



# **An Assessment of Strength and Weaknesses of Performance Appraisal Analysis in the Borno State Civil Service Commission**

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**Abstract:** *This study assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal system within the Borno State Civil Service Commission. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 100 respondents through structured questionnaires, with findings analyzed to evaluate the fairness, effectiveness, and challenges of the appraisal process. The study revealed that the performance appraisal system is generally perceived as fair and unbiased, promoting equity and merit-based recognition, thereby fostering trust and organizational effectiveness. However, significant weaknesses were identified, including the inadequate use of appraisal outcomes for employee development and career progression, as well as a lack of proper training for appraisers, which leads to bias and reduced employee motivation. Despite these challenges, the study highlighted that, when effectively implemented, performance appraisals can contribute to professional growth and organizational efficiency. The study concludes with recommendations for enhancing the utilization of appraisal results, improving appraiser training, and fostering clearer communication of appraisal criteria to align with employee development goals.*

**Keywords:** *Performance Appraisal, Borno State Civil Service, Employee Development, Appraisal Effectiveness, Organizational Efficiency.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Globally, the importance of employees in the efficient performance of public service is widely acknowledged. Public servants represent the backbone of government activities, playing a critical role in achieving national plans and objectives. Consequently, the behaviour and performance of these employees require regular monitoring and evaluation. Performance appraisal has emerged as one of the key mechanisms for measuring and assessing employee contributions within organizations (Laschchnau, 2015). By employing performance appraisal systems, organizations are better equipped to make informed decisions on essential matters such as promotions, remuneration, and employee development through training (Jose, 2011). These systems contribute to the overall growth and success of an organization by aligning employee performance with institutional goals and standards.

The impact of performance appraisal on the operations of any organization is profound, influencing a wide array of organizational functions (Eneanya, 2013). Nevertheless, Obi (2016) argues that managing performance appraisal in human resource systems is inherently complex. The effectiveness of an employee's performance within an organization is often shaped by the design and implementation of the appraisal system itself. A well-structured appraisal system provides a foundation for a compensation framework that motivates both managers and

employees, driving them toward achieving the organization's overarching goals (Hunnes, Kvaloy, & Mohn, 2012).

Despite ongoing scholarly debates regarding the most effective methods for conducting performance appraisals (Daoanis, 2012; Brumbach, 2003; Dogbe, 2011), there is general consensus that appraisals should be continuous, with many organizations opting for annual reviews. This periodic evaluation allows management to assess whether employees are meeting the required standards, fulfilling assigned responsibilities, and contributing toward organizational objectives. Performance appraisal, therefore, plays a critical role in ensuring employees remain aligned with the organization's expectations and benchmarks (Armstrong, 2001). In certain cases, these appraisals also serve as the foundation for determining employee compensation, as they reflect overall productivity, output quality, and contributions to organizational strategies and goals.

In addition to these organizational benefits, performance appraisal systems often incorporate comprehensive evaluations such as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses of individual employees, typically conducted during annual or semi-annual reviews (Singh, Kochar, & Yuksel, 2010). These appraisals are not solely confined to assessing employee performance; they also serve as mechanisms for rewarding employees through both monetary and non-monetary means, thus contributing to employee development beyond traditional human resource management functions (Mathew & Johnson, 2015). However, performance appraisals can have negative consequences if bias, prejudice, or stereotyping infiltrates the process. When appraisers allow personal biases to influence their evaluations, employees may suffer significant adverse effects (Selvarajan, Singh, & Solansky, 2018). As Singh and Rana (2013) suggest, key dimensions such as the awareness of the appraisal system, the significance of the system, fairness in appraisals, perceptions of the appraiser, and performance-based compensation practices are critical factors in determining the effectiveness of performance appraisals.

The concept of performance in public service is a frequent topic of discussion in public administration literature, as it forms the essence of managing government activities and governance processes. Performance in the public sector directly correlates with the government's ability to meet the needs of its citizens. While opinions vary regarding what constitutes performance in public service, it is generally agreed that delivering excellent service over time defines public service performance (Magbadelo, 2016). Ogunrotifa (2012) posits that civil service performance is characterized by the efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness in delivering quality services to the public. This performance reflects public expectations regarding both paid and free government services. According to Adebayo (2004), the link between government efficiency and public expectations is forged through the measurement of civil service performance. Similarly, Adegoroye (2015) asserts that civil service performance can be assessed through two primary lenses: the degree of efficiency and the level of productivity. Productivity, in this context, refers to the input-to-output ratio, which is informed by public perception of how government resources have been utilized to deliver value to the country.

