

Rewarding or Sanctioning Performance? A critique on group dominance and counter-group dominance in public organizations

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to determine the synergy between performance rewards and performance sanctions.

Research methodology: A desk research was adopted in which obtainable literature was consulted regarding the emerging themes and sub-themes of the study.

Results: Results suggest that PRS are key elements in organizational management. Both monetary - and non-monetary rewards play significant roles but there is a greater move towards non-monetary rewards among modern-day organizations and public managers. Execution of performance sanctions is an essential aspect of enforcing performance though there are challenges inhibiting the process of identifying employees to be sanctioned. In this paper, it has been noted that direct supervisors are likely to suggest sanctions as a way of venting their anger against the unsuspecting victims. That is why it is imperative to reflect on whether the emphasis on performance rewards and sanctions is perpetuating group dominance and how probable the counter-group dominance group can abide by and/or ward off elements of subjugation in public organizations.

Limitations: This study relied solely on secondary data yet adoption of primary data would yield significantly.

Contribution: The results of this study are useful in guiding future field-based studies as well as those involved in human resource management in both the public sector and the private sector.

Keywords: *Employee, PRS, Public manager, Reward, Sanction*

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1. Introduction

Widespread debate on organizational performance has been growing since the end of the past century; this article complements to the debate by expounding on the locus of performance rewards and sanctions. Abundant research on organizational performance focuses on the significance of managerial functions and processes, yet in the framework of dynamic global organizations and the rise of performance-related pay as well as results-oriented management in countries similar to Uganda, is of great worth (Amegayibor, 2021). However, Uganda is faced with several challenges in firming a move to more competitive public organizations, given that it has been quoted as one of the centers for labour export. This article advocates that this is connected with a specific proposition of performance rewards and sanctions, which are occasional in Uganda, and offers three positions for reviewing this proposition. The first emphasizes that rewards to employees in public organizations are not fully established, reasonable nor articulate; the second underscores some of the disturbing social nuances of administering sanctions, even though they remain to be; and the third underlines some of the probable criteria for evaluating performance rewards and sanctions at organizational and employee levels. With this at the

core, it is imperative to reflect on whether the emphasis on performance rewards and sanctions is yielding group dominance and how probable the counter-dominance can resist being subjugated.

Global attention to organizational performance has been growing since time immemorial. Abundant research on organizational performance inclines to the significance of managerial functions and processes, yet in the framework of dynamic global organizations and the upsurge of performance-related pay as well as results-oriented management in countries like Uganda is of growing significance. Performance Rewards and Sanctions (PRS) are essential elements to both public sector - and non-public sector organizations. This is largely so because an organization's reward structure determines its philosophy and describes, for the employee, the kind of conduct an organization expects to reward and/or strengthen. Indeed, every single organization endeavors to have control over the abilities and competencies of its employees so as to achieve its long-term goals albeit to varying degrees. As a result, organizations seek to have control over their employees using a wide range of inducements. Obtainable studies appear to suggest that organizations whose employees feel fondness for being recognized are more likely to be gratified with non-monetary incentives rather than monetary rewards. This is so for the reason that non-monetary rewards have a propensity to lessen the level of professional stress, absence from duty, proportions of resignation, and consecutively raise the degree of confidence at work, organizational output, as well as employee effectiveness (Pan, Zhao, & Ding, 2021).

The two elements (rewards and sanctions) remain central to a transforming public sector among a number of organizations in the East African region. The position of PRS in the management of public organizations in Uganda and the entire region is outstanding; they do not only enhance motivation but confidence (Huang, Liu, & Huang, 2021) (Jaynes & Wilson, 2021). A prominent component of the Ugandan public sector lies with the country's abundant potential in human resources that are largely dominated by young people. As a consequence, the impression of total rewards has developed with a proposition that employees see the whole lot that their organization presents so as to decide whether to endure serving in that organization or look for better opportunities elsewhere. Also, total rewards allow an employee to make a deep-rooted analysis of the quantity and quality of determination they ought to devote to their obligations if the equation is to balance unequivocally. Moreover, organizations have the account of making an allowance for both monetary inducements and non-monetary inducements and incorporating everything into a plan that incentivizes performance and determination (Riener, 2021). Li, Wen, and Hsieh (2022) render the organization's targets more expressive and have a tendency to be perceived as the largest measure of achievement. That is conceivably why an effective reward structure is projected to offer a significant milestone to both the rewarded employee and other employees with whom the rewarded employee is associated.

