organisation, work is planned in advance. This includes setting performance expectations and goals for individuals in order to channel efforts towards achieving organisational objectives. Involving employees in the planning process is essential to their understanding of the goals of the organisation, what needs to be done, why it needs to be done, and expectations for accomplishing goals (www.doi.gov/hrm/guidance).

The involvement of employees in the organisational processes is extremely important in any organisation, and it is vital that management carry out appraisals in order to develop their

teams. The management of appraisals is the most important factor to be considered, as the individual manager giving the appraisal has the most direct effect on the delivery and outcome of the appraisal interview and motivational usefulness. There are political and control elements that disrupt and corrupt appraisals, damaging the employees' relationship with management and de-motivating the team. Bratton and Gold (2003 *cited by* Analoui, 2007: 209) argue that, "basing feedback and development on managerial agendas is an unjust treatment of human resources. Careers have been ruined, self esteem lost and productivity degraded because of the political use of the appraisals". Managers use appraisals as controlling meetings, listing faults committed over the year, all too readily forgetting the praise element, using the threat of demotion as a manipulative tool to achieve their own results. There is a vital difference, often overlooked by lower management, between a disciplinary interview and appraisal interview, but this blurring of boundaries has made the appraisal system implemented today a dreaded task of both the manager and the employee. The benefits of a good appraisal system are becoming increasingly crucial in the new economy.

There are three basic functions of an effective performance appraisal, including to:

- Provide adequate feedback to staff members on their performance;
- Serve as an opportunity to communicate face to face modifications or changes to existing performance objectives; and
- Provide data to administrators so that they can evaluate a staff member and judge future job assignments and compensation (www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data).

While it should be standard policy, not every company endeavours to reward proficient employees for their added efforts. PAs are a vital facet of any organisation and encourage employee loyalty as well as growth. Nothing is more empowering for an employee than to receive constructive feedback pertaining to the employee's individual performance.

If an organisation is going to rely heavily on the use of formal PAs as a vehicle to foster managerial development (which many do) they had better employ an effective appraisal system. Formal appraisals have been found, according to Longenecker (1997: 212), to be a potentially effective device for:

- Planning and goal setting;

- Performance feedback and coaching;
- Development, counselling and planning; and
- Performance to compensation and promotion decisions.

2.4.4 Outcomes of effective performance appraisal

Common outcomes of an effective PA process are employees' learning about themselves, employees' knowledge about how they are doing, and employees' learning about management values. According to Stephan and Dorfman (1989 *cited by* Ishaq, Iqbal and Zaheer, 2009: 480) outcomes of effective PA are improvement in the accuracy of employee performance and establishing relationship between performance on tasks and a clear potential for reward. Lochan and Tell (1988 *cited by* Migiro and Taderera, 2011: 3767) are of the view that an effective PA system should be based on definite written policies, procedures and instructions for its use. General information about the system should be given to all employees through a circular or separate memorandum. All factors used to evaluate performance must flow from the jobs that are being appraised and not on traits or personality characteristics.

To meet current and future business needs, each employee needs to be assisted to excel. All employees must be better today than they were yesterday and better tomorrow than they are today. Management must help people align personal goals with organisational goals, to help people take personal pride in their output and understand how that output contributes to the total organisation's performance (Harrington, 2000: 36).

The success of appraisal schemes depends to a large extent on the way in which they are managed, due to a number of aspects which need to be effectively incorporated. These include consistency of application, objectivity of the process, valuing the process as much as the outcome, recognising that appraisal involves particular skills, allowing the process to be driven by the appraisee's needs, maintaining a balance between confidentiality and sharing, and evaluating and reviewing effectively. It seems that as part of any PA system, there also needs to be on-going training during which the nature of the appraisal relationship especially in terms of the roles and responsibilities of both partners is examined and agreed upon (Quinn & McKellar, 2002: 73&80).

2.4.5 Detriments to effectiveness of performance appraisal

Literature has uncovered that most of the following aspects can cause harm to the effectiveness of PAs: exemptions to the highly visible employees, conduct of PA to punish the low performers, rewards on non-performance, doubts in the minds of performers about appraisal's after effects, organisation's politics that leads to disturb performance of targeted employee, use of fundamentally flawed appraisals, focus on encouraging individual, which automatically discourages teamwork/collaboration, inconsistencies in setting and applying appraisal criteria, focus on extremes (exceptionally good or poor performance), appraisal's focus on the achievement of short-term goals, support to autocrat supervisors, subjectivity of appraisal results and creation of emotional anguish in employees (Segal, 2000 *cited by* Ishaq, *et al.*, 2009: 480), use of vague qualities and irrelevant measurement criteria, use of useless checklists for evaluation, monologues instead of dialogues in feedback sessions, reluctance of appraisers to offer feedback, supervisors' misguidance to appraiser, inaccuracies at supervisor/organisation's end.

Appraisals take place in an organisational environment that is anything but completely rational, straightforward, or dispassionate. In this environment, accuracy does not seem to matter to managers so much as discretion, effectiveness or more importantly, survival. Any discussion of PA must recognize that organisations are political entities and that few, if any, important decisions are made without key parties acting to protect their own interests (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 183 – 186).

Most employers aspire to use PA and review as a "strategic lever" over not only individual performance, but also the performance of the business as a whole. This assumes that managers have the ability and motivation to make performance review work, by translating strategic goals into operational practice. Ideally, they should use the appraisal to help the employee see how their contribution adds value to the business as a whole. Too often, however, they are rushed discussions where performance ratings are handed out, where petty lapses in performance are picked upon, or where performance-related pay is awarded.

In addition, the report details how performance review is becoming an over-burdened management tool, with line managers additionally expected to identify staff training needs, provide career counselling, spot high flyers of the future and manage poor performers. While

each of these is a legitimate part of managing, the report argues that, in seeking to do many things at once, it is hardly surprising to find that many appraisal schemes fail to deliver any of them effectively.

Many performance review systems were conceived when organisations were more hierarchical, and despite modification still drive pay and promotion decisions. This has questionable relevance in modern, flatter organisations, where career progress is limited and rewards may be more flexible. Systems now need to be designed to deliver in the context of the individual organisation, for which text book models may not exist, and remain adaptable to shifts in business strategy and structure. Transforming performance review "from a beast of burden into a thoroughbred" starts with the business strategy, followed by clarity about the roles, skills and behaviours required to deliver it (Strebler, Robinson and Bevan, 2000).

2.4.6 Disempowering performance appraisals

The thing about performance appraisals is that they exist: there is no alternative. All employees are constantly being appraised by everyone with whom they come into contact and even by those with whom they have no contact. This appraisal may consist of nothing but rumours, ignorant opinions, hearsay evidence, misinformation, prejudice, and even outright character assassination, or of friends shielding one another in order to build up their empires and inflate their egos. Yet such appraisals are real and have force. The choice is not whether a department has PA or not, or whether an individual is subject to appraisal or not, it is about what kind of appraisals there will be. PAs are generally feared and with good reasons. Bad appraisals have destroyed lives. Fear disempowers people. The way to disempower appraisals is to put them in the hands of the subject's enemy, character assassination, prejudice and career sabotage are simply given a scientific veneer. Successful PAs will be those that have been disempowered by the subjects' having had a hand in their design and a say in their application and effect (Ruth, 2001: 199-200).

2.5 Performance appraisal versus performance management

PA has many definitions. It is also referred to as a process within the overall performance management (PM) process (Dowling *et al.*, 1999 *cited by* Jafari, Bourouni and Amari, 2009: 93). PA is a platform for PM of establishing targets and making a range of decisions aimed at improving the performance of employees in an institution (van der Waldt, 2004: 242). Managing employee performance is an integral part of the work that all managers and rating officials perform throughout the year. It is as important as managing financial resources and program outcomes because employee performance or the lack thereof, has a profound effect on both the financial and program components of any organisation (www.doi.gov/hrm/guidance).

Spangenberg and Theron (2001: 36), on the contrary, believe that PM as a process was developed because of the failure of PA. In essence, it represents a move from an isolated, mechanistic, HR-driven approach to PA towards a comprehensive, integrated business-driven system aiming at organisational and people development. It was believed that by participatively setting goals that are aligned with higher organisational goals, conducting performance reviews and coaching on an ongoing basis, and rewarding an individual's performance based on the outputs of the PM system, desirable outcomes would follow. PM however, did not prove to be a panacea for solving PA problems either, it just performed better. The exception was problems linkages of PM to other systems, and specifically, the performance-reward linkage. The significance of PM is to establish an organisational culture in which the individual employees and groups within the organisation take responsibility for the continuous improvement of their performance for the achievement of the organisational goals. Hence, the main purpose of appraising and coaching employees is to instil in them the desire for continuous improvement.

2.6 Resistance against performance appraisal

Resistance against PA process is realised from both the point of view of the ratee and rater. From the point of view of the rater, Rademan & Vos (2001) posit that it is manifested:

- In a normal dislike for having to criticise subordinates and then having to defend their point of view which invariably develops into a conflict situation;
- There is often a lack of skill in the handling of the appraisal interview;
- There is always towards new procedures and the concomitant changes which they bring about especially from the point of view of evaluation measures; and
- There is often mistrust concerning the validity of the appraisal instrument in use.

Performance appraisal is regarded by ratees as:

- Too time consuming and laborious having to record, prepare and list incidents;
- Too subjective in terms of appraisals by supervisors;
- Too confusing in terms of having different instruments for different purposes instead of a single multi-disciplinary instrument;
- Insufficiently representative and unfair in that, at review level, ratees' evaluations are ratified and finalised by persons who don't always know them and/or are not always aware of their true capabilities. The outcome of their assessment can also be influenced by the oratory capabilities or personality of the person presenting it before the reviewing body; and
- Unclear in that incidents and weighting thereof are ill-defined. A general lack of training in the administration of the system and use of the instrument is apparent.

2.7 Key challenges of performance appraisals

There are probably as many problems associated with PA as there are reasons for its existence. At the centre of the organisational performance challenge lies the need to objectively define measurable performance criteria and then to effectively attract, select, develop and reward/retain competence (Charlton, 2000: 143). A major problem of PA in most libraries (the same as government departments), is the dichotomy between quantity and the quality of work. Too often a blanket approach is utilised to evaluate employees on the quantity of work performed and not necessarily on its quality. It is relatively easy to record the quantity of work performed but not so easy to estimate the quality of the same or other work (Neerpath, Leach and Hoskins, 2006: 54).

Hilliard (1995 *cited by* van der Waldt, 2004: 64 -66) identified some of the difficulties associated with performance measurement in the public sector, which are:

2.7.1 Evasive concept of output

Performance and productivity are difficult to measure in the public sector, because both relate to output but not necessarily to production. The public sector is generally a provider of public services, and not so much a producer of goods and services. Public sector output, or the quantification thereof, appears to be a vague issue due to the notion that it is intangible and therefore not easily measured. Consequently, public officials seldom fear that they will be asked “how much” they have succeeded in producing, that is, how much they have accomplished in a specified period of time. Their salaries are usually not dependent upon their output (that is, performance related), but based on what the state can afford to pay them with the limited financial resources at its disposal.

2.7.2 Vague or incorrect performance measure

Performance is usually related to the degree to which desired ends have been achieved at the least cost. In the public sector, however, the least cost cannot always be the main criterion for success. This is so because when dealing with other people’s money, despite the requirement of public accountability, it is relatively easy to fall into the habit of wastage.

2.7.3 Vague performance dimensions

Besides the scarcity of performance measures, performance usually has two rather elusive dimensions, namely effectiveness and efficiency. It is said that performance is effective according to the degree to which a stated community condition is achieved and/or maintained. Effectiveness may be defined as the ratio of actual output to planned output, and implies that the intention of a programme has been achieved. Performance is efficient depending on the quantity of resources expended in the effort to achieve the desired condition or output. The output usually varies both in quality and quantity (van der Waldt, 2004: 64 - 66).

PA is valuable only if people take it seriously and with thoughtfulness and objectivity. Lacking that, it will end up with a bureaucratic exercise that annoys people and eats up their time. Another problem with formal appraisals is that managers are not particularly good at assessing performance against goals, but few jobs are that clear cut. The result is that

subjective judgement creeps in. Attempts to hand out individual appraisals are inevitably coloured by personality, emotions, and selective memory, for instance:

- The manager sees only part of the employee's work activity over the course of the year. Often, an employee's co-workers and internal or external customers know a lot more about the person's performance than the manager does as they observe that performance every day; and
- Because the employee's performance in the last month or so is fresh in the manager's mind, it contributes more heavily to the appraisal than it should. The employee's one big mistake or one big contribution over the course of the year sticks in the mind of the manager, outweighing everything else.

Longenecker (1997 *cited by* Analoui, 2007: 208) using a large-scale survey of focus groups, found that the three most common reasons for failure of an appraisal system were:

- Unclear performance criteria or an ineffective rating instrument;
- Poor working relationships with the boss; and
- The appraiser lacks information on the manager's actual performance.

Coetsee's (2002: 142 -144) view after having looked at the performance evaluation systems in a variety of organisations is that, many of the systems are out-dated, badly designed and managed, and contribute very little to equitable rewards, the recognition of performance and of employees contributions and, in some cases, are even instrumental in creating a demotivating climate. Another observation is that, in a number of cases where performance evaluation systems fail, it could not be ascribed to the particular system or technique used, but rather to how sound systems fail and how relatively poor systems work efficiently. The reason for this is generally that implementation and management errors cause even good systems to fail. She further mentioned that one of the most common deficiencies of performance evaluation systems is that unnecessary factors are measured, such as certain irrelevant personality traits. Performance should be limited to the evaluation of employee goal attainment, employee compliance with the shared values of the organisation, and the extent to which managers, supervisors and employees live these values. In the case of supervisors and managers, it is also important to measure the extent to which they unlock and utilise the potential of their team members. This implies that the performance of managers

and supervisors should also be measured in terms of their core task – the extent to which they have succeeded in making their team members successful.

Appraisal and development, if meaningful, must centre on an individual with particular needs in specific circumstances and at a certain stage of his or her career. Systems, form and quantification may be useful tools, but unless they are generated with due attention to a specific climate and sensibility, they may be worse than useless or even damaging (Ruth, 2001: 199-202).

2.8 Summary

This chapter discussed in detail what PA is all about and what its purposes and objectives are. The process of PA was also discussed as well as the comparison between PA and PM. The researcher further looked at the importance of PAs and why there is such resistance against PAs and the key challenges experienced.

CHAPTER 3 - GOVERNMENT AND POLITICISATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the core of politicisation. It is important to note why government introduced the performance management development system (PMDS). The meaning of politicisation is explored, as well as the managerial and employee's political problems. The gender perspective is crucial as is the comparison of the national and international perspectives, particularly the South African perspective.

In the discussion of PMDS in the North West Department of Health and Social Development (NWDoh & Soc Dev), the focus is on issues impacting on the appraisal of the performance of programme managers, middle managers as well as junior staff members on levels 3 to 12, and the effect that the method or system has on the outcome with a view to developing acceptable guidelines or management for such appraisal. Poole and Warner (1998 *cited by* Neerpuh *et al.*, 2006: 53) state that the issue is not whether performance should be measured, but how?"

3.2 Why government introduced the performance management development system

On its accession to power in 1994, the Government of National Unity (GNU) inherited a society marked by deep social and economic inequalities, as well as by serious racial, political and social divisions. Guided by the principle of national reconciliation, the new South African government adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to reorient and reunite society towards a common purpose, that of a socially coherent and economically equitable society.

"In forging ahead with the processes of reconciliation, reconstruction and development, the South African public service had a major role to play as the executive arm of government. To fulfil this role effectively, the service needed to be transformed into a coherent, representative, competent and democratic instrument for implementing government policies and meeting the needs of all South Africans. The government's commitment to this process is demonstrated by the fact that it identified institutional transformation and reform as one of the key medium and long-term programmes to drive the implementation of the RDP".

The government took a first step in this direction through the introduction of the Public Service Act of 1994 (Procl. 103/1994). This act created the basis for integrating the fragmented system of state administrations inherited from the apartheid era into a unified national public service. Much more needs to be done, however, to transform the public service into an agency that is coherent and representative, as well as capable of achieving the crucial goals set for it by the people and government of SA.

3.2.1 Transformation and reform

The government regards transformation as a dynamic, focused and relatively short-term process, designed to fundamentally reshape the public service for its appointed role in the new dispensation in SA. Transformation can be distinguished from the broader, longer-term and on-going process of administrative reform which will be required to ensure that the South African public service keeps in step with the changing needs and requirements of the domestic and international environments. The transformation of the public service was inevitably a complex and controversial process. Furthermore, government policies that were likely to have a significant impact on the public service were still being shaped and negotiated (White paper on the transformation of the public service 1995).

3.2.2 Rationale for the performance management

The government's vision, mission and priorities can only find meaning provided its executive arm carries its mandate to the public in an efficient and effective manner. The development of a new organisational culture is critical to the improvement of efficient and effective public service delivery. These changes needed to be accompanied by a major shift from a rule bound culture to one which is focused more on the achievement of objectives and the meeting of needs (North West Provincial Government, Performance management system 1997).

3.3 The meaning of politicisation

There is lack of uniformity in the ways in which different writers define politicisation, commonly known as organisational or workplace politics. In one category are those who define it in a "neutral" fashion as the occurrence of certain forms of behaviour associated with the use of power or influence. A second group tends to define it in terms of an actor's

subjectively realised intention of engaging in self-serving behaviours at the expense of others in the organisation (Gandz & Murray, 1980: 237).

The focus of this research is on the second definition and the fact that organisations politicise performance appraisals and that this devalues the essence of appraising. Weller (1989 as *cited by* Mulgan, 1998) begins with the assumption that politicisation is to be seen as the opposite of political neutrality. He then identifies it with two tendencies which can be said to contradict two aspects of neutrality: the use of the public service for party purposes and the appointment, promotion and tenure of public servants through party political influences.

“Politics” implies calculated influence manoeuvring, and organisational politics is the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organisation or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means. Anyone associated with almost any form of organisation eventually becomes aware of activities that are described by employees as “political”, but what is termed political by one observer may not be viewed as political by another (Mayes and Allen, 1977: 672 - 675). In the politicised organisation, the conflict is pervasive (i.e., not concentrated between any well-defined power centres) but moderate, and hence possibly enduring, a condition that seems to be emerging in what Blumberg (1971 *cited by* Mintzberg, 1984: 211) refers to as “the politicisation of the corporation.

3.3.1 The nature of politics in executive appraisal

At the heart of many appraisal function is an assessment, and an evaluation of performance. The goal is fair and “objective” measurement – measurement of the quality of one’s work and how it stands up against some standard or in comparison to others. The ratings must be reliable and fair because they are used for important purposes. They decide pay adjustments and bonuses. They determine whether someone can move up on the career ladder. Within competitive, internal promotion processes, screening committees rely on ratings to choose the interview pool and even to select a group of finalists. Ratings also serve as a coaching, feedback and development tool. While the reasons for ratings are important, at some level, the ratings really do not come out right. Without looking at data or research, there is inconsistency, a sense of a certain caprice and arbitrary application of the measuring sticks. It is known that the raters do not have all the facts, that appraisal is not particularly reliable, but

nonetheless pretend that it is a valid measurement as Gioia & Longenecker (1994: 50 – 56) further mention that:

- Politics is prevalent in appraisal, and the higher one rises in the organisation, the more political the appraisal process becomes. The role of politics in the review process is a frustrating fact of executive life. Although performance is an important factor in the review process, it is by no means the sole or even the dominant factor;
- Appraisals are susceptible to political manipulation because of the dynamic, ambiguous nature of managerial work. Any rating a manager receives can be justified in some way, even if it is inaccurate. Accuracy, according to executives is a difficult and elusive criterion at their level because of the nature of their jobs. Furthermore, executive work and success almost invariably depends on the performance of other people, often in other departments or divisions. But despite their recognition that assessing their performance is no easy task, they still suspected that the inherent ambiguity of their jobs works against them and allows their superiors to use executive ratings for their own political purposes;
- Performance is not necessarily the bottom line in the executive appraisal process. The executives indicated that their ability to understand the relationship between performance, ratings, and rewards is further hampered by an apparent failure on the part of superiors to discuss what they expect in terms of total performance (for example, long range goals and plans, special projects, management style, “knowing the ropes”, vision, etc.). It is easy to be kept in the dark if you don’t know what counts, so you become apprehensive and suspicious that you are being used for someone else’s ends. But if you know the boss’s agenda, the reviewed executive’s reputation and the company’s political climate, they may just influence the rating you receive;
- Senior executives have extraordinary latitude in evaluating subordinate executives’ performance; and
- Executive appraisal is a political tool used to control people and resources.

3.3.2 Consequences of corrupt executive appraisal

The manipulative practices in executive appraisals unquestionably undermine the designed purpose of executive review, sacrificing fairness and benefiting some people at the expense of others. In addition to producing consequences and costs for individuals, these practices almost always hurt the organisation as a whole because of the following reasons:

- Political appraisals undermine organisational goals and performance. Some executives pointed out that reviews manipulated for political purposes encourage them to engage and learn ways of appeasing or even duping superiors, even if it meant not doing what was best for the company;
- Political appraisals compromise the link between executive performance and outcomes. Executives said they fear running into disagreements over differing views of appropriate goal/action/performance/reward linkages. Most junior executives avoid clashing with their boss, because the confrontation amounts to an unequal power contest they cannot possibly win. As a consequence, ambiguities persist and the junior executive's performance suffers;
- Appraisal politics inhibits executive development. When appraisals are inflated for political reasons, they give the junior executive a false sense of security, and often undesired behaviours, when ratings are intentionally deflated, frustration, self-doubt, bitterness, and withdrawal can result;
- Politics at the executive level begets politics in the rest of the organisation. If the top of the organisation is characterized by politically driven promotions, bonuses, and rewards, similar practices are sure to occur at lower levels. The net effect is blanket cynicism and suspicion about the appraisal process itself. Enterprising junior executives will soon find ways to impose their own preferences on what they take to be a tarnished system, again encouraging actions that support personal, rather than organisational interests. Furthermore, politically influenced appraisals also encourage coalition formation, since politics becomes understood as the means by which things get done, and coalitions breed political power. The political appraisal thus becomes a triggering event, with politics eventually showing up in other organisational domains; and
- Political appraisals can expose an organisation to litigations when executives are terminated. Executives are more likely to sue an organisation today than in the past for two primary reasons: first, finding an equivalent job is increasingly difficult in the face of lean economic times and increasing global competition, and second, retribution for the shock and humiliation associated with termination is now more easily redressed through the courts.

