

**THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH
AFRICA**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Richard C. Harding, (student number: 414-619-0) declare that "THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA" is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

(Mr R.C. Harding)

DATE

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my son, Richard, and my partner, Lizette. Their unremitting support and love provided a fertile source of motivation and inspiration during my study period.

ABSTRACT

This study explored the improvement of individual performance outcomes within the administrative units of UNISA. The study aimed, in particular, to explore, analyse and interpret individual performance management practices. It should be noted that this study did not attempt to cover all the areas of effective and efficient performance management. The focus was to investigate the processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance outcomes, which could lead towards improved institutional performance. The main aim of the study was to investigate how the performance management system at the University of South Africa can be improved.

The study adopted qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, thus a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, sampling and analyses, data collection and interpretations were used. However, the research design and methodology in this study primarily focused on a case study design and a mixed-method approach to reach valid and reliable conclusions. The first part of the thesis focused on the analysis of literature and empirical documents relating to performance management approaches and the research design and methodology applied. The second part focused on the performance management practices at UNISA, the implementation of surveys/questionnaires, interviews and group-discussions. Lastly, ideas and themes were identified from the collected data that should answer the research questions.

The study found that performance management should focus on the identification of an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to enable improved individual performance outcomes. Therefore, if managers want to manage individuals effectively and improve individual performance, all related factors, which include motivation, coaching and monitoring, as well as influencing positive behaviours by individuals, should form part of the effective performance management system.

Far too often, managers neglect objectively analysing performance appraisals' outcomes, and compromise by allocating undeserved percentage ratings, mainly to

avoid possible conflict situations. The study's findings provided valuable insights that could improve the performance management system at Unisa.

Some of the recommendations include: that effective performance management entails co-analysis, co-decision, co-design and co-evaluation, which could lead to the clear objective setting of targets for implementation by individuals; the implementation of quarterly appraisals; the implementation of 'crowdsourcing' or 360° evaluations; continuous self-development and training. This study's outcomes could make a significant contribution to the body of existing literature in the discipline of Public Administration. More specifically, in respect of the survey/questionnaires within three prominent constructs, the triangulation and mixed-methods approach used for this study; and the case study model applied in the research of the University of South Africa, as an institution of higher education.

KEYWORDS:

Performance management, individual performance, appraisals, individual development, objectives, management, evaluation, measuring, improvement, target setting, continuous engagement.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this study is to investigate the processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance outputs. Hence, if managers continuously engage and develop individuals, the performance of individuals would inevitably improve, which in turn may lead to improved institutional performance.

Furthermore, the emphasis will be to evaluate what has been published on the management of individual performance. Outcomes related to the above could contribute to the improvement of a performance management system at the University of South Africa (Unisa), which is in alignment with the main research question of this study (Section 1.5).

According to Smith, Henning, Wade and Fisher (2015:73-74), constant changes in the performance management design are necessary to align the expected individual performance with changes in the technology, processes and direction of an institution. This will ensure a positive influence on individual behaviours, and the adoption of new methodologies and improvement initiatives.

Against this background, this chapter will introduce and discuss the rationale behind this study. Thus, the research problem and questions, research objectives and a short description of the research design and methodology will be discussed in the following sections. The importance and the description of the sequence and contents of chapters to follow will be presented, and lastly, a chapter summary will be provided.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The current state imperative is to grow and develop the skills that will be needed to meet, for example, targeted infrastructure development projects over the next 10 years. If seen in the light of the increasing prominence of the notion of South Africa as a developmental state, higher education, and distance education in particular, will have to re-affirm its role as educator, in alignment with its responsibility as a state

partner in development, or it stands a chance of compromising its fundamental role as set out in the Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997 (RSA, 1997:s 13), namely:

- To meet the learning needs and aspirations of individuals through the development of their intellectual abilities and aptitudes throughout their lives;
- To address the development needs of society and provide the labour market in a knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society, with the ever-changing high-level competencies and expertise necessary for the growth and prosperity of a modern economy;
- To contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens;
- To contribute to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge.

In 2015, Unisa embarked on an institutional strategy to strive towards being the 'university of choice' throughout Africa. As such, various strategic objectives were formulated to realise this, and to promote the Open Distance Learning (ODL) model of the University. More specifically, for the purpose of this study, to ensure high quality service delivery, through the improvement of individual employees towards the required performance outcomes that could enhance institutional performance outcomes (Unisa, 2015:4-6).

The effective implementation of the above-mentioned could result in Unisa becoming a high performing and more efficient and effective institution (Unisa, Senate, 2014:2-5). Given the importance of Unisa's contribution in support of the national development goals, it is crucial that the employees safeguard Unisa's reputational image to retain and ensure enhancement on all strategic and operational levels, and while in so doing, meet Unisa's models in respect of societal credibility and trustworthiness. The implementation of the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016 to 2030 (Unisa, 2015e:11), will require more vigilance and joint execution actions to promote streamlined efficiencies, towards ensuring a more effective high performance and responsive Unisa (Unisa, 2015e:11)(Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.2.1).

Various complaints on social media and newspapers alluded to the deterioration of services rendered by Unisa. The latest report from *Business Day*, 5 February 2020

refers to “the rot at Unisa: indication the lack of Management to intervene in assuring that the current state of service delivery improves, is long overdue”.

The above-mentioned policy statement is in alignment with “The Batho Pele principles, as indicated in The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery in South Africa” (1997:18-20). However, the emphasis by Government is to consult with the wider community, including the public sector, non-governmental and community-based organisations, academic institutions and citizens themselves, in order to improve service delivery (Kroukamp, 2001:22-37).

Therefore, the relationship between performance management and ensuring effective service delivery is an important challenge for scholars and practitioners in the field of public administration. Scholars need to identify predictable connectivity, or enablers, between what motivates employees and drives individual performance outcomes. Practitioners, in turn, are exploring ways and means to successfully implement objectives that will allow them to produce the expected results. Effective performance management should therefore be, amongst others, the solution to these challenges (Walker, Boyne & Brewer, 2010:169-174).

Effective performance management ultimately involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels, and the continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers. Moreover, performance management must involve all the information systems and supportive mechanisms used by managers to set strategy, to ask appropriate questions, to take timely decisions to monitor execution and to forecast planned performance, in addition to reporting on results (Walker *et al.*, 2010:169-174).

The research conducted by Davila, Epsen and Manzoni (2014:344) found that the challenge to effectively measure performance at universities, whether academic or administrative performance, is difficult to find in literature. It is argued that the challenge to measure the performance of individuals is something researchers know little about, specifically with regards to tertiary institutions. The specific aspects that are important in efforts to measure or manage performance usually consist of a few factors, namely, quantitative, qualitative and the impact of outcomes. Therefore, the wide range of performance approach possibilities, such as statistics, reports, self-assessments, self-targets and standards, make the identification of the most

appropriate performance measurements even more difficult (Davila *et al.*, 2014:344-345).

More important, and a relevant focus point of this study, is the observation of Smith *et al.* (2015:2-3) that individual performance depends on the design factors in the working environment in which performance takes place, which includes cognitive proficiency, learning abilities, health status and language. Thus, the manner in which employees adapt to changes within the working or personal environment could have an effect on their functionality in respect of performance (Smith *et al.*, 2015:72-74).

Moreover, Robertson, Cullinan and Bartram (2002:136) maintain that the following are three core principles for performance management to ensure effective performance:

- Performance management as a system for managing the institution's performance;
- Performance management as a system for managing employee performance; and
- Performance management as a system for integrating the management of institutional and employee performance.

In conclusion, Barrows and Neely (2012:240) emphasise the importance of striking a balance between effective and knowledgeable managers and leadership. Management is all about doing things right, whereas leadership is about doing the right things.

This study will therefore entail an in-depth empirical investigation, description, and interpretation of the appropriate performance management approaches that could contribute to the improvement of the performance management system at Unisa. Moreover, the interaction and interventions relating to the performance management practices, and the descriptions thereof, as well as the analyses of policies, procedures, documents and communications related to current individual performance management practices at Unisa, will form part of this study.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

Although there is abundant literature relating to the topic of performance management, this study will specifically focus on the improvement of individual performance. Cokins (2004:22-29) supports the importance of this statement, by stating that there is a growing body of empirical evidence that effective performance management will improve institutional performance.

However, according to Walker *et al.* (2010:172), performance management is always a dynamic target, with various concerns such as economy and fairness, consistency and relevance to individuals in different working environments. Moreover, the measurements applicable in respect of the intended objectives towards implementation, should be agreed upon by the individuals responsible for the execution thereof.

Hence, the outcomes of this study could provide important insight and understanding relating to the appropriate approaches and methodologies which will be able to assist and support the improvement of individual performance. Moreover, this study's outcomes could also make a significant contribution to the body of existing literature in the discipline of Public Administration, more specifically, in the subject of performance management improvement, which could enhance institutional performance in respect of service delivery.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

It should be noted at the outset that the focus of this study is on the processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance, as individuals are eventually the end-result performers. However, without the proper setting of strategies, targets, structures and job contents, as well as the expectation of the individual, successful implementation will fail (Walker *et al.*, 2010:208; Rummler & Brache, 1990:24).

Moreover, the implementation of the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016 to 2030, indicates that Unisa will require more vigilance and joint execution actions to promote streamlined efficiencies to ensure a more effective and responsive Unisa (Unisa, 2015e:2-4)(Section 5.1).

The key features of the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030 can be summarised as follows (Unisa, 2015e:1-2):

- To be “The African University of Choice”;
- To become the trend-setting comprehensive university;
- To become a cutting-edge open distance e-learning (ODeL) institution; and
- To become the leader in higher education management and good governance.

Also, an important aspect that forms part of this Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030, is the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the University’s performance towards the realising of goals, objectives and targets that have been set. Hence, based on the contents of this policy, a holistic monitoring and evaluation system will require appropriate operational intelligent capabilities and a risk management framework to enable Unisa to meet the set targets (Unisa, 2015e:12).

Likewise, evident from the contents of documents which contain the views of stakeholders in performance management practices at Unisa, the successful implementation of individual objectives is inhibited by the lack of managers’ abilities and experience in coordinating individual performance management in alignment with the institutional objectives. Therefore, the policy endorsed the fact that managers also lack leadership abilities, which means taking the right decisions and ensuring support, and controlling and tracking the expected individual performance progress. The latter results in individuals that are not sure what is expected from them (Unisa, 2013a:4).

However, a report with important findings in respect of the performance management environment at Unisa, which emanated from a Unisa Culture Study (2013:2-3), and which was conducted by the Organisational Development Directorate at Unisa indicated that:

- Employees perceive that they are exposed to institutional policies which they cannot influence;
- Employees indicated that they are disempowered without a voice and are forced to comply;
- The institutional environment is experienced as a “command-and-control” institution; and

- Top management imposes decisions upon employees responsible for the implementation of objectives. Moreover, a lack of consultation and engagement in respect of the planning thereof, is also evident.

Another important finding of this study, is the confirmation related to the complexity of the current performance management processes.

Further relevant and important challenges related to Unisa's Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) emanated from an organisational architecture workshop held during 2014, with the Executive Management of Unisa and 31 representatives of administrative and academic units, *inter alia*:

- In its current form the IPMS at Unisa does not articulate sufficiently well with the operational needs of Unisa;
- Targets are disconnected from institutional strategic priorities; hence, there is a lack of facilitating and rewarding collaboration and performance;
- The IPMS in its current form tends to over-emphasise a culture of compliance and managerialism, rather than to focus primarily on effective service delivery objectives; and
- There is often a mismatch between available skills and support services needed, combined with a general lack of sufficient human resource (HR) capacity to deliver the expected service outcomes (Unisa, 2014a:par: 2.9, part 7).

Lastly and equally relevant, is the document regarding "Unisa's Academic Plan", that also refers to the IPMS. It indicates that the most challenging aspect is to integrate various units relating to Unisa's core business with the implementation targets and evaluation thereof within an appropriate IPMS. More specifically, there should be a focus to rather integrate the all-inclusive spectrum of academic employees' performance, and not only to manage fragmented components which are not in alignment with the standard operational procedures. Hence, at Unisa there was no holistic standardised IPMS approach at the time this study was undertaken (Unisa, 2015:8-9).

In efforts to find a solution, the Vice-Chancellor, through the Management Committee of the University of South Africa, appointed an external service provider to evaluate the design of Unisa's 2017 executive performance agreement, as well as its

alignment to strategic documents, such as the New Organisational Architecture at Unisa: Planning Workshop Report, (Unisa 2014,2-5).

Below are the primary research questions of the current study.

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The main aim of the study is to focus on the appropriate processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance at Unisa. Individuals are eventually the end-result performers. However, without the proper setting of strategies, structures and job contents, as well as considering the expectations of the individual employees, successful implementation of specific intended objectives will fail (Walker *et al.*, 2010:208; Rummler & Brache, 1990:24).

Hence, a case study approach was utilised to investigate and recommend the most appropriate methodology and practice to improve individual performance to enable the expected or desirable institutional performance improvement at Unisa (Section 4.3).

Webb (2009:117-118) stated that the research design is the research approach that appropriately fits the research problem. Based on the latter, it could be taken that a research design is simply the way that a research project tests or answers the research questions. The outcomes of how employees perceive, experience and observe the performance management practices at Unisa could lead to appropriate solutions to the problem at hand, namely, how to involve and enhance individual performance, while ensuring improved institutional performance outcomes.

Therefore, the research objectives below explain how the researcher intends to solve the research problem.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question which guided this researcher was: How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?

The following sub-research questions were formulated for this study:

Sub-research question 1: What has been published on performance management systems?

Sub-research question 2: What are the purposes, components and attributes of performance management systems?

Sub-research question 3: How should the performance management systems at Unisa be investigated?

Sub-research question 4: What are the current performance management practices and policy framework at Unisa?

Sub-research question 5: What are the experiences, and expectations of employees vis-à-vis the performance management systems at Unisa?

Sub-research question 6: How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?

1.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following research objectives further guided this researcher in this study:

Research objective 1: To review what has been published on performance management systems.

Research objective 2: To analyse the purposes, components and attributes of performance management systems.

Research objective 3: To describe the most appropriate research design and methodology to investigate performance management systems at Unisa.

Research objective 4: To describe and analyse the current performance management practices and policy framework at Unisa.

Research objective 5: To analyse and interpret the experiences and expectations of employees vis-à-vis the performance management system at Unisa.

Research objective 6: To provide for findings, conclusions and recommendations that could contribute to the improvement of the performance management system at Unisa.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Babbie and Mouton (2001:73-75) maintain that a research design describes the plan for conducting empirical research. Hence, the research questions will have an influence on the research design. Additionally, a proper research design will assist in

addressing a research problem, and assist in how to solve the problem. Moreover, Babbie and Mouton (2001:7-75) argue that the research methodology focuses on the steps, procedures and methods to implement the research design.

For the purpose of this study, qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, thus a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, sampling and analyses, data collection and interpretations were used. However, the research design and methodology in this study primarily focused on a case study design and a mixed-method approach to determine the answers to the research questions and to reach valid and reliable conclusions (Section 4.1, 4.2).

Hence, De Vos, Strydom and Fouche (2005:272) posit that a case study may be referred to as an exploration and an in-depth analysis of a single case or phenomenon over a period of time. Thus, the case study method was appropriate for this study which was a journey towards improving individual performance outcomes to enable the expected or desirable institution performance improvement at Unisa (Section 4.3).

According to Webb (2009:117-118), the most appropriate research methodology or macro research methods are usually categorised at the level of meta-theory and social enquiry between the positivist approach, which focuses on scientific methods, and the interpretivist approach, which focuses on the understanding of social interactions by humans, within the epistemology approaches – which are based on the qualitative and quantitative paradigms (Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2). The supportive and guiding factor in determining an appropriate research approach should be the main research question pertaining to the problem under investigation, and to seek solutions thereto. Therefore, the main research question of this study is:

How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?

Further to the above, Webb (2009:120-121) feels that the units of observation to enable the appropriate collection of data are equally important. Webb (2009) argues that there are two categories that are applicable for the purposes of this type of study, namely (i) human behaviour and characteristics, and (ii) the products of human behaviour and characteristics. Documentary evidence and data refer to the products of human behaviour. The second unit of observation entails human behaviour and characteristics. This category refers to the perceptions and

experiences of employees related to performance management practices and interactions in the unit of analysis. Thus, in terms of the purpose of this study, it entails how employees perceive, experience and observe the performance management practices at Unisa.

Hence, the appropriate methods to gather qualitative data, according to Webb (2009: 120-121), were observation, personal and group interviews, documentary sources, strategic operational plans and annual reports. Whereas, for the quantitative paradigm experiments, surveys and questionnaires were appropriate. Since this study is mostly embedded in the qualitative research paradigm, the case study approach was utilised, which also allowed for an inductive approach. Thus, the study started off within a natural setting, focusing on applicable events in respect of performance management practices at Unisa.

Also, according to Babbie and Mouton (2007:275-278), most researchers participate or form part of events as observers of what it is that they investigate. Hence, to avoid possible personal biases, triangulation will ensure more validity and reliability in respect of the qualitative study. Moreover, triangulation could analyse data and information from different sources and events, as well as from different relationships, methods and views within similar research environments (Webb, 2009:125-126). Chapter 4 provides an in-depth discussion and explanation of the research design and methodology relating to this study.

Lastly, the collected data was interpreted and the findings were generalised to the target population.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009:593-594), all social research should consider ethical issues, since it entails the collection of data from people, as the subject under study. Thus, during this study, the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were maintained. The respondents were informed of their rights and how it would be protected. Precautionary measures included the protection of publishing names by using only coding when publishing results. These results will, however, be made available to respondents on request. The willing commitment of respondents was sought through informed consent (see Appendix A). These

commitments were in alignment with the College of Economic and Management Science's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher also received ethics clearance to conduct the research within Unisa (see Appendix A), as well as permission to utilise student information and relevant statistics and documents within Unisa (see Appendix B).

1.10 DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

At the outset it should be noticed that this study prioritised the focus on the improvement of individual performance outcomes. More importantly, it aimed to explore, analyse and interpret individual performance management practices within the administrative units of Unisa, relating to the improvement of high service level delivery (Section 2.1, 5.3). Although there are typically three important institutional levels of performance, namely, institutional, process, and job performance that ensure effective connectivity towards the implementation of desirable objectives, the focus of this study was mainly at the level of job-performance (Section 2.5).

The empirical research results and conclusions were strictly focused on the administrative employees of Unisa in respect of performance management practices. However, these findings could certainly be generalised and could be applied to other tertiary institutions and academic staff. Therefore, it could be taken that this study did not attempt to cover all areas of effective and efficient performance management. The main focus was to investigate the processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance outcomes, which could lead towards improved institutional performance.

In conclusion, the researcher acknowledges that his current experience and knowledge as an insider in the institution, as well as his involvement in performance management practices, could have influenced his objectivity during the interpretation of the data. However, according to Babbie and Mouton (2007:275-278), the study's credibility and reliability can be improved by triangulation, field notes and inquiry audits. Moreover, the researcher attempted not to be influenced by his own perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation – the results should speak for itself (Sections 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6).

1.11 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter which explained and described the background to and rationale for this study. Thus, the research problem and question, research objectives and a summary of the research design and methodology that were used in the study were described. Furthermore, the sequence and contents of chapters to follow and lastly the chapter summary were provided.

Chapter 2 focuses on the evaluation of what has been published on the management and improvement of individual performance. In addition, to determine whether such approaches are appropriate to describe the attributes, strengths and weaknesses of individual performance management. Eventually, the literature reviews could inform and contextualise the research topic for this study. The literature review could serve as a critical synthesis of the existing literature to prove that the researcher has read extensively and intensively on the specific subject.

Chapter 3 will focus on the supportive attributes to enable the possible improvement of individual performance outcomes. Hence, important principles are described, which could change individual behaviours, which in turn could lead to improved work performance.

Chapter 4 explains and describes the research design and methodology, thus the plan for conducting the empirical research. Therefore, the focus is on the concepts of research paradigms, research design and research approaches and methodology. In conclusion, the unit of analysis, unit of observation, and data-collection methods are also explained.

Chapter 5 deals with the analytical investigation and description of the performance management policy framework and the associated practices at Unisa. The focus is on the empirical investigation, analysis description, and the interpretation of performance management practices and the implementation thereof; more specifically related to the performance management practices within the administrative directorates at Unisa.

Chapter 6, the data-collection chapter, discusses the interviews and questionnaires, as well as the analysis and interpretation thereof. Hence, the views, opinions and perceptions of respondents were interpreted.

Chapter 7 is the final chapter of this study and the findings from Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, thus all theoretical outcomes, are consolidated into final recommendations.

1.12 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided an introductory explanation and description of the background to and rationale for this study. The research problem and question, research objectives, limitations of the study and a summary of the research design and methodology, were indicated and discussed. Lastly, the sequence of the study and the contents of chapters were explained. The next chapter presents the literature review and will focus on the evaluation of what has been published on the performance management approaches relating to the improvement of individual performance outcomes. The latter could identify enablers to ensure successful and high-quality outcomes in respect of service delivery.

CHAPTER 2: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided a background to the study as well as an overview of the significance and problem statement relating to this study. Furthermore, the aim, objectives, research objectives, and a general overview of chapters were discussed.

The focus of this research is on processes and approaches for continuously managing the improvement of individual performance. The investigation in the research study involved an evaluation of what has been published on the performance management approaches relating to the improvement of individual performance outputs. Individuals are eventually the end-result performers. However, without the proper setting of strategies, structures and job contents, as well as the expectations of the individual, successful implementation of performance management will fail (Walker *et al.*, 2010:208; Rummler & Brache, 1990:24).

It is important to evaluate what has been published on the management of performance. Performance management is a tool to ensure individual performance and improved outputs, by improving employees' performance: to eventually enhance the current levels of individual performance outcomes. The study aimed to determine what specific performance management approach would be appropriate; as well as the identification of attributes, strengths and weaknesses of individual performance management approaches. It is also important to identify enablers to ensure successful and high-quality outcomes in respect of service delivery outputs.

Further to the above, the literature review will inform and contextualise the research topic for this study. The research review will therefore be a critical synthesis of the available literature on the topic to prove that the specific subject was researched thoroughly. The next section will provide a definition of the concept of performance management.

2.2 DEFINING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Armstrong and Taylor (2014:331-332) and Davila *et al.* (2014:349) define performance as employee behaviour that accomplishes results. The concept of performance management consists of three phases, namely, (i) ensuring that the individual's output is aligned to the institution's strategy and objectives, (ii) to influence the employee's behaviour toward the accomplishment of the expected results, and (iii) an evaluation of the employee's performance, which could result in skills development, mentorship and rewards. Thus, performance management influences employees' performance results by supporting them to understand what is expected from them, and to provide the working environment and information needed to improve it. Reward management influences the intended performance outputs by recognising and rewarding excellent performance, and providing incentives to enhance it.

The management of performance usually has the following two important challenges in respect of individual performance management: 1) maintaining or controlling current processes, and 2) enhancing current processes. Thus, to be continuously accountable for improving employees' performance outcomes (Charron, Harrington, Voehl & Wiggin, 2015:2).

According to Walker *et al.* (2010:2-6) it is only in recent years that public administration scholars have turned their attention to systematically conceptualise and theorise the performance of public agencies and officials. Hutchinson (2013:27-28) endorses the above statement by indicating that it was not until the 1980s that the term performance management emerged as a concept in the United States of America (USA), and became an integrated part of HR functions. However, according to Walker *et al.* (2010:6), performance management must be seen as a result of various inputs, such as institutional processes and environmental influences, in assessing and monitoring effective progress towards acceptable levels of service delivery. Likewise, Robertson *et al.* (2002:135-136) also endorse the importance of the alignment of institutional objectives to ensure effective individual performance management.

A specific set of criteria to manage the performance of public institutions and the measurement thereof involves analysing the sequence of input-output and intended

individual performance outcomes. Inputs include revenue or costs, day-to-day operations and are comparable with the economy, whereas output includes a number of categories, such as quantity of service and service quality turnaround time, and provision of acceptable service delivery levels. This in turn leads to improved individual performance outcomes (Thorpe & Holloway 2018:92-94) (Section 2.3).

Walker *et al.* (2010:2-7) further found that scholars need to identify predictable connectivity between that which motivates employees and drives individual performance outcomes. The relationship between performance management and ensuring effective service delivery is an important challenge for scholars and practitioners in the field of Public Administration. Practitioners, in turn, are exploring ways and means to successfully implement goals and to produce the expected results. Effective performance management should thus be the solution to these challenges (Walker *et al.*, 2010:169-174; Michel, 2013:77; Hutchinson, 2013:73-74).

In light of the above, Schwartz (1999:3-5) argues that performance management comprises of three important components:

- the understanding and setting of specific objectives and expectations,
- continuously providing feedback on progress, and
- eventually appraising the expected performance outcomes.

The above phases should be managed throughout the year and aligned with any change in the policy and goals of the operational plans towards implementation. The result of which could force job content changes. These components will be the three core drivers to ensure effective performance management, and more specifically, the improvement of individual performance outcomes. Hence, these concepts will form an integral focus throughout the chapter.

However, before the above-mentioned components can take effect, Robertson *et al.* (2002:136) wrote that there are three core factors for performance management that should be in place to ensure alignment with institutional objectives:

- Performance management as a system for managing organisational performance;

- Performance management as a system for managing employee performance; and
- Performance management as a system for integrating the management of institutional and employee performance.

Likewise, Hale and Whitlam (2000:xi) argue that institutional performance can be powered up through the development and improvement of employees' performance management. However, a holistic view or integrated approach in respect of performance management must include, for example, taking the right decisions when selecting the right staff, job contents, target setting, coaching, and performance appraisal and monitoring, as well as mentoring.

The above statements correlate with that of scholars such as Swanepoel *et al.* (2003:371-372), Rummler and Brache (2013:23-25), Hutchinson (2013:3-4), Bussin (2017:17-18), and Borganovi *et al.* (2018:100). The next section will focus on the origin and development of performance management within the sphere of public administration.

2.3 THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE SUBJECT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

With the assistance of the Unisa main library, electronic searches on the Nexus database were conducted on current and completed research/projects relevant to the subject of this study. The search involved, more specifically, the index of completed theses and dissertations. Key terms used were, performance management, individual performance outcomes, appraisals, individual development, objectives, evaluation, managers, target setting and continuous management. Eventually a total of 11 research records, excluding relevant articles (14), were identified. In general, these research records were restricted to the years 2010 to 2018/19. Only a few research projects (theses and dissertations) referred to the importance of the continuous engagement of managers/supervisors with their subordinates: to develop, support and motivate employees towards the effective execution of set objectives, which in return, could improve the IPMS of the institution. Some of these research projects are cited in this study where applicable. Only a few theses and dissertations were identified that could contributed during the time of

writing this study: that of Edgar Sisa (2014), Wasnaai Mokoena (2014), Esther Maimela (2015), Nkwanane Paile (2012), Pandelani Munzhedzi (2011), Mbotheni Ravhura (2009) and Simon Mathidza (2015).

The above-mentioned authors focused on the improvement of performance management systems and several indicated similar challenges, similar research approaches and research designs. The researcher of this study did not refer to or quote any part of the above-mentioned authors. However, the researcher of this study contextualised and familiarised himself with similar challenges in respect of the improvement of IPMS practices. It is important to mention that Unisa is a unique open distance e-learning (ODEL) institution, which is difficult to benchmark against other traditional tertiary institutions (Unisa, 2020:1-3).

The researcher of this study attempted to determine if the focus of this study is adequately represented in the subject of Public Administration as presented at the University of South Africa (Unisa). The College of Economic and Management Sciences accommodates the management sciences, including Human Resource Management, Business Management, Industrial and Organisational Psychology Operations Management and Public Administration Management. These disciplines, however, do not include all offerings within the above-mentioned College. However, after an in-depth analysis on the website of Unisa and a discussion with the administrative manager of the College of Economic and Management Sciences, these disciplines were selected as pertinent to the question at hand, namely, whether the focus of this study is adequately represented in the subject of Public Administration as presented at Unisa.

These selections could serve well to indicate whether Performance Management Practices are included in the curriculum of management sciences. (It serves to be noted that the researcher of this study is an employee and student at Unisa.)

The outcomes of the investigation emerge below:

- Undergraduate modules within the degree Bachelor of Business Administration (PUB1501 and PUB1601). The purpose of these modules is to enable students to understand the field of human resource management. The same accounts for the Diploma in Public Human Resource Management;
- At postgraduate level:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Management is offered: Module MNG4801. The purpose of this module is to build on the existing strategic management knowledge of postgraduate students;
- Postgraduate Diploma in Management of Organisational Change and Renewal: Module ORG4801. The purpose of the module is to provide students with the necessary competencies to manage change;
- Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration. The purpose of this qualification is to empower learners with the necessary competencies to apply relevant contents in respect of economics, business decisions, financial statements and decision making;
- Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resources Management: Module PUB4868. This qualification will enable the student to independently identify, analyse and manage human resource development trend practices and problems in the context of development in any organisation. Module PUB4865 focuses on key sections of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and relevant legislation that direct the duties and functions of Public Human Resource Management.

From the preceding contents it is evident that the discipline or module in respect of Performance Management is not offered as a separate discipline. It could be argued, based on the need of such a discipline at Unisa that this study object should be part of the curriculum in the undergraduate and postgraduate levels/degrees, specifically within the sphere of Public Administration.

2.3.1 The origin of performance management

Performance management has its origin or roots in performance appraisals, and was initially perceived as performance management practices. Hence, according to Hutchinson (2013:26-27), during the development phases of performance management in the United Kingdom (UK), these early monitoring trends were evident in the Industrial Revolution years, and more specifically within the textile mills.

Further to the above, appraisal systems also started to originate in the USA from the early 1920s. Merit ratings and management by objectives (MBO) were popularised by Drucker (1955) during the 1960s and 1970s (Hutchinson, 2013:27; Kalgin,

Podolskiy, Partenteva & Cambell, 2018:4-6; Bouckaert & Halligan, 2006:12-13, 22). Hutchinson (2013:27-28) further indicates that it was not until the 1980s that the term 'performance management' emerged as a concept in the USA, and has also formed an integrated part of HR functions.

2.3.2 The evolution of performance management

The recent place of performance management is that of a strategic management tool, integrating individual and group contributions with that of institutional strategies, goals and objectives, and also to ensure alignment with various HR policies and practices (Hutchinson, 2013:28-31).

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:14-15) state that the academic interest in performance management has reflected the development of actual performance management practices. The 2001 Bain and Co survey of the use of, and satisfaction with management tools and techniques (Bain & Co, 2001), reported that more than 80% of institutions make use of benchmarking, while 50% have some form of remuneration linked to performance, and more than 40% utilise some criteria, for instance, the Balanced Scorecard tool. Furthermore, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:15-16) write that the focus on performance management as an academic discipline originated from the middle 1990s. However, earlier fields of study, for instance performance improvement in industrial engineering, started in 1977 onwards (Section 2.3.4).

Further to the above, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:14-15) argue that there are three areas that make performance management a distinctive focus for research:

- Firstly, the practice of management is across technical, cultural and functional boundaries, thus knowledge and theory developments are shared with other disciplines to determine what it means for the practice.
- Secondly, the challenge or issue at hand is whether to analyse performance management only from one perspective (discipline) or to utilise a cross-disciplinary approach.
- Thirdly, to find or produce outcomes that could add value in respect of those (managers) practising performance management.

Hence, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:16-19) indicate that, should a multi-disciplinary approach be the solution, then the issue is which discipline is predominant. The authors therefore suggest applying either a uni-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary method to determine possible gaps in knowledge and perspectives. The authors also suggest that inter-disciplinary research could examine performance management from different perspectives. Thus, to determine where there are similarities to enable an investigation to explain phenomena that are currently vague (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:15-17).

Bussin (2017:2-6) endorses the view of Thorpe and Holloway relating to the importance of a cross-disciplinary approach. Bussin emphasises the fact that the purpose of global performance management is to build and maintain a strong overarching, integrative corporate culture. Therefore, it is vital to train managers in the importance of global performance management systems, and to take into account diversity and cultural competency. Otherwise, effective performance management and the implementation thereof will be derailed, and will result in a waste of time and costs. Hence, performance management improvement is a never-ending process (Bussin, 2017:3-4).

2.3.3 Performance management vs performance appraisal

Although IPMS is a complex process which includes strategic planning and tactical management, this study focuses on performance management at the operational level. Therefore, to improve individual performance outcomes in alignment with planned objectives, it is necessary to explore the history in respect of this specific perspective. Thorpe and Holloway (2008:90-92) argue that there is still a huge challenge to bridge the gap or to understand the difference between performance appraisal and performance management within performance management processes.

Likewise, Armstrong (2009:4, 27) also maintains that performance management differs from performance appraisals. Performance appraisals are judgements on progress, whilst performance management is a continuous engagement process that ensures that management and employees determine relevant support towards improved individual performance outcomes. The above statement is also supported by Morrissey, Below and Acomb (1988:10) who state that performance management

closes the loop on the total performance management planning process. It provides management with the ongoing mechanisms for executing and monitoring the implementation and results of individual performance outcomes. Lastly, Hale and Whitlam (2000:1-5) and Enos (2000:143) endorsed the opinion of the above-mentioned authors, indicating that to concentrate only on hard measures, thus statistics in respect of production outputs, creates a lack of focus on how to achieve planned individual performance outcomes.

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:90-92) further indicate that, specifically in Western governments, such as the UK, measures have moved from:

- Focusing on tasks and processes to institutional level, and even external levels within a supply chain, from supplier to customer;
- The Balanced Scorecard approach, which linked operational outcomes to strategic intent; and
- Performance measures as a priority phase, shifted from economy and efficiency (input/outputs costs) to effectiveness (quality flexibility, meeting deadlines and planned outcomes) and more important a shift in only conducting performance appraisals, to continuous management by managers in respect of performance management.

According to Thorpe and Holloway (2008:101-102), Walker *et al.* (2010:172-173) and Rummler and Brache (2013:14-15), performance appraisal entails key success factors, to monitor deviations in respect of set targets, to track past achievements, to determine the current progress status in respect of planned performance outcomes, and input and output activities. Performance management, in contrast, involves training, teamwork, communication, engagement, attitudes, agreed-upon targets, individual involvement in target setting, and incentives and rewards. Therefore it can be concluded that the purpose of performance management is to motivate behaviour towards improvement.

2.3.4 The evolution of operational performance management

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:92-93) point to a key assumption, which indicates that the emphasis within operational management is still on measurements (statistics/or snapshots). The above authors indicate that the focus should rather be on the

management intervention, namely, to utilise data to enable decisions towards the improvement of individual performance outcomes.

As such, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:92-94) and Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:20-22) posit that operational management (OM), which is the process of implementing intended strategic objectives, should be an applied discipline, with a relationship with industry. The authors refer to the history over 100 years in an attempt to determine specific time periods and patterns in respect of operational management, in relation to performance management and measurements: (i) the early twentieth century, (ii) the post-Second World War years, and (iii) the mid-1980s to date. The latter will be discussed in the sub-sections below.

According to Brudan (2010:113), the evolution of operational performance management could be linked to the evolution of accounting and management practices. The author indicates that operational performance is traditionally evaluated in terms of efficiency, productivity and low costs, as well as effectiveness in goal achievement. Financial indicators played a major role in determining the expected performance outcomes of an institution.

Furthermore, it was indicated that, although performance management can be traced back to the ancient times, the concept of performance management was first used during 1976 by Beer and Ruh (1976:60-61). This was confirmed during their study of performance management at Corning Glass Works of the USA entitled, *Employee growth through performance management*. Due to some findings which include the lack of adequate feedback to employees, and the lack of managers to perform their role as managers, a performance management system was developed to assist managers. Although this concept was introduced by Beer and Ruh, it was not widely used until the mid-1980s, when it emerged in the USA as a new approach to the management of performance (Beer & Ruh, 1976:60-61).

The development of operational management in each of the specific time periods is discussed below.

2.3.4.1 The early twentieth century

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:92-94) further explain that during the early twentieth century, performance management first emerged as a discipline embedded or influenced by scientific management principles. In essence it entails that operational

management's role focused on operational functions, thus to manufacture as efficiently as possible. Hence, manufacturing managers sought appropriate measurements to assist them in determining how successful they were in optimising 'efficiency'. Concepts such as specialisation, productivity, outputs and the automation of large-scale machinery emerged.

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:92) also indicate that an important influence in respect of performance management occurred during the 1910s when FW Taylor (1911), or Taylorism, reported that management's responsibility was to advise on the best method of performing tasks. Hence, the adoption of appropriate scientific performance management principles. The analysis of work by observation and measurement (work - study) had to improve measurement tools, to eventually improve and monitor individual quality productivity (volume and costs) outcomes on an ongoing basis (Bouckaert, 2006:12-13, 20-22).

However, according to Thorpe and Holloway (2008:93), the so called 'Taylorism' was not without critics. Many of whom came from the 'human relations' movement, and more specifically from the theories of Maslow, McGregor and Herzberg (Section 3.5.3).

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:93) further elaborate that the rationale behind the above critics was that the individual could achieve much more by humanising the work environment, thereby enabling motivated workers. Therefore, according to the human relations movement, the assumption is that the social factors of work are at least as important as the technical ones based on scientific management principles.

2.3.4.2 Post-Second World War to middle 1980s

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:94-96) further indicate that during the second period, namely, the period post-Second World War to middle 1980s, the quantification in management, as a newly developed method of management science, or operations research, evolved. Also, the utilisation of automated measuring tools like computers, which could support the measurement of productivity outputs became more popular.

More important, according to Thorpe and Holloway (2008:94-96), was the shift from 'Taylorism' to the influence of the human relations movement. It entailed that performance could improve if workers were involved in the performance management processes, underpinning the importance of creating motivated

employees. However, Thorpe and Holloway (2009:95) emphasised the fact that the focus, namely, productivity, remained the central point. Moreover, the methods changed to collective achievement by involving employees in achieving quality outputs.

The above-mentioned authors further explain that during the 1970s questions were raised about the emphasis being only on performance appraisal. Therefore, according to the authors, new measures were required to indicate the importance of effectiveness (quality). As a result, total quality management (TQM) emerged to improve effectiveness and responsiveness. The authors indicate that a growing concern emerged regarding the appropriateness of measurements to address efficiency and effectiveness within operational management processes. A common view was, according to Thorpe and Holloway (2008:97) and Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:20-22), that the traditional performance measurement system of operations management (OM) was outdated, based on the following:

- That the wrong activities were measured;
- There was a lack of strategic focus;
- There was a lack of encouraging/motivating and the optimisation of employees;
- Continuous improvement interventions were absent; and
- The lack of consulting customers on what they want.

Thus, the need to monitor, measure and track performance improvement to enable the focus on measuring the right things, was lacking (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:96-97). In light of the above, Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:20-23) argue that a general assumption emerged that, if you know what to do and how to do it, it will indeed be done. However, the lack of understanding in respect of the complexity of performance management in all its variations, made this approach rather a naive scheme of thinking. This thinking eventually led, in many publications, to how to measure performance management in the public sector.

2.3.4.3 Mid-1980s to present

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:97-101) and Mizrahi (2017:13-16) examined the third and last period: mid-1980s to present, which saw the rise of business process re-engineering (BPR). The focus changed to improving business processes in order to

improve the measurement of performance such as cost, quality, service delivery, and turnaround time. This approach, according to the authors, focuses on driving performance improvement across the institution at different levels, and not only on measuring output. The approach that was dominant at the time was the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). Thorpe and Holloway (2008:99) explain that, during these decades, the public sector reform in the UK shifted to the 'New Public Management' (NPM) approach, which in summary entails the following:

- A shift in the focus of management systems and efforts from inputs and processes to outputs and outcomes;
- A change to more measurement, reflecting itself in performance indicators and standards; and
- More aggressive market-related mechanisms to ensure appropriate and timely service delivery.

As such, Mizrahi (2018:12) endorses the above statements by indicating the emphasis of the New Public Management (NPM) on the introduction of explicit standards and measures of performance that were later defined as performance management indicators. This is an indication that the focus shifted to a greater emphasis on output control.

Bovaird and Löffler (2010:152-154) agree that the NPM specifically emphasised the importance of performance management as a mechanism in public sector institutions. Moreover, Bovaird and Löffler (2010:152) indicated that the NPM did not originally develop this approach towards measuring public sector's performance. As early as the 1949s, the Hoover Commissions in the UK attempted to shift the attention of budget from inputs to function outputs (activity, costs and implementation achievements).

Hence, the focus of performance measurement and management shifted through the years, based on what constituted government performance. For instance, during the 1980s, performance measurements and management focused on inputs and efficiency, and later, due to the decline in trust in the public sectors, changed to the focus on the quality-of-governance. Bovaird and Löffler (2010:154) further stated that, from the mid-1990s, the NPM was reinterpreted as a core strategic management concept, which included *inter alia*:

- The sharing of decision-making with the partnership concept; ensuring trust-building and capacity-building activities;
- The sharing of accountabilities, hence, the shift towards standards and measures of performance;
- Coordinated approaches in respect of goals and plans towards integrated processes among interdependencies, and partnerships supporting common and complementary goals, towards execution; and
- The shift to competitive approaches in alignment with the private sector.

The focus of performance management has shifted from imposing strategic control on stakeholders towards the negotiation of strategies, thus involving employees. However the focus has remained on results, with a shift to the introduction of performance indicators and specific objectives towards implementation (Bovaird & Löffler, 2010:241-242).

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:101) conclude by stating that, from their review over the above-mentioned periods, the themes identified suggest that performance measurement and reporting focused on efficiency and productivity during the twentieth century. Performance management, supported by performance measurement, was concerned with effectiveness on a more holistic and qualitative perception of operations within institutions, therefore combining the what, why and how (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:102-103).

Rao (2016:18-19) endorses the above statements, by indicating that performance input, standards and quality, as well as costs, should be important indicators for measurement towards achieving the expected performance outcomes. However, Bussin (2017:189-190) warned about the over-emphasis on the tick-box approach, without continuous support and engagement by managers. Managers should move from a paper chase to engagement and conversations.

2.3.5 Performance management in the public sector

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:101) report that performance appraisal in the public sector has continued to focus on control, reporting and monitoring based on efficiency (value for money). Moreover, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:101) and Cokins (2004:23-29) indicate that the focus on performance management to improve

operational outcomes has been neglected in the public sector. Further to the above, the authors indicate that the concepts of performance measurement and performance management became one concept, whereas the authors are of the opinion that it is important to consider them as different concepts.

Moreover, the research undertaken by Davila *et al.* (2014:344) further found that the challenge to effectively manage performance at universities, such as academic performance or administrative performance, is difficult to find in literature. Davila *et al.* (2014:349) argue that the challenge to measure the performance of individuals is something researchers know little about. The performance aspects which are important to measure usually consist of a few factors, such as quantitative, qualitative, and the impact of outcomes. Hence, the wide range of performance approach possibilities make the identification of the most appropriate performance measurements even more difficult (Davila *et al.*, 214:344-345). Davila *et al.* (2014:346) further indicate that performance management processes are even more difficult in terms of implementation, therefore, the need to ensure performance outcomes are in alignment with planned institutional goals.

The clarity to define strategic goals, to conceptualise implementation activities by employees, validity problems and misleading incentives, are difficult processes. The linking of inappropriate incentives to performance could force the status quo instead of improving the performance (Davila *et al.*, 2014:348-349). Therefore, performance management is not only related to results/outputs (the what), but also relates to behaviours and processes (the how) of performance.

Additionally, Crawley *et al.* (2013:170) highlight that, as part of individual performance appraisals, a more appropriate performance management approach to enhance individual performance could be the 360-degree appraisal system (Section 2.6.4). This approach involves all the role-players' inputs in evaluating and improving individual performance. Using multiple data sources can go a long way in making performance measurement fairer because the elements of subjectivity are lessened, and a more balanced assessment of actual work performance can be created. This could lead to the identification of more relevant skills development needs and appropriate employee development.

Further to the above, Crawley *et al.* (2013:172-176) indicate that the theoretical and conceptual bases of performance management include the Expectancy Theory, which suggests that employees will be motivated and committed if goals are clear and compensation and incentives are offered. This will lead to pride and satisfaction, as well as personal achievement. Following from the above, the Goal Setting Theory entails that employees, although having difficult but achievable goals to be achieved, will be motivated to achieve it successfully. This will create a sense of self competency, values and beliefs, as well as opportunity. However, the Opportunity Theory entails that there should be adequate enablers to promote a working environment conducive to high-performance (structure, technology, tools, and all other relevant supportive resources). Finally, the Attribution Theory maintains that individuals must determine how far they consider themselves to be responsible for events and to what extent they attribute causes to the situation itself, or to external events.

In conclusion, Smith *et al.* (2015:2-3) argue that individual performance also depends on design factors in the environment in which performance takes place, which include cognitive proficiency, learning abilities, health status and language. Thus, the authors indicate that the manner in which employees adapt to changes within a working or personal environment will have an effect on their functionality in respect of performance. Constant changes in the performance management design are therefore necessary to align expected individual performance with changes in the technologies, processes and direction of the institution. This will ensure a positive influence on individual behaviours and the adoption of new methodologies and improvement in tactics (Smith *et al.*, 2015:72-74).

The next section will focus on the supportive tools and techniques to enable more effective individual performance management processes.

2.4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

This section will discuss and analyse different supportive techniques to ensure the more effective management of individual performance outputs.

2.4.1 Management by objectives (MBO)

Culbert (2010:15-18) argues that Management by Objectives (MBO) has allowed managers to set departmental goals, and then to determine what individuals need to accomplish to meet the specific goals: as subordinates report to managers. Hence, the concept of performance management was solely the responsibility of individuals, since they know what was expected from them. This process has forced managers to believe that employees know exactly what, how, and when to implement goals. Therefore, managers do not need to communicate, engage and to provide feedback anymore. The system indicators in respect of targets will keep employees accountable towards their commitment to produce the expected outcomes (Culbert, 2010:16-17). According to Culbert (2010:17-19) and Beer and Ruh (1976:59), a distance was created between managers and employees, which allowed managers to stand back and avoid the negative impact of engagement, monitoring and feedback, thereby shifting accountability onto individuals (their subordinates) only. The system (MBO) held employees accountable for results, rather than engaging employees in the day-to-day activities and the improvement of the expected individual performance outcomes.

However, Morrisey *et al.* (1988:116) argued that Management by Objectives and Results (MOR) was primarily directed at individual managerial efforts, rather than those of the total institution. Although a manager is held responsible for the results of a unit in the institution, there are certain key result areas, such as people development and organisational relationships, which the manager should pay attention to. MOR is also useful as a directive and measurement tool for performance appraisal.

2.4.2 Six Sigma Approach

Moreover, and apart from the above referrals to MBO, Proctor (2012:521-523) indicates that the Six Sigma approach has been hailed as the new Total Quality Management (TQM) at an advanced stage. It can be used on its own or together with other performance improvement techniques, such as TQM and MBO. The focus of using Six Sigma is standardised measurements for identifying unintended or defects in the production outputs.

The Six Sigma approach is a methodology and framework for linking improvement to profitability, thus efficiency and effectiveness, irrespective of the functional area (Paladino, 2007:254-257). The latter ensures that people do the right things right. The Six Sigma technique entails the following steps:

- Define – to identify all relevant problematic issues and to define the individual objectives towards implementation;
- Measure – quantify problems and determine the current performance levels;
- Analyse – identify the reasons for possible problems experienced;
- Improve – get rid of the cause of any problems; and
- Control – integrate solutions into the employee's everyday production activities.

The word 'Six Sigma' originated as a statistical term that measures how far a given activity deviates from perfection. It consists of six standard deviations between and the nearest specification limit (Paladino, 2007:254-257).

In an attempt to minimise individual performance barriers, Paladino (2007:254) has indicated that the Six Sigma approach should form part of a performance management approach to enhance measurement, monitoring and the achievement of institutional objectives. This mechanism ensures the following: it defines, measures, analyses, improves and controls a tracking sequence of achieving or progress towards achieving the required end results, and identifies defects in the process, streamlining and enhancing correct and timely productivity (Paladino, 2007:254-257).

Lastly, the implementation of enhanced production activities should then be tested to determine what positive effects it had on production outcomes, specifically emanating from the corrected defects from the Six Sigma measurements. A manager usually manages these activities assisted by a supervisor, and the whole process will be managed by a senior manager. However, according to Proctor (2012:523), this performance improvement technique did not last long. The collection of various categories of data and the analysis thereof, as well as the training of employees to deal with it, have become too labour-intensive (Proctor, 2012:520-523; Paladino, 2007:254-256).

The total quality management (TQM) concept was later popularised and will be elaborated upon in the next section.

2.4.3 Total Quality Management

Hale and Whitlam (2004:3-4) stated that the development of performance management as a concept emanated from various organisational management themes that were popular in the past, for example, Management by Objectives (MBO) and Total Quality Management (TQM) were such approaches. These approaches attempted to integrate institutional goals with a hierarchy of objectives cascaded through the institution. Too many objectives were set without adequate measurement criteria and tools. Furthermore, TQM focused on continuously reforming institutions into learning institutions, in alignment with changing environments and competitive markets, and in so doing, neglected the emphasis on individual contributions to enhance overall institutional performance. However, many approaches, according to Hale and Whitlam (2000:2-4), have become discredited for various reasons such as:

- The inability to account for specific unique phases and differences in levels of job contents;
- The usage of broad headings, such as leadership, teamwork and team play, without clarifying what they actually mean;
- Inconsistency with the allocation of ratings allocated to individual performance outcomes and their meaning, for example, good, below performance, on standard and so on; and
- Lack of objectivity in measuring behavioural characteristics by direct line managers.

The view of Hale and Whitlam (2000:4-6), Noe *et al.* (2014:235-239), and Kraiger *et al.* (2015:449), is that the complexity in respect of paperwork, form filling, too many objectives set, and the predominantly top-down approach, created the impression that the finalisation of individual performance management documentation became more important than the performance outputs themselves. It lacks the focus on improving individual performance outcomes (Section 3.3).

In the next section, the focus will be on institutional performance, and the management of performance within the context of institutional performance. Performance management will only be effective when it takes place within an appropriate institutional context.

2.5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Walker *et al.* (2010:172-174) argue that, although performance management overlaps with, and may contribute to activities, such as setting institutional goals and strategies, it is important to treat it as conceptually and empirically distinct from other public management functions. Otherwise it would be almost impossible to identify its specific contribution to public service performance. The focus on performance management will differ from the conventional approach. In public institutions the focus has typically been on inputs, or input management, specifically relating to cost-effectiveness, or process management (focusing on rules and procedures), which is typical of conventional approaches.

Performance management can be categorised into three specific categories interconnected conceptually and practically, namely, to determine measurements, to set targets, and to implement actions to activate and influence progress scores on the measurement criteria. Also important is the achievement of milestones towards the set target end results.

However, Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) suggest that performance management systems should incorporate various other HR processes, including HR planning, job design, adequate resources, incentives, retention, career development and termination. Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) argued that effective HR practices and performance management are positively linked to enhancing employee motivation and commitment, hence, the importance to incorporate HR policies, job design, adequate human resources, incentives, career planning and talent management.

In Figure 2.1 below, the importance of the performance management cycle is indicated, which will be unpacked in the following section.

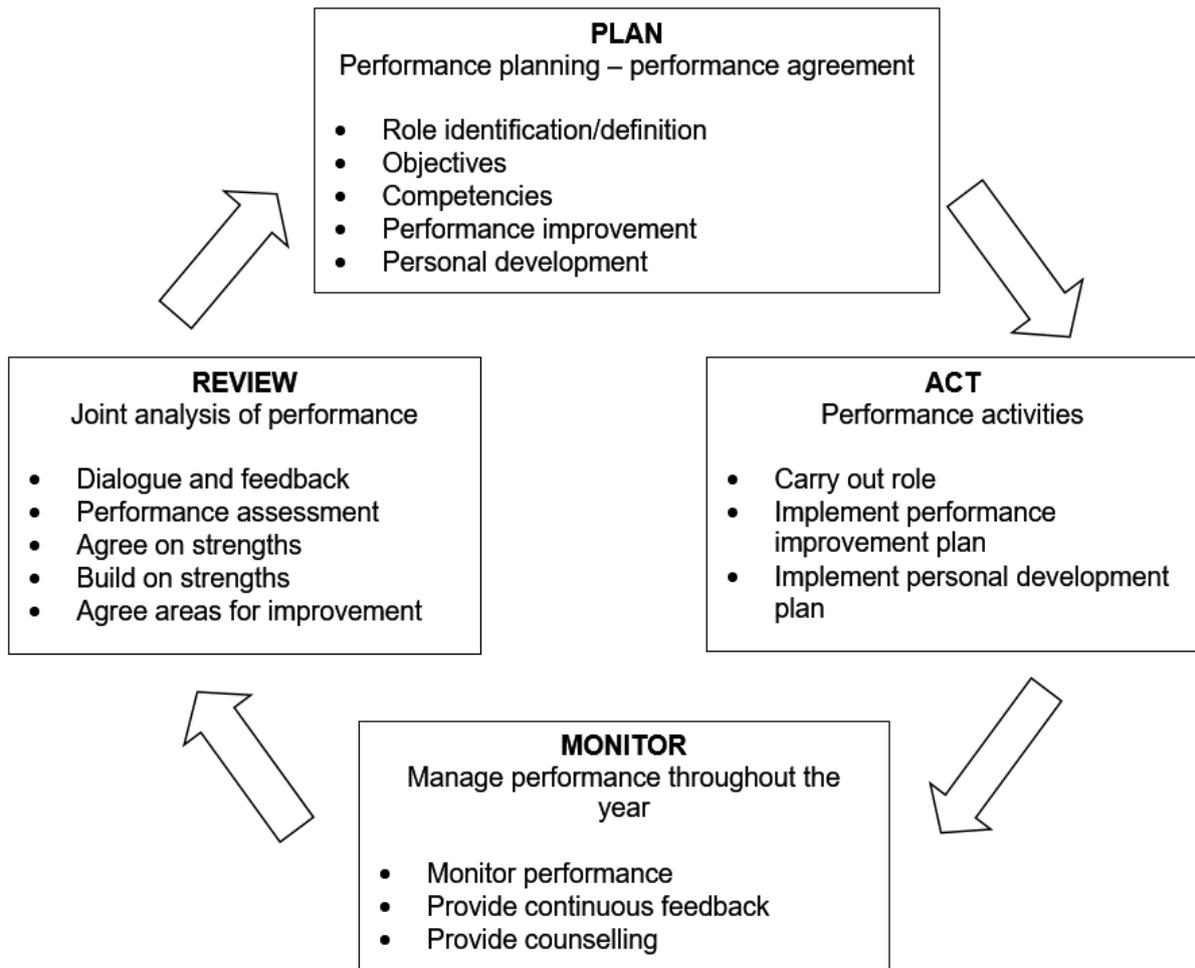


Figure 2.1: The Performance Management Cycle

Source: Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:337

The importance of adhering to the sequence of events, as indicated above in Figure 2.1, will be put in context in the following section.

Moreover, Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) indicate that, although HR policies and procedures play an important supportive platform, knowledgeable managers and their team members must work together to ensure ownership and accountability. Hence, managers must monitor performance on a continuous basis throughout the year and support employees by setting goals, providing feedback, monitoring performance outcomes, and improving the working environment to ensure continuous improvement in performance results (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:340-347).

Therefore, according to Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347), once a person is employed by an institution, an employment contract (relationship) of exchange

comes into being. The employee must provide all his/her energy, knowledge, skills, attitude and abilities in return for remuneration, fringe benefits and rewards. These relationships must be managed in such a way that it ensures a good 'fit' between the institution and its employees. The institution must establish processes, practices, systems, and more specifically, effective performance management practices that can improve and optimise the 'fit' between employees and that which they are expected to deliver (see Figure 2.1).

Additionally, Swanepoel *et al.* (2003:371-372) posit that in large complex institutions, accurate, appropriate and effective performance management is of crucial importance to ensure alignment between employees' tasks and the planned objectives of the employees' job contents. Such a performance system could be defined as a formal and systematic process by means of which the job-relevant strengths and weaknesses of employees are identified, observed, measured, recorded and developed. Its true contribution, however, will only be found in its application to ensure that it serves the attainment of the employee's objectives (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2003:370-372). The authors emphasised the fact that, as such, performance management can be viewed as an ongoing process involving individuals in respect of the planning, reviewing, rewarding and development of employee performance.

Thus, in performance management, individual performance appraisals are acknowledged as an important planning mechanism within an institution's performance execution strategy. Morrissey *et al.* (1988:9-10) and Armstrong (2009:4) endorse the above statement, by indicating that the purpose of planning is not only to produce plans. Its main purpose is to produce results, ensuring the individual objectives will eventually be implemented.