In Borno State, performance appraisal within the Civil Service Commission is a vital mechanism for evaluating employee performance and identifying areas for improvement. Appraisals offer the opportunity to assess whether employees are meeting organizational goals, contributing to the state's development objectives, and enhancing public service delivery. A study by Hassan (2018) highlighted several challenges faced by public service organizations in Borno State regarding the effective implementation of performance appraisals. These

challenges include inadequate training, unclear performance standards, and ineffective feedback mechanisms. Addressing these issues is essential for maximizing the potential of the appraisal system and ensuring that employee performance contributes meaningfully to organizational success.

In conclusion, the strengths of the performance appraisal system in the Borno State Civil Service Commission include its potential to provide structured employee evaluations, facilitate decision-making in areas like promotion and compensation, and offer feedback for employee development. However, weaknesses such as inconsistency in implementation, bias, and inadequate feedback mechanisms limit the system's effectiveness. By addressing these weaknesses and refining the appraisal process, the Borno State Civil Service Commission can better leverage performance appraisals to improve employee contributions and overall public service performance.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The ineffective implementation of performance appraisal processes remains a significant challenge within public service organizations, including the Borno State Civil Service Commission. The inability to establish clear and consistent performance criteria leads to subjective and often biased evaluations that do not accurately reflect employee performance. Additionally, biases in appraisals, coupled with a lack of proper feedback mechanisms, undermine the effectiveness of these evaluations. Employees often express resistance to the appraisal process, perceiving it as unfair or misaligned with their actual contributions. This resistance, along with the absence of a strong feedback culture, limits the appraisal system's capacity to foster performance improvement and organizational growth.

A key issue in the Borno State Civil Service Commission's performance appraisal process is the insufficient consideration of employee input and feedback. When employees feel excluded from the appraisal system, their engagement and willingness to participate in performance evaluations decline. Furthermore, the limited resources allocated for training on performance evaluation techniques hinder the ability of supervisors to conduct fair and objective assessments. These challenges are exacerbated by inconsistencies in applying performance evaluation criteria across departments, which creates discrepancies in how employee contributions are recognized. The lack of alignment between individual goals and the overarching objectives of the organization further complicates the appraisal process, making it difficult to accurately measure the value that employees bring to the organization.

Another challenge is the failure to establish effective mechanisms for addressing performance improvement needs identified through the appraisal process. Many employees find that even when performance gaps are highlighted during evaluations, there are inadequate systems in place to support their development. This can be attributed to the absence of regular monitoring and follow-up on performance goals set during appraisals. Without a structured approach to track progress, the appraisal process becomes a formality rather than a tool for continuous employee development. In addition, the lack of adequate documentation of appraisal results and feedback creates confusion and reduces the accountability of both employees and supervisors in the performance improvement process.

The rigidity of public service structures, such as that of the Borno State Civil Service Commission, poses another significant barrier to effective performance appraisal. Bureaucratic processes often delay or complicate the implementation of appraisal results, making it difficult to respond to changing circumstances within the organization. This inflexibility hampers the ability to adjust performance goals and standards in response to evolving organizational needs. Moreover, the absence of clear communication channels between employees and supervisors

regarding performance expectations and feedback further hinders the appraisal process. Employees are often left unsure of how to meet the standards set by the organization, resulting in a disconnect between performance evaluations and actual outcomes.

Lastly, intangible contributions such as leadership, innovation, and teamwork are often difficult to measure in performance appraisals, particularly in the public sector where quantitative metrics dominate the evaluation process. This presents a challenge in ensuring that all aspects of employee performance are recognized and valued. Limited employee involvement in setting performance goals and expectations reduces their commitment to achieving those goals, and the lack of supervisor accountability in conducting fair and objective appraisals compounds these issues.

In light of these challenges, it becomes clear that an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal analysis in the Borno State Civil Service Commission is necessary. Understanding these issues will provide a foundation for improving the appraisal system, ensuring that it not only assesses employee performance accurately but also fosters development and aligns with the organizational objectives.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to assess strength and weaknesses of performance appraisal analysis in the Bomo State civil service commission. While the specific objective are to:-

- i. to identify the strengths of performance appraisal analysis within the Borno State Civil Services Commission.
- ii. to assess the weaknesses of current performance appraisal processes within the civil services commission.
- iii. to examine the perceptions of employees and managers regarding performance appraisals in the public sector.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Dependent Variable**

Organisational Performance is a critical measure of success for public service organizations like the Borno State Civil Services Commission. Organisational performance encompasses various dimensions, including employee productivity, service quality, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall effectiveness in achieving organisational goals. Studies have shown that a strong performance appraisal system can positively impact organisational performance by improving employee motivation, engagement, and productivity (Patton, 2017). Research has indicated that high levels of job satisfaction among employees are linked to improved organisational performance, as satisfied employees are more likely to be motivated, committed, and productive (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Effective performance appraisal practices contribute to enhancing job satisfaction by providing employees with feedback on their performance, recognizing their achievements, and setting goals for improvement. This, in turn, drives employee engagement and contributes to overall organisational performance.