Without some assessment, an organisation cannot weed out unacceptable probationary employees. Without some evaluative information, it may be difficult for some employees to

identify strengths to build from or weaknesses to work on. Absent a measuring stick, we cannot properly pay or reward those who have grown and advanced their ability to contribute to organisational success. Without assessment, we cannot choose the best candidates for promotion, nor can we identify those who are bad fits and should be encouraged to pursue new career paths (Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 54).

3.4 Political problems

While rating errors and bias may be subconscious and unintended, research demonstrates that both the rater and the ratee deliberately distort, abuse, or misuse the process with political motives. According to Rusli Ahmad (2007 *cited by* Ahmad and Lemba, 2010: 100), PA involves the use of various types of political influences and power and that the relationship between employee and manager or superordinates and subordinates or raters and ratees will build an internal political relationship. One contextual factor that can encourage politically motivated distortions is the purpose of the appraisal (Curtis et al., 2005: 45). By “political” reference is made to people who play games with appraisal to arrive at a predetermined or desired result connected to the rating (Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 62). Meanwhile, Beeman and Sharkey (2001: 26) posits that the negative connotation associated with corporate politics stems from the general recognition that the rules of the game often stray far afield from what most people would consider fair play. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that the first rule of corporate politics is that there are no rules.

3.5 Managerial politics

For good or bad reasons, supervisors and managers make advance decisions of what they want to see happen and then use ratings as a vehicle to get those results. The goal may be to get someone a hefty pay raise or to ensure that someone is barred from promotion. Some scholars have noted that organisational politics is necessary for the survival of the organisation and those who operate in them, and can sometimes be perceived to be benefiting the organisation as a whole. The manipulations of performance ratings for motivational purposes, such as making subordinates look good in order to maximise benefits for them, are generally in the best interest of the employees. As supervisors compress PAs for motivational purposes, this political behaviour might be perceived to represent managerial discretion exercised to ensure the attainment of goals and potentially benefit the individual employee

and even the organisation as a whole. As a result, it might be perceived an effective use of the pay system (Salimaki and Jamsen, 2010: 231 & 233). Connecting rating outcomes to personnel decisions, such as pay and promotion, is a sure way to end up with distortion and inaccurate ratings. Although leniency is the most prevalent form of political abuse and most frequently is done for positive motives (e.g., inflating ratings to help people to qualify for a raise or a promotion), it nonetheless distorts the outcomes and undermines the validity of the ratings (Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 62). According to Poon (2004: 322), it is often not the ability but the motivation of the rater that determines the accuracy of a formal appraisal. Raters may be able yet not want to provide accurate appraisals because it is not in their best interest to do so. There is some evidence that managers deliberately distort subordinates' performance ratings for political reasons (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 183).

Gioia and Longenecker (1994), Murphy and Cleveland (1995 *cited by* Dhiman and Singh, 2007: 77) believe that some of the goals that superiors attempt to achieve through PA are: avoiding confrontation with subordinates, maintaining subordinate performance, avoiding written record of poor performance, hiding poor department performance, shocking subordinate to improve, sending a signal to the subordinate to leave the organisation. Assessors fulfil these goals by inflating or deflating the performance ratings while ignoring the employee's actual performance. Some managers give higher ratings to their employees to project an image of overall good performance of the department. This may affect their appraisal and rewards. The heads of powerful departments can also use it to showcase their power and garner maximum benefits for their team.

The manager who heads the most critical department constituting employees who either possess critical skills or perform critical functions is able to play this power game most effectively. Researchers have argued that appraisal errors or biases may be assessor's deliberate signals to the employees or may be adaptation to the conflicting demands of the process. Thus assessors may be motivated to manipulate the appraisal to get rewards for them, avoid negative consequences or create good impression in the eyes of the superiors (This assessor behaviour has been termed as loyalty, sympathy, concern, conflict avoidance, deviance, and power seeking and represent assessor's political behaviour in the appraisal context) (Harris, 1994: 740).

Coens and Jenkins (2000: 64) further mention that distorting ratings to ensure proper distribution of available “merit” raise funds in the budget process is equally common. Typically, an amount of money is established before appraisal time to conform to budget parameters. Months later, before appraisal formally begins, managers already know their merit pay target. No one is surprised then when the ratings just happen to turn out so that the total merit pay increases granted equal the exact amount that was budgeted for merit pay months earlier.

3.6 Political abuse by employees

Employees too, attempt to manoeuvre and distort the system. Researchers call this impression management, which comes in many variations more commonly known as “brown nosing” or “hey-look-what-I-did”. Employees know when appraisal time is coming around – they start saying good morning and take time to chitchat with the boss. While obvious or aggressive impression management may backfire, some research indicates that managers give the highest raises to politically connected people who would threaten to complain if they did not get a substantial pay raise (Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 64).

On the contrary, when employees perceive their performance ratings and hence pay increase and promotion, to be determined by political considerations rather than performance factors, they are likely to experience reduced job satisfaction. Furthermore, because employees tend to view workplace politics as undesirable, they may withdraw from their organisation as a means of avoiding political activities (Poon, 2004: 324). Ferris and Kacmar (1992 *cited by* Ahmad and Lemba, 2010: 99) also added that perceptions of an individual employee about politics in their workplace negatively influence their jobs, their feelings towards their colleagues, productivity, intention of leaving and other negative effects.

3.7 Crediting performance to individuals or the system

If compensation is to be based on “fair” ratings, the rating method must be able to distinguish what should be credited to or blamed on the employee versus “the system”, i.e., the situation and the environmental factors that largely affect individual performance. If the goal of fair compensation is to pay more to those who contribute more, then the ratings or appraisal must be able to ascertain each individual’s contribution and performance apart from the system. To

some degree, in crediting individuals for their performance, we are deciding how much the individual's efforts, skills, and abilities have contributed to that performance, albeit good or bad. If the impact of the system or the situation cannot be segregated in assessing an individual's performance, then a new theory is needed (Coens and Jenkins, 2000: 64).

3.8 Gender perspective (male versus female)

Sex equality in the workplace has been an important HR agenda item in work organisations since the mid -1970s, when legislation was introduced to tackle a history of discriminatory practices, largely directed against female employees. Irrespective of the legal framework making direct and indirect sex discrimination unlawful, both overt and covert discrimination arguably contribute to this lack of progress and continue to frustrate gender equality at work (Millmore, Biggs and Morse, 2007: 536 – 537). Equal opportunities legislation now ensures that women are able to acquire the educational and technical skills for success. However, the glass ceiling remains an impenetrable reality for most women (Hind & Baruch, 1997: 276). Judge and Livingston (2008 *cited by* Khoreva, 2011: 237) look at the perception that individuals have of gender role orientation whereby men and women have the proper roles at work and at home. This gender role orientation can be either traditional or egalitarian. The traditional conceptions of gender role orientation suggest that men specialise in the market work and build their careers with support from their families, who provide them with confidence, while women primarily care about family and think about their careers only afterwards. Alternatively, egalitarian gender role orientation allows flexibility for both men and women with the intention of managing their market and domestic duties by relaxing the gendered separation of work and family.

Tattersal and Morgan (1997 *cited by* Carter & Delahaye, 2005: 7-11) mentioned that individuals may interact differently to a stressful event such as performance appraisal. In fact, a suggestion is that males and females may experience stress differently. Further, a consensus of opinion exists that males have a more psycho-physiologically responsive body than females and hence that the physiological cost of stress is higher for males than for females. On the other hand, however, several extensive reviews have supported the notion that males receive better reviews than females do. Specifically, it was found that raters with traditional stereotypes of women evaluate the performance of female rates less favourably and that these behaviours occurred when the purpose of the appraisal was administrative, that is, when

dealing with pay, promotions, transfers and retrenchments. Thus it could be argued that, for females, the performance appraisal is a more stressful event than for males.

Most importantly, results of the study indicate that women react in a physically different fashion to males and this result has some important messages for workplace discrimination and gender equity. Thus performance systems that are masculine, i.e. confrontational, numeric and quantitative may have a significant negative impact on women. In addition, managers need to recognise that performance appraisal systems are not one size fits all. Best practices may mean that performance practices need to be more open and flexible, in order to account for individual differences. Contemporary managers need to keep in mind that gender equity in the appraisal process does not mean treating all staff exactly the same and measuring the same criteria. Staff will perform well in different areas, and poorly in others.

3.9 International versus local perspective

PA is not only implemented in local organisations but throughout the whole world, in public and private organisations. Going global will inevitably impact on the activities performed by the company's HR department. The PA process helps to clarify performance expectations, provide a framework for progress reviews and identify developmental needs. It would be correct to conclude that for most employees, PA is an inherently natural management practice – even when it is not well done. This conclusion may not hold for the manager working in Latin America, the Middle East or any number of non-Western countries. A variation of the critical incidents method is used for employees in Chinese companies, but in none of these is the PA used as evidence for promotion and merit pay decisions. Seniority (time on the job) is considered the most important determinant when it comes to these decisions.

When evaluating employees of the host country, the process can be extremely frustrating to someone who is not familiar with the local culture's expectation for the roles of the boss and the subordinate. Different cultures have their own ideas and beliefs about what the culture defines as incompetent, mediocre and excellent work performance. In most countries, it is performance that counts, whereas in Islamic countries, however, it may be the subordinate's personality and social behaviour – not job performance- that matter. Besides the cultural issues that complicate PA in the international environment, there are many other issues that

also make it extremely difficult. Although these issues can complicate the PA process, it is important that some type of evaluation takes place as it has a major impact on the expatriate's promotion and career alternatives upon repatriation back home. Evidence shows that multinational companies that use appraisal systems rely on a wide variety of appraisal techniques ranging from a mix of formal and informal procedures, visits to and from headquarters and the evaluation of financial statistics (Grobler *et al.*, 2006: 540).

In supporting the need for human capital development, the Malaysian government implemented the HR development Act 1992, to assist unskilled and skilled workforce with an adequate amount of the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in organisations. It was under this legislation that government implemented numerous incentives to assist employers in the manufacturing industries to develop its employees. Kirkpatrick (1994 *cited by* Abdullah *et al.*, 2007: 159) indicates that in evaluating employees' learning, the organisation will be looking for evidence of how changed job behaviour influences other employees and the way the organisation functions. This would mean measuring changes in overall organisational functioning with respect to productivity, output and costs, but such an exercise would be difficult to undertake.

3.10 South Africa's performance appraisal dilemma

According to Grobler *et al.* (2006: 263), a comprehensive survey of nine leading South African organisations undertaken by the University of Stellenbosch Business School revealed a rather bleak picture of the way employee performance is managed and rewarded in SA. Major problems that were identified during the survey included the existence of a rather negative working culture, changes in corporate strategy did not result in corresponding behaviour changes, and insufficient line management support for performance management. Regarding periodic and formal reviews, the following became apparent: lack of follow-up of performance reviews, over-emphasis on the appraisal aspect at the expense of development, inadequate performance information and inadequately maintained objectivity.

They further mentioned that, in a separate study undertaken among companies in SA, it appears that more than 60% of the organisations interviewed did not have a formal performance management system. Despite these problems, the existence of a good performance review system can be of great value to the organisation, the department and the

individual. Spangenberg and Theron (2001: 39) also realised that the previous results of the SA's surveys were somewhat disappointing with regard to both processes and linkages to other systems, particularly the reward system.

3.11 Summary

This chapter explained in detail what politicisation is all about and its relation to performance in government. The politics experience from the managers' side as well as the employees' side were also looked at. It was also important to see how workplace politics affect males and females and to compare the national and the international perspective. The next chapter will deal with the research methodology.

CHAPTER 4 - RESEARCH METHOD

4.1 Introduction

This study is set out to discuss the method followed in determining the extent of politicization of the performance appraisals in the NWDoH & Soc Dev. Emphasis of this chapter is on the design of the research, its population and sample utilised, procedures followed during data collection as well as the ethical considerations.

4.2 Overview of study design

Like all measures in all sciences, social survey measurement is not error free. The procedures used to conduct a survey have a major effect on the likelihood that the resulting data describe accurately what they are intended to describe (Fowler, 2009: 4).

4.3 Research design

Designing a research study has often been compared to designing a building. Like building plans, research designs ensure that the study fulfils a particular purpose, and that the research can be completed with available resources (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999: 30). Mouton (2001:55) concurs that a research design is a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research.

The use of multiple methods in a study secures in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question because it adds vigour, breadth and depth to the investigation (Cresswell 1994, Denzin & Lincoln 1998, Salomon 1991 *cited by* Monyatsi *et al.*, 2006: 431). Furthermore, most quantitative data gathering techniques condense data in order to see the bigger picture. Qualitative data gathering techniques, by contrast, are best understood as data enhancers, because when data is enhanced, one can see key aspects of cases more clearly.

4.4 Population and sampling

4.4.1 Population

To collect accurate information about a group of persons or objects, the best strategy is to examine every single member or element of the group. But it is also possible to reach accurate conclusion by examining only a portion of the total group. This entire set of objects or people which is the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics is called the population (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006: 98). In this research, the population of 300 is the figure obtained from Persal system at the time the research was done and determined by the total number of employees at levels 3 to 12 of the filled posts at head office only.

4.4.2 Sample

A sample is a subset of the whole population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population (Bless *et al.*, 2006: 98). The main reason that samples are used is to save time and money for the researcher. Sampling is a useful short-cut, leading to results that can be almost as accurate as those for a full census of the population being studied but for a fraction of the cost (Gorard, 2004: 57).

In their view, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 44-45) mentioned that the main concern in sampling is representativeness. The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions. To achieve representativeness researchers draw random samples. A second concern is the size of the sample, a very small random sample may be quite unrepresentative, and the same is true for a large non-random sample. The researcher must ensure that the sample is large enough to allow one to make inferences about the population. Just how large a sample should be, depends on the type of study conducted and on numerous measurement and statistical criteria.

Gay and Arasian (2003:113) argue that when selecting a sample, the researcher should consider the following:

- If the population has fewer than 100 people or units, the entire population should be surveyed;
- If the population is approximately 500 people or units, then its 50% should be sampled;
- If there are 1500 people or units in the population, 20% thereof should be sampled; and

- If the population has more than 5000 people or units, then 400 of them should be considered for a sample.

The study has used the simple random type of sampling to arrive at the group of employees chosen to participate. Since there were three hundred (300) employees of levels 3 to 12 who were targeted for the study, the researcher decided to randomly select the sample of 50%, i.e. one hundred and fifty (150) employees who were willing to participate, even though not all of them completed the questionnaire.

4.5 Data collection procedures

Data can be collected in a variety of ways, for example, either through interviews or questionnaires. Each has advantages and disadvantages and the final choice will depend on the appropriateness to the purpose and the disposable means (Oppenheim, 1992: 102).

4.5.1 Questionnaires

In this study, self-administered questionnaires were utilized as a means of collecting data. Questionnaires gather information directly by asking people questions and using them as data for analysis. These instruments are commonly used and commonly abused. It is easy to compile a questionnaire but not easy to compile an effective one. Effectiveness requires planning beforehand to ensure that the data can be objectively analysed afterwards (Goddard & Melville, 2001: 47). They are certainly the most often employed data collection devices in statistical work, with the most well-known questionnaire type – the census – being the flagship of every national statistical office.

The main strength of questionnaires is the ease of their construction. In an age of computers and sophisticated word processing software, it is possible to draw up something that looks respectable in a few hours. People appear to take it for granted that everybody with reasonable intelligence can put up together a questionnaire that works, unfortunately this is not true (Erlbaum, 2003).

4.5.1.1 Advantages

The main attraction of questionnaires is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of:

- Research time;

- Research effort; and
- Financial resources

By administering a questionnaire to a group of people, one can collect a huge amount of information in no time, and the personal investment required will be a fraction of what would have been for interviewing the same number of people. Furthermore, if the questionnaire is well constructed, processing the data can also be fast and relatively straightforward, especially by using some modern computer software. Cost-effectiveness is not the only advantage of questionnaires. They are also very versatile, which means that they can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics.

4.5.1.2 Disadvantages

Questionnaires have some serious limitations, and some of these have led certain researchers claim that they are not reliable or valid. There is no doubt that it is very easy to produce unreliable and invalid data by means of ill-constructed questionnaires.

a) Simplicity and superficiality of answers

As respondents are left to their own devices when filling in self-completed questionnaires, the questions need to be sufficiently simple and straightforward to be understood by everybody. Thus this method is unsuitable for probing deeply into an issue (Moses & Kalton, 1971 *cited by* Erlbaum, 2003) and it results in rather superficial data. The necessary simplicity of the questions is further augmented by the fact that the amount of time respondents are usually willing to spend working on a questionnaire is rather short, which again limits the depth of the investigation.

b) Unreliable and unmotivated respondents

Most people are not very thorough in a research sense, and this is all the more true about dealing with questionnaires – an activity which typically they do not enjoy or benefit from in any way. Thus the results may vary greatly from one individual to another, depending on the time and care they choose or are able to give. Respondents are also prone to leave out some questions, either by mistake or because they did not like them, and Low (1999 *cited by* Erlbaum, 2003) present empirical evidence that respondents also often simply misread or misinterpret questions which render the answers false.

c) Respondent literacy problems

Questionnaire research makes the inherent assumption that the respondents can read and write well. Even in the industrialized world, this is not necessarily the case with regard to the whole population. It is therefore understandable that for the respondents with literacy problems, filling in a questionnaire can appear an intimidating or overwhelming task.

d) Little or no opportunity to correct the respondents' mistakes

Questionnaire items focus on information which the respondents know best, and therefore the researcher has little opportunity to double-check the validity of the answers. Sometimes respondents deviate from the truth intentionally, but it is also common that they simply misunderstand or forget something, or do not remember it correctly. Another fairly common situation is when informants do not know the exact response to a question yet proceed to answer it without indicating their lack of knowledge.

e) Fatigue effects

If the questionnaire is too long or monotonous, respondents may begin to respond inaccurately as a result of tiredness or boredom. This effect is called the fatigue effect, and it is obviously more likely to influence responses towards the end of the questionnaire (Erlbaum, 2003).

4.5.2 Method of data collection

Although a study of performance appraisals in the public sector should ideally have been conducted in the wider public service, this was deemed to be impractical due to the size of the population. It was finally decided to concentrate more specifically on centralized head office component.

It is believed however, that the population from which the sample was drawn, was representative of the public service. The reason for this is that firstly, experience has shown that the specific comments or criticisms concerning PA are common throughout the public service. Secondly, with the constant migration of public servants through inter-departmental and inter-provincial transfers, it can be expected that the application of the system must become more and more stereotyped and therefore be subject to similar criticisms throughout the public service. Thirdly, because the system is universally applicable throughout the public service, training methods and information concerning the administration of the system are

originated and controlled from a single central source. This means that individual departments cannot deviate from the rules as set out in the Public Service staff code, thus leading to a situation which also lends itself towards uniformity (Rademan & Vos, 2001).

4.5.2.1 Design of the questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire, section A, composing of the demographics (that is, questions 1 to 11), was taken from Louw (2006 addendum 1), and the researcher made some alterations by including the current salary level as well as extending educational qualifications to include honours degree, masters and above .

The second part, section B, a pre-coded questionnaire numbered 1 to 25, was taken from Tziner, Latham, Price and Haccoun (1996), considered to be one of the standard questionnaires on politicisation, consisted mainly of open-ended questions and was utilized with minor alterations, and the remainder of the questionnaire, that is, questions 26 to 30, were designed and included by the researcher. The questionnaire was pre-tested on ten (10) employees of the NWDoH in Mahikeng and their contributions were incorporated on the final one distributed.

4.5.2.2 Deployment of questionnaires

In an attempt to improve the quality of results, it was decided to distribute questionnaires to a randomly selected sample of supervisors and subordinates, that is, levels 3 to 12. At the beginning one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were printed. Most of the questionnaires were distributed to participants personally by the researcher. The researcher further emailed another fifty (50) questionnaires to participants who needed the soft copy. Participants were requested to complete the questionnaire and that they will be collected within ten (10) days. After five days the researcher made a turn to some of the participants to check if they had done some work but those visited had not done any work. Some had already misplaced the questionnaire and the researcher had to replace them. The researcher also made some reminders through the email to those who got their questionnaires through the email. Even through the email, participants claimed they did not receive it, and the researcher had to resend. Most of the emailing work was all in vain as most participants who responded were those who got the hard copy.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 261) a questionnaire response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis, while responses of 60% and 70% are good and very good, respectively. On the due date, one hundred and ten (110) officials responded, consequently, a good questionnaire response rate (73%) was obtained. The questionnaire response rate obtained in the study was therefore considered to be sufficient for analysis.

4.6 Ethical considerations

The ethics of science concerns what is wrong and what is right in the conduct of research. Since scientific research is a form of human conduct, it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values (Mouton, 2001: 238).

Goddard & Melville (2001: 49) believe that collecting data from people raises ethical concerns. These include taking care to avoid harming people, having due regard for their privacy, respecting them as individuals and not subjecting them to unnecessary research. In order to avoid harming people, researchers should guard against both physical and psychological harm. People have a right to privacy, and researchers must keep collected data confidential. Most importantly, the researchers must remember that the subjects are individual human beings, and treat them with appropriate respect.

In this study, the researcher ensured that the ethical conduct was observed through amongst other things: requesting and obtaining permission from the department (as per appendix B, attached at the end of the report); ensuring participants of their anonymity, not forcing them to complete the questionnaire; requesting their consent to use the information for the purpose of research only; and making them aware that they can withdraw at anytime that they do not feel comfortable to continue with the project.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has dealt with the research methodology followed in this study. The overview was briefly looked at, then the design, and the population and sample were discussed in detail. More emphasis was on the methodology as well as the procedures followed, particularly the method used and why it was used, its advantages and disadvantages and the ethical considerations. The next chapter will look at the analysis and interpretation of data.