Rummler and Brache (1990:19) refer to the three core levels of performance management (Figure 2.2) which indicate a holistic view of performance management at the organisation level, process level and job performance level. The three levels are interdependent and the first phase flows into the next phase. Without this flow, many attempts to change and improve performance management will fail the institution, since the performer level will be misinformed of the planned strategies for implementation. For example, most training attempts will fail to improve institutional performance by addressing only one level of the job level, and only one dimension of

the job level skills, or knowledge. As a result, no significant long-term impact will involve and training costs will be wasted, and the incumbents will be left frustrated and confused. Even talented and motivated people can improve organisational performance only as much as the institution's performance processes allow.

Moreover, if top management does not manage performance at the institutional level, the end result will be weak performance improvement, and all efforts at other levels will be counterproductive (Rummler & Brache, 1990:33). In combining the three levels of performance, namely, the organisation, process and job performer levels, with the three performance objectives of goals, design and management, managers could in a comprehensive way, manage the improvement of different levels to eventually ensure individual performance improvement (Rummler & Brache, 1990:33-34).

As indicated in Figure 2.2, the three core performance levels form an integrated approach in respect of performance management (Rummler & Brache, 1990:19). This integrated approach could enhance individual performance management outcomes ensuring engagement with employees throughout the year relating to the identification of intended objectives for execution.

Table 2.1 below presents a summary of the three levels of performance in terms of the nine performance variables.

Table 2.1: Three levels of performance: Nine performance variables

	Goals	Design	Management
Organisational level	Organisational goals	Organisational design	Organisational Management
Process level	Process goals	Process design	Process Management
Job/performer level	Job/performer goals	Job design	Job/Performer Management

Source: Rummler and Brache, 1990:19

As presented in Table 2.1 above, Bussin (2017:6-8) informs that there are three levels that should be interrogated to ensure the achievement of individual performance improvement, namely, the organisational, process, and individual levels. These three levels will ensure that: (i) targets which the institution strives are indicated, towards successful implementation, (ii) that the institutional structures will support the achievement of goals and targets and (iii) that adequate resources in respect of the effective management of intended performance outcomes are in place.

However, Walker *et al.* (2010:4) mention that a range of important factors, namely, 1) acknowledging a development culture steeped in public service motivation, 2) learning to concert action through inter- and intra-organisational relationships, and 3) a sound performance management system, are important factors to enable effective performance management. Effective performance management should ensure that the execution of set objectives will be successfully implemented by the individuals accountable therefore (Walker *et al.*, 2010:2-4).

Moreover, there is a growing body of empirical evidence, according to Cokins (2004:22-29), that effective performance management will improve organisational performance. Therefore, the focus should be on continuous support, feedback and collective efforts in setting expected targets towards implementation. However, Walker *et al.* (2010:172) reveal that performance management is always a dynamic target, with various concerns, such as economy and fairness, consistency, relevance to individuals in different working environments, and measurements in respect of certain outputs and objectives.

The intended execution of objectives to manage performance outputs effectively, and viewed from top down, will ensure successful implementation of institutional objectives and enable connectivity between institutional performance and the implementation thereof at operational level. Therefore, individual performance can only be managed effectively through the three integrated process levels, namely, institution level, process level and job performance level (Rummler & Brache, 1990:46-49).

The Rummler and Brache methodology can be seen as the godfather of process improvement, and also, more relevant to this study, the introduction of individual performance management process improvements (Rummler & Brache, 2013:iv). The methodology addresses all three mentioned organisational levels of performance. The latter level, individual performance level, is the focus of this study.

The belief that training alone could enhance performance levels is no longer valid, and it is seen as only one variable that affects individual performance (Rummler & Brache, 2013:4). Rummler and Brache (2013:14) continue that institutional outputs are produced through processes which are performed and managed by individuals doing various tasks. The performance variables that should be managed at the job level must include the appropriate people with the right skills, job responsibilities and set standards, relevant measurements, continuous feedback, incentives, and training. Jobs need to be designed in such a manner that it will contribute to specific institutional goals (Rummler & Brache, 2013:22).

Rummler and Brache (2013:23-25) further argue that job management does not necessarily include organisational level management, despite the fact that it is important to ensure the alignment of organisational goals with job performer level goals. Job performer or individual level challenges entail people management, thus, the human performance system which is composed of inputs, processes, outputs and continuous feedback, all of which need to be monitored towards achieving set targets (Rummler & Brache, 2013:22-23). Enos (2000:134-136) and Hutchinson (2013:2-4) support the above-mentioned statement, indicating that face-to-face engagement and supportive day-to-day activities and methods often appear to be absent in performance management models and practices.

Figure 2.2 below highlights the importance of managing the individual level of people management.

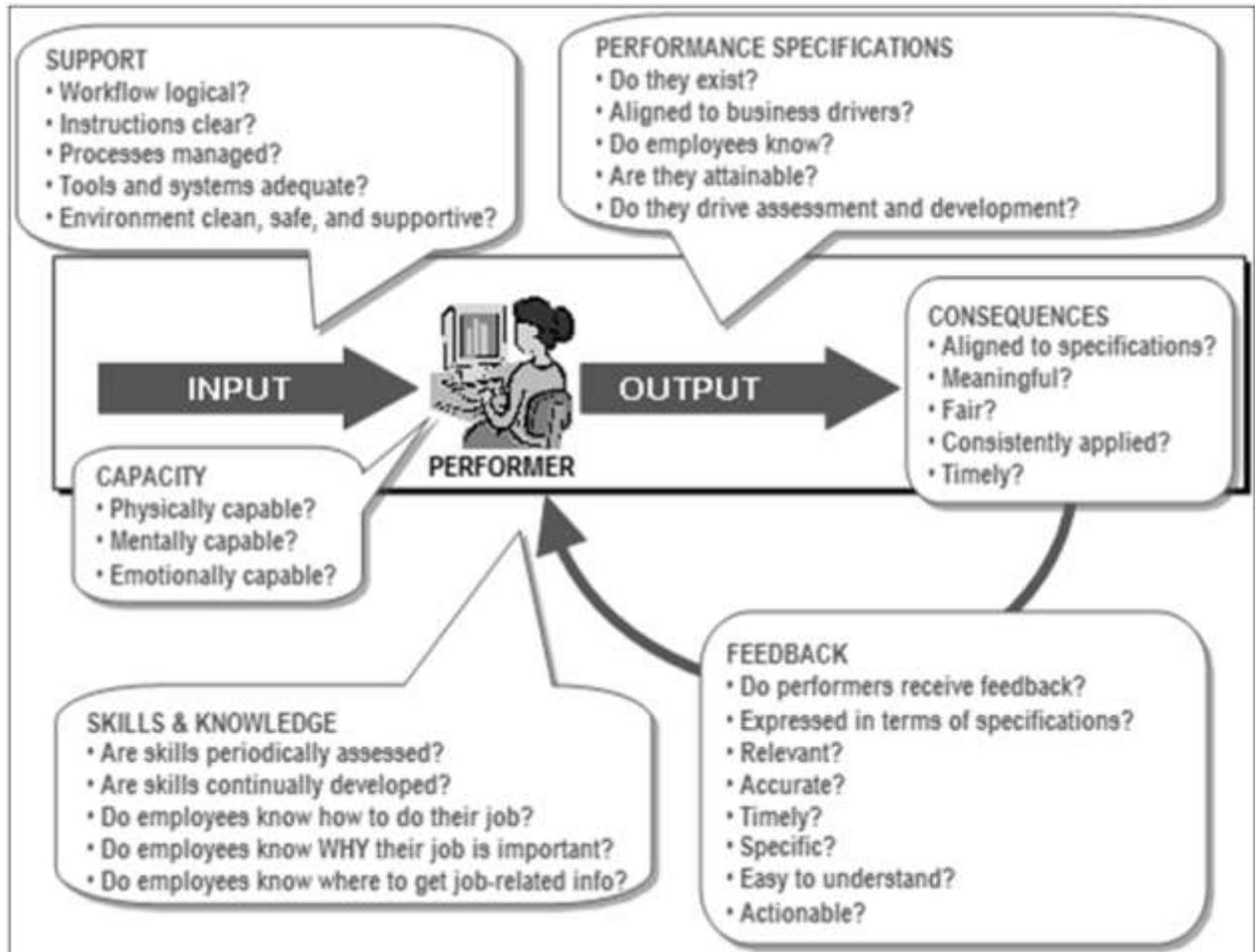


Figure 2.2: Factors affecting performance system

Source: Rummler & Brache, 1990:72

Strategic planning guides the direction in which the organisation seeks to move and concerns the planned allocation of managerial, financial and physical resources over future specified periods of time. However, operational planning focuses on the ways and means by which each of the individual functions may be programmed, so that optimum progress may be made toward the attainment of strategic objectives. In this way, strategic planning is restricted by the practical limitations under which operational planning operates (Barrows & Neely, 2012:25-26; Rummler & Brache, 1990:71-73).

Therefore, the successful implementation of strategies often requires fundamental changes in the behaviour of the existing institution or its operating system. In a well-

conceived operating plan, the operating system to implement a particular strategy is outlined in the form of a sequence of action steps. Each action step specifies the scope of work to be done, the nature of the deliverable when the work has been completed, the resources required, including the key individuals who will carry out the task, the person accountable for meeting the commitment, and the date of completion. The implementation of an action programme is monitored and measured by relating actual progress against the completion of the tasks in the action programme (Judson, 1996:64-66; Noe *et al.*, 2014:237-239; Rummler & Brache, 1990:24; Ehlers & Lazenby, 2009:275-277; Walker *et al.*, 2010:169-174; Morrissey *et al.*, 1988:7-10).

Additionally, Rummler and Brache (1990:140), Armstrong (2009:2-3) and Morrissey *et al.* (1988:9-10) argue that the institutionalisation of performance management requires the alignment of the strategic objectives with that of the operational implementation plans. A cornerstone of performance management is the monitoring and improvement of the job performer's work, which entail the following: To manage the performance of a process, one must manage the performance of the incumbents. To manage employees' contributions to process effectiveness, one must manage the variables of the HR performance system. Performance management practices will systematically improve the specific process level of performance, which serves as the link between strategic objectives and the organisation, and the implementation level.

Effective management of performance enables monitoring, control, and eventually, improved performance management. Without measuring, which is an essential part of performance management, performance management has no basis for effective engagement with employees (Rummler & Brache, 1990:141-143) if the following steps are not taken:

- Appropriate and relevant communication of performance expectations to subordinates;
- Familiarisation with current challenges and operations;
- Timely identification of performance 'gaps' that should be addressed;
- Providing feedback to compare expected performance to actual performance;
- Identification of performance outputs that qualify for incentives; and

- Timeous and appropriate decision-making in providing resources, plans, policies, procedures, schedules and structure to ensure the intended outputs (Rummler & Brache, 1995:141-143).

If the above interventions, namely, performance appraisals, are followed, it will enable employees to identify personal development plans, target setting and improvement areas (Rummler & Brache, 1990:140-143; Belton & Howick, 2002:2-3; Van Zyl *et al.*, 2012:12).

According to Minnaar (2010:36-37), the most recent approaches with regards to performance management focus on a comprehensive performance management model. Once institutions have determined the expected level of performance through a strategic planning process involving all the role-players, they then manage the institutions' system and structures to ensure the desired achievement thereof (Minnaar, 2010:35-37). The strategies formulated by institutions as performance drivers to execute activities should therefore meet and reflect the requirements of internal and external clients' expectations and also of the set policies of the organisation.

Schwartz (1999:1-4) argues that every manager knows that the effective productivity and outputs of employees affect the organisational performance, and that the main responsibility of supervisors is to ensure that employees' day-to-day activities are optimised to the level of their full potential. Therefore an effective performance assessment process helps both the managers and employees to eventually work smarter, instead of harder, towards the achievement of the specific objectives of the institution (Schwartz, 1999:2-4).

Minnaar (2010:3-4) and Noe *et al.* (2014:237) further confirm that the most important challenge for effective performance management is to identify or determine the relevant institutional strategies for implementation. Thus, strategic, operational and implementation strategies are driven by the same inputs, projects, operations and eventually outcomes. This is followed by individual performance management, the creation of accountability, and to drive these processes in concert while involving all the role-players from the start towards achieving the end targets. Thus, it is crucial to eliminate a silo-management approach in respect of performance management (Minnaar, 2010:3-4).

Figure 2.3 below, illustrates the significance of Key Performance indicators in the performance management processes.

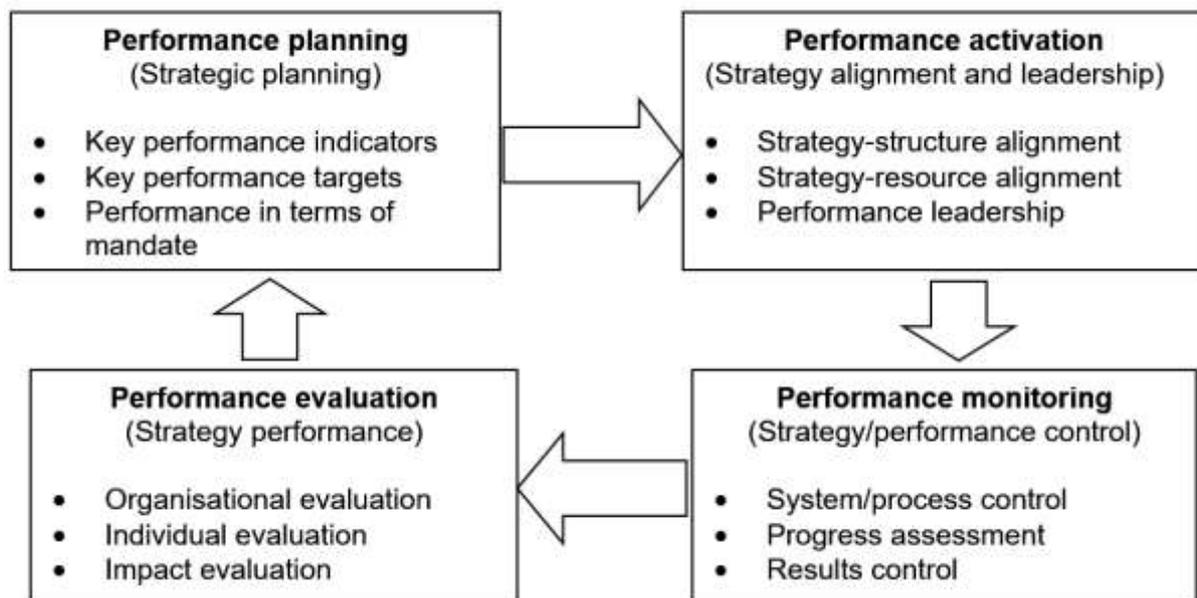


Figure 2.3: The system approach to performance management

Source: Minnaar, 2010:37

In agreement with the diagrammatic summary presented in Figure 2.3 (Minnaar, 2010:3-4), Hope and Guiton (2006:45-46) pronounce that an institution also needs to be able to deliver on that strategy, and to modify what it does when changes occur in the environment, as it learns from its experience. Well-designed performance management systems allow institutions to be methodical about what they do and how they keep on course. High quality service delivery outputs particularly benefit from such planning. A well designed performance management system is often large-scale and relies heavily on different parts of the institution's working in a coordinated and coherent way. Thus, it is essential to ensure the appropriate alignment between organisational strategies and performance management, as they direct the implementation of plans (Hope & Guiton, 2006:45-46).

Institutions usually operate on three core levels (Rummler & Brache, 1990:19; Taylor, 2014:258-260; Axson, 2007:23-24; Noe *et al.*, 2014:8-9), namely, the strategic level, tactical level and operational level. Institutions align their core functions with the environment, with their structures and organisational implementation activities. Strategic objectives become the value drivers (specific focus areas) of the implementation tactics of the institution. It determines the core

skills/competencies required, and core resources needed, as well as systems, and efficient individual performance activities required to execute specific core objectives. Thus, performance management must be part of a comprehensive integrated results-driven process aimed at effective planning related to the organisational performance-level outcomes. This process must ensure the appropriate evaluation to track the progress in achieving the intended execution of plans (Minnaar, 2010:35-39).

The next section discusses the specific measures that could enable the enhancement of a performance management system.

2.6 MEASURES TO ENHANCE A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Hunt (2014:153) indicates that a well-designed performance management system will improve workforce performance tremendously, whereas a badly designed process could create dissatisfaction among employees and result in low productivity. The question therefore is not whether to do performance management, but rather how to do it effectively.

In addition, Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) indicate that the alignment of performance management systems and operational planning could result in improved individual performance outcomes. More than 30 studies carried out in the UK and USA since the early 1990s confirmed that there is correlation between performance management and institutional performance. The more effective the performance management practices, the better the result.

The research undertaken by Hunt (2014:103-105) found that the basic concept of the performance improvement of employees is actually straight forward, in that employees will most probably do what is expected from them, if:

- Employees know exactly what activities must be executed by whom, when and how;
- Believe that they are able to do it; and
- Are motivated and supported in doing it.

Thus, setting direction, constantly giving appropriate feedback, building confidence, and providing acknowledgement will ensure improved individual performance outcomes (Hunt, 2014:105-107).

Paladino (2007:254) promulgated the importance of effective individual performance management by first establishing and implementing a performance management office and officer to monitor the driving of expected individual core performance outcomes. Secondly, continuously improving performance by providing feedback on areas where improvement and support are relevant to ensure that the expected outcomes are met.

Furthermore, Van Zyl *et al.* (2012:12-13) also indicate that, since the performance of every employee contributes to the institutional expected implementation goals, the core focus of managers should be to manage the expected individual performance outcomes. The three elements to ensure effective performance management, according to Van Zyl *et al.* (2012:12), are to:

- define individual performance tasks by indicating specific goals, activities and time frames toward implementation;
- facilitate individual performance in providing supportive resources to enable the expected performance outcomes; and lastly
- motivate and encourage individuals by setting appropriate incentives related to recognition in a fair and timely manner.

Similarly, Noe *et al.* (2014:9-11) also emphasised that a high-performance management system suggests that people and processes work together seamlessly to enable high individual performance outcomes. Maintaining an effective performance management system may include the development of training programmes, recruitment of people with new skillsets, and the establishment of rewards for appropriate behaviours (Noe *et al.*, 2014:5).

In addition, Belton and Howick (2002:2) indicate that the development of better integrated, balanced and operationally-driven performance management frameworks has been accompanied by an increase in the practice of performance measurement. However, the authors are of the view that there are still some issues which require further study if performance management and measurement systems are to become

fully effective. The two most important reasons behind improved individual performance outcomes are: the design and implementation of performance measurement systems, and the analysis and use of the outcomes thereof (information resulting from measurement), for incorporating into the enhancement processes (Belton & Howick, 2002:2-3; Wagner, 2009:125-126).

The sub-sections below present some measures that can be implemented to enhance the successful implementation of performance management activities.

2.6.1 Address implementation obstacles

It is also evident that, despite the successful development of a performance management framework, the implementation phase usually is not a straight forward task (Belton & Howick, 2002:2-4; Noe *et al.*, 2014:237-239). This is mainly due to fear, politics and subversion, although it may also be due to a lack of effective communication and dissemination of results. The fear of individual performance management as a punishment or blaming tool should be eliminated and reverted into a mechanism that is meant to support and provide information that helps the individual to take appropriate action, and that lead to the ultimate goal of improving operations. However, it has been found that some managers do not objectively analyse performance appraisals' outcomes, and often compromise by allocating undeserved percentage ratings in an effort to avoid possible conflict situations (Belton & Howick, 2002:2-3).

The importance of effective performance management criteria is to ensure the implementation of an appropriate performance management system, which will be highlighted in the section to follows.

2.6.2 The criteria for an effective Performance Management System

Noe *et al.* (2014:237-239) indicate that the criteria for effective individual performance management should be linked to the following specific directives to ensure the achievement of the planned outcomes:

- **Fit for strategy:** Identify the specific relevant objectives for implementation by utilising and involving employees, for example, obtain the employees' input if the outcomes involve timely and high-quality service delivery. The performance management approach should define the kinds of behaviour and activities

required to achieve the identified purpose. The performance appraisal approach should then measure the specific indicators relevant to the successful achievement thereof.

- **Validity:** This refers to the extent to which a measurement tool actually measures what it is intended to measure, thus, to utilise only the relevant measurement criteria and eliminate unnecessary aspects of performance, specifically those that will not ensure alignment with original set strategies.
- **Reliability:** The consistent measurement of expected end results that the intended performance targets must deliver. Rater reliability refers to the result of measurement outcomes which were done by more than one evaluator. Test-retest reliability refers to the consistency of results over time.
- **Acceptability:** Determine whether or not a measure is valid and reliable, and it needs to be acceptable to the people using it.
- **Specific feedback:** A performance measure should enable specific appropriate feedback to employees, related to what is expected from them and how they can achieve those expectations.

However, apart from guiding policy and the directives as mentioned above, Michel (2013:274-276) emphasises the rethinking of performance management by making a few additional comments relevant to an effective performance management, for example:

- Without specific strategies and goals, implementation is aimless, employees could do the wrong things right;
- Individuals should execute planned job contents, thus doing the right things right, and only then will performance improvement facilitation add value; and
- The core focus of performance management is to ensure employees are the drivers of their job contents which are the directives toward successful implementation.

Therefore, according to Michel (2013:275), individual performance improvement needs to drive specific identified targets and tasks that are to be done by employees.

In addition to above, important principles of managing performance are discussed in the next section.

2.6.3 Principles of an effective performance management system

Pulakos (2009:182) stated that there are key principles in respect of a performance management system that will ensure a good fit for the institution:

- The performance management system should be designed in such a manner that it aligns the individual's performance objectives with the expected job contents' end results;
- The performance management system should enable the effective monitoring and assessing of progress in respect of the successful implementation of expected individual outputs; and
- Involvement and establishment of accountability among all role-players at all levels which will create commitment and trust, and enable the effective facilitation of the performance management system.

Armstrong and Taylor (2014:335), in support of the statements of Pulakos (2009:182), advocate an additional four important requirements embedded within performance management:

- The focus should be on the management of employees' expected performance outcomes and not necessarily the supportive technology system, although systems may support employees to enhance their performance outcomes;
- Managers are accountable to ensure effective individual performance outcomes;
- Performance management is guided by institutional purpose; and
- Performance management forms part of the institutional performance culture. (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:335)

Also important is the identification by Baldwin, Bommer and Rubin (2013:240-242) of two major components in relation to individual performance management, namely, task performance and contextual performance:

- **Task performance** focuses on the core substantive activities of the incumbent. Managers are therefore concerned with how effective results/outcomes are achieved and efficient resources supported to ensure the execution of planned results.

- **Contextual performance** is also referred to as 'institutional citizenship behaviour' which, in addition to the individual's core tasks, contributes to the institution's effectiveness. This task usually does not form part of the substantive job contents. The individual's behaviour is less obvious in respect of these special contextual tasks, since it involves more indirect contributions, which do not necessarily form part of the core KPAs (key process areas) of an individual's job contents. Typical examples are the involvement of individuals in respect of talent management, health and safety, and other committees which contribute to the effectiveness of an institution.

Therefore, some individuals do more than is expected from them, in relation to their specific job contents and performance agreement. Managers should be alerted to this additional contribution which could only happen within an ongoing engagement and feedback process (Baldwin *et al.*, 2013:240-243).

From the above, it is evident that the aim is to enhance and optimise the capacity of human resources to meet and exceed the employees' own abilities and potential towards a higher quality performance outcome.

Moreover, and also an important view, which could be seen as an integral part and outflow of the above-mentioned statement, Pershing (2006:8-11) writes that effective individual performance management relates to a disciplined and systematic enquiry. The emphasis is on asking specific questions and analysing answers to enable a well-organised plan that ensures the appropriate support, and allows employees to implement the expected performance activities. Pershing's (2006:13-15) argument seems to be that individual performance improvement interventions should address the total sum of the identified problem or challenge in respect of performance management improvement. It should be appropriate interventions that have to integrate support within the employees' action plans toward intended execution. A systematic and holistic approach to the improvement of the present and future work-related tasks of employees will eventually enhance their performance outcomes (Pershing, 2012:14-16).

Conversely, Moynihan (2008:191-193) emphasises the rethinking of performance management approaches by stating the following:

- Performance supportive technologies, such as electronic templates, in relation to appraisals, procedures and guidelines, in itself do not constitute individual performance management;
- Performance feedback is not always objective;
- The major challenge of individual performance management is fostering relevant feedback to enhance performance improvement;
- Performance management tends to focus on only individuals;
- Performance management is less important than other institutional factors. Therefore the capacity and time frames of other operational matters force managers and employees to neglect the importance and continuous engagement necessary to improve individual performance outcomes;
- Performance management depends on other units and institutional operations to succeed. For instance, interdependencies with the HR Department should render support and adequate evaluation to ensure the submission of performance appraisals correctly and timely. The administrative deadlines over-rule effective engagement in respect of performance management of individuals.

2.6.4 Performance appraisals in performance management

Mosley (2013:1) explains that the traditional performance appraisal, for example, in the form of the administrative finalisation of allocation of scores to individuals, is outdated and the implementation thereof is not relevant anymore. Performance appraisals once or twice a year lack continuous engagement among employees and management which is not appropriate for the development of employees.

In theory, an effective performance management process rewards good performance and stimulates underperforming employees to improve, creating a cycle of ever-improving work performance based on objective criteria. Too often the performance management process creates discouragement, mistrust, bewilderment and low morale, as well as neglecting to address critical enhancements in the way people work. While technology, management techniques and institutional models have undergone major changes over the past years, the performance review processes, such as appraisals, have remained the same (Mosley, 2013:2; Entekin & Scott-Ladd, 2014:173-175).

Therefore, 'Crowdsourcing' or 360° evaluation information inputs of all kinds are, according to Mosley (2013:3), an important new innovation that should form part of the 'new approach', ensuring a more relevant and effective performance management model. When bringing together this innovation, the result is 'social recognition', a systematic set of practices, in which way people continuously consider and recognise an employee's performance (Mosley, 2013:4-5). Thus, it aggregates and highlights the opinions and thoughts of many individuals to arrive at a richer, more accurate observation of performance than one person alone could provide.

The flaws inherent in the traditional review can be fixed, and according to Mosley (2013:35-36), it is not necessary to scrap the system entirely. The traditional performance system's generic performance appraisals, allocating ratings for administrative purposes, still fulfils significant functions within the performance management process at large. Performance systems leave an audit trail documenting the institution's interactions with employees but do not really inspire employee engagement. Furthermore, it also does not provide objective criteria to enable trustworthy guidance towards more effective performance outputs.

In addition, based on research done by Mosley (2013:37), generic performance review systems are created for the convenience of administration, and neglects the objectivity of data. There are also no generic job contents, feedback or working conditions across the institution. Consequently, according to the author, a single performance system cannot render an accurate picture (Mosley, 2013:37). Barrows and Neely (2012:26) endorsed the above statement by emphasising the fact that performance information itself cannot ensure improved individual performance. It must be accompanied by timely decisions and implementation actions.

Kenny (2005:6) also endorsed the views of Mosley (2013:1) that the crowdsourcing approach could enhance more objective evaluations in respect of individual performance management. Managers and employees insist on looking at their performance from the inside out, rather than from the outside in. The focus should be from the outside in, having outsiders/other employees and clients evaluating your performance (Kenny, 2005:6).

These principles are endorsed by Mosley (2013:35-41), confirming the importance of crowdsourcing which involves feedback within the working environment to determine effective value-added performance outputs in alignment with the expected individual performance outcomes. Firstly, in doing so, employees will be able to focus on specific implementation activities aimed towards high quality outcomes, therefore doing the right things right (Kenny, 2005:5-7).

Secondly, to assess and evaluate performance management reviews that take into account opinions of managers, internal customers and others who witness the day-to-day work outputs (360° inputs) could maintain appropriate and relevant strengths of the traditional performance management model (Mosley, 2013:35-41; Kenny, 2005:5-7; Paladino, 2007:254-257; Noe *et al.*, 2014:8-9).

However, the negative side of 360° performance feedback, based on research done by Armstrong (2009:117-120), indicated that it does not change employee behaviour or performance enhancement. To the contrary, in some instances, negative perceptions were recorded. Specifically the lack of evidence, knowledge based on feedback from managers and subordinates, as well as pertaining to resources needed to support high performance, caused concerns regarding the objectivity of 360° degree inputs (Armstrong, 2009:117). For example, Armstrong (2009:271-274) reported, based on an e-reward survey conducted at Bath University in 2005, that line managers do not seem to execute performance management practices very well. Due to a lack of the required skills, managers were not committed to performance management, and managers were reluctant to perform management reviews.

London (2003:4-6) cautions that managers in various institutions seldom take the time to give feedback. Although they are aware of the importance thereof, managers tend to ignore the importance of feedback in respect of performance outcomes of employees. They rather let poor performance slide than to address it immediately. Subordinates complain that performance outcomes, good or bad, are very seldom communicated to them during performance appraisals, mostly to avoid conflict and to institute corrective actions (London, 2003:4-6). London (2003:6-7) argues that meaningful feedback is at the core of performance management. Feedback guides, motivates and enforces effective behaviour and reduces ineffective tasks or performance outcomes. According to London (2013:7-8), the method or way in which

feedback occurs should be through coaching rather than instructions. Feedback should also be given in a fair, constructive and professional manner focused on behaviours, outcomes and not personalities, and should address the standard of performance outcomes and support employees to meet the expected levels of performance.

London (2013:85-89) and Mosley (2013:4-5, 37-39) also refer to the multisource feedback method, thus, 360° degree inputs from subordinates, supervisors as well as internal and external clients. This feedback mechanism is usually an appropriate feedback process for managers and supervisors in respect of their own development plans, ensuring a more effective management approach to employee performance. As stated in previous paragraphs, the feedback also contributes to individual development by providing relevant information for learning and personal growth, to enable management to monitor, coach, support and direct employees towards more effective and improved performance levels. However, the negative outcomes of 360° degree feedback is that managers could feel uncomfortable discussing their colleagues' views of their performance levels with the subordinates concerned, especially if based on perceptions from others. Such methods usually prompt defensiveness, since there is a lack of hard data and evidence (London, 2013:85-92; Mosley, 2013:4-5, 37-39). In addition, London (2013:117) suggests that institutions should monitor and track the successes of the 360° degree feedback process over time to determine the influence thereof on employees' performance improvement levels.

Unfortunately, London (2013:155-163) agrees with other esteemed scholars that managers do not prioritise their subordinates' performance improvement. Managers rather focus on their own performance improvement activities and the effects thereof. Performance improvement will not just happen automatically, and managers need to cultivate performance management by demonstrating a commitment and willingness to ensure a high quality relationship with their employees by coaching, directing, setting targets and leading by example (London, 2013:163).

A never-ending concern of managers is determining which core activities of performance should be measured, and what the role of performance appraisal in the individual's performance improvement process is. According to Wagner (2009:120), one could be of the opinion that the role of performance measurement is an

appropriate part and supportive platform within the performance management processes to improve employee performance outcomes. Thus, ensuring that only the expected or planned activities for successful implementation are monitored.

Wagner (2009:125) further indicates that it therefore seems appropriate to define performance appraisal as a chain of activities which align employees' performance outputs with that of the intended end results. Individual performance improvement could be seen as all activities of the performance management process (gathering, analysing, interpreting and the communication thereof) (Wagner, 2009:125-126).

Culbert (2010:3-6) presents a different view, by arguing that it is most probably time to get rid of the traditional performance review, which employees experience as being subjective, and which they dislike. However, there is no evidence to eliminate performance reviews. According to Culbert (2010:4-7), HR professionals and managers alike, are utilising performance reviews for the wrong reasons, focusing on getting control and power over employees, which is inappropriate for the purposes of managing performance. An alternative use of performance reviews should rather focus on the development of employees, taking into account their needs in respect of self-development and to improve their skills.

Culbert (2010:6-7) further explains that managers usually build their self-confidence by using the institutional structure, and more specifically, performance appraisals to intimidate their subordinates into silent compliance. By allocating a good rating in respect of employees' performance outcomes, managers seem to believe that employees will overlook all the unacceptable behaviours of their line managers. Moreover, according to Culbert (2010:6-8), managers fail to understand that the most important principle they have at their disposal to ensure quality employee performances, is to build a trusting relationship with the employees working with them.

Performance reviews should be an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall performance of the institution. It must be a process of give-and-take between individuals and their line-managers that all have the same objective, namely, supporting the individual to grow and to ensure results that are expected from employees in alignment with operational objectives. Thus, according to Culbert (2010:36-37), with performance reviews everybody is on the same team,

supporting one another to produce high quality results. However, and more importantly, Culbert (2010:36-37) emphasises that objectivity and value-added engagement, feedback, and performance conversations, should be available at all times. The emphasis is on engagement and open-minded discussions related to performance improvement, not instructions. Ultimately, according to Culbert (2010:146-149), Rummler and Brache (1990:25) and Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-13), the challenge when conducting effective performance reviews, is to create a working environment in which all role-players feel safe enough to engage in honest open-minded discussions that will ultimately improve the institution's results, and to provide a supportive environment for employees to improve themselves. Thus, to self-reflect and to grow within a working environment that contributes to the expected delivery of high quality performance outcomes (Culbert, 2010:145-147). Moreover, according to Culbert (2010:146), performance reviews once or twice a year should be replaced with performance previews, which entails an ongoing communication process between managers and subordinates, working as a team asking the question; what can be done to get the results that the institution seeks to achieve? Therefore, according to the above author, performance previews could focus on achieving results, whereas performance reviews could focus on finding errors and blaming individuals.

Culbert (2010:151-170) compares and contrasts performance reviews and performance previews as follows:

- Performance reviews focus on finding errors/faults and blaming individuals, whereas performance previews focus on the achievement of outcomes;
- Performance reviews focus on specific measures and any deviation thereof is seen as weaknesses, whereas performance previews celebrate differences based on different thinking/personalities, thus allowing employees to accomplish objectives through their unique ways. If a subordinate gets results, who cares about his/her messy desk?;
- Performance reviews allow managers to compare employees with one another, whereas performance previews treat employees as individuals;

- Performance reviews enforce competition among managers and subordinates, whereas performance previews create an environment of team efforts, where employees learn from one another;
- Performance reviews are a fixed or scheduled event, whereas performance previews happen whenever and wherever, thus a continuous process of engagement and appropriate feedback; and
- Performance reviews empower HR practitioners or give them too much power, whereas performance previews enforce HR officials into a supporting role.

The importance of target setting, as part of an effective preview process to improve individual performance outcomes, is the focus of the next section.

2.6.5 Supportive environment to achieve agreed performance targets

Hrebiniak (2006:12-31) stated that performance management can improve service delivery through the establishment of a shared understanding of the delivery plans. Hence, to indicate what is to be achieved, how it is to be achieved and by what standards. Performance management is therefore aimed at achieving the desired focused results and overall successes for both individual workers and the institution. It involves providing visionary leadership to the institution, planning for performance, reviewing, measuring results and rewarding intended performance. Also focusing on ongoing feedback about results, and instituting development plans to improve results that are lacking.

Target setting should be the core focus of individuals, in alignment with their job contents to ensure they will take necessary steps towards achieving individual ambitions and planned performance outcomes (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:8-9).

Therefore, Hale and Whitlam (1998:9-11) indicate that the key factor for serving in an institutional environment is to ensure that employees understand what is expected from them. This allows employees to have a say in determining the set targets for implementation as part of their job contents of planned performance outcomes.

Hale and Whitlam (1998:10-11) argue that employees should explore alternative ways/methods to ensure continuous self-development and training. Some of these new methods are workbooks, computer-based training, videos, social media and workshops. The classroom, as only environment for learning, has changed to more

hands-on or experiential learning. More importantly, according to Hale and Whitlam (1998:11), target setting, if applied timely and professionally, will also ensure opportunities to directly align the specific skills, knowledge and abilities to the applicable job contents of individuals, and support them in meeting the planned performance outcomes.

More importantly, Hale and Whitlam (1998:12-13) advocate the crucial role of managers in creating a healthy working environment, and continuous engagement with subordinates in implementing target setting. Certain barriers towards the effective introduction and implementation of such an exercise should be taken into account which could include *inter alia*:

- The constant changes in the working environment;
- The many day-to-day challenges and interruptions;
- Not being too technical in introducing new target settings with employees; and
- Not creating an 'us and you' top down approach, but engaging with employees in supportive and honest discussions (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:14-15).

The above-mentioned aspects are also endorsed by Mizrahi (2017:15-16), who maintains that performance management systems are managerial tools through which managers must determine and set goals, as well as being performance indicators. These goals and performance indicators or target setting, should be followed by the expected performance standards, to enable employees to track their progress towards the achievement of the intended performance.

Hale and Whitlam (1998:78-82) propose certain ground rules for effective target setting and implementation thereof:

- Managers and subordinates should focus on the planned outputs;
- There must be a balance between quantitative and developmental target setting;
- Time should be invested to ensure there will be agreed-upon criteria for control and assessment; and
- A commitment towards management support and guidance for the execution of set targets must be agreed upon by managers and subordinates, thus continuous engagement and relevant feedback.

Moreover, Hale and Whitlam (1998:84-85) purport that the importance of setting targets is to enable individuals to meet or to exceed set targets. All too often the focus is on not meeting or achieving set targets, and this creates fear amongst individuals responsible for the implementation thereof. The process of managing the agreed-upon targets should be achievable with adequate support and guidance from managers. As individuals differ, factors such as (i) experience, (ii) existing knowledge, (iii) fear, (iv) confidence, (v) training, and (vi) education should be taken into account.

Hale and Whitlam (1998:84-85) further indicate that an appropriate approach for managers to enable individuals to perform on standard, is by creating a healthy working environment. This will be achieved only if managers demonstrate that the set targets call for a two-way commitment, thus by the commitment of the employee to achieve the planned performance outcomes, and the manager to support and engage on a continuous basis, thereby enabling the employee to perform. Continual engagement and feedback on progress will also provide the opportunities to change or modify the original set targets for implementation, sometimes due to circumstances beyond the individual's control (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:84-85; Minnaar, 2010:3-4; Michel, 2013:150-153; Barrows & Nelly, 2012:25-27).

In doing so, according to Hale and Whitlam (1998:86), managers should take the following into account:

- Coaching and mentoring, for the development of individual skills;
- Allowing additional time for prioritising the implementation of set targets;
- Continuous feedback on progress;
- Exposing individuals to relevant training courses and conferences;
- Providing adequate funds (budget); and
- Where necessary, delegating responsibility and authority.

Moreover, Steyn (2008:140) is of the opinion that, while planning is essential for employees to perform, it is not sufficient on its own to ensure work implementation successes. Effective planning may fail if not supplemented by effective performance management control. Mosley (2013:205) and Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) also support the importance of performance management planning and the

coordination of progress towards the implementation process. Monitoring, evaluation and corrective action form an integrated part of the process implementation principles. While process and planning determine the strategic institutional objectives and also ensure that the specific objectives will be driven toward successful implementation, control entails the following steps (Steyn, 2008:140-142):

- Evaluate the current situational facts and processes and anticipate future deviations from plans;
- Compare actual facts, and anticipate future situation, with the planned operational plans of the institution; and
- Implement appropriate actions to align the employee with the planned operational goals towards implementation.

Operational implementation involves anticipating and predicting the quality of individual performance deliverables, measuring progress, expenditures, and identifying undesirable results. Management control could also assist to ensure that individual targets are met in the implementation plans (Steyn, 2008:140-142).

Michel (2013:109-113) similarly argues that, to achieve effective control in respect of individual performance improvement, managers need to monitor employees closely and create an appropriate working environment to unleash their full potential. A degree of autonomy in taking decisions and how to best implement goals must also form part of the motivational strategy to ensure better individual performance. Employees need to be exposed to the ideal working environment to be able to take the opportunity to perform (Michel, 2013:113).

The next section elaborates on the skills required by managers to effectively monitor and coordinate the successful implementation of improved individual performance.

2.7 SKILLS REQUIREMENT FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Apart from appropriate monitoring mechanisms and infrastructure, the performance management processes have also been criticised due to the lack of competent managers. Managers often lack skills in doing performance reviews, monitoring performance outcomes and identifying adequate employee training and development interventions (Crawley *et al.*, 2013:172).

Table 2.2 indicates the required knowledge levels and skills, appropriate for managers accountable for effective performance management.

Table 2.2: Performance appraisal elements linked to the knowledge and skills required by line managers

	Performance appraisal element	Knowledge and skills required by line managers when conducting appraisals
1	Planning of individual goals and objectives	Awareness of institutional business plans and departmental goals and the ability to translate these into individual goals, in collaboration with the individuals.
2	Discussion of the plan with the employee	Communication and negotiation skills in order to obtain agreement with or to renegotiate the details of the plan.
3	Objective monitoring and measurement of achievement of objectives	Awareness and use of a range of performance measurement techniques and instruments. Ability to conduct a fair evaluation in relation to agreed standards and the performance of other similar staff.
4	Appraisal interview of review meeting	Ability to explain the results of the evaluation and the performance instruments used, ability to listen to views, counsel or reprimand, and motivate staff. (Coaching and mentoring skills are essential for all line managers with appraisal responsibilities).
5	Training needs discussion and plans for the future	Knowledge of training opportunities available that are relevant to the employee. Sensitivity in recommending appropriate training and development activities in line with realistic predictions of their value in terms of the employee's career opportunities within the organisation and budget restrictions.
6	Recommendation of reward and promotion. Career planning discussions	Knowledge of reward and promotion possibilities. Realistic and honest discussion of opportunities, given wider organisational constraints. Career planning discussion.
7	Documentation completion for HR department	Ability to complete a written/electronic document accurately to provide a fair assessment and record for the HR department. Concise but persuasive writing style to enable senior management to make decisions on pay and promotion.
8	Negotiation of employee ranking and reward	Communication skills to sell the relative ability of staff, to promote their interests in ranking and reward discussions (where forced ranking is used across departmental boundaries). Ability to persuade others.

Source: Crawley *et al.*, 2013:173

Table 2.2 presents an overview of the expected abilities, knowledge and skills required by managers to manage performance reviews more effectively. The role of line managers is of crucial importance since they *inter alia* evaluate past performance, consider the employees' potential, and recommend awards. More importantly, is the alignment of performance expectations of the institution with that of employees (Crawley *et al.*, 2013:173).

The core value of performance management is about how effective and efficient performance is managed in the institution. It should be a normal day-to-day process and responsibility of managers within the institution (Armstrong, 2009:278). Armstrong further emphasises the importance of managers being coaches or mentors, who should not judge but lead by example, ensuring commitment to performance management practices (as discussed in section .4.1).

Michel (2013:77) also confirms that effective leadership creates an environment where employees utilise their own motivation to perform. Performance culture starts from the top, therefore, a key aspect is to lead by example (Michel, 2013:77).

2.7.1 Managerial leadership: roles and skills

According to Behn (2014:216-218), institutions need to employ managers who competently exhibit a results-management mind-set, and an analytical-learning-mode, with adequate leadership experience. Such management should be purpose-driven to ensure continuous efforts towards enabling employees to enhance their performance outcomes, with the expected operational performance level. No institution will make any improvements in performance until the leadership of the institution takes accountability and commits itself to performance improvement (Behn, 2014:301-302).

Hutchinson (2013:80-83) endorses the view of Behn (2014:216-218), indicating that an engaging manager is the core of successful individual performance management. Managers therefore act as the interface between the organisation's planned execution objectives and its workforce. An analytical-learning mode should form an integrated part of the manager's approach, since it drives the core challenge, which is individual performance improvement. Thus, it should be a continuous effort of managers to improve employee performance outcomes, through engagement with subordinates to identify the development of required individual skills. Furthermore,

managers should ensure the delivery of training, coaching and mentoring through continuous feedback and the monitoring of the results and value-added outcomes of such interventions, towards improved job content implementation. Knowledge sharing towards continuous improvement and to exceed planned and expected levels of individual performance, should form part of day-to-day accountabilities of line-managers (Hutchinson, 2013:80-82)(Sections, 3.4.1 and 3.4.3).

According to Michel (2013:272), implementation occurs through the initiatives and projects embedded within employee capabilities to deliver the expected outputs. Ultimately, the focus should be on executing specific job contents, and not perfect performance measures.

Risher's (2014:325) study found that supervisors are the key to ensure the effective utilisation of an institution's human assets. More importantly, managers contribute to the successes or failure of institutions. Risher (2014:326) also confirmed that managers should optimise the capabilities of employees in order to bring out the best in them. However, merely monitoring production outputs is not seen as effective performance management anymore. Based on the empirical research done by Risher (2014:325-328) there is a clear indication that, although managers constantly attend training sessions, the major reason for employees leaving institutions is because of ineffective managers. This research outcome also correlates with that of Rummler and Brache (2013:4), who indicate that training alone will not necessarily enhance institutional performance. Risher (2014:326) supported the above conclusions that were also evident from surveys done by Google, which was published in *Harvard Business Review* and also in the *New York Times*. The outcomes highlight the fact that the best managers often have teams that perform better, are retained longer and are happier in the working environment. This specific statement is supported by quite a number of authors, for example, Hutchinson (2013:2-4); Behn (2014:170); Hale and Whitlam (2000:1-5) and Enos (2000:1-4). From the analysis done by Risher (2014:325-328), eight behaviour factors were identified that could support managers to improve individual performance outcomes (Risher, 2014:325-328):

- Managers should be excellent coaches.

- Managers should involve, empower and create ownership and must not micro-manage.
- Engagement and interest by managers is essential, thus showing concern for employees' successes and personal well-being.
- Managers should be productive, results-oriented, and lead by example.
- Managers must be good communicators, by listening and giving constant and relevant feedback on progress related to expected performance outcomes.
- Managers should assist in career development.
- Managers should have a clear vision and strategy for their employees and should support them in achieving their end-goals.
- Managers must have key technical and human relations skills to ensure appropriate approaches to advise and lead subordinates.

Mone and London (2010:xvii) further suggest, based on their own research, what managers can do to ensure the successful drive towards employee engagement:

- Create a platform of trust and involvement with employees;
- Ensure employees are given challenging and meaningful tasks, which endorse the importance thereof to the institution;
- Inform employees of development opportunities towards career growth;
- Provide ongoing feedback and coaching to ensure that planned implementation objectives are on track;
- Recognise achievement and link incentives to it;
- Facilitate fair and effective performance appraisals, involving employees and their inputs towards target setting; and
- Monitor the working climate and behavioural patterns of employees to prevent burnout.

According to Mone and London (2010:xvii), individual performance management and the improvement thereof leads to ongoing processes that require constant engagement and feedback. Armstrong (2015:207-208) supports the view of Mone and London (2010:xvii) that effective management towards improved individual performance outcomes requires ongoing engagement by managers. Managers

should rather focus on the development of individual engagement towards better performance. Armstrong (2015:208-209) proposes that engagement activities should meet the criteria in respect of the following questions: (i) What entails individual engagement and why is engagement essential? (ii) Which enablers support engagement?, and (iii) How can performance management support these enablers? Armstrong (2015:208-209) further explains that:

- Continuous engagement by managers with their subordinates ensures that employees perform better by creating a supportive working environment. Thus, employees feel more appreciated by their employer, and this enforces commitment and loyalty;
- The enablers of individual performance management that result in employees being high quality performers are: the empowerment/involvement of employees in decision making processes and target setting; treating employees as individuals with unique personal requirements, and coach and create development opportunities; individuals' inputs (participation) by managers and subordinates pertaining to performance management approaches and enforcing value-added outcomes in alignment with planned job contents;
- Managers should use performance management to enable an understanding among employees of that which is expected from them through continuous engagement, and to identify the supportive platforms required by employees to perform better, thereby giving more meaning to their work. Eventually, to provide a sense of purpose in achieving the execution of planned objectives (Armstrong, 2015:210-211).

Enos (2000:2-4) indicates that the feedback, support and engagement of managers must be relevant to the monitoring of planned outcomes. The most common reason for institutions failing in enhancing performance outcomes relates to ineffective leadership and a lack of dedicated involvement and not ensuring that employees learn to work more effectively together. Enos (2000:16-19) maintains that, although the basic function of managers is to provide direction, in many instances they only provide marching orders, and sometimes even that is unclear. Managers, according to Enos (2000:17-19), are of the opinion that sharing the vision and objectives of the institution with employees will confuse and distract them from doing their work.

Managers' vision must be clear enough to encourage commitment towards performance improvement, which is measurable, achievable and aligned with specific goals of the operational plans (Enos, 2000:16-17).

It is clear that a committed and engaged manager is the crucial link to success in engaging the workforce (Hutchinson, 2013:73-74). Hutchinson (2013:73-74) also emphasises that it is crucial for managers to show leadership behaviour which motivates and directs employees towards the expected performance outcomes, and which ultimately, requires complex management skills.

The growing body of evidence from literature relating to concerns in respect of the effectiveness of line managers to enhance employees' performance are endorsed by various authors (Hutchinson, 2013:37-75; Enos, 2000:16-17; Thorpe and Holloway, 2008:101-102; Nankervis *et al.*, 2013:9-11; Swanepoel *et al.*, 2003:371-372; Rummler & Brache, 2013:14; Noe *et al.*, 2014:237-239; Mizrahi, 2017:159). Management trends, such as increased competitiveness and focus on performance in institutions, the focus on individual performance, decentralised accountability and decision making, and team work performance could be attributed to the shift in responsibility to managers to drive the enhancement of individual performance.

The research undertaken by Hutchinson (2013:264-265), which was sponsored by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)(2001) in London, on performance management, has, according to Hutchinson (2013:264-265), proved the positive employees' feedback from twelve organisations in respect of driving performance management through employees, to eventually improve individual performance outcomes. More important though, is Hutchinson's (2013:265) conclusion that almost half of employees were demotivated by performance management practices, based on the lack of engagement of line managers and its subjectivity. This could be an indication of a weak relation between theory and practice, design and execution (Hutchinson, 2013:265).

Armstrong (2015:315-317), however, disagrees with Hutchinson with regards to the relationship between theory and practice in performance management. Armstrong (2015:308-315) indicates that, based on the outcomes of an e-reward survey conducted in 2014, namely, the Survey of Performance Management, Stockport, e-rewards, in respect of performance management practices, the following emerged:

- Managers (55%) do not have the skills necessary to conduct effective performance management;
- Managers (49%) avoid giving sufficient and valid criticism when doing performance evaluations;
- Managers (38%) are reluctant to facilitate performance evaluations; and
- Managers (24%) are not committed to engaging with performance management processes.

Johnson and Breckon (2007:16-21) feel that managers usually perceive their responsibilities to be planning, organising, coordinating and control. Yet, managers do not know how these responsibilities are translated into day-to-day activities. The authors further indicate that a manager's biggest challenge is to schedule and attend numerous meetings. Thus neglecting the core task of reflecting about issues that they should prioritise in order to enable them to take timely and appropriate decisions.

Moreover and extremely important, Johnson and Breckon (2007:19-21) explain that many individuals acting at the middle-management level of an institution manage without having managerial skills. They simply execute day-to-day management tasks. Johnson and Breckon (2007:19-21) further state that managers simply do what they are authorised to do, and in some instances must seek permission to do so, or to do anything different. Apparently planned change and leading by example are for only a few managers and they are called leaders who continuously engage and support managers (Johnson & Breckon, 2007:19).

Barrows and Neely (2012:230-332) also argue that management is about coping with change. In addition, doing better is no longer a recipe for success. Change is a given, and is a necessity in today's competitive environments; more change always requires more leadership.

In conclusion, Barrows and Neely (2012:240) emphasise the importance of striking a balance between leadership and management. Management is all about doing things right, whereas leadership is about doing the right things.

2.8 SUMMARY

Chapter 2 reviewed the available literature on the various approaches for managing continually improved individual performance. Individuals are ultimately the end-result performers.

The chapter discussed the origin of performance management, and the place of performance management in institutions, and within the context of Public Administration. Lastly, the lack of managerial and leadership skills requirements to enable effective performance management, were also indicated.

Pertinent themes were identified relating to the improvement of individual performance management from the literature review. There is a growing body of empirical evidence that effective employee performance management will improve institutional performance. However, performance management is always dynamic that has to contend with various concerns, such as fairness and consistency and taking into account individuals' different working environments, which could have an influence on their performance outcomes. However, utilising various data sources can contribute significantly to making performance measurement easier and fairer, since the elements of subjectivity are reduced. Employee performance management is focused on the internal challenges and to enhance the working environment within the institution. Thus, to enable employees to change their thinking toward desirable performance outcomes.

Performance management processes have received much criticism, due to the lack of competent and committed managers accountable for performance reviews. Appropriate employee and supervision training, and continuous development should form an integrated intervention, in order to ensure appropriate management of individual performance. More specifically, to lead by example, to provide coaching and continuous feedback to their subordinates, thus, engagement to enable self-development and growth. In addition, reward management could influence the intended performance outcomes by recognising and rewarding high-quality performance outcomes and providing additional incentives to further enhance it. The aim of performance management is to involve all information systems and supportive mechanisms used by managers to set strategy, to ask appropriate questions to take

timely correct decisions, develop plans, monitor execution, forecast planned performance, and report results.

One-size-fits-all performance management practices, which are created for the convenience of administrative practices, and not for fairness and quality objective data, will fail the institution. An ideal performance management system will combine the best components of a traditional system with social recognition. It will continuously improve organisational behaviour and will ensure objective driven end results. This will empower managers to manage better, while encouraging self-management at all levels. An effective performance management system is constantly hampered by barriers, such as a lack of proper HR capacity, inadequate skills and commitment of managers, and the negative perceptions related to performance management actions.

Performance appraisals are seen as an event that should take place twice a year and is a sufficient exercise to conduct effective performance management. Thus, appraisals to be used for the development of employees are neglected. The focus is only on an administrative exercise to allocate ratings and to submit the results in time to the HR practitioners for capturing purposes, in other words, to ensure internal compliance.

Furthermore, performance management should be concerned with the effective management of results and appropriate ways and means towards the achievement of these results through the individuals responsible for it. Lastly, it was urged that, due to the lack of performance management as subject/model within the curriculum at Unisa, it should be given priority to be included as part of the curriculum/offers, within the College of Economic and Management Sciences.

Chapter 3 focuses on the supportive attributes to enable the possible improvement of individual performance outcomes. The improvement of individual performance could lead to the improvement of institutional performance. Hence, it presents important principles which could change individual behaviours lead to improved activities.

CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of Chapter 2 was solely on the literature review and the place of performance management in the subject of Public Management and Administration. This chapter discusses and analyses the purpose, components and attributes of performance management systems. Effective performance management involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels, relationships and continuous engagement between themselves and their supervisors. If correctly managed, the performance of individuals would inevitably improve, which in turn may lead to enhanced institutional performance.

3.2 THE PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is now commonly distinguished as one of various important management processes, alongside others such as financial and HR planning, and institutional strategic planning. Thus, based on recent trends, performance management, as a separate system, should eventually link an institution's objectives and goals with that of the employee's efforts, to ensure high quality performance outcomes (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2006:1-4). Therefore, an effective performance management system integrates planned activities and measurements to improve the performance of individuals and teams. The focus is therefore on human resources.

The end purpose is to enhance the achievement of objectives by individuals which will contribute to improved performance outcomes (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2006:5). It can be assumed that if a good performer is put within a bad system, the system in itself will not perform on behalf of employees. Improved performance is the result of the effective performance management of individuals. Although system development could support individuals to do more tasks effectively, systems in itself cannot improve individual skills (Rummler & Brache, 1990:6).

Noe *et al.* (2014:237-239); Taylor (2014: 1) and Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:22-26) emphasise the fact that the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems, and institutional structure and culture could result in high-performance institutions. Armstrong (2018:19-20) agrees and adds that the overall objective of performance management is to develop and improve performance of individuals and teams and therefore institutions.

Cokins (2004:1) reminds us that the focus of performance management is the process of managing the execution of specific individual job contents. The challenge is to ensure that specific goals are implemented successfully. Therefore, performance management aims to integrate planned job contents towards target setting, and to ensure that intended implementation activities become realities. Only then, can employee activities be successfully directed towards implementation.

However, it is clear that performance management is more than HR practices, systems, software and metrics. Barrows and Neely (2013:145-146) concur that only when employees' job contents are aligned with that of the operational plans will the achievement of intended implementation strategies be possible. It includes all processes to enable effective individual performance management in alignment with core operational strategies. The main thrust of performance management is to ensure better decisions, which will enable and be evident in the achievement of end outputs. Performance management must align tasks with implementation objectives to achieve pre-determined outcomes (Cokins, 2004:2-4).

