

Effect of Teachers' Perception Towards Performance Appraisal on Its Implementation in Public Secondary Schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of teachers' perception of performance appraisal on its implementation in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya. The study was based on the Expectancy Theory of Motivation and was conducted using a descriptive survey design. The target population was 47 Principals and 416 teachers in public secondary schools in Mbooni-East Sub-County. A sample of 19 Principals and 126 teachers was selected through both stratified and simple random sampling. Quantitative data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was categorized into themes in accordance with the research objective and presented in narrative form. Results revealed that teachers' perception of performance appraisal affected its implementation. In as much as the teachers' both negative and positive perceptions about the implementation of performance appraisal, they noted that performance appraisal had had a positive impact on their teaching standards and their teaching profession as a whole. The Ministry of Education should organize more workshops and seminars to sensitize teachers on the importance of performance appraisal and how to use the TPAD tool. The Ministry should also engage teachers in public participation to ensure that they incorporate the required changes in the performance appraisal process to make it more productive.

Keywords: *Teachers' Perception, Performance Appraisal, Implementation*

1.0 Introduction

Teacher performance appraisal is the process of deciding how teachers do their jobs. It is a method of evaluating the behavior of teachers in the workplace, normally including both quantitative and qualitative aspects of job performance. It is a systematic and objective way of evaluating both work-related behavior and the potential of employees (Krishna & Rao, 2010). It is a process that involves determining and communicating to a teacher how they are performing the job and ideally, establishing a plan of improvement. Krishna and Rao (2010) further note that performance appraisal is a process that comprises six steps, namely: establishing performance standards with the teachers, setting measurable goals (appraiser and appraisee), measuring actual performance, comparing actual performance with standards, discussing the appraisal with the teacher and if necessary, initiating corrective action.

Implementation of the curriculum requires the use of teaching and learning resources the absence of which effective delivery of content is adversely affected. This eventually hinders the teacher from achieving the set targets which are core to performance appraisal. According to Owoko (2010), the term resources refer not only to teaching methods and materials but also to the time available for instruction, and the knowledge and skills of teachers acquired through training and experience. TPAD provides teaching standards that require teachers to be innovative and creative in the use of teaching aids besides displaying professional knowledge and application.

The way teachers perceive performance appraisal is a key determinant of how seriously they are going to take it. Attitude is an internal state of a person that is focused on objects, events, and people that can exist in the person's psychological world (Anitha, 2014). In schools, teachers have attitudes toward job security or uncertainty, prestige of the learning outcomes, and so forth. If they are not certain of the consequences of the outcomes, this may affect all the performance evaluation actions.

Muli (2011) established that if teacher performance appraisal is carried out effectively, their performance will be recognized through proper rewards which include salary increases and promotions. This in turn will make them have a positive attitude towards the appraisal programme and comply with appraisal requirements. Ochiewo (2016), revealed that teachers have a negative attitude towards teacher performance appraisal because it had no link with annual salary increments. This idea is not an exception to the issue of appraisal schemes therefore appraisers need to know and understand teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisal for its effective implementation.

1.1 Problem Statement

Whereas the Teachers Service Commission is upbeat about what teachers' performance appraisal sets out to achieve, teachers through their unions view performance appraisal as an impediment to their career progression. On the other hand, the TSC notes that the performance appraisal tool for teachers includes both evaluation of performance and ways of addressing performance gaps and it is expected to provide for fair, objective, and standard teacher evaluation for making important management choices such as appointment of teachers, placement and promotion (TSC, 2016). In a rejoinder to this assertion, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) laments that the role of the teacher has been reduced to that of a clerk as they are expected to fill in so many documents and are sometimes required to travel far distances to upload the filled in TPAD documents instead of being left to focus on curriculum implementation in their respective duty stations.

This divergence in viewpoints by the main stakeholders of the initiative cast doubts on whether performance appraisal process is being implemented as stipulated by the TSC. It is partly because of this contest of ideas that the current study was deemed necessary to establish the factors that may have a bearing on the implementation of performance appraisal in public secondary schools. For instance, in the study locale, teachers often complained of the process being lengthy and involving. They also point out that, there is a lack of adequate training on how to carry out self-appraisal, a problem that makes some teachers award themselves unrealistic marks in some teaching standards. The current study sought to address the gaps, by looking at teachers' perception towards performance appraisal on its implementation in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya.