CHAPTER 5 - RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research findings and further emphasises on the analysis and interpretation of data. The researcher sampled 50% of the head office staff to conduct the research. The questionnaires were randomly distributed to officials who agreed to participate, irrespective of their gender. These participants were in the salary levels between 3 and 12, and the research instrument sought to check their perception on the politicisation of PAs in their different directorates within the department. In the questionnaire, specific questions were asked and the analysis was done through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Each question will then be looked at and analysed separately.

5.1.1 Reliability

According to George and Mallery (2006: 223), the closer the Cronbach's Alpha is to 1, the greater the internal consistency of items in the instrument being assessed. From the reliability statistics given in table 5.1, it is observed that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.733 for the demographics data and 0,760 for the performance and politicisation data. It is therefore deduced that the research instrument for this study is reliable and the results it produced can be trusted.

Table 5.1: Reliability Statistics

(Demographics data)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.733	11

(Performance and politicization data)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.760	30

Table 5. 2 Response rate

	Total	Percentage
Population	300	100%
Sample	150	0,5%
Response	110	73%

This study was mainly targeted at employees in the department of Health and Social Development at head office only. Out of a population of 300 employees, which is the figure obtained from the Persal system at the time the research was done, 150 was decided as the sample for the study. It was a cumbersome job but various steps were followed for the researcher to ultimately get 110 responses as outlined in the previous chapter under the deployment of questionnaires. The response rate was thus 73% as shown in table 5.2 and considered enough to continue with the study as per Babbie and Mouton (2001: 261) who concurs that a questionnaire response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis.

5.2 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

5.2.1 Age

Figure 5.1: Age

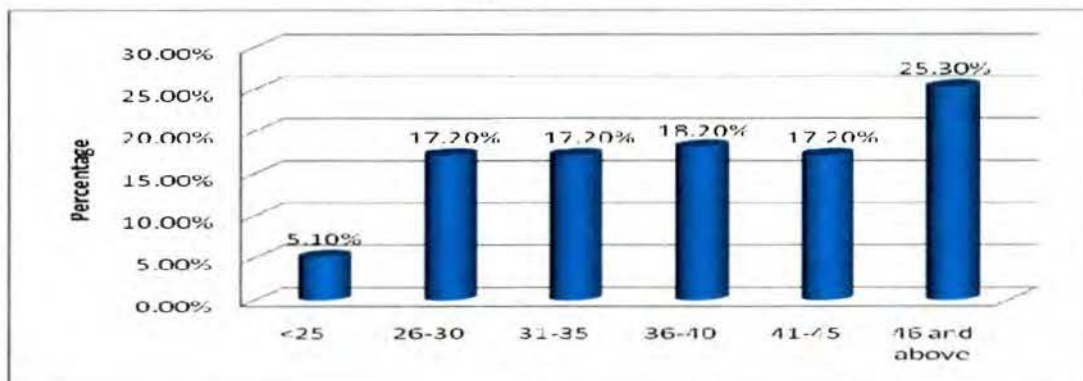
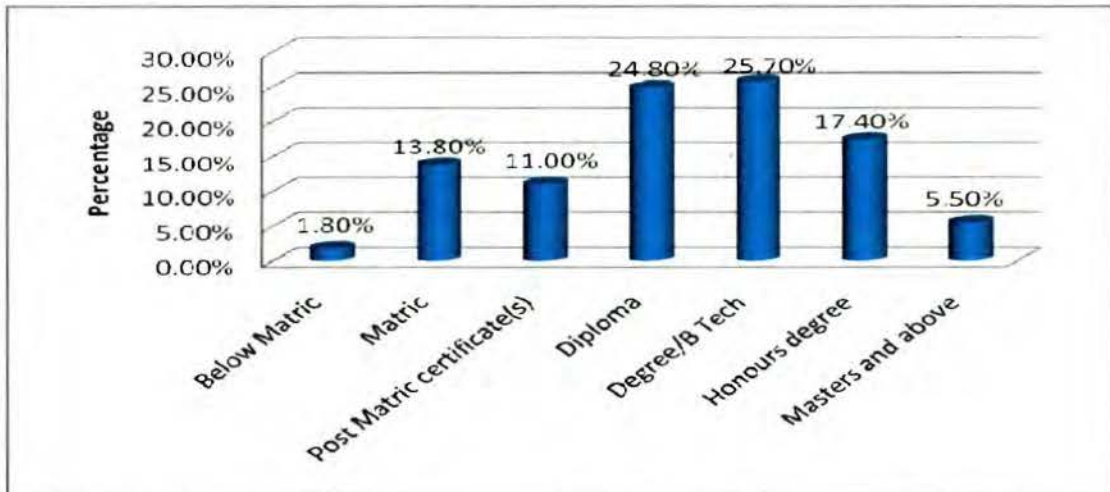


Figure 5.1 shows that 42,5% of respondents who participated are above 40 years old. Although age had nothing to do with the distribution of questionnaires to these respondents, this indicates that a higher number of them have been employed for some time and are familiar with performance appraisals and other human resources processes in the department. The information provided is likely to reflect their challenges with PAs over the years.

5.2.2 Highest educational qualification

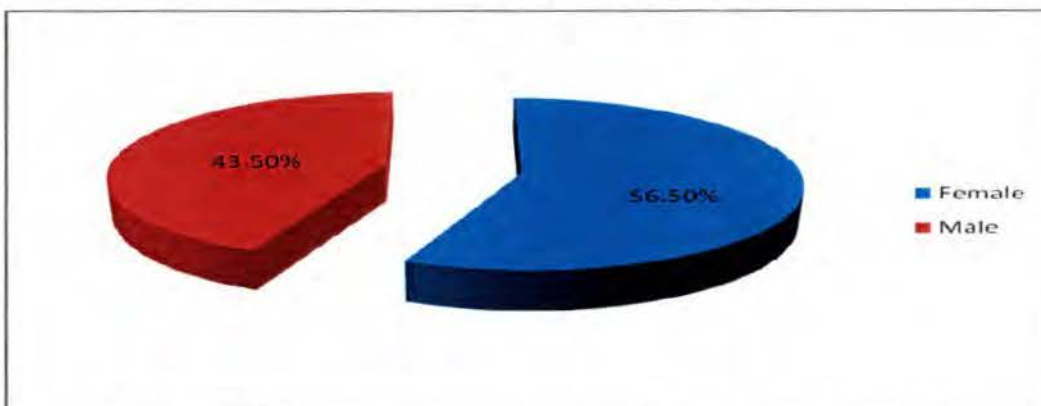
Figure 5.2: Educational qualification



The findings in figure 5.2 give an indication that many employees in the department have either a diploma or a degree qualification. There is also a very small number of employees who have masters' degrees and above. This indicates that the majority of employees are highly educated, which is an advantage to the department to have employees who are well conversant with issues of management as well as understand appraisals and being appraised. It is important for the study as well to have respondents who are conversant with the topic.

5.2.3 Gender

Figure 5.3: Gender

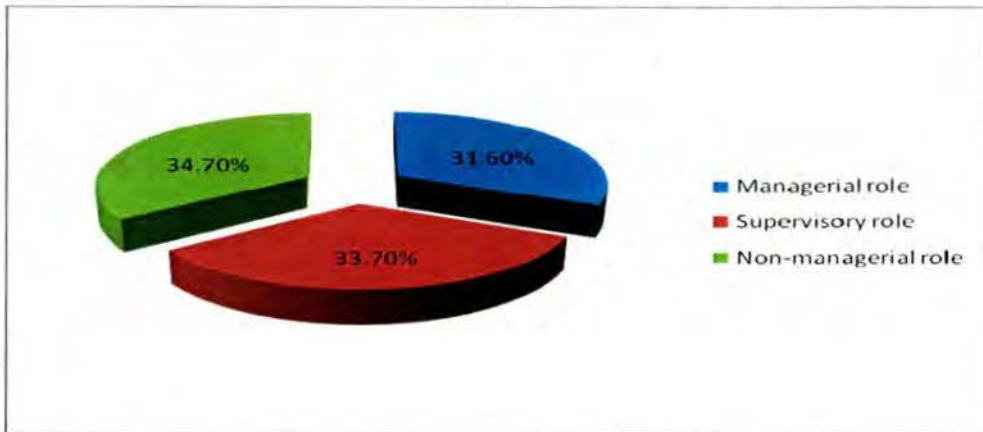


Most of the respondents (56.5%) in figure 5.3 above are females, while a minority of them (43.5%) are males. The questionnaire was distributed randomly without being biased to a particular gender. This could be attributed to the fact that the research was done to employees on salary levels 3 to 12 where the majority are females who are occupying clerical positions. It should also be noted that the majority of employees in the department are females and that

they occupy lower level positions. Males in general are fewer and are occupying more senior positions.

5.2.4 The role currently fulfilled

Figure 5.4: Role fulfilled



As reflected in figure 5.4, the majority of respondents (34.7%) are in non-manual positions, while 33.7% of them play the supervisory role in the organisation. Lastly, the minority of respondents (31.6%) are in management positions. Within the categories under investigation, the managerial role represents levels 9 to 12, supervisory 7 to 8, whilst non manual roles is represented by levels 6 and below. The majority of respondents are thus from the appraised rather than the appraiser level. The supervisory levels also form an important part as both the appraised and the appraiser. Their experience in the role is also as crucial as is the role of the managers.

5.2.5 Current salary level

Figure 5.5: Salary level

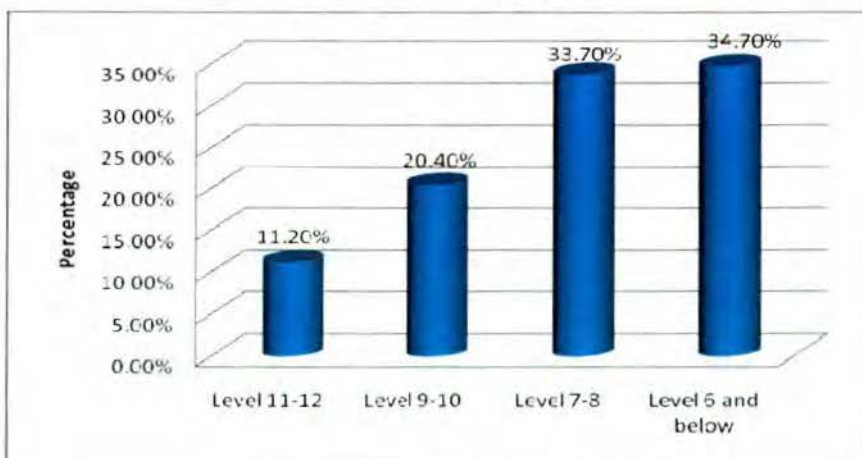
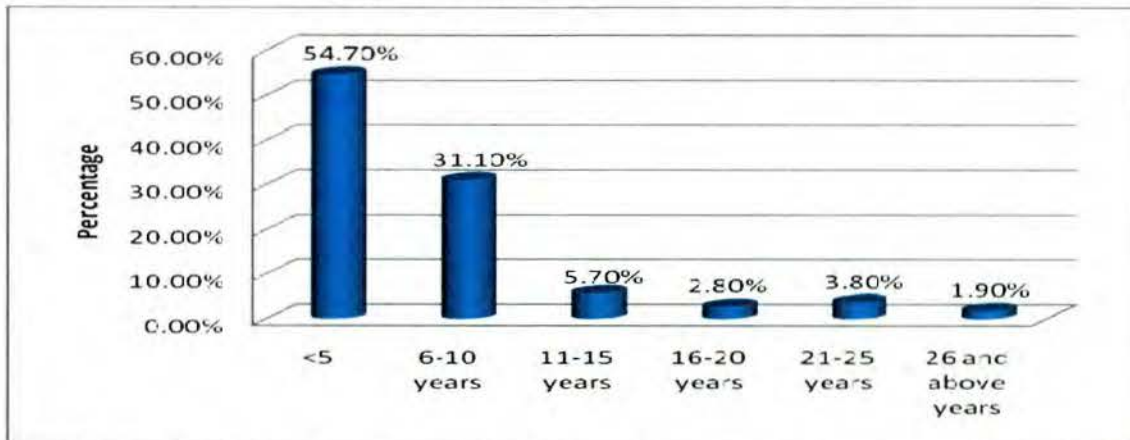


Figure 5.5 confirms what is said in figure 5.4 above, that most of the employees in the department are occupying non managerial positions and thus at low salary levels. These are employees who are faced with the challenges of appraisals in their work environment.

5.2.6 Number of years in the role

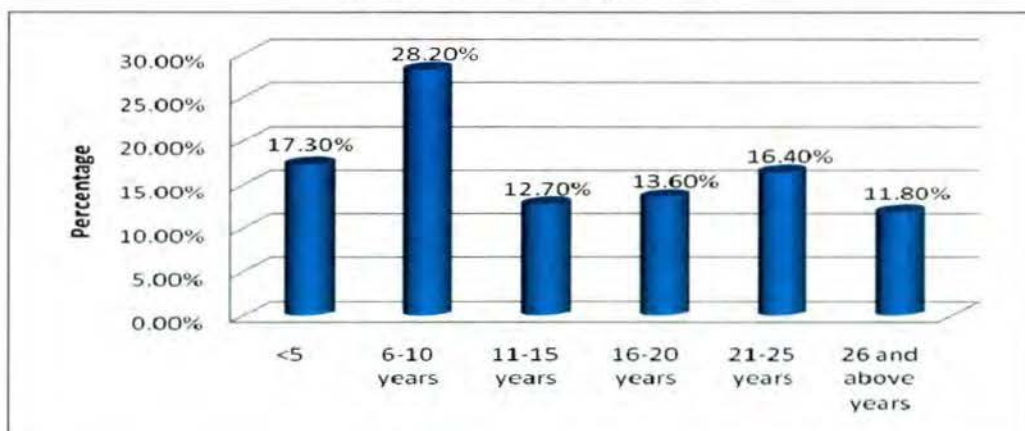
Figure 5.6: Number of years playing the role



The findings in figure 5.6 above reveal that the majority of respondents (54.7%) have less than five years in the role they are playing in the department. These figures may thus indicate that the majority of respondents have not been too long in the employ of the department and therefore do not understand the processes. The figures may also confirm that employees do not stay long in the department due to their dissatisfaction with the same processes. Their experience though, is crucial to the research and an advantage to the department.

5.2.7 Years of experience

Figure 5.7: Work experience



The findings as shown in figure 5.7 reveal that almost 55% of the respondents have more than 10 years work experience in the public service. This is crucial in the sense that information given could be considered reliable since these employees have been exposed to the public services processes overtime.

5.2.8 Has the performance ever been appraised?

Figure 5.8: Appraisal of the performance

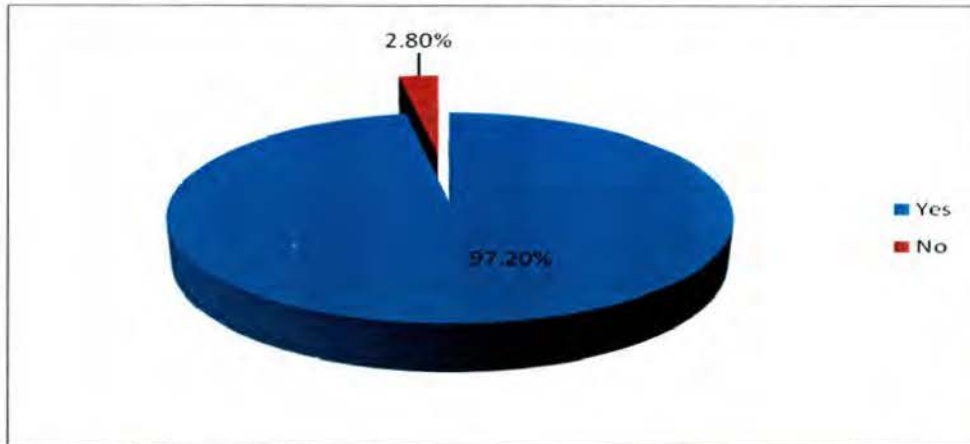
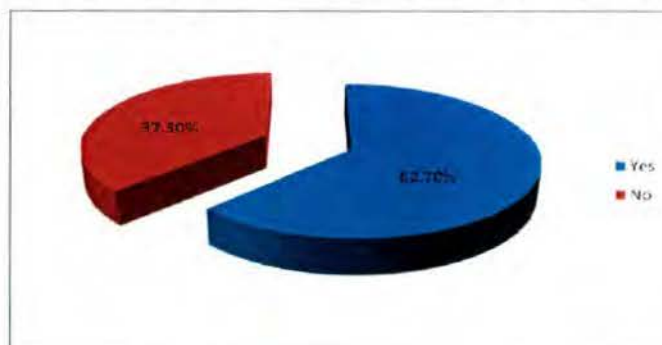


Figure 5.8 shows that majority of respondents' performance has been appraised at some stage in their work life. A minority of 2.8% of respondents indicated that their performance has never been appraised and could thus be sharing information that is based purely on wrong judgement. The findings thus indicate that most respondents have firsthand experiences and information when it comes to the appraisal of their performances. Information provided can therefore be considered reliable and not just hear-say.

5.2.9 Appraisal of someone else's performance (a subordinate or a co-worker)

Figure 5.9: Appraisal of a subordinate or a co-worker



In figure 5.9, the majority of respondents (62.7%) indicated that they have at some stage in their work life appraised other people's performance. It is very important for an employee to

have been on the appraiser side so as to experience the biasness that appraisers are normally associated with. The respondents thus have an experience of how it is like to appraise and the challenges of appraising. It is also assumed that the appraiser or “... person providing feedback has the necessary interpersonal interviewing skills to provide that feedback to people being appraised” (Prowse and Prowse, 2009: 70).

5.2.10 Relevance of performance appraisals

Figure 5.10: Relevance of performance appraisals

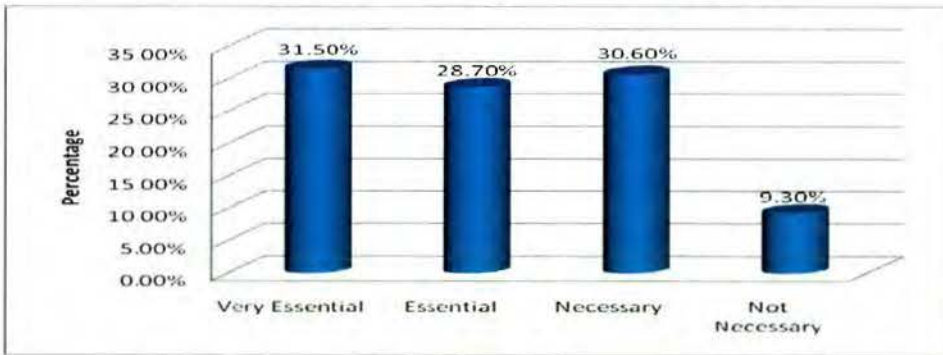


Figure 5.10 reveals that 28,70% and 31,50% of respondents feel that performance appraisals are essential and very essential respectively. Wiese and Buckley (1998: 233 – 234) support the above response that PA is important because it gives a manager an opportunity to spot performance before they become serious and to encourage the continuation of good work. But what is extremely important according to Analoui (2007: 209) is “... the management of appraisals”. Thus theory supports what majority of the respondents have indicated.

5.2.11 How regularly should performance appraisals be conducted?

Figure 5.11: Frequency of performance appraisals



As shown in figure 5.11, majority of respondents (47.3%) feel that performance appraisals should be conducted quarterly. According to Leucke (2006: 74), PAs are generally conducted annually with follow ups as and when needed. In addition, Harrington (1998: 37) also believe that “the ideal time to evaluate an individual’s performance is as as soon as work is performed”. In government, all managers are expected to have a formal performance review with their employees at least twice a year, and formal performance feedback sessions once every quarter (Policy on performance management and development – North West Department of Health 2003). Thus the respondents agree with the departmental policy or are just aligning themselves with what they found as the norm.

Table 5.3 Response percentages

No.	Item	Mean	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
1.	Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonize employees(e.g. a low rating)	3.67	43.9	56.1
2	Supervisors avoid giving a low performance appraisal because they fear that employees will try to transfer to other bosses.	4.50	27.3	72.7
3	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours, or benefits.	2.54	76.9	23.1
4	Supervisors inflate the performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information.	2.64	84.4	15.6
5	Supervisors’ performance appraisals reflect in part their personal liking or disliking of employees.	1.99	86.2	13.8
6	Supervisors’ appraisals are affected by the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do.	2.88	78.2	21.8
7	The performance ratings of employees are affected by their ability to inspire enthusiasm in the supervisor who appraises their performance.	3.04	64.5	35.5
8	Supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors.	3.39	57.8	42.2
9	The quality of the supervisor-subordinate personal relationship throughout the appraisal period (e.g., tense-relaxed; trusting-distrusting; friendly-hostile) affects the performance rating.	1.87	90	10
10	Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates.	3.06	60.6	39.4
11	Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).	3.64	36.4	63.6
12	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximize rewards for their subordinates (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).	3.72	44	56

13	Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so.	3.90	37.6	62.4
14	Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their organisation.	3.25	64.2	35.8
15	Employees holding a high status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved (i.e., regardless of their real performance, employee appraisals are affected by the organisational status of the positions they hold).	2.38	80	20
16	Supervisors give high performance ratings because they believe that their subordinates have already passed through many organisation hurdles and therefore are highly competent.	4.17	23.6	76.4
17	In assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative (acceptable) in their organisation so as to avoid disapproval by their peers.	3.51	45.5	54.5
18	Supervisors give low performance appraisals to teach rebellious employees a lesson.	2.39	78	22
19	Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees (e.g., encourage risk taking, creativity, etc).	2.34	79.1	20.9
20	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those employees who possess special characteristics (e.g. high popularity, compliancy, etc).	2.51	81.8	18.2
21	The fear that performance appraisals may threaten the self-esteem of subordinates discourages supervisors from giving negating-though accurate appraisal.	4.02	30.9	69.1
22	Supervisors give higher performance rating than is deserved in order to gain support or cooperation from their employees.	3.36	50.5	49.5
23	Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees.	2.40	83.6	16.4
24	Supervisors give equivalent performance ratings to all their subordinates in order to avoid resentment and rivalries among them.	4.15	27.3	72.7
25	Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved to those employees who control valuable organisation resources.	2.85	76.4	23.6
26	Performance appraisals in the department are only about getting rewards.	2.22	77.3	22.7
27	The criterion for assessment is based on the strategic goals of the department.	3.56	40	60
28	The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent.	4.17	21.8	78.2
29	Supervisors use performance appraisals to achieve goals of the department and to build capacity of employees.	4.05	28.2	71.8
30	Performance appraisal helps improve the performance of the department and develop skills of employees.	4.05	24.8	75.2

5.2.12 TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE (SPEARMAN'S RANK CORRELATION)

This test is concerned with the relationship between two ranked variables (X and Y). The relationship is statistically significant if the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. The coefficient of Spearman's rank correlation is given by:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6\sum D^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

where

D = differences of ranks of corresponding values of X and Y

N = number of paired values in the data

$$-1 \leq r \leq 1$$

Table 5.4 : Spearman's rank correlation between age and perception of employees about performance appraisals.