Also important is the requirement that individual performance outputs should entail or be in alignment with operational planned task outcomes. Effective performance management seeks to achieve the following objectives in terms of strategic, administrative and developmental purposes (Noe *et al.*, 2014:235-239; Hutchinson, 2013:2-4; Rummler & Brache, 2013:22-23; Armstrong, 2018:19-21):

- **Strategic purpose:** Effective performance management will support and ensure that employees achieve intended performance outcomes by aligning employee behaviours with the expectations of job contents. It measures and monitors progress to enable optimal outputs. It also enables the line managers of an institution to take corrective action, such as providing for training and incentives, and managing discipline.

- **Administrative purpose:** The purpose of performance management is to enable timely and adequate communication for day-to-day decisions, directives and guidelines on how to execute operational activities. Therefore, all relevant information in respect of human resource matters, from recruiting to appointment and career development, should be contributing factors to enable the expected individual performance outcomes, which should be in alignment with specific job contents.
- **Developmental purpose:** Finally, performance management has a developmental purpose to ensure the management and development of the required skills and knowledge in order to optimise the performance levels which are expected from employees and which contribute to the successful implementation of tasks (Noe *et al.*, 2014:235-239). More important, Armstrong (2018:21-22) stresses that managing performance is all about coaching, guiding, appraising, motivating and rewarding employees to support and unleash their potential and to ultimately, improve institutional performance.

Cokins (2004:22-23) argues that it is evident from the literature that managers are accountable for enhancing institutional performance outcomes. The more effective managers are, the more effective institutions will be, however, not all managers are managing effectively. Employees can only implement tasks successfully if they understand the what, why, when, who and how of activities to be executed. Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-14) endorse the fact that performance management should be a continuous process of ensuring that the 'what' and the 'how' are known to employees, in order to ensure the implementation of the correct activities (Section 3.5.1).

The significance of performance management is to involve people, create ownership, communicate, measure, support, guide and reward achievement. It is important to connect to specific goals and activities, within certain time frames to allow supportive intervention and support to ensure improved individual performance outcomes (Cokins, 2004:22-23). Cokins (2004:22-23) continues that it is also clear that performance management is not only a theory, but it is a pragmatic instrument to make sense of what matters. Thus, more specifically, it is a way to ask better and more relevant questions, in respect of institutional objectives towards implementation. The results of performance management are not endless meetings,

but rather a focus on implementation practices and opportunities to improve employee performance. Rummler and Brache (2013:14, 23-25) agree by indicating that the achievement of intended institutional objectives, are produced through the processes that are performed and managed at the job level. This job level must include appropriate people with the right skills, and by ensuring continuous engagement and support in the improvement of individual performance outputs. Therefore, it can be said that performance management has become a core process and focus of the modern institution (Cokins, 2004:26-29).

The next section focuses on the importance of the alignment of the expected individual performance outputs with institutional objectives.

3.2.1 Aligning employee performance with expected performance outcomes

To enhance individual performance, the process of managing the employee's performance must be an ongoing process. Performance management is a continuous process of identifying, measuring and developing the performance of individuals and teams, while aligning the actual performance outcomes with the planned objectives to be implemented. Policies and procedures guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. The continuous engagement and alignment facilitation, by informed and knowledgeable managers, is an important function (Smither & London, 2009:5-7).

Smither and London (2009:36-38) further argue that alignment and performance management are the extent to which expected performance outcomes are integrated with the job contents of employees. This will ensure a consistent view and enable individuals to execute the expected performance outcomes.

Research conducted by Michel (2013:150-153) revealed that there are five important ways in which managers can interact with employees to direct their thinking, decisions and actions purposefully, and to reinforce an awareness in relation to performance commitment. Michel's (2013:150-152) study, which is also in alignment with that of Cokins (2004:22-33) and Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-14), indicated the following approaches to interaction:

- Strategy conversation, indicating 'why' the institution is working towards a specific direction;

- Risk dialogue, indicating ‘how’ employees can contribute, and which risks exist;
- Sense-making, indicating ‘what’ the strategies mean in respect of implementation actions;
- Contribution dialogue, indicating ‘what’ to do next, and what activities employees need to execute in the alignment with the set objectives; and
- Performance conversation, asking whether everyone is on track.

According to Mosley (2013:218) and Rao (2016:19), engagement from top management is crucial for any initiative. Specifically in terms of their efforts to lead employees effectively, line management introduce, analyse, ensure incentives and monitor the planned objectives and implementation processes. Mosley (2013:218) is of the opinion that, if you do not know what you are working towards before you begin, how will you know when you have achieved what you are supposed to achieve (Mosley, 2013:218).

However, an important factor that should be taken into account, according to Barry (1994:6), is that individual performance outputs should never include a specific recognition or achievement as an end. If recognition or achievement has been the ultimate objective of the strategic plan, quality burnout will occur, since employees will only be focusing on quantitative outputs, thus chasing productivity statistics. Furthermore, managers need to develop specific operational objectives and relevant activities that will integrate the expected performance outcomes of employees (Barry, 1994:6). During the target-setting phase, the long-term objectives of the operational implementation phases should be established. This process will ensure that employees will focus on the intended activities to achieve performance outcomes.

3.2.2 Enhancing behaviour and productivity outcomes

According to Broadbent and Laughlin (2006:6) and Bussin (2017:17), the current understanding of the term performance management is that it is perceived as a concept that usually refers to HR management systems. These authors indicate that it should rather be linked to employee behaviour and productivity outputs, thus: (i) the planning of specific implementation objectives; (ii) continually monitoring the individual performance activities towards planned end results; (iii) training and

development intervention emanating from performance evaluations. The above will ensure relevant support to employees, to enable them to perform according to their job content expectations (Broadbent & Laughlin, 2006:6).

Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) suggest that performance management systems incorporate various HR processes, including HR planning, job design, adequate resources, incentives, retention, career development and termination. Hence, according to these authors, HR practices and performance management are positively linked to enhanced employee motivation and commitment.

3.2.3 Identifying self-development / training needs

Kaufman *et al.* (1997:7-9) and Noe *et al.* (2014:235-239) advocate that the core principle relating to individual performance improvement, as part of the performance management process, is individual competence within the scope of job contents, job design, improvement plans, implementation activities, and evaluation and control. Kaufman *et al.* (1997:9). This author do not consider training aspects, if not relevant to the job contents and set goals towards implementations, to be critical aspects in individual performance improvement. They maintain that the focus should be on the development of the individuals' skills and capabilities by identifying required relevant enablers, to ensure that knowledgeable individuals execute set targets timely and correctly.

Therefore, important factors, as part of an effective performance management process are: 1) on-the-job training and coaching, 2) knowledge of procedures related to performance management processes, job contents and the guidelines to improve the execution of set tasks. Unnecessarily generic development which has no influence on the specific job execution activities should be avoided, since it is not supportive to the specific expected execution of tasks. Hence, training and individual development, whether vocational or academic programmes, should enhance the knowledge of the individual, within his/her specific post and job contents. Training that will not contribute to the successful implementation of specific job contents should be avoided.

Furthermore, clear objectives, targets and activities should be the drivers or performance indicators towards achieving improved individual performance outcomes. Kaufman *et al.* (1997:96-98) further explain that the end results to be

accomplished are usually the core focus of managers, whereas the focus should rather be on the means. The techniques, procedures, methods and resources which are utilised to obtain ends should be the focus.

The next section presents a discussion of the identification of weaknesses within performance management systems.

3.3 WEAKNESSES OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Based on a survey that was done by Kraiger *et al.* (2015:440-443) among HR professionals, it was revealed that 45% of all respondents indicated that annual performance appraisals, or so-called performance management facilitation, were not objective evaluations of performance and were also of poor quality. Ratings and true performance were not in relation with one another. According to Kraiger *et al.* (2015:440) ratings were constantly higher than the actual individual performance. The authors are of the opinion that their research and findings have raised conceptual questions about the nature of true performance, due to rater errors. The authors reflect on whether performance management and evaluations simply point to the average level of performance over a certain period of time, and whether additional mechanisms and information could be included to enhance objectivity. The purpose of performance management should be to enhance individual development, and therefore average ratings or assessments will be an ineffective exercise (Kraiger *et al.*, 2015:448).

Kraiger *et al.* (2015:449-452) propose a continuous performance feedback approach which entails quantitative and qualitative information regarding an individual's performance. In an attempt to identify the most appropriate approach in respect of performance management in an institution, Kraiger *et al.* (2015:449-451) suggested the use of performance appraisals for individual development and for administration purposes as an integrated approach. This approach also correlates with the research outcomes of Noe *et al.* (2014:235-239). Thus, the focus on only administrative compliance should not be the core aim.

Roa (2016:236-237) and Culbert (2010:36-37) indicate that appraisals used for developmental purposes could more likely enhance individual performance development, since the focus is on motivating employees to change their behaviours

by identifying their strengths and weaknesses. However, appraisals for administrative purposes are typically used for promotions and remuneration increases. Kraiger *et al.* (2015:449) found that following a development appraisal, participants performed better in specific activities, compared to an administrative appraisal that only focused on results. Kraiger *et al.* (2015:449) indicate that a development appraisal system is more supportive than an administrative appraisal system, since the former appraisal system assists individuals more in relation to the identification of the skills that are required to perform better. Furthermore, the focus is more on effective feedback information regarding methods to improve the individual self and to ensure better performance.

Belton and Howick (2002:4), Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) and Mizrahi (2017:164-165) consider that performance management remains a complex and challenging task. These authors indicate that current performance management methods are not adequate to effectively address the current challenges within managing performance. As such, Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) provide some common weaknesses that exist in performance management systems, namely:

- Performance management systems are not in alignment with continual changes in the institutional working environment. Most institutions undergo significant changes in a matter of months. Therefore a static state in respect of a performance management system is simply unrealistic.
- It usually takes three to four years for a new performance management system to be implemented and to reach maturity. In the meantime, technology and institutional strategies for implementation could have changed drastically.
- A more pertinent weakness of today's performance management system is its complexity. It entails complex steps and sub-steps in combination with complex strategies for implementation. Moreover, it consists of additional complex processes to facilitate effective performance management during the monitoring of the implementation phases.
- Senior leaders cannot expect to enable managers to effectively facilitate performance management processes with a performance management system that takes three times longer to develop than the strategy it is intended to support.

Therefore, Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) are of the view that within a turbulent environment where change occurs rapidly and sometimes invisibly, a more simplified solution, namely, standardised procedures and the use of technology to manage performance, has a higher likelihood of succeeding. The performance management system should be quickly understood by managers in order to be managed successfully. This will enable more effective and understandable communication and eventually proper implementation of relevant activities towards a more effective execution of intended implementation tasks.

Eventually, effective performance management involves people, their behaviour, commitment and relationships with their line managers. If correctly managed, the performance of employees will improve through the introduction of well-designed performance appraisals that support the development of employees. These attributes and components of performance management are discussed in the next section.

3.4 THE COMPONENTS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Within a constantly changing working environment, it is a given that processes and enablers should be amended and enhanced to keep abreast of new technologies and methods. This section describes the processes and enablers that form part of performance management. The Process Model illustrated in Figure 3.1 below, represents an appropriate way of improving performance in a turbulent environment.

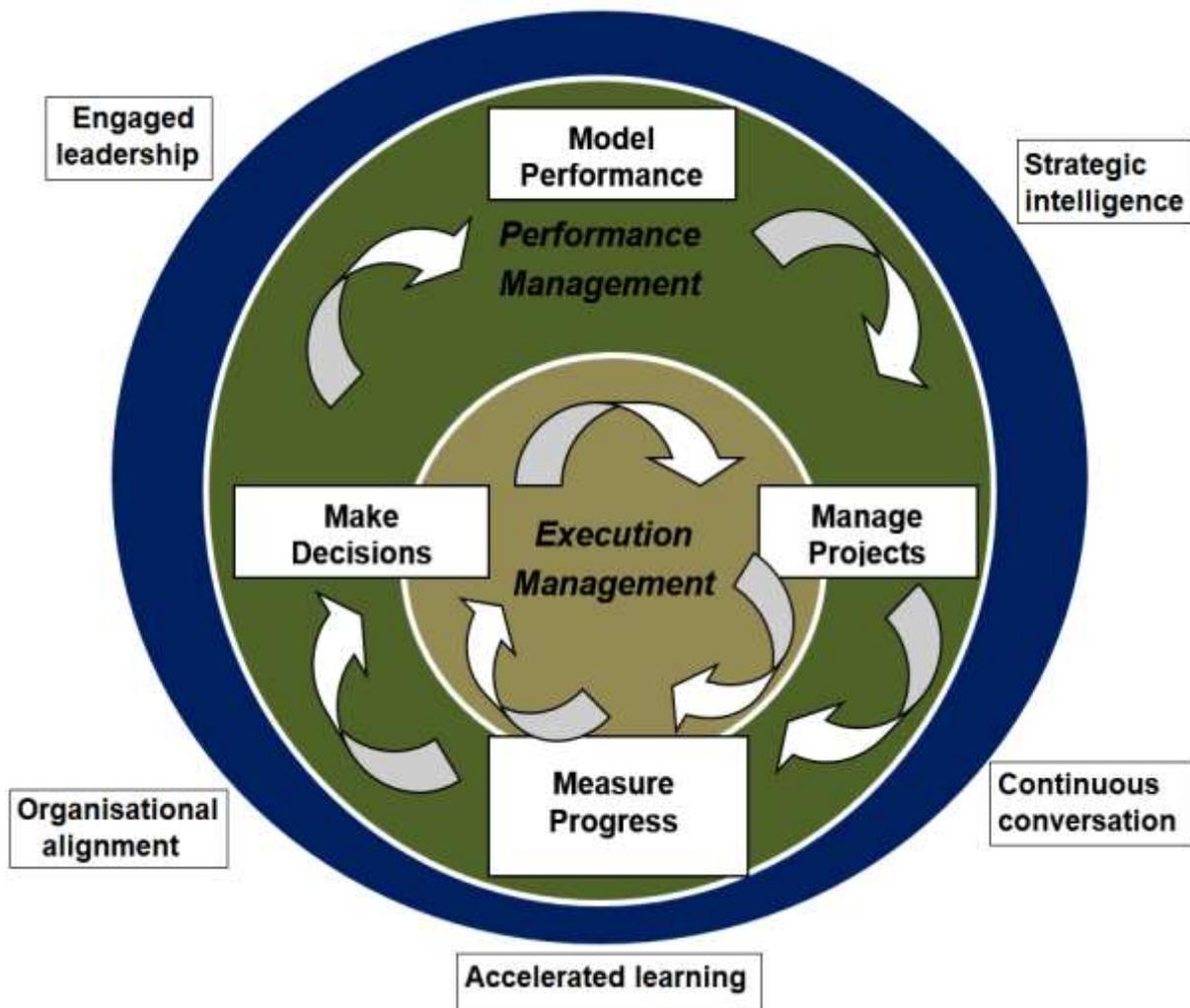


Figure 3.1: Process Model

Source: Barrows & Neely, 2012:31

The Process Model of Barrows and Neely (2012:31) as illustrated in Figure 3.1 is discussed below.

3.4.1 Processes and enablers

Barrows and Neely (2012:25-28) proposed a performance management approach which includes all the enablers, dependencies and monitoring mechanisms as seen in Figure 3.1.

The proposed performance management approach comprises two important cycles and one model enabler (Barrows & Neely, 2012:25-28):

1. The performance management cycle relates to effectiveness, which determines the institutions' core objectives, and prioritises implementation frames, which

usually falls between six months to two years. Hence, these objectives are, or should be, in alignment with institutional planned performance outcomes, therefore the 'what' which should be achieved (Barrows & Neely, 2012:27).

2. The execution management cycle relates to efficiency and enables the management of core objectives to successful implementation. The 'how' and 'when', are the core drivers of planned institutional performance management.
3. The above two cycles will enable managers not only to analyse, but also to communicate important goals, and how to achieve them. The cycles represent a repeating series of management performance activities, and if completed, will drive and monitor individual performance.
4. Model enablers, entail the following four important elements, namely:
 - i) model performance;
 - ii) manage projects;
 - iii) measure progress; and
 - iv) enforcing the making of better decisions (Barrows & Neely, 2012:27).

After the core model enablers have been identified and established, managers should then assess and improve institutional capabilities in respect of each individual enabler (see definitions in following paragraphs).

These four elements presented below, form the overarching core of the performance management process (Barrows & Neely, 2012:32-36):

- Model performance, which indicates the critical performance objectives to be achieved, and the tactics to achieve these objectives within the overall performance management process. The model performance is a plan or visual representation of what the institution wants to achieve.
- Once the performance levels are identified, managers should ensure support to individuals to enable the successful execution of activities on an ongoing basis. Set targets and objectives must be managed as projects. The improvement in critical areas, the 'how', which could improve individual performance, namely, reskilling, engagement and enabling a conducive working environment.
- Progress towards the successful implementation of expected individual performance must then be measured on a continuous basis and supportive

enablers. Training, timely decisions, engagement, coaching and appropriate incentives must be identified to enable the implementation of the desired performance outcomes.

- Effective timely decision-making is of crucial importance to determine continuity of high quality individual performance outcomes, or to revise or change current progress, or to make adjustments by resetting the objectives, in order to eventually meet planned individual performance implementation. (See Figure 3.1) (Barrows & Neely, 2012:32-36)

These findings correlate with the research outcomes of Cokins (2004:22-23), Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-14) and Michel (2013:150) (see Section 3.2.1 in this regard).

The model proposed by Barrows and Neely (2012:32-36) allows institutions to enhance individual performance, more specifically within a constantly changing environment. Individual performance improvement will be ensured through the timely provision of clear job descriptions, relevant measurements, and decisions that will support employees to successfully implement intended objectives.

Individual performance management, according to Barrows and Neely (2012:23-26), is concerned with ensuring that the employee's job contents are aligned with that of the operational implementation plans. The model enablers (see paragraphs to follow) indicate the strategic plans and core objectives for implementation, through individuals who will be managed by utilising these enablers. Armstrong (2018:8-9) agrees, and adds that performance management is a continuous process of identifying, measuring and developing the performance of individuals, also ensuring the alignment of job contents with the objectives of the institution.

The enablers will ensure a supportive structure to enable performance monitoring and improvement. These enablers, which are the how, who and when, are: strategic intelligence, continuous conversation, accelerated learning, institutional alignment and engaged leadership (see Figure 3.1) (Barrows & Neely, 2012:145-159):

These enablers can be described as follows:

- Strategic intelligence refers to a context where managers are able to make meaningful decisions, emanating from the analysis and conclusions made from top management's strategies regarding performance expectations. Armstrong

(2018:174) endorses this statement by arguing that engagement could be drastically enhanced when employees understand what is expected from them and what their activities entail, which could lead to a clear sense of purpose in the execution of tasks which they believe to be worthwhile.

- Continuous conversation refers to a context where managers and employees are well informed at all levels of the institution within an agenda-free context. Without open communication channels, the ability to know what is expected from employees will derail all efforts towards high-performance outcomes. Thus, a listening and questioning approach should be applied for the purpose of understanding to influence employees. This approach could lead to adapting to the thinking of top executives relating to the execution of operational tasks and activities needed. More important, continuous conversations and dialogue to facilitate a culture of trust and positive relations among employees and their supervisors, can contribute to effective individual performance (Barrows & Neely, 2012:187).
- Accelerated learning refers to a situation where managers speedily evaluate what is working and what is not, enforcing new thinking and strategies to enhance expected individual performance outcomes that lead to improved individual and team performance. Based on research done by Barrows and Neely (2012:187), institutions that have learned more quickly than their competitors and integrated the outcomes of what was learned into individual execution activities, performed better.
- Institutional alignment is an important enabler since it keeps all employees connected to the mission and core strategies of the institution. It enables the individuals to do the right things at the right time. However, according to Barrows and Neely (2012:206) and Armstrong (2018:44), managers know what alignment is, but do not know how to implement it. It is important to facilitate and monitor, as well as to measure, the expected performance tasks of individuals as an integrated part of the same set of expected operational priorities towards implementation. Therefore, each individual should know what their specific contribution will be to support the intended operational implementation plan.
- Engaged leadership is an enabler that serves to support and change the thinking of individuals, as well as their behaviours, to enforce the desirable levels of

performance. Barrows and Neely (2012:232-336) indicate that managers are accountable to set operational and implementation direction within the context of individual performance. They must model the behaviours required to inspire individuals to achieve planned objectives.

Hence, Barrows and Nelly (2012:15–28) emphasise the supportive enablers and interdependencies between phases with regards to the individual performance management processes (also see Section 3.4.1).

However, Armstrong (2009:2-3) writes that the improvement of employees' performance will not necessarily result in the improvement of the institution's performance, if employees' efforts are not connected with planned operational implementation activities. The challenge is to manage performance with the focus on institutional as well as the employee's core intentions, thus, to connect goals with desirable execution. Therefore, the alignment between individual activities and the objectives of the institution is an important prerequisite (Armstrong, 2009:3). Furthermore, Armstrong (2018:172-173) argues that additional important enablers, focusing on engagement are: support, coaching feedback, development and task variety. Also important, Armstrong (2018:172-174) identified an additional four key enablers that could ensure effective engagement, as: (i) strong leadership providing directives about the institution's objectives; (ii) engaging managers, who develop and coach employees; (iii) involvement of individuals in goal setting; and (iv) integrity in the day-to-day behaviours of managers (Armstrong, 2018:172-173).

It is evident that effective performance management entails a few important requirements, specifically, a sound relationship between managers and subordinates. Performance management ultimately involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels and continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers.

The critical linkage or difference between performance management and performance appraisals is discussed in the next section.

3.4.2 Performance management versus performance appraisals

Armstrong (2009:4) highlights that performance management differs from performance appraisals which are judgements on progress, since performance

management's core focus should be on individual objectives. It is a continuous process and covers results and input competencies. Therefore, it may not be linked to ratings, it is tailor made, it involves all employees, and it is owned by line managers (Armstrong, 2009:27). The author continues by writing that performance appraisals are an important part of performance management and usually occur twice a year. Performance management is a continuous engagement process ensuring managers and employees, identify relevant support, towards improved individual performance outcomes (Section 2.4.4).

Morrisey *et al.* (1988:9-10) endorse the view of Armstrong (2009:4) by stating that the purpose of planning is not only to produce plans. Its main purpose is to produce results, thereby ensuring that individual objectives will eventually be implemented successfully by creating effective and efficient alignment levels with operational plans. The primary purpose of the operational plan is to identify short-term results and actions to ensure employees will focus their energy to execute the right activities towards the expected outcomes (Morrisey *et al.*, 1988:7-10).

In addition, Morrisey *et al.* (1988:10) and Armstrong (2009:4, 27) further indicate that operational performance management closes the loop on the total planning process. It provides management with ongoing mechanisms for executing and monitoring the implementation and results of individual performance management outcomes (Morrisey *et al.*, 1988:7-10). The authors continue by stating that performance management is concerned primarily with planned execution and ensuring that planning is a continuous dynamic process within an institution. Another important ingredient in the process is the active involvement and commitment of employees within the institution. As those people who need to make the institution more successful become better informed and more actively involved in various planning steps, their commitment to achieving results will become increasingly substantial.

Hale and Whitley (2000:1-5) and Enos (2000:143) maintain that when concentrating only on hard measures, thus statistics in respect of production outputs, a lack of focus on the 'how' to achieve planned individual tasks is created. Usually the focus is on the 'what' to achieve, and not the 'how'. Furthermore, underperformance is often not addressed, since managers are unable to describe good performance in behavioural terms. The implementation of performance management must be supported by management in order to be successful. Managers must be committed

and should be encouraged to develop their own capacity to monitor and support employees during the implementation process, as individual efforts are misdirected and employees often focus on the wrong implementation tactics and activities (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:1-5). These statements are also supported by Barrows and Neely (2012:32-36), as indicated in Section 3.4.1.

Therefore, Hale and Whitlam (2000:2-5) indicate that performance measurement is not necessarily performance management. According to Behn (2014:143), managers usually discuss performance management when all they are really discussing is performance measurement. The measurement of performance, according to Behn (2014:143), is not to manage performance, and measurements should be regarded as an integral part of a performance management process. Performance management entails more than collecting statistics or data and analysing the publication of data. Although the improvement of individual performance management is dependent on some cohort of data, such as productivity, statistics, time frames and patterns, which form part of performance appraisals, it does not really contribute to the enhancement of individual performance.

Without the support and engagement of line managers who enable high performance outcomes in individuals during the facilitation of performance management appraisals, as embedded part of performance management, no specific improved results will be produced (Behn, 2014:143-144). Employees will ignore data, specifically if they do not understand it. Moreover, individuals usually do not know how to improve their performance based on data, specifically when data indicates poor performance. Managers need to communicate the context of the data relevant to the expected individual performance outcomes. This should form part of performance management meetings and ongoing engagement to ensure clarity in respect of expected performance outcomes (Behn, 2014:170).

In addition, Belton and Howick (2002:4) indicate that effective individual performance management and measuring is a complex and difficult task. If performance management is to lead to enduring continuous individual performance improvement, then the different phases of the performance management processes, namely, design, implementation, analysis and use, must be successfully completed and should form a continuous loop. This process should be interactive and not a linear

sequence of steps, thus involving all the role-players in the improvement planning phases (Belton & Howick, 2002:3 - 5).

According to Farrell and Schlesinger (2013:76-77), effective employee performance planning equals effective performance outcomes and continuous improvement processes. Various scholars, such as Cokins (2004:1, 22-23), London (2013:155-163), Swiatczak *et al.* (2015:376-374), Morrisey *et al.* (1988:10), Hale and Whitlam (2000:1-5), Enos (2000:134-136) and Armstrong (2009:2-3) also agree that employees can only implement tasks successfully, if they understand the what, why, when, who and how, of activities to be executed. Performance improvement does not just happen, it requires effective and efficient planning, directives, commitment and engagement by managers who will eventually ensure the successful implementation of the intended goals. These processes engage supervisors and employees from the start in terms of the planning, goal setting, understanding their roles and tasks allocated for implementation, feedback and development reviews and time frames.

Line-managers and supervisors should receive regular performance reviews to ensure compliance with specific job contents and activities, thus to enable employees to stay on track towards successfully meeting the desirable and planned implementation actions. Thus, improving individual knowledge levels at all institutional levels could enhance individual performance outcomes, morale and staff motivation (Farrell & Schlesinger, 2013:76-77) (Section 2.3).

Hutchinson (2013:2-4) similarly proposed that individual performance management should be an integrated process focusing on managers and employees to plan and set expectations, evaluate and review outcomes, agree on improvement plans and sometimes reward performance. However, based on research discussed in Chapter 2, Hutchinson (2013:4) confirms that there are still unanswered questions relating to the influence of HR policies and procedures on the management of employee performance. As such, policies and procedures guide employees to execute tasks within certain rules and time frames, and not necessarily, to develop individual performance outcomes.

3.5 MANAGEMENT TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

Enos (2000:134-136) argues that an effective way to develop an individual's performance is to introduce a well-designed performance management system. The author continues that such an appropriate performance management system should contain clear goals for implementation. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) assist managers to monitor progress, ensure sufficient feedback, and identify supportive interventions to enable individuals to meet expected performance levels. KPIs also assist managers to provide appropriate feedback related to acknowledgement, incentives and continuous communication with employees in an attempt to identify 'gaps' or barriers which could prevent the successful implementation of goals (Enos, 2000:140-142).

Rummler and Brache (1990:25), Roa (2016:236-237) and Bassin (2017:17) emphasise the importance that, if performance management is effectively implemented, managers and incumbents would answer affirmatively to the following questions:

- Performance specifications: Do the performers understand the outputs they are expected to produce and the standards they are expected to meet? (job goals);
- Task interference: Do the performers have sufficient resources, clear signals and priorities and a logical set of job responsibilities? (job design);
- Consequences: Are the performers rewarded for achieving job goals?
- Feedback: Do the performers know whether they are meeting the job goals?
- Skills and knowledge: Do the performers have the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the job goals?
- Individual capacity: In an environment in which the five questions listed above were answered affirmatively, would the performers have the physical, mental and emotional capacity to achieve the job goals? (Rummler & Brache, 1990: 25)

The next section focuses on the importance of performance measurement.

3.5.1 Significance of performance measurement

Culbert (2010:6-7) indicates that performance measurement should be an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall

performance of an institution. The authors, Rummler and Brache (1990:142), propose that performance measurement must be able to monitor the planned objectives for implementation, thus target setting, against planned outputs. These measurement outcomes must be able to convert the data into progress toward expected performance outcomes. This approach, in which performance is monitored at an individual level, could proactively determine or predict possible execution failure. Individual performance level outputs can now be pre-empted to identify a faulty process, as well as a missing or faulty job output, which will enforce corrective action.

A performance management system and its measurement method ensure that measures are connected at all strategic planning and operational implementation levels, also between all interdependencies and departments which must contribute toward successful individual job level outcomes ensuring successful implementation activities. Morrisey *et al.* (1988:46) and Enos (2000:2-4) also support the above approach in respect of the application of measurement to enhance individual performance outcomes, with specific planned goals, KPIs and the engagement of interdependencies.

Similarly, Rummler and Brache (1990:165-167) posit that the following factors could ensure the effective measurement of individual performance:

- Performance will be measured effectively at appropriate levels, and more specifically, at the individual job performance level;
- Specific identified objectives for implementation by individuals can be described, and priorities can be set to address them;
- Individuals who are responsible for the execution of specific objectives will understand what is expected from them; and
- Individuals will now be able to determine whether their performance is on track.

Once the above conditions have been met, employees will be in a position to evaluate their performance outputs in alignment with set targets and intended performance expectations. Without the involvement of individuals in target setting, the management thereof will become a set of uneducated guesses (Rummler & Brache, 1990:165-167).

Hutchinson (2013:21-22) further argues that individual performance could also be affected by other internal factors, such as personal characteristics, ambition, previous work experience, organisational culture, age and personal relations. Hence, individuals' performance could be either negatively or positively influenced by other institutional contextual factors outside the performance management process. Human resource practitioners should rapidly produce policies, within a changing human resources and labour law environment, to enable managers to manage and measure performance activities within clear and standardised procedures, specifically related to the performance management practices of an institution (Hutchinson, 2013:22-24).

An important factor that is highlighted in respect of effective individual performance measurement, relates to the combination of the 'what' and the 'how'. According to Hale and Whitlam (2000:xii), the how to implement specific operational objectives related to an institutional context, is consistently being ignored (also Section 3.4.1). Hale and Whitlam (2000:xiii) also advocate the use of behavioural competencies, or how managers are expected to behave, ensuring the enhancement of performance management of employees within an institution.

According to Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-13), the measurement of expected individual performance will improve if the managers explore and identify the behaviours critical to the expected roles and outputs of employees. The important issues, such as behaviour, skills, attitudes or values that are required, are usually ignored (Section 3.4.1). Hale and Whitlam (2000:14) are further of the opinion that 'how' in context of performance management entails conducting performance appraisals more than once or twice a year. Performance measurement should be a continuous process to ensure that the 'what', which entails the directives supporting the next phase, and the 'how', to ensure that individuals implement the correct activities, are communicated and implemented.

Hale and Whitlam (2000: 73-76) reiterate that managers often confirm that the real challenge is to motivate employees, thus the 'why' in delivering the intended operational objectives through the successful outputs that are expected from employees (Section 3.5.4 and 3.5.5). Hence, Hale and Whitlam (2000:73-76) are of the opinion that "actions are simply the results of our thinking and our feelings", and maintain that the employees should start thinking for themselves in changing their

ways, compared to enforced institutional change management and enforced measurements.

Aguinis (2013:226-228) agrees with the above opinion but adds that the knowledge of managers as to how to motivate employees is of crucial importance. He agrees that such a supportive motivational approach could assist individuals to improve performance outputs. If individuals keep working on their right behaviour, then eventually it will lead to the intended execution of expected job contents and improvement in performance outcomes. Hale and Whitlam thus emphasise the fact that mental practice, thus to align individual thinking on what is expected, and how it can be achieved, could eventually improve performance (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:74).

Important findings relating to the measurement of performance management practices are indicated by Alach (2017:102-104). In his exploratory study of the current state of the practice of performance measurement in New Zealand, the following observations were made:

- The survey showed the relatively high usage of performance measurement in alignment with strategies; and
- Multiple differences between academic and administrative units involved, for example, academics perceive that performance measurements do not bear positive outcomes, and that administratives were consistently more positive relating to performance management.

However, according to Alach (2017:102-104), the overall analysis confirmed that universities in general utilised performance measurement fairly frequently, and that most participants supported its benefits.

A synthetic model, consisting of seven elements, was utilised to determine performance measurement maturity as follows:

- the usage of performance information in decision-making, including trade-offs,
- strategic alignment and prioritisation,
- the outcomes framework,
- the variety, comprehensiveness and quality of measures,
- the depth and insight of commentary,

- the internal ownership of performance framework, and lastly
- the accurate and timely underlying data model (Altach, 2017:105-111).

Further to the above, Altach (2017:113) stated that a survey involving the practice of performance measurement of New Zealand, found that the perceptions of negativity relating to performance measurements in academic literature was not telling the full story and that further research on the subject seemed to be necessary. Altach (2017:113) concludes by indicating that performance measurements in universities will most probably not disappear, therefore, a better understanding of performance management practices could essentially lead to better practice.

3.5.2 Coaching and mentoring

It needs to be emphasised that performance management focuses on the identification of individuals' strengths and weaknesses to enable improved individual performance outcomes (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:73-76). However, as embedded in an effective performance management system, the importance of ensuring improved individual performance outcomes should not be underestimated. Effective performance management ultimately involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels and continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers. Therefore, if managers want to manage individuals effectively and improve individual performance, all the related factors, which include motivation, coaching and monitoring, as well as influencing positive behaviours by individuals, should form part of an effective performance management system. Managers should familiarise themselves with these supportive contributors as an embedded part of an effective performance management system (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:73-76).

A study by Cook and Poole (2011:2-4) found that coaching within the workplace can contribute to positive engagement amongst employees, ensuring empowerment and better communication. In so doing, it could create a working environment conducive to high levels of quality performance outcomes. The authors indicate that although coaching has similarities with mentorship, there is a distinctive difference in the approach. Mentoring is usually linked to experts in the same field/discipline as the mentee. Coaching *per se* focuses on giving advice, guidance, and options, and the client or individual can decide whether or not to put the advice into practice. Thus,

good coaches lead by example (Cook & Poole, 2011:20-21; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:340-347).

Cook and Poole (2011:30-31) and Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:29-30) argue that effective coaches listen, ask questions, explore opportunities, seek commitment, work with individuals and prioritise their needs and requirements. These actions will contribute towards improved individual performance. However, managers direct, give instructions, seek control and keep a distance.

Moreover, Johnson and Breckon (2007:132-133) point to a key principle, in that managers, regardless of the specific motivational theory, need to understand the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivators are embedded within the individual and relate to specific job contents. The successful execution and end of such a task could create a sense of achievement and self-satisfaction. These authors continue by indicating that in some instances the extrinsic motivators have no effect on the individuals' task achievement although it is under the control and influence of managers (Section 3.5.3).

Yet, events such as job enrichment or stretch assignments and challenges and increasing levels of responsibility, could enhance the performance improvement of an individual. Hence, according to the authors, a combination of both these motivators could serve a better improved individual performance outcome in respect of motivation levels (Johnson & Breckon, 2007:134-135).

Furthermore, the importance of coaching for individual performance improvement was also emphasised by Aguinis (2013:226-228) and Cook and Poole (2011:2-3). They consider coaching to be a collaborative, ongoing process, in which managers engage with their employees and support employees to enhance their performance (Aguinis, 2013:226-229). The author continues by stating that coaching entails direction, motivation and rewarding employees' behaviours. Coaching further involves the continuous observation, feedback and encouragement, supporting progress towards intended expectations and eventually improved performance outcomes.

A further essential contributor to individual performance improvement is the developing of trust between line managers and employees. This aspect will be discussed in the following section. Aguinis (2013:228-229) emphasises the

importance of establishing a trusting relationship, particularly if there are cultural differences within the institution. Therefore, according to Aguinis (2013:229), cultural differences should be discussed openly, taking into consideration possible alternative methods, such as coaching and mentoring, which could enhance individual and team performance, as part of the accepted organisational culture. The author further proposes four important guiding principles for understanding effective coaching:

- An open, trusting relationship and conversation are essential;
- The employee should be the source of direction for change and self-growth. The coach should therefore facilitate the employee's agenda, goals and improvement strategies to produce the expected performance outcomes;
- Each employee is unique, and has specific abilities and a personal history. By identifying these identities the coach could utilise these abilities and integrate it into the work environment in meaningful ways.
- The coach must be the facilitator of the individual's growth, and should therefore maintain an attitude of exploration, support, and to help expand the individual's awareness of strengths, resources and challenges towards achieving expected performance outcomes. (Aguinis, 2013:229-231).

Further to the above, Hale and Whitlam (2000:118) indicate that much, or almost all, development and learning should take place within the specific working environment, rather than attending external management sessions and courses. Coaching and mentoring in terms of on-the-job-training is therefore a critical part of enhancing the individuals' performance in alignment with the intended job contents. Hale and Whitlam (2000:118) emphasise the importance of coaching and mentoring to improve performance within an employee's specific role. In essence, the institution should encourage their managers to adopt a coaching style, or lead by example, to enhance overall individual performance improvement (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:118).

Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:26-29) similarly endorse the importance of positive employee relationships between employer and employee to ensure high-quality performance delivery. The emphasis is on the importance of integrated leadership, based on the following three principles:

- determination to deliver, thus having purpose and setting targets,
- continuous involvement with subordinates, supporting and providing guidance on the activities/job contents that need to be performed; and
- engagement with teams to understand cross-functionality with other units in the institution, and its role in supporting overall individual performance (Strycharczyk & Elvin, 2014:28-30; Cook & Poole, 2011:20-21).

Apart from coaching and mentoring, an additional approach that may be utilised to assist in the improvement of individual performance, is the knowledge of motivational theories. This aspect will be discussed in the following section.

3.5.3 Motivational theories underlying the implementation of a performance management process

Although performance management entails the management of individuals to eventually improve their performance outcomes, the knowledge of managers as to how to motivate employees is of crucial importance. During the engagement process between managers and employees, managers' knowledge of motivational approaches could enhance their skills to motivate individuals towards self-development and commitment as well as willingness to perform better (Aguinis, 2013:226-228).

According to Aguinis (2013:226-228), such a supportive motivational approach could assist in individual improved performance outcomes. Motivation, or the knowledge of motivational approaches, is embedded in effective performance management, or should at least be supportive, where applicable.

As part of Maslow's theory (see Maslow, 1992:310-320) of human motivation, namely, physical and survival needs, as well as the need for social content, self-esteem, recognition and status, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-64) also examine a few other approaches and theories relevant to motivation challenges to support managers to enhance individual performance outcomes, namely, (i) McClelland's Achievement Theory (1961), (ii) Herzberg's theory of motivation (1968), and (iii) Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964).

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-63) explain that McClelland's Achievement Theory differs from that of Maslow. McClelland did not believe in a specific fixed sequence of

needs, but that the need of individuals to achieve, the need for power, and the need for affiliation differs or changes based on the value that is placed on them. Commitment and willingness could therefore not be assumed, since it is dependent on the specific needs of an individual.

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-64) continue by analysing Herzberg's Theory of Motivation, indicating that job enrichment, which reflects more challenging outcomes, and requires more skills, could motivate individuals towards improvement in the execution of tasks. According to these authors, different factors such as achievement, recognition, job contents, which could influence individuals positively, could have no effect on the so called 'hygiene factors' which remains negative, whatever the working conditions and circumstances.

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-65) further consider that Herzberg's Theory of Motivation attempts to find out what pleased or displeased employees about their work. It was indicated that certain factors could cause satisfaction or presumably motivation, whereas certain factors could cause dissatisfaction, hence motivators and dissatisfiers, or hygiene factors. The term 'hygiene' is considered as being a maintenance factor, which rather avoids dissatisfaction and does not necessarily provide satisfaction (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:62-64). Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-64) also indicate some factors that could lead to no-satisfaction: institutional policies, relationships with line-managers, and working conditions; whereas factors that could lead to satisfaction are: achievement, recognition, responsibility and personal growth.

Further to the above, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:63-64) and Crawley *et al.* (2013:172-176) conclude their analysis of motivational theories in reflecting on Vroom's Expectancy Theory which is based on individual preferences and the importance of the relevance to these preferences. The departure points correlate with some features of McClelland's theory, with the exception of the individuals' expectations regarding which tasks are valued and achievable. The focus is not relevant to specific individual needs, but to how individuals perceive the relationship between efforts, improvement in performance and rewards. Lunenburg (2011:1-7) concurs that employees will be motivated to enhance performance outputs, if targets that are set will result in rewards. Therefore, an individual will not perform up to

standard, or even attempt the successful implementation thereof, if he/she will not meet all the expectations related to high quality outcomes.

While Maslow and Herzberg examine the relationship between internal needs and requirements and the efforts involved to fulfil them, Vroom's Expectancy Theory separates effort, performance and outcomes (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:63-64). Vroom's Expectancy Theory indicates that individual behaviour results from conscious choices among alternatives to eliminate pain and to maximise pleasure. It also indicates that an individual's performance is based on individual factors such as skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. However, more important is that, according to Vroom's Expectancy Theory, effort, performance and motivation are embedded in an individual's motivation. Thus, Thorpe and Holloway (2008:62-64) as well as Crawley *et al.* (2013:172-173), are of the opinion that Vroom's Expectancy Theory of motivation is not about self-interest and incentives, but about the perceptions and associations individuals make towards expected outcomes, and the value they can add towards those outcomes.

Another relevant theory applicable to the study is Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. According to Treher *et al.* (2011:24-25), Theory X presents a negativistic set of beliefs, namely, that employees have an inherent dislike for their work and will, if possible, not engage in any form of task execution. These employees need constant control, direction and firm monitoring of their inputs and outputs, to ensure that planned tasks are implemented. On the contrary, Theory Y presents an optimistic view towards self-directed and committed task execution, and the continuous seeking for more responsibilities.

An important observation was made by Thorne and Holloway (2008:63), indicating that managers should be alerted to the practice of applying a perceived theory to motivate individuals in attempts to improve performance outcomes. Usually in reality, it rather reflects the manager's own preference, whereas it should reflect the manager's knowledge of how employees ought to be motivated. Such a perceived approach could derail the good intentions underlying motivating individuals to improve their performance outcomes. Hence, Aguinis (2013:226) warns that it is of crucial importance that managers should have knowledge as to how to motivate employees.

However, motivational theories are only one of the approaches to understand individuals' work performance, apart from various other institutional factors (physical environment, monitoring of activities, supervisory support, engagement feedback) and individual differences (Thorpe & Holloway, 2008:62-64).

No specific theory is preferable above, or better, than the other. However, according to Treher *et al.* (2011:26-27), it is important to identify the preferred pattern that activates motivation. Managers have a distinct responsibility to engage employees to take responsibility in respect of their self-development, and to assign work that continuously develops skills, such as stretch assignments (Treher *et al.*, 2011:26-27).

Michel (2013:77) is of the opinion that motivation ensures and presents the condition within institutions required for employees to be inspired, and to optimise their potential to perform. Michel (2013:72) therefore emphasises the importance of motivated staff as the core drivers that take the institution forward towards performance excellence.

Maslow's motivational model in respect of employees' needs, confirms the importance of physical basic needs (see Maslow, 1992:310-320). The highest need and psychological achievement is called self-actualisation (Mosley, 2013:61-64). Thus, self-actualisation in the organisation can be observed in those employees who love their work and who have the 'perfect fit' within the institution. It is therefore evident that the higher social and psychological needs of individuals to drive them toward performing better, is recognition. When an employee feels that his/her work is valued by a manager, engagement follows (Mosley, 2013:63).

Mosley (2013:35-41) stated that happiness is the facilitator of success. Happiness in the workplace is an advantage, and managers should know it. They should also be aware of the fact that employees, working in an environment which supports and enables productivity, higher performance and ultimately financial rewards, are happy people with a high morale. Positivity encourages happiness over time.

However, Baldwin *et al.* (2013:242-243) argues that, although job satisfaction usually creates happy employees, the relationship between happiness and job contents could be moderate. More complex and challenging tasks could also create more satisfaction, since it offers employees more autonomy to take decisions and

accountability in executing it. Therefore, the authors indicate that managers' attempts to just make employees happy in respect of their jobs are no prescription for improved performance. Job satisfaction entails fairness, consistency in decision making, remuneration, career development opportunities and acknowledgement.

Moreover, Barrett (2014:33-36) explains that when employees' needs are met by the institution and they feel that they are aligned with the operational implementation goals and values, they respond with high levels of engagement and commitment towards expected performance outcomes. Barrett (2014:36) continues by indicating that the fulfilment of employees' survival needs, a working environment conducive to high productivity outcomes, freedom to make choices, self-esteem needs, thus important needs that motivate employees, are important factors towards high performance commitment (Barrett, 2014:34-35).

This approach correlates with the views of Mosley (2013:64) in respect of the basic employee needs. It is also clear from Barrett's (2014:33-36) research that different employees will have different needs, depending on the level of psychological development, personal life circumstances and specific work challenges employees are experiencing. The above challenges, according to Barrett (2014:36), raise an important challenge for leaders and managers. The result of the latter is to within a complex working environment, accelerate human development, to enable adequate intervention, meeting the demand to manage with competence and to prioritise the means and ways to meet employee needs.

Johnson and Breckon (2007:128-133) indicate that managers usually believe motivating individuals is the primary factor to ensure increased productivity or, if they are not successful, to replace them with new appointments, and hopefully, better performance management facilitation. Johnson and Breckon (2007:13) are further of the opinion that employees, managers and subordinates only use 30% of their abilities doing their jobs. Thus, utilising motivational theories at the right time to motivate employees, could increase individual performance outcomes. However, according to Johnson and Breckon (2007:130-132) there are no easy and standardised strategies through which the implementation thereof can ensure successful outcomes. Employees differ in many ways, and their needs and requirements to optimise and motivate themselves differ. The authors similarly

support Maslow's pyramid of human needs, namely, self-actualisation-, esteem-, social-safety-, and physiological needs.

Employees usually know who among them are the most and least productive, and so, Johnson and Breckon's (2007:131-134) research also supports the team work or group productivity approach. Raising group standards could raise the individual's performance. Employees can be motivated on what is experienced within the working environment, which will lead to self-motivation. Creating this conclusive environment should be the core challenge to managers (Johnson & Breckon, 2007:132-135).

An extremely important factor that was identified by Johnson and Breckon (2007:139-142) was the outcomes of labour studies. The authors confirmed that productivity increases when employees are being watched. They further indicate that it is not necessarily face-to-face or visual supervision, but through the use of productivity reports and focused performance appraisal standards related to set targets. Continuous feedback should, however, form part of the monitoring processes, keeping employees on track (Johnson & Breckon, 2007:133-135; Farrel & Schlesinger, 2013:76-77; Hutchinson, 2013:80-83; Behn, 2014:216-218; Mizrahi, 2017:160). Figure 3.2 below, indicates the importance of employee needs.

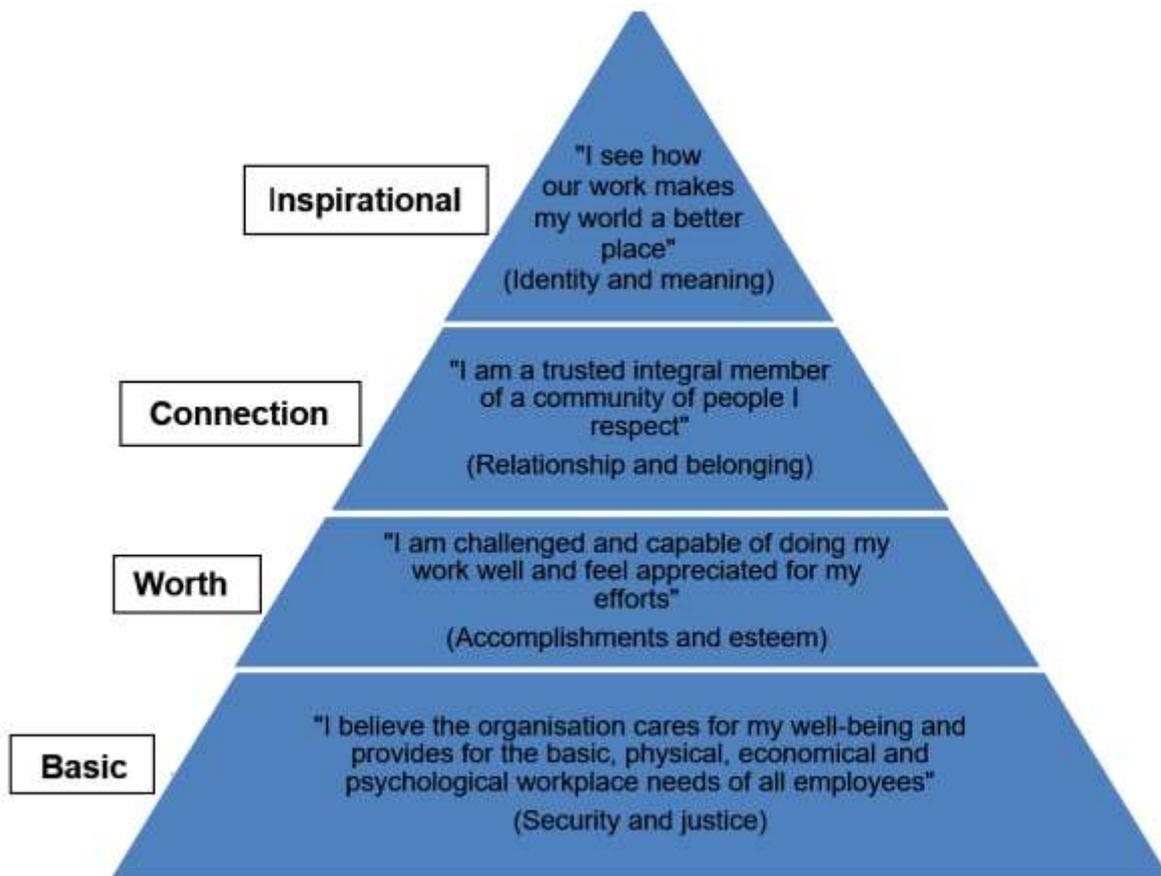


Figure 3.2: Model of employees needs

Adapted from: Mosley (2013:64)

Mosley (2013:66) and Hutchinson (2013:2-4) (see Figure 3.2), report that recognition, at the right time, improves the retention of key employees, improves performance of all employees by guiding behaviour, motivates the already engaged employee to deeper engagement, and inspires both recipient and others who witness the accolade.

Mosley (2013:205) further purports that an effective performance management approach should combine the best components of a traditional review with social recognition. It should provide constant feedback on progress, and ensure improved performance by creating an environment conducive to high performance outputs. It should continuously drive employees' behaviour towards a culture of performance and will be objective, self-monitoring and will empower managers to manage better while encouraging self-management at all levels (Mosley, 2013:205).

Mosley (2013:205), Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) and Mizrahi (2017:5-6) indicate that, as part of an effective performance management system, with the

focus on the improvement of individual performance and continuous engagement, employees will be inspired to improve their performance outcomes. Individuals will also be motivated if contributing to create a conducive working environment, and will also feel that they are worthy and appreciated as employees of the institution.

3.5.4 Performance management and integrated individual development strategies

Fisher (1996:13-16) is of the opinion that most employees have the capacity to improve their own performance. Developing the performance culture of an institution is the key factor to ensuring a more productive workforce. The motivation of an individual is a function of inner-drive, attitude and incentive, thus, development should always be self-development, which is the responsibility of the individual. Hence, managers should create the working environment and opportunities to enable self-development (Sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3).

In addition, Ströh (2001:74-76) reported that subordinates are more likely to perform well, if managers create a situation in which there is a high probability that subordinates' efforts will produce achievement which will be noticed by management and be rewarded. However, the above scenario is very seldom applied in the working environment (Ströh, 2009:73-74). It is evident that managers do not always agree on incentives as the only effective motivational factors to increase work outputs, as this may have a limited effect on higher performance.

Thorpe and Holloway (2008:6-64) similarly argue that factors like achievement, recognition and rewards could have no effect on individuals, what is the so-called 'hygiene factors' (Section 3.5.3). Thus, individuals remain negative, whatever the working conditions. However, a lack of feedback on performance and motivation from managers to ensure high quality individual performance outcomes seems to have the highest effect of hampering effective individual performance improvements (Crawley *et al.*, 2013:173).

Although motivation is one of the most extensively researched topics in the social sciences, Hutchinson (2013:46-47) indicates that motivation remains an invisible state in an individuals' mind, which cannot be observed directly. Hutchinson (2013:46-49) continues that motivation is therefore not a specific behaviour and is also not performance. It is innate to an individual and eventually influences a

person's choice of action. Hence, although motivation is an important supportive part of the improvement of individual performance outcomes, managers' abilities are limited to motivate or influence employees' choices of action.

The achievement of planned individual performance outcomes and the continuous exceeding of performance levels can only be achieved through self-commitment and the cognitive application of individuals. Hale and Whitlam (1988:132-133) raised this important view in enabling individual performance improvement. Based on the authors' research, which emanated from *The Power of Personal Influence*, Hale and Whitlam (1995) focus on how to apply the combination of cognitive techniques with physical skills to enable more effective goal achievement. This approach entails the so-called 'self-talk'. Thus, individuals will have conversations with themselves, evaluating current situations or actions. However, Hale and Whitlam (1998:132) point out that these self-conversations are usually negative in nature. Further to the above, the authors indicate that individuals tend to be influenced more often by negative inputs from seniors or line management than by positive inputs.

Therefore, the self-talk of one person could have a negative impact on the individual's thinking, and eventually affect their actions within a working environment. Hence, Hale and Whitlam (1998:132-133) suggest that employees should determine who these 'experts' are, whether senior or line managers, who influence their thinking about themselves, thus, they need to determine what the validity is of these experts' knowledge.

Hale and Whitlam (1998:134-136) and Hutchinson (2013:46-48) further explain that the individuals' self-concept or self-image will determine the way in which individuals believe they should act or do their work. The authors propose methods to remove such a negative influence by applying certain practices, namely: First, flooding (swim or drown approach), thus allowing an individual to learn him/herself to manage the expected implementation of job contents or activities, and to learn by trial and error, thus to learn from own mistakes. However the consequence of this approach could either have a positive or negative impact on employees.

The second method which Hale and Whitlam (1998:134-136) and Hutchinson (2013:46-48) endorse is desensitisation. This method removes the individual step by step out of the negative comfort zone by:

- Exposing individuals to someone else who contributes in a positive and effective manner towards high quality performance outcomes, which could positively influence the 'self-talk';
- Involving the individual through coaching and mentoring to participate in effective high quality projects or tasks implementation; and
- Transferring responsibility to individuals to experience the positive effects of value added outputs and achievement of targets by rewarding and acknowledging individuals accordingly.

The above could change individual thinking positively by allowing them to take control of who they allow to influence their thinking, and enable them to unlock their own human potential (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:134-140; Hutchinson, 2013:46-48). However, there are important indicators to guide employees towards the implementation of expected goals and targets. These indicators are discussed in the section to follow.

3.5.5 Engagement in respect of individual performance management

An important observation was made by Mone and London (2010:186-189) regarding the manager's role related to performance management. Employee burnout could have a serious negative effect on productivity and the expected high quality levels. Unfortunately, the increasing pressure during performance management practices by managers who are tasked to raise performance levels by doing more with less resources to meet deadlines, could have a negative effect on employees. Mone and London (2010:186-189) therefore suggest that managers should, through continuous engagement, which is imperative during performance management, be alerted to such signs occurring, for example:

- Stress-related effects (health issues and absenteeism as a result of burnout);
- Depression, a low self-esteem and poor concentration, which cause low productivity outputs;
- If job dissatisfaction leads to negative attitudes in relation to job contents' implementation; and
- Influencing colleagues negatively by demonstrating poor interpersonal relationships.

Thus, as an essential part of effective performance management, managers should ensure that burnout does not occur by allocating tasks and setting targets evenly among employees on the same structural level.

In addition to the above, Mone and London (2010:189-190) suggest some work environmental factors that managers can influence as part of an effective performance management process to reduce burnout among employees. This approach is also underscored by Aguinis (2013:226-229), Erasmus *et al.* (2005:279-180) and Kalgin (2018:13):

- Managers should ensure the availability of appropriate resources to support employees in doing what is expected from them;
- Employees should be empowered by managers to allow space for creating a sense of control over the implementation of their day-to-day activities. Managers should not micro-manage;
- Continuous engagement of managers with their subordinates giving appropriate feedback, recognition and incentives for high quality performance outcomes; and
- Employees should experience their working environment and management practices as fair and managed with integrity (Mone & London, 2010:186-88).