1.2 Research Objective

To investigate the effect of teachers' perception towards performance appraisal on its implementation in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The current study was based on the Expectancy Theory of Motivation which was first mooted by Victor Vroom (1964). The theory states that an individual's predisposition to act in a certain way is influenced by how strongly they expect their actions to result in a specific outcome and how appealing those results are to them. According to the theory, an employee's motivation results from the degree to which a person desires a reward, the chance that an effort will result in the expected performance, and the conviction that the performance will result in a reward (Parijat, & Bagga, 2014). It is one of the Process Theories of motivation which is based on the relationship between expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy according to the theory is the relationship between the efforts of employees and their performance. Instrumentality on the other hand is the relationship between performance of the employees and the rewards they get from their jobs or work outcomes while valence is the relationship between rewards or work outcomes and personal goals as set by the individual employees (Vroom, 1964).

The relevance of this theory to this study is that it proposes that rewards improve employee performance. This is because they are psychological beings and need motivation to achieve organizational goals as well as personal objectives. To this end, the way performance appraisal for teachers is structured, teachers may feel motivated because good scores in the appraisal form may lead to promotions and accompanying pay rises. Principals play a pivotal role in applying administrative practices such as availing relevant personnel, revitalizing existing structures enhancing training, and manipulating teachers' morale to implement performance appraisal.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions and Implementation of Performance Appraisal

Much of the literature has it that the first person to use the term attitude was the English philosopher Spencer, in his book, the First Principles. The concept has since then found common use among theorists from different fields who develop theories according to what they have in their fields of research (Anand, Mulotte & Ren, 2016). The relationship between teachers' attitudes toward teaching and their performance in teaching as a profession has already been studied by different scholars (Akkus, 2010). At the core of performance appraisal for teachers is their performance. A study by Al Harthy, Jamaluddin, and Abedalaziz (2013), for instance, concluded that attitude towards a profession can affect performance in that profession and that the relationship between teachers' attitudes and their performance in teaching is significant.

Globally, in their study, Al Harthy, Jamaluddin, and Abedalaziz (2013) argued that teachers' attitudes have a positive correlation to their behavioral engagement in work duties therefore, teachers who have higher levels of satisfaction are more likely to be engaged in their work, with an effect that their levels of performance will be high. The relationship between attitude and behavior or performance can be presented in "the Reasoned Action Model", which supposes that attitudes affect behavioral intention, which affects the person's actual behavior towards an undertaking. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' attitudes towards

performance appraisal have a bearing on their performance (Al Harthy, Jamaluddin & Abedalaziz, 2013). This study however presented a geographical gap which the present study addressed as it was conducted in Kenya.

O’Pry and Schumacher (2012) sought to establish the perceptions of new teachers regarding a standards-based performance appraisal system as it was implemented on their campus. This study found that the value a teacher placed on the evaluation process was influenced by the principal. In addition, teachers who felt well-prepared and well-supported by their peers and their principal viewed the experience positively, and teachers also placed a higher value on the process when they felt they received meaningful and timely feedback and/or were provided an opportunity for self-reflection. Finally, this study found that the relationship teachers have with principals is not always a factor in their perception of the standards-based appraisal process. There was a geographical gap in the study as it was not conducted in Kenya as well as a contextual gap as it was conducted in a university setting as opposed to a secondary school in the present study.

Pawson (2019) sought to explore the effectiveness of appraisal within two state-funded secondary schools by comparing the perceptions of appraisal to those of teachers. Along with two leaders in evaluation, nine teachers were interviewed. Despite the poor return rate, 16 teachers from both schools filled out a questionnaire that gave significant additional data. The major conclusions drawn from the data revealed a discrepancy between how individuals in charge of evaluating student work thought about the discipline's overall efficacy and how teachers felt about it. The appraisal leads emphasized teacher development significantly while presenting appraisal in a good light. Although neither instructor could provide proof for it, the teachers appeared to concur that it was about development. Actual evidence, on the other hand, supported accountability. This study was, however, comparative hence presenting a methodological gap that was addressed in the current study.