Modern-day organizations no longer attract employees simply on the basis of what they do or fail to do; instead, they attract exceptional abilities and talents that such employees bring around the organization. For example, public organizations no longer rely on individuals who are known for chastising subordinates as they enforce a kind of discipline that has no significance to the organization's growth. In fact, organizations, are these days, directing much of their funds to social capital and as a result, employees have to trade their private capital in terms of the proficiencies and competencies they bring around the counter that is constructive to the organization (Mauksch, 2021; Usanova, 2021). Consequently, to acquire and maintain the social capital essential for the organization to be prosperous, managers need to build an environment where employees are cherished for accomplishing preferred outcomes rather than following controlled procedures that yield no results. Reliance on antiquated doctrines such as moral codes, subordination, monotonous meetings, and chain of command, brings limited results to the organization (Finkelstein & Adams, 2021). Unfortunately, an antiquated manager is likely to overly put greater emphasis on procedures rather than results. In one of his televised addresses to the nation, President Museveni lamented why bureaucrats delayed government programs in the name of procedures for programs like infrastructure (roads, bridges, electricity). This suggests that incentives need to be connected to those actions and performances that support the success of an organization rather than merely adhering to procedures and codes of conduct (Homburg, Morguet, & Hohenberg, 2021). This link generates an environment where both the organization and the employee

can get to the top, and where dynamic talent is attracted, preserved, and engaged rather than subjugating a section of employees or an employee for that matter.

Uganda is facing several contests in consolidating a move to more competitive public organizations yet the country has been quoted as a center for labour export. This article contends that this is connected with a specific proposition of PRS which are occasional, and offers three positions for reviewing this proposition.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

Performance rewards

Performance rewards play a central role in the growth of organizations in a number of ways, viz; enhancing employee job satisfaction increases the level of motivation among employees and increases the level of employee confidence in the organization (Li et al., 2022). Amongst every single organization, rewards occupy a pivotal position because of their enormous potential to enhance the level of employee motivation (Seran, Kase, & Nursalam, 2022). The prominence of rewards is chiefly in the inducement of employees to believe that they are being recognized and appreciated for what they are doing and how they do them besides being paid their regular salary and other benefits (Andersen, Boye, & Laursen, 2018). Rewards are very important in serving as a stimulus to employees as well as improving the relationships between superiors and subordinates. To date, organizations that have and provide equitable rewards, have registered greater progress in terms of mitigating the rate of employee turnover, low absenteeism, high employee morale, enhancing employee relations and superior-subordinate relations as well as fostering honesty and compliance (Lisi, 2021).

According to Minden (1982), a reward is any reinforced performance followed instantaneously by a confirmatory gesture. Zigot (1998) defines a reward as anything that rises the regularity of an employee's exploit. The definitions of rewards encompass the overall value proposition that the employer offers to the employee. A study conducted by Rose (2013) suggests that rewards include payoffs that are aimed to raise the level of fulfillment among employees in an organization. A reward is, thus, a benefit arising from the exceptional performance of a task, rendering an excellent service, or discharging a responsibility above self (Agwu, 2013). This view shows that the notion of rewards is a form of payment as special appreciation for a service otherwise paid for. Okuna, Opok, and Mwesigwa (2020) describe a reward as 'a special form of payment given to an employee for a task one or performed in which payment can be either monetary or non-monetary.' These descriptions corroborate the findings of Nelson and Spitzer (2002) who established that approximately 78% of employees were pleased with being recognized by their supervisors each time they do decent work.