Baldwin *et al.* (2013:146) similarly cautioned about the pitfalls of conducting or facilitating performance management practices. This approach is also supported by Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:214-217). More specifically, this occurs if managers focus on end-outcomes only, and neglect to engage with employees throughout the year in measuring expected performance outcomes. These authors further indicate that the manager's role is to ensure their subordinates become as competent and successful as possible. Managers can only be successful when individuals reporting to them are successful. This process determines the relationship between employees and management who are responsible for conducting performance management. Baldwin *et al.* (2013:238) make an important observation by indicating that, for this specific reason, performance management cannot be a once-off event, but should be a continuous process to strengthen the engagement and feedback processes. When done correctly, it could improve individual performance tremendously (Baldwin *et al.*, 2013:240; Strycharczyk & Elvin, 2014:214-217).

The role of ethical behaviour as important factor, ensuring commitment to improve performance outcome, is discussed in the following section.

3.6 ETHICAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

According to Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:214-217), one of the most important factors within the performance management process, that will influence positive behaviour towards employee commitment, is the ethical manner in which managers conduct their day-to-day business in dealing with subordinates. Moreover, to conduct performance management in an ethical way and to engage with employees in a supportive manner without causing offence. Trustworthy communication and feedback, and not bullying employees, as part of effective performance management will commit employees to meeting set targets. Managers should act with integrity, honesty and consistency during the performance management phases, and specifically, during engagement with individuals, to ensure the improvement of capabilities, skills and knowledge of employees, which is aimed towards achieving institutional goals.

Baldwin *et al.* (2013:123) indicate that, although ethical philosophy informs the philosophy of 'think before we act', people are not judged on their thinking but on their actual behaviour. Furthermore, good intentions cannot be observed, only your behaviour and consequences (Baldwin *et al.*, 2013:123).

Therefore, Baldwin *et al.* (2013:123) maintain that the ethical behaviour of managers, when conducting performance management, requires ethical commitment and integrity, or adherence to an ethical code or standards. The authors define ethics as the principles, norms and standards applicable to conducting or managing the performance management of individuals or groups. However, the challenge is to recognise an ethical dilemma. The essence of identifying such a dilemma, according to Baldwin *et al.* (2013:124), is not what is wrong or right, but usually a situation of right versus right, or wrong versus wrong, during the facilitation of the performance management sessions with individuals of the point of time of the dilemma. Hence, these authors indicate that both the above scenarios could have merit, but a decision could have possible negative and positive consequences, depending on how an ethical dilemma is perceived by individuals during the conducting of performance management by managers (Baldwin *et al.*, 2013:124-125).

Baldwin *et al.* (2013:125-126) therefore suggest that managers should ask themselves some guiding questions and make difficult decisions when busy with performance management practices, for example:

- Is my action legal?
- Are my actions and behaviour fair and consistent in respect of similar or previous problems?
- Are my decisions embedded within my own values?
- Will others (employees/subordinates/line managers) be negatively impacted by the outcomes of a performance management exercise?

In conclusion, Baldwin *et al.* (2013:264-265) and Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) propose the following possible fair and consistent principles in managing individual performance, as integral part of a performance management system:

- Managers must set performance expectations immediately with their subordinates;
- Provide feedback early and often. The more communication in respect of expected outcomes, the less management of performance;
- Focus on the evaluation of performance and not people, although observation of behaviour should not be neglected;
- Should grey areas or gaps be identified, revisit the planned set targets and intervene to ensure progress towards the expected end results;
- Assist employees by supporting self-development and to learn from mistakes during the executing of tasks; and
- Reward quality performance outcomes, and ensure that it is repeated. Make sure that the performance appraisal methods ensure that the process, outcomes and interventions with employees are perceived by them as being fair. Thus, fairness and integrity, not equality or happiness, are the key factors that ensure high quality individual performance improvement outcomes (Baldwin *et al.*, 2013:265-266; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:340-347).

3.7 SUMMARY

Chapter 3 described the attributes and principles of effective individual performance management. Effective performance management could support positive individual behaviour and relationships among colleagues, and more specifically, with their line managers. These attributes could support individual staff members to improve their performance outcomes. Therefore, performance management is not only a theory. It is a pragmatic instrument to make sense of what matters, more specifically a way to ask better and more relevant questions.

It should be emphasised that performance management focuses on the identification of an individual's strengths and weaknesses, to enable improved individual performance outcomes. However, embedded in an effective performance management system is the importance of ensuring that improved individual performance outcomes are not underestimated. Effective performance management ultimately involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels, trust and continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers. Therefore, if managers want to manage individuals effectively and improve individual performance, all the related factors, which include motivation, coaching and monitoring, as well as influencing positive behaviours by individuals, should form part of an effective performance management system. Managers should familiarise themselves with these supportive contributors as an embedded part of an effective performance management system.

Prominent trends that were revealed from the literature reviews are that effective performance management could be hampered by the lack of timely supportive mechanisms, such as a lack of proper HR capacity, and the inadequate skills and commitment of managers. The contents of this chapter also revealed that a lack of continuous engagement and support and feedback from managers could lead to negative perceptions relating to performance management.

It is also clear that the knowledge of a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories is an important supportive factor. An effective performance management system is embedded in the latter ensuring a more integrated approach with regards to the motivation of employees. It could ensure higher quality level individual performance improvement outcomes. Performance management should

rather focus on the continuous development of the individual, and should not only be conducted for administrative purposes, which are usually used for promotions and remuneration increases.

Effective performance management practices involve people and their behaviour. One of the important factors that was identified is the ethical behaviour of managers, ensuring commitment to improve individual performance. If correctly applied, the performance of individuals would inevitably improve. The important purpose of effective performance management is highlighted, namely, performance management aligns individual effort to the vision, mission and objectives of the institution, and thereby contributes to improved quality, and thus, quality of service delivery.

Chapter four explains and describes the research design and methodology, thus to plan for conducting the empirical research.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to discuss and explain the research design and methodology selected for the empirical research. The focus of this chapter is on the research paradigms, research design, research approach and methodology. The unit of analysis, unit of observation, and data-collection methods, are also described.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:73-75), a research design describes the plan for conducting empirical research. The research problem and research questions will have an influence on the research design. A research design is a plan or blueprint of how the researcher plans to conduct the research. Babbie and Mouton (2003:646-647) write that a proper research design will assist in addressing a research problem. The latter will create a framework of how the research process will be implemented to solve the research problem. Moreover, the research methodology focuses on the steps, procedures and methods to implement the research design. Further to the above, Trafford and Leshem (2008:104) indicate that a research design should exemplify scholarly thinking, emanating from an in-depth literature review, rather than being a technical activity of describing the use of methods.

For the purpose of this study, qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, thus a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, sampling and analyses, data collection and interpretations were used. However, the research design and methodology in this study primarily focused on a case study design and a mixed-method approach to determine the answers to the research questions and to reach valid and reliable conclusions.

4.2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Mouton (2001:138-140) defines the Three-Worlds Model by referring to World 1 as the world of everyday life and knowledge, World 2 as the world of scientific research, thus, to determine truth by means of scientific research, and lastly World 3, which is primarily concerned with meta-science (Mouton, 2001:138-141). The most

appropriate approach for this study was deemed to be World 1, in combination with World 2 and 3. The performance management practices and interactions at Unisa, as well as the experiences, perspectives of employees of Unisa pertaining to their day-to-day exposure, insight and wisdom, as to how they experience individual performance management practices was the focus of the study. Hence, the research problem required intervention and action to improve future outcomes.

Mouton (2001:137-139) further writes that the distinction between World 1 and World 2 is that the former focuses on a pragmatic approach, whereas the latter focuses on truthful knowledge, thus the epistemological approach. It could be taken that World 2 issues could solve World 1 problems. Hence, the choice and focus for this study also suited the latter approach (World 2), which can be supported by the World 3 approach, as part of the mixed-mode paradigm. However, Mouton (2008:140-141) concluded by indicating that the World of meta-science, thus World 3, which has its origin in the application of critical interest and reflection by researchers/scientists, is of critical importance. This author states that researchers constantly submit their decisions to quality checks, to determine or attain truthful and valid results which has led to various meta disciplines, such as philosophy, ethics, methodologies, sociology and history (Mouton, 2001:138-139).

As is evident from the above-mentioned framework of Mouton (2001:138-139), it could be accepted that real-life problems, which are investigated and formulated as research problems, could be described by means of the Three-Worlds Framework. Hence, applicable to this study it can be taken that the three worlds approach is embedded and interrelated within the focus of this study, namely, how to improve a performance management system at Unisa. Therefore, the Three-Worlds Framework informs a close linkage between the different forms of human knowledge, thus everyday life experiences, scientific and meta-scientific knowledge. Eventually the methodological approaches are based on and informed by the third-world, thus meta-science and philosophical paradigms. Therefore, this study could be conducted within only one of the three worlds, as it included actions of all three worlds. Hence, a mixed-mode approach and research design was selected for used in this study.

The research adopted a case study approach. According to De Vos *et al.* (2005:272), a case study may be referred to as an exploration of in-depth analysis of a single case or phenomenon over a period of time. In this case, a journey towards

improving individual performance outcomes so as to enable the expected or desirable institution performance improvement, at Unisa (Section 4.3).

De Vos *et al.* (2005:272-274) further purport that a case study also reports on patterns and specific phenomenon. According to Bhattacharjee (2012:93-94), a case study approach also allows the researcher to conduct an investigation from multiple perspectives, interpretivism and positivism. The research mainly focused on the interpretivism phenomenological approach to understand and to describe and construct experiences and perceptions between humans and their influences as social actors (Saunders *et al.* 2009:893-894). Therefore, according to Cresswell (2007:8-9), the objective of the study was also to obtain the support and collaboration of as many as possible knowledgeable and experienced participants in relation to a specific phenomenon. Case studies also allow research through multiple levels, namely, individual, group and institutional (Bhattacharjee, 2012:93-94).

Webb (2009:117-118) posits that the most appropriate research methodology or macro research methods are usually categorised at the level of meta-theory and social enquiry between the positivist approach, which focuses on scientific methods, and the interpretivist approach, which focuses on the understanding of social interactions by humans, within the epistemology approaches that are based on the qualitative and quantitative paradigms.

Webb (2009:120-121) also indicates that the supportive and guiding factor in determining an appropriate research approach should be the main research question pertaining to the problem under investigation, and to seek solutions thereto. Hence, the main research question applicable for this study is: *How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?* Further to the above, Webb (2009:120-121) writes that similarly important is the units of observation to enable the appropriate collection of data. Webb argues that two categories apply: (i) human behaviour and characteristics, and (ii) products of human behaviour and characteristics. Therefore, it can be said that documentary evidence and data refer to the products of human behaviour. The second unit of observation entails human behaviour and characteristics. According to Webb (2009:120-121) this category refers to the perceptions and experiences of employees related to performance management practices and interactions in the unit of analysis, thus applicable for the purpose of this study, which is to investigate how employees perceive, experience

and observe the performance management practices at Unisa. Appropriate methods to gather qualitative data, according to this author are: observation, personal and group interviews, documentary sources, strategic operational plans and annual reports.

However, surveys and questionnaires are appropriate for the quantitative paradigm experiments. Since the methodology selected for this study was mostly embedded in the qualitative research paradigm, the case study approach, which also allows for an inductive approach was selected. The study started off within a natural setting, focusing on applicable events in respect of performance management practices at Unisa.

Bologun *et al.* (2003:203) highlights the importance of the researcher having extensive experience in the given context of research. For the purposes of the current study, the researcher had 35 years' experience in performance management practices and strategies at Unisa. The researcher had participated in-depth in strategies and practices over many years in the field of individual performance improvement, since its inception at Unisa (in the early 1990s). This experience and exposure contributed to applicable thinking, understanding and relevant participation within the institutional context in which this study took place.

Also, according to Babbie and Mouton (2007:275-278), most researchers participate in, or form part of, events as observers of what it is that they investigate. Therefore, to avoid possible personal biases, it was decided that triangulation would ensure more validity and reliability in the qualitative study. Triangulation collects data and information from different sources and events, as well as from different relationships, methods and views within similar research environments (Webb, 2009:125-126).

Webb and Auriacombe (2006:591) and Thani (2011:29) argue that, in the phenomenological paradigm, researchers seek to understand how people perceive their world, thus to understand the experiences of participants during research investigations. More importantly, Thani (2011:29) indicates that phenomenology in Public Administration will assist in avoiding the errors that are associated with wrong interpretations of what humans are and what they know. According to Thani (2011:33-34), researchers cannot decide on behalf of participants on what they perceived. Researchers should allow participants to define their perceptions and how

they experience and how it affected their real world. This was an important principle that was applied during the empirical research in the current study. Hence, Thani (2011:34) argues that a new or different outcome or perceived opinion will emerge, since the researcher utilised not only questionnaires, which could have forced participants to select their experiences from a standardised list of options. Thani (2011:34) opines that phenomenology attempts to 'objectivise' subjectivity, focusing on the core experience or perspective at the time and specific circumstances applicable to the event.

In summary, Thani (2011:36) indicates that phenomenology entails the following:

- An understanding of people's perceptions, perspectives and meanings;
- Participants' perceptions and experiences are mostly socially constructed;
- Researchers use the phenomenology data collecting methods, focusing on in-depth lengthy interviews and notes; and
- The utilisation of phenomenology supports a creative method of studying the world.

Moreover, Thani (2011:36) writes that, in one way or the other, some of the above principles will be applicable or relevant to Public Administration.

In conclusion, Lin (1998:162) states that qualitative research in itself can also be positivist. It, therefore, can attempt to document patterns that could lead consistently to one specific theme or set of outcomes rather than another; thus, certain specific patterns across different venues with different participants. Moreover, according to Lin (1998:162), qualitative work can be interpretivist, namely, to determine and understand the conscious and unconscious explanations people have for what they believe, experience and perceive.

Hence, the difference between the two approaches (positivist versus interpretivist) can be determined by comparisons based on the differences in the questions asked of the data and the types of conclusions made. Positivism focuses on identifying data that can be tested or identified in other similar cases, and ignores how general patterns look in practice. Therefore, Lin (1998:162-163) indicates that interpretivist work assists in asking the right questions to understand people and to assist in reaching conclusions. The interpretivist approach relies on the credibility and

accuracy of descriptions to ensure validity, thus not upon the evaluation of how often variables repeat themselves, and in which specific combinations (Lin, 1998:162-163).

Further to the above, multiple research methodologies, such as triangulation, are used to determine different views of phenomena. According to Trafford and Leshen (2008:97-99), the data that is located in different forms, held by different respondents who were in different locations, needs or requires a combination of methodological approaches.

4.2.1 The qualitative research paradigm

Johnson and Christensen (2012:18) write that qualitative research focuses on exploration, description and sometimes the generation and construction of theories through the use of qualitative data. The descriptions attempt to describe the characteristics of a phenomenon by observing and recording patterns of the phenomenon. In addition, the explanations also attempt to show how and why a phenomenon operates as it does (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:18).

Also important, as indicated by McNabb (2010:17-19), is that the post-positivist approach is referred to as qualitative research. The post-positivist approach is also sometimes referred to as realist, hermeneutic, or narrative research. Today, post-positivist political scientists apply rationalist or qualitative methods to study what governments choose to do and what they choose not to do. They are particularly interested in studying the distribution and exercise of power and domination, and the actions of individuals and groups who seek to gain power, and hold onto it once they have it. The goals of post-positivists have been to emphasise ideas, more than constructs that have to be observed and measured (McNabb, 2010:17-19).

McNabb (2010:18-20) is therefore of the opinion that the qualitative paradigm supports the view that there are many truths and realities. Additionally to the above, the interpretive approach is associated with a method that provides an opportunity for the voice and perceptions of research participants to be heard.

Moreover, Babbie and Mouton (2007:277) explain that, to clarify the notion of objectivity within the qualitative paradigm, the key criterion of good qualitative research is formed in the notion of trustworthiness. Thus, how can an inquirer

persuade his/her audiences, including him/herself that the findings of an enquiry are worth paying attention to. Just as a qualitative study cannot be transferable unless it is credible, audits cannot be deemed creditable unless it is dependable (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:277).

Furthermore, Armstrong (2010:392-394) holds that qualitative research aims to produce insights into situations and human behaviour in efforts to generate meaning about what is happening, so that it can be understood. Therefore, the focus is on the interpretation of behaviour, based on the perceptions of participants. It is usually difficult to reduce the gathered information to numbers, as data gathering is done through interviews, case studies and observation, although surveys can also be used. Important, according to Armstrong (2010:392), is that important information can also be drawn by producing narratives describing phenomena or even processes. Therefore, qualitative research describes and understands, whereas quantitative research measures and predicts.

Lastly, Leedy and Ormrod (2010:94-95) purport that qualitative research entails the investigation of characteristics and qualities that are difficult to convert into numerical values. Since this study focused on the perceptions of participants related to performance management practices at Unisa, the core focus of analysis was embedded within the qualitative paradigm. Also important, as was previously indicated, the researcher of this study had 35 year experience in the unit of analysis. This exposure and relevant experience contributed to the applicable thinking, understanding, appropriate observation and contextualisation of the relevant context of the research. However, the evidence collected should speak for itself. Therefore, a qualitative approach, as part of a mixed-model, was appropriate for this case study.

4.2.2 The quantitative research paradigm

Armstrong (2010:392-394) indicates that quantitative research is mostly empirical and is based on the collection of factual data which is measurable and quantifiable. Considerable amounts of statistical analysis are used for the collection of data through questionnaires, surveys, observation and experiments. This data is static and structured and is used to test theories (Armstrong, 2010:393). However, according to this author, the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is sometimes blurred, and researchers argue that there should be an attempt to

rather mix methods to some extent, which could provide more perspectives on the phenomena to be investigated (Armstrong, 2010:393).

Therefore, this study also selected quantitative research methods in the form of a questionnaire survey for the collection of both quantitative data and the qualitative perceptions from participants.

According to Bhattacharjee (2012:8-9), descriptive research attempt to answers the what, why, where and when questions related to the relevant research phenomenon. For the purposes of this study, both an interpretive, descriptive and a combination of quantitative (positivist) and qualitative constructivism (interpretive) paradigms were used.

Saunders *et al* (2009:892-894) write that the focus of the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm is on the fact that reality is constructed in the mind at the individual, whereas interpretivism is the epistemological position that emphasises the importance to understand the difference between humans and their role as social actors.

As the quantitative research approach mainly relies on the conducting of strict measurable methods, structured survey questionnaires were selected for use in the current study.

4.3 CASE STUDY APPROACH

Yin (2003:10-18) writes that case studies allow researchers to explore individuals or institutions through interventions, relationships and programmes, which could support the investigations, analysis, interpretation of phenomena. According to Yin (2003:16-19), a qualitative case study could facilitate the exploration of a phenomenon within its context by using multiple data sources. Also important, according to this author, the topic of research can be properly investigated and the essence of a phenomena can be explored (Yin, 2003:22).

The research approach for this study therefore entailed an in-depth interpretation, description, and explanation of a phenomenon within the context of a specific reality and environment, and led towards problem-solving. In this case, this involved a journey to enable the improvement of individual performance outcomes by applying a methodology on how to improve the performance management system at Unisa

(De Vos *et al.*, 2005:272-274), and ultimately to ensure a high quality level or desirable institutional performance outcome in respect of service delivery by improving individual performance outcomes.

Bhattacharjee (2012:94-96) states that a case study design can be utilised to combine and use different data-collection methods, such as survey questionnaires, observations, interviews and document analysis. It also allows the researcher to investigate the research problem from multiple levels of analysis, namely, individual, group and institutional level. According to Bhattacharjee (2012:94-96), a qualitative case study is characterised by researchers spending extended time on site, while being personally in contact with activities and operations of the case; thus allowing for reflections, descriptions, and meanings of what is happening.

Tellis (1997:2-6) explains that a case study is an ideal methodology to conduct a holistic in-depth investigation. Case studies are also designed to bring out detailed information from the viewpoint of selected participants, by using multiple sources of data. The aforementioned researcher indicates that the unit of analysis, for the purpose of this case, the performance management practices and interactions at Unisa, is a critical factor relating to case studies. Hence, according to Tellis (1997:2-6), a case study is typically a system of action, rather than an individual or group of individuals. Therefore, case studies tend to be selective, focusing on one or two issues that are fundamental to the understanding of the system being examined.

According to Tellis (1997:2-6), a case study is a multi-perspectival analysis, which means that the researcher considers not only the voice and perspectives of participants, but also the interaction between them. This important factor is relevant to the focus of this study that observed and interpreted the perceptions, experiences and interactions, related to performance management practices at Unisa. The current study ultimately aimed to determine to what extent effective individual performance management can be improved at individual level, based on the outcomes of the observations, analysis and interpretation of the case study research of this study.

Tellis (1997:3-6) further argues that case studies are also known as a triangulated research strategy, which can occur in data investigations, theories and also with methodologies which focus on establishing meaning, rather than location. The

current study focused on the description and interpretation of the real-life context in which the research was conducted.

Baxter and Jack (2008:545) write that the qualitative case study methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts in order to develop theory, evaluate programmes and develop interventions (using various data resources)(Baxter & Jack, 2008:545). The case is 'in effect your unit of analysis', do you want to analyse a programme/individual or a process or system? (Baxter *et al*, 2008:546). For the purpose of this current research, the research question was: *How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?* This research focused on the performance management practices and interaction thereof at Unisa. The research scope was limited to the administrative units within Unisa. A descriptive and interpretive single case study approach was used to describe an intervention of the phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred.

Moreover, according to Yin (2003:16-22) a case study approach should be considered when: (i) the study focuses on answering the 'how' and 'why' questions, (ii) you cannot manipulate behaviours of participants involved in the research, (iii) if you want to target contextual conditions believing they are applicable to the phenomenon under study, or (iv) the boundaries are not clear between phenomenon and context. Hence, for the purpose of the current study, a descriptive and interpretive case study was deemed to be appropriate. Yin (2003:22-23) indicates that this case study approach (descriptive) is usually used to describe a phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurs.

Therefore, the case study approach was an important embedded overarching design, supporting the researcher in the current study to ensure the appropriate investigations, analysis and interpretations of the phenomena under research, which was deemed to be an applicable approach for this study.

Wessels *et al*. (2009:7) contend that the purpose of research is to improve practice. Hence, the effort to deliver services to people requires high quality scholarly research. The above-mentioned authors further indicate that there should be a logical relationship between the unit of analysis and the units of observation, and the research approach of a research project: thus the 'what' of the study. Based on

these directions, the focus or unit of analysis relevant to this research was the performance management practices and interactions at Unisa. The unit of observation was: (i) employees of Unisa and their experiences and perspectives, and (ii) the policies, procedures and documents relevant to individual performance management practices. Suggestions to improve individual performance management practices flowed from these empirical study outcomes, namely, to determine to what extent effective performance management could improve individual performance outcomes.

Wessels *et al.* (2009:15-16) further indicate that the category of qualitative methodology entails an approach used to study and analyse human behaviour in a non-quantitative manner by *inter alia* participant observation studies, case studies and unstructured interviews or recollected experience, which was the choice of approach for this study. More importantly, according to Wessels *et al.* (2009:15-16), the qualitative approach, which focused on the implementation and outcome evaluation research, as well as policy and programme analysis, was also utilised to support a more valid and reliable empirical research outcome. Lastly, content analysis, as indicated by Wessels *et al.* (2009:16) to focus on the analyses of documents: policies, reports and legislation, themes and messages (emails), was also included to be part of the empirical study in respect of performance management practices and the perceptions of employees at Unisa.

4.3.1 Study population

A population is a collection of objectives, or individuals, who have common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying. For the purpose of this study, the researcher identified participants who are involved in the student administrative units, related to performance management practices at Unisa. The study involved two phases, namely:

- Phase one: structured survey questions.
- Phase two: open-ended questions (face-to-face interviews).

Phases one and two were conducted within the two specific categories of participants that were targeted by utilising the structured survey questionnaires:

- Administrative Line Managers who are accountable for the management and facilitation of performance management practices and interactions with employees; and
- Student service administrative officers or subordinates who form an integrated part, relating to the development and improvement of their performance levels, to ensure a high quality level of institutional performance and the expected and intended service delivery levels (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1: Number of Population

Administrative units at Unisa	Participants (category)	Number of population	Sample
All administrative staff at Unisa	Phase one: Structured survey questionnaires (a) Line Managers (b) Administrative officers(subordinates)	N = 200	63,2%
All administrative staff at Unisa	Phase two: Open ended questions (interviews) Line Managers/ Supervisors	N = 30	100%
Regions (all administrative staff)			

The rationale behind this sampling approach relates to the purpose of this study, the research question, and that the appropriate information, case or unit of study were relevant and available for the particular study (Section 4.3.1).

The names and personal identities of participants were not made public at any stage during the research. Potential participants were given an opportunity to either participate or not in the study. Each participant's right to confidentiality and privacy was respected.

4.3.2 Sampling procedures

The researcher used the non-probability coincidental sampling technique, which allows for the sharing of different experiences by different respondents. All items were piloted to check whether they would yield similar results.

According to Creswell (2009:8-9), interpretative studies rely on participants who have extended experience of a specific phenomenon. Trafford and Leshen (2008:97-99) further indicate that access to relevant data requires a combination of

methodological approaches, since neither an inductive nor a deductive approach alone would enable the research questions to be adequately answered.

More importantly, according to Armstrong (2010:396), sampling means to target a proportion of a total population for the researching of a phenomenon. The selected population must represent the characteristics of the total population. Moreover, the sample should not be biased, and therefore large scale surveys should use a random sampling method (Armstrong, 2010:396). Thus the population target is not based on specific selected individuals, but forms part of an existing large population.

Hence, purposive and random sampling methods were applied for the purposes of the current study. Purposive sampling involves the researcher determining which individuals would best provide the required or best information, based on their experience and understanding a specific phenomenon. The interpretation of data from interviews, consultations, observations and conversations should also follow the longitudinal approach to observe phenomena over a period of time (Webb & Auriacombe, 2006:594-596).

Saunders *et al.* (2007:60-69), similarly, indicate that sampling techniques provide a range of methods to ensure the data collected is limited, by considering data from sub-groups, rather than exploring all avenues. Sampling, according to this author, will be influenced by the approach to the study, whether cross-sectional or longitudinal. Cross-sectional approaches focus on a wide number of areas or situations studied over a short period of time and longitudinal designs focus on a small group over an extended period of time.

Since the approach to this study was mainly qualitative in nature, it was undertaken within an interpretive and descriptive framework. As such, there were guiding principles, including the recognition of subjective experiences, in contextualising the phenomena being studied. The intention was to use inductive methods and qualitative data, and to interpret, rather to quantify the data gathered for the current study.

The collected data was interpreted in a consistent and objective fashion, without given preference to any specific type of experience. Biases were avoided by using the non-probability coincidental sampling technique.

Thereafter, qualitative themes were identified and the number of times they repeated were counted. Once patterns and themes were identified, the researcher could compare the inductive and deductive data outcomes to determine relationships. Also, by using this approach, the researcher was able to codify and analyse the data to determine specific patterns. Thereafter the findings were generated which enabled an understanding of the performance management system at Unisa. The above steps guided the researcher in the quest for an answer to the question: *How can individual performance outcomes be improved to enable institutional high quality performance outcomes?*

This method enabled the sharing of different experiences by different respondents. Furthermore, the researcher used triangulation (multiple methods) to raise the research that was conducted in this study above the personal biases that stem from single methodologies (Section 4.9). According to Babbie and Mouton (2007:275), by combining methods and investigations in the same study, observers can partially overcome the deficiencies from one approach alone.

4.3.3 Data-collection methods

A case study usually entails the use of fieldwork investigation. Therefore, the methods to gather relevant information will include: participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Questions and questionnaires were based on the literature reviews and document analysis. Secondary data sources included the interpretation of policies and procedural documents relating to the object of research. According to White (2003:17), data triangulation refers to data sources such as oneself and respondents, as well as relevant documents the researcher may use to collect data.

Mouton (2001:197-199) describes the importance of combining the data obtained from individual qualitative interviews with that of focus group interviews, as part of the data-collection process. This approach, according to Mouton (2001:197), could indicate opinions and perceptions at another level, such as consensus or disagreement on issues related to the topic under research. More importantly, according to this author, a group interview could serve as an additional source of validation. Therefore, previous individual respondents could, within a group

interview, allow for new interpretive data to surface and bring the researcher closer to the truth.

The outcomes of data collected during the analysis and interpreting of documents, policies and procedures related to the performance management practices at Unisa (Chapter 5), was integrated with the primary data collected. Thus, the data collected from all available resources during the research phases was utilised to conclude the data-collection phases. White (2003:17) continues that the inclusion of multiple sources of data is likely to enhance the reliability of the data collected. Moreover, Denzin (1989:244) indicates that the advantage of the triangulation of different data lies in the fact that the flaws of one are often the strengths of another. This researcher argues that, by combining techniques or methods, the researcher can use the strength of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies.

It is important, according to Denzin (1989:244), that it does not mean that either the process techniques, or data generated, should be mixed. The results of each process should first be discussed or analysed separately. Only as a next step could triangulation of data then be considered. Also, according to Denzin (1989:244), typically strong similarities could be viewed as a validation of data conclusions. Data-collection techniques relevant to the qualitative approach entail interviews, observation and diary methods. The data is typically open-ended and focuses on a specific phenomenon, which provides detailed descriptions of events, situations and interaction between people.

4.3.3.1 Interviews as data-collection method

Armstrong (2010:343) indicates that interviews are an important primary data-collection method. The structured approach focuses on obtaining answers from pre-prepared questions, whereas the unstructured approach means that no specific questions have been prepared. Hence, the interview is allowed to communicate interpretations or perceptions without any interruption or intervention. However, this approach could be inconsequential, which could lead to poor data and difficulties in analysing it (Armstrong, 2010:393-394).

Armstrong (2010:394) continues by stating that the semi-structured approach identifies areas of importance and that questions should be predetermined. Although there is a predetermined checklist, the interviews do not have to follow it rigidly, and

the researcher or interviewer may rephrase questions to suite the specific circumstances and characteristics of each respondent. This approach, according to Armstrong (2010:394), could eliminate problems that arise from the completely structured or unstructured interviews. However, it requires a high degree of skill from the interviewer.

The researcher of the current study which is being reported on in this thesis, used a combination of the above-mentioned approaches which could ensure in-depth but also open-ended discussions of a specific phenomenon. Moreover, it allowed for insights based on experience directly from the respondents in the area of research, thus prompting in-depth perceptions from these interview approaches, as mentioned above, which is usually lacking during the use of questionnaires and surveys.

However, Armstrong (2010:394) argues that the weaknesses of interviews entail the following:

- Interviewer may use leading questions;
- Interviews may influence respondents by manipulating or imposing their own frames of reference;
- Respondents could communicate perceptions that the interviewer wants to hear;
- The interview processes are labour-intensive and time-consuming, specifically during the set-up, conducting and analysis phases;
- Effective interviewing requires considerable interviewing skills.

4.3.3.2 Survey as data-collection method

This study utilised a survey, as a data-collection method, includes a combination of various data gathering methods, for example, (i) less structured methods of observing a phenomena; (ii) individual and group interviews; and (iii) diary methods.

Questionnaires gather information on matters of fact or opinion. Hence, Armstrong (2010:394) writes that there are pertinent methods to conduct survey questionnaires by including:

- closed questions (that only require yes or no answers, or the frequent use of activities), which can be ranked in order of importance or value;

- Likert scales which is a method that requests respondents to indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement with a statement, usually on a scale of 1-5. This approach facilitates a quantitative analysis.

For this study, the researcher also used questionnaires to determine or gather factual evidence for comparison purposes, with that of qualitative data. These structured questionnaires can reach many respondents, within a short time of period, and is an efficient manner to gather information. However, Armstrong (2010:295) warned researchers to closely monitor the degree of subjectivity that may occur when expressing opinions. The researcher of this study therefore triangulated all gathered information, both qualitative and quantitative, to avoid subjectivity. Moreover the observation, analysis and interpretation of documents related to performance management practices at Unisa formed a supportive part of the data-collection process. Lastly, a more structured approach, through a survey in a questionnaire format, was also used to determine the scale or frequency of the application of identified activities.

This structured questionnaire was used to understand the views, perceptions, experiences and knowledge of participants to determine whether performance management practices of Unisa have improved individual performance outcomes. Semi-structured questions (open-ended) were used to ensure that participants would experience the freedom to express their opinions, the way they experience and understand the phenomenon being studied. The structured questionnaire, as part of the questionnaire's data-collection method, was used as it could reach many participants in a short time and with less costs. This in itself is an efficient method of collecting data which can be administered to a large number of people. Hence, a structured questionnaire was used to explore the perceptions of employees in respect of the implementation and facilitation of a performance management system at Unisa.

The above information was obtained by conducting a survey questionnaire, targeting administrative supervisors, as well as administrative officers. Hence, the researcher had no direct control over the variables and was in no position to manipulate the outcomes. Therefore, the researcher only reported on what emanated from the outcomes.

4.4 VALIDITY

It is often found that a study is reliable but not valid at all (Section 4.5, 4.6). Therefore, Silverman (2006: 304) notes that studies tend to be either valid or reliable, and it is often a trade-off. Again, triangulation will bring together the strengths of the different forms of research to validate results by comparison (Section 4.10). Qualitative studies tend to be valid but not necessarily reliable, whereas quantitative studies tend to be more reliable than valid. Usually the findings of the latter are not transferrable or generalisable to other settings. According to Silverman (2006: 303-310), appropriate methods for validating studies are largely based within the qualitative data gathering methods, namely, through analytical induction, constant comparative methods and case analysis.

The credibility of qualitative research can be increased by using purposive sampling. Qualitative researchers are not necessarily concerned whether documents are true or false, but focus on how document contents contribute to practical decision-making and experiences of employees in the context of the constraints and challenges of their work execution. Credibility exists when the research findings reflect the perception of the respondents, as part of the study of a phenomenon.

Qualitative and quantitative researchers use different methods to determine validity and reliability. Internal validity is important for the qualitative paradigm, since researchers are able to demonstrate realities through descriptions of the perceptions of participants. Triangulation uses various different or multiple sources, a range of different data collecting methods and comparisons related to research outcomes, emanated from the qualitative and quantitative methods applied.

Leedy and Ormrod (2013:88-89, 262) suggest that validity is the extent to which research methods confirm what was intended to be measured or investigated: hence, for this study to investigate how performance management systems at Unisa can be improved. Validity for the current study was ensured through a process of checking the interpretation of the study and by ensuring that conclusions logically emanated from the research findings.

4.5 CREDIBILITY

Credibility refers to the confidence of data. Thus, credibility in qualitative studies relates to internal validity in the data collected. Credibility occurs when the research findings accurately reflect the perception of the people/participants under research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:88-91).

The credibility of data was ensured by (i) both the researcher and an assistant separately coding data to check for inter-rater agreement; (ii) also the process first went through a trial run with a few participants to ensure that there were no discrepancies; and (iii) the outcomes of data interpretations were compared and checked by more than one person.

The researcher was not be influenced by his own perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. The participants' experiences and words demonstrated their realities.

4.6 RELIABILITY OF QUALITATIVE DATA

When enhancing validity and reliability in the qualitative paradigm, researchers are more concerned with triangulation and write extensive field notes. Activities such as member checks and peer review audits trials, and openness and comparisons usually apply (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:215).

The reliability of findings depends on the likely recurrence of the original data and the interpretation thereof. An important control process to ensure a high level of reliability consists of the following:

- Target knowledgeable participants;
- Eliminate own perceptions and keep a distance;
- Conduct fieldwork in a consistent manner;
- Allow participants ample opportunities to be flexible and free in portraying their experiences;
- Ensure classifications were confirmed by multiple assessments, interpretations, and was well supported by evidence; and

- Ensure that the narrative of the study specified all the information that was necessary to know and understand the findings of the study.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The outcomes of discussions during questionnaire surveys and interview sessions were transcribed as soon as possible after each interview and data analysis. Thereafter, the results were coded into themes/patterns, using the research question as guideline. Comparisons were made to eliminate possible duplication or biases. This process was repeated until saturation was reached, thus, until no further new information or themes emerged.

Mouton (1996:160-161) indicates that data analysis entails two important phases, namely, (i) reducing the collected data into manageable categories, and (ii) identifying themes and patterns from the data. Hence, the following phases formed the core of determining patterns and themes in the current study:

- Analysing recorded and documented interviews;
- Formulating hypotheses based on the outcomes of conceptual ideas and addressing discording participants' main concerns;
- Microsoft Office Word 2007 software program was used to develop documents, assisting the researcher to meet the objectives of coding (open, axial Atlas.ti and selected coding):
 - The first phase was open coding, which identified and defined phenomena to assist in developing categories of information;
 - The second phase entailed axial coding, which determined specific relationships and interconnected the categories;
 - The last phase concluded with the selection of coding that identified the core categories (themes).
- All of the above tasks were managed by conducting continuous comparisons of analysis and sifting towards specific categories.

The major aim in respect of data analysis was to determine an understanding and to assign meaning by analysing words, sentences, interpretations from participants,

and observations. Eventually, clear patterns emerged guiding the interpretation and meaning.

The literature overview was also important as it had to be analysed to determine what it could offer in this research. The researcher had to determine how the literature studied for the purposes of the current study could enable a valuable contribution to the body of existing knowledge. This was specifically applicable with regards to the existing approaches which were identified in the literature study to enhance performance management systems. Cross-references were eventually done between all the literature chapters in the current study to ensure that all the collected information or data gathered from the literature review, case study and all other relevant empirical investigations (themes) correlated. Exceptions were analysed in the context of the specific circumstances.

Interpretive researchers analyse texts to find out how people make meaning of their lives. Therefore, the researcher interprets the data, in order to make it understandable, and to identify consistencies as well as meanings which emerged from the data. In addition, the analysis and findings of the qualitative data, in combination with the above, were triangulated to identify themes that correlated.

4.8 DATA INTERPRETATION

The interpreting of data followed a three phase process:

- A first phase, where interpretations contained the motives, personal reasons and points of the participants;
- A second phase, where the interpretation included the point that, although the researcher aimed to get very close to the participant, he/she remained an outsider and kept a distance;
- A third phase, where the interpretation represented the researcher with an understanding of data that is at a distance, and the researcher was thus aware of his/her own influence.

The above phases also ensured reliability by consistently applying/assigning similar codes to the phenomena identified during the above processes.

The analysis pertaining to the results of the survey was executed by utilising descriptive statistical techniques that were used to analyse and interpret the outcomes of perceptions and experiences of the respondents. Measurements and scores were indicated by a five-point Likert scale: with a range from low to high levels of the variable of indication/interest by respondents. Hence, tendencies were identified to describe the averages of selected sets of outcomes/scores. The support of a statistical expert (Atlas.ti) was utilised to interpret, analyse and to convert interpretations into patterns, by using applicable computer software. This adequately reflected the scores for the purpose of quantitative interpretation.

4.9 TRIANGULATION

Babbie and Mouton (2007:275) observe that when enhancing validity and reliability in the qualitative paradigm, triangulation and extensive written field notes would be the appropriate approach. Also, the checking by members, peer review, audit trails, openness and comparisons are tools that ensure a high level of validity and reliability (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:275).

White (2003:17) similarly argues that data triangulation refers to data sources as oneself, participants, literature, interviews, observations, conversations and relevant documents, as used by researchers in collecting data. This researcher continues by indicating that the inclusion of multiple data-collection methods in research is likely to enhance the reliability of the collected data. Therefore, according to White (2003:17), the above approach could confirm a more correct understanding of a phenomenon, by approaching it from different angles. For example, this data could assist the researcher (as in the current study) in making appropriate proposals to enable the improvement of individual performance outcomes which could ensure high quality institutional performance.

Therefore, the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches was appropriate to ensure a holistic approach related to the phenomenon under investigation. Due to the complexity of the research focus, a specific research approach would most probably not have satisfied legitimate outcomes, hence the mixed approach. The researcher therefore utilised qualitative and quantitative data-collection methods, namely, semi-structured interviews, pre- and post-tested questionnaires, focus group

interviews, field notes, personal observations and conversations, and also performed an analysis of documents related to performance management practices at Unisa.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the research design and methodology adopted for the current study. Hence, the research design was defined as a plan for conducting empirical research, whereas the research methodology was explained as the various methods and techniques used for data collection, analysis and interpretation, as well as sampling. Therefore the steps, procedures and methods to implement the research design were explained. A mixed-method research design was the option for conducting this research, as this specific research approach could ensure an in-depth understanding of the research problem. Likewise, the population, sampling procedures and data-collection methods relevant to this research paradigm were discussed.

The current study utilised a literature review, document analysis, self-administered questionnaires and personal interviews as data-collection instruments. These were conducted within the prescribed ethical policies and procedures as prescribed by the University of South Africa (Unisa). This study used validity, credibility and reliability, as well as triangulation, to ensure the trustworthiness of the researched findings.

Lastly, the research data was properly administered to ensure the safeguarding of the rights of participants. Data was also secured by the protection of data, which will be stored on a computer protected through the use of a password.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, deals with the analytical investigation and description of the performance management policy framework and practices at Unisa. Therefore, the focus is on the empirical investigation of this study, and more specifically, to describe performance management policies, procedures and practices, and the implementation practices thereof at Unisa. Hence, it includes the interactions and interventions related to performance management practices, and the descriptions and interpretation of policies, procedures, documents, reports, minutes, and communications related to current individual performance management practices at Unisa.

Moreover, the focus of the next chapter is on the characteristics of Unisa's individual performance management environment; and more specifically, to explore the individual performance management practices within the administrative units of Unisa, as related to the expected institutional student administrative service delivery outcomes.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Charron *et al.* (2015:2) confirmed that the management of an institution usually has two important functions, namely, maintaining or controlling current processes, and enhancing current processes. Management is thus continuously accountable for improving institutional performance through, for example, the improvement of employee performance management practices. Performance management should therefore be seen as the outcome or end result of various inputs, such as institutional processes and environmental influences in evaluating and monitoring effective progress towards the planned and acceptable levels of service delivery.

Chapter 4 presented the research paradigms, design and methodology, thus the plan for conducting the empirical research. The focus of this chapter will be on the characteristics of Unisa's individual performance management policy environment and, more specifically, to explore the individual performance management practices within the administrative units of the University.

5.2 BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

In alignment with its strategic objectives and operational plans, and to ensure a high performance institution, Unisa underwent a complete reconfiguration in respect of their transformation agendas and strategies. The new Unisa emerged in 2004 as a single dedicated and comprehensive distance education institution. More specifically, after the amalgamation of the former Unisa, Technikon Southern Africa and the Vista University for Distance Education Campus, Unisa can truly claim to be a comprehensive open distance university in the service of humanity.

The purpose of this consolidation process was to facilitate increased access to higher education, to develop learning materials that could be used nationally, to create learning centres and other forms of support, and to expand access to

students from the SADC region (Unisa, 2010a:10-11). Unisa is the largest open distance learning (ODL) institution in South Africa and Africa, with a registered number of 360 000 students during the writing of this research investigation. Whilst acknowledging that the merger created challenges, it also created a critical mass of diverse cultures and resource capacity, which made it almost impossible to determine effective synergies across its goals and operations.

Hence, when the Unisa 2015 strategic plan was developed, the institution still faced various challenges emanating from the merger, such as, where staff should be relocated, new structures, the right-sizing of organisational structures and the consolidation of service conditions. An unexpected side-effect was that the morale of staff suffered due to uncertainties surrounding the merger. At the same time, managers were criticised for not adhering to due processes, proper planning and expected performance outputs (Unisa, 2015a:11).

However, more important according to the researcher of this study, different systems hampered effective ICT platforms, and that had further negative impacts on service delivery and individual performance outputs. The misalignment of current performance management procedures, and the lack of availability of standardised procedures: created challenges to successfully implement set targets by due dates. The alignment and synchronisation of all systems, processes and databases remained a key challenge to ensure effective individual performance management practices.

The Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030 is an important planning and directive document, which should seamlessly articulate with the Unisa 2015 strategic plan, that is, towards a high performance university. The key features of the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030 can be summarised as follows:

- To be 'The African University of Choice';
- To become the trend-setting comprehensive university;
- To become a cutting-edge open distance e-learning (ODEL) institution, and the leader in higher education management and good governance (Unisa 2015e:1-2).

An important aspect that forms part of the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030, is the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the University's performance towards the realising of goals, objectives and targets set. Based on the contents of this document, a holistic monitoring and evaluation system will require appropriate operational capabilities and a risk management framework to enable Unisa to meet set targets (Unisa, 2015e:12).

The 2020 Annual Performance Plan (APP) submission is in response to the Guidelines for Annual Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions (Act 101 of 1997). The University is required to submit a Unisa Council approved APP that is aligned to the strategic plan and budget, as well as key performance indicators. The Council approved the Unisa 2030 Plan, which sets out the university's vision, mission, values and strategic focus areas for the 15-year period (Unisa, 2015:2-3).

Also, in alignment with the above, a specific concern was raised in the Unisa Budget Committee (Unisa, 2014c:3-4) that it is evident that the current institutional performance management system and the parallel practice of performance bonuses to all members of staff has had no positive impact on service delivery. Hence, the investment of performance bonuses (R115 million for 2015) needed to be critically scrutinised. A concern was raised regarding the lack of correlation between the high performance ratings of individuals and the poor performance of the institution. An attempt to ensure proper correlation between investments made in respect of these bonuses and accepted service delivery levels, needed urgent attention (Unisa, 2014c:3-5).

Mizrahi (2017:68) is of the opinion that resources and resource allocation have a significant influence on performance management processes. The resource allocation and budgetary concerns form an integral part of day-to-day operations and management. Managers are required to integrate performance management processes with planning, goal setting, as well as resource allocation, to enable support and to ensure efficient operational implementation (Mizrahi, 2017:67-69).

5.3 THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AT UNISA

The Executive Management of Unisa submitted a revised management structure to Council which was approved on 24 April 2015. This structure took effect on 1 January 2016 and supports the Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030. Figure 5.1 below presents a diagrammatic illustration of the Unisa organisational structure.

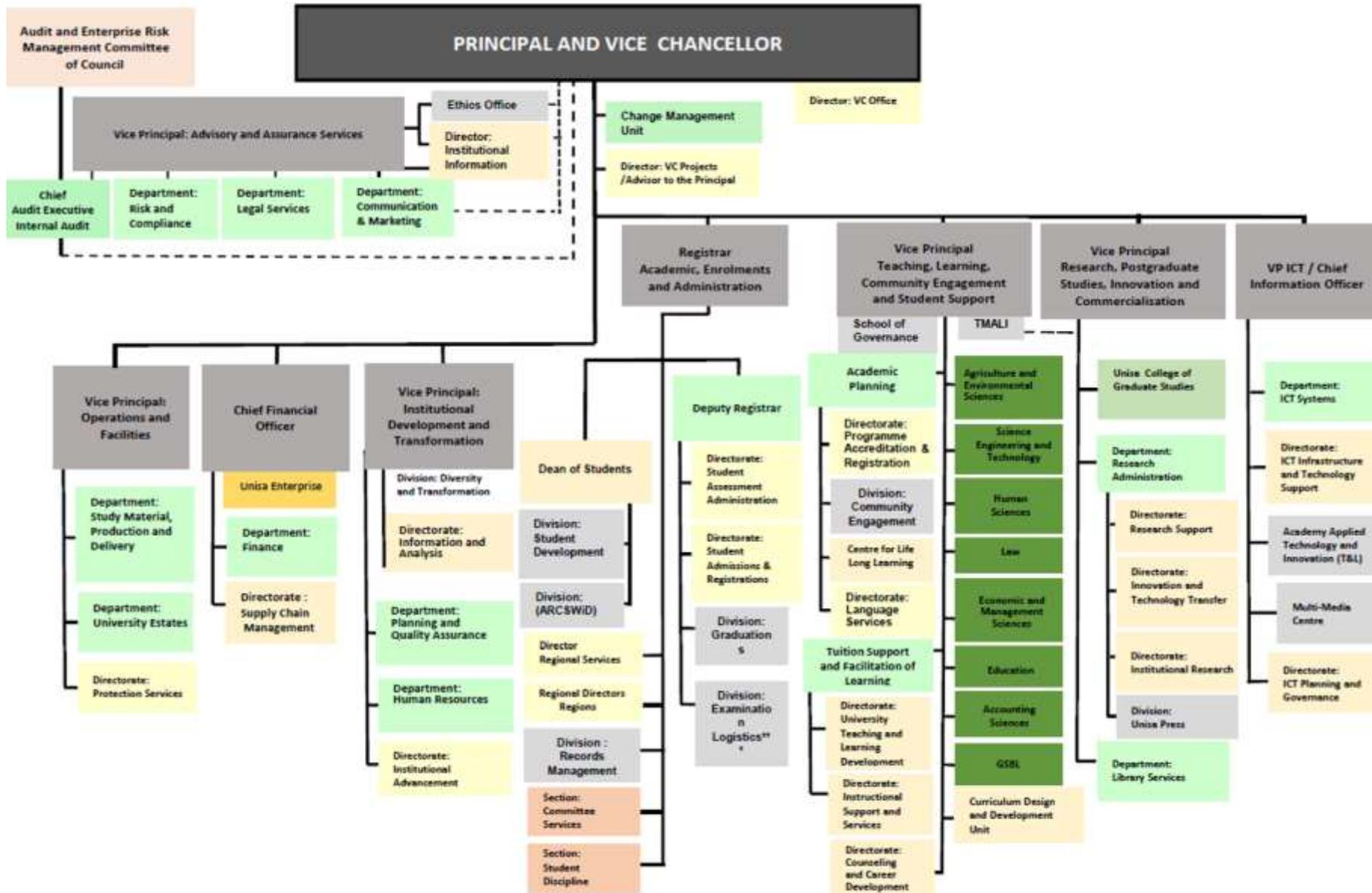


Figure 5.1: University institutional structure

Source: Unisa, Revised Structures

Performance occurs within the boundaries of organisational structures, standard operational procedures, and inter-personal relationships (Prester & Moller, 2008:12-13). Rummler and Brache (1990:46-49) similarly note that the intended execution of objectives to achieve performance outputs effectively, and viewed from top down, will ensure the successful implementation of institutional objectives. Therefore, ensuring connectivity between set individual objectives and targets, with institutional performance goals to ensure the implementation thereof at operational level. Individual performance can only be managed effectively through three integrated process levels namely, institutional level, process level and job performance level (Rummler & Brache, 1990:46-49) (Section 2.5).

Important for this study and investigation relating to an improved performance management system, are the following two strategic goals:

- To be the leading ODeL, comprehensive university on franchise and learning, research, innovation and community engagement based on scholarship;
- To craft and implement an agile, innovative, sustainable and efficient operational environment (Unisa, 2015a:3).

According to the Unisa Annual Report 2014, the organisational structure of the institution should be designed to support the institution to execute its core business: teaching and learning, research and innovation, community engagement, and to give practical effect to agreed-upon institutional strategic and operational priorities. The equitable distribution of functions across portfolios to ensure horizontal and vertical integration of activities will most probably ensure a high quality individual performance outcome, since individuals will then know what is expected from them (Unisa, 2014b:6-7).

The organisational structure of the University is designed to support the executing of its core objectives, through the effective management and utilisation of human resources, and more important, to give practical effect towards the implementation of specific objectives, by improving individual performance outcomes in alignment with its strategic and operational priorities (Figure 5.1). These core objectives, and the influence thereof related to performance management practices, will be discussed in the next section.

Noe *et al.* (2015:237-293); Taylor (2014:1) and Bouckaert and Hallingan (2006:22-26) emphasise the fact that the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems, and institutional structure and culture may result in high-performance institutions (Section 3.2).

5.4 INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: POLICY AND PROCEDURES AT INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Birnbaum (2009:240) contends that higher education does not only need more effective management techniques. From the literature review, it is evident that employee performance improvement should also be supported by an enhanced overall working environment within the institution. In addition, to engage in honest open-minded discussions, to eventually improve the institution's performance to eventually provide a supportive environment for employees to improve themselves (Culbert, 2010:185-187).

Wessels *et al.* (2009:7) declare that one of the purposes of research is to improve practice and to seek an understanding of how people understand their world. Research and/or science enable individuals to identify problems and/or challenges and to proactively propose proper solutions thereto. The focus in respect of the empirical investigation of this study, and more specifically this chapter, will be to describe the performance management policies, procedures and practices, and the implementation practices thereof at Unisa. Hence, according to Babbie and Mouton (2007:215) the researcher should ensure reliability by eliminating own perceptions and keeping a distance from the object of the study. Further mitigation measures are to allow inquiry audit, where an auditor examines documentation of critical incidents, like interview notes, interpretation and recommendations, in order to enhance reliability, and validity, by ensuring the soundness of the interpretation of outcomes of tests in measurement.

Unisa embarked on a 2015 strategy to strive towards being the University of choice throughout Africa. As such, various strategic objectives were formulated to realise this and to promote the Open Distance Learning (ODL) model of the University. More specifically, for the purpose of this study, to ensure high quality service delivery through the improvement of employees' contributions towards the institutionally expected performance outcomes. In so doing, to become a high performing and

more efficient and effective institution, specifically relating to the execution of expected service delivery outputs (Unisa, 2015:2-5).

Given the importance of Unisa's contribution in support of the National Development Goals (NDG), it is crucial that the employees safeguard Unisa's reputational image to retain and ensure service delivery enhancement, thus, meeting societal credibility and trustworthiness. The implementation of the Unisa Strategic plan 2016 to 2030, will require more vigilance and joint execution and actions to promote streamlined efficiencies towards ensuring a more effective and responsive Unisa (Unisa, 2015e).

According to Mizrahi (2017:164-165), performance management includes a series of information categories, such as strategic goals, objectives, performance measures and targets. Moreover, the process of planning and implementing performance management objectives links to the idea of strategic management. It entails a process of backward planning, where the outputs can lead to the expected planned outcomes. The inputs and activities that could lead to these outputs should be determined, and in each phase of this process, goals, targets and measures should be set. Mizrahi (2017:164-165) maintains that performance management can be viewed as the planning of such processes for the execution of strategic planning.

5.4.1 Policy and procedures related to individual performance management

Borgonovi *et al.* (2018:xi) describe an important interpretation of a performance management policy process, which is relevant to this study, namely, the separation between policy-making and management to the integration of the policy cycle. This process entails co-analysis, co-decision, co-design and co-evaluation, which lead to objective setting for implementation by individuals. Rummler and Brache (1990:165-167) endorse the fact that, without the involvement of individuals in target setting, the management thereof will become a set of uneducated guesses (Section 3.5.1).

Hutchinson (2013:2-4) proposed that individual performance management should be an integrated process focusing on managers and employees to plan and set expectations, evaluate and review outcomes, agree on improvement plans and sometimes reward performance. This author confirms that there are still unanswered questions relating to the influence of HR policies and procedures on the management of employee performance (Section 2.9.1).

To ensure a coherent and transparent institution-wide framework for performance monitoring and feedback, effective Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) policies and procedures should be consistent with best practice. This IPMS is essential to enable and ensure that the achievement of objectives within the institution's 2016-2030 Strategic Plan towards service excellence, are successfully implemented.

Conversely, Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) indicate that, although HR policies and procedures play an important supportive role, knowledgeable managers and their team members should work together to ensure ownership and accountability. Managers should monitor performance on a continuous basis throughout the year and support employees by setting goals, providing feedback, monitoring performance outcomes and improving the working environment, thus to ensure continuous improvement in performance results (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:340-347).

Nienaber (2017:585) observes that, if carefully designed and applied, performance management has the potential to align individuals' attitudes and behaviour with institutional priorities, which could lead to goal achievement (Nienaber, 2017:585). The practical implications are that continuous engagement by a manager will involve individuals and could improve performance outputs.

Mizrahi (2017:5-6) maintains that performance management systems usually contribute to managerial processes. Also in developing and executing such systems in the context of performance management policy, the emphasis should rather be on processes, and not necessarily on outcomes. With planning implementation, attention should be focused on behavioural factors, such as motivation, incentives, interpretations and development (also Section 3.5.2).

Furthermore, Mizrahi (2017:15-16) is of the opinion that performance management systems are managerial tools through which policy-makers or managers should determine and set goals, as well as acting as performance indicators for an institution. These goals and performance indicators should be followed by expected performance standards in relation to benchmarks, and tools should be introduced to incentivise managers and individuals to meet the expected standards (Mizrahi, 2017:15-16)(Section 3.5.4).