In addition to job satisfaction, employee engagement is another critical factor that influences organisational performance. Engaged employees are more likely to go above and beyond in their roles, leading to increased productivity, innovation, and customer satisfaction (Nero, 2016). Performance appraisal systems that promote employee engagement by involving employees in goal-setting, providing meaningful feedback, and recognizing their contributions can significantly contribute to organisational performance. By focusing on optimizing the factors that impact organisational performance, such as job satisfaction and employee

engagement through effective performance appraisal practices, public service organizations like the Borno State Civil Services Commission can enhance their overall effectiveness, service delivery quality, and achievement of strategic goals.

Organisational performance in public service organizations is a multifaceted concept that is influenced by various factors beyond just employee satisfaction and engagement. Some additional dimensions of organisational performance that can be impacted by performance appraisal practices include:

**1. Service Quality:** The quality of services provided by public service organizations is critical for their effectiveness and reputation. Effective performance appraisal practices can help identify areas for improvement in service delivery, leading to enhanced quality and customer satisfaction (Demir, 2016).

**2. Employee Development and Retention:** Performance appraisal processes that focus on employee development, training, and career growth can contribute to higher employee retention rates and talent development within the organization. Investing in employee development through performance appraisals can lead to a more skilled and motivated workforce, ultimately improving organisational performance (Bratton & Gold, 2017).

**3. Organisational Learning and Innovation:** Effective performance appraisal practices can create a culture of continuous learning and innovation within organizations. By encouraging knowledge sharing, identifying best practices, and fostering a culture of innovation, performance appraisals can drive organisational learning and creativity, leading to improved performance and adaptability in the face of change (Cardon, 2013).

By considering these additional dimensions of organisational performance and the influence of performance appraisal practices on them, public service organizations like the Borno State Civil Services Commission can adopt holistic approaches to improving their overall effectiveness and impact in serving the public. Enhancing organisational performance through effective performance appraisal practices involves addressing a wide range of factors that contribute to success in the public service sector.

#### **Independent Variable**

The independent variables in the context of organisational performance and performance appraisal practices in public service organizations

**1. Leadership Support and Organisational Culture:** The support and commitment of organisational leaders to the performance appraisal process, alongside the prevailing organisational culture, significantly influence its effectiveness. A supportive leadership and a culture that values feedback and continuous improvement can enhance the quality and impact of performance appraisals, ultimately impacting organisational performance (Fletcher, 2017).

**2. Training and Development of Appraisers:** The competence and training of those responsible for conducting performance appraisals play a crucial role in the effectiveness of the process. Appraisers need to possess the necessary skills to provide meaningful feedback and guidance to employees, which can positively influence performance and, subsequently, organisational effectiveness (Maurer, 2016).

**3. Performance Criteria and Goal Setting:** Well-defined performance criteria and goals, when aligned with organisational objectives, are integral to the effectiveness of performance appraisals. Clear performance expectations and goal setting facilitate employee understanding of their role in contributing to organisational success, impacting overall performance (Hong, 2016).

**4. Feedback and Communication:** The quality and frequency of feedback provided to employees during the performance appraisal process can significantly shape their performance

and motivation. Effective communication, both during formal appraisals and in regular interactions, can influence employee engagement and, consequently, organisational performance (McNabb, 2019).

By addressing these independent variables and optimizing the performance appraisal process, public service organizations can improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall organisational performance. Each of these variables plays a critical role in shaping the effectiveness of performance appraisal practices and, ultimately, their impact on organisational achievement.

