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TOPIC:

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN GHANA'S
LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A CASE OF KWABRE EAST DISTRICT
ASSEMBLY IN ASHANTI REGION

BY

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN GHANA'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

A CASE OF KWABRE EAST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY IN ASHANTI REGION

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management Option) Degree and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the university, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the performance management system (PMS) in place at the local government level in Ghana. Given the pivotal role Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) play in the socio-economic development of citizens, especially in rural areas, the need to ensure high levels of performance at the local government level cannot be over-emphasized.

The researcher adopted quantitative method using mainly questionnaires to capture data from eighty two (82) respondents sampled at random from a total employee population of one hundred and six (106) at the administrative office of Kwabre East District Assembly in Ashanti Region of Ghana. They expressed their views on issues as it pertains to performance management system in place at the district and SPSS software was used to analyze the data gathered and presented in a tabular and diagrammatic format to aid interpretation and drawing of conclusions.

Results show that the current system is not comprehensive with clearly defined strategies to continually manage and improve employee performance but mainly dominated by performance appraisal using a method which is obsolete and prone to biases. The assembly has a well educated and relatively young workforce and there is on-the-job coaching and support which help employees to improve their effective, but training and development are few and far in between to aid career growth and realization of their full potential. There is also no direct link between performance and pay or promotion as an incentive and motivation.

It is recommended that a much more comprehensive performance management system be developed in line with the overall objectives of the MMDAs to be managed by a fully fledged and well resourced Human Resource Management (HR) department instead of the current personnel unit at the districts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Above all, I thank Almighty Allah for the gift of life and knowledge to accomplish this task.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Hajia Ayishatu Mohammed for her support, prayer and faith in me, to my brother Dr. Umar Sallau Alhassan for his inspiration, to my one-and-only sister Yasmin for rebuilding the foundation of my education, to my wife Samira and kids Mallam and Nadia for their understanding through hard times and given me reason to smile and to the entire Hassan ki Aisha (HAKIA) family for being there for me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
KEDA	Kwabre East District Assembly
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
PA	Performance Appraisal
PM	Performance Management
PMS	Performance Management System
KSAs	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
BARS	Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale
MBO	Management By Objective
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
DAs	District Assemblies
LG	Local Government
CG	Central Government
RCC	Regional Coordinating Councils
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NDAP	National Decentralisation Action Plan
CSPIP	Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme
DDUs	Department, Division and Unit
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
PMED	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate
HRDD	Human Resource Development Directorate
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
IGF	Internally Generated Funds
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the study

Local government is a concept of governance structure which is considered to be a lower tier authority in a nation or state, made up of elected and non-elected representatives of the people within a specified geographical area with political and administrative functions and is responsible for provision of some vital social services for the socio-economic development of the area under its jurisdiction (Stoker, 1991). The need for the establishment and global promotion of local governments emanates not only from historical political experiences and the belief in the ideals of participatory grassroot governance as opposed to a remote and overly powerful central government, but also the recognition of the fact the local authorities are better placed to respond effectively to challenges confronting local communities (Ahwoi, 2010).

Local governments exist in both developed and developing world alike but it is in the latter that their roles are even more critical as they are expected, at least on paper, to promote participatory democracy and encouraging responsible citizenship by creating avenues for people at the local level to be involved in the decision-making process on issues that directly affect their community and fashioning of policies and programs to address them (Ahwoi, 2010). Local level authorities in modern times are not only responsible for policy formulation and implementation but also provision of a wide range of social services in health, education, security, development and land-use planning, waste management and disposal, welfare and relief among others. This, to say the least, merits the cliché about local governments taking care of their people 'from the cradle to the grave' (Stoker, 1991).

Through the process of decentralization, central governments transfer some of its powers and functions to local authorities and provide them with administrative and managerial capacity and resources to enable them carry out this mandate effectively. Today, Ghana's decentralization programme is one of the most successful and has gained international recognition as an exemplary model for Africa and the rest of the developing world. Within the Ghanaian context, District Assemblies are the primary units of local government with political and non-political representatives of the people constituting the executive committee with executive powers. Technocrats from Public and Civil Service form the core of the s staff of these assemblies across the country (*Local Government System in Ghana, 2009*).

It is further noted that the legal framework establishing these district assemblies defines their jurisdiction and mandate and assign responsibilities for the provision of social services from education, health, water and sanitation, to environment at varying degrees of authority and sometimes overlapping with that of central government. It is anticipated that greater efficiency will be achieved in the delivery of these services by local authorities than central government and representatives of the people exhibit better understanding and commitment in finding solutions to local problems (Ahwoi, 2010). Considering the pivotal role these assemblies play in the overall scheme of developing and sustaining democratic culture, provision of essential social service and the socio-economic development of the country as a whole, the need to ensure effective and efficient performance of employees in the discharge of their duties cannot be overemphasized.

To achieve this, a well-fashioned performance management system, which takes into consideration the peculiar socio-cultural context of the country and implemented in close consultation and involvement of all stakeholders, is an imperative. Performance management system is a continuous process which enables managers to set targets for individual employees and teams, track and assess performances and offer direction and support to ensure that those targets are achieved and ultimately lead to the realization of the overall objectives of the organization (Aguinis, 2007).The author further pointed out that there is, almost always, the tendency for performance appraisal practices to be seen as all there is to performance management. Whereas the former is limited to measuring performance over a specific period, the latter is much broader and a continuous process which encompasses performance appraisal as well as other strategies to develop and improve performance throughout the organization at all times.

According to Gragore et al. (2010), the purpose of performance management systems, among other things, is "*to provide the means through which better results can be obtained from the organization, teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements. It involves the development of processes for establishing shared understanding about what is to be achieved, and an approach to managing and developing people in a way that increase the probability that it will be achieved in the short or long term. Evaluating periodically the human resource inside the organization can increase the motivation and commitment of employees and enable individuals to develop their abilities, increase their job satisfaction and achieve their full potential to their own benefit and that of the organization as a whole*" (p277).

It is against this background that this research is conducted into the systems in place to manage the performance of employees at this very important level of our national governance structure, the local government level.

1.1 Problem statement

District Assemblies (DAs) play a crucial role in the socio-economic development of the people, especially the rural areas. In carrying out their deliberative, legislative and executive functions, the DA provide critical infrastructure and social services for human development and support the local economy grow by creating the enabling environment for individuals and small businesses to flourish. The construction and rehabilitation of facilities like roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, toilets and boreholes with funding from their allocations of District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), Internally Generated Funds (IGF) and other sources has brought relief and development to communities which hitherto lack these basic amenities partly due to their distance from central government. Thishas gone a long way to open up rural towns and stemmed to some extent the rural-urban migration.

The local government elections remain an avenue through which the local populations participate in the administration of their communities by exercising their democratic right to choose their leaders and demand accountability. The people's representatives exercise executive authority but the administrative and technical functions for the day-to-day running of the districts is the primary responsibilities of civil and public servants working at the DAs. Over the years, several legal frameworks and policy interventions have been adopted by successive governments as a

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means of improving the performance of local governments in terms of achieving some key policy objectives and effective delivery of social services as expected. Reports of technical review committees have revealed several legal, structural and administrative shortcomings which hinder the progress towards the achievement of effective and efficient service delivery at the local government level. What is even more pronounced is the human resource challenges in the civil service in general and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies(MMDAs) in particular (*Joint Government of Ghana and Development Partner Decentralization Policy Review Committee Report, 2007).* The report further indicated that there is scarcity of data on the number and distribution of administrative personnel deployed at the district level, no centralized information on capacity building to ensure maintenance of standards and efficiency in service delivery and training and development issues are handled by Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (PMED) and Human Resource Development Directorate (HRDD) of Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), making it uncoordinated.

In view of the human resource management issues confronting the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) as pointed out above, the researcher therefore intends to investigate into the performance management systems in place at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs).Performance management systems if well designed and properly implemented would ensure organizational objectives are clearly set with timelines and cascades down to departmental and personal levels that enable supervisors to track the progress towards its achievement and be able to identify any shortcomings in performance of individual employees or teams and institute corrective measures that not only ensure better future performance but also overall career development of the employees.

1.2 Objectives of the study

There are key objective set out to be achieved by this study. These objectives are sub-divided into General Objective and Specific Objectives.

1.2.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to identify the performance management systems implemented at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies(MMDAs), what are the challenges facing the systems and what ways can it be improved.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are;

a) To identify the nature of performance management systems in Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region.

b) To determine the strengths and weaknesses of the performance management systems at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region.

c) To identify the challenges in the implementation of the performance management systems in Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region.

1.3 Research questions

This research is intended to provide answers to the following questions;

(a) What is the nature performance management system at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region?

(b) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the performance management system at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region?

(c) What are the challenges in the implementation of performance management systems in Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Ashanti region?

1.4 Significance of the study

Having a professionally competent and efficient staff is an essential prerequisite for the development and success of any organization and local governments are not an exception. For local governments to carry out its mandate of delivering critical social services that best address the challenges confronting local communities and ultimately contribute to the socio-economic development of the country as a whole there is the need to develop and maintain high performance standards for all staff. Professional competence and performance levels as well as other human resource issues have been identified as one of the key challenges local governments face in their quest to deliver quality services to the people in a way and manner that meet stakeholder expectations.

Against this background, any study which aims at identifying the shortcomings of performance management systems in place at these MMDAs and recommending measures to improve upon the system is indeed important and worth pursuing. The study would contribute to a better appreciation of some key human resource issues, particularly performance management, at the MMDAs under study and by extension local governments in general. This could help inform future administrative and policy measures aimed at addressing some of these issues. As a literary

work, it would add to the body of knowledge that may already exist about the performance management practices in MMDAs in Ghana.

1.5 Brief methodology

The study was designed in the format of an exploratory research using Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA) as a case study organization. Data for the research was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source is response to questionnaires by sampled respondents from the staff of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA). Management and staff of the assembly were the population of the research, totaling one hundred and six (106) from which a sample size of eighty two (82) was chosen using the simple random technique for the administration of questionnaires. This is the main instrument used to collect data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was the software used to analyze the quantitative data and presented in a format that allows for sound inferences to be made and conclusions drawn. The annual appraisal reports on the staffs of the district assembly as well as other official documents about performance management were also perused.

On the other hand, secondary sources of data were obtained mainly from credible sources in the form of published scholarly materials such as books, journals, conference papers, etc to give an in depth background information to relative to the topic and provide the researcher with a theoretical context within which to situate the research.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study was conducted at Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA) of Ashanti region of Ghana. Considering the fact that the structures and procedures for the human resource functions at the MMDAs are principally the same across all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), this district gives a fair representation of the state of affairs as far as performance management is concerned in MMDAs in Ashanti region and Ghana as a whole.

Much attention was placed on the department or unit responsible for human resource or personnel management and what structures, procedures and practices are in place to manage the performance of employees.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The first limitation of this study is the expression of skepticism expressed by most of the staff, especially junior staff, in participating in the answering of questionnaires. In spite of the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality both in writing and in direct interaction with them, they still harbor some fear that their responses could be used to victimize them. They may therefore not give their sincere view of the issues and this could affect the accuracy and validity of the findings. Another limitation is the difficulty in retrieving questionnaires from respondents as they always cite tight schedules as reasons for not completing the questionnaires on time. Access to official documents like appraisal reports was a challenge as the researching had to go through a long winding bureaucratic procedure to secure access. Time limitations, financial resources and lack of research helping hand are other reasons that limited this research to be much broader in terms of scope and depth.

1.8 Organization of the study

This study is organized into five (5) main chapters. Chapter one is basically an overview of the work and consists of the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, brief methodology, scope, limitations and organization of the study. Chapter two is the literature review which attempts to bring into perspective literary work and body of knowledge that exist, relative to the topic of the study. This helps to give background information to the topic, definition key concepts or terms and conceptual framework that will form the foundation for the conduct of the research. Chapter three is methodology and organizational profile which describes the nature and design of the study. It also describes data sources, sampling techniques used and data collection and analysis instruments. For a case study research, it is relevant to give a profile of the organization under study and its environment. Chapter four is the data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings where data collected are analyzed and presented in an organized manner. Results or findings are discussed and inferences drawn. Chapter five is the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations which summarizes some of the key findings of the research, draw a conclusion and make recommendations as a means of bringing improvement in the current state of affairs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter attempts to bring into perspective a body of existing knowledge and information that deals with the subject matter of the study and create a theoretical context for the research. The concepts of Performance Management (PM) and Performance Management Systems (PMS), the underpinning theories of this management phenomenon as well as the criticisms leveled against these theories are briefly discussed. The chapter concludes by taking a look at the purposes, advantages and disadvantages of performance management systems and a conceptual framework of PMS.

2.1 The Concept of performance management

Performance Management (PM) is a management concept that is related to the continuous performance improvement of individual employees or teams, various departments or units and ultimately the organization as a whole by creating the right conditions for work and developing the capacity of the employees to meet performance expectations. This is achieved by management setting clear organizational goals which cascades down to unit and individual levels and engendering ownership from employees to commit to achieving these goals (Dransfield, 2000). Armstrong and Baron (2005) emphasized that PM is a Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) process which operates in a continuous cycle rather than an event and ensures the effective management of employees for high organizational performance through *"Human Resource (HR) policies, culture, style and communication systems"* (p16).