An important statement, according to Mizrahi (2017:65-67), is that it is accepted, or assumed that performance management systems provide and support managers to improve quality in respect of individual performance management outcomes, as well as their own leadership skills. In this context, quality refers to the professionalism of public personnel as measured by objective assessors, while it also refers to leadership skills of those responsible to execute the institutions vision and goals. Accountability and transparency provide an indication of the managerial self-criticism and a willingness to improve existing processes and procedures. Therefore, management quality is a significant indicator of institutional and individual performance improvement (Mizrahi, 2017:65-67).

As a backdrop to the above rationale, a short explanation of the historical development of IPMS at Unisa will follow. To establish the current challenges and the way forward, it is important to keep abreast of the changing environment and applicable execution activities relating to the IPMS in the institution. The IPMS report indicates that the first policy that governed the institution's IPMS was approved by the Unisa Council in 2008, and was applicable to all Unisa employees. A revised performance management policy for employees on Peromnes grades P5 to P19 was developed and approved, after negotiations with the Unisa Bargaining Forum (UBF) at Council in 2013. These changes were forced to ensure alignment with the newly introduced strategic objectives for Unisa. Since then, the original policy (2008) for all employees was used for employees on Peromnes grades, namely, Directors/Executive Directors and Vice-Principals (P1 – P4). The revised policy for employees P1 – P4, was eventually submitted in 2016 to Management Committee of Unisa (MANCOM) and to the Remuneration Committee of Council (REMCOM) for consideration and approval.

A well designed and properly implemented performance system provides a firm foundation for effective service delivery. Such a well redesigned IPMS policy and system could enhance the morale among staff, and could enhance individual performance outputs. However, evident from Unisa reports (Sections 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.2) it is clear that the current IPMS systems, policies and procedures lack appropriate alignment with current strategic goals (Sections 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.2).

Therefore, Minnaar (2010:3-4) argues that the most important challenge for effective performance management is to identify or determine the relevant organisational

strategies for implementation. Equally important is the operational implementation, driven by the same inputs, projects, operations and eventually outcomes, therefore, policies, procedures, enablers and dependencies. This is followed by individual performance management, creating accountability and to drive these processes in concert by involving all role-players from the start towards achieving the end-targets. Minnaar (2010:3-4) warns against a silo-management approach in respect of performance management practices, which could derail standardised procedures and effective management of IPMS.

During 2017 a further report was submitted, to present to MANCOM the findings and recommendation of an external review of the 2017 Execution Management Performance Agreement and to determine the way forward in respect of new developments. Based on the contents of this report, Council and the Vice Chancellor requested the alignment of the 2017 performance agreements to the 2017 Compact with Council (Unisa, 2017). A further important decision was to request an external service provider to conduct a review during 2017, of which the findings should be made available during 2017/18. (The outcomes of this review are described in Chapter 7.)

However, some of the recommendations from this review will have already take effect as part of the Executive and Extended Management's performance agreement in 2017 (Unisa, 2017c:1-12).

For the purpose of this study, which forms an integrated part of IPMS, the following policies will be relevant, where applicable:

- Unisa, 2013 – 2015. Towards a High Performance University;
- Unisa Strategic Plan. 2016 – 2030;
- Compact with Council, 2017. Derived from the Unisa 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan;
- Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) Peromnes levels, P1 – 4 and P5 – 18. 2008;
- Revised IPMS Policy Peromnes levels P5 – P19, 2013;
- Implementing the integrated performance management system (IPMS): Performance Management at the individual level, 2008;
- Performance Agreements (1 January to 31 December 2017);

- External review: 2017 Executive Management performance agreements: March 2017;
- Unisa: Towards a sustainable Future. The establishment of an Institutional Performance Measurement Framework and Methodology: November 2016;
- Draft Performance Management Policy and Procedures for Senior Management and Directors. MANCOM submission October 2016; and
- Progress report. Implementation of initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) and further alignment to best practices. MANCOM, May 2017.

According to the Unisa IPMS policy (2013a), Unisa's talent management framework forms an integrated part of the Institutional Performance Management System (IPMS) which is aimed at ensuring individual development and the enhancement in performance outputs, as well in recruiting developing and retaining employees with the requisite mind-set, knowledge and skills to achieve Unisa's strategic plan. The IPMS will also be utilised primarily to translate the institutional objectives, measures and targets into performance expectations for individuals which aim to support employees in achieving these expectations, through a process of continuous monitoring, reviews and enhancements (Unisa, 2013a:1-2). Therefore, the core purpose of the policy is to inform a systematic process to enable the institution to effectively manage predetermined events to ensure that employees achieve their agreed-upon performance outcomes. The policy must clarify the expected performance standards, resource requirements and agreement on regular feedback and assessment. Appropriate training and personal development plans are essential to eventually ensure appropriate recognition for performance excellence (Unisa, 2013a:1-3).

Enos (2000:134-136) agrees and argues that an effective way to develop an individual's performance process is to introduce a well-designed performance management system. Such an appropriate performance management system should contain clear goals and standards for implementation, Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)(Section 3.5.4), monitor progress, sufficient feedback, supportive interventions by line-managers, acknowledgements, incentives and continuous communication

with employees, to identify 'gaps' or barriers, which could prevent the successful implementation of set goals (Enos, 2000:140-142).

5.4.2 Objectives of an Integrated Performance Management System Policy

Further to the above focus areas, the Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) policy specifies the following objectives to be achieved (Unisa, 2013a:2-3):

- To establish a culture of performance excellence, accountability and stewardship in alignment with Unisa's values, objectives and institutional identity and culture;
- To build relationships of collegiality, trust and openness between individuals, their colleagues and line managers through continuous engagement in respect of performance management practices;
- To ensure day-to-day activities of employees are in alignment with the intended operational requirements;
- To promote service excellence by encouraging employees towards serving clients with integrity and dedication;
- To ensure the working environment is conducive to high performance outcomes; and
- To enable employees to showcase their individual contributions and to receive appropriate recognition.

Moreover, Cokins (2004:1) indicates that performance management is the process of managing the execution of specific individual job contents. The challenge is to ensure that specific goals are implemented successfully by employees. Performance management aims to integrate planned job contents towards target setting, ensuring these activities become realities. The result could be that employee activities can then be orchestrated towards implementation. Performance management is more than HR practices, system, software and metrics; it includes all processes to enable effective individual performance management (Section 3.2). According to Noe *et al.* (2014:235-239), effective performance management seeks to achieve strategic purpose, administrative purpose and development purpose (Section 3.2).

Cokins (2004:22-23), also argues that it is evident from literature that managers are accountable to enhance institutional performance outcomes. Employees can only

implement tasks successfully, if they understand the what, why, when, who and how, of activities to be executed (Section cf. 3.2).

5.4.3 Principles and values of an Integrated Performance Management System

Important principles and values guiding the facilitation of an effective performance management process, related to individual employees indicated in the policy document, are:

- Fairness, equity, consistency and openness in facilitation of the IPMS;
- Not to use the IPMS as a punitive, but rather as a developmental tool;
- To create individual accountability for achieving own performance standards, targets and to correct under-performance, if it exists;
- To establish clear standards and the provision of support and allocation of resources to enable employees to perform to the required standards; and
- To accept the need to continuously learn and enhance, to ensure an effective and vibrant institution. (Unisa, 2013a:2-3)

Smither and London (2009:5-7) note that, to enhance individual performance, the process of managing the employee's performance must be an ongoing process. Policies and procedures guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. The continuous engagement and alignment facilitation, by informed and knowledgeable managers, is an important function (Section 3.2.1).

More important, according to Michel (2013:150-153), is the five important ways in which managers can interact with employees: to direct their thinking, decisions and action purposefully and reinforce awareness in respect of performance commitment.

This is done through:

- Strategy conversation, indicating the 'why' the institution is working towards a specific direction;
- Risk dialogue, indicating 'how' employees can contribute, and which risks exist
- Sense-making, indicating what the strategies mean in respect of implementation actions;

- Contribution dialogue, indicating what to do next and what activities employees need to execute in alignment with self objectives and lastly
- Performance conversation, asking whether everyone is on track (Michel, 2013:150-151).

5.4.4 Phases and implementation of an Integrated Performance Management System

The broader cycle of activities as indicated in Unisa's IPMS involves; (i) the performance planning phase, (ii) the performance implementation, monitoring and development phase, and (iii) the formative and summative phases of assessment.

It is further reported that the procedures for managing each phase are based on the detail within the IPMS procedures and supportive templates. Also part of these templates, is the relevant personal development plans (PDP) applicable to each specific key performance area, should further training and individual development plans be required (Unisa, 2013a:3-4).

More important, the performance agreement should be developed during the planning phase, and should include all activities within the individual's job description and unit's operational plan. The allocation of a weighting percentage per key performance area (KPA) must be in alignment with the job description, unless operational requirements dictate otherwise (Unisa, 2013a:3-4).

Similarly important, as reported in this policy, is the management and coordination phase that entails how line managers should determine relevant measures to ensure that set objectives are achieved. Specifically the targets (quantity) and standards (quality) of levels of work must be clarified and indicated towards work that must be delivered. Hence, according to the view of some stakeholder's inputs, a joint responsibility and continuous conversation and feedback should emerge between managers and employees.

The policy endorses the basic principles of planning activities in alignment with effective administrative procedures that should be conducted by managers. However, as is evident from some documents, such as the Unisa Culture Study (2013b:2-3), which contains the views of stakeholders in performance management practices at Unisa, the successful implementation of individual objectives is lacking

due to the managers inadequate abilities and experience in coordinating individual performance management. The above statement also confirms that managers lack the ability to lead, which is demonstrated by having the ability to take the right decisions and ensure support, control and feedback of the expected individual performances progress (Unisa, 2013a:4).

London's view (2013:155-163)(Section 2.6.4) supports the above-mentioned statement by indicating that managers do not prioritise their subordinates' performance improvement. Managers rather focus on their own performance improvement challenges and the effects thereof. Performance improvement will not just happen; managers need to cultivate performance management by demonstrating a commitment and willingness and self-empowerment to ensure a high quality relationship with their employees by counselling, directing satisfying targets and to lead by example.

Also important, as indicated by Swiatczak *et al.* (2015:374-376), is that only if clear objectives are provided, can managers utilise it to assess their individual relative importance, to ensure better decisions and to agree or disagree with them. Furthermore, according to these authors, an effective and soundly maintained IPMS is of crucial importance to ensure trust in the information it provides, and which could enhance the positive perceptions of employees thereof. Henceforth, it could be a given that politically imposed policy could have a negative impact on the objectivity of performance management. It is thus of critical importance that agreed-upon transparent policies and goals for implementation could eliminate such negative spirals.

Swiatczak *et al.* (2015:377) further indicate that 'competence' should be an important factor in an individual's capacity to proficiently perform activities at work. Hence, the IPMS regularly attempts to evaluate this competence as to how set targets are to be achieved. Thus, an IPMS could influence how managers perceive their own competencies, therefore, a particular IPMS can foster or destroy their perceptions.

The critical importance of the above could eliminate these poor perceptions of managers' own capabilities by continuous engagement, feedback and support, in an attempt to evoke a 'fresh-start effect'. Also important is short term milestones which indicate progress. All of these mentioned mechanisms could re-adjust managers'

perceptions and behaviours to ensure higher quality performance management (Swiatczak *et al.*, 2015:377). Moreover, opportunities to participate in goal setting could further increase the willingness to contribute to collective tasks and the achievement thereof.

5.5 THE ANALYSIS AND PURPOSE OF INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AT UNISA

It should be noted that the focus of this research is on the appropriate processes and approaches for managing the improvement of individual performance outcomes. The analysis, exploration and interpretation of individual performance management practices will mainly focus on the administrative units, or the so called 'student walk at Unisa' (see Figure 5.1). The student walk includes all the administrative portfolios, departments and Directorates within Unisa. The inclusion of the academic profile is to emphasise the importance thereof within the student walk, since the administrative units directly support these academic units to ensure appropriate administrative service delivery in alignment with Senate rules and procedures (Figure 5.1).

Almost 61% of the total staff complement within Unisa, accountable for administrative activities, are the target pertaining to this study (Unisa, 2016a:14). The relationship between performance management and ensuring effective service delivery is an important challenge for scholars and practitioners in the field of public administration. As was indicated by Walker *et al.* (2010:169-170), scholars need to identify predictable connectivity between what motivates employees and drives individual performance outcomes. Practitioners, in turn, are exploring ways and means to successfully implement goals and produce expected results. Effective performance management should thus be the solution to these challenges.

Performance management is not only a theory, but it is a practice that makes sense of that which matters. The intention is ultimately to enable managers to ask appropriate questions (Section 3.7). Individuals are the end-result performers (Section 2.1).

A summarised version of these administrative processes is provided below (see Figure 5.2).

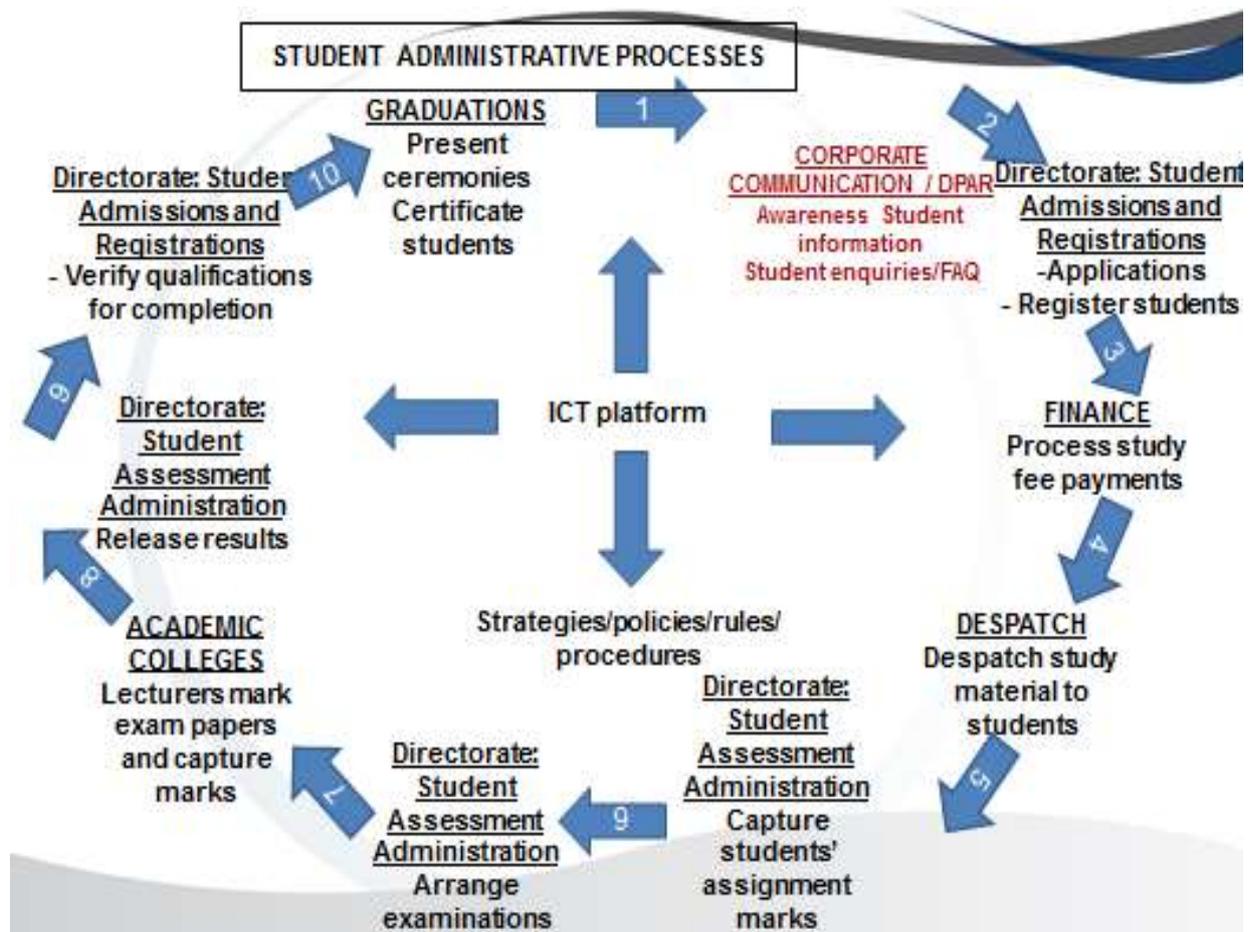


Figure 5.2: Unisa's 'Student Walk'

Source: Researcher's own compilation

The activities within the student walk (see Figure 5.2), include all the relevant portfolios dealing with service delivery in respect of internal and external clients at Unisa. It could be that, as first entry point to Unisa, first impressions of the University could be formed here. A timeous professional and one-stop service is essential in order to enrol students and to keep them in the system towards the completion of a qualification. The impact of the above-mentioned is direct, and the results are therefore immediately visible. The effective management of individual performance outcomes within this chain of events could enhance the administrative performance expectations of the institution.

The student walk represents the key units/directorates and departments accountable for student administration within the university. The referral to academic colleges emphasises the fact that all administrative activities eventually support the core business of the institution, in teaching, research, community engagement, and timely

student services. Therefore the emphasis of the current study is on the administrative units, which support the academic activities and enhance the administrative service delivery at Unisa.

The following Administrative Departments and Directorates are crucial to the successful roll-out of services and support for effective service delivery at Unisa. The outputs of a unit become the inputs of the next unit, and determine the success of operations within the next phases. The chain of events entails the following:

- Corporate Communication and Marketing ensure on-time correct information on the web/internet and my-Unisa as well as to students and staff, to enable first time correct applications/registrations information to internal and external clients;
- Directorate Student Assessment Administration is accountable for the timely availability of examination results;
- Graduations must finalise the verification of completed qualifications to allow graduation;
- Finance on-line functionality to ensure real-time payments;
- Despatch must ensure the timely dispatch of registration material;
- Regions execute decentralised services on micro level;
- Department of Information and Technology must provide adequate technology, accessible platforms and enable real-time self-help student activities; and
- Department of Human Resources (HR) must ensure adequate and timely provision of HR resources, where applicable, to eliminate/reduce student complaints, by ensuring enough capacity to deal effectively with a vast number of activities, within shortened periods within a semester driven model.

The above units have a direct impact on the operational level of the institution and are directly linked to the following objectives of the IPMS:

- Ensure that Unisa's vision and mission are converted into clear performance goals;
- Ensure the integrity of the performance management of all academic, professional and administrative functions within the institution;
- Effectively manage the performance of all administrative employees;

- Integrating systems and processes ensuring continuous enhancements in the performance of Unisa at all service delivery levels; and
- Enabling Unisa to promote staff development and employment equity in line with national priorities. (Unisa, 2007a:2; 2013a:1-4)

More importantly, from the revised policy regarding the IPMS (Unisa, 2013a:1-3), and relating to the student walk phases (Figure 5.2) and in alignment with this study, the focus on individual performance management at Unisa, according to current revised policy, is the following:

- To foster a culture of performance excellence accountability and stewardship, in alignment with the institutional values, objectives and institutional identity;
- To link day-to-day activities of all employees with the institution's operational needs and its long-term goals to ensure effective and sustained performance values;
- To build relationships of collegiality openness and trust between colleagues, and their line managers by incorporating mentoring, coaching and regular and honest performance conversations as important principles of performance management;
- To ensure and improve high quality outcomes by establishing a culture of continuous learning and critical self-reflection;
- To promote service excellence ensuring that employees are inspired to serve clients (internal/external) with integrity and dedication; and
- To enable employees to showcase their individual contributions towards service excellence, and to receive appropriate acknowledgement for superior performance. (Unisa, 2013a:1-3)

Based on the contents of the above explanations, individual performance management entails:

- A process of engagement by line managers and employees in respect of the planning, goal setting, communication of tasks allocated for implementation, feedback and development reviews, as well as time frames;
- That line managers should conduct regular performance reviews to ensure compliance with specific job contents and activities, thus to enable employees to

comply towards meeting the desirable and planned implementation actions successfully; and

- To evaluate and review performance outcomes, agree on improvement plans and reward performance.

Based on the contents of this policy, line managers must ensure formal sessions for feedback relating to successes and progress towards meeting set targets. Employees should likewise engage with their line managers on a continuous basis to seek guidance and feedback (Unisa: 2013a:3).

Pershing (2006:8-11) reports that effective individual performance management relates to disciplined and systematic enquiry, namely, asking specific questions and analysing answers to enable a well-organised plan to ensure the appropriate support, allowing employees to implement expected performance activities. Pershing's (2006:13-15) argument seems to be that individual performance improvement interventions should address the total sum of the identified problem or challenge in respect of performance management improvement. However, these should be appropriate interventions that should integrate support within employees' action plans towards the intended execution. A systematic and holistic approach to improve present and future work-related tasks through employees will eventually enhance their performance outcomes (Pershing, 2012:14-16).

Conversely, Moynihan (2008:191) emphasises the rethinking of performance management approaches by making a few comments:

- Performance supportive technologies, such as electronic templates in respect of appraisals, procedures and guidelines, in itself are not individual performance management;
- Performance feedback is not always objective;
- The major challenge of individual performance management is fostering relevant feedback to enhance performance improvement;
- Performance management tends to focus on only individuals;
- Performance management is less important than other institutional factors. The capacity limitations and time frames of other operational matters force managers

and employees to neglect the importance and continuous engagement to improve individual performance outcomes;

- Performance management depends on other units and institutional operations to succeed. For instance, the timeous provision of training, support and adequate time frames to submit finalised appraisals. The administrative deadlines over rule effective engagement in respect of the performance management of individuals. (Moynihan, 2008:191-193)

In addition, Morrisey *et al.* (1988:9-10) suggest that the purpose of planning is not only to produce plans, but its main purpose is to produce results, thereby ensuring that individual objectives are implemented successfully by creating effective and efficient alignment levels with performance objectives. The primary purpose of the performance plans is to identify short-term results and actions to carry out that will ensure that employees focus their energy on executing the right activities towards the expected outcomes (Morrisey *et al.*, 1988:7-10).

Morrisey *et al.* (1988:10) further indicate that performance management closes the loop on the total planning process. It provides management with ongoing mechanisms for executing and monitoring the implementation and results of individual performance management outcomes (Morrisey *et al.*, 1988:7-10). The authors continue by stating that performance management is concerned primarily with planned execution and ensuring that planning is a continuous dynamic process within an institution. Another important ingredient in the process is the active involvement and commitment of employees within the institution. As those people who need to make the institution more successful become better informed and more actively involved in various planning steps, their commitment to significant results will become increasingly substantial.

Furthermore, Belton and Howick (2002:4) indicate that effective individual performance management and measuring is a complex and difficult task. If performance management is to lead to enduring continuous individual performance improvement, then the different phases of the performance management processes design, implementation, analysis and use must be successfully completed and should form a continuous loop. This process should be interactive and not a linear

sequence of steps, thus involving all role-players in the improvement planning phases (Belton & Howick, 2002:3-5).

According to Farrell and Schlesinger (2013:76-77), effective employee performance planning equals effective performance outcomes and continuous improvement processes. These processes engage supervisors and employees from the start in respect of the planning, goal setting, understanding their roles and tasks allocated for implementation, feedback and development reviews and time frames. Line managers and supervisors should receive regular performance reviews to ensure compliance with specific job contents and activities, and in turn, to enable employees to stay on track towards meeting the desirable and planned implementation actions successfully. Improving individual knowledge levels at all institutional level, could enhance individual performance outcomes, morale and staff motivation (Farrell & Schlesinger, 2013:76-77)(Section 2.3). Therefore, the next section will focus on the role of line managers, accountable for the enhancement of individual performance outcomes.

5.5.1 Line managers responsibilities in managing individual performance

Emanating from the contents of the IPMS policy in respect of individual performance management, is that line managers play an important role in respect of the effective management, planning, goal setting and implementation of individual performance processes. A collaborative approach should be part of the above phases, ensuring understanding and agreement on what is expected from employees. Eventually a signed agreement will guide the challenges and goals to be achieved by certain timelines (Unisa: 2013a:5).

More important, according to the IPMS Policy (2013a:4) is standard setting, where the maximum standards required to perform job contents are indicated. However, indicated in the policy is that standards should be fair, transparent, reasonable and achievable, and employees should be involved in setting standards.

Prester and Moller (2008:1-4) maintain that performance standards act as a benchmark against which individual performance outcomes are measured. Without standards it would be extremely difficult to distinguish between good and poor performance outcomes. Performance standards ensure an objective basis for

engagement, feedback and improvement of individual performance (Prester & Moller, 2008:14).

However, emanating from the analysis and interpretations of the various views of stakeholders embedded in documents at Unisa in respect of the effectiveness of IPMS (Section 5.2), is that the practice at Unisa does not reflect these values (Unisa, 2014c:3-5; Unisa Culture Study, 2012:2-3).

Since policies and procedures are crucial in directing fair and consistent performance management practices, it does not necessarily ensure successful real-time implementation actions. The evaluation, feedback, reporting and monitoring of these realities on ground level form the core of this study, which focuses on the perceptions and real outcomes and experiences of the effective (or ineffective) management of individual performance.

According to Mizrahi (2017:102-104) a major factor that demotivates managers to utilise performance system information and procedures, is the dysfunction of performance management systems and the resulting gaming factor, such as deliberate distortions in a performance management system, which include activities that consume resources but do not necessarily improve individual performance outputs. According to the author, it is quite possible to improve the quantity of service but not necessarily the quality. This results in the consumption of resources without producing performance improvement, even in a measured area, and could lead to wastage of resources at high costs. However, this author indicates that eliminating uncertainty regarding the specification of set targets for implementation, and effective measurement and continuous monitoring could minimise gaming behaviour (Mizrahi, 2017:102-103).

Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) hold that performance management remains a complex and challenging task. The authors indicate that methodologies are not adequate to address the current challenges within managing performance effectively. As such, Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27), provide some common weaknesses that exist in performance management systems:

- Performance management systems are not in alignment with continual changes in the institutional working environment. Most institutions undergo significant

changes in a matter of months. A static state in respect of a performance management system is simply unrealistic.

- It usually takes a new performance management system three to four years to be implemented and to mature. Meanwhile technology and institutional strategies for implementation could have changed drastically during such a period.
- A more pertinent weakness of today's performance management system is its complexity. Different and complex steps and sub-steps, in combination with complex strategies for implementation, add additional complex processes to facilitate effective performance management during the monitoring of implementation phases.
- Senior leaders cannot expect to enable managers to effectively facilitate performance management processes with a performance management system that takes three times longer to develop than the strategy it is intended to support.

Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) are of the view that, within a turbulent environment where change occurs rapidly and sometimes invisibly, a more simple solution to manage performance has a higher likelihood of succeeding. The performance management system should be quickly understood by managers, if it is to be managed successfully. This will enable more effective and understandable communication and ultimately proper implementation of the relevant activities toward a more effective execution of the intended implementation tasks.

Effective performance management involves people, their behaviours, commitment and relationships with their line managers. If correctly managed, performance of employees will improve through the introduction of a well-designed performance process that supports the development of employees (Barrows & Nelly, 2012:25-27)(Section 3.5.4).

5.5.2 Incumbents' responsibilities related to their own performance management

Hale and Whitlam (2000:73-76) are of the opinion that "actions are simply the results of our thinking and our feelings", and that employees should start thinking for themselves when changing their ways, compared to enforced institutional change by management and enforced measurements. If individuals keep working on their right

behaviour, then the intended execution of expected job contents and improvement in performance outcomes will be achieved. The authors thus emphasise the fact that mental practice, to align individual thinking on what is expected, and how it can be achieved, could eventually improve performance (Hale & Whitlam, 2000:74).

However, Hutchinson (2013:80-83) and Behn (2014:216-218) indicate that an engaging manager is the core of successful individual performance management. Managers should ensure the delivery of training, coaching and mentoring. Hence, knowledge sharing and continuous engagement could ensure continuous improvement. To enable and exceed the planned and expected levels of individual performance, employees should be involved in the day-to-day activities of line-managers (Section 3.5.1).

More important, and in alignment with the above statement, and according to the IPMS Manual, the end-purpose of performance management is to enhance the achievement of objectives by individuals, which will contribute to improved performance outcomes (Section 3.2.1). Hence, the importance of the following:

- Employees must participate in identifying their units' objectives, measurements and targets;
- Ensure they participate and engage with their supervisors towards the compilation of their performance agreement; and
- Take full accountability of their own performance agreement. (Unisa, 2013a:1-3)

However, Frazey (2010:204) writes that employees generally do not believe that efficient feedback is frequently provided in relation to the day-to-day performance.

Some of the many reasons include:

- Managers experience the feedback process as difficult and daunting, and they lack the confidence and skills to manage it;
- The process is seen as a bureaucratic imposition;
- Performance evaluation procedures are too complex and not well understood;
- There are no consequences for managers who do not execute performance appraisals with their employees; and
- It is difficult to translate theoretical support into practice (Frazey, 2010:204).

According to Frazey (2010:205), the major reasons for having a performance management policy are:

- To ensure consistency with regards to performance management;
- To ensure procedural fairness;
- To inform employees as to how performance management will be appraised;
- To inform set targets and expected outcomes; and
- To link individual performance outcomes to institutional objectives.

A performance management policy is important to ensure that performance processes are not neglected and actively driven by the directive of a policy and procedure.

The next section will focus on the procedures and practices guiding individual performance management practices, ensuring continuous engagement between managers and employees and supporting the implementation of expected individual performance outcomes.

5.6 THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT UNISA

Various scholars in the discipline of performance management, such as Noe *et al.* (2014:237-239), Taylor (2014:1) and Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:22-26) emphasise the fact that the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems, and institutional structure and culture could result in high-performance institutions (Section 5.1 in this regard). Moreover, according to Mizrahi (2017:169), in most cases, the exact scope and characteristics of performance management systems are a function of the identity, interests, and capabilities of institutional entrepreneurs, and the power of relations they must negotiate. A variety of strategies and methodologies must be utilised to advance their vision towards intended change, supporting the effective implementation of set goals.

In alignment with above-mentioned statement, a description of current policies and procedures, relating to performance practices at Unisa, will follow.

A further report and important findings in respect of the performance management environment at Unisa emanated from a Unisa culture study (2013b:2-3), which was conducted by the Organisational Development Directorate at Unisa. Some conclusions drawn from this study are:

- Employees perceive that they are exposed to organisational politics, which they cannot influence;
- Employees indicated that they are disempowered, without a voice and are forced to comply;
- The institutional environment is experienced as a 'command-and-control' organisation;
- Top management imposes decisions upon employees responsible for the implementation of institutional objectives. Moreover, a lack of consultation and engagement in respect of the planning thereof, is also evident.

There is a significant lack of individual performance management relating to effective support, involvement and agreed-upon targets by managers. Ultimately, each individual should know what their specific contribution will be to support the intended operational implementation planning activities (Unisa, 2013b:2-3).

Therefore, Barrows and Neely (2012:25-27) are of the view that, within a turbulent environment where change occurs rapidly, and sometimes invisibly, a more simplified solution to manage performance has a higher likelihood to succeed. The performance management system should be quickly understood by managers to be managed successfully. This will enable more effective and understandable communication and eventually proper implementation of relevant activities for a more effective execution of implementation tasks (Section 3.3).

Important to notice from this study, is the comprehensiveness of performance management processes. Hence, Thorpe and Holloway (2006:101-102) declare that effective performance management involves training, teamwork, communication, engagement, attitude, agreed-upon targets, individual involvement in target setting, and incentives and rewards.

More important, according to Mizrahi (2017:6-9), is that performance management systems are usually integrated in the public sector through a policy-making process,

that involves decisions made by politicians and senior public administrators. However, taking into account the political and administrative barriers to performance management reforms, employees should be involved as key role-players in initiating, and certainly, in implementing such performance management policy reforms. Within the University context political influence remains limited and is at the level of managers.

Moreover, performance management policy is a comprehensive concept that attempts to grasp the mutual relations between performance management and policy. It entails the way policy-makers can use performance management mechanisms to enrich and develop more effective implementation procedures. Policy theories and practices in respect of performance management may help to identify deficiencies and support design which could lead to more effective improvements (Mizrahi, 2017:158-159).

Furthermore, important outcomes related to Unisa's IPMS, originated from an organisational architecture workshop held during 2014 with the Senior Management and representatives of administrative and academic units *inter alia* to resolve the following challenges:

- In its current form, the IPMS at Unisa does not articulate sufficiently with the operational needs of Unisa;
- Targets are disconnected from institutional strategic priorities, hence, a lack of facilitating and rewarding collaboration;
- The IPMS in its current form tends to over emphasise a culture of compliance and managerialism, rather than to focus primarily on achieving effective service delivery objectives;
- There is often a mismatch between available skills and support services needed, combined with a general lack of sufficient HR capacity to deliver expected service outcomes (Unisa, 2014a: par: 2.1, point 7).

The latest document, dated 2014, regarding Unisa's Academic Plan also refers to the IPMS. It indicates that the most challenging aspect is to integrate various units, relating to Unisa's core business with the implementation targets and the evaluation thereof, with an appropriate IPMS. According to the contents of this document,

integration can only be achieved by amalgamating committees or by ensuring the representation of all relevant role-players on such committees, across portfolios.

However, this researcher is of the view that there is a lack of a clear focused strategy and operational plan in respect of performance management approaches and practices (Section 5.3.1 and Section 5.2). Moreover and importantly, there is a lack of adequate support by managers, to ensure continuous engagement and monitoring, towards the execution of set targets. It is evident that the indication of specific job content and activities, specifically related to the procedures in terms of the successful implementation thereof by employees, is lacking.

Many policies are in place without a clear supportive operational implementation plan, targets and due dates towards implementation. The enablers, including clear time frames, budgets, activities and supportive resources, are also absent, which could be the result of a lack of knowledgeable, skilled and experienced managers, accountable to ensure a conducive working environment. More specifically, there is a lack of appropriate training and exposure to IPMS procedures to ensure effective individual performance management (Section 5.3.1), is lacking.

5.6.1 Personal development plans

A study on performance management cannot exclude aspects related to personal development plans (PDP) which are embedded in the IPMS policy, procedures and evaluation processes. These are directives that ensure assistance and training interventions in relation to any identified shortfalls in the performance of individuals. Managers should identify shortfalls within these processes to enable individuals to meet the set standards and targets described within their performance agreements (Unisa, IPMS, 2013:3).

Johnson and Breckon (2007:134-135) (Section 3.5.2) also support events, such as job enrichment and stretch assignments, which enforce increasing levels of responsibility and improved individual performance outcomes. The importance of coaching was also made by Aguinis (2013:226-228), by writing that coaching involves continuous observation, feedback and encouragement, supporting progress towards intended expectation and improved individual outcomes.

Such foregoing interventions are essential and serve as supportive mechanisms and training initiatives to ensure improved individual outputs that will be identified and populated in template format, to ensure that progress could be monitored in respect of personal development plans.

Culbert (2010:3-6) presents a different view, by declaring that it is most probably time to abolish the traditional performance review, which employees experience as being subjective. According to Culbert (2010:3-6), employees who went through an evaluation process, dislike it, and yet there is no evidence of progress to eliminate performance reviews. Culbert (2010:4-7) posits that HR professionals and managers alike are utilising performance reviews for the wrong reasons, focusing on getting control and power over employees, which is inappropriate for the purposes of managing performance. Performance reviews should rather focus on the development of employees, taking into account their needs with regards to self-development and to improve their skills.

Culbert (2010:6-7) further explains that managers usually gain self-confidence by using the corporate structure, and more specifically performance appraisals, to intimidate their subordinates into silent compliance. By allocating a good rating in respect of employees' performance outcomes, managers believe that employees will overlook all the unacceptable behaviours of their line managers. Moreover, according to Culbert (2010:6-8), managers fail to understand that the most important principle to ensuring quality employee performances, is a trusting relationship with the employees working with them.

Culbert (2010:6-7) also indicates that performance reviews should be an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall performance of the institution. It must be a process of give-and-take between individuals and their line-managers and should have the same objective: supporting the individual to grow and to ensure results that are expected from employees. According to Culbert (2010:36-37), in terms of performance reviews everybody is on the same team, supporting one another to produce high quality results. However, and more importantly, Culbert (2010:36-37) emphasises the fact that objectivity and value-added engagement, feedback, and performance conversations, should be available at all times. The emphasis is on engagement and open-minded discussions in respect of performance improvement, not instructions. Ultimately, according to

Culbert (2010:146-149), the challenge when conducting effective performance reviews, is to create a working environment in which all the role-players can feel safe enough to engage in honest open-minded discussions to eventually improve the institution's results and to provide a supportive environment for employees to improve themselves. Implementing actions such as described above will lead to self-reflection and growth within a working environment that can contribute to the expected delivery of high quality performance outcomes (Culbert, 2010:145-147). According to Culbert (2010, 146), performance reviews once or twice a year, should be replaced with performance previews which entails an ongoing communication process between managers and subordinates, working as a team seeking answers to the question; what can be done to get the results that the institution seeks to achieve? Therefore, according to the above author, performance previews could focus on achieving results, whereas performance reviews could focus on finding errors and blaming individuals.

5.6.2 Strategic planning phases of an Integrated Performance Management System at institutional level

The IPMS at Unisa is planned and managed within the annual and multi-year calendar of Unisa, namely, at the beginning of the year (January) and mid-year (August). Hence, appraisals are conducted twice a year. At institutional level the process involves the following role-players (Unisa, 2013a:3):

- Council;
- Top Management;
- Senior Management;
- Executive Deans of Academic Colleges;
- Heads of Departments;
- Supervisors/Managers; and
- Individual employees. (See Figure 5.1, Section 5.1.1)

The Unisa Bargaining Forum (UBF) also plays an important role in scrutinising performance management policies and to respond to possible discrepancies, where applicable (Unisa, 2013a:1-3).

The Unisa Bargaining Forum (UBF) Management Advisory Committee serves as the Moderating Committee for performance appraisals/assessments being conducted in respect of members of organised labour, who are part of the Unisa Bargaining Forum. The UBF validates the performance agreements and assures that organised labour complies with all the relevant policies, including the Performance Management Policy.

There are additional control mechanisms in place to ensure compliance in the alignment with current IPMS policies in relation to performance management practices. These include various high-level meetings and decision making committees for example, the Vice-Chancellor's Moderating Committee, the Executive Management Moderating Committee and the IPMS Moderating Committee. These committees coordinate the IPMS processes annually, to ensure adherence and finalisation of the processes by determined closing dates (Unisa: 2007a:22-23).

A hierarchical oversight and moderation process is conducted that ensures the integrity of the IPMS, specifically relating to the accuracy, fairness and consistency of its application. The next level of line managers participate to ensure that appraisals and percentage allocations in respect of performance ratings are in alignment with performance outcomes. Also to ensure that parity exists between all similar positions in the institution. Also, as reflected within the revised IPMS (2013a:3), representatives of unions will serve on the Unisa Bargaining Forum (UBF) to ensure fair and consistent performance management practices. This accountability of unions is indicated in the performance agreements, as part of their responsibilities.

The Unisa IPMS Policy (2013a:3-4), provides for performance outputs and deliverables which are determined from each KPA, as indicated in the performance agreements of employees. These outputs entail deliverables, processes or events, and implementation timelines that mark performance on the KPA.

Additional to the above, are important policy frameworks, strategy documents, guidelines and procedures manuals relating to IPMS to ensure the proper implementation and monitoring thereof. Reports on outcomes of operations, such as enrolment targets and student numbers registered, pass rates, and funds obtained from grants and subsidies, also form part of the IPMS Policy. KPIs have to be

generated for each of the above-mentioned outputs at institutional level, and they will be utilised to monitor execution activities at operational level. Finally, the objectives per departmental level units and sections, plus job descriptions at individual level, are then used for the individual's performance agreement or operational implementation tasks (Unisa, 2007a:24-25; 2013a:3-4). However, it needs to be emphasised that the IPMS in itself does not guarantee the achievement of the desired performance outcomes.

Mizrahi (2017:160-162) indicates that the performance management system merely indirectly affects institutional performance. In other word, the primarily influence affects managerial processes, rather than achieving specific outcomes. Mizrahi (2017:160-162) further states that it is expected that a performance management system that includes intangible rewards, will work better than material awards (Chapter 6). According to Mizrahi (2017:160), such rewards in the form of positive feedback and employee empowerment may encourage individuals to invest more effort in their work. Performance management should therefore focus on fostering institutional learning and must be integrated into the policy process.

These above-mentioned policies and procedures provide the principles of performance management practices which require knowledgeable portfolio managers to encourage a culture of engagement. It requires the involvement of all role-players to ensure employee commitment towards the successful implementation of the intended objectives. Only continuous monitoring, evaluation and reporting on all operational levels will ensure streamlined performance execution in alignment with intended operational plans.

However, the researcher in the current study has observed the over-emphasis on compliance issues. The focus is on the administrative activities related to the completion of IPMS templates by the relevant due dates in terms of effective individual performance management. These forms of bureaucratisation may be the root cause of various challenges to ensure effective individual performance.

Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) endorse the view that HR policies and procedures provide an important supportive platform. However, knowledgeable managers and their team members must work together to ensure ownership and accountability for the management of individual performance outcomes. The

performance management outcomes should be monitored, and feedback should occur throughout the year to ensure continuous improvement in performance results.

5.6.3 Management of poor performance

Behn (2014:143-144) indicates that, without human intervention, no improved performance results will be produced. Employees will ignore data, specifically if they do not understand it. Moreover, individuals usually do not know how to improve their performance, based on data, specifically when data indicates poor performance. Managers should communicate the context of the data relevant to expected individual performance outcomes. This should form part of performance management meetings and ongoing engagement, to ensure clarity with regards to the expected performance outcomes (Behn, 2014:170).

However, Bacal (1999:35-36) confirms that there could be disagreements during performance evaluations, and he recommends that, where such disagreements lead to disputes, the subordinate may include his/her intervention to disagree in writing and follow the institutional procedures to resolve the matter. The author is of the opinion that subordinates who follow this option, are encouraged and assisted by their relevant unions (Bacal, 1999:36).

Based on the content of the Unisa IPMS (2013a:5), performance management of poor work performance entails the following directives:

- Poor work performance should be managed according to the applicable directive of the Labour Relations Act, Schedule 8, and the IPMS Policy of Unisa.
- The identification of an individual's poor performance outputs must be dealt with immediately and this which includes a proper analysis and the causes of poor work performance.
- Appropriate intervention relating to corrective measures, such as training, mentoring and setting of specific standards, should be introduced.
- Evidence of poor work performance is important to confirm the exact grey areas of performance. Line managers should keep adequate records and evidence during a performance cycle, in order to to justify below standard performance.
- Should interventions not lead to improvement in individual performance, formal steps should be taken, and the individual should be informed of the

consequences thereof. This process must be documented in writing to the incumbent.

- In the event that a poor performance hearing will take place, the individual will have all the rights to prepare for the hearing and be represented by a fellow employee or trade union member (Unisa, 2013a:5-7).

London (2003:4-6) cautions that managers tend to ignore the importance of feedback related to the performance outcomes of employees and they would rather ignore poor performance than to address it immediately. Subordinates complain that performance outcomes, good or bad, are very seldom communicated to them during performance appraisals, mostly to avoid conflict and corrective actions (London, 2003:4-6). The author further argues that meaningful feedback is the core of performance management. Feedback guides, motivates and enforces effective behaviour, and reduces ineffective tasks or performance outcomes. Furthermore, this author suggests that feedback should be given in a fair, constructive and professional manner, and should focus on behaviour and not personalities.

Also important, according to Mosley (2013:1), is that the traditional performance appraisal is outdated and the implementation thereof is not relevant anymore. Performance appraisals once or twice a year lack continuous engagement among employees and management and this is not appropriate towards the development of individuals.

The scholars, Mosley (2013:2) and Entrekin and Scott-Ladd (2014:173-175) indicate that performance management is too often a process that creates discouragement, mistrust, bewilderment and low morale, in addition to neglecting to address critical enhancements in the way employees work. The authors further write that, while technology, management techniques and institutional models have undergone major changes, the performance review processes (appraisals) have remained the same (Mosley, 2013:2; Entrekin & Scott-Ladd, 2014:173-175).

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an analysis and description of performance management policies, procedures, practices, and the unique characteristics of the performance management environment at the University of South Africa (Unisa).

It is evident that performance management entails a series of activities to ensure that the desired results will be achieved. Important activities include (i) planning, (ii) implementation, monitoring and adjusting, (iii) assessment; and (iv) performance outputs and re-planning. Most of these activities are imbedded in the policies and procedures which were described in this chapter (Sections 5.1.1, 5.3).

More important was the indication from various policy frameworks that the current performance management system and the parallel practice of performance bonuses to all employees has had no positive impact on service delivery, more specifically if measured against the poor institutional performance. Further to the above, there was an indication of an over-emphasis on compliance relating to the administration of individual performance management, which could hamper the effective management of improved individual performance outputs.

An important pattern emerged from the IPMS policies and procedures, as well as outcomes from various documents relating to performance management practices at Unisa, namely, the lack of support, engagement and target setting by managers responsible for ensuring high quality performance outputs of individuals. The improvement in the knowledge and skills level of line managers, relating to the effective management of individual performance outcomes, could enhance individual performance, morale and self-motivation.

Furthermore, it was indicated that, although policies and procedures play an important supportive role, knowledgeable managers and their team members must work together to ensure ownership and accountability. Managers should monitor performance on a continuous basis, throughout the year, and provide support to employees by collectively setting goals, and provide feedback and engagement in order to enhance individual performance.

Effective performance management ultimately involves people, their behaviours, commitment, and relationships with their line managers. If correctly managed, the performance of employees will improve by introducing well designed and easy-to-understand performance processes that support the development of employees.

The next chapter reports on the data collection in the current study, namely, interviews and questionnaires, and the analysis and interpretation thereof. The views, opinions and perceptions of respondents are also presented.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The research design and the description and interpretation of the performance management policies and procedures at Unisa were discussed in previous chapters. Hence, the focus in this chapter is on reporting on the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data. In this chapter the views, perceptions and experiences of respondents will be analysed and interpreted.

Therefore the research findings, or analysed data and interpretation thereof, will define the outcomes of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from previous chapters, namely, literature reviews, document analysis, questionnaires and interviews. In so doing, the conclusions could contribute to the improvement of the performance management system at Unisa, which could result in recommendations to improve individual performance management outcomes, and ultimately, improved institutional performance. The above is in alignment with the main research question: *How can the performance management system (IPMS) at Unisa be improved?*

6.2 PURPOSE OF QUESTIONS

This section presents a discussion of the questions used in the current study to collect the data, namely, (i) questions used in open-ended face-to-face interviews, and (ii) structural survey questions

The themes and types of questions were determined mainly by the literature review and tentative observations by the author. Also, importantly, these identified themes and questions clarify the objectives and aims of this study, which are the performance management practices and interactions at Unisa. Thus, the analysis and recommendations could assist in proposing measures that could contribute to an improved system of performance management by answering the research questions.

To avoid any ambiguity, the survey questions were developed in a simple and clear language which eliminated jargon, slang and abbreviations that may confuse participants (Wessels *et al.*, 2009:15-16).

The main purpose of these questions is to enable the researcher to collect data, analyse, understand, interpret and describe the perceptions, and experiences, of respondents. An important objective of this study is to obtain the support and collaboration of as many as possible experienced participants in the identified case study (Mouton, 1996:160-161). The analyses and conclusions of these survey questions and answers could assist in answering the main research question: *How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?*

The research methodology primarily focused on a case study design and mixed-method approach, to determine answers that will allow the study to reach valid and reliable conclusions. This endeavour will be a journey towards improving individual performance outcomes (Section 4.3)(De Vos *et al.*, 2005:272).

The research results will firstly, be presented as an analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. Mouton (1996:160-161) indicates that data analysis entails two important phases, namely, (i) reducing collected data into manageable categories, and (ii) to identify themes and patterns from the data (Section 4.7). Hence, the researcher interpreted the data to make it understandable, and to identify consistencies as well as meanings that emerged from the data (Mouton, 1996:160). Secondly, an analysis of the qualitative data that emanated from the face-to-face and group semi-structured interviews was conducted.

Thus, the purpose of these data-collection instruments is two-fold. With regards to the surveys to identify at a superficial level what the perceptions and experiences of the respondents are. Furthermore, with regards to the interviews to obtain an in-depth understanding in those areas which were identified during the analysis of the survey instrument (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:275-276).

This chapter will discuss the response rate of the survey research and the profile of the respondents. The comprehensive collected data will be presented as findings and recommendations, with the purpose of answering the research question.

According to White (2003:17), data triangulation refers to data sources, such as oneself, respondents, observation, questionnaires and relevant documents that the researcher may use to collect data. Therefore, triangulation uses different or multiple sources, and various different data-collection methods and comparisons, as related

to the research outcomes from the qualitative and quantitative methods applied in the study (Silverman, 2006:304).

6.2.1 Implementation of pilot study

A pilot survey was conducted to enable the refinement of categories; thus ensuring more exhaustive and discrete results.

6.2.1.1 Quantitative study

Prior to the finalisation of the survey questionnaire, a process was followed to ensure the validity and reliability of the survey. Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:202) indicate that a pilot survey is important to devise and refine categories, making them more exhaustive and discrete. Hence, a pilot testing was conducted at Unisa. However, prior to the pilot testing the researcher's supervisors, a mentor and statistician scrutinised the contents thereof to ensure further validity and reliability.

The researcher also discussed certain questions relating to the performance management practices with colleagues at Unisa. This was done in an attempt to identify possible patterns and challenges. Field notes were carefully taken as part of an attempt to identify critical themes that could be included in the survey: also to document contextual information. Although field notes feature more predominantly within the qualitative research methods, field notes are also essential to enable the researcher to understand the specific phenomenon being studied. These notes may contextualise the data collection for a research study, and supplement and contribute to relevant collected data and descriptive information. Field notes assisted the researcher in the current study to reflect on his thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns during the implementation of this research project.

The pilot questionnaire was submitted to 15 participants: 5 executive members of staff, 5 senior members or managers/supervisors, and 5 entry-level staff members. From the 15 questionnaires, 10 participants responded.

The feedback enabled the researcher to further align the questions with the purpose of the research study, which in return ensures the clarity of the questions, for example, to determine which, if any, were unclear or ambiguous, and to amend accordingly. Lastly, to also check the questions' format, expected data outcome and layout of the questionnaire.

The respondents indicated minor semantic changes, and in general, indicated no structural or format changes. However, some feedback highlighted important additional questions, which were added to the interview phase of the study. Two executive members suggested two specific questions to be included in the interview phase, namely, (i) what is your perception and experience of Unisa's IPMS, and (ii) what is your perception and experience of performance management in general.

6.3 DATA COLLECTION AT UNISA: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

After the finalisation of changes made after the pilot survey, the researcher proceeded with its administration.

The data-collection process was conducted at Unisa over a period of two weeks. The invitation and survey were posted online, namely on Lime Survey. The population group was administrative staff at Unisa, and the survey link was sent to 1 592 staff members at post level P3 to P9 (Table 6.1). Union shop stewards were also included as respondents, since the survey link was sent to them as well (as part of the P9 post level category).

At the closure of the survey, $232 + 15 = 247$ (15 in respect of the pilot study), respondents participated in the survey, which amounts to a 16.4% response rate. Response rates on web-based surveys are usually low (Armstrong, 2010:295).

All participants were requested to respond to all three sections of the online/web survey.

6.3.1 Analysis of the survey questionnaire

The introduction and explanation of the focus areas or themes of each section, mostly served as reference background data when each section and relevant questions were analysed. Hence, cross-references to the literature, as indicated in this introduction will, where applicable, serve as the reference source. Where applicable, additional sources will be referred to, ensuring a more comprehensive support in respect of a specific analysis.

Data obtained from the quantitative survey was summarised and analysed according to the following themes or categories: sample profiles in respect of biographical information, thus post level, years of service at Unisa, highest qualification, gender

and campus. Furthermore, statistics reflected the means of frequencies (categorical data) and also descriptive statistics (continuous data). Hence, for each of the categories and applicable questions, the sample (N232) was disaggregated with the above-mentioned profiles. The researcher aimed to investigate variation in the data across these specific categories (Sections 4.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.3, 4.3.3.2 and 4.8) (Bhattacharjee, 2012:8-9; Armstrong, 2010:394).

The SD at the bottom of each table refers to the degree of variation based on the responses from participants. The Mean, also indicated at the bottom of each table, explains the average rating of each category of responses, and lastly, the N refers to the total of participants in the specific sample. A Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree at (5) was utilised.

Each response is given a numerical score reflecting its degree of attitudinal favourableness: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Each section comprised several questions with a range of answers for each question. The participants could simply tick the appropriate boxes.

6.3.2 Biographical information

Table 6.1 below reports on the number of responses per post level, years of services at Unisa, highest qualification, gender and campus.

It was noted by the researcher that there was a level of resistance to indicate the relevant Department/Directorate/Division. This low response rate could suggest that respondents are sensitive or careful to provide the requested information, in the event that they could be identified. The purpose of this profile is to determine the number, and categories, of respondents who participated in the research (survey). The highest proportionality of responses was at post levels P6–P7, managers/supervisors (98), thus 42.4%. This middle-management level represents the core category, responsible for the implementation of performance management at Unisa. Thus, this percentage (42.4%) at this category, could present a valid degree of responses, based on the perceptions relating to IPMS.

The years of service category '6-10 years' represents 26.2% of responses, which shows interest in the manner in which IPMS is conducted. Moreover, 70 or 34.1% of the respondents fell in the years of service category of '21 years plus', which could

imply adequate experience. Also important, is the female category that showed a 62.3% response rate, which could indicate female employees to be in the majority.

Table 6.1: Biographical Information

		Post level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Valid	P3	3	1.3	1.3	1.3		
	P4	10	4.3	4.4	5.7		
	P5	23	9.9	10.1	15.8	P3-P5	36
	P6	49	21.1	21.5	37.3		
	P7	49	21.1	21.5	58.8	P6-P7	98
	P8	58	25.0	25.4	84.2		
	P9	36	15.5	15.8	100.0	P8-P9	94
	Total	228	98.3	100.0			
Missing	System	4	1.7				
Total		232	100.0				
		Years of service at Unisa					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Valid	0 – 2 yrs.	8	3.4	3.5	3.5		
	3 – 5 yrs	12	5.2	5.2	8.7		
	6 – 10 yrs	61	26.3	26.5	35.2	0 - 10 yrs	81
	11 – 15 yrs	40	17.2	17.4	52.6		
	16 – 20 yrs	30	12.9	13.0	65.7	11- 20 yrs	70
	21 - 25 yrs	41	17.7	17.8	83.5		
	26 - 30 yrs	22	9.5	9.6	93.0		
	31 yrs +	16	6.9	7.0	100.0	21 yrs +	79
	Total	230	99.1	100.0			
Missing	System	2	0.9				
Total		232	100.0				
		Highest qualification					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Valid	PhD	21	9.1	9.2	9.2		
	Professional qualification (e.g. CA)	2	0.9	0.9	10.1		
	Masters	54	23.3	23.7	33.8	Masters/Doctoral	77
	PG below Masters	61	26.3	26.8	60.5	PG below Masters	61
	UG B-degree	40	17.2	17.5	78.1		
	UG Diploma/Certificate	38	15.5	15.8	93.9		
	Matric	14	6.0	6.1	100.0	UG and lower	90
	Total	228	98.3	100.0			
Missing	System	4	1.7				
Total		232	100.0				
		Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Valid	Male	81	34.9	35.7	35.7		
	Female	146	62.9	64.3	100.0		
	Total	227	97.8	100.0			
Missing	System	5	2.2				
Total		232	100.0				

6.3.2.1 Department/Directorate/Division

The category Department/Directorate/Division reflected a reluctance by respondents to provide answers that could lead to their loss of anonymity. Some comments indicates such fear, for example, “By disclosing this, I can be identified!” However,

there seems to be responses from all units at Unisa. The fact that certain academic departments are indicated, is the result of responses from administrative staff that are employed in the applicable academic colleges.