Regionally, Kamper et al., (2006) conducted a study on teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher appraisal in Botswana and confirmed that the teacher performance appraisal done by the school administration is seen by the teachers as being oppressive, and punitive thereby causing negative feelings among the teachers. Additionally, the same study found that many of the teachers were being used to serve in senior management teams’ interest of controlling and retrenching those teachers who underperformed. Hence, this made the teachers have a negative perception of the whole appraisal process. There was a geographical gap in this study.

A study was conducted by Akampurira (2010) on the effectiveness of teachers’ performance in Uganda and confirmed that managers of organizations usually avoid conducting performance appraisals because of fear of employee reactions towards performance appraisal and also lack of confidence in defending the rating. They feel that the appraisal schemes tend to interfere with the work of teaching. Similarly, employees view performance appraisal as a prediction tool used by the management to determine the level of performance output of an employee and determine whether excellent, acceptable, fair, poor, unbearable, or unacceptable. Teacher performance appraisal has received a bad blow of fear and anxiety and for instance, if poor performance is condemned, they will become bitter and be in conflict with the organization. This will make them consider the appraisal system as not valuable. The setting of the study was not a school hence presenting a contextual gap.

Mpungose and Ngwenya (2014) conducted a study in South Africa on managing teacher performance and its appraisal. The research findings showed that the implementation of appraisal systems in South African Schools has not been good as it has been characterized by

hostility, negativity, and resistance to appraisal by the teachers. The principals faced difficulties emanating from a lack of coordination, trust, and clarity of roles. The researcher pointed out that there should be proper understanding between the principal and teachers which could be done through information sharing, seminars, and workshops. There was however a geographical gap owing to the fact that the study was conducted in South Africa and not in Kenya as the two countries may have differences in terms of performance appraisal policies.

Locally, a study conducted by Gichuki (2015) in his study in Nakuru County on an analysis of teacher performance appraisals and their influence on teacher performance in secondary schools in Kenya concluded that appraiser credibility can affect the teachers' perceptions of the appraisal system. Teachers who received higher graduation scores perceive assessments as a cause for professional confrontation (Ngeno, Bett & Cheruiyot, 2013). The study further noted that the direction for managing appraisal systems requires that appraisers be professionally competent. On the contrary, there is no definition of the knowledge and expertise required to be an appraiser in Kenya. In most schools, HOD, Deputy Principal, Principal, and the Sub-County Director of Education are the usual appraisers. On many occasions, teachers have blamed their performance appraisers for lacking the requisite knowledge and skills needed to deliver acceptable appraisal results. With such a perception, an appraisal process can make employees uncomfortable, as they may not enjoy the scrutiny making them view the whole procedure as a negative endeavor.

Stephen (2014) conducted a study to establish the perceptions of teachers regarding performance appraisal feedback in secondary schools in Bungoma East Sub-County. The study was conducted through a descriptive survey design. All of the head teachers and classroom teachers in Bungoma East Sub-County were included in the target population. Ten public high schools with Teachers Service Commission-employed teachers participated in the study. From the available population of teachers, 50 teachers and 10 head teachers a total of 60 were randomly chosen, and information was gathered.

Utilizing questionnaires and interview schedules that included both structured open-ended and structured closed-ended questions, data was gathered. Utilizing descriptive statistics, data were examined. The study discovered that instructors dislike being evaluated and view performance appraisal feedback as a direct attack on their autonomy. They also found that they did not feel comfortable with the comments made about them, particularly when the goals were not met. The major focus of the study was the feedback from the performance appraisal and not the implementation of the performance appraisal which the current study focused on.