Perception		Age Category
Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonize employees(e.g. a low rating)	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.246
	p - value	0.015
Supervisors avoid giving a low performance appraisal because they fear that employees will try to transfer to other bosses.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.229
	p - value	0.022
Supervisors inflate the performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.276
	p - value	0.005
Supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.266
	p - value	0.008
Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.309
	p - value	0.002
Supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximize rewards for their subordinates (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.217
	p - value	0.031
Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.229
	p - value	0.023
Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees (e.g., encourage risk taking, creativity, etc).	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.226
	p - value	0.024

SPSS 18.0 software package was used to perform the correlation analysis and the results are shown in table 5.4. Since the p-values are less than 0.05 level of significance, then the

correlation between age category and perception of employees about performance appraisals is significant. Negative correlation coefficients imply that older employees tend to agree with the items listed in table 5.4, whereas young employees tend to disagree. A correlation coefficient ($r = 0.226$) is positive and this implies that older employees tend to disagree that supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees (e.g., encourage risk taking, creativity, etc) whereas young employees tend to agree.

Lochar and Teel (1988 *cited by* Migiro and Taderera, 2011: 3767) are of a different view on the above. According to them, an effective PA system should be based on definite written policies, procedures and instructions for its use (General information about the system should be given to all employees through a circular or separate memorandum. All factors used to evaluate performance must flow from the jobs that are being appraised and not on traits or personality characteristics, for example, age should not be a factor in determining the outcome of the assessment.

Table 5.5: Spearman’s rank correlation between educational qualification and perception of employees about performance appraisals.

Perception		Educational Qualification
Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.215
	p - value	0.024
Employees holding a high status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved (i.e., regardless of their real performance, employee appraisals are affected by the organisational status of the positions they hold)	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.195
	p - value	0.043

The p-values (0.024 and 0.043) in table 5.5 are less than 0.05 level of significance. This shows that the correlation between educational qualification and perception of employees about performance appraisals is significant. The positive correlation coefficients (0.215 and 0.195) imply that highly qualified employees tend to disagree with the statements listed in table 5.5, whereas less qualified employees tend to agree.

Table 5.6 : Spearman’s rank correlation between work experience and perception of employees about performance appraisals.

Perception		Work Experience
Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonize employees (e.g. a low rating)	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.199
	p - value	0.040
Supervisors inflate the performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.217
	p - value	0.023
Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.248
	p - value	0.009
Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so.	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.192
	p - value	0.045

The p-values in table 5.6 are less than 0.05 level of significance. This shows that the correlation between work experience and perception of employees about performance appraisals is significant. The negative correlation coefficients (-0.199, -0.217, -0.248 and -0.192) imply that more experienced employees tend to agree with the statements listed in table 5.6, whereas less experienced employees tend to disagree.

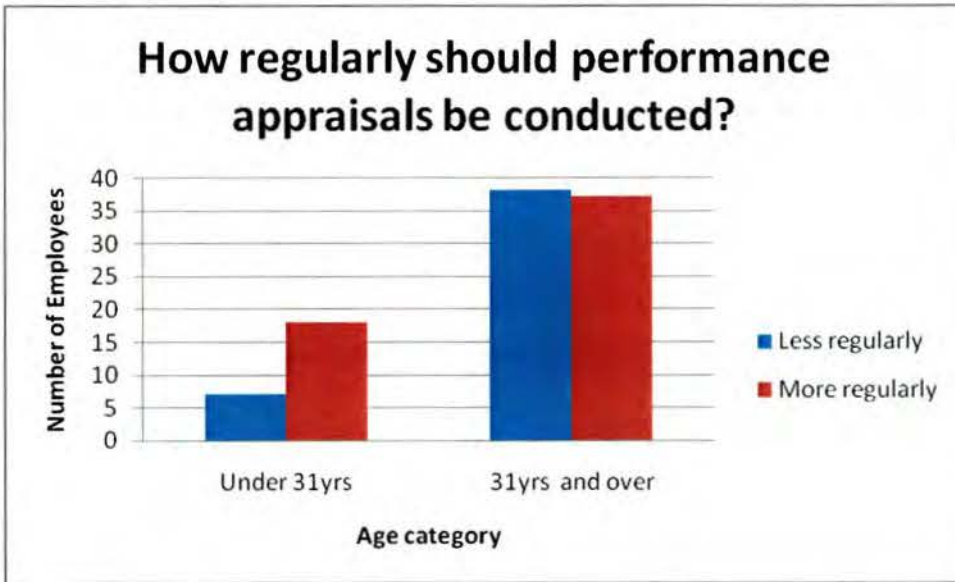
Table 5.7 : Spearman’s rank correlation between period of conducting performance appraisals and age, educational qualification and work experience of employees.

Item		Period
Age	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.269
	p - value	0.007
Educational Qualification	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.223
	p - value	0.020
Work Experience	Correlation coefficient(r)	-0.213
	p - value	0.025

The p-values in table 5.7 are less than 0.05 level of significance. This shows that the correlation between the period of conducting performance appraisals and age, educational qualification and work experience of employees is significant. The negative correlation coefficients (-0.269, -0.223 and -0.213) imply the following:

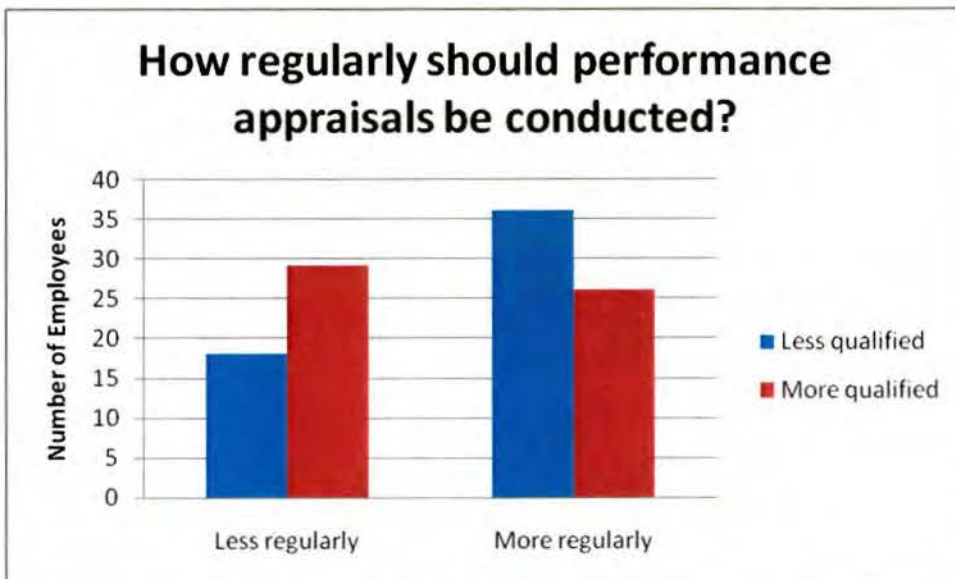
(Graphs depicting results of table 5.7 above)

Figure 5.12.1 Age



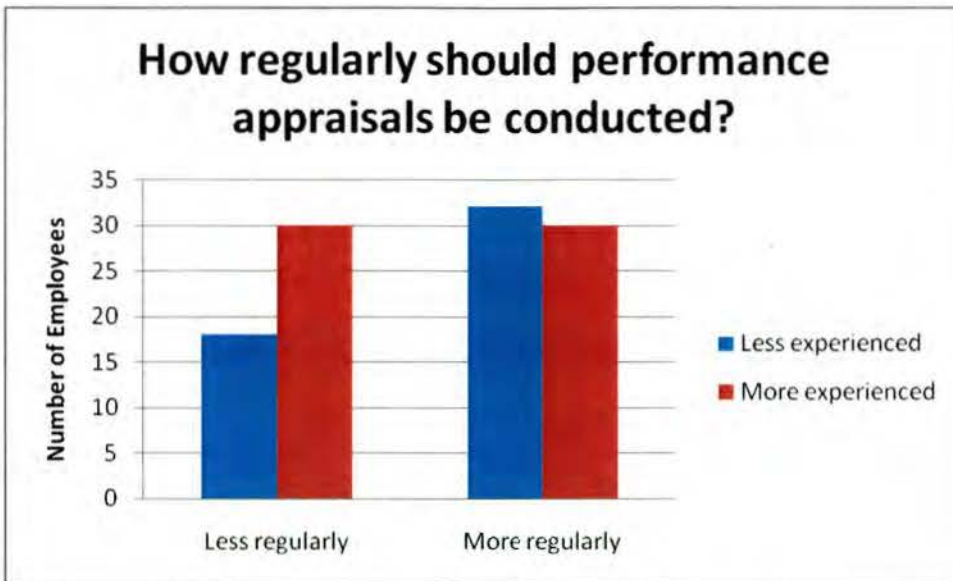
Older employees tend to believe that performance appraisals be conducted less regularly, whereas young employees tend to believe that performance appraisals be conducted more regularly.

Figure 5.12.2 Educational qualifications



More qualified employees tend to believe that performance appraisals be conducted less regularly, whereas less qualified employees tend to believe that performance appraisals be conducted more regularly.

Figure 5.12.3 Work experience

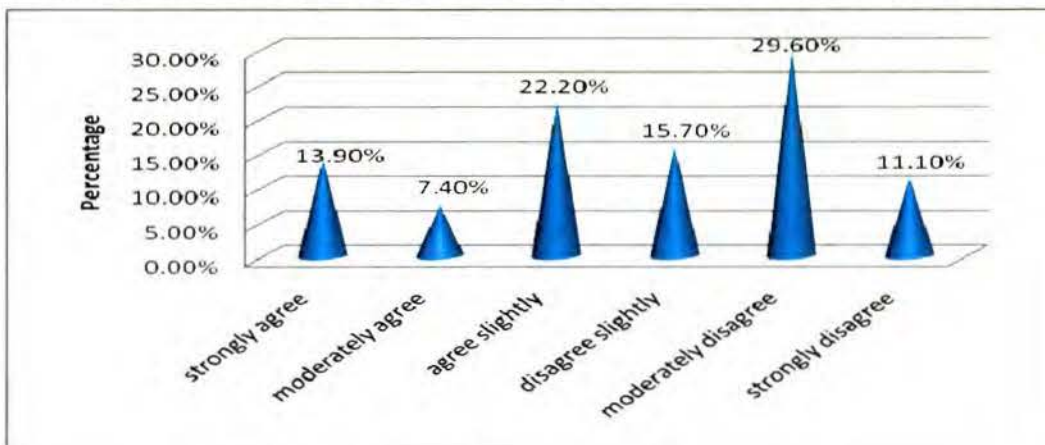


More experienced employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted less regularly, whereas less experienced employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted more regularly.

5.3 SECTION B: POLITICISATION OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

5.3.1 Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonise employees

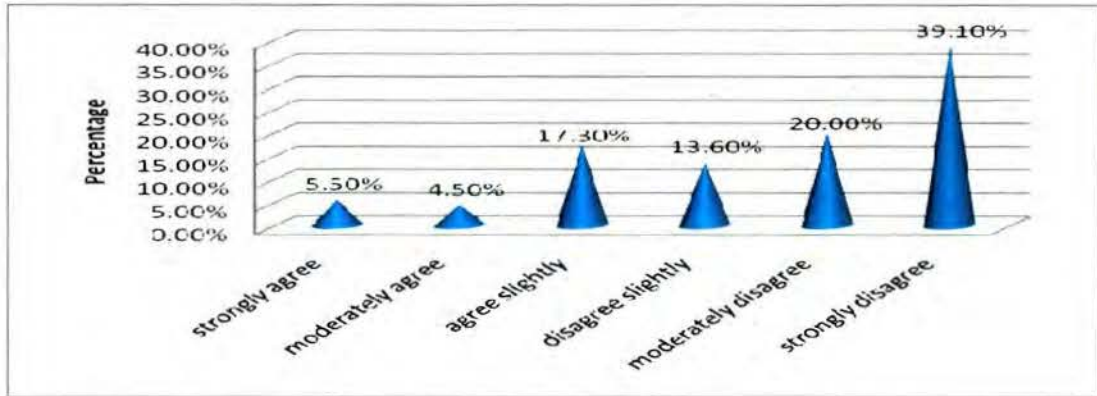
Figure 5.12: Avoidance to give performance appraisals that may antagonise employees



The findings in figure 5.12 reveal that, the majority of respondents (56.4%) disagree that supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonise employees, instead, they believe that “...supervisors use PAs as a vehicle to get results that they want, which may include barring someone from promotion...”(Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 62). This therefore means that supervisors give any performance appraisals regardless of how employees may feel about them.

5.3.2 Supervisors avoid giving a low performance appraisal because they fear that employees will try to transfer to other bosses

Figure 5.13: Avoidance to give low performance appraisal by supervisors



As reflected in figure 5.13, the results show that supervisors do not avoid giving low performance appraisals fearing that employees will try to transfer to other bosses, instead, Dhiman and Singh (2007: 77) believe that some of the goals that superiors attempt to achieve through PA include "... sending a signal to the subordinate to leave the organisation". Once again, the results might mean that performance appraisals given by supervisors are not fair, or they may just give low performance appraisals without caring as to how employees would react to them.



5.3.3 Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours, or benefits

Figure 5.14: Inflating performance appraisals of other people for benefits

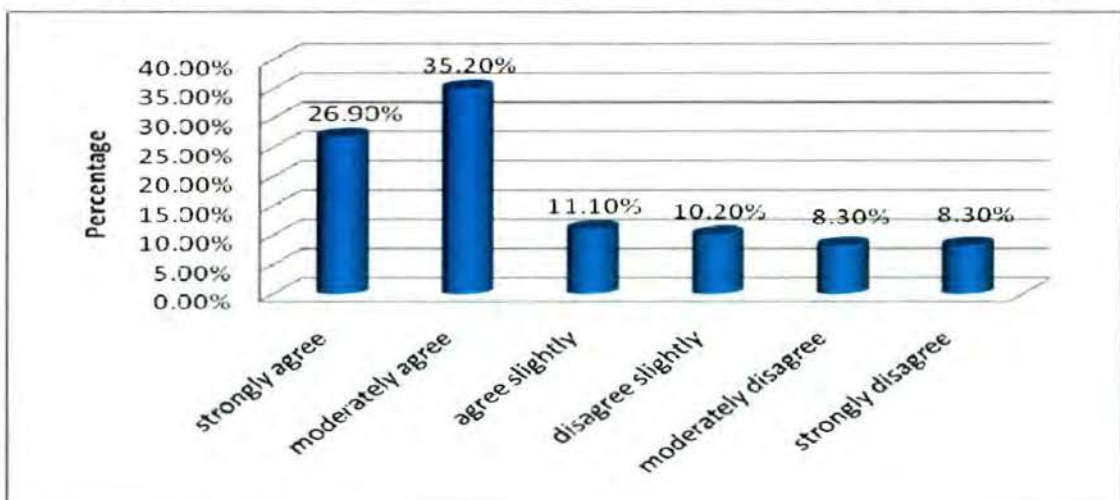
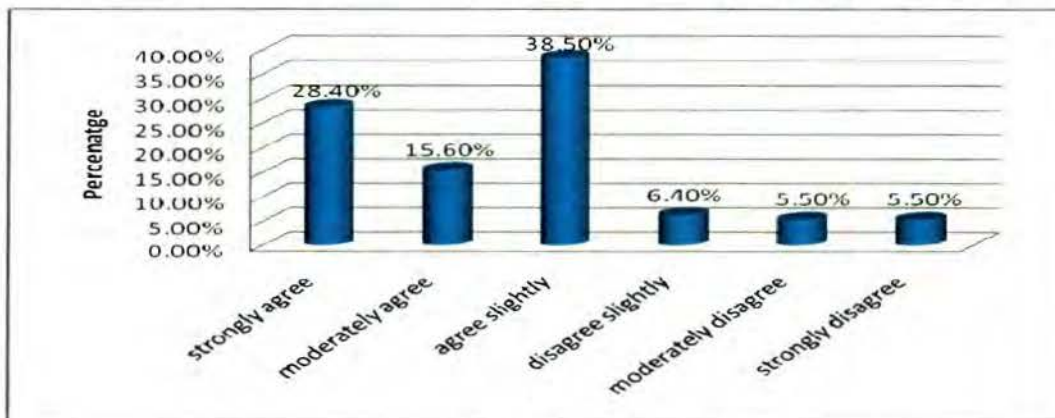


Figure 5.14 shows that the majority of respondents, more than 73%, indicated that supervisors do inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours or benefits. These results reveal that performance appraisals are not handled fairly, and that "... assessors are motivated to manipulate the process to get rewards for their people. This assessor behaviour has been termed as loyalty, sympathy, concern, conflict avoidance and most importantly power seeking (Longenecker, 1997: 215). The results show that there is a strong favouritism in performance appraisals.

5.3.4 Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information

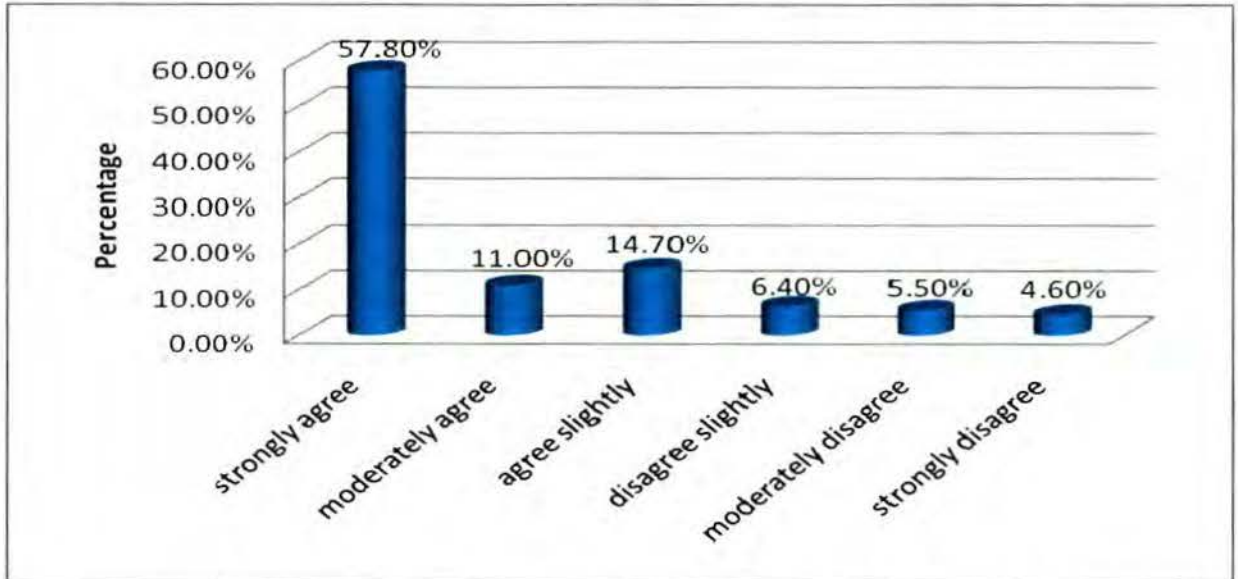
Figure 5.15: Inflating performance appraisals of employees with access to information



As reflected in Figure 5.15, the high percentage of those respondents who agree that supervisors inflate performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information paints a picture that reveals the department's poor administration and/ or management of performance appraisals. It further suggests that supervisors use performance appraisals for their own personal gain, and not to improve service delivery, develop and reward employees appropriately.

5.3.5 Supervisors' performance appraisals reflect in part their personal liking or disliking of employees

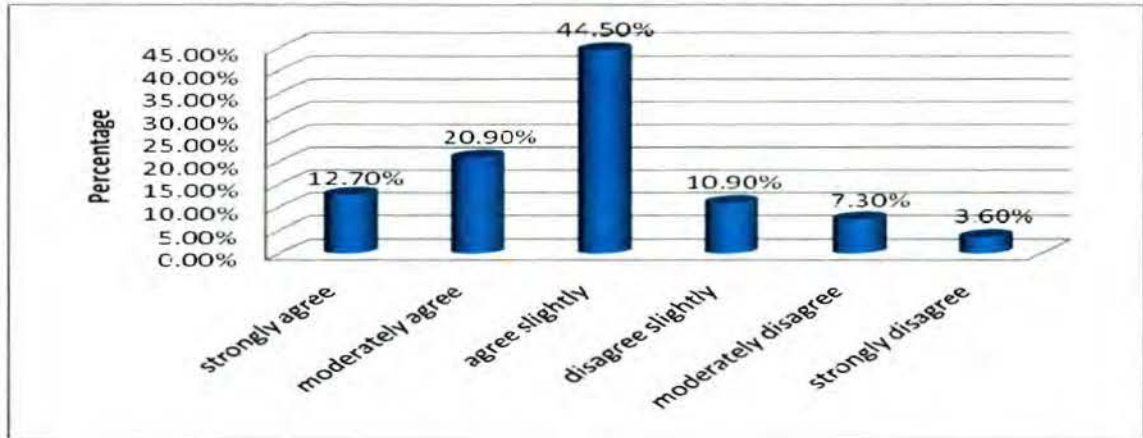
Figure 5.16: Performance appraisals reflect personal liking or disliking of employees



The majority of respondents (57.8%) in figure 5.16 strongly agree that supervisors' performance appraisals reflect their personal liking or disliking of employees. This is also confirmed by Dhiman and Singh (2007: 77) when they mention that assessors inflate or deflate the performance ratings while ignoring the employee's actual performance. Some effort has also been directed toward demonstrating that appraisal is, in addition to everything else, a highly emotional process. When emotional variability gets dragged into the process, any hope of obtaining objectivity and accuracy in appraisal waltzes right out the office door (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 183). This gives an impression that involving emotions, whether of liking or not liking an employee, hampers the implementation and management of performance appraisals in the department. One could also deduce that performance appraisals in the department are used as a punitive exercise to employees who are disliked by supervisors.