### **Strengths of Performance Appraisal analysis within the Borno State Civil Services Commission.**

Performance appraisal serves as a vital tool for promoting accountability and transparency within public service organizations. According to Chen et al. (2018), effective performance appraisal systems can help align individual employee goals with organizational objectives, ensuring that all employees are working towards common goals. This alignment fosters a sense of purpose and direction, which is essential for enhancing overall organizational effectiveness. Performance appraisals can significantly contribute to employee development and growth. Gilson et al. (2015) emphasize that a well-structured appraisal process can identify training and development needs, thereby supporting career progression for employees. By recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of employees, organizations can tailor development programs that enhance skills and competencies, ultimately leading to a more capable workforce. This investment in employee development not only improves individual performance but also contributes to the overall success of the organization. In addition to promoting individual growth, performance appraisals can facilitate a culture of continuous learning and innovation within organizations. D'Annunzio and Sani (2017) argue that performance appraisal processes can help identify best practices and areas for improvement, encouraging a proactive approach to problem-solving and innovation. By fostering an environment where feedback is valued and acted upon, organizations can adapt to changing circumstances and improve service delivery, which is particularly important in the public sector where responsiveness to citizen needs is paramount.

Performance appraisals can enhance employee engagement and motivation. Ojeleye and Salami (2019) highlight that when employees receive regular feedback and recognition for their contributions, they are more likely to feel valued and committed to their work. This sense of engagement can lead to increased job satisfaction, which is closely linked to higher levels of productivity and organizational performance. Engaged employees are more likely to go above and beyond in their roles, contributing to a positive work environment and improved service delivery. The appraisal process also plays a crucial role in promoting fairness and equity within organizations. Okechukwu and Duru (2016) found that a transparent and objective appraisal system can help ensure that rewards and recognition are based on merit rather than favoritism or bias. This fairness fosters trust among employees and enhances their commitment to the organization, as they perceive the appraisal process as just and equitable. When employees believe that their efforts will be recognized and rewarded fairly, they are more likely to be motivated to perform at their best.

Moreover, performance appraisals can serve as a mechanism for effective communication between managers and employees. Onyenekenwa and Ovadjc (2018) emphasize that structured appraisal discussions provide opportunities for open dialogue about performance expectations, development needs, and career aspirations. This communication not only clarifies expectations

but also strengthens the relationship between supervisors and their team members, leading to a more collaborative and supportive work environment.

Chen et al. (2018) examined the strengths of performance appraisal in the public sector, specifically within government agencies like the Nigerian Civil Services Commission. The researchers found that performance appraisal can be a valuable tool for promoting accountability, transparency, and efficiency in the public sector, by evaluating employee performance and linking it to organisational goals and objectives, performance appraisal can help ensure that government agencies are operating effectively and delivering high-quality services to the public.

Another study by Gilson et al. (2015) highlighted the role of performance appraisal in promoting employee development and growth within organizations. In the context of the Nigerian Civil Services Commission, performance appraisal can help identify training and development needs, support career progression, and ensure that employees have the skills and capabilities necessary to perform their roles effectively. By investing in employee development through the performance appraisal process, government agencies can build a skilled and motivated workforce that is better equipped to meet the needs of the public. Study by Annunzio and Sani (2017) emphasized the importance of performance appraisal in promoting organisational learning and innovation. Through the appraisal process, government agencies like the Nigerian Civil Services Commission can identify best practices, areas for improvement, and opportunities for innovation. By encouraging a culture of continuous learning and improvement, performance appraisal can help government agencies adapt to changing circumstances, improve service delivery, and enhance organisational performance.

One study by Ojeleye and Salami (2019) explored the strengths of performance appraisal in promoting fairness and equity within organizations, including government agencies like the Nigerian Civil Services Commission. The researchers found that performance appraisal can serve as a mechanism for evaluating employee performance in a consistent and objective manner, ensuring that rewards and recognition are based on merit and achievement rather than bias or favoritism. By promoting fairness and equity in the evaluation process, performance appraisal can help build trust and confidence among employees and stakeholders, ultimately enhancing organisational effectiveness.

Another study by Okechukwu and Duru (2016) highlighted the role of performance appraisal in promoting employee engagement and motivation in the public sector. Within the Nigerian Civil Services Commission, performance appraisal can provide employees with clear expectations, feedback on their performance, and recognition for their achievements. This can help foster a sense of ownership and accountability among employees, leading to increased job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity. By engaging employees through the appraisal process, government agencies can create a positive work environment that supports high performance and organisational success.

A study by Onyenekenwa and Ovadje (2018) emphasized the strengths of performance appraisal in promoting effective communication and feedback between managers and employees. By providing a structured framework for discussing performance, setting goals, and addressing development needs, performance appraisal can facilitate open and constructive dialogue between supervisors and their team members. This communication can help clarify expectations, resolve issues, and support professional growth, ultimately enhancing employee performance and organisational outcomes within the Nigerian Civil Services Commission.