Rewards may be regular or annual depending on the strategic plan of an organization as long as they are administered following a clearly laid out procedure (Lisi, 2021). Rewards are among the major sub-functions that have provided Ugandan private sector organizations with greater age over their colleagues in the public sector who largely believe that as long as one is paid their salary in time, the rest is inoperable. Rewards produce an insurmountable proportion of an organization's overall output in real terms suggesting that an organization that fails to plan for and administer rewards is likely to slip back in a corresponding direction. In Uganda, the use of consolidated salary scales as dictated by the so-called integrated personnel and payroll system (IPPS) has failed to incorporate the element of rewards in the public sector; this is due to the political confidence that what government pays its employees is good enough to offset every basic need that public employees require such as transport, housing, medical insurance, education for their children, leisure, to mention a few.

The above observations appear suggestive that the reward system of an organization determines its philosophy, and describes for the employee what kind of manners the organization desires to have the funds for and strengthen (Wang, Tsai, Lee, & Ko, 2021). As a consequence, every organization tries to control the know-how and proficiencies of its personnel so as to achieve its objectives however different organizations apply different practices. Research shows that control can well be attained through payment of inducements, independent working conditions, a clear chain of expertise, and a careful description of accountabilities. The modern management method encompasses the personnel of the

organization, focuses on them for origination and resolutions, and rewards them when the organization flourishes (Beeri, 2021). Much of what is motivating this transformation is the growing necessity to acquire and hold exceptional skills; as a consequence, organizations ought to come up with a reward system that fascinates, stimulates, and retains the exceptional skills they need to get to the top. However, it is clear that rewards to employees in a number of public organizations are not fully established, viable or articulate.

Classifications, purpose, and modus operandi of rewards

Rewards are either non-monetary or monetary in nature or a combination of the two. A non-monetary reward system is a means to reward somebody by giving money, for instance, a modest thanks or certificate of appreciation (Riener, 2021);(Ochwo & Mwesigwa, 2021). It is frequently used as an inducement or gratuity scheme for employees, with a view to stimulate, retain and appeal to first-class individuals in an organization (Ballentine et al., 2003). The application of non-monetary rewards is traceable in Hawthorne's experiment where participants indicated that issues such as appreciating an employee were found to be more important than the conventional methods of paying cash incentives to employees or in what some organizations have come to label as the 13th month. According to the Public service standing order (2010), the policy of the Ugandan Ministry of public service encourages the application of non-monetary rewards among exceptionally performing public officers as a path to enhancing not only job satisfaction but encouraging others to emulate excellent performance as well as showing to the excellent performers that their performance is not in vain.

Non-monetary rewards entail indirect compensation arising from work itself for example high achievement, self-sufficiency, skill development, training, and profession development, acknowledgment, advancement, managerial roles, flexible working conditions, and thankfulness, to mention just a few (Jiang, Tang, Guan, Cui, & Luo, 2021). Under this, organizations have a tendency to emphasize the needs of employees on account of the different levels at which each employee is situated. For example, a study by Iren (2015) suggests that the idea of non-monetary rewards is perceived as an advantage that is realized by an employer for a specific job done that goes away from the official compensation package for the purpose of drawing, holding, and motivating that employee. Okuna et al. (2020) assert that rewards are directed to enhancing employee satisfaction given that content employees are normally bodily and psychologically in good health and experience a greater worth of life.

One of the main non-monetary rewards is promotion, which refers to the re-assignment of an employee to a higher rank in the job. The promotion has an essential element in the life of employees seeing that it comes with it considerable increase in wage, which leads to greater employee satisfaction. This reassignment can accelerate employee effort, especially where employees give more value to the promotion and this leads to increased productivity, job security as well stability at the place of work. While promotion is considered one of the key non-monetary rewards, public organizations are faced with several dilemmas whenever it comes to selecting whom to promote. For instance, a number of public organizations have been infiltrated by mafia groups (often labeled interest groups) (Belli & Bursens, 2021), which favor promoting a select group of individuals even if they do not merit at all. In other cases, the mafias come up with trumped-up charges against an employee whom they strongly believe has overly hit the requirements for being promoted as a way of tainting such employee's file to the advantage of the preferred individual within the mafia clique. A case in point, the mafias can use a supervisor to invent an appraisal about an unsuspecting employee, without following the authorized guidelines (such as the principle of fair-mindedness of the superior, employee participation, and adhering to the prescribed criteria) (Shukla, 2021). All these can and are indeed applied so as to give benefit to a preferred individual at the time of promotion. In addition, the mafias can push for manipulated inquiries, on the unsuspecting employee, where they melodramatically apply cock-eyed terms to knock down the victim under the guise of impartiality. And so, when the unsuspecting employee who has been knocked off, by the coteries, is no longer in the eligible for promotion, the preferred individual is promoted.