3.0 Methodology

The study was conducted using a descriptive survey design. The target population was 47 Principals and 416 teachers in public secondary schools in Mbooni-East Sub-County. A sample of 19 Principals and 126 teachers was selected through both stratified and simple random sampling. Data was collected by use of an interview guide for principals and a questionnaire for teachers. Quantitative data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. Quantitative data was processed through editing, coding, and entering it into a computer for analysis using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) then presented using frequency distribution tables, pie charts, and bar graphs. Qualitative data was categorized into themes in accordance with research objectives and presented in narrative form.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The study sought to establish the effect of teachers' perception of performance appraisal on its implementation in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from teachers and principals. The findings are discussed in the following section.

4.1 Teachers Regards for Performance Appraisal

The teachers were asked to state how they regard the concept of performance appraisal. Figure 1 shows that 52.7% of the teachers regarded performance appraisal moderately, 30.9% regarded performance appraisal highly, 8.2% regarded performance appraisal lowly, 6.4% regarded performance appraisal very highly and 1.8% regarded performance appraisal very lowly.

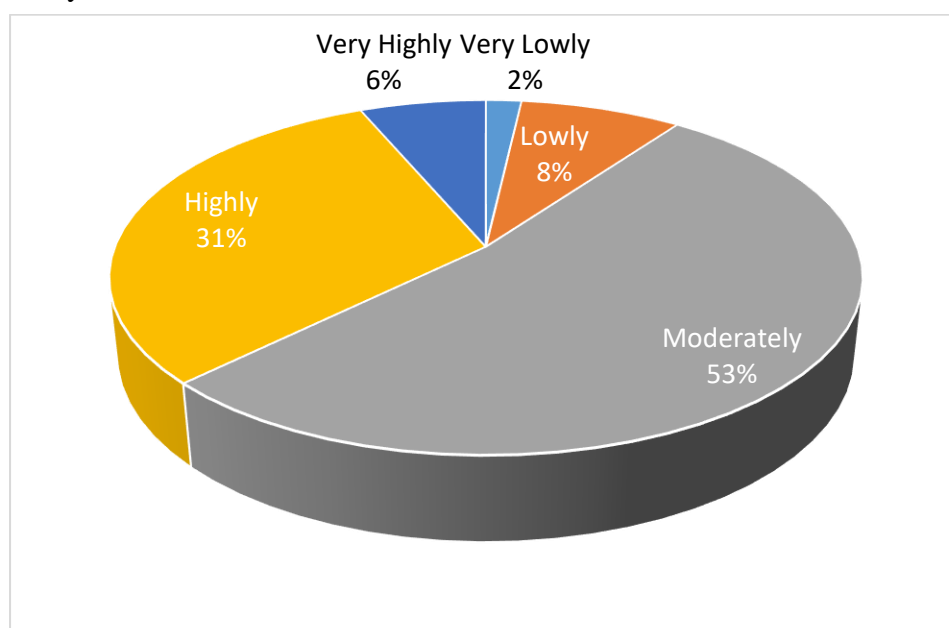


Figure 1: Teachers Regard for Performance Appraisal

The principals were also asked to state whether teachers liked the idea of performance appraisal. The feedback from the principal relates to that of the teachers as most of the principals retorted that the teachers view performance appraisal as a bother and punishment with no benefits attached to the tedious process due to lots of paperwork. Hence, the teachers have no option but to go through the process as it is a requirement by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). However, three principals noted that teachers in their schools have embraced performance appraisal and see it as a tool to improve their profession. This indicates that the process of performance appraisal is not well planned for and can be replaced with a more digitalized way to relieve the teachers of the tedious burden. The use of digital platforms will also ensure that the filling in of the details is done gradually and the final results are obtained at the end of the process. This may enable the teachers to improve their attitude toward performance appraisal and hence obtain the benefits thereof.

The findings on teachers' regard for performance appraisal concur with those of Kamper et al., (2006) who conducted a study on teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher appraisal in Botswana and confirmed that the teacher performance appraisal done by the school administration is seen by the teachers as being oppressive, punitive and thereby causing

negative feelings among the teacher. Additionally, (Kamper et al., 2006) found that many of the teachers were being used to serve in senior management teams' interest of controlling and retrenching those teachers who underperformed. Hence this made the teachers have a negative perception of the whole appraisal process.