Table 6.2: Department/ directorate/ division

Department/Directorate/Division	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	29	12.5	12.5	12.5
	1	0.4	0.4	12.9
Academic College	1	0.4	0.4	13.4
Academic Planning	1	0.4	0.4	13.8
Academic Planning - Language Services	1	0.4	0.4	14.2
Academic support and ICT	1	0.4	0.4	14.7
Admissions & Registrations	1	0.4	0.4	15.1
BY DISCLOSING THIS I CAN BE IDENTIFIED!!!!	1	0.4	0.4	15.5
CAES Research Office	1	0.4	0.4	15.9
CEMS Deanery	1	0.4	0.4	16.4
CEMS DEANERY	1	0.4	0.4	16.8
CGC M+D	1	0.4	0.4	17.2
CGS	3	1.3	1.3	18.5
CGS - M&D Coordinator	1	0.4	0.4	19.0
CGS:PGAD	1	0.4	0.4	19.4
CHS	1	0.4	0.4	19.8
College for Graduate studies (Postgraduate and Hons)	1	0.4	0.4	20.3
College Graduate Studies	1	0.4	0.4	20.7
College of Accounting Sciences	1	0.4	0.4	21.1
College of education	1	0.4	0.4	21.6
College of Graduate Studies	1	0.4	0.4	22.0
COLLEGE HUMAN SCIENCES- COMMUNICATION SCIENCE	1	0.4	0.4	22.4
counselling	1	0.4	0.4	22.8
Counselling	1	0.4	0.4	23.3
Counselling and career development	1	0.4	0.4	23.7
Counselling and Career Development	1	0.4	0.4	24.1
CSET, School of Computing	1	0.4	0.4	24.6
Department Academic Planning	1	0.4	0.4	25.0
Despatch	1	0.4	0.4	25.4
DIA	1	0.4	0.4	25.9
DIA-Communication	1	0.4	0.4	26.3
Dir university teaching learning development DUTLD	1	0.4	0.4	26.7
Directorate of student Administration and Registration	1	0.4	0.4	27.2
Directorate Student Admissions and Reg	1	0.4	0.4	27.6
Directorate University Teaching and Learning Development	1	0.4	0.4	28.0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Directorate: Regional Services	1	0.4	0.4	28.4
DISS	1	0.4	0.4	28.9
Division: Graduations	1	0.4	0.4	29.3
DPAR	2	0.9	0.9	30.2
DSAA	9	3.9	3.9	34.1
dsar	4	1.7	1.7	35.8
DSAR	28	12.1	12.1	47.8
DSAR - APPLICATION SERVICES	1	0.4	0.4	48.3
DSAR/CGS	1	0.4	0.4	48.7
DTFSL	1	0.4	0.4	49.1
DTSFL	1	0.4	0.4	49.6
DTSFL, DISS	1	0.4	0.4	50.0
DUTLD	2	0.9	0.9	50.9
Facilities Management Project Management Directorate	1	0.4	0.4	51.3
Facility Management	1	0.4	0.4	51.7
Gauteng region	1	0.4	0.4	52.2
GAUTENG REGION	1	0.4	0.4	52.6
ICT	7	3.0	3.0	55.6
ICT portfolio	1	0.4	0.4	56.0
ICT Support	1	0.4	0.4	56.5
Internal audit	1	0.4	0.4	56.9
KZN Finance	1	0.4	0.4	57.3
KZN Region	1	0.4	0.4	57.8
Language Services	2	0.9	0.9	58.6
library	1	0.4	0.4	59.1
Library	8	3.4	3.4	62.5
Library Corporate Services	1	0.4	0.4	62.9
library services	1	0.4	0.4	63.4
Library Services	3	1.3	1.3	64.7
Library Services/IRCM	1	0.4	0.4	65.1
Directorate/Collection Development				
Midlands	2	0.9	0.9	65.9
Newly in appointed at Regional Office Student Admissions & Registrations	1	0.4	0.4	66.4
north eastern region	1	0.4	0.4	66.8
North-Eastern Region	1	0.4	0.4	67.2
Print Production	1	0.4	0.4	67.7
PRINT PRODUCTION	1	0.4	0.4	68.1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Protection services	1	0.4	0.4	68.5
Protection Services	5	2.2	2.2	70.7
Records Management	1	0.4	0.4	71.1
RECORDS MANAGEMENT	1	0.4	0.4	71.6
Regional services	2	0.9	0.9	72.4
Regional Services	5	2.2	2.2	74.6
Regional Services-Gauteng	1	0.4	0.4	75.0
Registra	1	0.4	0.4	75.4
registrar	1	0.4	0.4	75.9
Registrar	9	3.9	3.9	79.7
Registrar / Regional Services	1	0.4	0.4	80.2
Registrar: Gauteng Region	2	0.9	0.9	81.0
Registrar: Regional Services	1	0.4	0.4	81.5
registrar's portfolio	1	0.4	0.4	81.9
Registrar's Portfolio (until recently)	1	0.4	0.4	82.3
Risk and Compliance	1	0.4	0.4	82.8
RMD	2	0.9	0.9	83.6
SAF	1	0.4	0.4	84.1
SAFA(started in May 2018)	1	0.4	0.4	84.5
SBL	2	0.9	0.9	85.3
SBL Academic Department	1	0.4	0.4	85.8
School of Agriculture and Life Sciences, CAES	1	0.4	0.4	86.2
School of Computing - College of Science, Engineering and Technology	1	0.4	0.4	86.6
SMPD	5	2.2	2.2	88.8
SMPD - DESPATCH	1	0.4	0.4	89.2
SMPD department.	1	0.4	0.4	89.7
SMPDD	1	0.4	0.4	90.1
SoC	1	0.4	0.4	90.5
student admin	1	0.4	0.4	90.9
Student Admin	1	0.4	0.4	91.4
Student Admin and Registrations	1	0.4	0.4	91.8
Student Admin and Registrstions	1	0.4	0.4	92.2
Student Administration and Funding, Western Cape	1	0.4	0.4	92.7
Student administration and registration	1	0.4	0.4	93.1
Student admission and registration	1	0.4	0.4	93.5
Student admissions and Registration	1	0.4	0.4	94.0
Study Materials Production & Delivery	1	0.4	0.4	94.4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Technology Enhanced Learning Unit	1	0.4	0.4	94.8
The Registrar	1	0.4	0.4	95.3
tuition and faciation of learning	1	0.4	0.4	95.7
Tuition and Learner Support (CHS)	1	0.4	0.4	96.1
Tuition, Support and Facilitation of Learning	1	0.4	0.4	96.6
Unisa Press	1	0.4	0.4	97.0
UNISA SBL	1	0.4	0.4	97.4
Unisa Western Cape: Facilitation of Learning	1	0.4	0.4	97.8
university estates	1	0.4	0.4	98.3
University Estates	2	0.9	0.9	99.1
University Estates Department	1	0.4	0.4	99.6
University Estates/ Facilities Management	1	0.4	0.4	100.0
Total	232	100.0	100.0	
Campus				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Muckleneuk	92	39.7	42.0	42.0
Florida	30	12.9	13.7	55.7
Region	50	21.6	22.8	78.5
Sunnyside	43	18.5	19.6	98.2
SBL	4	1.7	1.8	100.0
Total	219	94.4	100.0	
Missing System	13	5.6		
Total	232	100.0		

6.4 SECTION A: UNIVERSITY IPMS: POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

This section refers to matters relating to the University's IPMS: with the focus on policies, procedures and practices.

6.4.1 Focus areas and themes per section

These themes were selected by the researcher and identified by the selection of applicable patterns. A deductive approach was followed, whereafter relevant questions were selected to explore context/understanding relating to the identified themes.

Lin (1998:162) writes that qualitative research in itself can be viewed within the positive and interpretivist paradigms. In terms of the interpretivist approach, resources attempt to document patterns that could lead consistently to one specific theme or set of outcomes rather than another, thus, certain specific patterns across

different venues with different participants (Section 4.2). In the interpretivist approach, researchers attempt to ask the right questions to understand people and to reach conclusions, in other words, to determine and to understand the conscious and unconscious explanations people have for what they believe, experience and perceive. Furthermore, Webb and Auriacombe (2006:591) argue that, in the phenomenological paradigm, researchers seek to understand how people perceive their world, thus to understand the experiences of participants during research investigations.

The difference between the two approaches, namely, the positivist and the interpretivist paradigms can be determined by comparisons based on the difference in the questions asked of data and the types of conclusions made. Within the positivist approach, researchers aim to identify details/data that can be tested or identified in other similar cases and ignore how general patterns look in practice. Therefore, Lin (1998:162-163) indicates that interpretivist work assists in asking the right questions to understand people arriving at conclusions (Section 4.2).

Table 6.3 to Table 6.24 present the results of the section dealing with the University's performance management system: Policies, Procedures and Practices. This specific section's themes and questions were identified from certain sections in Chapters 2, 3 and 5. This section refers to matters relating to the IPMS at Unisa.

Table 6.25 to Table 6.46 present the results for the section, Managers/Supervisors (responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures). This specific section's themes and questions were identified from the literature, as presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 5. This section refers to matters relating to the responsibilities of line managers responsible for the implementation of the IPMS procedures.

Table 6.46 to Table 6.63: This section deals with matters relating to the experiences and perceptions of performance management practices and the influence thereof on the employee.

6.5 SECTION A: ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS RELATING TO UNIVERSITY IPMS: POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

This section and tables refer to matters relating to the University IPMS, with the focus on policies, procedures and practices. Participants were requested to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the questions. Thus, to indicate their awareness, perceptions and experience relating to the current policies, procedures and practices of the performance management system in the institution.

Table 6.3: My performance expectations are clearly communicated in the IPMS template

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 1. My performance expectations are clearly communicated in the IPMS template	Strongly disagree	N	22	5	8	9	22	10	6	6	22	8	6	8	22	7	14	21	
		%	9.5%	13.9%	8.2%	9.6%	9.6%	12.3%	8.6%	7.6%	9.6%	10.4%	9.8%	8.9%	9.6%	8.6%	9.6%	9.3%	
	Disagree	N	49	13	18	17	48	16	10	22	48	20	13	15	48	20	28	48	
		%	21.1%	36.1%	18.4%	18.1%	21.1%	19.8%	14.3%	27.8%	20.9%	26.0%	21.3%	16.7%	21.1%	24.7%	19.2%	21.1%	
	Neutral	N	30	6	11	13	30	10	10	10	30	8	5	16	29	12	18	30	
		%	12.9%	16.7%	11.2%	13.8%	13.2%	12.3%	14.3%	12.7%	13.0%	10.4%	8.2%	17.8%	12.7%	14.8%	12.3%	13.2%	
	Agree	N	103	10	47	43	100	33	34	36	103	31	27	44	102	32	69	101	
		%	44.4%	27.8%	48.0%	45.7%	43.9%	40.7%	48.6%	45.6%	44.8%	40.3%	44.3%	48.9%	44.7%	39.5%	47.3%	44.5%	
	Strongly agree	N	28	2	14	12	28	12	10	5	27	10	10	7	27	10	17	27	
		%	12.1%	5.6%	14.3%	12.8%	12.3%	14.8%	14.3%	6.3%	11.7%	13.0%	16.4%	7.8%	11.8%	12.3%	11.6%	11.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.28	2.75	3.42	3.34	3.28	3.26	3.46	3.15	3.28	3.19	3.36	3.30	3.28	3.22	3.32	3.29
	SD			1.201	1.180	1.183	1.196	1.206	1.282	1.163	1.133	1.198	1.257	1.265	1.116	1.202	1.204	1.192	1.194

The mean score across administrative staff, namely, post level, years and service, qualification and gender, was consistently a move towards agreement (mean = 3.28). However, it is noted that the senior staff members at P3 to P5 post level (at 2.75) tend to disagree. Moreover, the average SD at (1.201) relating to the total sample of 232, indicates not much variation, which correlates with that of post level P3 – P5 (indicates an SD of 1.180).

Therefore, it seems that senior staff administrative members do not have clear expectations in respect of performance management in comparison with staff at operational level.

However, based on this researcher's experience and interpretation, senior administrative staff should not have, or are not expected to have, detailed or specific performance agreements, if compared to staff at operational levels. Hence, it is expected from senior staff to plan and execute broad visionary, abstract and long term objectives. These objectives are usually in alignment with each Portfolio's objectives which are in alignment with the Annual Performance Plan (APP) and the Compact with Council (CWC) as relating to the strategic medium and long term objectives of the institution (Section 5.2.1).

Mizrahi (2017:164-165) states that performance management includes a series of information categories, such as strategic goals, objectives, performance measures and targets. Moreover, the process of planning and implementing performance management objectives link to the idea of strategic management. Therefore, according to Mizrahi (2017:164-165), performance management can be viewed as strategic management and the planning of such processes for execution is operational planning (Section 5.2). Furthermore, Mizrahi (2017:5-6) opines that performance management systems usually contribute to managerial processes, and the emphasis should rather be on processes, and not necessarily on outcomes. Likewise, Minnaar (2010:3-4) holds that the most important challenge encountered in effective performance management is to identify or determine the relevant institutional objectives for implementation: thus doing the right things right (Section 5.2.1).

Table 6.4: I often do not understand how to interpret the targets of my job expectation/responsibilities

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	30	4	13	13	30	14	13	3	30	11	11	8	30	10	19	29	
		%	12.9%	11.1%	13.3%	13.8%	13.2%	17.3%	18.6%	3.8%	13.0%	14.3%	18.0%	8.9%	13.2%	12.3%	13.0%	12.8%	
	Disagree	N	74	10	32	32	74	19	22	32	73	23	18	32	73	26	46	72	
		%	31.9%	27.8%	32.7%	34.0%	32.5%	23.5%	31.4%	40.5%	31.7%	29.9%	29.5%	35.6%	32.0%	32.1%	31.5%	31.7%	
	Neutral	N	31	4	14	12	30	12	8	11	31	9	7	15	31	10	21	31	
		%	13.4%	11.1%	14.3%	12.8%	13.2%	14.8%	11.4%	13.9%	13.5%	11.7%	11.5%	16.7%	13.6%	12.3%	14.4%	13.7%	
	Agree	N	75	14	31	27	72	28	21	26	75	27	20	27	74	27	46	73	
		%	32.3%	38.9%	31.6%	28.7%	31.6%	34.6%	30.0%	32.9%	32.6%	35.1%	32.8%	30.0%	32.5%	33.3%	31.5%	32.2%	
	Strongly agree	N	22	4	8	10	22	8	6	7	21	7	5	8	20	8	14	22	
		%	9.5%	11.1%	8.2%	10.6%	9.6%	9.9%	8.6%	8.9%	9.1%	9.1%	8.2%	8.9%	8.8%	9.9%	9.6%	9.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.94	3.11	2.89	2.88	2.92	2.96	2.79	3.03	2.93	2.95	2.84	2.94	2.92	2.96	2.93	2.94
	SD			1.241	1.260	1.226	1.269	1.246	1.299	1.295	1.121	1.238	1.266	1.293	1.174	1.234	1.249	1.241	1.241

The average mean score (at 2.94) across all levels indicates that there is a slight movement towards disagreement. The SD average at 1.241 also implies that not much variation occurs in the responses in these two categories. It is noted that the category, years of service (21 years), indicates a percentage of 40.5% in disagreement. It could be taken that this category of respondents should be experienced and knowledgeable in terms of performance management practices. However, this could be an indication that at the higher level jobs, P3-P5 (at 38.9% in agreement) there are a more conceptual, directive and innovative approaches, compared to the operational levels which are more detailed and specific. These pattern/dimensions were also identified in the literature (Sections 3.3, 3.4.2, 5.2.2 and 5.3.1).

Cokins (2004:1) indicates that performance management aims to integrate planned job contents towards target setting, and to ensure that the intended implementation activities become realities. Only when above applies can employee activities be orchestrated towards implementation. Likewise, Barry (1994:6) suggests that, during the target setting process, the long-term objectives of the operational implementation phases should be established as a first priority, thereby ensuring the successful execution of individual tasks.

Table 6.5 reports on whether some parts of their job contents are not captured in the IPMS template.

Table 6.5: Some parts of my job contents are not captured in the IPMS template

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 3. Some parts of my job contents are not captured in the IPMS template.	Strongly disagree	N	16	4	5	7	16	6	6	4	16	3	7	6	16	7	9	16	
		%	6.9%	11.1%	5.1%	7.4%	7.0%	7.4%	8.6%	5.1%	7.0%	3.9%	11.5%	6.7%	7.0%	8.6%	6.2%	7.0%	
	Disagree	N	44	3	22	19	44	17	12	14	43	11	16	17	44	13	28	41	
		%	19.0%	8.3%	22.4%	20.2%	19.3%	21.0%	17.1%	17.7%	18.7%	14.3%	26.2%	18.9%	19.3%	16.0%	19.2%	18.1%	
	Neutral	N	17	1	8	8	17	6	6	5	17	4	3	8	15	6	11	17	
		%	7.3%	2.8%	8.2%	8.5%	7.5%	7.4%	8.6%	6.3%	7.4%	5.2%	4.9%	8.9%	6.6%	7.4%	7.5%	7.5%	
	Agree	N	97	16	42	37	95	30	26	40	96	35	19	43	97	34	63	97	
		%	41.8%	44.4%	42.9%	39.4%	41.7%	37.0%	37.1%	50.6%	41.7%	45.5%	31.1%	47.8%	42.5%	42.0%	43.2%	42.7%	
	Strongly agree	N	58	12	21	23	56	22	20	16	58	24	16	16	56	21	35	56	
		%	25.0%	33.3%	21.4%	24.5%	24.6%	27.2%	28.6%	20.3%	25.2%	31.2%	26.2%	17.8%	24.6%	25.9%	24.0%	24.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.59	3.81	3.53	3.53	3.57	3.56	3.60	3.63	3.60	3.86	3.34	3.51	3.58	3.60	3.60	3.60
	SD			1.242	1.305	1.203	1.267	1.245	1.294	1.301	1.146	1.242	1.132	1.413	1.183	1.244	1.272	1.218	1.235

In Table 6.5 there is a clear move, at all levels/categories, towards agreement that some parts of their job contents are not captured in the IPMS template. A mean score at (3.59), with again the highest in the categories P3 – P5 and P6 – P7, and the category years of service (21 years or longer) at 50% of the participants (Mean score at 3.65).

An interesting observation is the agreement in the category highest qualification (Masters/Doctoral), at a mean score of 3.86. An SD score confirms a low degree of variation in terms of responses. This proportionality of agreement, specifically at the 21 years of service level, plus the strongly agreement level at 25%, suggests that there are some concerns regarding the lack of appropriate job contents within IPMS templates.

This question is also in alignment with that of Table 6.24. This grey area could have an effect on the rating of employees during performance appraisal sessions, since all expectations, due to the lack of relevant job contents, could result in not meeting and executing expected outcomes. .

Rummler and Brache (2013:22) and Cokins (2004:1) state that jobs need to be designed in such a manner that it will contribute to specific institutional goals. Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-14) endorse the fact that performance management should be a continuous process to ensure that the 'what' and the 'how' are known to employees, to enable the implementation of the correct activities (also see Section 3.5.1). However, too much detail could result in confusion or misunderstanding regarding what is expected from employees.

Table 6.6 reports on the results regarding the statement: my performance expectations are clearly defined.

Table 6.6: My performance expectations are clearly defined

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	17	2	8	7	17	7	5	5	17	6	7	3	16	7	9	16	
		%	7.3%	5.6%	8.2%	7.4%	7.5%	8.6%	7.1%	6.3%	7.4%	7.8%	11.5%	3.3%	7.0%	8.6%	6.2%	7.0%	
	Disagree	N	59	14	21	22	57	19	19	20	58	25	13	20	58	21	37	58	
		%	25.4%	38.9%	21.4%	23.4%	25.0%	23.5%	27.1%	25.3%	25.2%	32.5%	21.3%	22.2%	25.4%	25.9%	25.3%	25.6%	
	Neutral	N	51	11	17	22	50	19	14	18	51	12	13	25	50	17	34	51	
		%	22.0%	30.6%	17.3%	23.4%	21.9%	23.5%	20.0%	22.8%	22.2%	15.6%	21.3%	27.8%	21.9%	21.0%	23.3%	22.5%	
	Agree	N	86	8	43	35	86	27	25	34	86	27	22	36	85	29	55	84	
		%	37.1%	22.2%	43.9%	37.2%	37.7%	33.3%	35.7%	43.0%	37.4%	35.1%	36.1%	40.0%	37.3%	35.8%	37.7%	37.0%	
	Strongly agree	N	19	1	9	8	18	9	7	2	18	7	6	6	19	7	11	18	
		%	8.2%	2.8%	9.2%	8.5%	7.9%	11.1%	10.0%	2.5%	7.8%	9.1%	9.8%	6.7%	8.3%	8.6%	7.5%	7.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.13	2.78	3.24	3.16	3.14	3.15	3.14	3.10	3.13	3.05	3.11	3.24	3.14	3.10	3.15	3.13
	SD			1.110	0.959	1.140	1.110	1.108	1.163	1.146	1.020	1.106	1.169	1.199	0.987	1.107	1.147	1.079	1.101

Table 6.6 reports on the proportionality of agreement/disagreement among administrative employees relating to their experience regarding whether their performance expectations are clearly defined.

The analysis reported in Table 6.3 is consistent with the data in Table 6.6. Both tables refer to performance expectations. Firstly, Table 6.3 defines clear communication reporting performance expectations, where Table 6.6 serves to determine whether performance expectations are clearly defined.

The highest portion of respondents are in agreement (37.1%), at a mean at 3.14, whereas the senior level of employees, P3-5, disagree (38%), at a mean at 2.78. Moreover, at this same level, 30.6% were neutral, which could indicate that performance management practices and relations between managers and employees are a cause for concern (Sections 3.2, 3.2.1 and 3.4.1).

Table 6.7 reports on the consultation of employees during the design of their performance agreements.

Table 6.7: I was consulted during the design of the performance management agreement

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	55	11	17	26	54	20	17	17	54	17	11	26	54	23	31	54
		%	23.7%	30.6%	17.3%	27.7%	23.7%	24.7%	24.3%	21.5%	23.5%	22.1%	18.0%	28.9%	23.7%	28.4%	21.2%	23.8%
	Disagree	N	51	9	19	22	50	16	17	17	50	16	16	18	50	20	29	49
		%	22.0%	25.0%	19.4%	23.4%	21.9%	19.8%	24.3%	21.5%	21.7%	20.8%	26.2%	20.0%	21.9%	24.7%	19.9%	21.6%
	Neutral	N	32	5	12	14	31	8	9	15	32	8	7	17	32	9	22	31
		%	13.8%	13.9%	12.2%	14.9%	13.6%	9.9%	12.9%	19.0%	13.9%	10.4%	11.5%	18.9%	14.0%	11.1%	15.1%	13.7%
	Agree	N	68	7	37	23	67	27	17	24	68	25	19	22	66	18	50	68
		%	29.3%	19.4%	37.8%	24.5%	29.4%	33.3%	24.3%	30.4%	29.6%	32.5%	31.1%	24.4%	28.9%	22.2%	34.2%	30.0%
	Strongly agree	N	26	4	13	9	26	10	10	6	26	11	8	7	26	11	14	25
		%	11.2%	11.1%	13.3%	9.6%	11.4%	12.3%	14.3%	7.6%	11.3%	14.3%	13.1%	7.8%	11.4%	13.6%	9.6%	11.0%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.82	2.56	3.10	2.65	2.83	2.89	2.80	2.81	2.83	2.96	2.95	2.62	2.82	2.68	2.91
SD			1.373	1.403	1.343	1.366	1.377	1.423	1.420	1.292	1.373	1.418	1.359	1.337	1.375	1.439	1.334	1.373

The average mean score (at 2.82) across all levels suggests some level of disagreement among respondents, 22% and 23% respectively. Again the exception is observed at post level P3 – P5 (55.6%) in disagreement and strongly disagreement. The SD at this level (1.403) implies not much variation, if compared against the participants/respondents in that particular category. The highest proportionality agreements was at the level, post level P6 – P7, which represents managers and supervisors, with a mean score (at 3.10) and a SD (at 1.343) indicating a low level of variation.

It is evident from the high level of strong disagreement at P3 – P5 (30.6%) and at P8 – P9 post levels (27%) that there is poor or limited communication at the senior level, as well as at the lower-entry-level of employees, relating to engagement and consultation with regards to the design of performance agreements. In these two categories there are also the highest proportionality of neutral percentage responses, 13.9% and 14.9%, respectively, which could be an indication of a lack of continuous engagement, feedback, involvement and support from line managers.

Smither and London (2009:5-7) indicate that policies and procedures guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. However, formal policies should be augmented by informal communication. Hence, continuous engagement alignment, facilitation, by informed and knowledgeable managers, is an important function to ensure effective performance management (Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.4.1 and 5.3.2).

Interviewees indicated their frustration relating to the processes that were followed in respect of the development of IPMS templates. The processes and templates are changed on an annual basis and are always late. Furthermore, the researcher of this study is aware of the centralised approach towards the dealing with and the finalisation of the IPMS procedures at Unisa. In exceptional cases, IPMS policy and procedures will be forwarded/provided electronically to staff for comments, although no participation or consultation sessions take place.

From P5 to P2, directives and procedures, as well as IPMS templates will be provided for completion at short notice, without any foregoing consultation. However, at the lower levels, P5 – P14, the Unisa Bargaining Form (UBF) will be consulted, whereafter the processes will be signed off for implementation (Section 5.2.1).

According to Cokins (2004:1), performance management is more than HR practices, systems, software and metrics: it includes all processes to enable well designed IPMS procedures towards implementation. Noe *et al* (2014:235-239), similarly indicate that effective performance management seeks to achieve strategic purpose, administrative purpose and development purpose (Section 3.2). Employees can only implement tasks successfully, if they understand the what, why, when, who and how of activities to be executed. This can only be achieved after in-depth consultations, involvement and continuous development of the processes and procedures.

Lastly, performance management depends on other units and institutional operations to succeed. For instance, timeous provision of training, support and adequate time frames to submit finalised appraisals. However, administrative deadlines over rule effective engagement by managers in respect of the performance management of individuals. As those who need to make the institution more successful, become better informed and more involved in the various planning steps, their commitment to significant results will become increasingly substantial (Section 5.3).

The interviewees at categories P3 – P5 and P6 – P9 indicated that, according to their experience, the IPMS at Unisa is not objective, is inconsistent and used as a tool to achieve hidden agendas (Section 6.9.1).

Table 3.8 below presents the analysis of the statement: the Unisa performance management system integrates my goals with those of my directorate.

Table 6.8: The Unisa performance management system integrates my goals with those of my directorate

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 6. The Unisa performance management system integrates my goals with those of my directorate.	Strongly disagree	N	25	5	10	9	24	11	6	8	25	9	6	9	24	9	15	24	
		%	10.8%	13.9%	10.2%	9.6%	10.5%	13.6%	8.6%	10.1%	10.9%	11.7%	9.8%	10.0%	10.5%	11.1%	10.3%	10.6%	
	Disagree	N	48	7	20	19	46	12	15	21	48	20	10	17	47	15	32	47	
		%	20.7%	19.4%	20.4%	20.2%	20.2%	14.8%	21.4%	26.6%	20.9%	26.0%	16.4%	18.9%	20.6%	18.5%	21.9%	20.7%	
	Neutral	N	60	9	18	32	59	22	18	18	58	14	18	27	59	23	37	60	
		%	25.9%	25.0%	18.4%	34.0%	25.9%	27.2%	25.7%	22.8%	25.2%	18.2%	29.5%	30.0%	25.9%	28.4%	25.3%	26.4%	
	Agree	N	75	10	38	27	75	24	23	28	75	26	20	28	74	22	51	73	
		%	32.3%	27.8%	38.8%	28.7%	32.9%	29.6%	32.9%	35.4%	32.6%	33.8%	32.8%	31.1%	32.5%	27.2%	34.9%	32.2%	
	Strongly agree	N	24	5	12	7	24	12	8	4	24	8	7	9	24	12	11	23	
		%	10.3%	13.9%	12.2%	7.4%	10.5%	14.8%	11.4%	5.1%	10.4%	10.4%	11.5%	10.0%	10.5%	14.8%	7.5%	10.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.11	3.08	3.22	3.04	3.13	3.17	3.17	2.99	3.11	3.05	3.20	3.12	3.12	3.16	3.08	3.11
	SD			1.170	1.273	1.206	1.087	1.167	1.253	1.154	1.115	1.175	1.224	1.152	1.140	1.168	1.219	1.133	1.163

The rationale behind this question was to determine whether the respondents' goals were integrated in the IPMS of their specific directorate. From a mean score point of view, the responses reported in Table 6.8 indicate that respondents consistently, across the administrative levels, are in agreement, with an average mean score at 3.25. The highest proportionality degree of neutrality was at the lower levels, P8 – P9 (at 34%), which could be a possible disagreement or undecidedness. The highest proportionality of agreement as reflected in the table (at 38%) was from the managers/supervisors level, Post levels P7 to P6, which suggest that this category is satisfied with the IPMS integration of their directorate's objectives/goals (Sections 3.2, 3.2.1 and 3.5).

This integration of institutional objectives with a Directorate's goals, within specific portfolios was a directive from Council during 2017 (Section 5.2.1). Hence, the alignment of the strategic objectives and the execution thereof, should be embedded within individual performance agreements, in alignment with the Annual Performance Plan (APP) and Compact with Council (CWC). Also see Table 6.3 in which the analysis correlates with that of Table 6.8.

Cokins (2004:22-23) argues that employees can only implement tasks successfully, if they understand the what, why, when, who and how of activities to be executed, which are the accountability of managers. Moreover, Smither and London (2009:5-7) declare that, to enhance individual and institutional performance, the process of managing an employee's performance must be an ongoing process. Policies and procedures only guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. The continuous engagement and alignment facilitation, by informed and knowledgeable managers, is an important function (Section 3.2.1).

Furthermore, the interviewees indicated that the way line managers implement the current IPMS at Unisa is very subjective and detrimental to the performance of Unisa. Interviewees also emphasised the fact that IPMS at Unisa does not influence institutional or portfolio performance at all. Since IPMS is applied inconsistently, it is subjective and is manipulated by Top Management (Section 6.9.1).

The researchers' perception confirms that there is a lack of skills, willingness and continuous engagement by managers ensuring the proper monitoring and progress of individuals: to enable the successful integration, and execution of intended goals

towards implementation. There are no directives relating to the re-planning and re-alignment of strategies to move towards the implementation of set goals and targets by individuals, ensuring these activities become realities. Line managers are focused on meetings, administrative due dates, and submissions of other priorities, tasks, and reports, and more specifically, to submit the finalised IPMS reviews by due dates. Managers are negligent about becoming involved and ensuring that supportive interventions to execute set targets, and intended objectives are done successfully.

IPMS, with possible exceptions, is usually managed for only administrative compliance purposes. The normal practice is that managers request a meeting for 20 minutes, where the highlights which was indicated by the employee self, is the only interaction between the incumbent and manager, where after the document will be signed for submission to the HR Department for further processing and finalisation. Thereafter, no further discussions or reflections occur, until the next end-year reviews are scheduled (Culbert, 2010:145-147; Mosley, 2013:4-5).

More important, according to Michel (2013:150-153), is the five important ways in which managers can interact with employees to direct their thinking, decisions and action purposefully and to reinforce an awareness regarding performance commitment. This is done through (i) Strategy conversations indicating the 'why' the institution is working towards a specific direction; (ii) Risk dialogue, indicating 'how' employees can contribute, and which risks exist; (iii) Sense-making, indicating what the strategies mean in respect of implementation actions; (iv) Contribution dialogue, indicating what to do next, and what activities employees need to execute in alignment with self objectives; and lastly (v) Performance conversation, asking whether everyone is on track (Michael, 2013:150-151).

However, it is evident from the contents of documents, such as the Unisa Culture Study (2013:2-3) which contains the views of stakeholders in performance management practices of Unisa, that there is a lack of the successful implementation of individual objectives due to the managers' inadequate abilities and experience in facilitating individual performance management (Section 5.2.4).

The next table reports on the understanding of participants on how to complete/populate their IPMS template.

Table 6.9: I often do not understand how to complete/populate my IPMS template

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 7. I often do not understand how to complete/ populate my IPMS template.	Strongly disagree	N	33	4	16	12	32	19	6	8	33	8	14	11	33	13	20	33
		%	14.2%	11.1%	16.3%	12.8%	14.0%	23.5%	8.6%	10.1%	14.3%	10.4%	23.0%	12.2%	14.5%	16.0%	13.7%	14.5%
	Disagree	N	103	12	50	40	102	34	31	37	102	37	29	37	103	35	66	101
		%	44.4%	33.3%	51.0%	42.6%	44.7%	42.0%	44.3%	46.8%	44.3%	48.1%	47.5%	41.1%	45.2%	43.2%	45.2%	44.5%
	Neutral	N	30	3	12	14	29	9	12	9	30	9	5	15	29	10	19	29
		%	12.9%	8.3%	12.2%	14.9%	12.7%	11.1%	17.1%	11.4%	13.0%	11.7%	8.2%	16.7%	12.7%	12.3%	13.0%	12.8%
	Agree	N	51	14	15	21	50	15	15	20	50	20	11	18	49	17	33	50
		%	22.0%	38.9%	15.3%	22.3%	21.9%	18.5%	21.4%	25.3%	21.7%	26.0%	18.0%	20.0%	21.5%	21.0%	22.6%	22.0%
	Strongly agree	N	15	3	5	7	15	4	6	5	15	3	2	9	14	6	8	14
		%	6.5%	8.3%	5.1%	7.4%	6.6%	4.9%	8.6%	6.3%	6.5%	3.9%	3.3%	10.0%	6.1%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.62	3.00	2.42	2.69	2.62	2.40	2.77	2.71	2.62	2.65	2.31	2.74	2.60	2.60	2.61
SD			1.163	1.242	1.093	1.173	1.164	1.180	1.144	1.145	1.164	1.097	1.119	1.204	1.155	1.201	1.141	1.160

The majority of the respondents disagreed with this statement, as reflected in the mean score (at 2.62) and the SD (at 1.63). These outcomes suggest that respondents in general understand how to populate their performance (IPMS) template. The managers/supervisors level, at post levels P6 to P7, reported the highest proportionality of disagreement, at 51%. However, the analysis indicates that post levels P3-P5 (38.9%) are in agreement, which could be an indication that there are some discrepancies in overall responses. This result could suggest uncertainty at senior level.

In alignment with Table 6.4, similar reasons for the above-mentioned pattern/analysis could be that senior management's job contents are more conceptual, directive and innovative if compared to the lower levels at operational levels (Unisa Performance Agreements: 1 January to 31 December 2018)(Sections 3.3, 3.4.2, 5.2.2). Moreover, a lack of engagement, feedback and effective support from top management could also be an important factor. Thus, senior management (P3 – P5) could experience IPMS as only part of administrative and compliance purposes.

Managers do not adhere to the basic principles relating to effective performance management practices, namely, the continuous engagement, support, monitoring, feedback and identification of individual development opportunities to ensure the execution of desired individual performance outputs (Tables 6.34, 6.36, 6.37, 6.41 and 6.42) in this regard.

Barrows and Nelly (2012:25-29) argue that performance management remains a complex and challenging task. A more pertinent weakness of today's performance management system is its complexity. Moreover, senior leaders cannot expect to enable managers to effectively facilitate IPMS, with a performance management system that changes almost annually, and takes three times longer to develop, than the strategy it is intended to support (Section 5.3.1). Therefore, the authors indicate that within a turbulent environment, where change occurs rapidly, and sometimes invisibly, a more simplified solution to manage IPMS, has a higher likelihood of succeeding.

Table 6.10 reports on whether it is clear to participants why an IPMS is in place at Unisa.

Table 6.10: It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at Unisa

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	26	4	11	11	26	11	8	7	26	10	4	11	25	12	13	25	
		%	11.2%	11.1%	11.2%	11.7%	11.4%	13.6%	11.4%	8.9%	11.3%	13.0%	6.6%	12.2%	11.0%	14.8%	8.9%	11.0%	
	Disagree	N	40	6	15	19	40	11	12	17	40	13	8	18	39	14	26	40	
		%	17.2%	16.7%	15.3%	20.2%	17.5%	13.6%	17.1%	21.5%	17.4%	16.9%	13.1%	20.0%	17.1%	17.3%	17.8%	17.6%	
	Neutral	N	29	7	11	11	29	6	9	14	29	11	7	11	29	8	20	28	
		%	12.5%	19.4%	11.2%	11.7%	12.7%	7.4%	12.9%	17.7%	12.6%	14.3%	11.5%	12.2%	12.7%	9.9%	13.7%	12.3%	
	Agree	N	98	12	46	37	95	37	29	30	96	27	34	35	96	32	64	96	
		%	42.2%	33.3%	46.9%	39.4%	41.7%	45.7%	41.4%	38.0%	41.7%	35.1%	55.7%	38.9%	42.1%	39.5%	43.8%	42.3%	
	Strongly agree	N	39	7	15	16	38	16	12	11	39	16	8	15	39	15	23	38	
		%	16.8%	19.4%	15.3%	17.0%	16.7%	19.8%	17.1%	13.9%	17.0%	20.8%	13.1%	16.7%	17.1%	18.5%	15.8%	16.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.36	3.33	3.40	3.30	3.35	3.44	3.36	3.27	3.36	3.34	3.56	3.28	3.37	3.30	3.40	3.36
	SD			1.261	1.287	1.241	1.294	1.266	1.323	1.274	1.206	1.266	1.334	1.088	1.298	1.258	1.355	1.206	1.259

Across all the administrative levels there was a move towards agreement (42%) and strongly agree (16.8%, at a mean score of 3.36), which gives a total of 58%. At the post levels P6 to P7, managers and supervisors, the agreement was the highest (at 46.9%), and at 55.7% in the category highest qualification, below master's degrees, and 45.7% in the category 01-10 years of service at Unisa.

With an average mean score at 3.36 and a SD at 1.2, it suggests that respondents are generally in agreement that they understand why an IPMS is in place at Unisa. However, also important is the percentages at 17.20% in disagreement and 11.2% strongly in disagreement, and the 12.5% neutral responses (Section 6.4.1).

The above analysis could suggest undecidedness regarding the purpose of IPMS at Unisa (Section 3.2 and 3.2.1). Bockaert and Halligan (2006:5) write that IPMS eventually involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels, relationships and the continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers. If correctly managed, the performance of individuals would inevitably improve, which in turn may lead to enhanced institutional performance.

Table 6.11 below presents an analysis of the statement: the Unisa performance management system supports me towards the implementation of my directorate's goals

Table 6.11: The Unisa performance management system supports me towards the implementation of my directorate's goals

		n	Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
				P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	23	3	8	12	23	7	5	11	23	9	4	10	23	9	13	22	
		%	9.9%	8.3%	8.2%	12.8%	10.1%	8.6%	7.1%	13.9%	10.0%	11.7%	6.6%	11.1%	10.1%	11.1%	8.9%	9.7%	
	Disagree	N	55	12	18	24	54	19	19	16	54	24	10	19	53	20	32	52	
		%	23.7%	33.3%	18.4%	25.5%	23.7%	23.5%	27.1%	20.3%	23.5%	31.2%	16.4%	21.1%	23.2%	24.7%	21.9%	22.9%	
	Neutral	N	54	7	23	23	53	12	17	25	54	11	14	28	53	17	37	54	
		%	23.3%	19.4%	23.5%	24.5%	23.2%	14.8%	24.3%	31.6%	23.5%	14.3%	23.0%	31.1%	23.2%	21.0%	25.3%	23.8%	
	Agree	N	78	11	39	26	76	32	21	24	77	25	26	26	77	27	51	78	
		%	33.6%	30.6%	39.8%	27.7%	33.3%	39.5%	30.0%	30.4%	33.5%	32.5%	42.6%	28.9%	33.8%	33.3%	34.9%	34.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	22	3	10	9	22	11	8	3	22	8	7	7	22	8	13	21	
		%	9.5%	8.3%	10.2%	9.6%	9.6%	13.6%	11.4%	3.8%	9.6%	10.4%	11.5%	7.8%	9.6%	9.9%	8.9%	9.3%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.09	2.97	3.26	2.96	3.09	3.26	3.11	2.90	3.09	2.99	3.36	3.01	3.10	3.06	3.13	3.11
	SD			1.160	1.158	1.124	1.200	1.165	1.212	1.149	1.105	1.162	1.241	1.096	1.127	1.165	1.197	1.128	1.151

Across all administrative levels there was a move towards agreement (43.1%). The results of respondents suggested a neutral position, with a mean score at 3.09 and SD score at 1.60 respectively. A significant portion of respondents across all levels at 23.3% were neutral, which could be an indication of uncertainty regarding the supportive nature of IPMS at Unisa.

Performance management and performance agreements should be developed during the planning phase, which should include all activities within the individual's job description and operational plan (Unisa, 2013a:3-4). Similarly important, is the management and coordination phase that entails how line managers should determine relevant measures to ensure that set objectives and targets are achieved (Unisa, 2013a:4).

Table 6.12 below presents an analysis of the statement: I perceive the IPMS practices to be fair, consistent and ethical.

Table 6.12: I perceive the IPMS practices to be fair, consistent and ethical

		n	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total		
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 10. I perceive the IPMS practices to be fair, consistent and ethical.	Strongly disagree	N	51	7	21	22	50	18	12	21	51	20	13	18	51	17	33	50	
		%	22.0%	19.4%	21.4%	23.4%	21.9%	22.2%	17.1%	26.6%	22.2%	26.0%	21.3%	20.0%	22.4%	21.0%	22.6%	22.0%	
	Disagree	N	83	18	32	32	82	28	27	27	82	28	23	30	81	27	53	80	
		%	35.8%	50.0%	32.7%	34.0%	36.0%	34.6%	38.6%	34.2%	35.7%	36.4%	37.7%	33.3%	35.5%	33.3%	36.3%	35.2%	
	Neutral	N	34	4	17	12	33	10	11	13	34	8	8	18	34	13	21	34	
		%	14.7%	11.1%	17.3%	12.8%	14.5%	12.3%	15.7%	16.5%	14.8%	10.4%	13.1%	20.0%	14.9%	16.0%	14.4%	15.0%	
	Agree	N	49	6	22	20	48	18	12	18	48	14	14	19	47	18	31	49	
		%	21.1%	16.7%	22.4%	21.3%	21.1%	22.2%	17.1%	22.8%	20.9%	18.2%	23.0%	21.1%	20.6%	22.2%	21.2%	21.6%	
	Strongly agree	N	15	1	6	8	15	7	8	0	15	7	3	5	15	6	8	14	
		%	6.5%	2.8%	6.1%	8.5%	6.6%	8.6%	11.4%	0.0%	6.5%	9.1%	4.9%	5.6%	6.6%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.54	2.33	2.59	2.57	2.54	2.60	2.67	2.35	2.54	2.48	2.52	2.59	2.54	2.62	2.51	2.55
	SD			1.227	1.069	1.225	1.291	1.228	1.291	1.271	1.110	1.228	1.304	1.206	1.189	1.229	1.251	1.211	1.223

With a response of (22%) strongly disagree and (35.8%) respectively in disagreement, there is a strong indication that respondents do not experience the IPMS at Unisa to be fair, consistent and ethical. This is further confirmed with 21.1% of the respondents in agreement, and strongly in agreement at only 6.5%. Moreover, the mean score at 2.54 consistently across all levels further endorses disagreement among respondents.

According to Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:214-217), one of the most important factors within the IPMS process that will influence positive behaviour towards employee commitment, to improve performance outcomes, is the ethical manner in which managers conduct their day-to-day business in dealing with subordinates. Thus, to conduct performance management in an ethical way to engage without causing offence. Hence, trustworthy communication and feedback, and not bullying employees, are essential principles to ensure effective performance management. Therefore, managers should act with integrity, honesty and consistency when engaging employees during performance management practices (Section 3.6).

Swiatczak *et al.* (2015:374-376) endorse the concern raised in the above analysis. They indicate that a sound and effectively maintained IPMS is of crucial importance to ensure trust in the information provided, which could enhance the positive perceptions and experience thereof. However, transparency, in particular, regarding politically imposed goals is not often provided. Thus, according to Mizrahi (2017:6-9), IPMS are usually integrated into the public sector through policy-making processes that involve decisions made by politicians and senior public administrators.

However, taking into account the political and administrative barriers to performance reforms, employees should be involved as key role-players in initiating, and certainly in implementing such performance management policy reforms (Section 5.4). Furthermore, interviewees indicated that the IPMS does not have sufficient criteria to ensure sound fair appraisals, it is still subjective, inconsistent and with an appeal system that is fraudulent and which does not take into account the real performance outputs of employees (Section 6.9.1.1).

The next table will report on whether the respondents prefer their IPMS to be conducted with their supervisor, a colleague and a representative/subordinate included.

Table 6.13: The IPMS would be more appropriate, if my supervisor, a colleague representative, and subordinate (if applicable) is included

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 11. The IPMS would be more appropriate, if my supervisor, a colleague representative, and subordinate (if applicable) is included.	Strongly disagree	N	15	2	7	6	15	9	3	3	15	5	5	5	15	5	9	14	
		%	6.5%	5.6%	7.1%	6.4%	6.6%	11.1%	4.3%	3.8%	6.5%	6.5%	8.2%	5.6%	6.6%	6.2%	6.2%	6.2%	
	Disagree	N	46	6	26	13	45	16	9	20	45	21	13	11	45	8	38	46	
		%	19.8%	16.7%	26.5%	13.8%	19.7%	19.8%	12.9%	25.3%	19.6%	27.3%	21.3%	12.2%	19.7%	9.9%	26.0%	20.3%	
	Neutral	N	63	12	22	26	60	19	23	21	63	20	13	28	61	19	42	61	
		%	27.2%	33.3%	22.4%	27.7%	26.3%	23.5%	32.9%	26.6%	27.4%	26.0%	21.3%	31.1%	26.8%	23.5%	28.8%	26.9%	
	Agree	N	66	11	28	27	66	23	23	19	65	19	18	29	66	27	38	65	
		%	28.4%	30.6%	28.6%	28.7%	28.9%	28.4%	32.9%	24.1%	28.3%	24.7%	29.5%	32.2%	28.9%	33.3%	26.0%	28.6%	
	Strongly agree	N	42	5	15	22	42	14	12	16	42	12	12	17	41	22	19	41	
		%	18.1%	13.9%	15.3%	23.4%	18.4%	17.3%	17.1%	20.3%	18.3%	15.6%	19.7%	18.9%	18.0%	27.2%	13.0%	18.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.32	3.31	3.18	3.49	3.33	3.21	3.46	3.32	3.32	3.16	3.31	3.47	3.32	3.65	3.14	3.32
	SD			1.170	1.091	1.196	1.180	1.177	1.262	1.059	1.172	1.171	1.182	1.246	1.104	1.172	1.164	1.130	1.167

The proportionality of agreement across the administrative post levels at a mean score of 3.32, reflected in Table 6.13, was in the range of 30%. However, the neutral response of an average of almost 27.2% is significant which is also consistent at all the post levels. The highest proportionality of agreement was at the senior post level P3-P5, which suggests there may be some concerns relating to the experience of one-on-one IPMS appraisals on employees. The suggestion could support the implementation of a 360° approach.

The mean score at 3.32 indicates consistency across all levels towards agreement. Some interviewees indicated that a more reliable performance appraisal process should entail a three tier assessment process, linked to a monthly assessment or monitoring process, with three types of assessment, self-assessment, peer assessment and supervisor assessment. The final outcomes or rating, should be the combination of the assessment ratings (Section 6.9.1.1, 6.9.2.1).

Mosley (2013:1) explains that the traditional performance appraisal, thus administrative finalisation of allocation of scores to individuals, is out-dated. Therefore, 'Crowdsourcing' or 360° evaluation information inputs of all kinds are, according to Mosley (2013:3), an important new innovation that should form part of a new approach, ensuring a more relevant and effective performance management model (Mosley 2013:2; Entrekin & Scott-Ladd, 2014:173-175). Thus, 'Crowdsourcing' aggregates and highlights the opinions and thoughts of many individuals, to arrive at a richer, more accurate observation of individual performance outputs (Section 2.6.4).

Table 6.14 presents the analysis of the statement: I am rewarded for exceeding my performance targets.

Table 6.14: I am rewarded for exceeding my performance targets

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 12. I am rewarded for exceeding my performance targets.	Strongly disagree	N	27	7	8	11	26	12	6	9	27	9	4	13	26	13	14	27	
		%	11.6%	19.4%	8.2%	11.7%	11.4%	14.8%	8.6%	11.4%	11.7%	11.7%	6.6%	14.4%	11.4%	16.0%	9.6%	11.9%	
	Disagree	N	47	10	13	22	45	17	14	15	46	16	11	19	46	11	33	44	
		%	20.3%	27.8%	13.3%	23.4%	19.7%	21.0%	20.0%	19.0%	20.0%	20.8%	18.0%	21.1%	20.2%	13.6%	22.6%	19.4%	
	Neutral	N	27	3	13	11	27	9	9	9	27	8	8	10	26	10	17	27	
		%	11.6%	8.3%	13.3%	11.7%	11.8%	11.1%	12.9%	11.4%	11.7%	10.4%	13.1%	11.1%	11.4%	12.3%	11.6%	11.9%	
	Agree	N	112	15	56	40	111	35	34	42	111	37	32	42	111	40	71	111	
		%	48.3%	41.7%	57.1%	42.6%	48.7%	43.2%	48.6%	53.2%	48.3%	48.1%	52.5%	46.7%	48.7%	49.4%	48.6%	48.9%	
	Strongly agree	N	19	1	8	10	19	8	7	4	19	7	6	6	19	7	11	18	
		%	8.2%	2.8%	8.2%	10.6%	8.3%	9.9%	10.0%	5.1%	8.3%	9.1%	9.8%	6.7%	8.3%	8.6%	7.5%	7.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.21	2.81	3.44	3.17	3.23	3.12	3.31	3.22	3.21	3.22	3.41	3.10	3.22	3.21	3.22	3.22
	SD			1.200	1.261	1.085	1.241	1.195	1.279	1.161	1.162	1.201	1.221	1.101	1.237	1.198	1.262	1.166	1.198

Respondents are generally in agreement (48%) and strongly agree (52%), thus a total of 56.2%. The highest agreement rate 57% is at the post level P6 – P7, managers and supervisors, with the highest in disagreement at post levels P3 – P5, senior management, at 27.8%.

With a mean score at 3.21 and SD at 1.200, there is a suggestion that respondents are satisfied that they are rewarded for exceeding their performance targets. Also, from a mean score point of view there was consistency in respect of those respondents who were neutral and in agreement.

However, this finding should be interpreted with caution, as Baldwin *et al.* (2013:242-243) warn that job satisfaction entails more than just remuneration. Hence, job satisfaction also entails fairness, consistency in decision-making, remuneration, career development opportunities and acknowledgement (Section 3.5.4).

Table 6.15 reports on whether administrative employees are in agreement that evidence of exceptional performance determines their performance ratings.

Table 6.15: Evidence of exceptional performance determines my performance ratings

		n	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total		
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 13. Evidence of exceptional performance determines my performance ratings.	Strongly disagree	N	22	5	6	11	22	11	1	10	22	8	5	9	22	9	13	22	
		%	9.5%	13.9%	6.1%	11.7%	9.6%	13.6%	1.4%	12.7%	9.6%	10.4%	8.2%	10.0%	9.6%	11.1%	8.9%	9.7%	
	Disagree	N	47	9	18	18	45	12	18	16	46	19	13	14	46	16	29	45	
		%	20.3%	25.0%	18.4%	19.1%	19.7%	14.8%	25.7%	20.3%	20.0%	24.7%	21.3%	15.6%	20.2%	19.8%	19.9%	19.8%	
	Neutral	N	40	6	14	20	40	15	15	10	40	13	9	18	40	14	25	39	
		%	17.2%	16.7%	14.3%	21.3%	17.5%	18.5%	21.4%	12.7%	17.4%	16.9%	14.8%	20.0%	17.5%	17.3%	17.1%	17.2%	
	Agree	N	102	13	53	35	101	33	28	40	101	29	27	43	99	31	70	101	
		%	44.0%	36.1%	54.1%	37.2%	44.3%	40.7%	40.0%	50.6%	43.9%	37.7%	44.3%	47.8%	43.4%	38.3%	47.9%	44.5%	
	Strongly agree	N	21	3	7	10	20	10	8	3	21	8	7	6	21	11	9	20	
		%	9.1%	8.3%	7.1%	10.6%	8.8%	12.3%	11.4%	3.8%	9.1%	10.4%	11.5%	6.7%	9.2%	13.6%	6.2%	8.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.23	3.00	3.38	3.16	3.23	3.23	3.34	3.13	3.23	3.13	3.30	3.26	3.22	3.23	3.23	3.23
	SD			1.156	1.242	1.060	1.203	1.154	1.248	1.034	1.170	1.157	1.207	1.174	1.117	1.160	1.238	1.113	1.156

The mean score at 3.23 reflected consistency towards being neutral (18%) of responses at this category, and a SD score of 1.24, which could suggest some level of deviation among respondents. The proportionality of agreement of 44% and disagreement of 20% could be an indication that respondents are in agreement that evidence of exceptional performance determined performance ratings as reflected in Table 6.15.

Employees focus on the gathering of evidence, more specifically, high statistical output, that support them during IPMS appraisals to ensure the allocation of high ratings. In the process, the quantity of work (fault factor) increases which could have a negative effect and perception on the high quality service delivery, which is expected from employees.

Mizrahi (2019:102-104) indicates that the major factor that demotivates managers to utilise IPMS, is the dysfunction of IPMS and the resulting gaming factor, namely, deliberate distortions in the IPMS, which include activities that consume resources, but do not necessarily improve individual performance outputs. Hence, according to Mizrahi, the quantity of services may improve, but not necessarily the quality thereof (Section 5.3.1).

The analysis in Table 6.15 is aligned to Table 6.14 in terms of expected performance ratings, and Table 6.16, where it is reported that line managers should appraise incumbents according to the same standards (Sections 2.6.4, 5.3.1 and 5.4).

Table 6.16 reports on the standard by which managers/supervisors are assessed against.

Table 6.16: In my department/directorate employees are assessed by our line managers according to the same standard

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 14. In my department/direc torate employees are assessed by our line managers according to the same standard.	Strongly disagree	N	40	4	15	20	39	21	5	14	40	12	9	19	40	14	25	39	
		%	17.2%	11.1%	15.3%	21.3%	17.1%	25.9%	7.1%	17.7%	17.4%	15.6%	14.8%	21.1%	17.5%	17.3%	17.1%	17.2%	
	Disagree	N	49	8	20	20	48	14	15	19	48	21	11	15	47	18	31	49	
		%	21.1%	22.2%	20.4%	21.3%	21.1%	17.3%	21.4%	24.1%	20.9%	27.3%	18.0%	16.7%	20.6%	22.2%	21.2%	21.6%	
	Neutral	N	59	7	23	27	57	17	23	19	59	17	16	24	57	18	41	59	
		%	25.4%	19.4%	23.5%	28.7%	25.0%	21.0%	32.9%	24.1%	25.7%	22.1%	26.2%	26.7%	25.0%	22.2%	28.1%	26.0%	
	Agree	N	67	15	32	20	67	21	19	26	66	19	22	26	67	25	39	64	
		%	28.9%	41.7%	32.7%	21.3%	29.4%	25.9%	27.1%	32.9%	28.7%	24.7%	36.1%	28.9%	29.4%	30.9%	26.7%	28.2%	
	Strongly agree	N	17	2	8	7	17	8	8	1	17	8	3	6	17	6	10	16	
		%	7.3%	5.6%	8.2%	7.4%	7.5%	9.9%	11.4%	1.3%	7.4%	10.4%	4.9%	6.7%	7.5%	7.4%	6.8%	7.0%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.88	3.08	2.98	2.72	2.89	2.77	3.14	2.76	2.88	2.87	2.98	2.83	2.89	2.89	2.85	2.86
	SD			1.214	1.156	1.218	1.230	1.217	1.353	1.107	1.135	1.216	1.250	1.162	1.247	1.222	1.235	1.194	1.206

The mean score at 2.88, consistently across administrative staff at the different post levels, suggests a response rate between being neutral (25%), agreement and strongly agree combined (36.2%), and disagreement and strongly disagreement at 38.3%. This result reflects some level of unfairness, as the same standard is not applied to all employees and could be due to the fact that one-to-one performance appraisals tend to be confidential. Hence, the comparisons between individual employees do not often occur (see Table 6.13, and Sections 3.5.1 and 5.2.3) where the benefits of Crowdsourcing or 360° evaluations are mentioned.

Mizrahi (2017:15-16) is of the opinion that performance management systems are managerial tools through which policy-makers or managers must determine and set goals, as well as performance indicators for an institution. These goals and performance indicators should be followed by expected performance standards, in relation to benchmarks, and the introduction of tools to incentivise managers and individuals to meet the expected standards.

Prester and Moller (2008:14) confirm in their study, that performance standards ensure an objective basis for the engagement, feedback and improvement of individual performance. Hence, performance standards act as a benchmark against which individual performance outcomes are measured. Without standards, it would be extremely difficult to distinguish between good and poor performance outcomes. Moreover, performance standards ensure an objective basis for the engagement, feedback and improvement of individual performance (Prester & Moller, 2008:14).

Table 6.17 presents the analysis of the statement: Line managers' actions and behaviour during the assessment of performance are consistent.