Also, when compared to other non-monetary rewards such as recognition and personal growth, the promotion of employees in public organizations has arguably become tricky (McBride, 2022). For instance, the government of Uganda, through its line Ministry, contends that there is no budget to facilitate the promotion of employees. As a consequence, it is no longer abnormal for one to remain at the same rank for decades. In a number of public organizations, employees have instead been encouraged to apply afresh whenever a higher position is available. This is informed by the irony that there is a budget for hiring new staff but there is no budget for promoting existing employees.

Monetary rewards are incentives given for an exceptional performance of an individual. A study by Odondi (2014) concluded that an effective reward system enhances the level of employee performance in the medium-term as a good number of them struggle to meet the higher target. They are an essential set of tools applied by organizations to serve as inducements in inspiring individual employees to keep up with their respectable effort (Commonwealth, 2009). They are occasionally more preferred than non-monetary rewards since they have a physical useful value for their productiveness. It is clear that people work so as to satisfy the different personal, family, and community needs, and these needs may be satisfied by monetary potency which can be generated from monetary rewards. Employees would go to any level to enhance their cash income as they will do something to avoid their source of income is removed. The fact that the employees fear losing their jobs, cash has been a very efficient motivator only because money is necessary for continued existence in an economy (Tymoigne, 2020). Monetary rewards, in modern society, are the most transferable means of satisfying fundamental requirements. For instance, Kepner (2001) submits that physiological satisfaction, protection, and social requirements may only be attained with money unless someone is born into an opulent family.

Monetary rewards are essential in a number of ways, viz. they can enhance collaboration among employees, increase employee performance, enhance the level of competition among employees hence greater output, and organizational performance increases, reduced cost otherwise incurred on unnecessary damage. On the other hand, monetary rewards are chastised for the fact that the supervisor may not value the performance of some employees due to social differences arising out of socio-demographic characteristics. This can inhibit the ultimate organizational performance as employees feel that they are unfairly isolated from the reward regime due to individual or group differences.

Performance sanctions

Performance sanctions have been a popular notion within the United Nations Organisation (UNO) system as well as the United States government against its antagonists such as Iran, Russia, China, North Korea, Venezuela, Lebanon, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Sudan, the list is endless. While the above popularity of the term cannot be purged for not relating to the content of sanctions at the organizational level, it provides an insight into what sanctions are meant for as well as the geopolitical domain encompassing the term and or process of sanctions in general. For instance, for many of the public organizations in the global south, the element of organizational politics tends to boil down to sanctions against the innocent who may lack the necessary shield while exempting the actual wrongdoers given that they have the clout to influence issues and decisions within the organization even if they overly on the wrong side of life.

A performance sanction is described as a form of incentive which is negative for purposes of deterring an acknowledged mode of employee conduct over time. According to the Republic of Uganda (n.d), any dishonorable code of behavior, among service providers, draw specific sanctions. A sanction can be an authorization or a restraint, subject to the situation. Authorizations are intended for issues such as the armed forces, the ecosystem, peacekeeping missions, individual personalities, support for usage, economic activities, and sporting activities. For example, sanctions can target radicalism, nuclear explosion undertakings, human rights abuses, the occupation of a foreign land, and deliberate subversion of a self-governing nation (Shyrokykh, 2022). According to Kanungo (1983), a sanction is any act introduced in reaction to undesirable performance; and they are intended to correct (rather than a reprimand) abuses, enhance performance, circumvent reoccurrence, and defend the wellbeing of the establishment. In a number of cases, sanctions are used to correct the conduct of an employee to encourage them to turn to a certain mode so as to make sure that set goals and objectives are attained

(Geoffrion, Lamothe, Drolet, Dufour, & Couvrette, 2021). However, a study by Maicibi (2003) observes that an individual will expect that the sanction remains proportionate to the action or conduct and so is a reward thus corroborating what Hodgetts and Hodgetts and Hegar (2007) call corrective procedures. A decent manager strives not to dismiss or rebuke an employee by administering appropriate sanctions.