5.3.6 Supervisors' appraisals are affected by the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do

Figure 5.17: Supervisors' appraisals are affected by the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do



In figure 5.17 the sum of the respondents who agree slightly, moderately and strongly with the statement, highlight yet another weakness in the performance appraisals within the department. Employees who are perceived to share the same basic values as supervisors may be given good performance appraisals than those who do not irrespective of their actual performance.

5.3.7 The performance ratings of employees are affected by their ability to inspire enthusiasm in the supervisor who appraises their performance

Figure 5.18: Performance ratings are affected by employees' ability to inspire enthusiasm in the supervisor

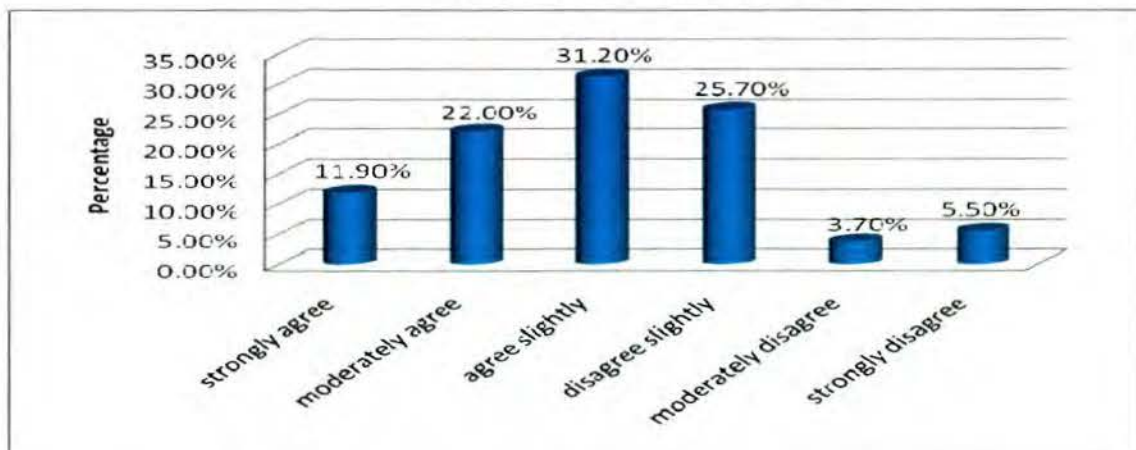
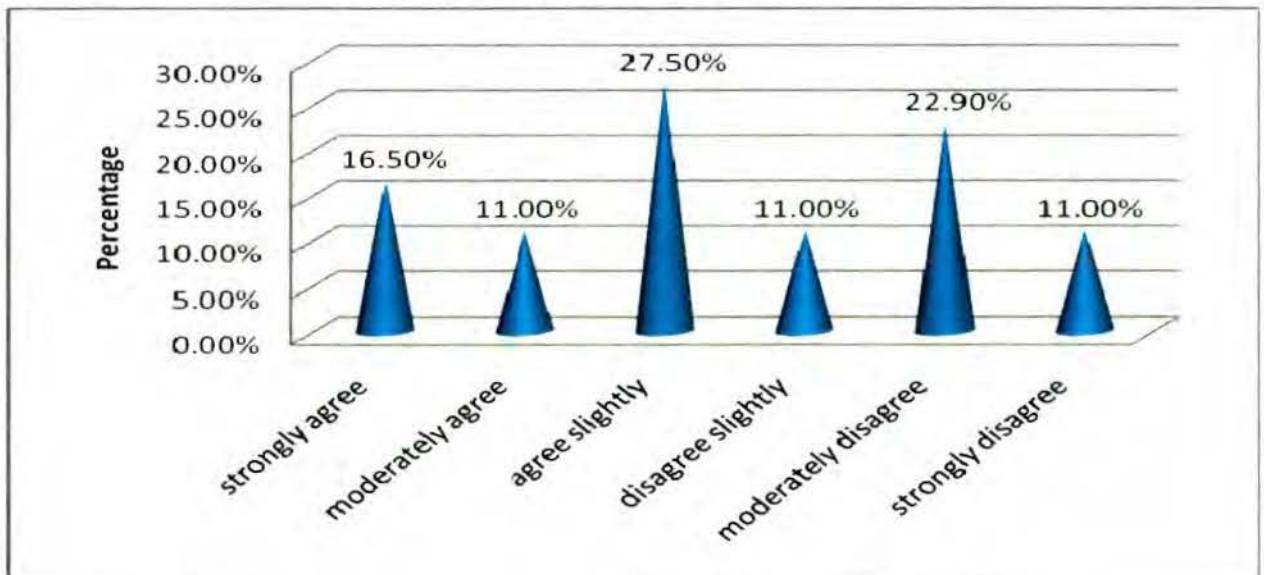


Figure 5.18 shows that the high percentage of respondents who agree slightly, moderately and strongly indicates that supervisors' ratings are dependent on what they regard as enthusiasm inspired by their subordinates. This perception means that employees who have no ability to inspire their supervisors, in the way understood by the supervisor only, would not get better performance ratings.

5.3.8 Supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors

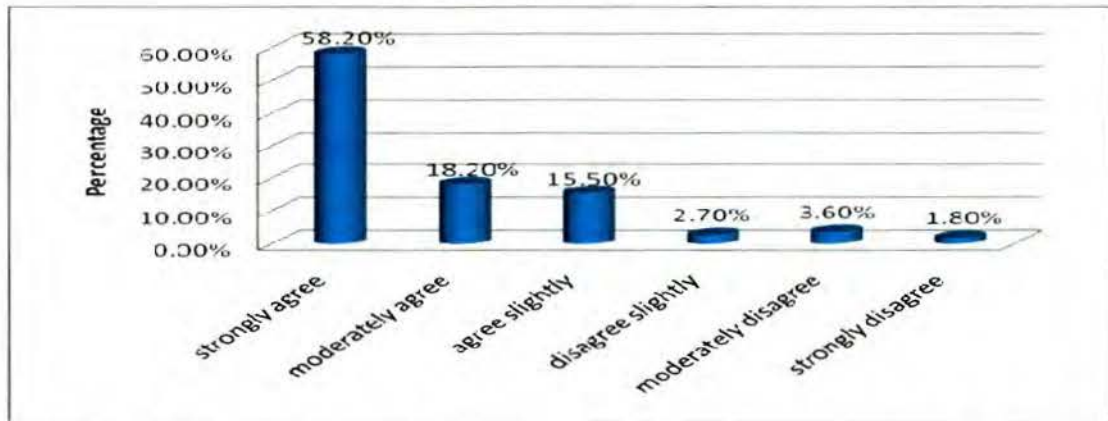
Figure 5.19: Performance appraisals that make supervisors look good to their own supervisors are given



The findings in figure 5.19 show that the sum of the respondents who agree that supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors gives an indication that performance appraisals are not done for the benefit of the employees and the organisation, but rather to score points with their peers and seniors or create a good impression in the eyes of the superiors (Dhiman & Singh, 2007: 77).

5.3.9 The quality of the supervisor-subordinate personal relationship throughout the appraisal period affects the performance rating

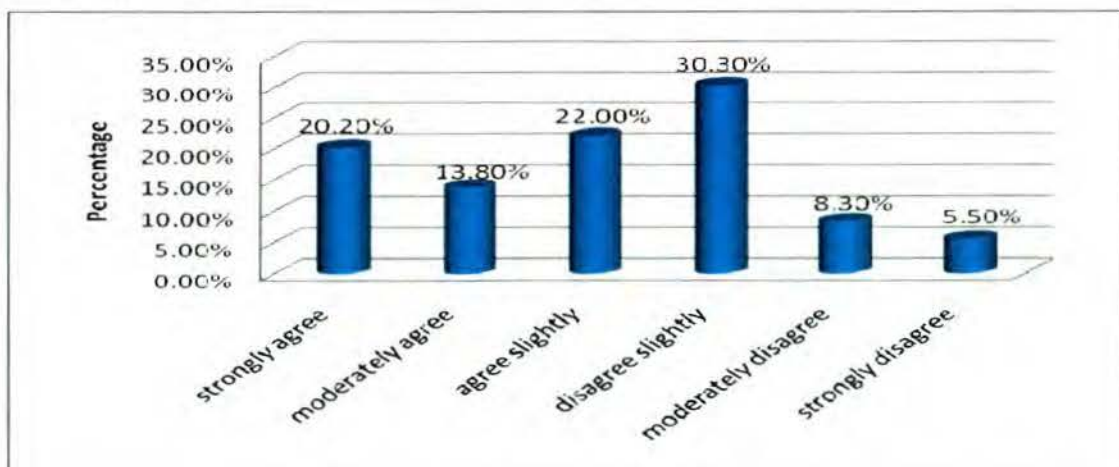
Figure 5.20: Quality of the relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate affects performance ratings



In figure 5.20 the findings reflect that more than 90% of the respondents agree that the quality of the supervisor-subordinate personal relationship in an organisation affects the performance rating. This gives an indication that performance rating is not done in a healthy and fair way in the department. It also implies that when performance rating is done, supervisors do not focus on the performance of individuals, but emotions and personal feelings cloud their judgement.

5.3.10 Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/ uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates

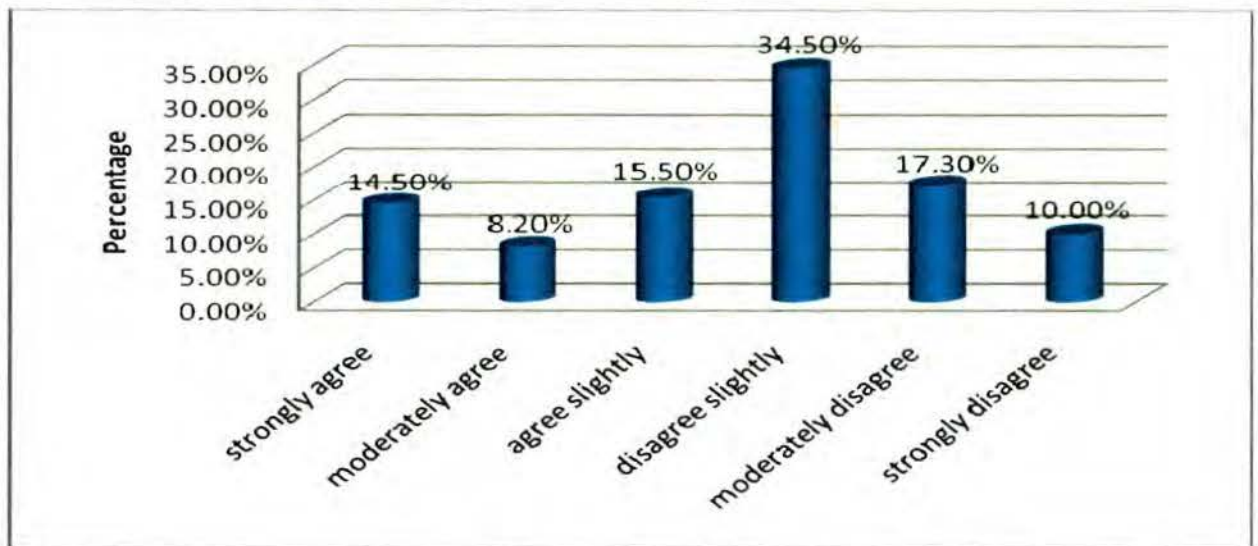
Figure 5.21: Supervisors give inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative feedback sessions



As reflected in figure 5.21, the findings indicate that indeed supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative or uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates. This normally happens when an employee or employees belong to a union that is most feared in the organisation or especially in an organisation that is highly unionised. The supervisor will thus avoid any confrontation with members themselves or their representatives, and rather inflate their performance scores especially where they do not have any evidence on the performance.

5.3.11 Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc)

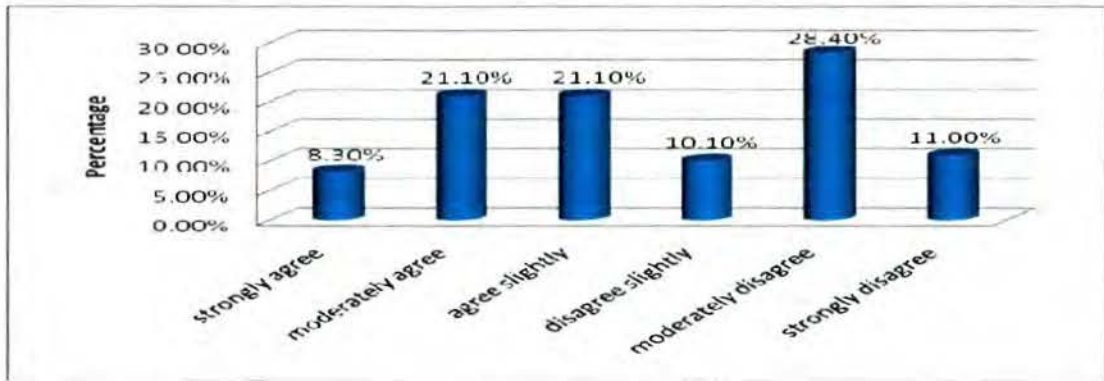
Figure 5.22: Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees



As shown in figure 5.22, more than 60% of the respondents disagree that supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees. This means that supervisors do not consider other variables, such as those which may have negative consequences for the employees when giving performance appraisals. Supervisors are likely to stick to what they want to see happen, whether good or bad.

5.3.12 Supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximize rewards for their subordinates (e.g. salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc.)

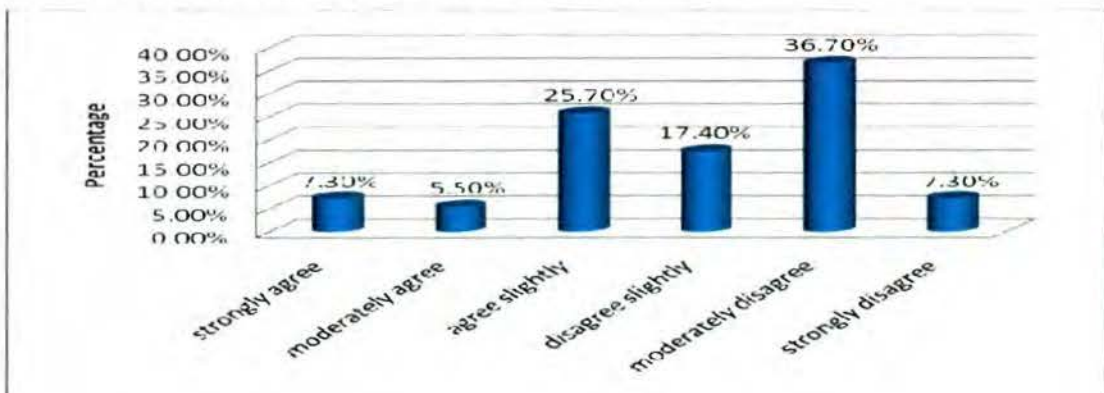
Figure 5.23: Performance appraisals are inflated in order to maximise rewards for subordinates



The findings in figure 5.23 reveal that although the results show that a percentage of those respondents who agree that supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximize rewards for their subordinates is slightly higher than those who oppose it, it can be assumed that some supervisors do inflate performance appraisals of their subordinates, whilst others do not. This can also indicate that inflating performance appraisals is for the supervisor's own personal gain rather than the reward for the subordinate or repaying a favour.

5.3.13 Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so

Figure 5.24: Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so



More than 60% of the respondents in figure 5.24 disagree that supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so. This could mean that supervisors unconditionally produce accurate performance appraisals. On the other hand it could mean that supervisors do not produce accurate performance appraisals at all. Supervisors are rarely held accountable for the performance appraisal outcomes of their subordinates in the department. Their rewards are not dependant on them appraising employees accurately.

5.3.14 Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their organisation

Figure 5.25: Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their organisation

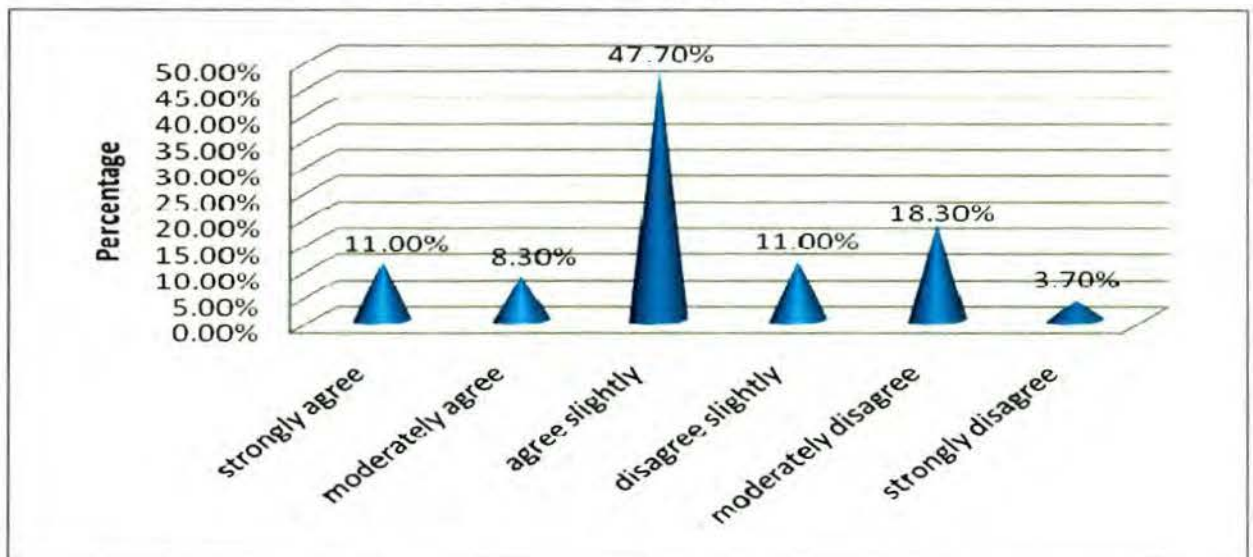
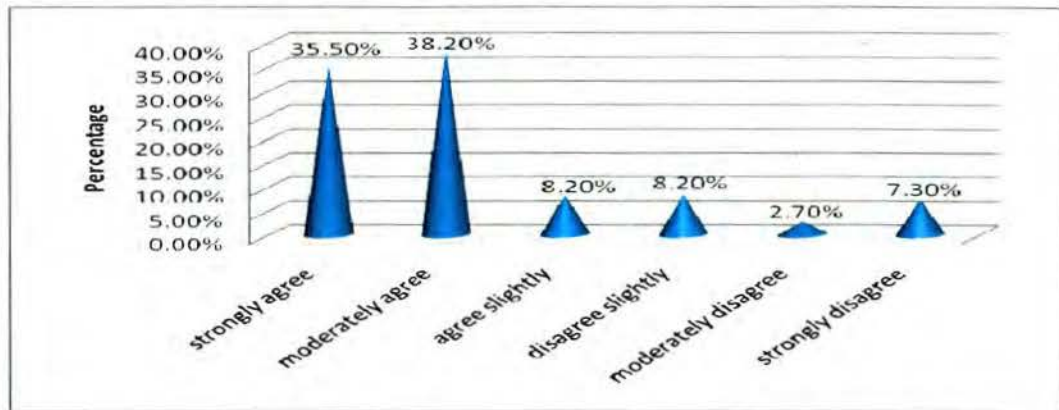


Figure 5.25 reveals that most respondents (67%) actually agree that supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their organisation. These results could mean that supervisors are not interested in appraising the performance of their subordinates, and that they are only doing it because they are required to do so.

5.3.15 Employees holding a high status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved

Figure 5.26: Employees holding a high status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved



The findings tabled in figure 5.26 make it clear that performance appraisal in the department is not fair, since a very high majority agree that employees holding a high status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved. This could be due to a number of reasons including those outlined in figures 5.14 – 5.16 above.