4.2 Improvement of Teaching Standards after Inception of Performance Appraisal

Teachers were also asked to state their level of agreement on the improvement of teaching standards since the inception of performance appraisal. Table 1 shows that 91.8% of the teachers agreed that the introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their timely preparation of professional records, 91.9% of the teachers agreed that the introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their time management, 85.4% of the teachers agreed that introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their recovery of missed lessons, while 61.8% of the teachers agreed that introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their use of ICT in teaching.

Results also showed that 89.1% of the teachers agreed that introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their adherence to the code of conduct of teachers, 75.5% of the teachers agreed that introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their active involvement in co-curricular activities by teachers while 78.2% of the teachers agreed that introduction of performance appraisal helped them improve their collaboration with parents, guardians, and stakeholders. The results imply that the introduction of performance appraisal helped teachers improve their teaching standards to a great extent. Therefore, performance appraisal is seen as an important process that enables teachers to do their work better and if done properly will benefit the teachers as well as the students.

The findings on the improvement of teaching standards after the inception of performance appraisal are congruent with those of Obasi (2011) who studied teacher performance evaluation techniques in public and private secondary schools in South East Nigeria and established that performance appraisals are essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. It helps develop individuals and improve organizational performance through monitoring of standards. The information on improvement in teaching standards on performance appraisal is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Improvement of Teaching Standards after Inception of Performance Appraisal

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Timely preparation of professional records	0.9%	2.7%	4.5%	59.1%	32.7%
Time management	1.8%	3.6%	2.7%	55.5%	36.4%
Recovery of missed lessons	1.8%	3.6%	9.1%	52.7%	32.7%
Use of ICT in teaching	2.7%	9.1%	26.4%	47.3%	14.5%
Adherence to the code of conduct of teachers	1.8%	1.8%	7.3%	50.9%	38.2%
Active involvement in co-curricular activities by teachers	2.7%	8.2%	13.6%	49.1%	26.4%
Collaboration with parents, guardians, and stakeholders	1.8%	2.7%	17.3%	55.5%	22.7%

The principals were also asked to state whether there had been improvement in the teaching standards since the inception of the performance appraisal. They gave their response citing five

aspects namely, timely preparation of professional records, time management, recovery of missed lessons, use of ICT in teaching, adherence to the Code of Conduct of teachers, active involvement in co-curricular activities by teachers, and collaboration with parents, guardians, and stakeholders. With regard to the timely preparation of professional records, the principals noted that this had greatly improved. This was reflected by the ability of teachers to; meet deadlines, update records weekly submit reports every two weeks, and prepare in time before teaching.

To emphasize the school's ability to follow through with the implementation of the performance appraisal aspect of timely preparation of professional records, one of the principals said *“the school has an academic audit team who go through schemes, records of work, occasionally invite quality staff from the sub-county office. They check on syllabus coverage and all documents. The audit team comprises a principal, an officer from the sub-county office to give advisory, deputy principal, HODs on the hand check schemes of work, syllabus coverage, and student notes”*.

With regard to time management, the principals posited that this has also improved tremendously. They noted that performance appraisal has promoted punctuality in meeting deadlines and timely attendance of lessons because they are being monitored by class secretaries. However, two principals alluded that time management had not improved as teachers wasted time and attended classes because they were being monitored. Otherwise, people should perform their duties because they are self-driven.

With regard to recovery of missed lessons, the principal noted that it has greatly improved. They noted that teachers did not like to miss classes and in case it happened they recovered the missed lessons through rescheduling to utilize free time usually in the morning, evening, and night preps and Saturdays. With regard to the use of ICT in teaching, principals noted that there was an improvement with the advent of ICT integration. They noted that teachers had adapted and acquired skills to use laptops and smartphones. Additionally, they were able to fill in the TPAD online. However, the use of ICT in teaching was still not at par due to a lack of resources such as projectors.