It is almost clear that a number of disturbing social nuances ensue in administering sanctions, even though they remained to be. For instance, in a number of public organizations, when an employee performs exceptionally well he/she will not be rewarded but when the same employee is perceived to be on the wrong side for once, he/she will experience tough sanctions. This condition is popular in organizations where the degree of organizational politics is from top to bottom.

Categories of performance sanctions

Sanctions can be official or casual. Official sanctions are executed through prescribed means by an administration on persons. They are usually clearly demarcated and can take into account of rewards for acquiescence or fines for nonconformity (Meissner & Urbanski, 2022). They are frequently recognized in procedures, directives, or guidelines but may be deeply abused by supervisors over personal or social demographic influences. A notable case in point, a perpetual absconder can remain scot-free while a regular attendee grieves because he or she was away from his or her desk for a day or two without written notice about his or her whereabouts or perhaps because he or she failed to delegate in writing but in fact delegated and work proceeded uninterrupted. As a consequence, sanctions can be applied by superiors for patronage over employees perceived to be vulnerable under the guise of enforcing normalcy in the conduct of certain employees (Bleakley, 2022). Ironically, this, in the medium- or long-term perpetuates a permanent organizational divide between the more and the less influential, something that can damage organizational reputation. Unfortunately, a number of managers fail to grasp this reality by continuing to feel that they are applying the paradoxical ‘carrot and stick’.

Purpose of performance sanctions

On the progressive side, performance sanctions may be instrumental in a number of ways, for instance; correcting employee misconduct, mitigating perceived violence, abetting better superior-subordinate relations, and bringing order to the organization. However, the same sanctions can be used to mute prominent and/or liberal voices of those whose actual performance is undefeatable. Thus, sanctions are perceived to be a ‘walking stick’ of those in executive positions notwithstanding the fact that they are not a sustainable tool given that such organizations are prone to suffering gross impairment when the otherwise patronized employees gain their liberties. In spite of everything, public managers may have a tendency to hide behind what can be labeled as permissible procedures in terms of inquiries under the ploy of fortifying a prearranged decision while curbing the prey from appealing against such bigoted or rather chauvinistic conclusions. If performance sanctions are to serve the true purpose for which they are intended they should be objectively overseen by identification of the employee or manager whose performance falls below standard (including steps hitherto taken such as dialogue, mediated dialogue, verbal warnings, and written warning by the immediate supervisor, before recommending the employee for sanctioning) to the end just like the Canonical sword that cuts on either side (Patel, 2021). If not, sanctions on employees will broadly remain observed as a non-effective approach for enhancing organizational efficiency.

3. Research methodology

This study was based on secondary data where information was entirely gathered from obtainable sources namely Journals, peer-reviewed textbooks, government documents, and other similar studies. This form of study is good at various levels of the study since it is likely to allow the author/s to conduct studies with limited finances as well as their convenience. The aim of this study was to determine synergy between PRS. Consequently, a set of study questions informed the study, namely: what principles guide the execution of PRS? What are the levels of executing PRS? How can PRS be executed and under what composition? What mitigation measures are available for performance sanctions and what is the probable criteria for identifying and awarding exceptional performance among employees?

What challenges affect effective PRS processes and how well the challenges to effective PRS processes be overcome?

4. Results and discussions

Performance Rewards and Sanctions (PRS)

It has been suggested that the logic of the PRS is to create a base for rewarding exceptional performance and executing sanctions for poor performance, stimulating personnel to have optimistic value towards their job so as to boost efficiency. However, a number of public organizations in Uganda appear to pay superior attention to performance leading to sanctions (just like the linesman/woman in a football contest) than they do to rewards. Yet from the carrot and stick philosophy, it would be unethical to sanction misconduct without rewarding excellent conduct. It produces non-progressive organizations and thus, a real PRS should strive for greater visibility of extraordinary budding personnel within an organization as well as enhancing organizational progress, increased enthusiasm, and productivity (Republic of Uganda, n.d). Unfortunately, the execution of the PRS framework has failed to shape and take root in the Ugandan public sector (Uganda, 2015). As a result, a PRS embracing monetary and non-monetary rewards ought to be executed so as to guarantee that employees are motivated on a viable basis. However, it should be underlined here that some of the probable criteria for evaluating PRS at organizational and intermediate/employee levels lack clarity.