Performance management is broader and much more comprehensive than Performance Appraisal (PA), which is defined as *"the formalized means of assessing worker performance in comparison to certain established organizational standards"* (Riggio 2008:p125). *"Although performance appraisal is an important component of performance management, it is just a part of the whole"* (Aguinis, 2011: p3). It is important to define the concept of performance management to identify the difference between performance management and performance appraisal.

2.1.1 Definitions of performance management

Hartle (1997) defined performance management as "*a process of establishing a shared understanding about what is to be achieved, and how it is to be achieved, and an approach to managing people which increases the possibility of achieving job-related success*" p12. The definition by Hartle (1997) touches on a very important aspect of performance management, the need to create employee ownership of the process by encouraging their participation and contribution at the planning stage, which ensure their deeper understanding of its objectives and how to achieve them.

Hartle (1997) thus stated that "*to improve performance individuals need to have a common shared understanding about what performance (and success) in their job looks like. Whether it is a set of tasks, objectives or results; or a set of behavior; or both. They need to be defined clearly and by agreement with the job holder so that people know what they are working towards*" (pp12-13).

Aguinis (2007) on the other hand defined performance management as "*a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization*" (p2).The author went further to stress that performance management, unlike performance appraisal (a periodic assessment of the performance of individual employees or teams against set targets), is a never-ending process aimed at ensuring continuous improvement in performance throughout the organization, and which is done in alignment with the firm's strategic objectives so as to gain competitive advantage.This definition point out the need to create a direct link between organizational strategy and employee performance, which must be clearly spelt out.

Grigore *et al.* (2011)looked at it purely from the strategy point of view and defined it as "*a strategic and integrated approach to delivering sustained success to organizations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors*" (p277). Grigore *et al*. (2011) explained that it is strategic because performance management goes beyond individual and team contributions and is concerned with the overall future direction of the firm and its continuous development and effectiveness. These definitions make it possible to examine the theories that form the basis of performance management.

2.1.2Theories of Performance Management

A theory is explained to mean "*a systematic grouping of interdependent concepts (mental images of anything formed by generalization from particulars) and principles (are generalizations or hypotheses that are tested for accuracy and appear to be true to reflect or explain reality) that*

give a framework to, or tie together, a significant area of knowledge" (Olum 2004: p9). In the field of management, theories provide a means of understanding experiences, allow for effective communication and a context for further learning.

The main theories that underpin performance management are motivational theory, particularly Goal-Setting theory and Expectancy theory (Lucas et al. 2006). Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that motivation is simply force acting either on or within a person to initiate behaviour or to do something. Forces acting on a person are referred to as extrinsic motivation and is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome while forces within a person is intrinsic motivation and is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. Motivating forces can be positive, as in impelling one to reach a certain goal. They can also be negative, as in driving one away from an unwanted situation.

The goal-setting theory (Figure *2.1*) was pioneered by Edwin Locke in his 1968 article titled "*Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives*" in which he stated that employees were motivated by clear goals and appropriate feedback. Locke (1968) further suggested that working toward a goal provided a major source of motivation to actually reach the goal – which, in turn, improved performance. Another researcher, Gary Latham, in 1972 studied the effect of goal setting in the workplace. His results supported exactly what Locke had found, and the inseparable link between goal setting and workplace performance was formed. Locke and Latham in their 1990 book titled *"A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance"* postulated the goal-setting theory. According to the theory values and goals are the two cognitive

determinants of behavior and they simply defined a goal as what the individual is consciously trying to do and that one's values create a desire to do things consistent with them. (Lunenburg, 2011)

Satisfaction and Further Motivation

| Value | Emotions and Desires | Intentions (Goals) | Directed Attention Mobilized Effort Persistence Strategies | Behavior or Performance | Outcome |
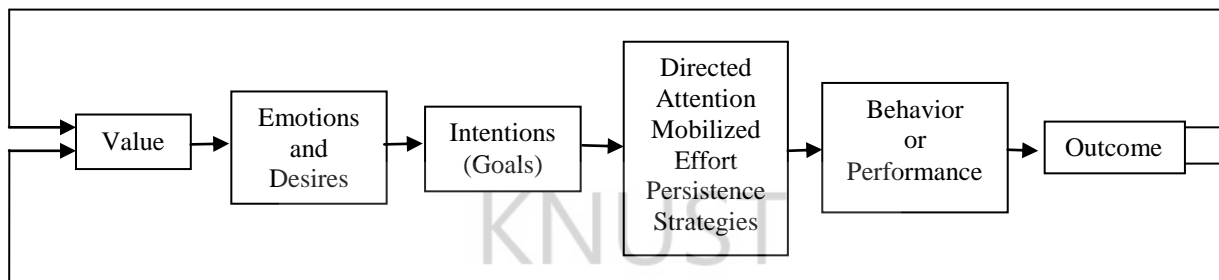
Frustration and Lower Motivation

Figure 2.1: General model of goal-setting theory.
Source: Adapted from Lunenburg (2011)

On the other hand, Vroom's Expectancy theory (1964),as illustrated in Figure 2.2, is based on the idea that people believe there are relationships between the effort they put forth at work, the performance they achieve from that effort and the rewards they receive from their effort and performance. In other words, people will be motivated if they believe that strong effort will lead to good performance and good performance will lead to desired rewards (Lunenburg 2011). This theory has three elements; expectancy, instrumentality and valence. A person is motivated if he or she believes that effort will lead to acceptable performance (expectancy), the performance will be rewarded (instrumentality), and that the value of the rewards is highly positive (valence).

Figure 2.2: Basic Expectancy Model.
Source: Adapted from Lunenburg (2011)

These two theories of motivation are at the core of performance management and form the underlining principles for the design of performance management systems.There are however different theories about what constitutes and creates motivation in people, and in this context employees. Notable among them include;

Maslow's (1970) Hierarchy of Needs: Maslow's (1970) theory (Figure *2.3*) states that human needs are hierarchical in nature and in satisfying these needs, people move along the pyramid bottom up by satisfying the deficiency needs before the growth needs. Maslow (1970) asserts that the fundamental desires of human beings are similar despite the multitude of conscious desires (Zalensky and Raspa, 2006).
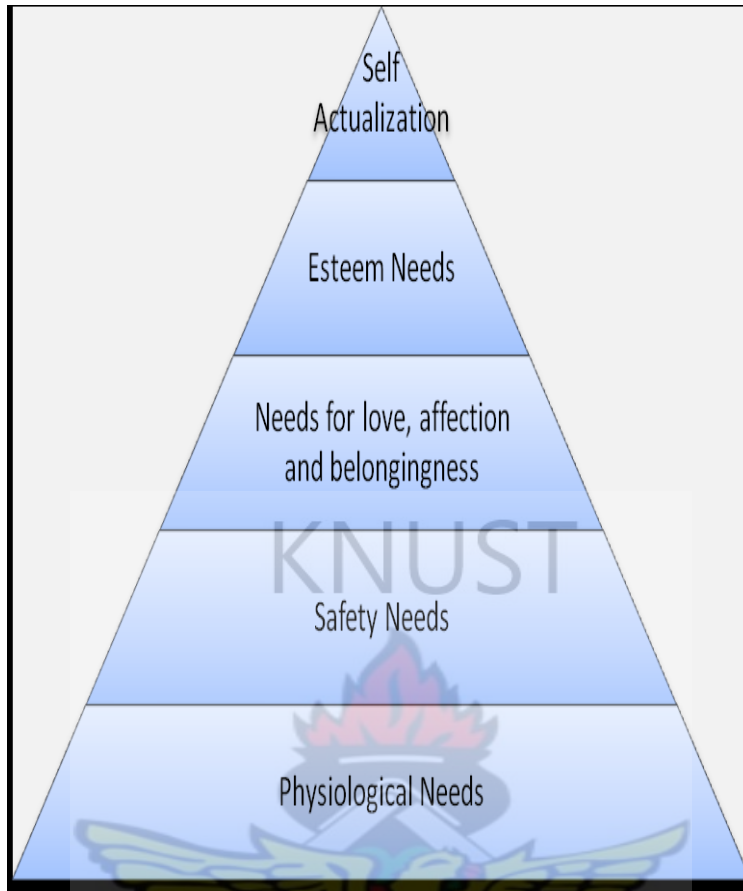
Figure 2.3: General model of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
Source: Adapted from Nyameh (2013)

McClelland's (1961) Achievement Motivation Theory (figure. 2.4) suggests that personal life experiences determine an individual's specific needs. This theory identifies three types of motivational need (achievement motivation (n-ach), authority/power motivation (n-pow) and affiliation motivation (n-affil)) which are found to varying degrees in all workers and managers, and this mix of motivational needs characterizes a person's or manager's style and behavior, both in terms of being motivated, and in the management and motivation others (More et al. 2010).

Figure 2.4: A model of McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory.
Source: Adapted from More et al. (2010)

Herzberg's (1968) Motivation-Hygiene theory (as illustrated in figure 2.5) attempt to explain the factors that motivate individuals through identifying and satisfying their individual needs, desires and the aims pursued to satisfy these desires. This theory identifies two factors of motivation as *"Motivators which involve factors built into the job itself, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement and Hygiene Factors which are extrinsic to the job, such as interpersonal relationships, salary, supervision and company policy"* (Tech-Hong and Waheed 2011: p.76).
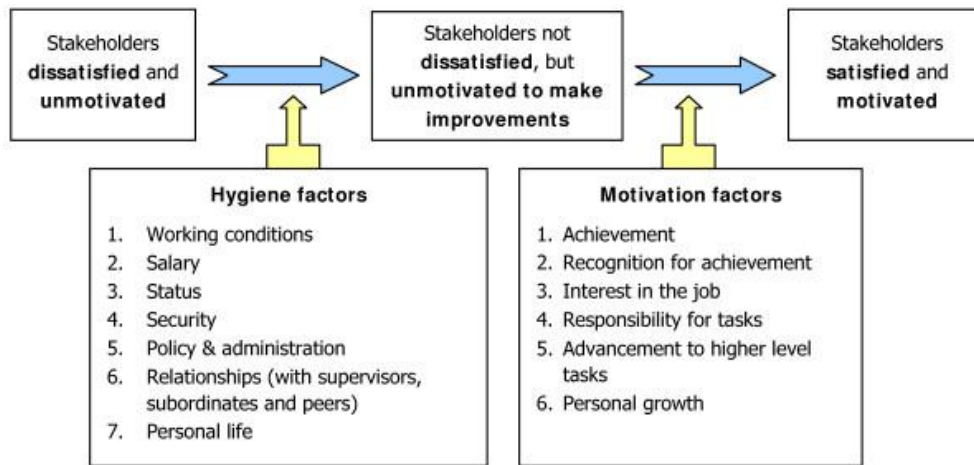
Figure 2.5: A model of Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

Source: Adapted from Ball (2003).

These theories, in spite of their role in explaining the factors that are likely to motivate employees in order to perform better, have had some criticisms levelled against them.

2.1.3 Criticisms of motivational theories

Despite their wide use and impact on the study and practice of this management phenomenon, there are several criticisms leveled against motivational theories (Katzell and Thompson, 1990). Some of the criticisms against motivational theories in general include their universalistic nature - the theories pertain to be universal theories and apply to everyone, taking no account of gender, age, culture, religious or other factor differences. Also, despite many research projects, little to no empirical support has been established for these theories. Again the theories assume that the connection between needs and behavior is non-problematic, making them too simplistic to account for the complexity of the real world and the complex decision making process that individuals must often make in the motivation process (Kaur, 2013). These criticisms notwithstanding, the theories makes it possible to examine performance management systems.

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2.2. Performance management system (PMS)

Personnel constitute one of the most important resources of any organization and their individual contributions results in the overall performance of the firm. In an ever-complex and competitive marketplace, organizations put in place mechanisms which ensure high level of performance of their workforce which support their corporate strategy and confer competitive advantage. Performance Management System (PMS) is a holistic approach by which an organization manages and controls the performance of its employees through regular coaching, training and development and an effective and fair evaluation system that recognizes and rewards high performance (Ferreira and Otley, 2009).