Performance appraisal is a critical tool in evaluating the performance and effectiveness of employees within the Borno State Civil Services Commission. It allows for the identification of strengths and weaknesses, facilitates communication between managers and employees, and helps in setting goals and objectives for the future. Performance appraisal also provides a basis for rewarding high performers and addressing any performance issues.

According to Nouri and Parker (2018), performance appraisal can enhance employee motivation and engagement, as it provides a formalized process for recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions, by providing feedback on their performance, employees are able to understand how their efforts are contributing to the overall goals of the organization, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and commitment. Performance appraisal can help in identifying gaps in employee skills and capabilities, allowing for targeted training and development initiatives to address these deficiencies. By identifying areas for improvement, employees can work towards enhancing their performance and professional growth, ultimately benefiting both the employee and the organization.

Furthermore, performance appraisal can support succession planning and career development within the Borno State Civil Services Commission. By identifying high-potential employees and providing them with opportunities for advancement and career growth, the organisation is able to build a pipeline of talented individuals who are well-equipped to take on leadership roles in the future. Performance appraisal within the Borno State Civil Services Commission can serve as a valuable tool for enhancing employee performance, motivation, and development, ultimately contributing to the overall success and effectiveness of the organization. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015) highlights that performance appraisal can promote a culture of continuous improvement within organizations. By providing regular feedback on performance, employees are encouraged to reflect on their actions, identify areas for improvement, and take proactive steps to enhance their skills and capabilities. This can lead to increased productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness within the Borno State Civil Services Commission. Another research by Cardy and Dobbins (2018) emphasizes the importance of performance appraisal in aligning individual goals with organisational objectives. Through the appraisal process, managers can communicate expectations and objectives to employees, ensuring that their efforts are in line with the strategic priorities of the organization. This alignment can lead to improved organisational performance and outcomes.

Performance appraisal can also play a crucial role in talent management and employee development. According to research by DeShon and Kinicki (2018), performance appraisal can help identify high-potential employees who may be suitable for leadership positions or special projects. By recognizing and nurturing talent within the organization, the Civil Services Commission can build a diverse and capable workforce that is well-equipped to meet the demands of the job.

Furthermore, a study by Fletcher and Williams (2018) suggests that performance appraisal can facilitate communication and dialogue between managers and employees. Through the appraisal process, managers can provide feedback on performance, address any concerns or issues, and set goals for the future. This open and transparent communication can strengthen the relationship between employees and their supervisors, leading to increased trust, engagement, and job satisfaction.

#### **Weaknesses of current performance appraisal processes within the civil services commission.**

The weaknesses of current performance appraisal processes within the Borno State Civil Services Commission are multifaceted and have been the subject of various studies in public



administration and human resource management. One significant weakness identified is the subjectivity and bias that often permeate the appraisal process. Research has shown that when appraisals are influenced by personal relationships or preconceived notions about employees, it can lead to unfair evaluations. Smith and Oyewobi (2018) emphasize that subjectivity undermines the credibility of the appraisal system, resulting in decreased employee morale and trust in management. When employees perceive their evaluations as biased, it can lead to disengagement and a lack of motivation to improve performance (Jones & Adeyemi, 2017). Furthermore, the lack of clear performance criteria is another critical weakness in the appraisal processes. Employees often report confusion regarding what is expected of them and how their performance will be assessed. Ahmed and Bello (2019) highlight that this ambiguity can lead to frustration and a sense of helplessness, as employees may feel they are being judged against standards that are not clearly communicated. Establishing well-defined performance metrics that align with organizational goals is crucial, as literature indicates that when employees understand the criteria against which they are being evaluated, they are more likely to engage with the appraisal process (Okonkwo & Ibezim, 2016).

Inadequate feedback mechanisms also pose a significant challenge within the performance appraisal framework. Research indicates that timely and constructive feedback is essential for employee development (Maurer, 2016). However, many appraisal systems fail to provide meaningful feedback, leaving employees uncertain about their performance and areas for improvement. The absence of regular feedback can hinder professional growth and lead to stagnation in employee performance (Olaniyi & Ojo, 2018). Studies suggest that organizations should prioritize creating a culture of continuous feedback, where employees receive regular updates on their performance rather than waiting for annual reviews (Demir, 2016).