5.3.16 Supervisors give high performance ratings because they believe that their subordinates have already passed through many organisation hurdles and therefore are highly competent

Figure 5.27: High performance ratings are given because subordinates are perceived to be competent since they passed through many organisation hurdles

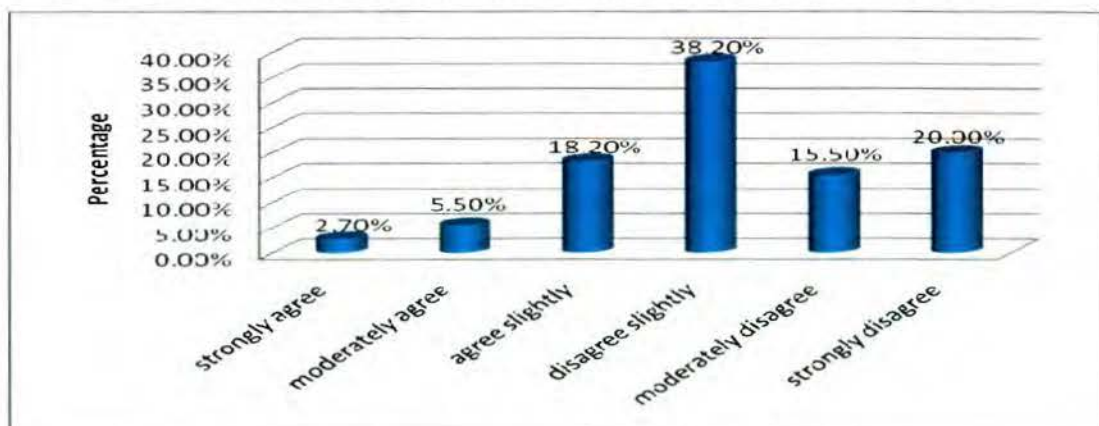
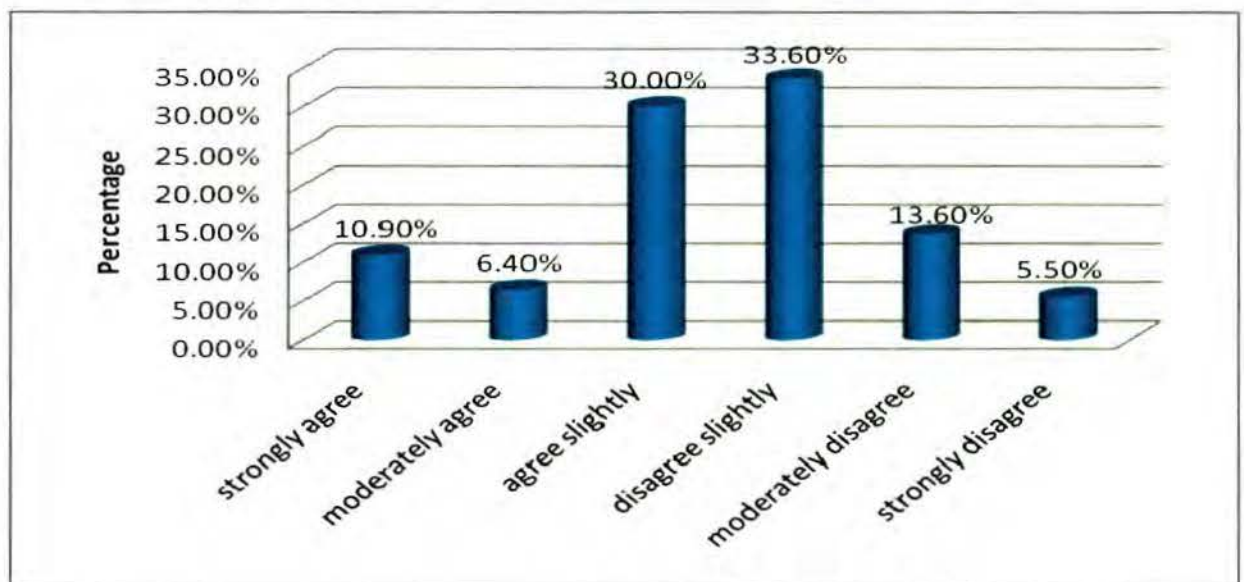


Figure 5.27 shows that supervisors do not give high performance ratings because they believe that their subordinates have already passed through many organisation hurdles and therefore are highly competent. This could imply that supervisors' ratings are fair, in that they are not influenced by experience without checking the employees' actual performance. It could also indicate that supervisors' focus is not wide enough to check other factors that affect performance when appraising employees.

5.3.17 In assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative (acceptable) in their organisation so as to avoid disapproval by their peers

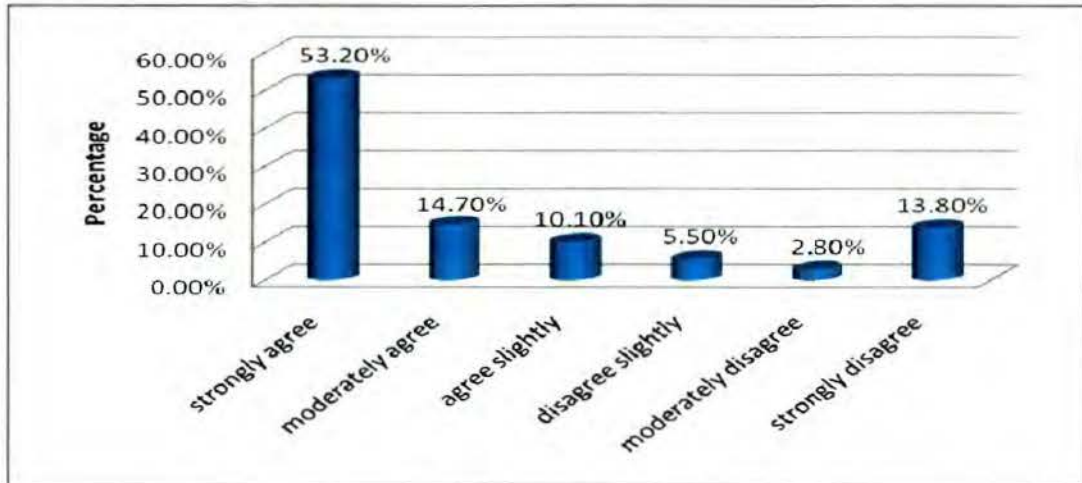
Figure 5.28: In assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative in their organisation



The majority of respondents in figure 5.28 disagree that in assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative in their organisation so as to avoid disapproval by their peers highlights the fact that supervisors do whatever they want to do in assigning ratings, without conforming to what is normative. In most cases, supervisors will do what they think is good for them and will benefit them. On the contrary, Gioia & Longenecker (1994: 56) are of the view that, politics at the executive level begets politics in the rest of the organisation. If the top of the organisation is characterised by politically driven promotions, bonuses and rewards, similar practices are sure to occur at lower levels.

5.3.18 Supervisors give low performance appraisals to teach rebellious employees a lesson

Figure 5.29: Supervisors give low performance appraisals to teach rebellious employees a lesson



The majority of respondents in figure 5.29 strongly agree that supervisors give low performance appraisals to give rebellious employees a lesson. Longenecker et al. (1987: 190) support the view that supervisors sometimes deflate appraisals in order to shock a subordinate back on to a higher performance track, and to teach a rebellious subordinate a lesson of who is in charge, to send a message to a subordinate that he or she should consider leaving the organisation, and to build a strongly documented record of poor performance that could speed up the termination process. These findings further reveal that performance appraisals are not handled properly and fairly in the department. The results show that some employees are unfairly victimised through the use of performance appraisals.

5.3.19 Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees

Figure 5.30: Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees

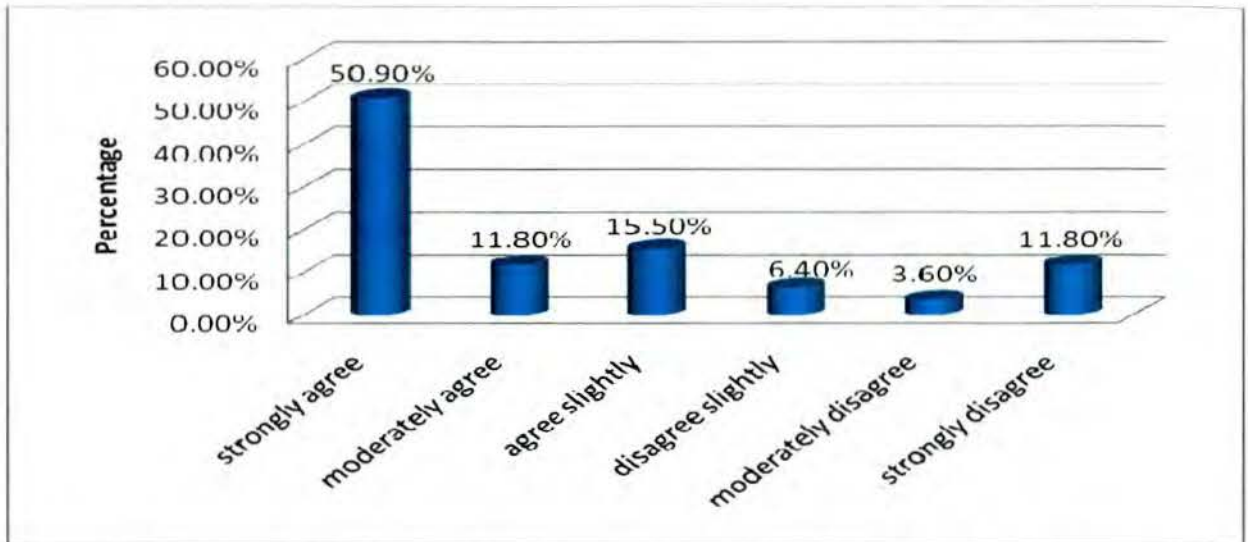
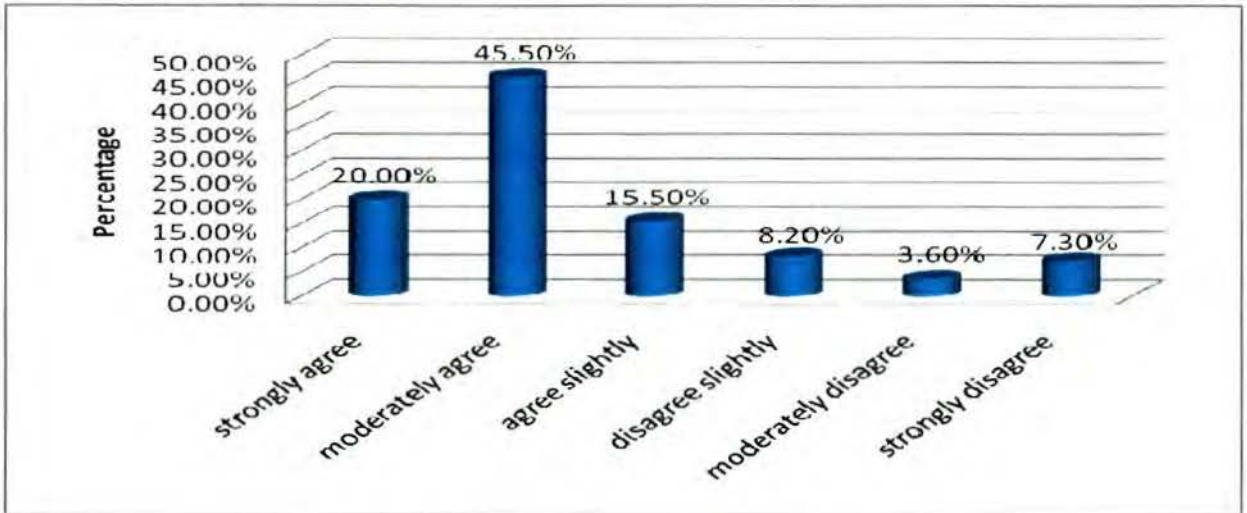


Figure 5.30 shows that a very high percentage of respondents agree that indeed supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees. Once again, one could say that this is not a good practice. Performance appraisal should focus on the performance of employees in doing the work which was planned with the supervisor. Supervisors should devise other strategies to motivate and mobilise employees to do the work better.

5.3.20 Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those employees who possess certain characteristics (e.g., high popularity, compliancy, etc)

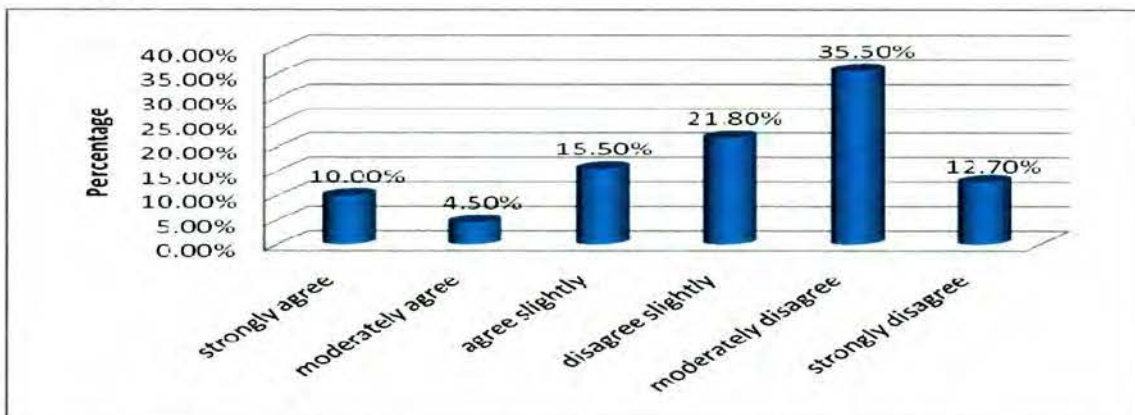
Figure 5.31: Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those employees who possess certain characteristics



As highlighted in figure 5.31, the findings are clear that supervisors have favouritism or biasness when appraising the performance of staff. One could state that the practice is not good, since the standard of compliancy is set by the supervisor. This could thus cause dissatisfaction and low morale among staff, and could lead to low or poor production and/ or service delivery.

5.3.21 The fear that performance appraisals may threaten the self-esteem of subordinates discourages supervisors from giving negating though accurate appraisal

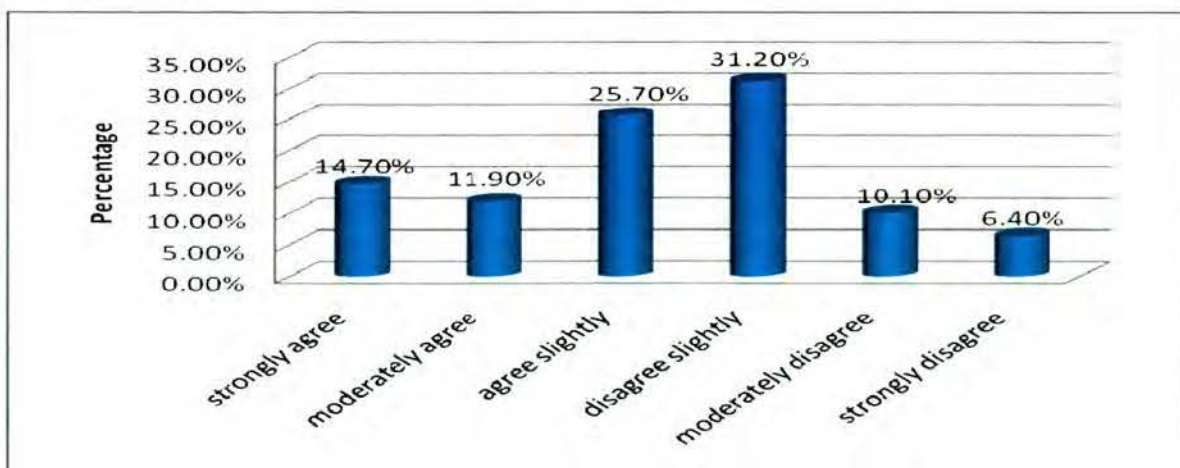
Figure 5.32: The fear that performance appraisals may threaten the self-esteem of subordinates discourages supervisors from giving negating though accurate appraisal



As shown in figure 5.32, the findings reveal that supervisors do not have the fear that giving negating though accurate performance appraisals will threaten the self-esteem of subordinates. Consequently, supervisors are not discouraged to give negating appraisals instead they look forward to discrediting and killing the self-esteem of employees.

5.3.22 Supervisors give higher performance rating than is deserved in order to gain support or cooperation from their employees

Figure 5.33: Higher performance ratings are given to gain support or cooperation from employees



The findings in figure 5.33 indicate that the majority of the respondents agree that supervisors give higher performance rating than is deserved in order to gain support or cooperation from their employees. Literature has uncovered that most of the following aspects can cause harm to the effectiveness of PAs: exemptions to the highly visible employees, conducting of PA to punish the low performers, rewards on non-performance, doubts in the minds of performers about appraisal's after effects, organisation's politics that leads to disturb performance of targeted employee, use of fundamentally flawed appraisals, focus on encouraging individualism, which automatically discourages teamwork/collaboration, inconsistencies in setting and applying appraisal criteria, focus on extremes, appraisal's focus on the achievement of short-term goals, support to autocrat supervisors, subjectivity of appraisal results and creation of emotional anguish in employees, use of vague qualities and irrelevant measurement criteria, use of useless checklist for evaluation, monologues instead of dialogues in feedback sessions, reluctance of appraisers to offer feedback, supervisors' misguidance to appraiser, inaccuracies at supervisor/organisation's end (Ishaq *et al.*, 2009: 480).

5.3.23 Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees

Figure 5.34: Higher performance appraisals are given in order to repay favours

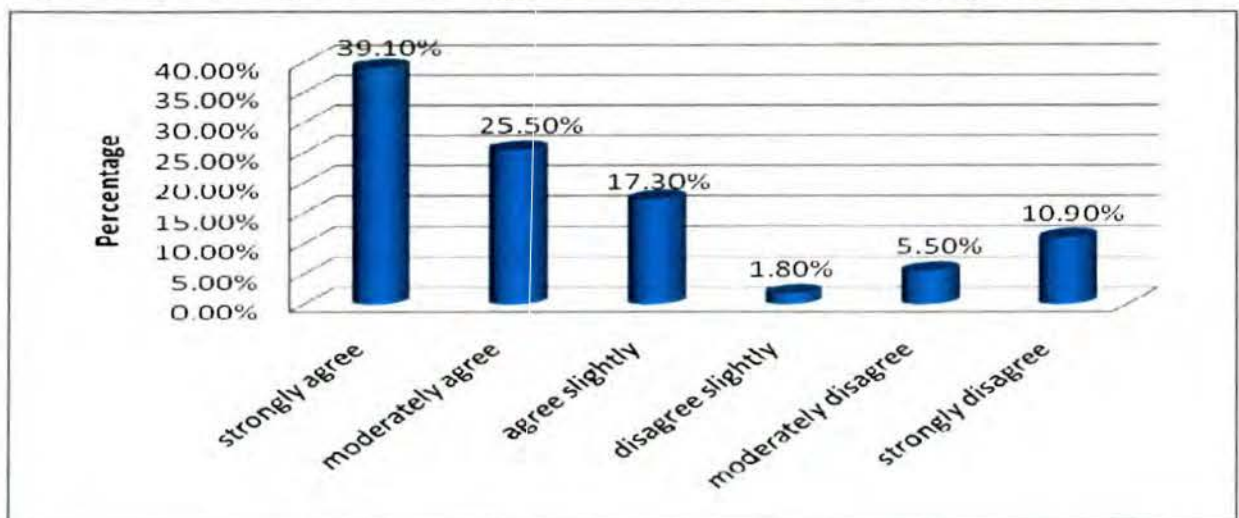


Figure 5.34 show that 81.9% of the respondents agree that supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees as

discussed in figures 12 and 15 above. Once again, this situation reveals the poor handling and management of performance appraisal in the department.

5.3.24 Supervisors give equivalent performance ratings to all their subordinates in order to avoid resentment and rivalries among them

Figure 5.35: Equivalent performance ratings are given to all subordinates

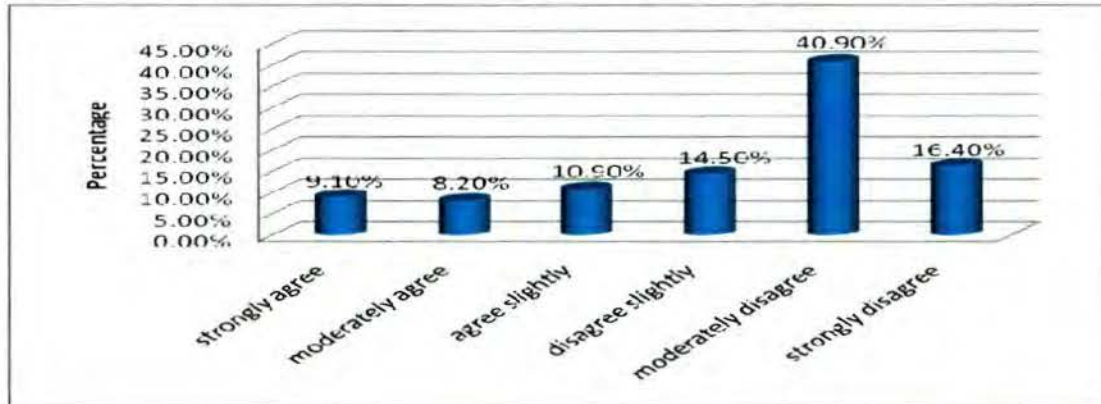
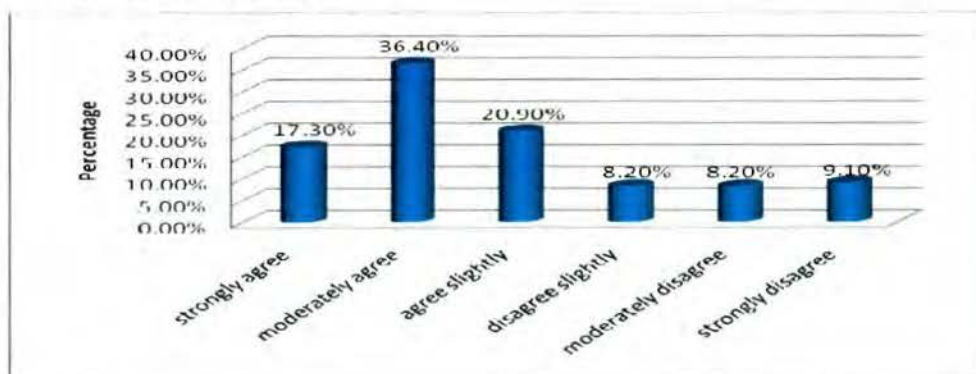


Figure 5.35 reveal that supervisors do not give equivalent performance ratings to all their subordinates in order to avoid resentment and rivalries among them, instead they promote individuality through the way they conduct the appraisals. At the end of the appraisal process, only an individual is credited for a job that needed or was done through team effort.