PMS create organizational environment that ensure continuous performance improvement, greater manager/employee commitment and communication and promotes learning and professional development. 'A well-designed performance management process stimulates managers to develop high-quality strategic plans, set ambitious targets, and track performance closely-all activities which help to achieve strategic objectives and consequently sustained value creation' (Grigore *et al.* 2011). Ferreira and Otley (2009) have developed an elaborate PMS framework, as shown in figure 2.6, which *"aims to provide a broad view of the key aspects of PMSs and to form the basis upon which further investigations can be developed"* p266.This structure outlines critical elements of the PMS and how they are inter-related as well as stressing the importance of aligning set goals to overall organizational vision and mission, backed by an effective evaluation and reward system.
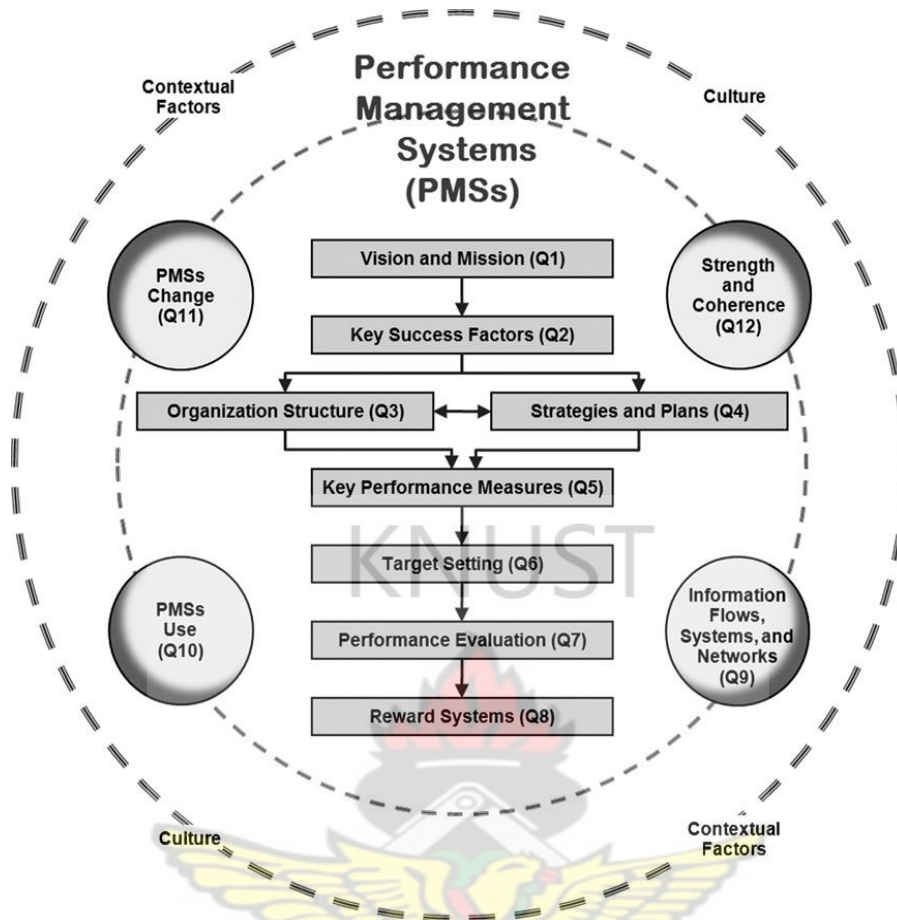
Figure 2.6: A performance management system (PMS) framework.
Source: Adapted from Ferreira and Otley (2009)

2.2.1 Aims of performance management systems (PMS)

The aims of performance management systems vary from one organization to the next and they underpin the design of the system and making it firm-specific. However, Aguinis (2007) has identified six major generic purposes for performance management systems:

- *Strategic purpose:* Performance management systems serve as a means of achieving strategic objectives of the firm by aligning individual objectives to organizational objectives and encouraging behaviours that help to achieve those objectives.

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- *Administrative purpose:* Performance management systems serve as a source of vital information for management in their administrative decision-making. Such administrative decisions include *"salary adjustments, promotions, employee retention or termination, recognition of superior individual performance, identification of poor performance, lay-offs, and merit increases"* (Aguinis 2007, p.13)

- *Informational purpose:* Performance management systems can be a device for communication to inform employees about performance shortfalls and for them to focus on aspects of the work that management consider as key.

- *Developmental purpose:* Through feedback from performance management systems, management can identify the strength and weaknesses (as well as their causes) in the performance of individual employees or teams and institute corrective measures, thereby developing the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) of employees.

- *Organizational maintenance purpose:* Performance management system is a source of information which could aid management to predict, with a higher degree of accuracy, future manpower needs of the organization and be able to put in place mechanisms to effectively respond to those needs. This is achieved through an inventory of skills, talents, and abilities of current employees and their performance history to serve as a basis for workforce planning.

- *Documentation purpose:* A comprehensive database can be developed through data collected from performance management systems to be used for documentation purposes such as validation of recruitment and selection instruments, legal documentation for litigation, etc.

Beardwell and Claydon (2010: 473) cited Armstrong and Baron (2005) who suggested that among other things, Performance Management System in an organization is aimed at communicating and creating ownership of clearly defined organizational goals based on its mission and vision and what their performance expectations are, how to achieve those expectation and. It also creates an environment for coaching and training for the professional development of the individual employees as well as high levels of motivation.

2.2.2 Components of performance management process

Aguinis (2007) presented a cycle of six inter-related components, as show in figure 2.7, that underpin a performance management process which, if any is poorly implemented, can undermine the effectiveness of whole system.
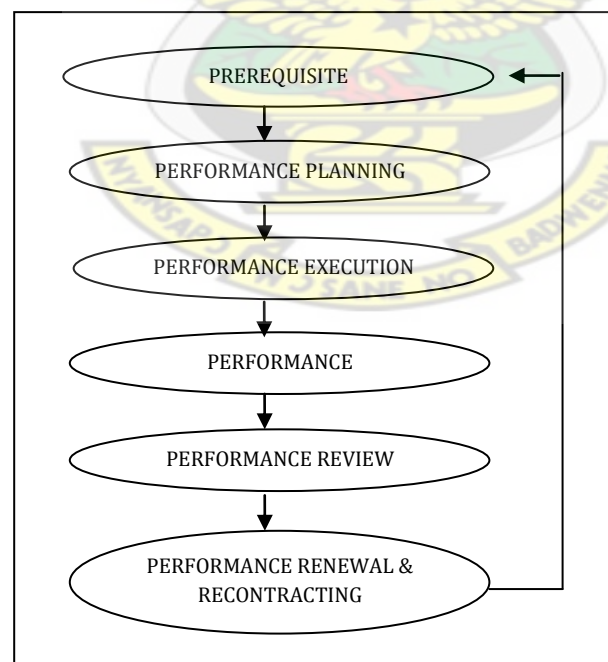
Figure 2.7:A model of Performance Management Process.
Source: Adapted from Aguinis (2007).

According to Aguinis (2007) the two important prerequisites that must precede the implementation of a performance management system are knowledge of organizational mission and strategic goals, and knowledge of the job in question. Through strategic planning, an organization is able to clearly define its purpose or reason for existing, where it wants to be in the future, the goals it wants to achieve, and the strategies it will use to attain these goals. This will result in setting organizational strategic goals in line with its mission and vision, setting the stage for fashioning departmental and individual employee goals in a cascading manner in order to achieve overall organizational objectives. To get a complete understanding of a job so that we know what and how to measure performance, a job analysis is conducted to determine 'the key components of a particular job, including activities, tasks, products, services, and processes'. The result of this process is job description which gives information on the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to do the job to ensure that the right calibre of people are employed and avoid putting square pegs in round holes.

Broadbent and Laughlin (2009) suggested that at the performance planning stage, supervisor and employee or team meet to discuss and agree on performance goals and expectations for the following cycle. In the discussion of goals, the following issues should be considered to increase the mutual understanding of what results are expected and how the results are expected to be achieved: Who are our customers? What do our customers want and expect from us? What will success look like in short term and long term? How will we move toward success? What specific actions will we take? What do we need from each other? What will I contribute? What do I expect others to contribute?

At the performance execution stage, Aguinis (2007) outlined factors that are needed on the part of the employees and supervisor. Some of the critical factors expected on the part of employees include commitment to goal achievement – employees must show they are committed to achieving the set goals, proactiveness in seeking feedback and coaching from supervisor, regular progress report on goal achievement to supervisor and regular self-appraisal so that where there are short falls in performance corrective actions could be taken in good time and not to wait till the end of the performance cycle. On the part of the supervisor, it is expected that regular observation and documentation of both good and bad performances will be undertaken, regular revision and update of performance objectives to reflect changing organizational goals in the fast-changing and competitive marketplace, provide regular feedback and coaching to employees to enable them achieve set goals, making available to employee or team all needed resources to achieve set goals including resources and encouragement for training and development of the employee as well as recognizing good performance and reinforce positive behaviour towards goal achievement and give feedback on negative behaviour and institute corrective measures to address it as soon it is identified.

Performance assessment is more or less a self-evaluation exercise to assess the extent to which the desired behaviours have been displayed and whether the desired results have been achieved (Amaratunga and Baldry, 2002). Among other benefits, it motivates employees as they take more responsibility for their work and performance, develop greater understanding of their job especially in a highly creative and individual work, and cost-effective in terms of time and use of external evaluators (Dransfield, 2000).

2.2.3 Performance Appraisal (PA)

Performance review or appraisal has been defined as activities through which organizations seek to assess employees based on pre-determined standards and develop their competence, enhance performance and distribute rewards (Fletcher, 2001). This very important component is traditionally an annual affair and is also referred to as 'Appraisal meeting or discussion' and 'provides a formal setting in which the employee receives feedback on his or her performance' (Aguinis, 2007). Notwithstanding its importance to the whole performance management system, supervisors and employees alike are uncomfortable and sometimes apprehensive to give or receive feedback, especially when performance is unsatisfactory. This can however be mitigated by giving special training to supervisors on how to give performance feedback and Hartle (1997) made suggestions like scheduling the meeting (date, time and venue) in advance with the agreement of the job holder, sharing all information on performance with the employee before the meeting, focusing on only performance related matters, and adequate preparation by both parties among others, to make the session a positive experience for all.

Performance appraisal serves many purposes for the worker, supervisor and the organization as a whole. For the employee it provides information about attainment of set goals, a means of recognition and reward in the form of praise or pay rise and also a basis for career advancement by promotion or increased responsibility. It is an opportunity for supervisors to interact with subordinates and give constructive feedback. Recommendations for important personnel decisions such as training needs, promotions, retentions, firing are made by supervisors in appraisal reports. Management can assess the productivity levels of individual workers or teams

and give recognition and motivation, evaluate the effectiveness of organizational interventions and validation of employee selection and placement methods (Riggio, 2008).

2.2.4 Performance appraisal methods

There are several means of reviewing performance of employees, the scope and methods of which varies from one organization to the next (Beardwell and Claydon, 2010). Appraisal methods have their strengths and weaknesses and depending on the organizational context, the choice and use of a particular method may be appropriate than the other (Dressler, 2012). The methods discussed here are Narrative/Form, Graphic Rating Scale, MBO and 360-Degree

The narrative/essay form method is a traditional method of appraisal which requires the Evaluator to write about an employee's strengths and weaknesses, previous performance, potential for promotion and a suggestion for future improvements (Aggarwal and Thakur, 2013). This method allows the evaluator to give a detailed account of the employee's performance and provide direct feedback but has a disadvantage of being open to biases and does not provide a means of comparison between employees.

Graphic rating scale (as illustrated in Table 2.1) is a popular, simple technique for evaluating employees where the scale lists a number of important work dimensions (such as leadership and management) and a performance range for each one. For each work dimension, the evaluator assigns values for each dimension and the total is the rating of the employee. This method is simple and easy to use and its standardized results allow for comparison between employees. It has a drawback of being subjective and there are ambiguities between ratings which could lead

to unreliable or invalid appraisal results, hence the development of a newer technique called Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS), which define scale points with specific behavior statements that describe varying degrees of performance (Lunenburg, 2012).

Table 2.1: A sample of Graphic Rating Scale.

Work Dimension	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Acceptable	Commendable	Outstanding
Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Management	1	2	3	4	5
Personnel	1	2	3	4	5
Administration	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative	1	2	3	4	5
Teaming	1	2	3	4	5
Budgeting	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Adapted from Lunenburg (2012)

Management By Objective (MBO) is another widely used method in recent times, a process in which a supervisory manager and his or her subordinate jointly set specific objectives to be accomplished within a set time frame and for which the subordinate is then held directly responsible (Thomson, 1998). This method has the advantage of engendering direct managers' attention toward results, secures the commitment of members of the organization to specific achievement, and facilitate their thinking in terms of the organization's future needs and the setting of objectives to meet those needs. On the down side, MBO requires more time and communication from employees and supervisors alike than other evaluation techniques, again unknown factors and unanticipated events can make the set goals and deadlines in advance too easy or even impossible to achieve. Finally, evaluations focus only on goal achievement, not on how goals are accomplished, so work behaviors such as teamwork, cooperation, or interpersonal skills are not evaluated (Lunenburg, 2012).

A 360 degree performance review is a formalized process whereby an individual receives feedback on performance behaviors from multiple individuals or "raters" that regularly interact on the job with the person being reviewed or the "learner" (Alexander, 2006). The raters include supervisor, colleagues, subordinates, customers/clients as well as himself. The underlying assumption of the 360 degree technique is that the accuracy and scope of the assessment of the individual increases when consulting a full circle of daily business contacts, as opposed to one supervisor. Accuracy and validity of feedback, when consistent pattern of feedback comes from different raters, makes it more acceptable to the learner and increasing the likelihood of behavioral change and performance improvement. Performance appraisals generally have some errors which if no mechanisms and strategies are put in place to address tend to affect the accuracy and validity of results, rendering the entire system counterproductive. Some of these errors include Central Tendency - raters reluctant to rate subordinates as very high or very low, Halo Effect - a single positive or negative dimension of a subordinate's performance is allowed to influence the supervisor's rating of that subordinate on other dimensions, and recency of events – supervisor likely to consider recent performance more strongly than performance behaviors that occurred earlier (Lunenburg, 2012).