Training and development opportunities for managers and appraisers involved in the performance appraisal process are often insufficient. Olaniyi and Ojo (2018) argue that without proper training, appraisers may lack the skills necessary to conduct fair and objective evaluations. This inadequacy can result in inconsistent application of appraisal criteria and further exacerbate issues of bias and subjectivity. Investing in training programs for appraisers is crucial to ensure they are equipped to provide accurate assessments and constructive feedback (Fletcher, 2017). Resistance to change is another pervasive issue affecting the effectiveness of performance appraisal processes. Many civil service organizations, including the Borno State Civil Services Commission, may have entrenched practices that resist modernization. Okoro and Dike (2019) note that when employees and managers are accustomed to traditional appraisal methods, they may be reluctant to adopt new approaches that could enhance the appraisal process. This resistance can stifle innovation and prevent the organization from implementing best practices in performance management.

Additionally, the lack of accountability for performance outcomes is a significant weakness that can lead to complacency among employees. When there are no clear consequences for underperformance, employees may feel less motivated to strive for excellence. Research emphasizes the importance of linking performance appraisals to tangible outcomes, such as promotions, salary increases, or professional development opportunities (Cardon, 2013). Establishing a clear connection between appraisal results and employee advancement can foster a culture of accountability and drive performance improvement.

The infrequency of performance evaluations can hinder the effectiveness of the appraisal process. Many organizations struggle to conduct regular evaluations due to heavy workloads and competing priorities. Research indicates that when performance reviews are infrequent, employees may miss out on valuable feedback and recognition for their achievements (Nero,

2016). Establishing a consistent schedule for performance evaluations can help ensure that employees receive timely feedback and have opportunities to discuss their progress with their supervisors.

Performance appraisal processes within civil service organizations play a critical role in managing employee performance, providing feedback, and facilitating organisational effectiveness. However, research has identified several weaknesses in the current performance appraisal practices within these institutions, such as the Nigerian Civil Services Commission. Smith and Oyewobi (2018) highlighted challenges related to subjectivity and bias in performance appraisal, emphasizing the detrimental impact on employee trust and motivation when evaluations lack objectivity and transparency. Jones and Adeyemi (2017) underscored the issue of inadequate feedback and communication, noting that the absence of effective feedback mechanisms can hinder employee development and lead to disengagement.

Inconsistency and lack of standardization in performance appraisal practices were addressed by Ahmed and Bello (2019) as a common weakness in the public sector. The authors emphasized the importance of having clear criteria and processes to ensure the credibility and fairness of performance evaluations. Okonkwo and Ibezim (2016) identified the challenge of goal alignment and relevance in performance appraisal, highlighting the need for clearly defined and aligned performance goals to motivate employees.

Olaniyi and Ojo (2018) emphasized the lack of training and development opportunities for managers and appraisers involved in the performance appraisal process as a significant weakness. Inadequate training on performance evaluation techniques and feedback delivery can result in biased judgments and ineffective appraisals.

Performance appraisal processes in civil service organizations are crucial for monitoring employee performance, providing feedback, and determining rewards and promotions. However, several weaknesses have been identified in these processes, particularly within institutions like the Nigerian Civil Services Commission. Lack of clarity in performance expectations and criteria is another key weakness affecting performance appraisals in the public sector. When employees are unclear about what is expected of them and how their performance will be evaluated, it can lead to confusion, demotivation, and unfair assessments (Ahmed & Bello, 2019).

The issue of rater bias and favoritism during performance appraisals is a significant concern in civil service organizations. Research has shown that managers and appraisers may exhibit bias based on personal relationships, perceptions, or stereotypes, leading to inaccurate and unfair evaluations (Jones & Adeyemi, 2017). Inadequate resources and support for performance appraisal processes also pose challenges in the public sector. This includes factors such as limited access to technology for performance tracking, insufficient training on appraisal tools and techniques, and a lack of dedicated time for supervisors and employees to engage in meaningful performance discussions (Olaniyi & Ojo, 2018).

Along with the challenges mentioned, the issue of time constraints and infrequent performance evaluations is another weakness in the performance appraisal processes of civil service organizations. Due to heavy workloads and competing priorities, managers may not have sufficient time to conduct regular and meaningful performance reviews with their employees. This can lead to rushed or superficial assessments, limited opportunities for feedback, and delayed recognition of performance achievements (Okonkwo & Ibezim, 2016).

Another significant weakness in performance appraisal within civil service organizations is the lack of accountability and consequences for poor performance. When employees perceive that there are no real consequences for underperformance or lack of effort, it can erode motivation

and lead to a culture of complacency and low engagement. Establishing clear performance expectations, linking performance appraisals to rewards and consequences, and holding employees accountable for their performance are essential for driving continuous improvement and maintaining high standards of productivity (Smith & Oyewobi, 2018).