5.3.25 Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved to those employees who control valuable organisation resources

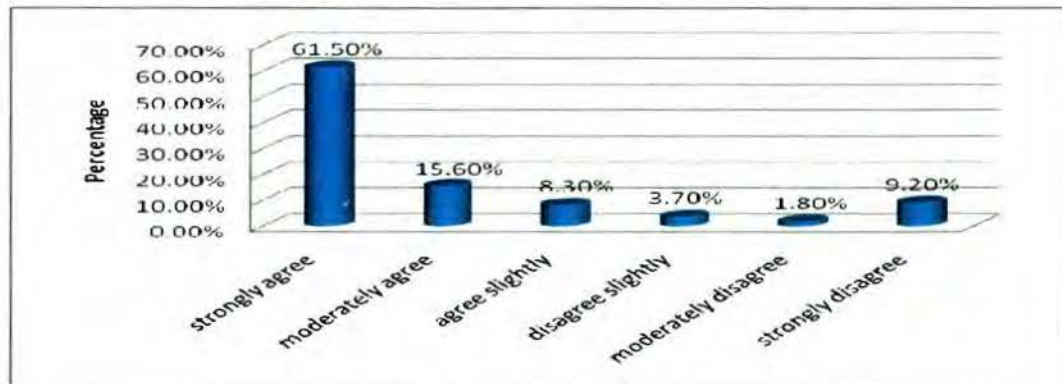
Figure 5.36: Higher performance appraisals are given to employees who control valuable organisation resources



The findings in figure 5.36 clearly show that supervisors in the department unfairly give higher performance appraisals to employees who control valuable organisation resources. Once again, this practice could be seen as poor performance appraisal management that needs to be resolved.

5.3.26 Performance appraisals in the department are only about getting rewards

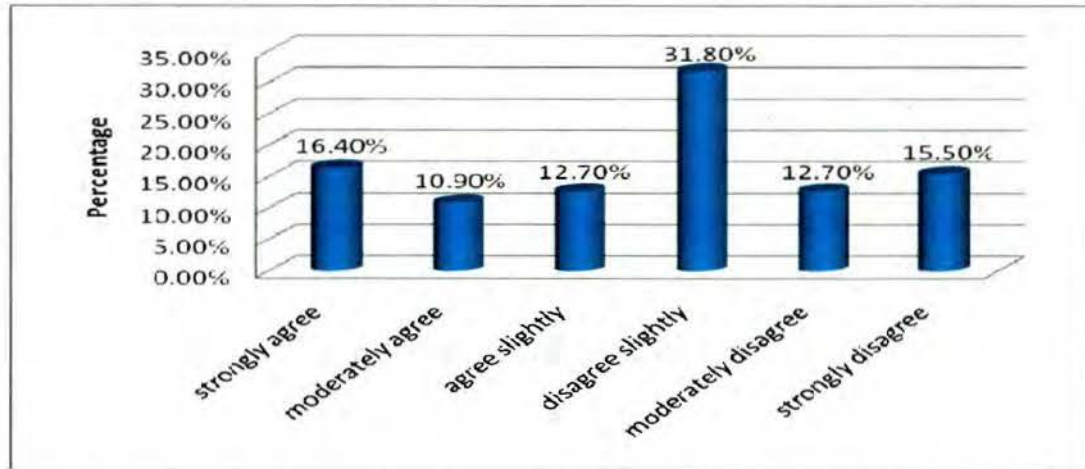
Figure 5.37: Performance appraisals are only about getting rewards



The results in figure 5.37 indicate that indeed performance appraisal in the department is only done for getting rewards. This means that employees are unhappy about the way in which performance appraisal is handled; as a result they just agree to be assessed for the sake of getting rewards, that is, if they get those rewards.

5.3.27 The criterion for assessment is based on the strategic goals of the department

Figure 5.38: The criterion for assessment is based on the strategic goals of the department



The findings in figure 5.37 of this study show that the criterion for performance assessment in the department is not based on its strategic goals. This is because management sees the process of aligning organisational goals/objectives as they apply to an individual to be a long, challenging and difficult one (Harrington, 1998: 37).

5.3.28 The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent

Figure 5.39: The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent

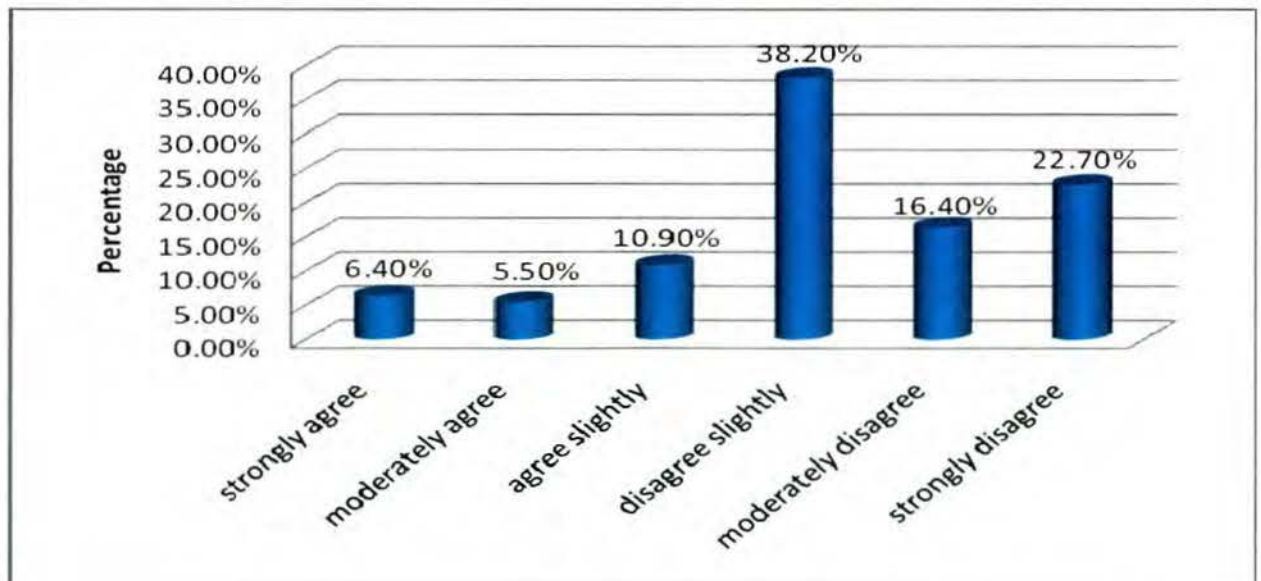
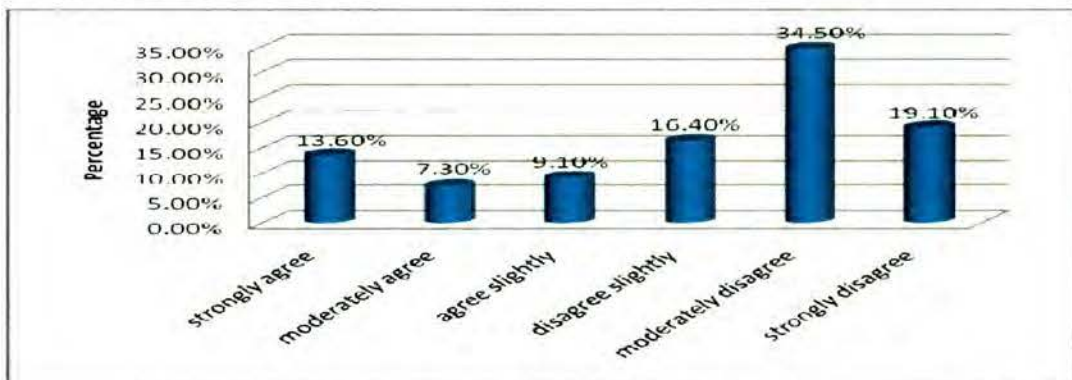


Figure 5.39 shows that the PA procedure in the department is not fair and transparent. It is necessary to have a standardised process of implementing PAs because it ensures that each individual is judged fairly and keeps discrimination out of promotions and compensation decisions. Moreover, having a standardised process ensures that job performance expectations are consistent throughout (www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data). It is also important for appraisal process to involve various stakeholders who will pursue different goals (Dhiman & Singh, 2007: 77). When employees believe that processes are not standard and consistent, they will not believe that it is fair and transparent like it is the case above.

5.3.29 Supervisors use performance appraisals to achieve goals of the department and to build capacity of employees

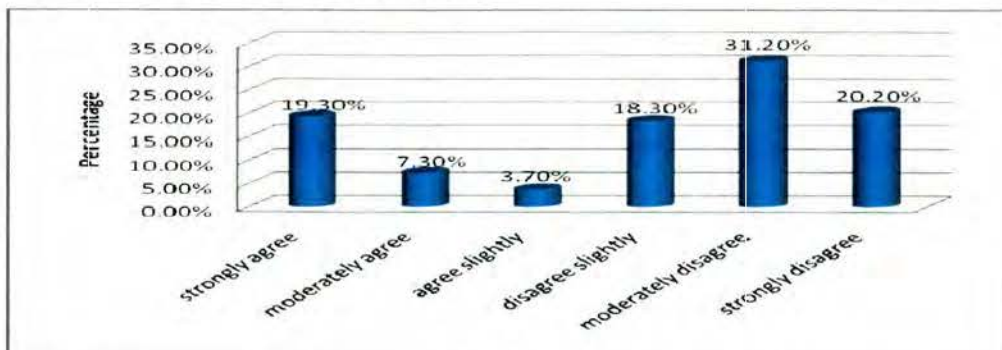
Figure 5.40: Performance appraisal is used to achieve goals of the department and build capacity of employees



In Figure 5.40 above, the findings reveal that in the department supervisors do not use PAs to achieve departmental goals and to build capacity of employees. Analoui (2007: 212) concurs that appraisal process begins with the establishment of clear, sound objectives and measurable performance standards. Further, the expectations a manager has in terms of work performance from the employees must be clear and coherent enough so that they can be communicated, and mutually agreed and acted upon in accordance with the established standards. If these are not achieved, this could be seen as a fruitless effort, for both supervisors and employees.

5.3.30 Performance appraisal helps improve the performance of the department and to build capacity of employees

Figure 5.41: Performance appraisal helps improve the performance of the department and to build capacity of employees



The findings in figure 5.41 reveal that 69,7% of the respondents disagree (either slightly, moderately and strongly) that PA helps improve the performance of the department and to build capacity of employees. According to Letsoalo (2007: 42), PA is a fundamental requirement for improving the productivity of an organisation’s human resources because it is through appraisal that each individual’s productivity is evaluated. Although in theory PA is supposed to improve the performance of the department and help to build capacity, the response shows that it is not happening in the department. One could state that this is once again a fruitless exercise, an exercise which only aims to give some employees financial rewards.

5.3.31 T – test between two independent samples

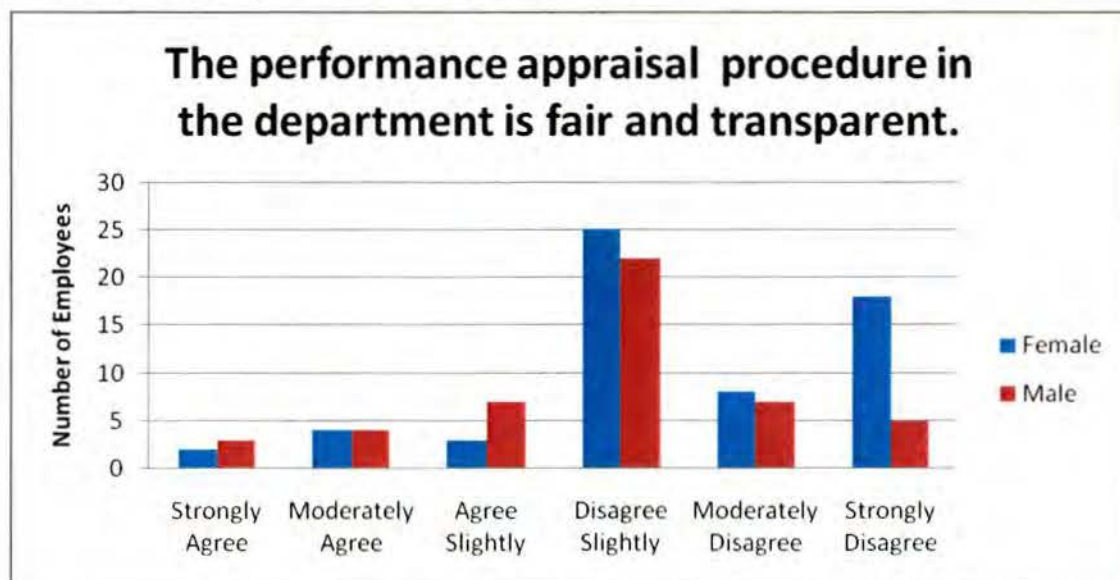
Table 5.8: Comparing perceptions (views) of male and female employees concerning performance appraisal

Item	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	p-value
The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent.	Female	60	4.45	0.020
	Male	48	3.85	

The statistical software package (SPSS 18.0) was used to perform a t-test between two independent samples (male and female employees) in table 5.8. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, it means that there is a significant difference of opinions concerning performance appraisal. The mean score (4.45) of the female employees is higher than that (3.85) of the male employees. This indicates that female employees tend to disagree with the item listed in table 5.8, whereas male employees tend to agree (see Figure 5.42 below).

It is thus not surprising that male employees believe that PAs in the department is fair and transparent as Carter & Delahaye (2005: 7-8) write that several extensive reviews have supported the notion that males receive better reviews than females do. Specifically, it was found that raters with traditional stereotypes of women evaluate the performance of female ratees less favourably and that these behaviours occurred when the purpose of the appraisal was administrative, that is, when dealing with pay, promotions, transfers and retrenchments. Thus it could be argued that, for females, the performance appraisal is a more stressful event than for males.

Figure 5.42 Comparison between male and female



5.3.32 Chi-square test of independence

This test of independence is concerned with the relationship between two different factors (or categories) in a population under study.

Hypotheses:**H₀:** Row and column categories are independent (i.e. no relationship)**H₁:** Row and column categories are not independent (i.e. relationship exists)**Significance level :** 1%, 5% or 10%**Chi-square statistic** = $\sum[(o - e)^2 / e]$, o=observed, e=expected frequency**Degrees of freedom (df)** = (r - 1)(c - 1), r = rows, c = columns**Rejection region :** p-value (i.e. probability value) \leq 1% , 5% or 10%**Table 5.9: Cross-tabulation of employee opinions about performance appraisals by gender.**

	The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent.		
Gender	Agree	Disagree	Total
Female	9	51	60
Male	14	34	48
Total	23	85	108

Chi-square=3.193 p-value=0,074 df = 1

Excel software package was used to perform a chi-square test for the data in table 5.9. The chi-square statistic and the p-value with one degree of freedom are 3.193 and 0.074, respectively. Since the p-value is less than 10% level of significance, then the opinion of employees about the performance appraisal procedure in the department is significantly dependent on their gender. It means that the majority (14/23 = 61%) of employees who tend to agree that the performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent are men, whereas the majority (51/85 = 60%) of the employees who tend to disagree are women.

5.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented data obtained from the research instrument that focused on the politicisation of PAs. The data was summarised statistically in tables, graphs and figures. An interpretation of the tables and graphs was also outlined by the researcher. To this end, the findings revealed that there is a form of politicisation in the way in which the process is conducted in the North West Department of Health and Social Development.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the weaknesses in the PA process in the department, and whether it is politicised. This chapter discusses the conclusions derived from the results of the study. The summary of the study is looked at, together with the responses or findings to research questions, suggestions from the findings as well as limitations. The recommendations of the study are also made.

6.2 Summary of the study

Given the results of the study, the following conclusions were reached:

This research revealed that there is some form of politicisation in the way in which PAs and its processes are conducted in the department. The results show that the correlation between age category and the perception of employees about PA is significant since the p-values are less than 0.05. This means that there is certainly a different way that younger and older people perceive some aspects of PA. It was also found out that the correlation between educational qualifications and work experience and PA is significant. Furthermore, the findings of the spearman's rank correlation also showed that the correlation between the period of conducting PA and age, educational qualifications and work experience is also significant.

It is therefore important that when PAs are held, managers or raters should be aware that PAs are not a "one size fits all". Again, jobs differ in content and expected results, thus it is important that organisations develop different sets of PA that will cover specific task/jobholders (Migiro and Taderera, 2011: 3767).

6.2.1 How regularly should performance appraisals be conducted?

The response from table 5.7 indicates that, older employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted less regularly, whereas young employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted

more regularly. Again, it is indicated that more qualified employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted less regularly whereas less qualified employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted more regularly. It is also indicated that more experienced employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted less regularly whereas less experienced employees tend to believe that PAs be conducted more regularly

6.2.2 The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent

Table 5.9 shows that out of 110 respondents, only 108 responded to this question. Of the 108, 60 are female whilst 48 are male. The majority of male respondents (61%) indicated that PA procedure in the department is fair and transparent whilst the majority of respondents from females, that is 60% disagree with the above.

6.3 Response to research questions

The main findings of the research in relation to research questions are discussed below and each is discussed separately. Only the major findings that directly relate and respond to the research questions and objectives are considered.

6.3.1 What are the weaknesses in the performance appraisals in the North West Department of Health and Social Development?

The PAs in the North West Department of Health and Social Development have a number of weaknesses as shown by the responses from the outcome of the research. The following have been identified for discussion as they show a high response rate by respondents:

- Inflating PAs for favours;
- Personal liking or disliking of people, or personal relationships and sharing common values with supervisors; and
- PAs for rewards only.

The results show that a high percentage of respondents agree that supervisors give higher performance appraisal results than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees. Once again, this situation reveals the poor handling and management of performance appraisal in the department.

Coetsee (2002: 144) is of the view that one of the most common deficiencies of performance evaluation systems is that unnecessary factors are measured, such as certain irrelevant personality traits, for example, in figures 5.29 & 5.30, seventy eight percent (78%) of the respondents agree that supervisors give low performance appraisals to teach rebellious employees a lesson as well as to send a message to their employees. These findings reveal that performance appraisals are not handled properly and fairly in the department. Supervisors use them to settle personal vendettas or differences which makes it a serious weakness. The findings further show that some employees are unfairly victimised due to other things than their actual performance through the use of performance appraisals. Once again, one could say that this is not a good practice. Performance appraisal should focus on the performance of employees in doing the work which was planned with the supervisor; and not to be used as a way to discourage risk taking, creativity, etc. Supervisors should devise other strategies to motivate and mobilise employees to do the work better.

Performance should be limited to the evaluation of employee goal attainment, employee compliance with the shared values of the organisation, and the extent to which managers, supervisors and employees live these values. In the case of supervisors and managers, it is also important to measure the extent to which they unlock and utilise the potential of their team members. This implies that the performance of managers and supervisors should also be measured in terms of their core task – the extent to which they have succeeded in making their team members successful (Coetsee, 2002: 144).

Other weaknesses according to Analoui (2007: 211-212), are that too often, many jobs have vague and unclear performance standards, as such the employees have to guess what is expected of them. Worse still, the performance standards are often set in isolation from employees, and this creates alienation and a lack of identification on their part. It is vital therefore to create a two-way channel of information between the managers and the employees regarding performance standards and expectations.

Figure 5.37 reveals that indeed performance appraisal in the department is only done for getting rewards. This may mean that employees are unhappy about the way in which performance appraisals are handled; but are doing it anyway hoping to qualify and to get rewards.

6.3.2 Are performance appraisals politicised in the North West Department of Health and Social Development?

According to Gioia & Longenecker (1994: 48), many organisations either ignore the existence of politics in the appraisal process or assume that its impact can be minimized if they refine their appraisal instruments. For good or bad reasons, supervisors and managers make advance decisions of what they want to see happen and then use ratings as a vehicle to get those results. The goal may be to get someone a hefty pay raise or to ensure that someone is barred from promotion and this result in politicisation (Coens & Jenkins, 2000: 64).

The weaknesses outlined in 6.3.1 above, are good examples of politicisation in an organisation whereby management discretion is high and determines the success or failure of his or her subordinates. This happens to the extent that processes such as work appraisals, promotions or transfers rest on ill-defined, poorly known, or ambiguous criteria, such perceptions are exacerbated (Gandz & Murray, 1980: 249). It suggests that supervisors use PAs for their own personal gain, and not to improve service delivery, develop and reward employees.

According to Figure 5.14, more than 73% of respondents indicated that supervisors do inflate PAs of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours or benefits. These results reveal that PAs are not handled fairly. In a nutshell, the results show that there is a strong favouritism in PAs. Figure 5.15 also supports this view whereby a high percentage of those respondents who agree that supervisors inflate PAs of employees who have access to valuable sources of information paints a picture that reveals the department's poor administration and/ or management of PAs.

6.4 Recommendations

From the results of this study the following recommendations are given to supervisors and managers of the department with regard to the way they conduct performance appraisals:

- On the issue of inflating results, managers should realise that perceptions of procedural unfairness can adversely affect employees' organisational commitment, job satisfaction, trust in management and performance as well as their work related stress, theft and inclination to litigate against the employer (Heslin & Vande Walle, 2009: 1-2);

- On the fact of PAs being about rewards only, managers should consider separating assessment for development and assessment for rewards. Linkage to rewards outcomes reduces or eliminates the developmental value of appraisals (www.performance-appraisal.com/intro.htm);
- To eliminate any problems of bias, discrimination, favouritism, or the like, a PA system needs to include a review mechanism. The next higher level of management, usually the evaluator's immediate supervisor, should automatically review all evaluations of employees made by subordinate managers. The purpose of this managerial review is for auditing the evaluation for fairness, consistency, accuracy, and assuring that the evaluator has carried out his or her function objectively.
- Organisations should also have appraisal appeal procedures. An appeal process would seem to serve three purposes: 1) it protects employees from unfair appraisals; 2) it protects the organisation from potential charges of unfairness; and 3) it helps assure that appraisers do a more conscientious job evaluation because they know their appraisals are subject to examination by others in the organisation (Allan, 1994, Curath and Humprey, 2008 *cited by* Migiro and Taderera, 2011: 3768).