Table 6.17: Line managers' actions and behaviour during the assessment of performance are consistent

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	45	7	18	19	44	20	11	14	45	15	14	16	45	21	23	44	
		%	19.4%	19.4%	18.4%	20.2%	19.3%	24.7%	15.7%	17.7%	19.6%	19.5%	23.0%	17.8%	19.7%	25.9%	15.8%	19.4%	
	Disagree	N	66	10	25	29	64	21	17	27	65	25	15	25	65	23	43	66	
		%	28.4%	27.8%	25.5%	30.9%	28.1%	25.9%	24.3%	34.2%	28.3%	32.5%	24.6%	27.8%	28.5%	28.4%	29.5%	29.1%	
	Neutral	N	51	8	22	20	50	17	18	16	51	17	12	19	48	13	36	49	
		%	22.0%	22.2%	22.4%	21.3%	21.9%	21.0%	25.7%	20.3%	22.2%	22.1%	19.7%	21.1%	21.1%	16.0%	24.7%	21.6%	
	Agree	N	55	8	27	20	55	16	16	22	54	14	17	24	55	18	36	54	
		%	23.7%	22.2%	27.6%	21.3%	24.1%	19.8%	22.9%	27.8%	23.5%	18.2%	27.9%	26.7%	24.1%	22.2%	24.7%	23.8%	
	Strongly agree	N	15	3	6	6	15	7	8	0	15	6	3	6	15	6	8	14	
		%	6.5%	8.3%	6.1%	6.4%	6.6%	8.6%	11.4%	0.0%	6.5%	7.8%	4.9%	6.7%	6.6%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.69	2.72	2.78	2.63	2.71	2.62	2.90	2.58	2.69	2.62	2.67	2.77	2.69	2.57	2.75	2.68
	SD			1.212	1.256	1.214	1.209	1.215	1.290	1.253	1.081	1.213	1.214	1.248	1.218	1.221	1.294	1.156	1.207

The rationale behind this question, as reflected in the above table, is to determine the consistent behaviour of line managers during the assessment of performance. The respondents at level P8 – P9 report the highest level of disagreement (30%), with the lowest SD at 1.08 in the category which has 21 years or longer service at Unisa. A combined proportionality of disagreement/strongly disagreement, at 47.8%, suggests some concerns raised relating to the question reflected in Table 6.17.

The SD is at 1.212, implying some variation, although it is not significant. The neutral percentage of 22% correlates with the category agreement of 24%, which moves toward undecidedness. These variations will be probed further during the interviews (Section 3.2.1).

According to Walker *et al.* (2010:172) performance management is always a dynamic target with various concerns, such as economy and fairness, consistency and relevance to individuals in different working environments, and measurement in respect of certain outputs and objectives. The focus should be on the collective efforts in setting targets for implementation. Moreover, Armstrong (2009:271-274) reported that line managers do not seem to execute performance management in a consistent manner. Due to a lack of the required skills, managers are not committed to performance management and are reluctant to perform management reviews. Furthermore, Culbert (2010:6-8) found that managers fail to understand that the most important principle they have to ensure is a trusting and consistent behaviour and relationship with the employers.

Crawley *et al.* (2013:173) endorse the above opinions by indicating that managers should be aware of a range of performance measurement techniques and instruments, as well as the ability to conduct a fair and consistent evaluation in relation to the agreed standards and the performance of other similar staff. Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-13) also advocate for the use of behavioural competencies, or how managers are expected to behave in a consistent manner, to ensure the enhancement of performance management of the employees within an institution.

Table 6.18 will report whether the IPMS criteria consistently measure what it is intended to measure.

Table 6.18: The IPMS criteria consistently measure what it is intended to measure

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 16. The IPMS criteria consistently measure what it is intended to measure.	Strongly disagree	N	39	6	16	16	38	18	9	12	39	12	13	14	39	15	22	37	
		%	16.8%	16.7%	16.3%	17.0%	16.7%	22.2%	12.9%	15.2%	17.0%	15.6%	21.3%	15.6%	17.1%	18.5%	15.1%	16.3%	
	Disagree	N	73	15	29	26	70	24	18	30	72	28	19	24	71	23	48	71	
		%	31.5%	41.7%	29.6%	27.7%	30.7%	29.6%	25.7%	38.0%	31.3%	36.4%	31.1%	26.7%	31.1%	28.4%	32.9%	31.3%	
	Neutral	N	51	6	25	20	51	12	20	19	51	18	9	23	50	18	33	51	
		%	22.0%	16.7%	25.5%	21.3%	22.4%	14.8%	28.6%	24.1%	22.2%	23.4%	14.8%	25.6%	21.9%	22.2%	22.6%	22.5%	
	Agree	N	57	7	24	26	57	20	18	18	56	14	17	25	56	19	38	57	
		%	24.6%	19.4%	24.5%	27.7%	25.0%	24.7%	25.7%	22.8%	24.3%	18.2%	27.9%	27.8%	24.6%	23.5%	26.0%	25.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	12	2	4	6	12	7	5	0	12	5	3	4	12	6	5	11	
		%	5.2%	5.6%	4.1%	6.4%	5.3%	8.6%	7.1%	0.0%	5.2%	6.5%	4.9%	4.4%	5.3%	7.4%	3.4%	4.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.70	2.56	2.70	2.79	2.71	2.68	2.89	2.54	2.70	2.64	2.64	2.79	2.70	2.73	2.70	2.71
	SD			1.164	1.157	1.133	1.208	1.166	anal	1.149	1.010	1.165	1.146	1.239	1.147	1.169	1.225	1.116	1.154

The highest response rate (41.7%) disagree, combined with strongly disagree (16.7%), thus 58.4%, is on P3 – P5 (senior management) level and also in the category 21 years of service or longer (38.2%). This suggests that senior experienced staff disagree with the question reflected in Table 6.18. Hence, a negative attitude reflects clearly within the senior administrative level towards the IPMS at Unisa. The mean score at 2.70 and SD (1.164) confirms the move towards disagreement, with a consistent pattern of at least 22% of neutral responses at each level.

A performance management system and its measurements method ensure that measures are connected at all strategic planning and operational implementation levels, also between interdependencies, which must contribute towards successful individual job level outcomes (Morrisey *et al.*, 1988:46; Enos, 2000:2-4; Culbert, 2010:6-7). However, London (2013:155-163) indicates that managers rather focus on their own performance improvement challenges and the efforts thereof.

Noe *et al.* (2014:237-239) indicate that an important criteria to ensure effective performance management, is the extent to which a measurement tool actually measures what it is intended to measure. To utilise only the appropriate measurement tools, and eliminate unnecessary aspects of performance: could ensure the execution of set targets by due dates. The author continuous by indicating that a performance measure should enable specific appropriate feedback to employees, and should determine whether or not a measure is valid and reliable and needs to be acceptable to the people using it.

Table 6.19 reports on statement: The implementation of the IPMS at Unisa motivates me to improve my performance.

Table 6.19: The implementation of the IPMS at Unisa motivates me to improve my performance

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 17. The implementation of the IPMS at Unisa motivates me to improve my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	42	7	12	22	41	18	8	16	42	11	10	20	41	15	24	39	
		%	18.1%	19.4%	12.2%	23.4%	18.0%	22.2%	11.4%	20.3%	18.3%	14.3%	16.4%	22.2%	18.0%	18.5%	16.4%	17.2%	
	Disagree	N	66	16	30	20	66	22	21	23	66	27	18	20	65	22	43	65	
		%	28.4%	44.4%	30.6%	21.3%	28.9%	27.2%	30.0%	29.1%	28.7%	35.1%	29.5%	22.2%	28.5%	27.2%	29.5%	28.6%	
	Neutral	N	33	2	19	11	32	9	14	9	32	12	10	11	33	12	21	33	
		%	14.2%	5.6%	19.4%	11.7%	14.0%	11.1%	20.0%	11.4%	13.9%	15.6%	16.4%	12.2%	14.5%	14.8%	14.4%	14.5%	
	Agree	N	72	9	30	33	72	21	20	30	71	21	18	31	70	25	47	72	
		%	31.0%	25.0%	30.6%	35.1%	31.6%	25.9%	28.6%	38.0%	30.9%	27.3%	29.5%	34.4%	30.7%	30.9%	32.2%	31.7%	
	Strongly agree	N	19	2	7	8	17	11	7	1	19	6	5	8	19	7	11	18	
		%	8.2%	5.6%	7.1%	8.5%	7.5%	13.6%	10.0%	1.3%	8.3%	7.8%	8.2%	8.9%	8.3%	8.6%	7.5%	7.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.83	2.53	2.90	2.84	2.82	2.81	2.96	2.71	2.82	2.79	2.84	2.86	2.83	2.84	2.85	2.85
	SD			1.274	1.230	1.180	1.354	1.263	1.397	1.209	1.211	1.277	1.218	1.254	1.345	1.274	1.289	1.250	1.261

Table 6.19 clearly reflects that the senior administrative employees, at Post level P3 – P5 reported the highest degree of disagreement (44.4%) and strongly disagree (19.4%), giving a total of 63.8%, at a mean score of 2.83 and SD at 1.274. The proportionality of agreement was the highest at the lower post levels (P8 – P9) at 35.1%. Thus, the results of the outcomes could suggest unhappiness with the manner in which IPMS at Unisa is practised by their line managers, which demotivates employees to improve their performance outputs (Table 6.10).

Interviewees indicated their frustration with the processes that were followed in respect of the manner in which IPMS criteria is developed. The IPMS templates changes almost annually and are always submitted late, within a given period for submission by employees. The categories P3 – P5 and P6 – P9, emphasise the fact that according to their views and experience, the IPMS at Unisa is subjective, inconsistent and is used as a tool to achieve hidden agendas and objectives (Section 6.9.1).

According to Aguinis (2013:226-228) motivation, or the knowledge of motivational approaches, is embedded in effective performance management, or should at least be supportive, where applicable. Therefore, during the engagement process between line managers and employees, managers' knowledge of motivational approaches could enhance their skills to motivate individuals towards self-development.

Table 6.20 will report whether IPMS at Unisa clearly indicates what is expected from employees.

Table 6.20: The Unisa IPMS clearly indicates what is expected from me

		n	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total		
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 18. The Unisa IPMS clearly indicates what is expected from me.	Strongly disagree	N	24	5	10	9	24	10	4	10	24	9	6	8	23	8	15	23	
		%	10.3%	13.9%	10.2%	9.6%	10.5%	12.3%	5.7%	12.7%	10.4%	11.7%	9.8%	8.9%	10.1%	9.9%	10.3%	10.1%	
	Disagree	N	53	9	22	21	52	22	13	17	52	18	15	19	52	18	35	53	
		%	22.8%	25.0%	22.4%	22.3%	22.8%	27.2%	18.6%	21.5%	22.6%	23.4%	24.6%	21.1%	22.8%	22.2%	24.0%	23.3%	
	Neutral	N	30	9	11	9	29	6	9	15	30	14	5	10	29	11	18	29	
		%	12.9%	25.0%	11.2%	9.6%	12.7%	7.4%	12.9%	19.0%	13.0%	18.2%	8.2%	11.1%	12.7%	13.6%	12.3%	12.8%	
	Agree	N	104	12	45	45	102	33	35	35	103	28	30	45	103	34	68	102	
		%	44.8%	33.3%	45.9%	47.9%	44.7%	40.7%	50.0%	44.3%	44.8%	36.4%	49.2%	50.0%	45.2%	42.0%	46.6%	44.9%	
	Strongly agree	N	21	1	10	10	21	10	9	2	21	8	5	8	21	10	10	20	
		%	9.1%	2.8%	10.2%	10.6%	9.2%	12.3%	12.9%	2.5%	9.1%	10.4%	8.2%	8.9%	9.2%	12.3%	6.8%	8.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.19	2.86	3.23	3.28	3.19	3.14	3.46	3.03	3.20	3.10	3.21	3.29	3.21	3.25	3.16	3.19
	SD			1.192	1.125	1.208	1.204	1.197	1.292	1.112	1.132	1.193	1.220	1.199	1.164	1.190	1.220	1.173	1.188

From the point of view of the mean score at 3.19 and SD at 1.192 there is a suggestion that there is uncertainty between the responses at all levels with regards to the clear directive from the IPMS informing employees what is expected from them. However, there was a movement towards agreement (44,8%) and strongly agreement (9.1%), with a total of 53.9%, that indicated some level of agreement towards IPMS directing employees regarding what is expected from them. The exception is at the senior level (P3-P5) with 38.9% in disagreement. Again, this can be an indication that at the highest levels, job contents are more conceptual, directive and innovative, if compared to the lower operational levels, which are more detailed and specific.

Table 6.21 reports on whether supervisors provide performance feedback regularly.

Table 6.21: My supervisor provides me with performance feedback regularly

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES	Strongly disagree	N	52	8	22	22	52	20	15	17	52	16	15	19	50	24	27	51
		%	22.4%	22.2%	22.4%	23.4%	22.8%	24.7%	21.4%	21.5%	22.6%	20.8%	24.6%	21.1%	21.9%	29.6%	18.5%	22.5%
	Disagree	N	78	13	30	31	74	25	20	31	76	32	13	32	77	27	50	77
		%	33.6%	36.1%	30.6%	33.0%	32.5%	30.9%	28.6%	39.2%	33.0%	41.6%	21.3%	35.6%	33.8%	33.3%	34.2%	33.9%
	Neutral	N	39	6	16	17	39	10	16	13	39	8	14	16	38	12	26	38
		%	16.8%	16.7%	16.3%	18.1%	17.1%	12.3%	22.9%	16.5%	17.0%	10.4%	23.0%	17.8%	16.7%	14.8%	17.8%	16.7%
	Agree	N	49	8	22	19	49	20	13	16	49	16	15	18	49	13	35	48
		%	21.1%	22.2%	22.4%	20.2%	21.5%	24.7%	18.6%	20.3%	21.3%	20.8%	24.6%	20.0%	21.5%	16.0%	24.0%	21.1%
	Strongly agree	N	14	1	8	5	14	6	6	2	14	5	4	5	14	5	8	13
		%	6.0%	2.8%	8.2%	5.3%	6.1%	7.4%	8.6%	2.5%	6.1%	6.5%	6.6%	5.6%	6.1%	6.2%	5.5%	5.7%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.55	2.47	2.63	2.51	2.56	2.59	2.64	2.43	2.55	2.51	2.67	2.53	2.56	2.36	2.64
SD			1.219	1.158	1.279	1.207	1.228	1.302	1.252	1.117	1.224	1.221	1.274	1.192	1.220	1.238	1.191	1.213

The percentages of disagreement (33.8%) and strong disagreement (22.4%), total (56.2%), suggest that there is not adequate feedback from line managers regarding performance management matters and issues of importance that could support employees in doing what is expected from them. The mean score of 2.55 reflects a worrying phenomenon, namely an absence of feedback on performance. The SD at 1.219, also suggests minor variation in terms of responses at all levels.

The outcomes of this analysis are in alignment with the literature and policy documents analysis and analysis with previous tables in this section, namely, Tables 6.5, 6.12, 6.15, 6.16 and 6.21. The analysis in Table 6.21 is one of the core reasons for the lack of effective performance management towards the improvement of individual performance outcomes.

Hale and Whitlam (1998:12-13) advocate for the crucial role of managers to create a healthy working environment and continuous engagement with subordinates in implementing target setting.

Continual engagement and feedback on progress will also provide opportunities to change or modify original set targets for implementation, specifically due to circumstances beyond the individual's control (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:84-85; Minnaar, 2010:3-4; Michael, 2013:150-157; Barrows & Nelly, 2012:25-27).

Table 6.22 reflects the proportionality of agreement/disagreement on whether IPMS at Unisa only serves compliance purposes.

Table 6.22: The implementation of the Unisa IPMS only serves compliance purposes

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 20. The implementation of the Unisa IPMS only serves compliance purposes.	Strongly disagree	N	8	1	3	4	8	4	2	2	8	4	0	4	8	4	4	8	
		%	3.4%	2.8%	3.1%	4.3%	3.5%	4.9%	2.9%	2.5%	3.5%	5.2%	0.0%	4.4%	3.5%	4.9%	2.7%	3.5%	
	Disagree	N	37	4	18	14	36	15	13	9	37	12	11	12	35	12	24	36	
		%	15.9%	11.1%	18.4%	14.9%	15.8%	18.5%	18.6%	11.4%	16.1%	15.6%	18.0%	13.3%	15.4%	14.8%	16.4%	15.9%	
	Neutral	N	63	9	20	33	62	18	18	26	62	16	16	30	62	13	50	63	
		%	27.2%	25.0%	20.4%	35.1%	27.2%	22.2%	25.7%	32.9%	27.0%	20.8%	26.2%	33.3%	27.2%	16.0%	34.2%	27.8%	
	Agree	N	69	10	28	29	67	22	23	23	68	24	15	29	68	29	40	69	
		%	29.7%	27.8%	28.6%	30.9%	29.4%	27.2%	32.9%	29.1%	29.6%	31.2%	24.6%	32.2%	29.8%	35.8%	27.4%	30.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	55	12	29	14	55	22	14	19	55	21	19	15	55	23	28	51	
		%	23.7%	33.3%	29.6%	14.9%	24.1%	27.2%	20.0%	24.1%	23.9%	27.3%	31.1%	16.7%	24.1%	28.4%	19.2%	22.5%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.54	3.78	3.63	3.37	3.55	3.53	3.49	3.61	3.54	3.60	3.69	3.43	3.56	3.68	3.44	3.52
	SD			1.120	1.124	1.179	1.047	1.123	1.215	1.100	1.055	1.124	1.195	1.104	1.061	1.119	1.181	1.063	1.110

The report reflected that (29.7%) agree plus strongly agree (23.7%), thus 53.4% in agreement. Significant is the proportion of 27% who are neutral. Overall, the mean score of 3.54, moves towards agreement. However, the portion that remained neutral (27%) could suggest undecidedness, which could have influenced the ratings positive/negative should they have responded. This challenge regarding IPMS at Unisa will further be probed during the interviews. The response rate at all other levels and categories was consistent at a mean of 3.54 and SD of 1.120. The analysis of Table 6.22 correlates with that of Table 6.19, regarding the vague directives regarding procedures to manage IPMS at Unisa.

Bussin (2017:189-190) warned about the over-emphasis of the tick-box approach without continuous support and engagement by managers. Line managers should move from a paper chase to engagement and conversations. Mosley (2013:37) concurs with Bussin (2017:189-190), by indicating that generic performance review systems are created for the convenience of administration purposes only, and neglects the objectivity of data.

Table 6.23 reports on whether employees understand the Unisa IPMS policy and procedures.

Table 6.23: I have read and understand the Unisa IPMS policy and procedures

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 21. I have read and understand the Unisa IPMS policy and procedures.	Strongly disagree	N	2	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	
		%	0.9%	0.0%	1.0%	1.1%	0.9%	1.2%	0.0%	1.3%	0.9%	1.3%	0.0%	1.1%	0.9%	1.2%	0.7%	0.9%	
	Disagree	N	16	0	6	9	15	5	4	6	15	4	3	8	15	4	12	16	
		%	6.9%	0.0%	6.1%	9.6%	6.6%	6.2%	5.7%	7.6%	6.5%	5.2%	4.9%	8.9%	6.6%	4.9%	8.2%	7.0%	
	Neutral	N	37	6	11	19	36	10	12	15	37	12	7	18	37	15	22	37	
		%	15.9%	16.7%	11.2%	20.2%	15.8%	12.3%	17.1%	19.0%	16.1%	15.6%	11.5%	20.0%	16.2%	18.5%	15.1%	16.3%	
	Agree	N	134	22	60	51	133	48	41	44	133	47	36	48	131	40	92	132	
		%	57.8%	61.1%	61.2%	54.3%	58.3%	59.3%	58.6%	55.7%	57.8%	61.0%	59.0%	53.3%	57.5%	49.4%	63.0%	58.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	43	8	20	14	42	17	13	13	43	13	15	15	43	21	19	40	
		%	18.5%	22.2%	20.4%	14.9%	18.4%	21.0%	18.6%	16.5%	18.7%	16.9%	24.6%	16.7%	18.9%	25.9%	13.0%	17.6%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.86	4.06	3.94	3.72	3.87	3.93	3.90	3.78	3.87	3.87	4.03	3.76	3.87	3.94	3.79	3.85
	SD			0.826	0.630	0.810	0.873	0.818	0.833	0.764	0.857	0.820	0.801	0.752	0.878	0.824	0.871	0.796	0.824

A mean of 3.86 and SD of 0.826 reflected in Table 6.23 indicates a consistent strong move towards agreement, while a low degree of variation amongst all respondents occurred. The highest level of disagreement (9.6%) was at the lowest post levels (P8 – P9). Significant is the highest response rate in agreement (61%) at the senior administrative staff level (P3 – P5) and managers/supervisors levels (P6 –P7).

This analysis questions the literature by stating there is clear understanding of what is expected within the contents of IPMS policies and procedures, specifically at senior management levels. This will be probed further during interviews. An assumption could be that, although there is understanding of expectation, there is a lack of commitment to adhere to these principles: thus, a lack of commitment by managers to implement and manage IPMS procedures effectively.

Armstrong (2009:271-274) reported, based on an e-ward survey conducted at Bath University in 2005, that line managers do not seem to execute performance management practices very well. Due to a lack of the required skills, managers were not committed to performance management, and managers were reluctant to implement performance management reviews. This result could be that managers mistrust the current IPMS procedures and practices.

Table 6.24 reports on the statement: I often engage with my direct line manager on my performance targets and standards.

Table 6.24: I often engage with my direct line manager on my performance targets and standards

		n	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total		
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES 22. I often engage with my direct line manager on my performance targets and standards.	Strongly disagree	N	27	5	8	14	27	8	5	14	27	8	4	15	27	8	18	26	
		%	11.6%	13.9%	8.2%	14.9%	11.8%	9.9%	7.1%	17.7%	11.7%	10.4%	6.6%	16.7%	11.8%	9.9%	12.3%	11.5%	
	Disagree	N	75	11	29	32	72	25	26	24	75	25	15	33	73	25	50	75	
		%	32.3%	30.6%	29.6%	34.0%	31.6%	30.9%	37.1%	30.4%	32.6%	32.5%	24.6%	36.7%	32.0%	30.9%	34.2%	33.0%	
	Neutral	N	49	6	24	18	48	12	18	19	49	12	17	19	48	20	28	48	
		%	21.1%	16.7%	24.5%	19.1%	21.1%	14.8%	25.7%	24.1%	21.3%	15.6%	27.9%	21.1%	21.1%	24.7%	19.2%	21.1%	
	Agree	N	67	12	29	26	67	30	16	19	65	26	20	20	66	23	42	65	
		%	28.9%	33.3%	29.6%	27.7%	29.4%	37.0%	22.9%	24.1%	28.3%	33.8%	32.8%	22.2%	28.9%	28.4%	28.8%	28.6%	
	Strongly agree	N	14	2	8	4	14	6	5	3	14	6	5	3	14	5	8	13	
		%	6.0%	5.6%	8.2%	4.3%	6.1%	7.4%	7.1%	3.8%	6.1%	7.8%	8.2%	3.3%	6.1%	6.2%	5.5%	5.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.85	2.86	3.00	2.72	2.86	3.01	2.86	2.66	2.84	2.96	3.11	2.59	2.86	2.90	2.81	2.84
	SD			1.142	1.199	1.121	1.149	1.147	1.178	1.081	1.142	1.141	1.186	1.082	1.111	1.146	1.114	1.147	1.133

The analysis suggests that respondents were not sure and reflected some degree of undecidedness. A 32.3% in disagreement and 11.6% strongly disagree, thus a total of 43.9% in disagreement, with 21.2% neutral, could confirm a possible challenge with the IPMS practices, specifically pertaining to the engagement between employees with their line manager to determine targets and standards. Moreover, if you add the neutral (21.2%) to disagree, over 53% of the respondents indicated that there is little conversation with regard to performance targets and standards.

The SD of 1.42 implies some degree of variation in responses in all categories. This uncertainty in responses will be probed further during the interview phase (Table 6.21).

Continual engagement and feedback on progress will provide opportunities to change and modify original set targets for implementation, specifically due to circumstances beyond the individual's control (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:84-85; Minnaar, 2010:3-4; Michel, 2013:150-157; Barrows & Nelly, 2012:25-27), Unfortunately, in London's (2013:155-163) view, performance management will not just happen and managers need to cultivate performance management by demonstrating a commitment and willingness to ensure quality, relationships and continues engagement, by coaching, directing, setting targets, and to lead by example.

6.5.1 Summary

As was indicated in Section 6.4.1, Section A dealt with the University IPMS: Policies, procedures and practices. Specific themes were identified from the literature as discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 (Section 6.4.1). The focus and questions within this section were identified from various authors, which were referred to in Sections 2.2, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.6.3, as well as Sections 3.2, 3.2.1, 3.4 and 3.5.

The purpose of Section A was to determine to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed with statements about their awareness, perceptions and experience relating to the current policies, procedures and practices of IPMS in the institution.

It was evident that there was no overwhelming support for, and agreement with the fact that IPMS in the institution has met all employee's requirements, expectations and support, towards enhancing their performance outcomes. This evidence was

based on the fact that managers demonstrated a lack of willingness and commitment to ensure proper support to enhance individual development towards meeting expected individual performance outcomes.

An average response or undecidedness at each statement/question was evident. These average responses, such as to not fully agree or disagree, suggest that there is uncertainty and possible negative perceptions regarding the manner in which participants have experienced the implementation of IPMS by their managers at Unisa.

Some statements were flagged to be followed up during the interview phase to seek clarity on some of the statements in reports. The major concerns pointed at the manner in which IPMS procedures were implemented and managed by line managers. More specifically, the lack of support and continuous feedback and engagement from line managers, to enable self-development and growth. It is evident from the literature overview and analysis of policy documents, and the previous analysis of tables in this chapter, that managers neglected the basic principles relating to effective performance management. Performance management should be a chain of activities, namely, aligning employees' performance outputs with that of the intended end results. Individual performance improvement could be seen as all activities of the performance management process (gathering, analysing, interpreting and the communication thereof). However, the large number of respondents that indicated the lack of involvement and consultation in terms of their performance agreements aggregates a negative experience relating to the IPMS practices at Unisa.

According to Culbert (2010:4-7), HR professionals and management alike, use performance reviews for the wrong reasons, focusing on getting control and power over employees, something which is inappropriate for the purpose of developing individuals and to improve their skills. Performance reviews should be an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall institution. It should be a process of give and take between individuals and their line managers, with the same objective, namely, supporting the individual to grow and to ensure results that are expected from employees. With performance appraisals and procedures everyone should be on the same team, and should be supporting one another to produce high quality results.

6.6 SECTION B: MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IPMS PROCEDURES

This section and tables refer to matters relating to the responsibilities of line managers responsible for the implementing of IPMS procedures.

Participants were requested to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements below, relating to their experience and perceptions of the role of the line managers. It is not policies that are failing, but the possible lack of willingness and commitment from managers/employees to implement effective individual performance outcomes.

Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) indicate that HR policies and procedures are an important directive, however, knowledgeable managers must ensure ownership and accountability among employees towards achieving the implementation of set targets. Managers must monitor performance on a continuous basis and support employees by setting goals and providing feedback on progress.

Noe *et al.* (2015:237-293); Taylor (2014:1) and Bouckaert & Halligan (2006:22-26) emphasise the fact that the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems and institutional culture result in high-performance institutions (Section 3.2).

Table 6.25 reports on the statement: My supervisor/manager always engages and communicates openly with me.

Table 6.25: My supervisor/manager always engages and communicates openly with me

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 1. My supervisor/ manager always engages and communicates openly with me.	Strongly disagree	N	30	2	9	19	30	14	7	9	30	7	9	14	30	11	19	30	
		%	12.9%	5.6%	9.2%	20.2%	13.2%	17.3%	10.0%	11.4%	13.0%	9.1%	14.8%	15.6%	13.2%	13.6%	13.0%	13.2%	
	Disagree	N	45	9	15	18	42	9	15	21	45	16	6	20	42	24	20	44	
		%	19.4%	25.0%	15.3%	19.1%	18.4%	11.1%	21.4%	26.6%	19.6%	20.8%	9.8%	22.2%	18.4%	29.6%	13.7%	19.4%	
	Neutral	N	41	7	21	12	40	14	13	13	40	16	17	8	41	9	32	41	
		%	17.7%	19.4%	21.4%	12.8%	17.5%	17.3%	18.6%	16.5%	17.4%	20.8%	27.9%	8.9%	18.0%	11.1%	21.9%	18.1%	
	Agree	N	83	13	37	33	83	26	25	31	82	26	17	39	82	27	53	80	
		%	35.8%	36.1%	37.8%	35.1%	36.4%	32.1%	35.7%	39.2%	35.7%	33.8%	27.9%	43.3%	36.0%	33.3%	36.3%	35.2%	
	Strongly agree	N	33	5	16	12	33	18	10	5	33	12	12	9	33	10	22	32	
		%	14.2%	13.9%	16.3%	12.8%	14.5%	22.2%	14.3%	6.3%	14.3%	15.6%	19.7%	10.0%	14.5%	12.3%	15.1%	14.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.19	3.28	3.37	3.01	3.21	3.31	3.23	3.03	3.19	3.26	3.28	3.10	3.20	3.01	3.27	3.18
	SD			1.268	1.162	1.196	1.372	1.272	1.393	1.230	1.176	1.273	1.218	1.306	1.299	1.271	1.299	1.250	1.271

The analysis in Table 6.21 and Table 6.24 is in alignment with Table 6.25, relating to the engagement of line managers with employees.

At a mean of 3.19 and SD of 1.268 there is a move towards agreement (35.8%) plus strongly agree at 14.2%. Whereas 17% reflected as neutral, and disagreement at 19.4%, with 12.9% strongly agree. At an SD of 1.268 there seems to be agreement among employees.

The management of performance usually has two important challenges in respect of individual performance improvement, namely, maintaining or controlling current processes and the enhancing thereof. Hence, managers are continuously accountable for improving employees' performance outcomes (Charron *et al.*, 2015:2). Moreover, Schwartz (1999:3-5) argues that performance management comprises of three important components: (i) the understanding and setting of specific objectives and expectations; (ii) continuously providing feedback on progress; and (iii) eventually appraising the expected performance outcomes. Moreover, according to Hunt (2014:105:107), Van Zyl *et al.* (2012:12-13), and Noe *et al.* (2014:9-11) there should be continuous engagement and feedback on areas where improvement and support are relevant to ensure the successful implementation of expected individual performance outputs. Also see Section 2.7 as well as Table 2.1 in Chapter 2, in this regard.

Lastly, Mosley (2013:205), Armstrong and Taylor (2014:340-347) as well as Mizrahi (2017:5-6) indicate that, as part of an effective IPMS, with the focus on the improvement of individual performance, continuous engagement with employees by their managers will inspire them to enhance their performance outputs.

Table 6.26: My supervisor/manager often discusses staff performance in their absence

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 2. My supervisor/ manager often discusses staff performance in their absence.	Strongly disagree	N	36	7	13	16	36	13	10	13	36	12	9	15	36	14	20	34	
		%	15.5%	19.4%	13.3%	17.0%	15.8%	16.0%	14.3%	16.5%	15.7%	15.6%	14.8%	16.7%	15.8%	17.3%	13.7%	15.0%	
	Disagree	N	95	10	42	42	94	34	25	34	93	26	26	41	93	23	71	94	
		%	40.9%	27.8%	42.9%	44.7%	41.2%	42.0%	35.7%	43.0%	40.4%	33.8%	42.6%	45.6%	40.8%	28.4%	48.6%	41.4%	
	Neutral	N	47	9	19	18	46	12	19	16	47	14	16	15	45	25	21	46	
		%	20.3%	25.0%	19.4%	19.1%	20.2%	14.8%	27.1%	20.3%	20.4%	18.2%	26.2%	16.7%	19.7%	30.9%	14.4%	20.3%	
	Agree	N	45	10	20	13	43	18	13	14	45	20	9	16	45	15	29	44	
		%	19.4%	27.8%	20.4%	13.8%	18.9%	22.2%	18.6%	17.7%	19.6%	26.0%	14.8%	17.8%	19.7%	18.5%	19.9%	19.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	9	0	4	5	9	4	3	2	9	5	1	3	9	4	5	9	
		%	3.9%	0.0%	4.1%	5.3%	3.9%	4.9%	4.3%	2.5%	3.9%	6.5%	1.6%	3.3%	3.9%	4.9%	3.4%	4.0%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.55	2.61	2.59	2.46	2.54	2.58	2.63	2.47	2.56	2.74	2.46	2.46	2.55	2.65	2.51	2.56
	SD			1.088	1.103	1.083	1.094	1.088	1.150	1.079	1.048	1.091	1.197	0.976	1.072	1.095	1.120	1.065	1.085

The rationale behind the questions, as reflected in Table 6.26, is to determine whether direct line managers often discuss staff performance in their absence.

There was a 20.3% proportionally of neutral responses, with the highest degree of neutral responses at the level male respondents (30.9%). If you combine disagree (40.9%) and strongly disagree (at 15%), the total of 55.9% could be significant. Therefore, it suggested that employees are in general convinced that line managers do not discuss performance outcomes with staff in their absence. The SD of 1.088 shows no significant variation amongst respondents.

Aguinis (2013:228-229) emphasises the importance of establishing a trusting relationship, particularly if there are cultural deficiencies within the institutional (Section 3.5.3 and 3.6).

The next table will report on whether line managers frequently request employees' input during the appraisal of their performance.

Table 6.27: My supervisor/manager frequently requests my inputs when appraising my performance

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 3. My supervisor/ manager frequently requests my inputs when appraising my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	18	1	5	12	18	8	3	7	18	4	5	9	18	8	10	18
		%	7.8%	2.8%	5.1%	12.8%	7.9%	9.9%	4.3%	8.9%	7.8%	5.2%	8.2%	10.0%	7.9%	9.9%	6.8%	7.9%
	Disagree	N	37	6	12	17	35	12	11	14	37	11	5	19	35	11	26	37
		%	15.9%	16.7%	12.2%	18.1%	15.4%	14.8%	15.7%	17.7%	16.1%	14.3%	8.2%	21.1%	15.4%	13.6%	17.8%	16.3%
	Neutral	N	42	6	19	15	40	17	11	14	42	10	13	19	42	15	27	42
		%	18.1%	16.7%	19.4%	16.0%	17.5%	21.0%	15.7%	17.7%	18.3%	13.0%	21.3%	21.1%	18.4%	18.5%	18.5%	18.5%
	Agree	N	109	19	49	41	109	32	37	38	107	44	29	34	107	38	68	106
		%	47.0%	52.8%	50.0%	43.6%	47.8%	39.5%	52.9%	48.1%	46.5%	57.1%	47.5%	37.8%	46.9%	46.9%	46.6%	46.7%
	Strongly agree	N	26	4	13	9	26	12	8	6	26	8	9	9	26	9	15	24
		%	11.2%	11.1%	13.3%	9.6%	11.4%	14.8%	11.4%	7.6%	11.3%	10.4%	14.8%	10.0%	11.4%	11.1%	10.3%	10.6%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			3.38	3.53	3.54	3.19	3.39	3.35	3.51	3.28	3.37	3.53	3.52	3.17	3.39	3.36	3.36
SD			1.118	1.000	1.037	1.221	1.119	1.195	1.032	1.120	1.121	1.033	1.105	1.173	1.119	1.154	1.100	1.117

Table 6.27 shows that senior staff members, at post level P3-P5, reported the highest proportionality of agreements at 52.8%. There is consistent response of disagreement (15.9%).

The SD at 1.118 implies not significant variation amongst respondents. At a mean of 3.38 there is a strong movement towards admitting that line managers involve employees by requesting their inputs during performance appraisals.

The literature indicates that line managers should frequently involve employees and consult on target setting. Therefore, Armstrong (2015:208-209) explains that managers should use performance management to ensure understanding among employees of what is expected from them, through continuous engagement. Managers must identify supportive platforms required, such as a conducive working environment, training and feedback, to ensure that individuals execute the expected performance successfully. Therefore, managers should involve employees and agree on the setting of targets towards implementation. Without the involvement of individuals in target setting, the management thereof will become a set of uneducated guesses (Section 3.5).

Minnaar (2010:35-37) states that only when institutions have determined the expected level of performance through a strategic planning process, involving all the role-players, can they manage the institutions' systems and structures to ensure the desired achievement thereof (Section 3.2).

Table 6.28 will report on whether line managers know how to implement IPMS, policies and procedures.

Table 6.28: My supervisor/manager knows how to implement the performance management system, policies and procedures

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 4. My supervisor/ manager knows how to implement the performance management system, policies and procedures.	Strongly disagree	N	33	5	10	18	33	16	7	10	33	8	8	16	32	14	19	33	
		%	14.2%	13.9%	10.2%	19.1%	14.5%	19.8%	10.0%	12.7%	14.3%	10.4%	13.1%	17.8%	14.0%	17.3%	13.0%	14.5%	
	Disagree	N	38	4	15	16	35	14	11	13	38	13	10	15	38	13	24	37	
		%	16.4%	11.1%	15.3%	17.0%	15.4%	17.3%	15.7%	16.5%	16.5%	16.9%	16.4%	16.7%	16.7%	16.0%	16.4%	16.3%	
	Neutral	N	50	4	22	23	49	13	16	21	50	16	12	20	48	19	31	50	
		%	21.6%	11.1%	22.4%	24.5%	21.5%	16.0%	22.9%	26.6%	21.7%	20.8%	19.7%	22.2%	21.1%	23.5%	21.2%	22.0%	
	Agree	N	78	15	37	26	78	22	27	27	76	25	23	29	77	25	53	78	
		%	33.6%	41.7%	37.8%	27.7%	34.2%	27.2%	38.6%	34.2%	33.0%	32.5%	37.7%	32.2%	33.8%	30.9%	36.3%	34.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	33	8	14	11	33	16	9	8	33	15	8	10	33	10	19	29	
		%	14.2%	22.2%	14.3%	11.7%	14.5%	19.8%	12.9%	10.1%	14.3%	19.5%	13.1%	11.1%	14.5%	12.3%	13.0%	12.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.17	3.47	3.31	2.96	3.19	3.10	3.29	3.13	3.17	3.34	3.21	3.02	3.18	3.05	3.20	3.15
	SD			1.271	1.341	1.196	1.303	1.275	1.428	1.181	1.191	1.274	1.263	1.253	1.289	1.273	1.293	1.241	1.259

The highest proportionality of agreement was from the senior post levels (P3-P5) at 41.7%. Neutral respondents show an average of 21.6%. However, the combined average of the levels/categories disagree (16.4%) and strongly disagree (14%) at a total of 36.4%, implied a level of uncertainty amongst respondents about the capacity and skills set of their managers. Moreover, at the lower levels (junior staff) P8-P9 at 17% disagree and 19.1% at strongly disagree, with 36.1% in total, could confirm some level of negativity relating to the question raised in Table 6.28. This analysis and outcome will further be probed during the interview phase.

Interviewees' opinions correlate with the findings of above analysis. There seems to be some concerns raised that managers/supervisors may lack the skills, commitment and supportive interventions to ensure the proper implementation of performance management processes. An important statement made was that managers and supervisors tend to complete the interviews as soon as possible, without giving it the attention it deserves (Section 6.9.2.2).

Table 6.29: My supervisor/manager treats some staff differently from others

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 5. My supervisor/ manager treats some staff differently from others.	Strongly disagree	N	24	4	9	11	24	12	7	5	24	7	5	12	24	11	12	23	
		%	10.3%	11.1%	9.2%	11.7%	10.5%	14.8%	10.0%	6.3%	10.4%	9.1%	8.2%	13.3%	10.5%	13.6%	8.2%	10.1%	
	Disagree	N	49	7	29	13	49	17	14	17	48	21	13	15	49	14	33	47	
		%	21.1%	19.4%	29.6%	13.8%	21.5%	21.0%	20.0%	21.5%	20.9%	27.3%	21.3%	16.7%	21.5%	17.3%	22.6%	20.7%	
	Neutral	N	64	7	29	27	63	19	24	21	64	20	18	24	62	21	43	64	
		%	27.6%	19.4%	29.6%	28.7%	27.6%	23.5%	34.3%	26.6%	27.8%	26.0%	29.5%	26.7%	27.2%	25.9%	29.5%	28.2%	
	Agree	N	55	15	16	23	54	20	11	23	54	18	14	21	53	20	34	54	
		%	23.7%	41.7%	16.3%	24.5%	23.7%	24.7%	15.7%	29.1%	23.5%	23.4%	23.0%	23.3%	23.2%	24.7%	23.3%	23.8%	
	Strongly agree	N	40	3	15	20	38	13	14	13	40	11	11	18	40	15	24	39	
		%	17.2%	8.3%	15.3%	21.3%	16.7%	16.0%	20.0%	16.5%	17.4%	14.3%	18.0%	20.0%	17.5%	18.5%	16.4%	17.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.16	3.17	2.99	3.30	3.14	3.06	3.16	3.28	3.17	3.06	3.21	3.20	3.16	3.17	3.17	3.17
	SD			1.238	1.183	1.206	1.277	1.235	1.307	1.247	1.165	1.239	1.207	1.213	1.309	1.246	1.302	1.194	1.231

This table reports on whether direct line managers treat some staff differently from others. The proportionality of agreement was the highest among senior level administrative staff (41.7%), while the proportionality of disagreement was highest among middle management (P6-P7) at 29.6%. The reason for this could be that senior management's job contents are more conceptual, directive and innovative if compared to the lower levels at operational levels (Table 6.9). Moreover, consistent contextualisation of accountabilities at senior levels could be a challenge. The proportionality of neutral responses was at 27%.

The SD at 1.238 implies some degree of variation amongst respondents. The mean score at 3.16 implies that there could be challenges with the consistent and fair implementation of IPMS (Sections 2.7, 3.5.3 and 3.6).

Table 6.30 reports on whether employees were motivated by performance appraisals.

Table 6.30: I am motivated by performance appraisals

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 6. I am motivated by performance appraisals	Strongly disagree	N	51	7	19	25	51	24	12	15	51	17	13	20	50	19	29	48	
		%	22.0%	19.4%	19.4%	26.6%	22.4%	29.6%	17.1%	19.0%	22.2%	22.1%	21.3%	22.2%	21.9%	23.5%	19.9%	21.1%	
	Disagree	N	64	11	28	23	62	19	21	23	63	22	21	20	63	18	45	63	
		%	27.6%	30.6%	28.6%	24.5%	27.2%	23.5%	30.0%	29.1%	27.4%	28.6%	34.4%	22.2%	27.6%	22.2%	30.8%	27.8%	
	Neutral	N	43	7	18	17	42	12	15	15	42	10	11	21	42	15	28	43	
		%	18.5%	19.4%	18.4%	18.1%	18.4%	14.8%	21.4%	19.0%	18.3%	13.0%	18.0%	23.3%	18.4%	18.5%	19.2%	18.9%	
	Agree	N	57	9	26	22	57	19	14	24	57	22	12	23	57	22	35	57	
		%	24.6%	25.0%	26.5%	23.4%	25.0%	23.5%	20.0%	30.4%	24.8%	28.6%	19.7%	25.6%	25.0%	27.2%	24.0%	25.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	17	2	7	7	16	7	8	2	17	6	4	6	16	7	9	16	
		%	7.3%	5.6%	7.1%	7.4%	7.0%	8.6%	11.4%	2.5%	7.4%	7.8%	6.6%	6.7%	7.0%	8.6%	6.2%	7.0%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.68	2.67	2.73	2.61	2.67	2.58	2.79	2.68	2.68	2.71	2.56	2.72	2.68	2.75	2.66	2.69
	SD			1.263	1.219	1.248	1.305	1.263	1.359	1.273	1.172	1.268	1.306	1.218	1.254	1.259	1.318	1.217	1.252

Table 6.30 reflects that the senior administrative level (P3-P5) reported the highest degree of disagreement at 30.6%, followed by middle management (P6-P7) at 28.6%. The gender category, female, reported the highest degree of disagreement at 30.8%, whereas the highest degree of agreement was at the male category (27.2%). This analysis could imply that females prefer informal engagement in respect of their performance feedback, rather than formal sessions (IPMS) meetings. However, carefully designed and applied performance management has the potential to motivate and align individuals' attitudes and behaviour with institutional priorities, which could lead to goal achievement.

At a mean score at 2.68 there was a clear movement towards disagreement and the SD of 1.263 implied some degree of variation amongst respondents. Moreover, in general, it seems that respondents experienced IPMS as a measure that would not improve productivity or motivation levels.

The average disagree responses, at 27.6% combined with strongly disagree at 22.0%, thus 49.6%, implied some concerns relating to the statement reflected in Table 6.30.

Also see Table 6.19, of which the analysis correlates with that of Table 6.30.

Againis (2013:226-228) emphasises the fact that motivation, or the knowledge of motivational approaches, should be embedded in effective performance management, or should at least be supportive where applicable (Section 3.5.4).

Table 6.31 reports on whether employees believe that they have a fair chance to receive an accurate performance rating.

Table 6.31: I believe I have a fair chance to receive an accurate performance rating

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 7. I believe I have a fair chance to receive an accurate performance rating.	Strongly disagree	N	37	5	12	20	37	15	8	14	37	13	8	16	37	15	21	36	
		%	15.9%	13.9%	12.2%	21.3%	16.2%	18.5%	11.4%	17.7%	16.1%	16.9%	13.1%	17.8%	16.2%	18.5%	14.4%	15.9%	
	Disagree	N	49	9	17	22	48	15	17	15	47	18	8	21	47	13	36	49	
		%	21.1%	25.0%	17.3%	23.4%	21.1%	18.5%	24.3%	19.0%	20.4%	23.4%	13.1%	23.3%	20.6%	16.0%	24.7%	21.6%	
	Neutral	N	51	6	23	19	48	20	21	10	51	15	19	17	51	21	29	50	
		%	22.0%	16.7%	23.5%	20.2%	21.1%	24.7%	30.0%	12.7%	22.2%	19.5%	31.1%	18.9%	22.4%	25.9%	19.9%	22.0%	
	Agree	N	79	14	40	25	79	22	18	39	79	26	22	29	77	26	52	78	
		%	34.1%	38.9%	40.8%	26.6%	34.6%	27.2%	25.7%	49.4%	34.3%	33.8%	36.1%	32.2%	33.8%	32.1%	35.6%	34.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	16	2	6	8	16	9	6	1	16	5	4	7	16	6	8	14	
		%	6.9%	5.6%	6.1%	8.5%	7.0%	11.1%	8.6%	1.3%	7.0%	6.5%	6.6%	7.8%	7.0%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.95	2.97	3.11	2.78	2.95	2.94	2.96	2.97	2.96	2.90	3.10	2.89	2.95	2.94	2.93	2.93
	SD			1.212	1.207	1.148	1.288	1.221	1.288	1.148	1.209	1.214	1.231	1.136	1.258	1.215	1.238	1.184	1.201

With a combined response of 34.1% and 6.9% in agreement and strongly in agreement, thus 41%, there is a slight movement towards the belief that employees have a fair chance in receiving an accurate performance rating. However, with 22% at a neutral response, an SD at 1.212 and 21% and 15% in disagreement and strongly disagreement respectively, there could be challenges in respect of the effectiveness and fairness relating to the statement as reflected in Table 6.31.

While technology, management techniques and institutional models have undergone major changes during the past few years, the performance review processes have remained the same (Mosley, 2013:2; Enrekin & Scott-Ladd, 2014:173-175). Therefore, 'Crowdsourcing' or 360° evaluation information inputs of all kinds, are, according to Mosley (2013:3), an important new innovation and effective performance management model. When bringing together this innovation, the result is 'social recognition', a systematic set of practices, in which way people continuously consider and recognise an employee's performance. Thus, it aggregates and highlights the opinions and thoughts of many individuals to arrive at a richer, more accurate observation of performance, than one person alone could provide.

Table 6.32 indicates whether direct line managers allocate ratings to avoid conflict.

Table 6.32: My rating is the result of my supervisor/manager trying to avoid conflict

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 8. My rating is the result of my supervisor/ manager trying to avoid conflict.	Strongly disagree	N	31	4	12	15	31	13	9	9	31	11	7	13	31	14	16	30
		%	13.4%	11.1%	12.2%	16.0%	13.6%	16.0%	12.9%	11.4%	13.5%	14.3%	11.5%	14.4%	13.6%	17.3%	11.0%	13.2%
	Disagree	N	78	14	37	24	75	22	24	30	76	26	25	25	76	20	56	76
		%	33.6%	38.9%	37.8%	25.5%	32.9%	27.2%	34.3%	38.0%	33.0%	33.8%	41.0%	27.8%	33.3%	24.7%	38.4%	33.5%
	Neutral	N	46	5	19	22	46	11	16	19	46	16	12	18	46	16	30	46
		%	19.8%	13.9%	19.4%	23.4%	20.2%	13.6%	22.9%	24.1%	20.0%	20.8%	19.7%	20.0%	20.2%	19.8%	20.5%	20.3%
	Agree	N	47	8	17	21	46	22	14	11	47	15	9	21	45	16	30	46
		%	20.3%	22.2%	17.3%	22.3%	20.2%	27.2%	20.0%	13.9%	20.4%	19.5%	14.8%	23.3%	19.7%	19.8%	20.5%	20.3%
	Strongly agree	N	30	5	13	12	30	13	7	10	30	9	8	13	30	15	14	29
		%	12.9%	13.9%	13.3%	12.8%	13.2%	16.0%	10.0%	12.7%	13.0%	11.7%	13.1%	14.4%	13.2%	18.5%	9.6%	12.8%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.86	2.89	2.82	2.90	2.86	3.00	2.80	2.78	2.87	2.81	2.77	2.96	2.86	2.98	2.79
SD			1.256	1.282	1.246	1.279	1.261	1.360	1.199	1.205	1.259	1.246	1.230	1.297	1.260	1.378	1.174	1.251

The proportionality of disagreement was the highest among senior administrative levels, i.e. P3-P5 and P6-P7, at 33.6% and 38.6, respectively. However, at the junior levels (P8-P9) there is a response rate of only 25.5% towards disagreement, 22.3% in agreement. Thus, suggesting that senior staff responsible for appraisal ratings disagree that ratings are given to avoid conflict.

However, the literature and analysis of documents, policy and procedure endorsed the fact that managers usually allocate ratings to avoid conflict. Culbert (2010:6-7) explains that managers intimidate their subordinates into silent compliance by allocating a good rating in respect of individual performance outcome (Section 5.4.1).

Important is the responses from senior management towards disagreement. This trend could be explained by Culbert (2010:6-7). This author indicates that, by allocating a good rating in respect of employees' performance outcomes, managers believe that employees will overlook all the unacceptable behaviours of their line managers (Section 5.4.1). Likewise, Londen (2003:4-6) cautions that managers rather ignore poor performance, than to address it immediately. Hence, subordinates complain that performance outcomes, good or bad, are very seldom communicated to them during performance appraisals, mostly to avoid conflict and corrective action.

For the purposes of this study, this researchers' perspective is that this analysis/statement becomes a more significant challenge within a union-driven institution where line managers are constantly being taken to task, especially if they manage IPMS effectively (Section 5.4, 5.4.1). Therefore, interviewees endorsed the above concern, by emphasising that managers/supervisors concern themselves with their own scores, at the expense of the team. Moreover, interviewees indicated that they perceive performance management in a very negative way, since managers/supervisors do not want to engage in conflict with staff members, regarding the final rating given. Hence, managers compromise and allocate a rating that will satisfy the employee (Section 6.9.2.1).

Table 6.33 reports on whether line managers rate employees' performance fairly and consistently.

Table 6.33: My supervisor/manager rates employee performance fairly and consistently

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 9. My supervisor/ manager rates employee performance fairly and consistently.	Strongly disagree	N	27	2	10	15	27	12	6	9	27	9	7	11	27	12	15	27	
		%	11.6%	5.6%	10.2%	16.0%	11.8%	14.8%	8.6%	11.4%	11.7%	11.7%	11.5%	12.2%	11.8%	14.8%	10.3%	11.9%	
	Disagree	N	50	8	15	24	47	19	15	16	50	19	7	23	49	16	33	49	
		%	21.6%	22.2%	15.3%	25.5%	20.6%	23.5%	21.4%	20.3%	21.7%	24.7%	11.5%	25.6%	21.5%	19.8%	22.6%	21.6%	
	Neutral	N	83	13	37	32	82	24	29	29	82	24	29	28	81	28	54	82	
		%	35.8%	36.1%	37.8%	34.0%	36.0%	29.6%	41.4%	36.7%	35.7%	31.2%	47.5%	31.1%	35.5%	34.6%	37.0%	36.1%	
	Agree	N	57	10	30	17	57	19	13	24	56	19	14	23	56	18	38	56	
		%	24.6%	27.8%	30.6%	18.1%	25.0%	23.5%	18.6%	30.4%	24.3%	24.7%	23.0%	25.6%	24.6%	22.2%	26.0%	24.7%	
	Strongly agree	N	15	3	6	6	15	7	7	1	15	6	4	5	15	7	6	13	
		%	6.5%	8.3%	6.1%	6.4%	6.6%	8.6%	10.0%	1.3%	6.5%	7.8%	6.6%	5.6%	6.6%	8.6%	4.1%	5.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.93	3.11	3.07	2.73	2.94	2.88	3.00	2.90	2.92	2.92	3.02	2.87	2.93	2.90	2.91	2.91
	SD			1.089	1.036	1.058	1.128	1.093	1.187	1.077	1.008	1.091	1.133	1.041	1.104	1.094	1.168	1.030	1.079

The proportionality of disagreement was highest among the junior levels (P8-P9) at 25%, (at disagreement) and 16% (at strongly disagreement), thus a total of 41%, while the agreement responses at the middle-management level (P6-P7) was at 30.6%. Significant was the proportion of responses that were neutral at 35.8%. The reason could be that respondents are unable to compare their ratings with other employees on the same post grade level. Which could prevent respondents from determining fairness and consistency. The spread of the remaining responses between agreement and disagreement across the other levels was somewhat consistent. The above results suggest that categories of responses are fairly equal.

See analysis of Table 6.32 and Section 5.4.1.

Table 6.34 reports on the statement: My direct line manager involves me in target setting.

Table 6.34: My direct line manager involves me in target setting

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 10. My direct line manager involves me in target setting.	Strongly disagree	N	25	3	8	14	25	10	6	9	25	8	6	11	25	9	16	25	
		%	10.8%	8.3%	8.2%	14.9%	11.0%	12.3%	8.6%	11.4%	10.9%	10.4%	9.8%	12.2%	11.0%	11.1%	11.0%	11.0%	
	Disagree	N	62	7	19	33	59	20	23	19	62	14	11	34	59	21	39	60	
		%	26.7%	19.4%	19.4%	35.1%	25.9%	24.7%	32.9%	24.1%	27.0%	18.2%	18.0%	37.8%	25.9%	25.9%	26.7%	26.4%	
	Neutral	N	41	9	18	14	41	14	11	16	41	16	11	13	40	17	23	40	
		%	17.7%	25.0%	18.4%	14.9%	18.0%	17.3%	15.7%	20.3%	17.8%	20.8%	18.0%	14.4%	17.5%	21.0%	15.8%	17.6%	
	Agree	N	84	13	45	25	83	29	22	31	82	32	28	24	84	26	57	83	
		%	36.2%	36.1%	45.9%	26.6%	36.4%	35.8%	31.4%	39.2%	35.7%	41.6%	45.9%	26.7%	36.8%	32.1%	39.0%	36.6%	
	Strongly agree	N	20	4	8	8	20	8	8	4	20	7	5	8	20	8	11	19	
		%	8.6%	11.1%	8.2%	8.5%	8.8%	9.9%	11.4%	5.1%	8.7%	9.1%	8.2%	8.9%	8.8%	9.9%	7.5%	8.4%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.05	3.22	3.27	2.79	3.06	3.06	3.04	3.03	3.04	3.21	3.25	2.82	3.07	3.04	3.05	3.05
	SD			1.187	1.149	1.117	1.235	1.189	1.228	1.209	1.143	1.189	1.162	1.150	1.214	1.191	1.198	1.185	1.187

Table 6.34 reports on the proportionality of agreement/disagreement levels in terms of whether direct line managers involve employees in target setting.

The highest response rate of agreement was at the middle-management level (P6-P7) at 45.9%, while the highest level of disagreement was at 35.1%, at the level (P8-P9), thus junior staff members. There was a consistent level of being neutral at a mean score of 3.05 at 26% at all levels and categories. The reason could be that senior staff and their line managers tend to be more focused on timelines, objectives to be executed, and are more familiar with strategic planning principles. More important is the indication that line managers tend to agree, while junior levels are in disagreement.