In addition, the absence of employee involvement and participation in the performance appraisal process is a common weakness in civil service organizations. When employees are not given the opportunity to provide input on their performance goals, self-assessments, or feedback on their own performance, it can lead to feelings of disempowerment, lack of ownership, and reduced commitment to the appraisal process. Involving employees in setting their performance objectives, soliciting their feedback on the evaluation process, and encouraging self-assessment can enhance their engagement and motivation to improve (Ahmed & Bello, 2019).

## **METHODOLOGY**

Borno State, located in the extreme northeastern corner of Nigeria, is bordered by Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Adamawa, Gombe, and Yobe States. With 27 local governments, Jere Local Government was selected for this study due to its violent extremism, IDP settlements, and NGO activities. Historically, Borno traces its roots to the Kanem-Borno Empire, a significant Islamic region since 1096 AD. The study population comprises 16,620 civil service employees subject to the performance appraisal system. Both primary and secondary data were collected through questionnaires and a review of journals, books, and reports to provide comprehensive insights. A sample size of 100 employees was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation. Data collection relied mainly on questionnaires and personal interviews, with the questionnaire divided into sections addressing personal information and research questions. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages, were used to analyze the data.

## **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **Data Presentation**

A total of one hundred (100) questionnaires were administered on the respondents during the survey, out of which four (4) were missing and six (6) were invalid; not completed. Therefore, the researcher was left with ninety (90) questionnaires to analyze.

**Table 4.1: Sex of the Respondents**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Male	68	75.6%
2	Female	22	24%
3	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source field work 2024

Table 4.3 shows that (78) 86% of the respondents are male, (22) 24% of the respondents are female. This implies that majority of the respondents that participated in the programmed are male.

**Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-29	17	18.9
30-39	33	36.7
40-49	25	27.8
50 and above	15	16.7
Total	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above shows that 17 respondents are between the age of 18-29 which represents 18.9%, 33 respondents are between the age of 30-39 which represent 36.7%, 25 respondents are between the age of 40-49 which represent 27.8% and 15 respondents are between the ages of 50 and above which represent 16.7%. The result shows that majority of the respondents were between the age of 30-49 years.

**Table 4.3: Marital status of the respondents**

S/N	Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Single	44	48.9%
2	Married	23	25.5%
3	Divorced	23	25.6%
5	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source field work 2024

Table 4.4 shows the marital status of the respondents, where (44) 48.9% of the respondents are single, (23) 25.5% are married, (33) 36.6% are divorced, that is to say majority of the respondents are single.

**Table 4.4: Educational Background of the respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SSCE	17	18.8
ND/NCE	15	16.7
HND/BSC	38	42.2
PHD	20	22.2
Total	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above shows that (17) respondents have SSCE which amount to 18.8%, (15) respondents have ND/NCE which represent 16.7%, (38) respondents have BSC/HND which represent 42.2%, while (20) respondents have PHD which represent 22.2%. The result shows that more of the Respondents are HND/BSC holders.

**Table 4.5: Strengths of Performance Appraisal analysis within the Borno State Civil Services Commission**

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	The performance appraisal system in Borno State civil service commission is fair and unbiased?	20 (22.3%)	33 (36.7%)	8 (8.9%)	23 (25.6%)	6 (6.7%)	90 (100%)
2.	The performance appraisal system has been effective in enhancing organizational performance	70 (77.8%)	12 (13.3%)	8 (8.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
3.	Performance appraisal are linked to the achievement of organisational goals	45 (50%)	30 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	15 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
4.	Performance appraisal process helps in identifying high performers and underperformers	64 (71.1%)	9 (10%)	0 (0%)	17 (18.9%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)

Source field work 2024

Table 4.5 shows 22.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the performance appraisal system in Borno State civil service commission is fair and unbiased, 36.7% of the respondents agreed with statement, 20% were undecided, 25.6% of the respondents disagreed with statement, 6.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that the performance appraisal system in Borno State civil service commission is fair and unbiased.

The second item in table shows 77.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that the performance appraisal system has been effective in enhancing organizational performance, 13.3% of the respondents agreed with statement, 8.9% of the respondents were undecided. This implies that the performance appraisal system has been effective in enhancing organizational performance.

The third item in table shows that 50% of the respondent strongly agreed that the Performance appraisal are linked to the achievement of organisational goals, 33% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 16.7% of the respondents disagreed with statement. This implies that the Performance appraisal are linked to the achievement of organisational goals.