Performance renewal and re-contracting is the final component of the performance management process and is much like the performance planning stage only that it has the benefit of hindsight and information from the previous stages becomes the basis for setting new standards and targets going forward, which will be more realistic and reflective of the business environment as being experienced now (Aguinis, 2007). Performance management systems have inherent advantages and disadvantages.

2.2.5Advantages and Disadvantages of Performance Management Systems (PMS)

Some of the advantages that accrue to management, staff and indeed the entire organizations include focus on performance - performance management process provides opportunity for coaching and forces managers to discuss performance issues with employees. It is this consistent coaching that affects changed behaviors and employee development. A good performance management system puts all employees on a development journey, a succession planning process, to prepare them for higher positions and increased responsibilities. There is also motivation and encouragement for employees to perform at higher levels as pay increases and/or bonuses are tied to the performance appraisal process to reward them for a job well done. There is also opportunity for career development because an effective performance management system can help an employee reach their full potential and this is positive for both the employees and management.

Conversely, if a performance management system is not well thought through and implemented its can have some negative repercussions on the employees and the organization as a whole. Performance appraisals can discourage employers if the process is not a pleasant experience due to poor results. It is critical that managers document not only issues that need to be corrected, but also the positive things an employee does throughout the course of a year, and both should be discussed during performance appraisal. Biases could affect the accuracy and validity of appraisal results and strain relations between supervisor and subordinate, and it takes a very structured, objective process and a mature manager to remain unbiased through the process (Lotich, 2012). Also, performance management systems cost money and time and these resources are wasted if systems are poorly designed and implemented (Aguinis, 2007).

2.2.6 Performance management in local government

According to Torres et al (2011), performance management has always been part of public administration, at least theoretically, but there is very little to show in terms of its practical implementation. There is however a growing effort by local governments to develop performance measurement tools to improve service delivery, efficiency and accountability in response to concerns expressed by the public about how their taxes are used. "*A range of theories – grounded theory, agency theory, positive accounting theory, institutional theory and conflict/ambiguity approach – has contributed to explaining, to some extent, the introduction of performance measures into governments through the identification and analysis of the role and drivers of these reforms*".

Torres et al (2011) again pointed out that where performance management systems are adopted for the purposes of improving decision-making, the agency theory is used and the focus of budgeting, management and accountability is shifted away from inputs towards outputs, in that managers are given the flexibility to make informed choices to improve performance and are then held accountable for outputs and outcomes resulting from their decisions. Here "*The provision of performance information is not an end in itself; but rather, its overall objective is to enhance decision making by politicians and civil servants leading to improved performance and/or accountability and, ultimately, enhanced outcomes for society*".

On the other hand if the objective is to enhance institutional image and accountability, it is underpinned by the institutional theory and institutions in response to the expectations of the broader society *"adopt structures and practices that have high social value" and "performance*

measures can be viewed as a process of formal compliance with the wishes and expectations of the external environment and stakeholders" pp. 83-87.

2.2.7 Conceptual frameworks

The conceptual framework (as illustrated in Figure 2.8) presents a graphical view of the main concepts or components of the study based on reviewed literature. From the framework, Performance Management (PM) is made up of Performance Management System PMS) including the overall vision and mission of the organization (see Section 2.2, Figure 2.6) and Performance Appraisal (PA), which includes methods such as graphic rating scale, management by objective and 360 degree appraisal.

The performance management system will ensure that set goals are aligned to overall organizational objectives and that each employee is clear about his/her performance targets and management provide resources for training and development with coaching and support from supervisors to help achieve targets. Appropriate performance appraisal methods can be used to assess employee behavior and performance against set targets to recognize and rewards excellent performers while taking corrective measures to address shortcomings. The interrelatedness of performance management systems and performance appraisal allows for an empirical investigation of performance management in organizations. It also makes it possible to consider the implications of performance management on the overall performance of an organization.

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                    │    PERFORMANCE          │
                    │    MANAGEMENT           │
                    │       (PM)              │
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       ┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────┐
       │   PERFORMANCE        │    │   PERFORMANCE        │
       │ MANAGEMENT SYSTEM    │◄──►│   APPRAISAL (PA)     │
       │      (PMS)           │    │                      │
       └──────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────┘
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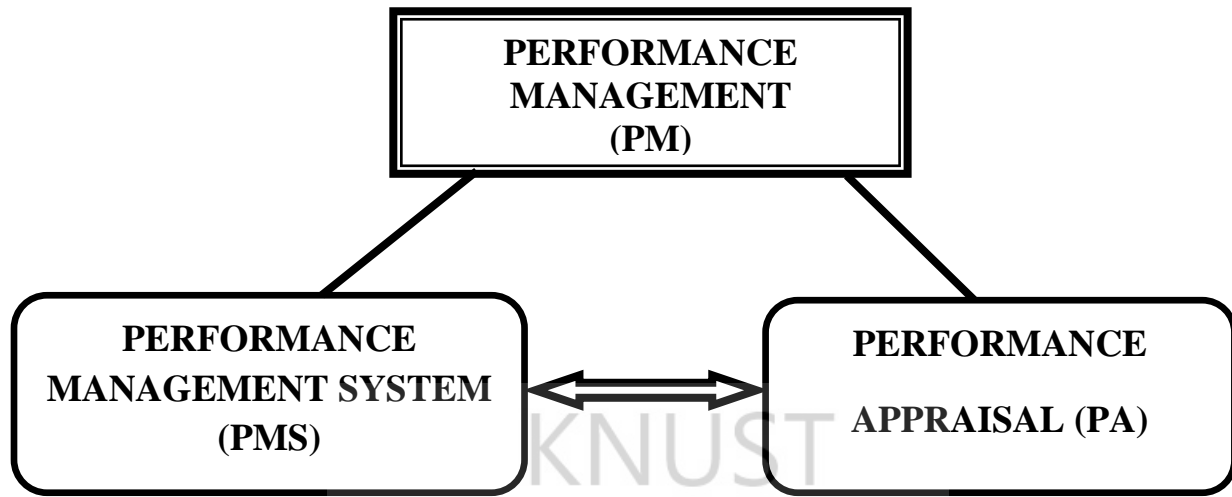
Figure 2.8: Conceptual framework of Performance Management in Organizations

2.3 Summary

In summary, the chapter discussed the concept of performance management (PM) and the theories that underpinned this management process. It also outlines the holistic nature of the Performance Management System (PMS) and how its proper implementation can influence behavior and bring about significant improvements in the overall organizational performance. The various components of the PM process, especially Performance Appraisal (PA), and how they are inter-related shows a continuous process which require the commitment and participation of both supervisor and subordinate at each stage. Performance appraisal is shown to be a vital part of the broader system and some performance appraisal methods were highlighted. The chapter concludes with a look at some of the pros and cons of performance management system and how it applies to local government and a conceptual framework of the research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is in two parts – research methodology and organizational profile. The first section focuses on research methodology which outlines the various research approaches there is and instruments and strategies used to gather all relevant data. It touches on the research design, population of the study, sampling techniques, sample size, types and sources of data, instruments and strategies of data capture and analysis of data. The second part deals with the organizational profile of the study area. It presents a brief history and vital information about the organization, its vision and mission, mandate and major activities as well as presentation of the topic of the study as it applies in the organization.

3.1 Research methodology

The approach adopted in conducting a research is dependent on the philosophy that underpins the research. A research philosophy can be thought of as principles that guide the process of data collection, data analysis and interpretation of results when studying a phenomenon. There are two main research philosophies; Positivism and Interpretivism. According to Greener (2008), Positivism (usually associated with natural science research) states that 'knowledge' about a phenomenon can be produced only by objective view through our senses (touch, sight, hearing, smell, taste) whereas Interpretivism (common with research in social science) contends that our subjective thoughts and ideas of a phenomenon is valid. These philosophies form the foundation and framework within which various research methodologies are situated. There are several research methodologies that have been identified which include Survey, Action Research, Case

Study, Forecasting, Simulation and Laboratory Experiment. Even though research method and research methodology are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a difference between them. Kothari (2004) explains that research method may be understood as all those methods/techniques (observation, administering questionnaire, interviews, analytical tools) that are used for conduction of research whiles research methodology is the systematic steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them.

3.2 Research design

According to van Wyk (2013), research design is the overall work plan that connects the conceptual research problem to the pertinent empirical research; thus it articulates what data is required, methods of collecting and analyzing data, and how the results represents the most effective way of answering the research question in the face of the limitations of the study. Research design deals with the logical flow of the entire process to ensure that the right form of data are collected and analyzed and the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial research questions as unambiguously as possible. The methodology and the approach to be adopted in conducting the research flow out of the research design. This research was an exploratory study of the performance management systems in place at the local government level.

3.3 Research strategy

The two main approaches to research are quantitative and qualitative research strategies. Greener (2008) pointed out that a *"quantitative research is associated with deductive approach to testing theory using figures or facts and therefore a positivist or natural science approach with an*

objective view of the phenomenon under study' while a qualitative research is associated with inductive approach to generating theory using an interpretivist model that allow for subjective perspectives to the phenomenon under study and to construct knowledge rather than seeking to 'find' it in 'reality' p17.Ho *et al* (2006) quoted Denzin and Lincoln (2005) in distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative research as *"The word qualitative implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. . . in contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes"* (p.1). They further pointed out that 'quantities are quantified qualities—that is, qualities to which numbers have been assigned according to rules that define the correspondence between the numbers and measures of the qualities' and that both qualitative and quantitative studies are needed to describe and to make sense of the same social reality. It must however be observed that no single research methodology is intrinsically better than any other methodology and it is commonplace today to see a combination of both approaches in a single research.

The research strategy adopted for this research was quantitative approach which emphasizes on objective measurements and numerical analysis of data collected through questionnaires and using the results generalize across the local government institutions. This strategy was adopted because it allows for a broader study, involving a greater number of subjects, and enhancing the generalization of the results. Again, there is greater objectivity and accuracy of results and if standards are strictly applied the research could be replicated (Creswell, 2003). Data collected was organized and categorized under acceptable headings and the appropriate data analysis tools

and techniques were applied to generate information and presented in a format that aid to effectively answer the research questions.

3.4 Sources of data

Data collection is crucial process to the success every research project. Data collection forms the basis the validity of the outcome of a research by providing objective information about what is happening in the organization under study, rather than subjective opinions of outsiders. Data for this research was collected from two main sources; primary and secondary sources. The primary data (data obtained at firsthand by a researcher) was collected through the administration of questionnaires to management and staff of the district under study as well as perusal of annual performance appraisal reports and other official documents related to performance management in the district. On the other hand secondary data for the research was obtained from published materials as well as official documents from government agencies and state institutions responsible for local government and Public/Civil service governing bodies.

3.5 Research population

The population for a research refers to the total number of people from which the sample size will be selected to conduct the research. In this case it is the staffs of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA) with a total staff population of one hundred and six (106).

3.6 Sample size

The total sample size who participated in the research was eighty-two (82). Considering the total number of staff, the target was to use the entire population as the sample size but unwillingness of some staff to take part, absenteeism due to other official engagements outside the district and

inability to retrieved questionnaires were some of the reasons that accounted for the eighty-two (82) sample size. Table 3.1 shows the sampled population categorized into senior administrative staff, junior administrative staff and clerical staff.

Table 3.1: Sampled population of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA).

STAFF CATEGORY	NUMBER
MANAGEMENT/HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS	10
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	20
JUNIOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	43
CLERICAL STAFF	9
TOTAL	**82**

Source: Field survey 2014.

3.7 Sampling technique

Sampling is a procedure where a fraction of a group or set is taken and analyzed and the inferences drawn from the sample is extended to the whole. The method used in selecting an appropriate sample is referred to as sampling technique, which could either be probability or non-probability sampling technique. Probability sampling is a sampling process which exercises some form of random selection and each item has an equal change being selected while non-probability sampling depends on subjective judgment of the researcher and samples are selected according to a predetermined criterion to the convenience of the researcher (Barreiro and Albandoz, 2001).Even though there are several sampling techniques, the one used for this

research is Simple Random Technique where each unit in any given population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample.

3.8 Data collection instrument

After selecting the appropriate sample, the means through which relevant data is collected from sample for analysis is referred to as data collection instrument. This research used questionnaire as the main instrument for collecting primary data for the research. A *questionnaire* is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts, mostly in print and prepared based on the main concepts addressed in the specific objectives and the research questions, for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Burgess 2001). In designing a questionnaire, it is important to consider not only the questions to ask but also the type (open or close-ended) and wording of the questions as well as the sequence and overall layout of the questionnaire. Questionnaires were administered after a test run was conducted and identified short-comings were rectified.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

Gorman and Johnson (2003) described data analysis as a mechanism of distilling a collection of raw data into few key numerical values and presented in a graphical or descriptive statistical format to allow the researcher to focus on the specific meaningful properties of the data set. After collecting relevant data using questionnaires, the raw data was carefully categorized and entered into a computer system for analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was the analytical software used to analyze the data and presented in a tabular or graphical format that allows for sound inferences to be made and conclusions drawn.