It is vital therefore to create a two-way channel of communication between managers and employees regarding performance standards and expectations as Analoui (2007: 212) puts it, so that the managers are not accused of politicising appraisals.

6.5 Limitations

This study has been limited to the department of Health and Social Development, head office only, which could limit the generalisations of the findings. The districts, which form a major part of the department, have not been included.

6.6 Conclusion

From the results presented and discussed in Chapter 5, the following conclusions with regard to politicisation of PAs in the North West Department of Health and Social Development can be made:

- More than 73% and 82% of respondents respectively indicated that supervisors do inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours or benefits and those who have access to valuable sources of information; and
- Almost 84%, 90% and 78% agree that supervisors' PAs reflect in part their personal liking or disliking of employees as well as the quality of their relationship, and the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do. 90% of respondents also believe that employees holding a high status position in the organisation will get a higher PAs than is deserved.

The following conclusion is thus made that there are weaknesses in the manner in which PAs in the department are conducted. It has also been confirmed that the process is highly politicised as could be seen by the high percentage rates given by respondents. The objectives of the study were thus met. The recommendations to management are highlighted.

It is important for organisations to note that, "politics in employee appraisal will never be entirely squelched. More candidly, there is some place for politics in the appraisal process to facilitate necessary executive discretion. The goal then, is not to arbitrarily and ruthlessly try to eliminate politics but, instead, to effectively manage the role politics plays in employee appraisal" (Longenecker *et al.*, 1987: 191).

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Covering letter

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: POLITICISATION OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

Dear Respondent,

I need your assistance through participating in a research project to study Performance Appraisals. I need to understand the perception and or views of employees of the Department of Health & Social Development: Health Branch at Head-Office, on the politics around the performance appraisals and how these affect their performance and motivation.

Although you will be assisting the researcher, your participation is **voluntary**. There are no risks to you or your privacy if you decide to participate. The information will be used for academic purposes only. I will be happy to share the results with you, if you so wish. If you do not feel comfortable to answer the questions, simply return the questionnaire.

How to complete the questionnaire

The survey consists of two sections, namely, **Section A**, on the demographics and **Section B** on the actual questionnaire part. Please complete all details in full. These will be kept as confidential as possible. Section B of the questionnaire has six (6) possible responses, select only one.

If you choose to participate, **please answer all questions** and make a cross (x), with a **pen** not pencil, on only one of the possible answers, and answer as honestly as you can.

Thank you very much for your time and for agreeing to participate in this research.

Researcher: Nancy Mangonyane – 082 464 7525 or (018) 387 5744

Supervisor: Professor Sonia Swanepoel (North West University)

APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL

Section A DEMOGRAPHICS

Please indicate your response by making a cross in the appropriate block.

1.	Age	<25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46 and above	
2.	Highest educational qualification	Below Matric (Grade 12)	Matric	Post Matric certificate(s)	Diploma	Degree / BTech	Honours degree	Masters and above
3.	Gender	Female			Male			
4.	What role do you currently fulfil/occupy?	Managerial role			Supervisory role	Non-managerial role		
5.	What is your current salary level?	Level 11 - 12		Level 9 - 10	Level 7 - 8	Level 6 and below		
6.	How many years have you been in this role?	<5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 25	26 and above	
7.	How many years' working experience do you have (in total)?	<5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 25	26 and above	
8.	Has your performance been appraised in the department?	Yes			No			
9.	Have you ever appraised someone else's performance (a subordinate or a co-worker)?	Yes			No			
10.	How relevant are performance appraisals?	Very Essential	Essential		Necessary	Not necessary		
11.	How regularly should performance appraisals be conducted?	Annually	6 monthly	Quarterly	monthly	More regularly than monthly		

Section B Performance and politicisation

Scales : 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = agree slightly; 4 = disagree slightly; 5 = moderately disagree; 6 = strongly disagree

No.		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonize employees (e.g. a low rating)						
2.	Supervisors avoid giving a low performance appraisal because they fear that employees will try to transfer to other bosses.						
3.	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours, or benefits.						
4.	Supervisors inflate the performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information.						
5.	Supervisors' performance appraisals reflect in part their personal liking or disliking of employees.						
6.	Supervisors' appraisals are affected by the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do.						
7.	The performance ratings of employees are affected by their ability to inspire enthusiasm in the supervisor who appraises their performance.						
8.	Supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors.						
9.	The quality of the supervisor-subordinate personal relationship throughout the appraisal period (e.g., tense-relaxed; trusting-distrusting; friendly-hostile) affects the performance rating.						
10.	Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates.						
11.	Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).						
12.	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximize rewards for their subordinates (e.g., salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc).						
13.	Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so.						
14.	Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their department.						
15.	Employees holding a high status position in their department will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved (i.e., regardless of their real performance, employee appraisals are affected by the organisational status of the positions they hold).						

Scales : 1 = strongly agree; 2 = moderately agree; 3 = agree slightly; 4 = disagree slightly; 5 = moderately disagree; 6 = strongly disagree

No.		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Supervisors give high performance ratings because they believe that their subordinates have already passed through many departmental hurdles and therefore are highly competent.						
17.	In assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative (acceptable) in their department so as to avoid disapproval by their peers.						
18.	Supervisors give low performance appraisals to teach rebellious employees a lesson.						
19.	Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees (e.g., encourage risk taking, creativity, etc).						
20.	Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those employees who possess special characteristics (e.g. high popularity, compliancy, etc).						
21.	The fear that performance appraisals may threaten the self-esteem of subordinates discourages supervisors from giving negating-though accurate appraisal.						
22.	Supervisors give higher performance rating than is deserved in order to gain support or cooperation from their employees.						
23.	Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees.						
24.	Supervisors give equivalent performance ratings to all their subordinates in order to avoid resentment and rivalries among them.						
25.	Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved to those employees who control valuable organisation resources.						
26.	Performance appraisals in the department are only about getting rewards.						
27.	The criterion for assessment is based on the strategic goals of the department.						
28.	The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent.						
29.	Supervisors use performance appraisals to achieve goals of the department and to build capacity of employees.						
30.	Performance appraisal helps improve the performance of the department and develop skills of employees.						

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please ensure that you have answered all questions.

I give consent for this information to be used for research purposes.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX B - LETTER FROM THE EMPLOYER



Health & Soc Dev

Department:
Health & Social Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2ND Floor Tirelo Building
Dr. Albert Luthuli Drive
Mafikeng, 2745
Private Bag X2068
MMABATHO

DIRECTORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND RESEARCH

Enq -Tel: (018) 387 5757
Fax: 086 734 0956
smalakane@nwpg.gov.za

To : Ms N.Mangonyane
Chief Directorate Corporate Services
North West Department of Health and Social Development

From : Director: Policy, Planning & Research Directorate
Mr K.Rabanye

Date : 08 September 2010

Subject: Request for approval: **Politicization of performance appraisal , a case study for North West Department of Health and Social Development**

The above stated subject matter bears reference

This communiqué serves to inform your good office that permission to undertake the above mentioned study has been granted by the North West Department of Health and Social Development.

Arrangements with managers at appropriate level shall be facilitated by the researcher. We shall be delighted to receive a final report in this regard.

Yours truly

PR 

Mr K.Rabanye

Chairperson: PHRC –Health Branch

North West Department of Health and Social Development



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APPENDIX C - FREQUENCY TABLES

In this Appendix, case processing summary tables are presented as well frequency tables of data collected through the questionnaires that were administered at the North West Department of Health and Social Development are listed. The tables are listed in the order in which questions appeared in the questionnaire. Tables are listed under two sections, viz. Section A - Demography and Section B -Performance and Politicisation.

Demographical data

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	79	71.8
	Excluded ^a	31	28.2
	Total	110	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Performance and politicization data

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	88	80.0
	Excluded ^a	22	20.0
	Total	94	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 1: Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<25	5	4.5	5.1	5.1
	26-30	17	15.5	17.2	22.2
	31-35	17	15.5	17.2	39.4
	36-40	18	16.4	18.2	57.6
	41-45	17	15.5	17.2	74.7
	46 and above	25	22.7	25.3	100.0
	Total	99	90.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.0		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 2: Highest educational qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below matric	2	1.8	1.8	1.8
	Matric	15	13.6	13.8	15.6
	Post Matric certificate(s)	12	10.9	11.0	26.6
	Diploma	27	24.5	24.8	51.4
	Degree/BTech	28	25.5	25.7	77.1
	Honours Degree	19	17.3	17.4	94.5
	Masters and above	6	5.5	5.5	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 3: Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	61	55.5	56.5	56.5
	Male	47	42.7	43.5	100.0
	Total	108	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.8		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 4: What role do you currently fulfil?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Managerial role	31	28.2	31.6	31.6
	Supervisory role	33	30.0	33.7	65.3
	Non-managerial role	34	30.9	34.7	100.0
	Total	98	89.1	100.0	
Missing	System	12	10.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 5: Current Salary level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Level 11-12	11	10.0	11.2	11.2
	Level 9-10	20	18.2	20.4	31.6
	Level 6-8	33	30.0	33.7	65.3
	Level 5 and below	34	30.9	34.7	100.0
	Total	98	89.1	100.0	
Missing	System	12	10.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 6: How many years have you been in this role?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid <5	58	52.7	54.7	54.7
6-10	33	30.0	31.1	85.8
11-15	6	5.5	5.7	91.5
16-20	3	2.7	2.8	94.3
21-25	4	3.6	3.8	98.1
26 and above	2	1.8	1.9	100.0
Total	106	96.4	100.0	
Missing System	4	3.6		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 7: How many years experience do you have?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid <5	19	17.3	17.3	17.3
6-10	31	28.2	28.2	45.5
11-15	14	12.7	12.7	58.2
16-20	15	13.6	13.6	71.8
21-25	18	16.4	16.4	88.2
26 and above	13	11.8	11.8	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 8: Has your performance ever been appraised?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	106	96.4	97.2	97.2
	No	3	2.7	2.8	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 9: Have you ever appraised someone else's performance (a subordinate or a co-worker)?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	69	62.7	62.7	62.7
	No	41	37.3	37.3	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: How relevant are performance appraisals?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Essential	34	30.9	31.5	31.5
	Essential	31	28.2	28.7	60.2
	Necessary	33	30.0	30.6	90.7
	Not Necessary	10	9.1	9.3	100.0
	Total	108	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.8		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 11: How regularly should performance appraisals be conducted?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Annually	30	27.3	27.3	27.3
6 monthly	20	18.2	18.2	45.5
Quarterly	52	47.3	47.3	92.7
Monthly	6	5.5	5.5	98.2
More regularly than monthly	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals that may antagonise employees (e.g. a low rating)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	15	13.6	13.9	13.9
moderately agree	8	7.3	7.4	21.3
agree slightly	24	21.8	22.2	43.5
disagree slightly	17	15.5	15.7	59.3
moderately disagree	32	29.1	29.6	88.9
strongly disagree	12	10.9	11.1	100.0
Total	108	98.2	100.0	
Missing System	2	1.8		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 13: Supervisors avoid giving a low performance appraisal because they fear that employees will try to transfer to other bosses

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	6	5.5	5.5	5.5
moderately agree	5	4.5	4.5	10.0
agree slightly	19	17.3	17.3	27.3
disagree slightly	15	13.6	13.6	40.9
moderately disagree	22	20.0	20.0	60.9
strongly disagree	43	39.1	39.1	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 14: Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those people who are to procure for them special services, favours or benefits

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	29	26.4	26.9	26.9
moderately agree	38	34.5	35.2	62.0
agree slightly	12	10.9	11.1	73.1
disagree slightly	11	10.0	10.2	83.3
moderately disagree	9	8.2	8.3	91.7
strongly disagree	9	8.2	8.3	100.0
Total	108	98.2	100.0	
Missing System	2	1.8		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 15: Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of employees who have access to valuable sources of information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	31	28.2	28.4	28.4
	moderately agree	17	15.5	15.6	44.0
	agree slightly	42	38.2	38.5	82.6
	disagree slightly	7	6.4	6.4	89.0
	moderately disagree	6	5.5	5.5	94.5
	strongly disagree	6	5.5	5.5	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 16: Supervisors' performance appraisals reflect in part their personal liking or disliking of employees

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	63	57.3	57.8	57.8
	moderately agree	12	10.9	11.0	68.8
	agree slightly	16	14.5	14.7	83.5
	disagree slightly	7	6.4	6.4	89.9
	moderately disagree	6	5.5	5.5	95.4
	strongly disagree	5	4.5	4.6	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 17: Supervisors' appraisals are affected by the extent to which employees are perceived as sharing the same basic values as they do

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	14	12.7	12.7	12.7
moderately agree	23	20.9	20.9	33.6
agree slightly	49	44.5	44.5	78.2
disagree slightly	12	10.9	10.9	89.1
moderately disagree	8	7.3	7.3	96.4
strongly disagree	4	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 18: The performance ratings of employees are affected by their ability to inspire enthusiasm in the supervisor who appraises their performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	13	11.8	11.9	11.9
moderately agree	24	21.8	22.0	33.9
agree slightly	34	30.9	31.2	65.1
disagree slightly	28	25.5	25.7	90.8
moderately disagree	4	3.6	3.7	94.5
strongly disagree	6	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing System	1	.9		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 19: Supervisors give performance appraisals that will make them look good to their own supervisors

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	18	16.4	16.5	16.5
	moderately agree	12	10.9	11.0	27.5
	agree slightly	30	27.3	27.5	55.0
	disagree slightly	12	10.9	11.0	66.1
	moderately disagree	25	22.7	22.9	89.0
	strongly disagree	12	10.9	11.0	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 20: The quality of the supervisor-subordinate personal relationship throughout the appraisal period (e.g. tense-relaxed; trusting-distrusting; friendly-hostile) affects the performance rating

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	64	58.2	58.2	58.2
	moderately agree	20	18.2	18.2	76.4
	agree slightly	17	15.5	15.5	91.8
	disagree slightly	3	2.7	2.7	94.5
	moderately disagree	4	3.6	3.6	98.2
	strongly disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 21: Supervisors are likely to give an inflated performance appraisal in order to avoid negative/ uncomfortable feedback sessions with subordinates

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	22	20.0	20.2	20.2
moderately agree	15	13.6	13.8	33.9
agree slightly	24	21.8	22.0	56.0
disagree slightly	33	30.0	30.3	86.2
moderately disagree	9	8.2	8.3	94.5
strongly disagree	6	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing System	1	.9		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 22: Supervisors avoid giving performance appraisals which may have negative consequences for the employees (e.g. salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	16	14.5	14.5	14.5
moderately agree	9	8.2	8.2	22.7
agree slightly	17	15.5	15.5	38.2
disagree slightly	38	34.5	34.5	72.7
moderately disagree	19	17.3	17.3	90.0
strongly disagree	11	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 23: Supervisors inflate performance appraisals in order to maximise rewards for their subordinates (e.g. salary increases, promotions, layoff, no bonus, salary freezes, etc)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	9	8.2	8.3	8.3
	moderately agree	23	20.9	21.1	29.4
	agree slightly	23	20.9	21.1	50.5
	disagree slightly	11	10.0	10.1	60.6
	moderately disagree	31	28.2	28.4	89.0
	strongly disagree	12	10.9	11.0	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 24: Supervisors produce accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that may be rewarded for doing so or failing to do so

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	8	7.3	7.3	7.3
	moderately agree	6	5.5	5.5	12.8
	agree slightly	28	25.5	25.7	38.5
	disagree slightly	19	17.3	17.4	56.0
	moderately disagree	40	36.4	36.7	92.7
	strongly disagree	8	7.3	7.3	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 25: Supervisors produce accurate performance accurate performance appraisals only to the extent that they are perceived as a norm in their organisation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	12	10.9	11.0	11.0
	moderately agree	9	8.2	8.3	19.3
	agree slightly	52	47.3	47.7	67.0
	disagree slightly	12	10.9	11.0	78.0
	moderately disagree	20	18.2	18.3	96.3
	strongly disagree	4	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 26: Employees holding a higher status position in their organisation will get a higher performance appraisal than is deserved (i.e. regardless of their real performance, employee appraisals are affected by the organisational status of the positions they hold)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	39	35.5	35.5	35.5
	moderately agree	42	38.2	38.2	73.6
	agree slightly	9	8.2	8.2	81.8
	disagree slightly	9	8.2	8.2	90.0
	moderately disagree	3	2.7	2.7	92.7
	strongly disagree	8	7.3	7.3	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 27: Supervisors give high performance ratings because they believe that their subordinates have already passed through many organisation hurdles and therefore are highly competent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	3	2.7	2.7	2.7
moderately agree	6	5.5	5.5	8.2
agree slightly	20	18.2	18.2	26.4
disagree slightly	42	38.2	38.2	64.5
moderately disagree	17	15.5	15.5	80.0
strongly disagree	22	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 28: In assigning ratings, supervisors conform to what they believe is normative (acceptable) in their organisation so as to avoid disapproval by their peers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	12	10.9	10.9	10.9
moderately agree	7	6.4	6.4	17.3
agree slightly	33	30.0	30.0	47.3
disagree slightly	37	33.6	33.6	80.9
moderately disagree	15	13.6	13.6	94.5
strongly disagree	6	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 29: Supervisors give low performance appraisals to give rebellious employees a lesson

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	58	52.7	53.2	53.2
	moderately agree	16	14.5	14.7	67.9
	agree slightly	11	10.0	10.1	78.0
	disagree slightly	6	5.5	5.5	83.5
	moderately disagree	3	2.7	2.8	86.2
	strongly disagree	15	13.6	13.8	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 30: Supervisors use performance appraisals to send a message to their employees (e.g. encourage risk taking, creativity, etc)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	56	50.9	50.9	50.9
	moderately agree	13	11.8	11.8	62.7
	agree slightly	17	15.5	15.5	78.2
	disagree slightly	7	6.4	6.4	84.5
	moderately disagree	4	3.6	3.6	88.2
	strongly disagree	13	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 31: Supervisors inflate performance appraisals of those employees who possess certain characteristics (e.g. high popularity, compliancy, etc)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	22	20.0	20.0	20.0
moderately agree	50	45.5	45.5	65.5
agree slightly	17	15.5	15.5	80.9
disagree slightly	9	8.2	8.2	89.1
moderately disagree	4	3.6	3.6	92.7
strongly disagree	8	7.3	7.3	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 32: The fear that performance appraisals may threaten the self-esteem of subordinates discourages supervisors from giving negating-through accurate appraisal

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	11	10.0	10.0	10.0
moderately agree	5	4.5	4.5	14.5
agree slightly	17	15.5	15.5	30.0
disagree slightly	24	21.8	21.8	51.8
moderately disagree	39	35.5	35.5	87.3
strongly disagree	14	12.7	12.7	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 33: Supervisors give higher performance rating than is deserved in order to gain support or cooperation from their employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	16	14.5	14.7	14.7
moderately agree	13	11.8	11.9	26.6
agree slightly	28	25.5	25.7	52.3
disagree slightly	34	30.9	31.2	83.5
moderately disagree	11	10.0	10.1	93.6
strongly disagree	7	6.4	6.4	100.0
Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing System	1	.9		
Total	110	100.0		

Table 34: Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved in order to repay favours to their employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	43	39.1	39.1	39.1
moderately agree	28	25.5	25.5	64.5
agree slightly	19	17.3	17.3	81.8
disagree slightly	2	1.8	1.8	83.6
moderately disagree	6	5.5	5.5	89.1
strongly disagree	12	10.9	10.9	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 35: Supervisors give equivalent performance ratings to all their subordinates in order to avoid resentment and rivalries among them

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	10	9.1	9.1	9.1
moderately agree	9	8.2	8.2	17.3
agree slightly	12	10.9	10.9	28.2
disagree slightly	16	14.5	14.5	42.7
moderately disagree	45	40.9	40.9	83.6
strongly disagree	18	16.4	16.4	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 36: Supervisors give higher performance appraisals than is deserved to those employees who control valuable organisation resources

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	19	17.3	17.3	17.3
moderately agree	40	36.4	36.4	53.6
agree slightly	23	20.9	20.9	74.5
disagree slightly	9	8.2	8.2	82.7
moderately disagree	9	8.2	8.2	90.9
strongly disagree	10	9.1	9.1	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 37: Performance appraisals in the department are only about getting rewards

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	67	60.9	61.5	61.5
	moderately agree	17	15.5	15.6	77.1
	agree slightly	9	8.2	8.3	85.3
	disagree slightly	4	3.6	3.7	89.0
	moderately disagree	2	1.8	1.8	90.8
	strongly disagree	10	9.1	9.2	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		

Table 38: The criterion for assessment is based on the strategic goals of the department

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	18	16.4	16.4	16.4
	moderately agree	12	10.9	10.9	27.3
	agree slightly	14	12.7	12.7	40.0
	disagree slightly	35	31.8	31.8	71.8
	moderately disagree	14	12.7	12.7	84.5
	strongly disagree	17	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 39: The performance appraisal procedure in the department is fair and transparent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	7	6.4	6.4	6.4
moderately agree	6	5.5	5.5	11.8
agree slightly	12	10.9	10.9	22.7
disagree slightly	42	38.2	38.2	60.9
moderately disagree	18	16.4	16.4	77.3
strongly disagree	25	22.7	22.7	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 40: Supervisors use performance appraisals to achieve goals of the department and to build capacity of employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	15	13.6	13.6	13.6
moderately agree	8	7.3	7.3	20.9
agree slightly	10	9.1	9.1	30.0
disagree slightly	18	16.4	16.4	46.4
moderately disagree	38	34.5	34.5	80.9
strongly disagree	21	19.1	19.1	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Table 41: Performance appraisal helps improve the performance of the department and to build capacity of employees

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	21	19.1	19.3	19.3
	moderately agree	8	7.3	7.3	26.6
	agree slightly	4	3.6	3.7	30.3
	disagree slightly	20	18.2	18.3	48.6
	moderately disagree	34	30.9	31.2	79.8
	strongly disagree	22	20.0	20.2	100.0
	Total	109	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		110	100.0		