It is becoming clearer that PRS are executed in organizations to point out and reward exceptional performance and to sanction unfortunate performance (Kenya, 2016). The key resolve of executing PRS is to increase efficiency as well as boost the quality of service delivery. Thus, the requirements for an efficacious execution of PRS should consist of:

- Flawless instruments to ascertain projected levels of employee performance;
- Clear communication on PRS to every employee;
- Creation of structures for instilling the ethos of employee performance;
- Appraising inspiration of vital actors on top of balancing between monetary and non-monetary stimulus at the top, middle and lower levels of the organization;
- Connecting inducements to performance processes, which results in the anticipated results in a foreseeable manner;
- Cost efficiency of the PRS;
- Safety nets to ensure liability and openness;
- Reliable and valid systems for data management in terms of gathering and scrutiny of apt and dependable performance data;
- Proficiency to spread out PRS in an appropriate, reliable, and open way; and
- Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating so as to determine the efficacy of the PRS.

Principles guiding the execution of PRS

The execution of PRS at the organizational and employee levels can be grounded in the degree to which managers and employees contribute to organizational performance. According to the Republic of Kenya (2016), this suggests an unequivocal relationship between assessment of organizational performance and single employee performance calling for mutually reinforcing M&E instruments. For now, the following principles could guide the PRS execution:

- *Performance criteria* – there have to be flawless procedures for developing genuine and quantifiable ideals of performance and for facilitating employees to realize those ideals;
- *Impartiality* – the management of PRS should be reliable, rapid, neutral, rational, and executed devoid of bias;
- *Natural fairness* – management of PRS should be directed by the doctrines of natural fairness, honesty, objectivity, and fair-mindedness;
- *Equal chances* – balanced opportunities should be granted to every employee;
- *Aptness* – execution of PRS should be completed in a well-timed way in line with the prevailing rules;
- *Right to petition* – every employee ought to have the liberty to show displeasure against sub-standard PRS;

- *Effective tools for communication* – to make sure that there is delivery of consistent response on employee performance, flawless channels of communication must be presented and reachable;
- *Organization first* – PRS, especially sanctions, must never be used to fight periphery conflicts to the detriment of victims;
- *Training and mentoring* – instruments need to be availed to guide and train employees for performance enhancement; and
- *Professionalism* – maintain expert morals and principles knowing that PRS is not meant to destroy but to build stronger organizations.

Levels of executing PRS

The PRS can be executed at three levels, namely;

- Executive (organizational) level* – this involves the performance of top management staff in terms of their strategic directions, M&E, etc.
- Intermediate (managerial) level* – this involves those charged with interpreting and direct monitoring the execution of policies, guidelines, rules, directives, decisions, etc.
- Operational (employee) level* – this involves those charged with the implementation of policies and decisions in terms of actual service delivery to the clientele.

Execution of PRS

Since PRS can be used as a way of perpetuating group dominance, the counter-dominance group may not tolerate the subjugation forever. As a consequence, PRS need not be used to subdue a section of employees or an individual. In fact, everyone in the organization should be objectively and legitimately rewarded or sanctioned in accordance with the set guidelines and mechanisms.

- Executive (Organisational) performance* – the rewards for executive performance should be executed by the governing body in line with the performance guidelines. For instance, the following criterion can be adopted. (see table below)

Table 1. Proposed criteria for executing PRS at the executive level

| Achievement of performance targets | Rating scale | | Reward or sanction |
|---|---------------------|-----------|--|
| Achievement of $\geq 100\%$ of agreed performance targets | Excellent | 100%+ | Certificate of recognition signed by chair of the governing body |
| Achievement of 90% to 99% of agreed performance targets | Very good | 90% – 99% | Certificate of recognition signed by chair of the governing body |
| Achievement of 70% to 89% of agreed performance targets | Good | 70% - 89% | Verbal appreciation by chair of the governing body |
| Achievement of 50% to 69% of agreed performance targets | Fair | 50% - 69% | Cautionary letter signed by chair of the governing body |
| Achievement of $< 50\%$ of agreed performance targets | Poor | 0 - 49% | Endorsement for censure signed by chair of the governing body |