3.10 Organizational Profile
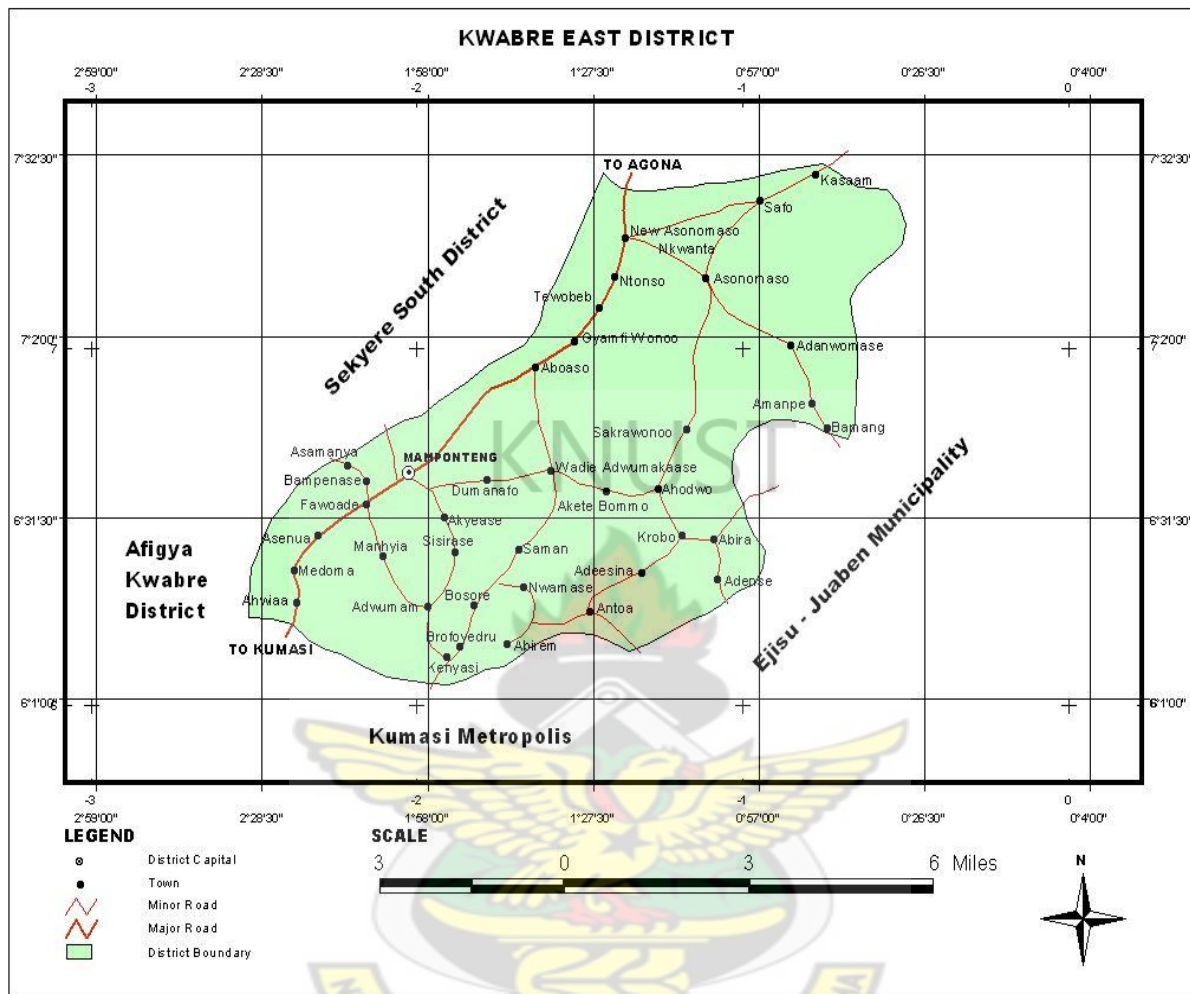
Figure 3.1: A map of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA)
Source: KEDA Service Charter (2013).

The study was conducted at Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA) in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The district was part of the former Kwabre District, which was carved out of the former Kwabre Sekyere District in 1988 and then became Kwabre East District after the creation of Afigya Kwabre District in 2008. It is located almost at the central portion of the Ashanti region (*fig 3.1*). The District shares common boundaries with Sekyere South District to the North;

Kumasi Metropolis to the South; Ejisu Juaben District to the East and Afigya Kwabre District to the West. The District has a total land area of 148 square kilometers constituting about 0.06% of the total land area of Ashanti Region (24,389 sq. km.). The District capital, Mamponteng, is approximately 14.5 kilometers from Kumasi to the North-east. There are 42 settlements, administered under 1 parliamentary constituency, 2 Town Councils, 4 Area Councils and 31 Electoral Areas with a population of 102,310 (Population and Housing Census, 2010).

Economic activities in the district can be categorized into 3 major sectors, namely Agriculture, Industry and Service. The agricultural sector is dominated by crop farming, which is mostly done on subsistence basis and employs rudimentary production techniques. The 2009 household survey reveal that about 82% of all farmers interviewed are food crops farmers. Fruits, vegetables, cocoa and livestock are also grown but on a smaller scale. The industrial sector consists of a wide range of micro, small and medium scale manufacturing and processing activities, including agro processing, wood-based, textiles based, metal based, quarrying, construction and other activities. Trading, personal services such as hairdressing and barbering, drinking and 'chop bar' operations, transport, tourism and other services are referred to as services sectors.

3.10.1 Mission Statement of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA)

Kwabre East District Assembly exists to improve upon the quality of life of the people in the district through the formulation and implementation of policies, programs and projects that will enhance incomes, make the district the number one destination for tourists in Ashanti, promote quality education, health and improve community access to potable water in partnership with the private sector.

3.10.2 Vision Statement of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA)

The Kwabre East District Assembly's vision is to be a sterling provider of humane administrative and development oriented programs and projects in the district.

3.10.3 Objectives of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA)

a) To facilitate the effective functioning of government machinery in the metropolis.

b) To ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources of the District Assembly.

c) To monitor, conduct and harmonize the implementation of the district development plans and activities within the district

d) To facilitate community-based and private sector development in the district.

3.10.4 Functions of Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA)

The assembly is to perform the following functions among others:

i.   Ensure the preparation and submission through the regional coordinating council, development plans of the district to the finance for approval.

ii. Formulate and execute plans, programs and strategies for the effective mobilization of resources necessary for the overall development of the district.

iii. Promote and support productive activity and social development in the district and remove any obstacle to initiative and development.

iv. Initiate programs for the development of basic infrastructure and provide municipal works and services in the district.

v.   In co-operation with the appropriate national and local security agencies are responsible for the maintenance of security and public safety in the district.

vi. Ensure ready access to courts in the district for the promotion of justice.

vii. Initiate, sponsor or carry out such studies as may be necessary for the discharge of any of the fictions conferred by Act 462 and any other enactment.

3.11 Overview of Local Government System in Ghana

Local government is a global concept of governance and public administration that exists in diverse forms in different parts of the world. Because of the diversity in the meaning of local government from one country to the other, there are almost as many forms of local government as there are countries in the world, a reason for the non-existence of a single universal definition. (Ahwoi, 2010). Boakye (1986) cited Clark (1948) to have defined local government as *"that part of the government of a nation or state which deals mainly with such matters as concerned the inhabitants of a particular district or place together with those matters which parliament has deemed it desirable should be administered by local authorities subordinate to the central government"* p6. Ahwoi (2010) rather gave a working definition of local government as simply *"consisting of those functions which are carried out by local authorities"* (p10). According to Stoker, 1991 the history of local government in Britain, from whom Ghana developed its local government system, is traced back to the eighteenth century and closely linked to the Industrial Revolution which caused the movement of people from rural to urban areas, resulting in overcrowding and its attendant problems. As a response, *ad hoc* single-purpose bodies were created with varied powers and responsibilities to deal with some of these challenges. But these bodies, acting alongside other local government institutions, were found to be administratively inadequate to deal with the many challenges confronting the cities and towns, leading to the

creation of elected municipal councils by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835.These municipal councils are believed to be the genesis of modern local government systems.

Local government has been part of our way of life, heritage and political culture. The history of local government in Ghana is traceable to the pre-independence era where the chiefs and traditional authorities held military, political and social power to administer local affairs. In the then Gold Coast, the 'Indirect Rule' was the first form of local government system the British implemented, which used local authorities as conduits to control the people and administer law and order with limited involvement in local administration (Ahwoi, 2010). In 1951, the Local Government Ordinance (Cap 64) was passed which created a two-tier structure which is a mixture of the British system and the local administration. 'This system was found to be inherently weak as too much emphasis had been laid on local allegiances and sentiments resulting in conflicts among local educated elite and the traditional authority over leadership of local affairs' (Boakye, 1986). Several constitutional provisions, parliamentary enactments and military regime decrees followed, each serving one political interest or the other, but could be considered generally as our attempts to create a local government system that best serve the needs and aspirations of people at the grassroots level.

2.11.1 Legal and Administrative Framework of Local Government in Ghana

Ghana's current programme of decentralisation was initiated in 1988, and according to Boafo-Arthur (2007) *"the then military government embarked on an ambitious overhaul of the existing local government system. These changes were far-reaching and affected not only the conceptual basis but also the practice of decentralization in the country" p.258.* The '*Joint Government of*

Ghana and Development Partner Decentralization Policy Review Report (2007)' noted that District Assemblies (DAs) as the highest political authority became a catch-phrase during the pre-constitutional era and the associated specifications for their constitution and operations were deemed to be sufficient in bringing about a blend of local representation and governmental efficiency in planning and delivering public and developmental services in a decentralized manner. When Ghana ushered in its fourth republic, local government was given prominence the 1992 Constitution with a whole chapter (Chapter Twenty) dedicated to local government and decentralization. Article (1) of that chapter stipulates that Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized. Other legislations that underpin present day local government system in Ghana include;

i.   Local Government Act 1993 (Act 462), together with supporting enactments and subsidiary legislation such as the Local Government - Urban, Zonal and Town and Unit Committees -Establishment Instrument, the 138 Legislative Instruments establishing the 138Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies (MMDAs)

ii.   District Assemblies' Common Fund Act 1993 (Act 455)

iii. Civil Service Law 1993 (PNDCL 327)

iv.   National Development Planning (System) Act 1994 (Act 479)

v.   National Development Planning Commission Act 1994 (Act 480)

vi.   Local Government Service Act 656 of 2003, (and other legislation pertaining to administration of LG and CG personnel at local level discussed further in chapter 5)

vii. Institute of Local Government Studies Act 647 of 2003.

The principal units of local government in Ghana are the District Assemblies (DAs), of which there are one hundred and thirty eight (138). Between the district assemblies and the central government are the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs), made up of the representatives from each of the DAs in the region and from the Regional House of Chiefs. The role of these bodies is to coordinate policy implementation amongst the DAs. The Local Government Act provides that there are three kinds of districts in Ghana – districts, municipalities and metropolis. Each of them has an Assembly as the highest political authority in the district: a District Assembly, Municipal Assembly or a Metropolitan Assembly.

The administrative architecture and composition of local government are provided for in the 1992 constitution which provides among other things that a District Assembly shall consist of the following members -

i.   one person from each local government electoral area within the district elected by universal adult suffrage;

ii.   the member or members of Parliament from the constituencies that fall within the area of authority of the District Assembly as members without the right to vote;

iii. the District Chief Executive of the district, who shall be appointed by the President with the prior approval of not less than two-thirds majority of members of the Assembly present and voting at the meeting; and

iv.   other members not being more than thirty percent of all the members of the District Assembly, appointed by the President in consultation with the traditional authorities and other interest groups in the district.

A critical observation of the local government system can reveal that there are two competing concepts of decentralization currently operating in Ghana, Devolution and De-concentration. The first is the devolution of major political and administrative responsibilities from Central Government to District Assemblies, comprising the establishment of partially elected bodies with the mandate for local governance and community development. The second, running parallel to devolution, is the process of administrative and technical de-concentration practiced by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that plan and deliver specific services to communities – Water and sanitation, Health, Education, Agriculture, Roads, Works, and allied municipal services (*Joint Government Of Ghana And Development Partner Decentralization Policy Review Report,2007*).In spite of this extensive legislative administrative framework, it is worth noting that there is no one coherent policy document defining the decentralisation policies in Ghana. The latest and overall guiding programming document is the National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP), which was endorsed by the Cabinet in 2004. The Government of Ghana and development partners recognise that further real progress of the decentralisation reform will require a more comprehensive policy strategy, and are developing initiatives aiming at achieving this (*Local Government system in Ghana, 2009*).