Further, with regard to adherence to the Code of Conduct of teachers, the principals noted that performance appraisal helped to improve the teachers' conduct. With regard to active involvement in co-curricular activities by teachers, the principals noted that it had improved fairly partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic which led to the suspension of extra-curricular activities in schools. They also noted that even with the resumption of learning the schools' calendar is so squeezed leaving little time for extracurricular activities. One of the principals' said *“even on normal days teachers are not actively involved but they do supervise the students. They also struggle to be coaches”*.

Finally, consider the aspect of collaboration with parents, guardians, and stakeholders. The principals noted that this had greatly improved. One of the principals noted *“parents are involved in indiscipline cases, they attend class meetings and are encouraged to follow the performance of their children and consult with individual teachers, check notes of their children, and in cases of persistent poor performance the school involved the parent”*.

Other principals reiterated that parents are involved in indiscipline cases, they also participate in class-based academic clinics/meetings where parents get to meet with individual teachers to discuss the performance and discipline of students. They also retorted that they conduct termly BOM and PTA meetings. One of the principals said *“parents can log in to Zeraki app system*

and check the results and discipline of their children” while another noted “*we have formed class-based WhatsApp groups where teachers interact with parents directly*”.

The findings on the improvement of teaching standards after the inception of performance appraisal by the principals are congruent with those of Obasi (2011) who studied teacher performance evaluation techniques in public and private secondary schools in South East Nigeria and established that performance appraisals are essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. It helps develop individuals and improve organizational performance through monitoring of standards.

4.3 Performance Appraisal and Boosting of the Teaching Profession

Teachers were asked to state their level of agreement on whether the introduction of performance appraisal has boosted their liking of the teaching profession. Table 2 shows that 65.5% agreed, 19.1% were neutral, and 15.5% disagreed. This is an implication that performance appraisal has a positive impact on the teaching profession.

These findings on performance appraisal boosting the teaching profession agree with those of Aslam (2011) who conducted a study in two Pakistan universities, one public and the other private. The research findings of the study revealed that lecturers were not satisfied with the performance appraisal systems employed in the universities. Some of the reasons given included poor communication, reliance on a single appraisal system, and failure to act on suggestions from appraisal feedback. The research findings showed that the implementation of performance appraisal systems in Pakistan Universities had not met fully what it intended to accomplish.

Table 2: Performance Appraisal and Boosting of the Teaching Profession

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	6	5.5
Disagree	11	10
Neutral	21	19.1
Agree	62	56.4
Strongly agree	10	9.1
Total	110	100

The assertions of the principals contradicted the feedback from the teachers. Most of the principals noted that the introduction of performance appraisal has had no great impact on teachers liking the teaching profession. In explanation, they noted that teachers hate being evaluated and rather see it as a colonial old and feel as if they are being forced and do it because there is no other option. They also see it as a waste of time as it involves a lot of paperwork. However, two principals noted that the impact had been positive. They explained that initially there was resistance but then many had changed their attitude towards performance appraisal and they were embracing the process more. The contradiction in the responses from the teachers and the principals implies that there are misunderstandings about how the teachers do their work. The principals may have a feeling that the teachers are not doing their best while the teachers feel they have put in enough effort.

These findings on performance appraisal boosting the teaching profession agree with those of Slam (2011) who conducted a study in two Pakistan universities, one public and the other a private one. The research findings of the study revealed that lecturers were not satisfied with performance appraisal systems employed in the universities. Some of the reasons given

included poor communication, reliance on a single appraisal system, and failure to act on suggestions from appraisal feedback. The research findings showed that the implementation of performance appraisal systems in Pakistan Universities had not met fully what it intended to accomplish.

5.0 Conclusion

The study also concluded that teachers' perception of performance appraisal affected its implementation in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya. In as much the teachers' both negative and positive perceptions about the implementation of performance appraisal, they noted that performance appraisal had a positive impact on their teaching standards and their teaching profession as a whole.

6.0 Recommendations

The Ministry of Education should organize more workshops and seminars to sensitize teachers on the importance of performance appraisal and how to use the TPAD tool. The Ministry should also engage teachers in public participation to ensure that they incorporate the required changes in the performance appraisal process to make it more productive.

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