Source: Kenya (2016)

- Intermediate and employee level* - At this level, a monetary bonus based on basic salary can be awarded for exceptional performance (commission, 2018) For instance, a 13th month can be awarded based on one's basic salary vis-à-vis the individual performance and respective contribution to the organization's overall performance (see table 2 below).

Table 2. Proposed criteria from executing PRS at both intermediate and employee levels

| Achievement of performance targets | Rating scale | | Reward or sanction |
|--|--------------|-----------|---|
| Attainment of $\geq 100\%$ of agreed performance targets | Excellent | 100%+ | 13 th month salary based on score of excellence or promotion to next level |
| Achievement of 90% to 99% of agreed performance targets | Very good | 90% – 99% | Certificate of appreciation signed by the CEO |
| Achievement of 70% to 89% of agreed performance targets | Good | 70% - 89% | Put on performance progress plan to gain better performance |
| Achievement of 50% to 69% of agreed performance targets | Fair | 50% - 69% | Place on 3-year progress plan |
| Achievement of < 50% of agreed performance targets | Poor | 0 - 49% | Endorse for a 4-year progress plan |

Source: Kenya (2016)

Other notable rewards include: selection for national nobilities and decorations, letters of praise by authorized officers, extended service honours, paid holidays, the role of reputation for outstanding performance, an employee of the month/year prize, renewal of contract, international accolade recognition, etc. the view here is that public managers need not be obsessed with sanctions since behind any dark cloud there is something that can be exploited for the good of the organization. Indeed, managers need to focus more on consolidating the strengths of an employee rather than the mistakes since none is perfect.

Composition of the RSC

The rewards and sanctions committee, as provided in Annex II, Section 3.1 of Circular Standing Instruction No 1 of 2011 was amended as follows (Uganda, 2011):

- The committee shall consist of five officers from within the institution inclusive of the chairperson and the secretary;
- The secretary of the committee shall be the head of human resources;
- The members of the committee shall be appointed by the responsible officer, based on the principle of fairness and representativeness.

Ideally, the instrument does not provide for any additional member and whoever does so is blameworthy not forgetting that the outcomes otherwise generated from a committee that goes beyond the stipulated number can suffer legitimacy.

Mitigation measures to performance sanctions

It has been advocated that the administration of performance sanctions should not be the primary choice by supervisors and or managers but an advanced stage in the whole PRS process (commission, 2018). Since performance sanctions can be used as a way of perpetuating group dominance, the counter-dominance group cannot abide by the subjugation forever. That is why the focus should be put on mitigating what is perceived to be the root cause of poor performance or misconduct of a particular employee by:

- Identifying the strengths in every employee and seeking means of consolidating them coupled with
- Identifying the weaknesses in every employee and seeking practical means to suppress them since it is cheaper to suppress identified weaknesses than to recruit new employees from time to time.
- Giving due attention to the performance assessment info on an employee's performance appraisal and performance contract from the direct supervisor (Bayo-Moriones & De la Torre, 2021);
- Ensuring participatory appraisal and creation of awareness on the projected targets and objectives to be accomplished (Regner & Crosetto, 2021);

- e) Ascertaining the performance vacuum of an employee and seeking appropriate ways to correct them;
- f) Ensuring procedural justice in the administration of any PRS (Savigar-Shaw, Radburn, Stott, Kyprianides, & Tallent, 2021);
- g) Mounting and executing a methodical orientation for fresh employees and fresh heads of units as well as conducting constant refresher pieces of training;
- h) Evolving and executing agendas for mentorship drills and peer-support agendas for every employee in their relevant departments and/or units (Mgaiwa & Kapinga, 2021)

Probable criteria for identifying and awarding exceptional performance among employees

The following criteria can merit:

- a) At every department or unit, members can, through a secret ballot, nominate two names to be forwarded to the Directorate or Department of Human Resources.
- b) The initial process can be overseen by at least two officials from the above Directorate for both authenticity and objectivity.
- c) The employees nominated at every department or unit should be required to make presentations to defend the justification provided during their nomination process.
- d) The nominated employees can be assessed by their immediate supervisor using an official format.
- e) The final evaluation ratings for exceptional performance among the employees can be based on verifiable evidence along with the assessment provided by the immediate supervisor, by an independent team of three, as proof of achievement.