3.11.2 Performance Management at the District Assemblies

Several attempts have been made in the form of policy initiatives and reforms to improve the performance of public sector employees. Notable among them is the Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) which aimed among other things at 'providing objective basis for monitoring and assessing the performance of civil servants and civil service institutions through explicit goal and target setting' but with little success. Kwami (2012) in an article titled

'Is performance management in Ghana's public service a mirage?' suggested that there is a general agreement on the factors which contributed to the failure of previous attempts which includes;

i. The absence of a strong performance culture that relates performance to appropriate rewards or sanctions.

ii. Focus on inputs i.e. budget, personnel and equipment more than on outputs and outcomes. (i.e. input and process-orientation rather than results orientation.)

iii. Lack of change champions to lead and sustain performance management initiatives and to build performance management culture.

iv. Lack of performance orientation and insufficient accountability standards.

v. Weak planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

In a renewed commitment to ensure success, the Local Government Service (the institution under which all staff of the decentralized departments of the Metropolitan, Municipal and Districts Assemblies are) in their document titled *Human Resource Operational Manual For Metropolitan, Municipal & District Assemblies, September 2013,* made a policy statement that it is "committed to ensuring that all employees are given every opportunity to deliver and maintain a high level of performance at work" with a stated objective of:

i. Help and encourage employees to achieve the required standards.

ii. Ensure that the required standards of work performance are maintained.

iii. Provide a framework for dealing with issues of poor performance in a fair and consistent manner.

It further elaborated on the principles that underpin their performance management as follows;

a) Accountability - Every individual, unit, and department/division in the Service is to be held accountable on a continuous basis to his/her superior, the public/beneficiaries of services.

b) Transparency - The process for holding individuals and Public Service Institutions accountable should as much as possible be transparent.

c) Equity - There should be equity in the assessment process across grades in the public service, and frequency and use of assessment outcomes should be the same for all categories of staff in the service.

d) Ownership - The process and outcome of the assessment mechanism must be owned by the assessee, the assessors and other stakeholders.

e) Results Orientation - The employee's performance should be assessed on the basis of a work plan covering a specified period, setting out clearly his or her responsibilities and the objectives to be achieved.

Under the current arrangement, the governing council of the local government service shall be responsible for the administration and evaluation of Performance Agreements signed with the managers (Head of Service, Chief Directors and Coordinating Directors) and they will in turn ensure compliance in their respective DDUs (Department, Division and Unit).The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the National Development Planning Commission and the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission shall provide annual performance indicators/ measures, incentives and rewards for high productivity. The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission and the Public Services Commission shall put in place

monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure compliance by all institutions(*Human Resource Operational Manual For Metropolitan, Municipal & District Assemblies, 2013*).

3.12 Summary

As a summary, the research methodology adopted for this study has been discussed with particular attention on the research design and strategy and data collection instrument used. The organizational profile of the study district covered its brief history, geographical location, general demographics and the staff of administrative institution, the district assembly was categorized for the purposes of this study (Table 3.1). The chapter ended with a general overview of local government in Ghana, how performance management applies at the district level and efforts made to improve the system.
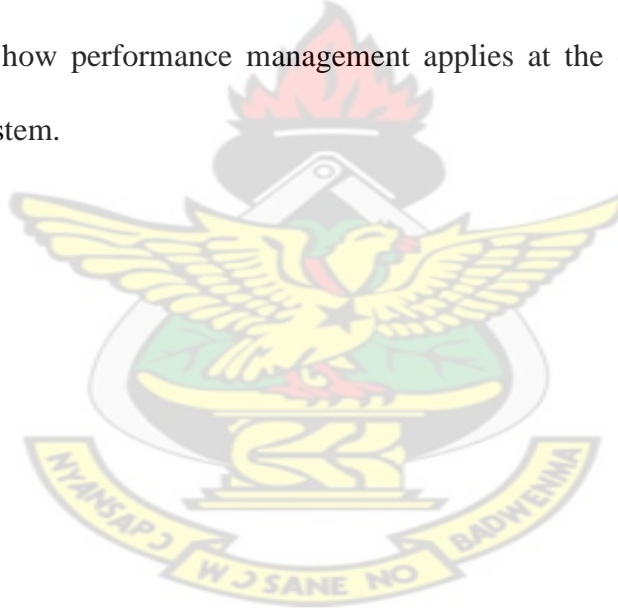
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the methodology adopted in carrying out this research and various methods and techniques used to gather empirical data. This chapter presents results and findings as captured during the field work using statistical tools such as tables and pictorial presentations in the form diagrams for simplified and better appreciation of the data. A comprehensive analysis of the data is done and the findings are discussed to make clear its implications.

4.1 Background information of respondents

The study among others sought to find the background information of respondents in terms of age distribution, gender, educational background, working experience and category of staff. This information is aimed at establishing the caliber of staff sampled for the study and their suitability to give an account of what pertains in the district with regards to performance management processes.

4.1.1 Gender distribution of respondents

The gender distribution of the respondents (*Figure 4.1*) is that 38 out of the total of 82 respondents were male, representing 43% while 44 were female, representing 57%. This implies that both males and females are represented in the workforce of the district and that more females responded than males.
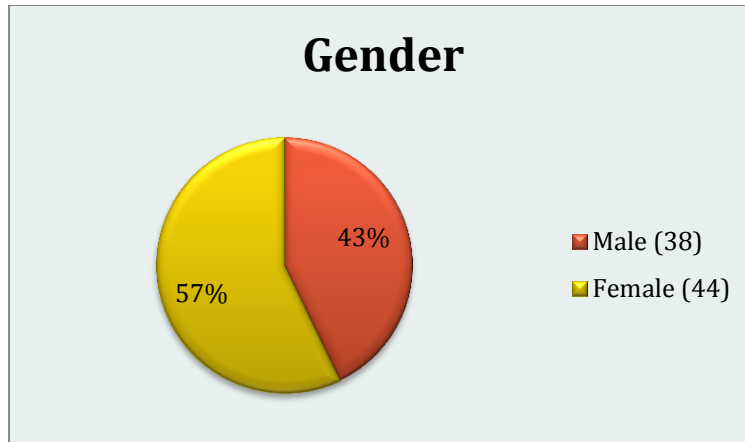
Figure 4.1: Gender distributions of respondents.
Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.1.2 Age distribution of respondents

Respondents sampled have their ages ranging between twenty (20) and fifty (50) yearsin the proportions shown in *figure 4.2*. The youngest of all the respondents was twenty one (21) while the oldest is forty eight (48) years old, with the majority between 31-40 years (54.3%). This implies that the district has a relatively young workforce and all the respondents have at least ten (10) more years of service before reaching the mandatory retirement age of sixty (60) years.
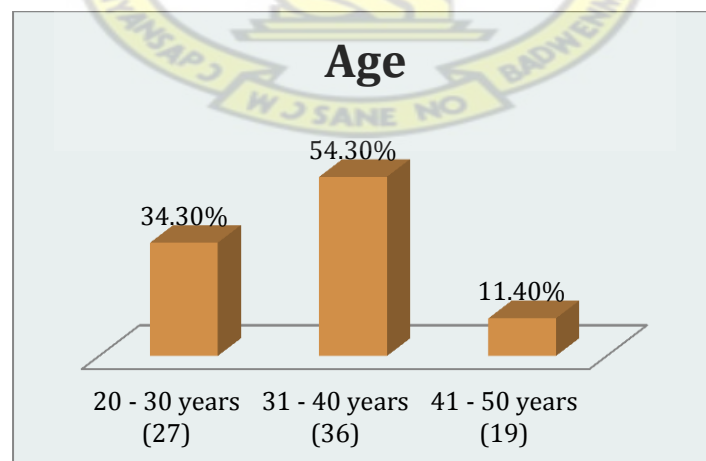
Figure 4.2: Age distribution of respondents.
Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.1.3 Educational level of respondents

Educational level of a workforce is vital prerequisite for performance improvement and high levels of productivity. A well education workforce can be a source of competitive advantages to the organization. Figure *4.3* shows the educational levels of the respondents and that out of the total of eighty-two (82) respondents, only four (4) representing 6.08% have not had tertiary education with a total of 91.0%attaining tertiary education or higher.. This indicates that the respondents are well educated and have a good appreciation of issues.
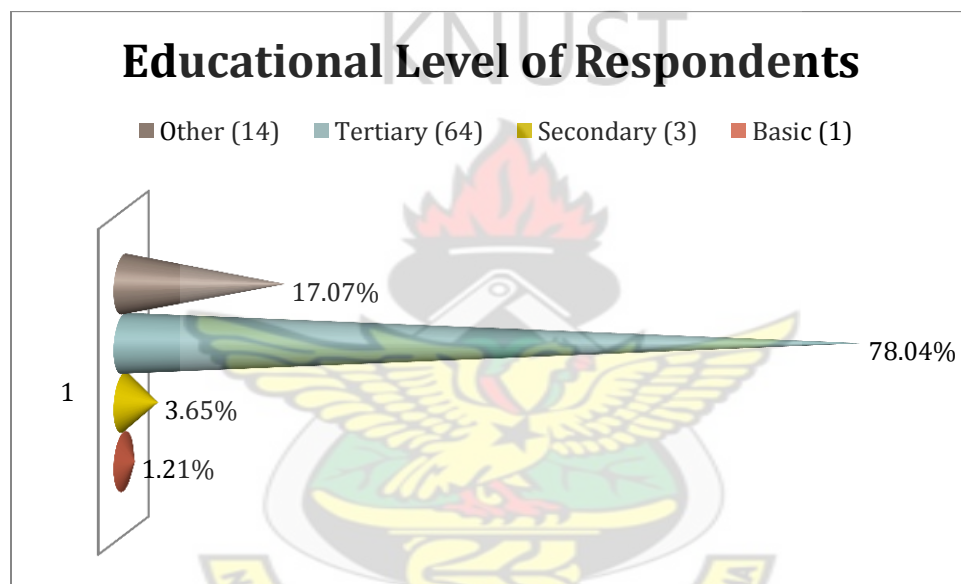
Figure 4.3: Educational levels of respondents.
Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.1.4 Work experience of respondents

The respondents have a wide range of working experience as show in *fig. 4.4*. The most experienced of the respondents with over a decade of working experience constitute 17% while the majority (47 %) has 1 to 5 years working experience. Those in the 6 -10 years bracket are thirteen (13) in number, representing 17%.
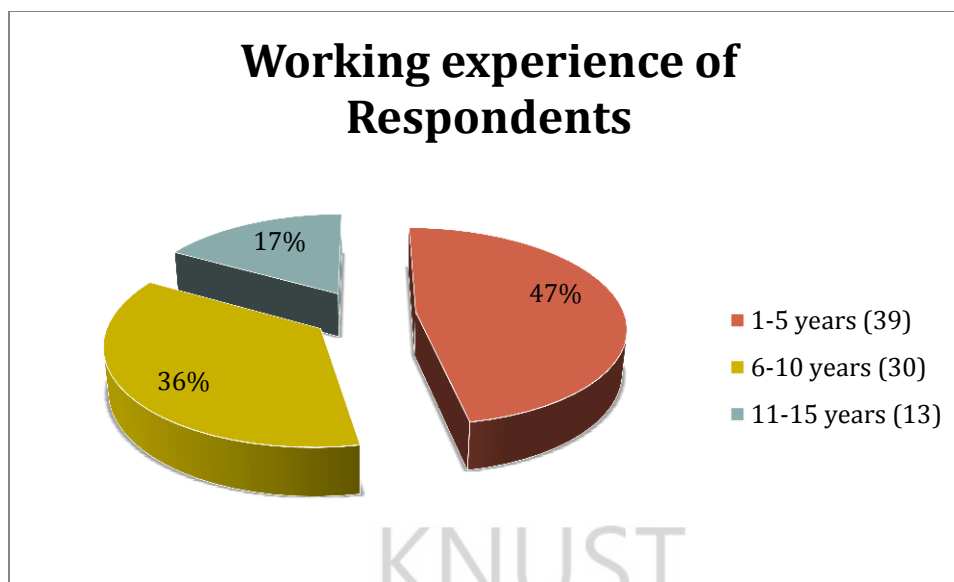
Figure 4.4: Working experiences of respondents.
Source: Field Survey 2014

4.1.5 Staff category of respondents

The staff categories of management/HOD, senior administrative staff, junior administrative staff

and clerical staff were represented in the total sampled respondents in the proportions of 12.2%.

24.4%, 52.4% and 11.0% respectively (table 4.1). The senior and junior administration staffs

who shoulder most of the operational responsibilities constitute the majority.

Table 4.1: Staff category of respondents.

Staff category of respondents				
Staff category	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Clerical staff	9	11.0	11.0	11.0
Junior Administrative Staff	43	52.4	52.4	63.4
Senior Administrative staff	20	24.4	24.4	87.8
Management/HOD	10	12.2	12.2	100.0
Total	**82**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

In summary, the background information of the respondents suggests that Kwabre East District Assembly (KEDA) has a well-educated workforce with a fair representation of all age groups, gender. Such a diverse workforce when well-trained and motivated could achieve higher levels of productivity.

4.2 Performance management system (PMS)

This section seeks to find from the respondents the performance management processes they go through and their view of issues related to its implementation. The statements are grouped under the three specific research objectives, thus the nature of the performance management system, its strengths and weaknesses as well as challenges management face in implementation of the system.

4.2.1 Nature of performance management processes (PMP)

In ascertaining the nature of the system in place, the researcher sort to find from the respondents the presence or otherwise of certain key features and processes of a good performance management system. These include a clear performance management policy and mechanisms of which the employees are fully aware and participate in its processes, performance planning, coaching and performance appraisal.