The fourth item in table shows that 71,1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Performance appraisal process helps in identifying high performers and underperformers, 10% of the respondents agreed, while 18% of the respondents disagreed with statement. This Performance appraisal process helps in identifying high performers and underperformers

**Table 4.6: Weaknesses of current performance appraisal processes within the civil services commission**

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	The result of performance appraisals is not effectively used for employee development or career?	26 (28.9%)	45 (50%)	0 (0%)	19 (21.1%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
2.	Performance appraisals are perceived as mere formality rather than a meaningful assessment tool?	40 (44%)	38 (42.2%)	0 (0%)	12 (13%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
3.	Performance appraisals are often influenced by personal relationships rather than objective measures?	28 (31.1%)	27 (30%)	0 (0%)	35 (38.9%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
4.	The current appraisal system is biased and does not treat all employees fairly	50 (55.6%)	9 (10%)	0 (0%)	31 (44.4%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)

Source field work 2024

Table 4.6 shows 28.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the result of performance appraisals are not effectively used for employee development or career, 50% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 21.1% of the respondent strongly disagreed. This implies that the results of performance appraisals are not effectively used for employee development or career.

The second item in table shows 44% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Performance appraisals are perceived as mere formality rather than a meaningful assessment tool, 42.2% of the respondents agreed with statement, 13% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that the performance appraisals are perceived as formality rather than a meaningful assessment tool.

The third item in the table shows that 31.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Performance appraisals are often influenced by personal relationships rather than objective measures, 30% of the respondents agreed with statement, while 38.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that the performance appraisals are not influenced by personal relationships rather than objective measures.

The fourth item in the table shows that 55.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the current appraisal system is biased and does not treat all employees fairly, 10% of the

respondents agreed, 44.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that the current appraisal system is biased and does not treat all employees fairly.

**Table 4.7: Perceptions of employees and managers regarding performance appraisals in the public sector**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	Performance appraisals are conducted with the aim of genuinely helping employees grow and develop professionally?	48 (53.3%)	19 (21.1%)	0 (%)	23 (25.6%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
2.	Performance appraisal process motivates employees to achieve better result?	35 (38.9%)	22 (24.4%)	5 (5.6%)	28 (31.1%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
3.	The appraisals criteria are clearly communicated and understood by all employees?	40 (44.4%)	35 (38.9%)	0 (0%)	15 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)
4.	The performance appraisals system contributes to a positive work environment and employee satisfaction?	60 (66.7%)	9 (10%)	0 (0%)	21 (23.3%)	0 (0%)	90 (100%)

Source: *field work 2024*

Table 4.5 shows 53.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that Performance appraisals are conducted with the aim of genuinely helping employees grow and develop professionally, 21.1% of the respondents agreed with statement, 25.6% of the respondents disagreed with statement. This implies that performance appraisals are conducted genuinely to help employees grow and develop professionally.

The second item in table shows 38.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that Performance appraisal process motivate employees to achieve better result, 24.4% of the respondents agreed with statement, 5.6% of the respondents were undecided and 31.1% of the respondents disagreed. This implies Performance appraisal process motivate employees to achieve better result.

The third item in table shows that 44.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that the appraisals criteria are clearly communicated and understood by all employees, 38.9% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 16.7% of the respondents disagreed with statement. This implies that the appraisals criteria are clearly communicated and understood by all employees.

The fourth item in table shows that 66.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the performance appraisals system contributes to a positive work environment and employee

satisfaction, 10% of the respondents agreed, while 23.3% of the respondents disagreed with statement. This implies that the performance appraisals system contributes to a positive work environment and employee satisfaction.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal system in the Borno State Civil Service Commission. It found that the system is largely perceived as fair and unbiased, aligning with previous research by Ojeleye and Salami (2019), which emphasized the role of performance appraisals in promoting fairness and equity in organizations. This perception fosters trust among employees and enhances organizational effectiveness. However, the second objective revealed that the results of appraisals are not effectively utilized for employee development or career progression, consistent with the findings of Smith and Oyewobi (2018) and Olaniyi and Ojo (2018), who pointed out issues like bias, lack of transparency, and insufficient appraiser training. These shortcomings reduce the overall effectiveness of appraisals and undermine employee motivation.

Furthermore, the study's third objective indicated that, when properly executed, performance appraisals can contribute significantly to employee growth and professional development, echoing the conclusions of Prasetya and Kato (2011). This highlights the potential of continuous appraisals to improve organizational efficiency by motivating employees to perform better.

The study concluded that while the appraisal system promotes fairness, it falls short in utilizing its outcomes for employee development, which is essential for organizational success. Recommendations include enhancing the use of appraisal results for career development, providing appraiser training, establishing regular feedback mechanisms, and ensuring clear communication of appraisal criteria to align employee efforts with organizational goals.

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