Table 3. Probable criteria for evaluating exceptional performance

| Performance indicators | Maximum score | Assessor's score | Remarks |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Professional achievements | 10 | | |
| Performance in assignment areas of responsibility | 10 | | |
| Maintenance of employee professional records | 10 | | |
| Attendance rating | 10 | | |
| Performance appraisal and development standards | 10 | | |
| Performance index in one's key areas | 10 | | |
| Readiness and ability to work in teams | 10 | | |
| Improvement in the quality of work through designated activities | 10 | | |
| Community involvement | 10 | | |
| Research, innovation and publication | 10 | | |
| Total | 100 | | |

Source: Kenya (2016)

Challenges to effective PRS processes

A number of challenges abound the PRS in public organizations; key among them include:

- a) The dearth of awareness among supervisors and employees.
- b) Deficiency of clear moral reward standards in an organization (Harðarson & Magos, 2021).
- c) Unfairness is mounted by influence peddling from the mafia group (Syed, Naseer, & Bouckennooghe, 2021).
- d) Discrimination is based on social demographic factors such as tribal differences, level of education, sex, area of specialization, etc.
- e) Over-reliance on contingent evaluation practices of supervisors (Huang et al., 2021).
- f) Increased rate of staff turnover resulting in dissatisfaction with the reward practices (Hoyos & Serna, 2021); (Ooi & Teoh, 2021).
- g) The dearth of clear statistical tools for measuring performance and over-reliance on subjective opinions of the direct supervisor (Alves, 2021).

Overcoming the challenges to effective PRS processes

- a) Implementing rewards and sanctions system in a phased manner rather than in totality since a number of organizations may not be taking adequate interest in the PRS.
- b) Rewards and sanctions should be executed with fairness and trust (Woods, 2008).
- c) There is a need for public managers to design ways of incorporating PRS methods into the core activities of the organisational sub-units.
- d) Public managers need to focus on both rewards and sanctions rather than being biased to sanctions alone.
- e) PRS progress should be mandatory at every level at least once every year.
- f) There should be functioning PRS service units in every user department.
- g) The provision of an enabling PRS software, especially in the areas of data collection and analysis so that sentiments of supervisors are quarantined.

5. Conclusion

From this paper, it can be concluded that PRS are key elements in organizational management. Both monetary - and non-monetary rewards play significant roles but there is a greater move towards non-monetary rewards among modern-day organizations and public managers. Execution of performance sanctions is an essential aspect of enforcing performance though there are challenges inhibiting the process of identifying employees to be sanctioned. In this paper, it has been noted that direct supervisors are likely to suggest sanctions as a way of venting their anger against the unsuspecting victims. That is why it is imperative to reflect on whether the emphasis on performance rewards and sanctions is perpetuating group dominance and how probable the counter-dominance group can abide by and/or ward off elements of subjugation in public organizations.

Limitations and study forward

This study is largely based on obtainable literature yet results could be different if a field-based study was conducted. Nonetheless, based on the proceedings of this paper, it is encouraged that:

- a) Managers should be committed to identifying and strengthening the strengths in every employee rather than continually looking out for the weaknesses.
- b) Managers are more objective when identifying and nominating candidates for PRS to avoid dragging the organization into chaos.
- c) Stakeholders executing PRS be as transparent as possible so that the outcomes of the process are respected by everyone.
- d) Improve the communication lines and invest more in mitigation rather than reprimand.
- e) Managers should balance between positive performance and negative performance of an employee by applying both the carrot and the stick.
- f) Managers should avoid being dragged by self-centered members in the organization to fight peripheral battles.
- g) Increase awareness through continuous training on expected performance targets as well as the share of liability.

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