Responding to the statement 'my organization has a defined system in place for measuring and managing employee performance' (table 4.2), 11.4% strongly agree and 40.0% agree, while on the other hand 5.7% strongly disagree and 11.4% disagree, with 31.4% undecided. From these responses, even though majority (51.4%) agrees that there is a system in place to measure and

manage performance, a significant proportion (31.4%) was undecided. This implies that even

though a performance measurement system may exist, it has not been clearly defined.

Table 4.2: Nature of performance management system.

STATEMENT	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Hard To Decide	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL
My organization has a defined system in place for measuring and managing employee performance.	5.8%	11.4%	31.4%	40.0%	11.4%	100.0%
I fully understand the processes of the system to measure and manage employee performance.	2.9%	2.9%	25.7%	60.0%	8.6%	100.0%
I am clear about the results I am expected to achieve in my job.	2.9%	0.0%	25.7%	51.4%	20.0%	100.0%
My supervisor and I worked together to plan my performance expectations	2.9%	8.6%	34.3%	40.0%	14.3%	100.0%
My organization provides the resources I need to do my job.	11.4%	31.4%	25.7%	22.9%	8.6%	100.0%
My supervisor gives me the information and assistance I need to accomplish my performance expectations.	2.9%	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%	17.1%	100.0%
My supervisor gives me regular feedback on how I am doing with regards to achieving my performance expectations	2.9%	11.4%	14.3%	54.3%	17.1%	100.0%
My supervisor reinforces me when I am not meeting my performance expectation	2.9%	14.3%	22.9%	37.1%	22.9%	100.0%
My organization has a fair system for evaluating employee's performance.	2.9%	8.6%	57.1%	25.7%	5.7%	100.0%
I have a clear understanding of how my performance is judged.	2.9%	5.7%	45.7%	37.1%	8.6%	100.0%

Source: Fields Survey, 2014

Again, in responding to the statement 'I fully understand the processes of the system to measure and manage employee performance', 60% of the respondents say they understand the processes of the system. But the uncertainty is still expressed as 25.7% are undecided. Regarding performance planning, majority agreed that they were involved in setting performance targets and that those targets are clear and achievable. From *Table 4.2*, 51.4% and 40.0% agreed with the statements 'I am clear about the results I am expected to achieve in my job' and 'My supervisor and I worked together to plan my performance expectations' respectively. The total proportion of respondents who indicated their awareness of their performance expectations is 71.4% but on their involvement in the planning process, the 54.3% agreement is far from convincing and implies that there is not sufficient involvement of the employees in the planning process. This position is supported by the fact that those who either disagree or are undecided constitute a significant 42.9%.

Coaching and support as well as provision of resources needed to achieve targets during performance execution are responsibilities of supervisors. Responding to the statement 'My organization provides the resources I need to do my job', majority (42.8%) disagreed as against 31.5% who agreed with 25.7% yet to make up their minds. Inadequate resources are a commonplace in most state institutions and this finding is an ample demonstration of that fact. This implies that resource constraints remain a hurdle towards achieving performance targets. It is however encouraging that in spite of this challenge, supervisors provide coaching to their subordinates as a total of 77.1%, 71.4% and 60.0% respectively agreed with the statements 'My supervisor gives me the information and assistance I need to accomplish my performance expectations', 'My supervisor gives me regular feedback on how I am doing with regards to

achieving my performance expectations' and 'My supervisor reinforces me when I am not meeting my performance expectation'.

A review of performance at the end of the performance cycle using various appraisal methods is an important part of ant performance management system (PMS). Even though the respondents were unanimous about the presence of an appraisal process, majority were unsure of their full appreciation of its processes and its fairness. 57.1% were undecided and 11.5% disagree on the statement 'My organization has a fair system for evaluating employee's performance' while a total of 54.3% either disagree or are undecided when confronted by the statement 'I have a clear understanding of how my performance is judged' (Table 4.*2)*.This implies that the appraisal process is not as comprehensive and engaging as one would have expected. Nevertheless, annual performance appraisal is a regular occurrence as 78% of the respondents go through it every year (Table 4.3) and 97.4% said it is done by their supervisor (Table 4.4)

Table 4.3: Frequency of performance appraisal.

How often is your performance appraised				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Quarterly	12	14.6	14.6	14.3
Annually	63	78.0	78.0	85.7
Every 2 years	4	7.4	7.4	100.0
Total	**82**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.4: Who undertake performance appraisal.

who appraise your performance periodically				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
My supervisor	80	97.5	97.5	97.5
Others	2	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	**82**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.2 Strengths and weaknesses of performance management system (PMS)

An appraisal of any system requires that an effort is made to identify its strengths and weaknesses so as to consolidate and improve upon the positives and institute corrective measures to reduce the negatives to the barest minimum, and a performance management system (PMS) is no exception. Some of the important features that define a good PMS include the strategic alignment of performance targets with overall organizational objectives emanating from its mission and vision, engendering employee ownership of these objectives by tying it up with their personal development and career advancement through a comprehensive training and development regime, instituting a fair and progressive appraisal process as well as motivating them by linking performance with pay and promotion.

In response to the statement 'My performance expectations are linked to the goals of the organization', 62.8% of the respondents agreed, 31.4% were undecided while only 5.8% disagree (Table 4.5). This finding suggest there is some alignment of targets and overall objectives, however the magnitude of the indecision among the respondents (31.4%) is an indication that there is still much to be done to improve the situation. Majority (68.5%) was of the view that 'The performance management processes in place helps them to perform more effectively' but

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pointed out that 'There is insufficient training and support given to staff' (62.9%) even though those that happen few and far in-between 'clearly leads to performance improvement' (82.9%).

Table 4.5: Strengths and weaknesses of PMS.

STATEMENT	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Hard To Decide	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL
My performance expectations are linked to the goals of the organization.	2.9%	2.9%	31.4%	31.4%	31.4%	100.0%
The performance management processes in place helps me perform more effectively.	2.9%	8.6%	20.0%	37.1%	31.4%	100.0%
There is sufficient training and support given to staff.	2.9%	42.9%	20.0%	34.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Training clearly leads to performance improvement.	2.9%	2.9%	11.4%	34.3%	48.6%	100.0%
People are developed to their full career potential.	8.6%	14.3%	28.6%	37.1%	11.4%	100.0%
My most recent overall performance rating accurately reflected the results I have achieved	2.9%	14.3%	40.0%	40.0%	2.9%	100.0%
My performance ratings are effectively communicated to me.	2.9%	20.0%	22.9%	45.7%	8.6%	100.0%
The appraisal process helps me to improve my performance.	2.9%	2.9%	17.1%	54.3%	22.9%	100.0%
There is a direct link between performance and pay.	31.4%	11.4%	37.1%	17.1%	2.9%	100.0%
There is a direct link between performance and promotion.	28.6%	22.9%	25.7%	20.0%	2.9%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The career development of employees is top priority and beneficial not only to the individual but to the organization for which they work. This is because a highly qualified and well-trained workforce is a source of competitive advantages in today's knowledge-based and technology driven global marketplace. 48.5% agreed with the statement 'People are developed to their full career potential', 28.6% were undecided while 22.9% disagree (Table 4.5). The fact that respondents who disagree and the undecided are more (51.5%) than those who agree (48.5%) gives an indication that the sampled employees are not fully confident in the ability of the current system to support their personal development.

The accuracy and fairness of a performance appraisal system is critical if it is to achieve its aim of reviewing performance and give feedback to employees, means of reinforcing behaviors that promote continuous performance improvement and recognizing and rewarding good performance among others. Anything short of this could be counter-productive as it would be a source of suspicion, de-motivation and strained supervisor-subordinate relationship. This was tested by the statement 'My most recent overall performance rating accurately reflected the results I have achieved' and 42.9% agree while 17.2% disagree (Table 4.5). Of concern is proportion of respondents who found it difficult to decide (40.0%) and that is not good enough. Effective communication of performance reports is equally important. When the statement 'My performance ratings are effectively communicated to me' was posed, 54.3% respondents agreed and both the undecided and those who disagree were 22.9% (Table 4.5). This implies that there is some communication of appraisal reports but there is much room for improvement as mis-communication and dis-communication could lead to dissatisfaction among the workforce.

Respondents clearly agreed with the statement 'The appraisal process helps me to improve my performance' (77.2%), with 17.1% undecided and only 5.8% disagree (Table 4.5). This is an indication that the appraisal system is impacting positively on the performance of the staff.

Motivating employees to continually improve their performance and go the extra mile to achieve organizational objectives remain the overarching aim of any performance management system (PMS). The motivational effect of linking performance with pay and promotion cannot be overemphasized. The statement seeking the views of respondents on whether 'There is a direct link between performance and pay' came up with not too good findings. 42.8% disagreed, 37.1% could not make up their minds and 20.0% agreed (Table 4.5). This implies that there is no clearly defined performance-based pay policy in place and that could affect motivation to go the extra mile to achieve higher levels of performance. Likewise, the statement regarding relationship between performance and promotion produced similar response. 51.5% disagree that there is a link between performance and promotion, 25.7% could not decide and 22.9 agreed. The impression I got from my interactions with them is that promotion is based more on years of service rather than performance. This means that there is not much motivation for employees who are ambitious and want to rise through the ranks in their chosen career by hard work and excellent performance.

4.2.3 Challenges in the implementation of PMS

To identify the challenges that may militate against the smooth implementation of such a comprehensive and continuous process of sustaining and improving high performances in the workforce, attention was focused on management who are responsible for its implementation.

Statements alluded to the design and processes of the system, resource availability and level of participation by both management and staff. In response to the statement 'The design and processes of the PMS adequately reflect the context of the organization', 60.0% agreed and 40.0% found it hard to make up their minds on that one, with no disagreement T*able 4.6*). This can be interpreted to mean that the processes of the system are responding to their needs, even though not fully.

Table 4.6: Design and processes of PMS.

The design and processes of the PMS adequately reflect the context of the organization				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
hard to decide	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
agree	6	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

However, they overwhelmingly disagreed with the suggestion that 'The organization provide all the resources needed to implement PMS'. 80.0% disagree while 20.0% were undecided (Table 4.7). There was no agreement whatsoever with that statement. It goes without saying that resource constraints will almost always pose as a major challenge, particularly so with government institutions providing public services.

Table 4.7: Resource availability for PMS

The organization provide all the resources needed to implement PMS				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
disagree	6	60.0	60.0	80.0
hard to decide	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

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Source: Field Survey, 2014

On the issue of adequate training, majority (60.0%) were of the view that there is not adequate training for both management and staff to implement and actively participate in the processes of the PMS. 40.0% though were in agreement (Table 4.7). Capacity building is vital to the development and success of every institution and this finding does not give an indication that it is given the attention that it really deserves.

Table 4.8: Adequacy of training for management and staff.

Management and staff are adequately trained to implement PMS				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
disagree	6	60.0	60.0	60.0
agree	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2014

The full participation of staff in the processes of the performance management system (PMS) was confirmed by management with 60.0% agreeing to the statement 'Staff fully participate in the processes of the PMS' while 40.0% were undecided (Table 4.9). This implies that given the

right conditions, performance of employees could be greatly improved as their participation and co-operation is encouraging.

Table 4.9: Staff participation in the processes of PMS.

Staff fully participate in the processes of the PMS				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
hard to decide	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
agree	6	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Finally on the question of the impact the system had had on operations of the organization, 70.0% responded in the affirmative while 30% were not able to decide on that (Table 4.10). This is a positive sign and implies that even greater outcomes could be achieved if a much more concerted effort is geared towards its improvement and sustainability, a suggestion confirmed by Halachmi (2002).

Table 4.10: Outcomes of the PMS.

There is direct improvement in our operation as a result of the implementation of PMS				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
hard to decide	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
agree	7	70.0	70.0	100.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.3 Summary

In summary, respondents have brought to the fore their views on issues relating to the performance management system (PMS) in place and the processes therein. It is however worth noting that except for a few issues that there were unanimity, opinions vary greatly on most of the issues and points to a fact that there is a lot to be done to bring clarity to the system and its processes as well as shape opinions and create a sense of unity of purpose towards the achievement of organizational goals.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, attempt is made to put all the findings into perspective under the three research objectives to ensure a coherent presentation of facts as gathered from the field survey. Emphasis will be placed on the appraisal process and coaching which are the predominant feature of the performance management system (PMS) as it pertains at the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs). Inferences will be drawn from the findings and form the basis for some conclusions to be made and then recommendations put forward with the hope of helping to inform further studies and shape policy and programs aimed at improving the PMS at the local government level.

5.1 Summary of findings

The findings of this study will be summarized under the stated specific objectives of identifying the nature of performance management systems in place at the district, its strengths and weaknesses as well as challenges confronting the smooth implementation of the system.

5.1.1 Nature of performance management systems at the assembly

Based on the responses given to the statements meant to ascertain the nature of the performance management system in place, it has become apparent that the system in place lacks clarity and coordination for it to significantly influence behavior and motivate employees to achieve higher performance levels. Employees are generally aware of their performance expectations but their participation in setting these goals is minimal and its alignment with the overall organizational

objective can be improved upon. Availability of adequate resources needed to carry out the operations of the organization remains a challenge. Coaching and support is a regular feature during performance execution and very encouraging as supervisors are willing to share knowledge and experiences and subordinates show enthusiasm to learn on the job. Periodic review and appraisal of employee performance is the most prominent activity of the performance management system at the district. The appraisal process is an annual ritual using the traditional appraisal form method with heads of departments as supervisors to rate the performance of their subordinates for the calendar year. This method is not comprehensive and engaging enough to assure employees of a rating that is an accurate reflection of their performances and its susceptibility to biases makes subordinates suspicious of its fairness.

5.1.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the PMS at the assembly

The strategic benefit of aligning performance target to overall organizational objective remains to be fully derived by the assembly and is reflected by the uncertainty expressed by a significant proportion of the workforce. A plus for the system is that it helps the staffs to improve their effectiveness on the job a position supported by Meldin and Green (2009) and that if enough training is to be given they can achieve even greater levels of performance. There is not much support given by the system currently in place to the personal development of the employees in their chosen careers and this trend must be reversed to motivate them to work even harder to rise through the ranks. Even though appraisal ratings is helping employees to improve upon their performances, it is not engaging enough and there is lack of effective communication of appraisal reports, making the employees question its accuracy and fairness. There is no

motivation in the form of pay rise when an employee achieves high appraisal ratings and consistent excellent performance does not guarantee promotion.

5.1.3 Challenges in the implementation of PMS at the district

The design and processes of the performance management system currently in place largely fit the organizational context of the district assembly but could be improved upon to make it more comprehensive and better coordinated. Lack of adequate resources remains a major hurdle in the implementation of a comprehensive performance management system at the district. This has led to the inability of the organization to provide regular training for both management and staff to acquire the skills needed to effectively manage and participate in the processes of the system. The participation of both management and staff in the processes of the system is encouraging and there are indications that performances improvement is being witnessed as a result of the processes of the system.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the field survey undertaken by the researcher using mainly questionnaires to elicit the views of respondents on issues that border on the nature of their performance management system, its strengths and weaknesses and the challenges in its implementation, some findings have been made and the following conclusions can be drawn;

i. The performance management system at the local government level is not comprehensive to strategically align performance target to overall organizational goals and achieve continuous performance improvement.

ii.   The performance appraisal method under use is obsolete and prone to bias and errors which has led to suspicion of lack of accuracy and fairness.

iii.   There is no strong motivation in the form of pay rise or promotion for employees to achieve higher levels of performance.

iv.   Management and staff lack adequate training to acquire the skills and competencies needed to effectively implement and actively participate in the processes of the system.

v.   Lack of adequate resources is a major challenge to the implementation of performance management system at the local government level.

The performance management system in Ghana's local government and the entire public sector is still evolving, regrettably at a slower pace than desired, and it remains to be seen how it will eventually transform the working culture within the public sector and results in a more efficient and accountable public administration system.

5.3 Recommendations

Towards further studies and future efforts to improve upon the management of employee performance in local governments, the researcher recommends that;

a)   A complete overhaul of the performance management system be undertaken with the involvement of all stakeholders to create a comprehensive system to achieve continuous improvement in performance in the MMDAs

b)   A fully fledged and adequately resourced Human Resource Department be created in all MMDAs to coordinate the implementation of the performance management system instead of the existing personnel office.

c) A much more engaging, forward-looking and accurate performance appraisal system be instituted to replace the current appraisal form method.

d) An effective communication mechanism needs to be established to enhance communication between supervisor and subordinate and improve performance feedback.

e) Regular training be provided to both management and staff to equip them with enough skills and competencies to improve their effectiveness and achieve higher performance levels.

f) Performance-based pay policy should be introduced to motivate employees to go the extra mile to achieve performance excellence and improve productivity.

g) Performance should be the key determining factor for promotion to attract and maintain highly qualified and motivated personnel who aspire to greater heights in their chosen careers.

h) Adequate resources should be committed to the implementation of a comprehensive performance management system at the local government level
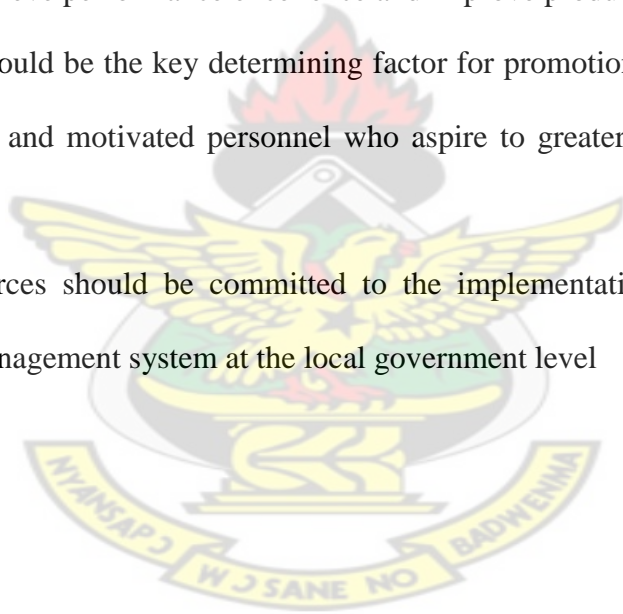
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KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, KNUST

TOPIC:

Performance Management Systems in Ghana's Local Government: A Case of Kwabre East District Assembly in Ashanti Region.

QUESTIONNAIRE

(This questionnaire is for academic purposes only. Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purposes of academic exercise)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

SECTION A: BACKGROUND

1. Name of Assembly:………………………………………………………………………

2. Position of respondent:………………………………………………………………

3. Department:…………………………………………………………………………

4. Reporting to:…………………………………………………………………………

5. Staff category (please tick one)

    i. Clerical staff ☐   ii. Junior Admin staff ☐   iii. Senior Admin staff ☐

6. Age (in yrs) …………………………………………...

7. Work Experience (in years):…………………………

8. Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

9. Educational Background: (Please tick one)

i. No formal education ☐   ii. Basic ☐   iii. Secondary ☐ iv. Tertiary ☐

v. Other (please specify)…………………………………………………………………

SECTION B – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

From the Human Resource Management (HRM) perspective, Performance Management System (PMS) is a continuous process which enables managers to set targets for individual employees and teams, track and assess performances and offer direction and support to ensure that those targets are achieved and ultimately lead to the realization of the overall objectives of the organization (Aguinis, 2007). With this background information, kindly answer the questions in this questionnaire as it applies to your organization.

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= hard to decide, 4= agree, 5 = strongly agree
(USING THE ABOVE SCALE, PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR CURRENT VIEW OF ISSUES BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER THAT BEST REPRESENT YOUR VIEWS)

Unit 1: Nature of Performance Management System

1. My organization has a defined system in place for measuring and managing employee performance.   1 2   3   4   5

2. I fully understand the processes of the system to measure and manage employee performance.   1   2   3   4   5

3. I am clear about the results I am expected to achieve in my job.   1   2   3   4   5

4. My supervisor and I worked together to plan my performance expectations.   1 2   3   4   5

5. My organization provide the resources I need to do my job.   1 2   3   4   5

6. My supervisor gives me the information and assistance I need to accomplish my performance expectations.   1 2   3   4   5

7. My supervisor gives me regular feedback on how I am doing with regards to achieving my performance expectations.   1   2   3   4   5

8. My supervisor reinforces me when I am not meeting my performance expectation.   1   2   3   4   5

9. My organization has a fair system for evaluating employee's performance.   1   2   3   4   5

10. I have a clear understanding of how my performance is judged.   1   2   3   4   5

11. How often is your performance appraised? (please tick one)

    i. Quarterly ☐   ii. Annually ☐ iii. Every 2 years ☐ iv. Every 3 years ☐

    v. Other (please specify)………………………………………………………………..

12. Who appraises your performance periodically? (please tick all applicable options)

    i. My supervisor ☐   ii. My colleague ☐   iii. Myself ☐ iv. My subordinates ☐

    v. Clients ☐ vi. Other (please specify)…………………………………………………………..

Unit 2: Strengths and Weaknesses of Performance Management System

1.	My performance expectations are linked to the goals of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The performance management processes in place helps me perform more effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	There is sufficient training and support given to staff.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Training clearly leads to performance improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	People are developed to their full career potential.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	My most recent overall performance rating accurately reflected the results I have achieved.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	My performance ratings is effectively communicated to me.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The appraisal process helps me to improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	There is a direct link between performance and pay.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	There is a direct link between performance and promotion.	1	2	3	4	5

***Thank you very much for taken time to fill out this questionnaire. Your participation is
invaluable.***

APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MANAGEMENT/HOD

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
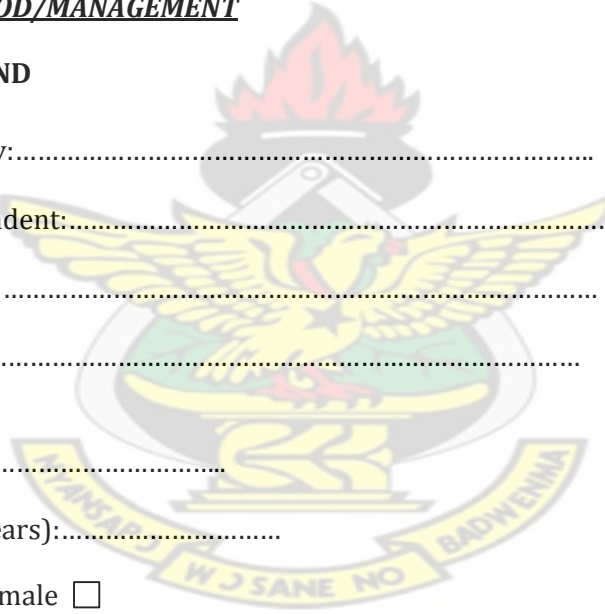### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, KNUST

TOPIC:
Performance Management Systems in Ghana's Local Government: A Case of Kwabre East District Assembly in Ashanti Region.

QUESTIONNAIRE
(This questionnaire is for academic purposes only. Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purposes of academic exercise)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOD/MANAGEMENT

SECTION A: BACKGROUND

6. Name of Assembly:……………………………………………….…………………….

7. Position of respondent:…………………………………………………………………..

8. Department/Unit:…………………………………………….………………………

9. Reporting to:……………………………………………………………………………

5. Age (in yrs) …………………………………………..

6. Work Experience (in years):………………………….

7. Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

8. Educational Background: (Please tick one)

i. No formal education ☐   ii. Basic ☐   iii. Secondary ☐iv. Tertiary ☐

v. Other (please specify)……………………………………………………………………

SECTION B – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PMS)
From the Human Resource Management (HRM) perspective, Performance Management System (PMS) is a continuous process which enables managers to set targets for individual employees and teams, track and assess performances and offer direction and support to ensure that those targets are achieved and ultimately lead to the realization of the overall objectives of the organization

(Aguinis, 2007). With this background information, kindly answer the questions in this questionnaire as it applies to your organization.

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= hard to decide, 4= agree, 5 = strongly agree
(USING THE ABOVE SCALE, PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR CURRENT VIEW OF ISSUES BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER THAT BEST REPRESENT YOUR VIEWS)

Unit 1: Nature of Performance Management System (PMS)

13. My organization has a defined system in place for measuring and managing employee performance.   1 2   3   4   5

14. I fully understand the processes of the system to measure and manage employee performance.   1   2   3   4   5

15. I am clear about the results my unit is expected to achieve.   1   2   3   4   5

16. My staff and I worked together to plan employee performance expectations.   1   2   3   4   5

17. I provide the needed information and support to my staff to achieve performance expectations.   1   2   3   4   5

18. I give regular feedback to my staff with regards to how well they are doing to achieve performance expectations.   1   2   3   4   5

19. My organization has a fair system for evaluating employee's performance.   1   2   3   4   5

20. I have a clear understanding of how staff performance is judged.   1   2   3   4   5

21. Do you appraise the performance of your staff?   Yes ☐   No☐

22. How do you appraise your staff? (please tick all applicable options)

    i. Using a form☐ ii. Using a checklist ☐iii. Using set targets☐iv. 360° Appraisal ☐

    v. Other (please specify)...

Unit 2: Strengths and Weaknesses of Performance Management System (PMS)

11. Performance expectations are linked to the   1   2   3   4   5

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goals of the organization.

12. The performance management processes in place helps staff to perform more effectively. 1 2 3 4 5

13. There is sufficient training and support given to staff. 1 2 3 4 5

14. Training clearly leads to performance improvement. 1 2 3 4 5

15. Staff are developed to their full career potential. 1 2 3 4 5

16. The performance ratings of staff accurately reflects the results they have achieved. 1 2 3 4 5

17. I effectively communicate performance ratings to my staff. 1 2 3 4 5

18. The appraisal process helps staff to improve upon their performances. 1 2 3 4 5

19. There is a direct link between performance and pay. 1 2 3 4 5

20. There is a direct link between performance and promotion. 1 2 3 4 5

Unit 3: Challenges in the implementation of Performance Management System (PMS)

1. The design and processes of the PMS adequately reflect the context of the organization. 1 2 3 4 5

2. The organization provide all the resources needed to implement PMS. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Management and staff are adequately trained to implement PMS. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Staff fully participate in the processes of the PMS. 1 2 3 4 5

5. There is a direct improvement in our operations as a result of the implementation of PMS. 1 2 3 4 5

Thank you very much for taken time to fill out this questionnaire. Your participation is

invaluable.