The SD of 1.187 implies some degree of variation amongst respondents, although not that significant. The fact that there is disagreement at junior levels could be expected, since at this level staff are inexperienced and need to be informed by their line managers.

However, according to the literature reviews, target setting should be the core focus of managers in consultation with employees. Hence, employees should understand what is expected from them (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:9-11). Likewise, Hrebiniak (2006:12-31) holds that performance management can improve service delivery through the establishment of shared understanding of the delivery plans. Hence, to indicate what is to be achieved and how it should be achieved, and by what standards (Section 2.6.5).

Table 6.35 reports on whether direct line managers often recognised employees' good work.

Table 6.35: My direct line manager often recognised my good work

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 11. My direct line manager often recognised my good work.	Strongly disagree	N	23	0	12	11	23	10	6	7	23	8	5	8	21	9	14	23	
		%	9.9%	0.0%	12.2%	11.7%	10.1%	12.3%	8.6%	8.9%	10.0%	10.4%	8.2%	8.9%	9.2%	11.1%	9.6%	10.1%	
	Disagree	N	38	9	12	15	36	7	16	15	38	13	12	13	38	18	19	37	
		%	16.4%	25.0%	12.2%	16.0%	15.8%	8.6%	22.9%	19.0%	16.5%	16.9%	19.7%	14.4%	16.7%	22.2%	13.0%	16.3%	
	Neutral	N	41	4	12	24	40	18	9	14	41	10	7	24	41	16	24	40	
		%	17.7%	11.1%	12.2%	25.5%	17.5%	22.2%	12.9%	17.7%	17.8%	13.0%	11.5%	26.7%	18.0%	19.8%	16.4%	17.6%	
	Agree	N	99	15	48	35	98	30	31	36	97	32	28	37	97	28	69	97	
		%	42.7%	41.7%	49.0%	37.2%	43.0%	37.0%	44.3%	45.6%	42.2%	41.6%	45.9%	41.1%	42.5%	34.6%	47.3%	42.7%	
	Strongly agree	N	31	8	14	9	31	16	8	7	31	14	9	8	31	10	20	30	
		%	13.4%	22.2%	14.3%	9.6%	13.6%	19.8%	11.4%	8.9%	13.5%	18.2%	14.8%	8.9%	13.6%	12.3%	13.7%	13.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.33	3.61	3.41	3.17	3.34	3.43	3.27	3.27	3.33	3.40	3.39	3.27	3.35	3.15	3.42	3.33
	SD			1.191	1.103	1.234	1.170	1.193	1.254	1.191	1.140	1.194	1.259	1.201	1.100	1.179	1.226	1.168	1.193

At a mean score of 3.33, there is a consistent move across all levels, at an average of 42.7%, towards agreement and combined with that of strongly agree 13.4% that equals 56.1% in agreement. The highest level of disagreement is at the level (P3-P5) senior management 25%, while the category gender (male) at 22.2% and years of experience 11-20 years at 22.9%. Also significant is the responses at P8-P9, from junior staff, at 25.5% (neutral).

Table 6.36 reports on the statement: My supervisor/manager has the skills and capacity to implement the performance management system.

Table 6.36: My supervisor/manager has the skills and capacity to implement the performance management system

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 12. My supervisor/ manager has the skills and capacity to implement the performance management system.	Strongly disagree	N	34	3	14	17	34	17	9	8	34	12	8	13	33	13	21	34	
		%	14.7%	8.3%	14.3%	18.1%	14.9%	21.0%	12.9%	10.1%	14.8%	15.6%	13.1%	14.4%	14.5%	16.0%	14.4%	15.0%	
	Disagree	N	39	11	13	13	37	15	8	16	39	15	11	13	39	17	21	38	
		%	16.8%	30.6%	13.3%	13.8%	16.2%	18.5%	11.4%	20.3%	17.0%	19.5%	18.0%	14.4%	17.1%	21.0%	14.4%	16.7%	
	Neutral	N	45	1	16	26	43	8	19	18	45	7	12	24	43	17	28	45	
		%	19.4%	2.8%	16.3%	27.7%	18.9%	9.9%	27.1%	22.8%	19.6%	9.1%	19.7%	26.7%	18.9%	21.0%	19.2%	19.8%	
	Agree	N	89	15	44	30	89	31	27	29	87	31	24	33	88	27	60	87	
		%	38.4%	41.7%	44.9%	31.9%	39.0%	38.3%	38.6%	36.7%	37.8%	40.3%	39.3%	36.7%	38.6%	33.3%	41.1%	38.3%	
	Strongly agree	N	25	6	11	8	25	10	7	8	25	12	6	7	25	7	16	23	
		%	10.8%	16.7%	11.2%	8.5%	11.0%	12.3%	10.0%	10.1%	10.9%	15.6%	9.8%	7.8%	11.0%	8.6%	11.0%	10.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.14	3.28	3.26	2.99	3.15	3.02	3.21	3.16	3.13	3.21	3.15	3.09	3.14	2.98	3.20	3.12
	SD			1.248	1.301	1.246	1.240	1.254	1.387	1.178	1.170	1.250	1.351	1.223	1.186	1.249	1.245	1.241	1.244

The mean score of 3.14 consistently across all levels move towards agreement, at 38.4%, and strongly in agreement at 10.8%.

The highest proportionality level of disagreement is at the senior administrative level (P3-P5) at 30.6%. Again evident is that, at senior administrative levels, respondents tend to disagree. However, at an SD of 1.301 at this category, there seems to be a degree of variation in terms of responses at other levels, which are in agreement. However, the combination of disagree, 16.8% and strongly disagree at 14.7%, thus 31.5%, at all levels suggests that here could be some challenges and concerns, regarding the question reflected in Table 6.36. The analysis of this section correlates with that of Table 6.28.

There is a clear indication, supported by the literature, that managers do not engage or have the knowledge and skills to manage individual performance effectively. Crawley *et al.* (2013:172) emphasise the fact that managers often lack skills in doing performance reviews, monitoring performance outcomes, and identifying appropriate development interventions. Armstrong (2009:278), Michel (2013:77) as well as Barrows and Neely (2012:336) agree that effective leadership creates an environment where employees utilise their own motivation platform. Performance culture starts from the top, therefore most important, is to lead by example. Furthermore, institutions need to employ managers who competently exhibit a results-management-mind-set, and an analytical-learning mode that have adequate leadership experience (Behn, 2014:301-302). Managers therefore act as the interface between institutions' planned execution objectives and its workforce (Sections 3.2.1, 3.4.1, 3.4.2 and 3.5.4).

Table 6.37 reports on whether direct line managers dislike employees which impacts on their performance ratings.

Table 6.37: My supervisor/manager dislikes me which impacts on my performance rating

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 13. My supervisor/mana ger dislikes me which impacts on my performance rating.	Strongly disagree	N	65	12	28	24	64	26	18	21	65	20	19	26	65	17	47	64
		%	28.0%	33.3%	28.6%	25.5%	28.1%	32.1%	25.7%	26.6%	28.3%	26.0%	31.1%	28.9%	28.5%	21.0%	32.2%	28.2%
	Disagree	N	97	12	41	42	95	28	33	35	96	34	24	37	95	33	61	94
		%	41.8%	33.3%	41.8%	44.7%	41.7%	34.6%	47.1%	44.3%	41.7%	44.2%	39.3%	41.1%	41.7%	40.7%	41.8%	41.4%
	Neutral	N	39	7	14	17	38	16	9	13	38	9	12	18	39	20	18	38
		%	16.8%	19.4%	14.3%	18.1%	16.7%	19.8%	12.9%	16.5%	16.5%	11.7%	19.7%	20.0%	17.1%	24.7%	12.3%	16.7%
	Agree	N	18	5	6	7	18	4	7	7	18	8	1	7	16	4	14	18
		%	7.8%	13.9%	6.1%	7.4%	7.9%	4.9%	10.0%	8.9%	7.8%	10.4%	1.6%	7.8%	7.0%	4.9%	9.6%	7.9%
	Strongly agree	N	13	0	9	4	13	7	3	3	13	6	5	2	13	7	6	13
		%	5.6%	0.0%	9.2%	4.3%	5.7%	8.6%	4.3%	3.8%	5.7%	7.8%	8.2%	2.2%	5.7%	8.6%	4.1%	5.7%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.21	2.14	2.26	2.20	2.21	2.23	2.20	2.19	2.21	2.30	2.16	2.13	2.20	2.40	2.12
SD			1.106	1.046	1.204	1.043	1.112	1.207	1.071	1.051	1.110	1.193	1.143	0.997	1.103	1.137	1.092	1.114

From a mean score point of view, at 2.21 there is a consistent move towards disagreement at 41.8%, and strongly disagreement at 28%. At an agreement level of 7.8%, there is a clear indication that employees do not experience any negative impact on themselves, relating to the question that was asked in this table, which could imply a level of maturity at senior management level. However, Culbert (2010:6-7) explains that managers intimidate subordinates into silent compliance by allocating a good rating in respect of individual performance outcomes (Section 5.4.1). Furthermore, interviewees indicated that managers/supervisors avoid conflict situations when allocating ratings. More important is the statement that managers seldom give objective feedback during IPMS interviews (Table 6.32).

Table 6.38 indicates the level of agreement/disagreement on whether employees' performance is adequately reflected in their ratings.

Table 6.38: My performance is adequately reflected in my rating

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 14. My performance is adequately reflected in my rating.	Strongly disagree	N	28	0	10	18	28	11	9	8	28	7	6	14	27	13	15	28	
		%	12.1%	0.0%	10.2%	19.1%	12.3%	13.6%	12.9%	10.1%	12.2%	9.1%	9.8%	15.6%	11.8%	16.0%	10.3%	12.3%	
	Disagree	N	55	13	20	19	52	23	18	13	54	24	15	15	54	19	35	54	
		%	23.7%	36.1%	20.4%	20.2%	22.8%	28.4%	25.7%	16.5%	23.5%	31.2%	24.6%	16.7%	23.7%	23.5%	24.0%	23.8%	
	Neutral	N	51	8	21	21	50	15	15	21	51	14	16	21	51	15	34	49	
		%	22.0%	22.2%	21.4%	22.3%	21.9%	18.5%	21.4%	26.6%	22.2%	18.2%	26.2%	23.3%	22.4%	18.5%	23.3%	21.6%	
	Agree	N	80	9	42	29	80	22	23	34	79	24	21	33	78	25	53	78	
		%	34.5%	25.0%	42.9%	30.9%	35.1%	27.2%	32.9%	43.0%	34.3%	31.2%	34.4%	36.7%	34.2%	30.9%	36.3%	34.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	18	6	5	7	18	10	5	3	18	8	3	7	18	9	9	18	
		%	7.8%	16.7%	5.1%	7.4%	7.9%	12.3%	7.1%	3.8%	7.8%	10.4%	4.9%	7.8%	7.9%	11.1%	6.2%	7.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.02	3.22	3.12	2.87	3.04	2.96	2.96	3.14	3.02	3.03	3.00	3.04	3.03	2.98	3.04	3.02
	SD			1.175	1.124	1.115	1.255	1.179	1.269	1.185	1.071	1.176	1.192	1.095	1.217	1.172	1.284	1.126	1.182

There is some degree of alignment in Table 6.38 with that of the analysis in Table 6.14 and Table 6.15.

The proportionality of agreement across all levels/categories reflected in the table at 34.5% was in the same range, with the exception of P3-P5 post level, at 25%. More important, is the responses at the neutral level at 22.0% and SD of 1.175 implying some level of variation among respondents. The highest level of disagreement is again reflected at post levels P3-P5, at 36.1%. Also the importance of disagreement/strongly disagreement, combined at 35.8%, could raise some concerns by respondents regarding the possible subjectivity of performance management ratings.

Mosley (2013:35-36) confirms that the traditional performance systems, thus general performance appraisals and allocating ratings are only for administrative purposes. It does not provide objective criteria to enable trustworthy guidance towards more effective performance outputs. Therefore, Kenny (2005:6) suggests a crowdsourcing approach, which could enhance more objective evaluations in respect of individual performance management.

Table 6.39 reports on the statement: My supervisor/manager engages and shares what is expected towards the improvement of my performance.

Table 6.39: My supervisor/manager engages and shares what is expected towards the improvement of my performance

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 15. My supervisor/ manager engages and shares what is expected towards the improvement of my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	32	1	12	18	31	17	8	7	32	7	10	15	32	13	19	32	
		%	13.8%	2.8%	12.2%	19.1%	13.6%	21.0%	11.4%	8.9%	13.9%	9.1%	16.4%	16.7%	14.0%	16.0%	13.0%	14.1%	
	Disagree	N	64	16	22	25	63	19	20	25	64	28	7	26	61	23	39	62	
		%	27.6%	44.4%	22.4%	26.6%	27.6%	23.5%	28.6%	31.6%	27.8%	36.4%	11.5%	28.9%	26.8%	28.4%	26.7%	27.3%	
	Neutral	N	53	4	25	22	51	14	18	20	52	12	20	20	52	19	34	53	
		%	22.8%	11.1%	25.5%	23.4%	22.4%	17.3%	25.7%	25.3%	22.6%	15.6%	32.8%	22.2%	22.8%	23.5%	23.3%	23.3%	
	Agree	N	65	12	32	21	65	21	17	26	64	22	20	23	65	19	44	63	
		%	28.0%	33.3%	32.7%	22.3%	28.5%	25.9%	24.3%	32.9%	27.8%	28.6%	32.8%	25.6%	28.5%	23.5%	30.1%	27.8%	
	Strongly agree	N	18	3	7	8	18	10	7	1	18	8	4	6	18	7	10	17	
		%	7.8%	8.3%	7.1%	8.5%	7.9%	12.3%	10.0%	1.3%	7.8%	10.4%	6.6%	6.7%	7.9%	8.6%	6.8%	7.5%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.88	3.00	3.00	2.74	2.89	2.85	2.93	2.86	2.88	2.95	3.02	2.77	2.89	2.80	2.91	2.87
	SD			1.188	1.121	1.158	1.244	1.190	1.352	1.183	1.022	1.191	1.202	1.176	1.200	1.194	1.219	1.168	1.185

The analysis of the statistics in Table 6.39 will indicate the levels of agreement/disagreement, on whether managers/supervisors engage and share what is expected towards the improvement of employee/individual improvement of performance.

The highest proportionality of disagreement, as was also a consistent pattern identified from previous analysis, reflected a mean score at 3.00 and response rate of 44.4% at the level of senior management (P3-P5).

The spread of responses between agreement and disagreement across all other levels/categories was somewhat consistent at a combined average of 27.6% for disagree and agree 28%. A significant portion of respondents were neutral, at 22.8%.

The results of this analysis could imply a lack of adequate and timely, as well as continuous engagement and feedback from direct line management, relating to performance improvement practices, which is confirmed by the mean of 2.88.

Crawley *et al.* (2013:173), Michel (2013:77), Behn (2014:216-218), Hutchinson (2013:301-302), Barrows and Neely (2012:32-36), Cokins (2004:22-23) and Whitlam (2000:11-14) to name a few, are all in agreement that the role of managers is of crucial importance to ensure improved institutional performance, by improving individual performance outputs. Managers *inter alia* evaluate past performance, consider potential and development, and recommend rewards. Hence, the core value of performance management is about how effective and efficient performance management is managed in the institution (Sections 23.2.1, 3.2.3, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.5.3 and 3.5.4).

Table 6.40 reports on whether line managers encourage employees to enhance their performance.

Table 6.40: My supervisor/manager encourages me to enhance my performance

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 16. My supervisor/ manager encourages me to enhance my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	31	2	14	15	31	14	9	8	31	9	8	13	30	11	20	31	
		%	13.4%	5.6%	14.3%	16.0%	13.6%	17.3%	12.9%	10.1%	13.5%	11.7%	13.1%	14.4%	13.2%	13.6%	13.7%	13.7%	
	Disagree	N	49	9	15	23	47	19	13	17	49	19	9	20	48	20	27	47	
		%	21.1%	25.0%	15.3%	24.5%	20.6%	23.5%	18.6%	21.5%	21.3%	24.7%	14.8%	22.2%	21.1%	24.7%	18.5%	20.7%	
	Neutral	N	46	8	20	17	45	10	16	19	45	11	19	15	45	12	33	45	
		%	19.8%	22.2%	20.4%	18.1%	19.7%	12.3%	22.9%	24.1%	19.6%	14.3%	31.1%	16.7%	19.7%	14.8%	22.6%	19.8%	
	Agree	N	86	13	41	31	85	28	25	32	85	30	20	35	85	31	54	85	
		%	37.1%	36.1%	41.8%	33.0%	37.3%	34.6%	35.7%	40.5%	37.0%	39.0%	32.8%	38.9%	37.3%	38.3%	37.0%	37.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	20	4	8	8	20	10	7	3	20	8	5	7	20	7	12	19	
		%	8.6%	11.1%	8.2%	8.5%	8.8%	12.3%	10.0%	3.8%	8.7%	10.4%	8.2%	7.8%	8.8%	8.6%	8.2%	8.4%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.06	3.22	3.14	2.94	3.07	3.01	3.11	3.06	3.06	3.12	3.08	3.03	3.07	3.04	3.08	3.06
	SD			1.210	1.124	1.210	1.251	1.215	1.337	1.210	1.090	1.213	1.235	1.159	1.231	1.209	1.239	1.198	1.210

The average mean score of 3.06 and SD at 1.21% across all the levels/categories confirm a slightly movement towards agreement at 37% and disagreement at 21.2%. The overall results at 45.7% show a level of agreement, while 34.5% of the respondents indicated that they are not in agreement. With an average of neutral responses at 19.8%, and 34.5% in disagreement, it could be an indication that some respondents are not sure whether their managers/supervisors encourage them to enhance their performance.

For the purposes of the present study, the researchers' own observation is that managers would rather use IPMS to highlight areas of poor performance or as a punitive tool. Hence, Belton and Howick (2008:2-4); Noe *et al.* (2014:237-239) declare that fear, politics and subversion and the lack of effective engagement prevent the proper implementation of performance management, and that this is experienced by employees as a test used for punishment or to blame employees for poor institutional performance.

See the analysis of Table 6.39 in this regard.

Morrisey *et al.* 1988:10) and Armstrong (2009:4, 27) write that performance management is concerned primarily with planned execution and ensuring that planning is a continuous dynamic process within the institution. Another ingredient in the process is the active involvement and commitment of employees within the institution towards improved performance management outcomes (Sections 3.4.2 and 3.5).

Table 6.41 reports on whether employee performance appraisals assist in identifying development needs.

Table 6.41: My performance appraisal assists me to identify developmental needs

		Total		Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
		n		P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 17. My performance appraisal assists me to identify developmental needs.	Strongly disagree	N	29	2	11	16	29	13	5	11	29	10	6	13	29	11	18	29	
		%	12.5%	5.6%	11.2%	17.0%	12.7%	16.0%	7.1%	13.9%	12.6%	13.0%	9.8%	14.4%	12.7%	13.6%	12.3%	12.8%	
	Disagree	N	60	12	25	22	59	19	23	18	60	26	14	18	58	17	41	58	
		%	25.9%	33.3%	25.5%	23.4%	25.9%	23.5%	32.9%	22.8%	26.1%	33.8%	23.0%	20.0%	25.4%	21.0%	28.1%	25.6%	
	Neutral	N	53	11	22	19	52	16	17	19	52	11	19	22	52	21	31	52	
		%	22.8%	30.6%	22.4%	20.2%	22.8%	19.8%	24.3%	24.1%	22.6%	14.3%	31.1%	24.4%	22.8%	25.9%	21.2%	22.9%	
	Agree	N	70	8	31	30	69	21	20	28	69	22	18	29	69	26	43	69	
		%	30.2%	22.2%	31.6%	31.9%	30.3%	25.9%	28.6%	35.4%	30.0%	28.6%	29.5%	32.2%	30.3%	32.1%	29.5%	30.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	20	3	9	7	19	12	5	3	20	8	4	8	20	6	13	19	
		%	8.6%	8.3%	9.2%	7.4%	8.3%	14.8%	7.1%	3.8%	8.7%	10.4%	6.6%	8.9%	8.8%	7.4%	8.9%	8.4%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.97	2.94	3.02	2.89	2.96	3.00	2.96	2.92	2.96	2.90	3.00	3.01	2.97	2.99	2.95	2.96
	SD			1.187	1.068	1.184	1.240	1.186	1.323	1.096	1.141	1.191	1.252	1.095	1.213	1.192	1.178	1.196	1.187

With an average percentage response rate between agreement at 30.2%, disagreement at 25.9%, and neutral at 22.8%, with a mean score at 2.97, there is a suggestion that the respondents are not sure whether performance appraisals assist them to identify development needs. An SD of 1.187 also confirms a degree of variation amongst the different levels/categories. The highest proportionality of disagreement (at 33.3%) is at the senior administrative level (P3-P5).

Armstrong (2009:4) indicates that performance management differs from performance appraisals, which are judgements on progress, whereas performance management's core focus should be on individual objectives and improved performance outcomes. Hence, performance appraisals are an important part of performance management and usually occur twice a year. Both should focus on progress, development needs and support, enabling successful achievement of intended performance outcomes. Without the support and engagement of line managers with individuals, to enable high performance outcomes during the facilitation of performance management appraisals, and as part of performance management, no specific improved results will be produced (Behn, 2014:143-144) (Section 3.4.2).

Interviewees indicated their negativity regarding IPMS, by stating that the IPMS process is regarded as an unpleasant task. Managers and supervisors tend to complete the interviews as soon as possible, without giving it the attention it deserves. During performance appraisals little objective feedback is given (Section 6.9.2.4). Although the IPMS policy at Unisa is very clear in respect of development plans of individuals, managers are not committed to ensure the proper analysis of performance outputs, and to ensure that proper development initiatives for individuals are introduced. Administrative compliances overrule the need to engage properly with individuals, in identifying such development needs (Section 5.1.1).

Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) posit that effective HR and IPMS practices are positively linked to enhance employee motivation. HR Policies, job design incentives and career planning, as well as target management, enable employees to successfully execute set targets and goals (Section 5.1.1).

Table 6.42 reports on whether managers/supervisors provide employees with ongoing coaching and support.

Table 6.42: My supervisor/manager provides me with ongoing coaching and support

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 18. My supervisor/ manager provides me with ongoing coaching and support.	Strongly disagree	N	36	2	15	19	36	15	12	9	36	11	11	13	35	12	23	35	
		%	15.5%	5.6%	15.3%	20.2%	15.8%	18.5%	17.1%	11.4%	15.7%	14.3%	18.0%	14.4%	15.4%	14.8%	15.8%	15.4%	
	Disagree	N	78	17	34	24	75	24	23	31	78	31	17	28	76	36	42	78	
		%	33.6%	47.2%	34.7%	25.5%	32.9%	29.6%	32.9%	39.2%	33.9%	40.3%	27.9%	31.1%	33.3%	44.4%	28.8%	34.4%	
	Neutral	N	48	8	19	20	47	13	17	17	47	14	12	21	47	11	36	47	
		%	20.7%	22.2%	19.4%	21.3%	20.6%	16.0%	24.3%	21.5%	20.4%	18.2%	19.7%	23.3%	20.6%	13.6%	24.7%	20.7%	
	Agree	N	50	6	22	22	50	19	11	19	49	13	15	22	50	16	32	48	
		%	21.6%	16.7%	22.4%	23.4%	21.9%	23.5%	15.7%	24.1%	21.3%	16.9%	24.6%	24.4%	21.9%	19.8%	21.9%	21.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	20	3	8	9	20	10	7	3	20	8	6	6	20	6	13	19	
		%	8.6%	8.3%	8.2%	9.6%	8.8%	12.3%	10.0%	3.8%	8.7%	10.4%	9.8%	6.7%	8.8%	7.4%	8.9%	8.4%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.74	2.75	2.73	2.77	2.75	2.81	2.69	2.70	2.73	2.69	2.80	2.78	2.75	2.60	2.79	2.73
	SD			1.207	1.079	1.206	1.282	1.214	1.324	1.222	1.078	1.209	1.217	1.276	1.169	1.210	1.180	1.209	1.199

Table 6.42 shows that the proportionality of disagreement, which reported the highest level, is at the category senior and middle-management levels, with P3-P5 and P6-P7, at 47.2% and 34.7%, respectively, as well as strongly disagree, at an average of 15%.

A mean score at 2.74 confirms a consistent movement towards disagreement.

Michel (2013:77) and Armstrong (2009:278) confirm the importance of managers being coaches or mentors, and not judging, but leading by example, and ensuring the commitment to effective performance management practices. Hale and Whitlam (2000:73-76) endorsed the statement that performance management focuses on the identification of individuals' strengths and weaknesses to enable improved individual performance outcomes (Section 3.5.2).

Some interviewees argued that performance interviews demotivate them, since managers and supervisors do not want to engage with subordinates. This pattern is recognisable in responses on all three constructs of the survey.

Table 6.43 reports on whether line managers allow employees to make suggestions regarding performance improvement.

Table 6.43: My line manager allows me to make suggestions regarding performance improvement

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 19. My line manager allows me to make suggestions regarding performance improvement.	Strongly disagree	N	27	1	13	13	27	12	7	8	27	8	8	10	26	11	16	27	
		%	11.6%	2.8%	13.3%	13.8%	11.8%	14.8%	10.0%	10.1%	11.7%	10.4%	13.1%	11.1%	11.4%	13.6%	11.0%	11.9%	
	Disagree	N	42	10	17	13	40	16	10	16	42	17	6	18	41	17	25	42	
		%	18.1%	27.8%	17.3%	13.8%	17.5%	19.8%	14.3%	20.3%	18.3%	22.1%	9.8%	20.0%	18.0%	21.0%	17.1%	18.5%	
	Neutral	N	61	10	24	26	60	13	25	22	60	17	20	23	60	20	40	60	
		%	26.3%	27.8%	24.5%	27.7%	26.3%	16.0%	35.7%	27.8%	26.1%	22.1%	32.8%	25.6%	26.3%	24.7%	27.4%	26.4%	
	Agree	N	85	13	36	35	84	32	21	31	84	28	23	33	84	27	55	82	
		%	36.6%	36.1%	36.7%	37.2%	36.8%	39.5%	30.0%	39.2%	36.5%	36.4%	37.7%	36.7%	36.8%	33.3%	37.7%	36.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	17	2	8	7	17	8	7	2	17	7	4	6	17	6	10	16	
		%	7.3%	5.6%	8.2%	7.4%	7.5%	9.9%	10.0%	2.5%	7.4%	9.1%	6.6%	6.7%	7.5%	7.4%	6.8%	7.0%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.10	3.14	3.09	3.11	3.11	3.10	3.16	3.04	3.10	3.12	3.15	3.08	3.11	3.00	3.12	3.08
	SD			1.141	0.990	1.185	1.168	1.145	1.261	1.112	1.055	1.144	1.170	1.123	1.134	1.139	1.183	1.120	1.142

The highest proportionality of disagreement is found at the senior administrative level (P3-P5) at 27.8%, while a significant degree of respondents were neutral at (26%). There is a slight shift towards agreement at 36%.

An SD of 0.990 – 1.141, across all levels, implies no significant deviation among respondents. These outcomes imply some level of agreement by managers/supervisors to allow suggestions from employees, as to how to improve individual performance.

This analysis of Table 6.43 correlates with the outcomes as indicated in Table 6.25 (Sections 3.5.3 and 3.6).

Table 6.44 reports on whether employees prefer feedback on their performance from peers, staff and their line manager.

Table 6.44: I prefer feedback on my performance from my peers, staff and my line manager

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 20. I prefer feedback on my performance from my peers, staff and my line manager.	Strongly disagree	N	6	0	3	3	6	2	1	3	6	2	2	2	6	2	4	6	
		%	2.6%	0.0%	3.1%	3.2%	2.6%	2.5%	1.4%	3.8%	2.6%	2.6%	3.3%	2.2%	2.6%	2.5%	2.7%	2.6%	
	Disagree	N	21	3	4	12	19	11	3	6	20	6	6	9	21	3	18	21	
		%	9.1%	8.3%	4.1%	12.8%	8.3%	13.6%	4.3%	7.6%	8.7%	7.8%	9.8%	10.0%	9.2%	3.7%	12.3%	9.3%	
	Neutral	N	51	5	24	21	50	12	22	17	51	15	14	21	50	14	36	50	
		%	22.0%	13.9%	24.5%	22.3%	21.9%	14.8%	31.4%	21.5%	22.2%	19.5%	23.0%	23.3%	21.9%	17.3%	24.7%	22.0%	
	Agree	N	120	18	59	43	120	43	35	41	119	44	30	43	117	45	74	119	
		%	51.7%	50.0%	60.2%	45.7%	52.6%	53.1%	50.0%	51.9%	51.7%	57.1%	49.2%	47.8%	51.3%	55.6%	50.7%	52.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	34	10	8	15	33	13	9	12	34	10	9	15	34	17	14	31	
		%	14.7%	27.8%	8.2%	16.0%	14.5%	16.0%	12.9%	15.2%	14.8%	13.0%	14.8%	16.7%	14.9%	21.0%	9.6%	13.7%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.67	3.97	3.66	3.59	3.68	3.67	3.69	3.67	3.67	3.70	3.62	3.67	3.67	3.89	3.52	3.65
	SD			0.925	0.878	0.812	1.010	0.914	0.987	0.808	0.957	0.922	0.889	0.969	0.948	0.931	0.866	0.926	0.921

The analysis reported in Table 6.13 is related to Table 6.44. The mean at 3.67 and SD at 0.925 suggests a strong move towards agreement at an average of 51.7%, and strongly agree at 14.7% responses. The highest degree of responses towards agreement was at the manager's level (P6-P7) at 60.2%. These results imply unhappiness with one-on-one performance appraisals/feedback by managers to employees.

Responses from interviewees suggested feedback from more than one participant during performance reviews is preferred. For the purposes of the current study, the researchers' own view and experience relating to performance appraisals is that the opinions of managers, and other internal customers and those who witness day-to-day work outputs of an incumbent could maintain appropriate, fair and relevant inputs or strengths to the overall evaluation of an incumbent, which could eliminate unfair or subjective face-to-face conflict situations pertaining to the fair allocation of ratings.

Mosley (2013:3) suggests 'crowdsourcing' or 360° evaluation as a new innovation that should form part of a more objective approach towards performance appraisals. This approach aggregates and highlights the opinions and thoughts of many individuals to arrive at a richer, more accurate observation of performance, than one person alone could provide. These flaws, inherent in the traditional review, can be fixed and according to Mosley (2013:35-36), it is not necessary to scrap the system entirely. For example, the traditional reviews allocates ratings only for administrative purposes, thus, the system leaves an audit trail, documenting the institutions interactions with employees, but does not really inspire employee engagement. It does not provide objective criteria to enable trustworthy guidance towards more effective performance outputs.

Barrows and Neely (2016:26) endorsed the above statement by emphasising the fact that performance information itself cannot ensure improved individual performance. It must be accompanied by timely decisions and implementation actions.

Table 6.45 reports on whether employees prefer more than one performance review per annum.

Table 6.45: I prefer more than one performance review per annum

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 21. I prefer more than one performance review per annum.	Strongly disagree	N	25	4	11	10	25	6	9	10	25	8	6	10	24	6	18	24	
		%	10.8%	11.1%	11.2%	10.6%	11.0%	7.4%	12.9%	12.7%	10.9%	10.4%	9.8%	11.1%	10.5%	7.4%	12.3%	10.6%	
	Disagree	N	46	10	19	15	44	14	11	20	45	17	11	15	43	13	33	46	
		%	19.8%	27.8%	19.4%	16.0%	19.3%	17.3%	15.7%	25.3%	19.6%	22.1%	18.0%	16.7%	18.9%	16.0%	22.6%	20.3%	
	Neutral	N	44	5	16	22	43	12	16	16	44	12	8	24	44	18	25	43	
		%	19.0%	13.9%	16.3%	23.4%	18.9%	14.8%	22.9%	20.3%	19.1%	15.6%	13.1%	26.7%	19.3%	22.2%	17.1%	18.9%	
	Agree	N	85	11	37	36	84	31	25	28	84	29	27	29	85	25	++59	84	
		%	36.6%	30.6%	37.8%	38.3%	36.8%	38.3%	35.7%	35.4%	36.5%	37.7%	44.3%	32.2%	37.3%	30.9%	40.4%	37.0%	
	Strongly agree	N	32	6	15	11	32	18	9	5	32	11	9	12	32	19	11	30	
		%	13.8%	16.7%	15.3%	11.7%	14.0%	22.2%	12.9%	6.3%	13.9%	14.3%	14.8%	13.3%	14.0%	23.5%	7.5%	13.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.23	3.14	3.27	3.24	3.24	3.51	3.20	2.97	3.23	3.23	3.36	3.20	3.25	3.47	3.08	3.22
	SD			1.225	1.313	1.256	1.179	1.230	1.226	1.235	1.176	1.227	1.245	1.225	1.201	1.219	1.226	1.195	1.217

The mean at 3.23 and SD at 1.225 show a slight move towards agreement at 36.6% and disagreement at 19.8%. This suggested a possible movement towards supporting that more than one performance review should be conducted. The highest level of disagreement (27.8%) is at senior administrative level (P3-P5) which could confirm that management is not certain whether more than one performance review per annum will contribute to performance enhancement.

The literature review suggests that performance appraisals once or twice a year lack continuous engagement among employees and management, which is not appropriate towards the development of employees (Mosley, 2013:1-2).

Table 6.46 reports on whether employees often disagree with their performance rating by their direct line manager.

Table 6.46: I often disagree with the performance rating of my supervisor

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS 22. I often disagree with the performance rating of my supervisor.	Strongly disagree	N	37	8	16	13	37	21	6	10	37	13	12	12	37	15	21	36	
		%	15.9%	22.2%	16.3%	13.8%	16.2%	25.9%	8.6%	12.7%	16.1%	16.9%	19.7%	13.3%	16.2%	18.5%	14.4%	15.9%	
	Disagree	N	69	8	31	28	67	18	22	28	68	22	17	28	67	19	50	69	
		%	29.7%	22.2%	31.6%	29.8%	29.4%	22.2%	31.4%	35.4%	29.6%	28.6%	27.9%	31.1%	29.4%	23.5%	34.2%	30.4%	
	Neutral	N	60	9	24	25	58	23	20	17	60	15	19	26	60	21	37	58	
		%	25.9%	25.0%	24.5%	26.6%	25.4%	28.4%	28.6%	21.5%	26.1%	19.5%	31.1%	28.9%	26.3%	25.9%	25.3%	25.6%	
	Agree	N	51	10	22	19	51	14	17	19	50	23	9	17	49	20	30	50	
		%	22.0%	27.8%	22.4%	20.2%	22.4%	17.3%	24.3%	24.1%	21.7%	29.9%	14.8%	18.9%	21.5%	24.7%	20.5%	22.0%	
	Strongly agree	N	15	1	5	9	15	5	5	5	15	4	4	7	15	6	8	14	
		%	6.5%	2.8%	5.1%	9.6%	6.6%	6.2%	7.1%	6.3%	6.5%	5.2%	6.6%	7.8%	6.6%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.73	2.67	2.68	2.82	2.74	2.56	2.90	2.76	2.73	2.78	2.61	2.77	2.73	2.79	2.68	2.72
	SD			1.161	1.195	1.145	1.191	1.169	1.225	1.092	1.146	1.162	1.199	1.159	1.142	1.163	1.222	1.119	1.155

The mean score at 2.73 and SD at 1.161 indicate a slightly movement towards disagreement regarding the statement in Table 6.46.

According to the researcher of the current study, the perception could be that respondents are quite satisfied with their ratings, most probably because they receive ratings that are too high. Managers avoid conflict by allocating higher scores, specifically when union members form part of the performance appraisal sessions.

The Remuneration Committee of Council (REMCO), August 2019, audit all senior management members' submissions, relating to the IPMS (end-year 2018) evaluations. The purpose of the audit was to inform REMCO of the processes and procedures that were followed during the individual evaluation sessions (Council decision: August 2019). The rationale behind this exercise was to confirm the high ratings that were allocated, when comparing the portfolio's performance outcomes with that of the Compact of Council's end results, which were mostly rated on average, and in some instances, below the accepted performance levels in each Portfolio. The requested templates with proper evidence of high performance were scrutinised by the senior management team and selected Council members.

REMCO was not satisfied with the outcomes of the audit and a second in-depth investigation was requested by REMCO (Minutes, REMCO: September 2019). A substantial number of ratings were found to be inflated, with no proper evidence to support such high ratings, mostly due to the fact that no proper performance management appraisals sessions took place, and the focus was only on allocating acceptable ratings (Section 5.2.1, 5.4.2). Most probably the reasons for this situation could be that should senior managers allocate low ratings, employees would dispute the outcomes, and due to the intervention of union members, it could take months before a resolution is taken towards the finalisation of the dispute by employees in respect of their unfair ratings. This process could delay the finalisation of performance appraisal outcomes which senior managers would prefer to avoid.

There is a consistent average across all levels/categories, with responses ranging from 29.7% in disagreement, 22% in agreement, and 25.9% being neutral.

London (2003:4-6) warns that managers would rather ignore poor performance, than to address it immediately. Therefore, subordinates complain that performance outcomes, good or bad, are very seldom communicated to them during performance

appraisals, mostly to avoid conflict. Hence, managers rather allocate higher ratings to compromise and eliminate unnecessary explanations and conflict with employees, and to avoid the intervention of union members.

6.6.1 Summary

As was indicated in Section 6.4.1, Section B dealt with Managers/Supervisors (responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures). This specific section's themes and statements were identified from the literature as presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 (Section 6.4.1). The focus and statements within this section were identified from various authors who could be referred to in Sections 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 in Chapter 2, and Sections 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5 in Chapter 3.

The purpose of Section B was to determine to what extent respondents agree or disagree with the statements about their awareness, perceptions and experience, relating to the role of their direct line management/supervisors in respect of performance management practices.

It was evident from the responses and analysis in Table 6.25 to Table 6.46 that there was an overwhelming support (agreement) for specific statements presented to the participants. More important was the high proportionality of neutral responses. Moreover, it can be taken from the outcomes of various analyses and patterns from the above section that respondents are dissatisfied with the ineffective and unfair manner in which IPMS is managed at Unisa.

Pertinent themes that were consistently identified as problematic and challenging in respect of IPMS practices were the demotivation of respondents, lack of support, engagement, feedback, involvement, distrust of and negative attitudes towards the IPMS practices, subjective performance appraisals, and lack of skills, experience and knowledge levels of line managers in implementing IPMS. The results of some analyses suggest the respondents expect feedback from more than one participant during performance appraisals. Moreover, there was an indication that IPMS is experienced as only two sessions per annum, and then only to adhere to compliance purposes, as well as to adhere to administrative deadlines. Hence, these sessions are not utilised to engage employees towards the improvement of their performance, but only as sessions to finalise performance appraisals for submission by due dates.

Also an important indication from the analysis of various questions was the lack of continuous support, engagement, training and development, feedback on progress, target setting and empowerment of individuals to take charge of their own performance improvement initiatives.

In conclusion, it was clear from the analysis of all the results in the tables that effective IPMS is constantly hampered by barriers, such as a lack of adequate HR capacity, managers with inadequate skills and commitment, and the negative perceptions towards conducting performance management.

6.7 SECTION C: EMPLOYEES, THE SUBJECT OF IPMS

This section and tables refer to matters relating to the experiences and perceptions regarding the IPMS policies and practices which are implemented by line managers, and the influence thereof on the employees as seen from their own perspective.

Participants were requested to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements presented to them. Thus, to indicate what influence performance management practices have on themselves.

Table 6.47 reports on the statement: The IPMS at Unisa contributes little, if any, to enhance my performance.

Table 6.47: The IPMS at Unisa contributes little, if any, to enhance my performance

		Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender				
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 1. The IPMS at Unisa contributes little, if any, to enhance my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	23	4	10	9	23	12	8	3	23	11	4	8	23	11	12	23	
		%	9.9%	11.1%	10.2%	9.6%	10.1%	14.8%	11.4%	3.8%	10.0%	14.3%	6.6%	8.9%	10.1%	13.6%	8.2%	10.1%	
	Disagree	N	45	7	18	20	45	14	15	15	44	10	14	21	45	17	27	44	
		%	19.4%	19.4%	18.4%	21.3%	19.7%	17.3%	21.4%	19.0%	19.1%	13.0%	23.0%	23.3%	19.7%	21.0%	18.5%	19.4%	
	Neutral	N	33	4	14	14	32	8	9	16	33	11	8	13	32	7	26	33	
		%	14.2%	11.1%	14.3%	14.9%	14.0%	9.9%	12.9%	20.3%	14.3%	14.3%	13.1%	14.4%	14.0%	8.6%	17.8%	14.5%	
	Agree	N	86	14	35	36	85	32	27	26	85	27	21	35	83	33	51	84	
		%	37.1%	38.9%	35.7%	38.3%	37.3%	39.5%	38.6%	32.9%	37.0%	35.1%	34.4%	38.9%	36.4%	40.7%	34.9%	37.0%	
	Strongly agree	N	45	7	21	15	43	15	11	19	45	18	14	13	45	13	30	43	
		%	19.4%	19.4%	21.4%	16.0%	18.9%	18.5%	15.7%	24.1%	19.6%	23.4%	23.0%	14.4%	19.7%	16.0%	20.5%	18.9%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.37	3.36	3.40	3.30	3.35	3.30	3.26	3.54	3.37	3.40	3.44	3.27	3.36	3.25	3.41	3.35
	SD			1.269	1.313	1.290	1.243	1.270	1.355	1.282	1.164	1.270	1.360	1.259	1.225	1.278	1.328	1.236	1.269

There are some similarities in respect of the responses and analysis reported in Table 6.9, Table 6.10 and Table 6.22 and that of Table 6.47. The mean score at 3.37 and SD at 1.269 suggested a movement towards agreement (37.1%), with the highest degree of responses at the senior management level (P3-P5) at 38.9% and at the gender category Male (40.7%), followed by the junior posts levels (P8-P9) at 38.3%. The responses relating to strongly agree (19.4%) combined with that of agreement (37.1%) amount up to 56.5%, which suggested negative experiences by respondents in respect of the statement made in Table 6.47.

Hunt (2014:153) states that a well-designed IPMS will improve workforce performance tremendously, if correctly implemented and facilitated by line managers, whereas a badly designed process and the same implementation thereof, by line managers could create dissatisfaction among employees which can lead to low productivity. The question therefore is, not whether to do performance management, but rather how to do it effectively.

Table 6.48 reports on whether employees perceive the IPMS in a positive way.

Table 6.48: I do not perceive the IPMS in a positive way

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 2. I do not perceive the IPMS in a positive way.	Strongly disagree	N	19	4	8	7	19	9	9	1	19	9	5	5	19	8	11	19	
		%	8.2%	11.1%	8.2%	7.4%	8.3%	11.1%	12.9%	1.3%	8.3%	11.7%	8.2%	5.6%	8.3%	9.9%	7.5%	8.4%	
	Disagree	N	66	6	32	27	65	21	20	24	65	16	22	26	64	22	43	65	
		%	28.4%	16.7%	32.7%	28.7%	28.5%	25.9%	28.6%	30.4%	28.3%	20.8%	36.1%	28.9%	28.1%	27.2%	29.5%	28.6%	
	Neutral	N	42	7	13	21	41	12	12	18	42	10	11	21	42	15	27	42	
		%	18.1%	19.4%	13.3%	22.3%	18.0%	14.8%	17.1%	22.8%	18.3%	13.0%	18.0%	23.3%	18.4%	18.5%	18.5%	18.5%	
	Agree	N	62	11	28	22	61	20	21	20	61	25	13	22	60	18	42	60	
		%	26.7%	30.6%	28.6%	23.4%	26.8%	24.7%	30.0%	25.3%	26.5%	32.5%	21.3%	24.4%	26.3%	22.2%	28.8%	26.4%	
	Strongly agree	N	43	8	17	17	42	19	8	16	43	17	10	16	43	18	23	41	
		%	18.5%	22.2%	17.3%	18.1%	18.4%	23.5%	11.4%	20.3%	18.7%	22.1%	16.4%	17.8%	18.9%	22.2%	15.8%	18.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.19	3.36	3.14	3.16	3.18	3.23	2.99	3.33	3.19	3.32	3.02	3.20	3.19	3.20	3.16	3.17
	SD			1.262	1.313	1.276	1.238	1.263	1.363	1.257	1.152	1.263	1.342	1.258	1.201	1.265	1.327	1.224	1.259

There is a degree of alignment in the analysis of Tables 6.4, 6.10 and 6.22 with that of the analysis in Table 6.48. The SD at 1.262 suggests a high degree of variation in the responses at all levels. The proportionality of agreement was the highest at post levels P3-P5 (30.6%) and P6-P7 (28.6%), respectively, and combined it equals 59.2%.

The responses reflected in Table 6.48 are consistent with that of the literature review in Chapters 2, 3 and 5.

Noe *et al.* (2014:9-11) emphasised the fact that a high-performance management system suggests that people and processes work together seamlessly to enable high individual performance outcomes. Maintaining an effective performance management system may include the development of training, recruitment of people with new skill sets, and the establishment of rewards, for appropriate behaviours (Section 3.5.4 and 5.3.1).

Furthermore, Mizrahi (2017:102-104) indicates that the major factor that demotivates managers to utilise IPMS, is the dysfunction of IPMSs and the resulting gaming factor, namely, deliberate distortions in the IPMS, which include activities that consume resources, but do not necessarily improve individual performance outputs. The quantity (statistical evidence) of activities completed may increase, but not necessarily the quality (fault factor and complaints in respect of administrative service levels) thereof. Managers should involve employees during the setting of targets, towards the implementation to avoid uncertainty about what is expected from them. Effective measurements and feedback on the progress by managers could then minimise the gaming factor (Mizrahi, 2017:102-103)(Section 5.3.1).

Table 6.49 reports on the proportionality of agreement/disagreement on whether appraisal outcomes enhance Unisa's performance.

Table 6.49: My appraisal outcomes enhances Unisa's performance

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 3. My appraisal outcomes enhance Unisa's performance.	Strongly disagree	N	30	7	14	9	30	11	7	12	30	11	9	10	30	11	17	28	
		%	12.9%	19.4%	14.3%	9.6%	13.2%	13.6%	10.0%	15.2%	13.0%	14.3%	14.8%	11.1%	13.2%	13.6%	11.6%	12.3%	
	Disagree	N	43	9	16	17	42	15	16	12	43	14	13	15	42	13	28	41	
		%	18.5%	25.0%	16.3%	18.1%	18.4%	18.5%	22.9%	15.2%	18.7%	18.2%	21.3%	16.7%	18.4%	16.0%	19.2%	18.1%	
	Neutral	N	55	7	22	25	54	16	18	21	55	18	11	26	55	18	37	55	
		%	23.7%	19.4%	22.4%	26.6%	23.7%	19.8%	25.7%	26.6%	23.9%	23.4%	18.0%	28.9%	24.1%	22.2%	25.3%	24.2%	
	Agree	N	81	11	35	33	79	28	22	29	79	26	20	33	79	26	54	80	
		%	34.9%	30.6%	35.7%	35.1%	34.6%	34.6%	31.4%	36.7%	34.3%	33.8%	32.8%	36.7%	34.6%	32.1%	37.0%	35.2%	
	Strongly agree	N	23	2	11	10	23	11	7	5	23	8	8	6	22	13	10	23	
		%	9.9%	5.6%	11.2%	10.6%	10.1%	13.6%	10.0%	6.3%	10.0%	10.4%	13.1%	6.7%	9.6%	16.0%	6.8%	10.1%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.10	2.78	3.13	3.19	3.10	3.16	3.09	3.04	3.10	3.08	3.08	3.11	3.09	3.21	3.08	3.13
	SD			1.202	1.245	1.241	1.148	1.207	1.269	1.164	1.182	1.204	1.233	1.295	1.116	1.200	1.282	1.142	1.192

The highest level of disagreement is evident at post level P3-P5 (25%) and strongly disagree (19.4%), thus, in total 44.4%. Also evident is the significant proportion of respondents who are neutral (23.7%). There is a consistent response of 34.9% in agreement, with strongly agreed at 9.9%, thus a total of 44.8%.

Furthermore, the SD at 1.202 implies a high degree of variation amongst respondents. The analysis suggests that respondents are moving towards agreement.

This outcome does not correlate with the views obtained from participants during the interviews. It was indicated that performance practices made no contribution to the individual and the institution. More important, according to interviewees, is that the only contribution of current IPMS practices is a negative perception with a high level of irritation, and it is experienced as a waste of time (Section 6.9.3.1). Moreover, it was indicated that IPMS will never influence individual performance, since employee performance forms part of an individual's work ethics. Thus, some interviewees emphasised the fact that they will not allow the IPMS reward system to influence their work ethic, since if they do, they will develop a negative attitude towards the current unfair and subjective IPMS practices.

Refer to the analysis in Table 6.48, which correlates with that of Table 6.49.

Table 6.50 explores the respondents' degree of agreement/disagreement on whether employees had an opportunity to ask their supervisors to clarify their ratings.

Table 6.50: I have an opportunity to ask my supervisor to clarify my ratings

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 4. I have an opportunity to ask my supervisor to clarify my ratings.	Strongly disagree	N	16	1	8	7	16	5	6	5	16	3	6	6	15	4	12	16	
		%	6.9%	2.8%	8.2%	7.4%	7.0%	6.2%	8.6%	6.3%	7.0%	3.9%	9.8%	6.7%	6.6%	4.9%	8.2%	7.0%	
	Disagree	N	26	3	6	16	25	9	9	8	26	11	3	12	26	7	17	24	
		%	11.2%	8.3%	6.1%	17.0%	11.0%	11.1%	12.9%	10.1%	11.3%	14.3%	4.9%	13.3%	11.4%	8.6%	11.6%	10.6%	
	Neutral	N	50	11	21	16	48	13	15	21	49	14	17	19	50	22	28	50	
		%	21.6%	30.6%	21.4%	17.0%	21.1%	16.0%	21.4%	26.6%	21.3%	18.2%	27.9%	21.1%	21.9%	27.2%	19.2%	22.0%	
	Agree	N	117	16	54	46	116	41	33	42	116	39	29	46	114	40	76	116	
		%	50.4%	44.4%	55.1%	48.9%	50.9%	50.6%	47.1%	53.2%	50.4%	50.6%	47.5%	51.1%	50.0%	49.4%	52.1%	51.1%	
	Strongly agree	N	23	5	9	9	23	13	7	3	23	10	6	7	23	8	13	21	
		%	9.9%	13.9%	9.2%	9.6%	10.1%	16.0%	10.0%	3.8%	10.0%	13.0%	9.8%	7.8%	10.1%	9.9%	8.9%	9.3%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.45	3.58	3.51	3.36	3.46	3.59	3.37	3.38	3.45	3.55	3.43	3.40	3.46	3.51	3.42	3.45
	SD			1.043	0.937	1.028	1.106	1.047	1.081	1.106	0.951	1.047	1.020	1.072	1.036	1.038	0.963	1.075	1.035

There is some degree of correlation between the analysis from Tables 6.38 and 6.46 with the analysis of Table 6.50.

With an average mean score at 3.45 and a consistent average response rate towards agreement (50.4%) and strongly agree (9.9%), there is a strong/high degree of consensus among respondents that there were ample opportunities to ask supervisors to clarify their ratings.

According to Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-13), the measurement of expected individual performance will improve, if managers explore and identify the behaviour critical to the expected roles and outputs of employees (Section 3.4.1 and 3.5.1).

Table 6.51 reports on the statement: I am involved in the setting of my performance targets.

Table 6.51: I am involved in the setting of my performance targets

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 5. I am involved in the setting of my performance targets.	Strongly disagree	N	14	1	4	9	14	7	3	4	14	4	3	7	14	6	8	14
		%	6.0%	2.8%	4.1%	9.6%	6.1%	8.6%	4.3%	5.1%	6.1%	5.2%	4.9%	7.8%	6.1%	7.4%	5.5%	6.2%
	Disagree	N	42	7	16	18	41	14	15	13	42	16	8	18	42	16	23	39
		%	18.1%	19.4%	16.3%	19.1%	18.0%	17.3%	21.4%	16.5%	18.3%	20.8%	13.1%	20.0%	18.4%	19.8%	15.8%	17.2%
	Neutral	N	48	8	19	20	47	13	15	20	48	11	11	25	47	15	32	47
		%	20.7%	22.2%	19.4%	21.3%	20.6%	16.0%	21.4%	25.3%	20.9%	14.3%	18.0%	27.8%	20.6%	18.5%	21.9%	20.7%
	Agree	N	102	14	49	37	100	33	27	40	100	34	34	31	99	31	71	102
		%	44.0%	38.9%	50.0%	39.4%	43.9%	40.7%	38.6%	50.6%	43.5%	44.2%	55.7%	34.4%	43.4%	38.3%	48.6%	44.9%
	Strongly agree	N	26	6	10	10	26	14	10	2	26	12	5	9	26	13	12	25
		%	11.2%	16.7%	10.2%	10.6%	11.4%	17.3%	14.3%	2.5%	11.3%	15.6%	8.2%	10.0%	11.4%	16.0%	8.2%	11.0%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			3.36	3.47	3.46	3.22	3.36	3.41	3.37	3.29	3.36	3.44	3.49	3.19	3.36	3.36	3.38
SD			1.088	1.082	1.017	1.165	1.092	1.212	1.106	0.949	1.091	1.141	0.994	1.111	1.095	1.186	1.026	1.083

Table 6.51 reports on the proportionality of agreement/disagreement on whether employees are involved in the setting of their performance targets. The analysis reported in Tables 6.34 and 6.39 have a degree of similarity with the analysis of Table 6.51.

The proportion of responses that is the highest towards agreement is at 50% from post levels P6-P7 and the lowest from post levels P8-P9 at 39.4%. A significant proportion of respondents were neutral (20.7%). The average agreement (44%) plus strongly agreement at 11.2%, reflects a total agreement of 55.2%.

The above analysis suggests a degree of consensus that employees are involved in setting their performance targets, specifically at the middle-management levels (P6-P7).

Cokins (2001:1) indicates that performance management is the process of managing the execution of specific job contents. Therefore, performance management aims to integrate planned job contents towards target setting, ensuring these activities become realities. Likewise Noe *et al.* (2014:235-239) write that effective performance management seeks to achieve strategic purpose, administrative purpose and development purpose (Section 3.2).

This 2020 Annual Performance Plan (APP) submission is in response to the Guidelines for Annual Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions (Act 101 of 1997). The University is required to submit a Council approved APP that is aligned to the strategic plan and budget as well as key performance indicators. The Council approved the Unisa 2030 Plan, which sets out the university's vision, mission, values and strategic focus areas for the 15-year period (Compact with Council, 2019).

Table 6.52 reports on whether their work performance targets and standards reflect the important parts of their job content.

Table 6.52: My work performance, targets and standards reflect the important parts in my job contents

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 6. My work performance, targets and standards reflect the important parts in my job contents.	Strongly disagree	N	14	2	6	6	14	7	2	5	14	5	4	5	14	6	7	13
		%	6.0%	5.6%	6.1%	6.4%	6.1%	8.6%	2.9%	6.3%	6.1%	6.5%	6.6%	5.6%	6.1%	7.4%	4.8%	5.7%
	Disagree	N	36	6	16	14	36	13	11	12	36	14	8	13	35	13	23	36
		%	15.5%	16.7%	16.3%	14.9%	15.8%	16.0%	15.7%	15.2%	15.7%	18.2%	13.1%	14.4%	15.4%	16.0%	15.8%	15.9%
	Neutral	N	39	7	16	15	38	10	15	14	39	11	9	19	39	16	22	38
		%	16.8%	19.4%	16.3%	16.0%	16.7%	12.3%	21.4%	17.7%	17.0%	14.3%	14.8%	21.1%	17.1%	19.8%	15.1%	16.7%
	Agree	N	116	16	49	49	114	36	34	44	114	35	36	43	114	33	81	114
		%	50.0%	44.4%	50.0%	52.1%	50.0%	44.4%	48.6%	55.7%	49.6%	45.5%	59.0%	47.8%	50.0%	40.7%	55.5%	50.2%
	Strongly agree	N	27	5	11	10	26	15	8	4	27	12	4	10	26	13	13	26
		%	11.6%	13.9%	11.2%	10.6%	11.4%	18.5%	11.4%	5.1%	11.7%	15.6%	6.6%	11.1%	11.4%	16.0%	8.9%	11.5%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			3.46	3.44	3.44	3.46	3.45	3.48	3.50	3.38	3.45	3.45	3.46	3.44	3.45	3.42	3.48
SD			1.076	1.107	1.085	1.074	1.079	1.216	0.989	1.017	1.080	1.153	1.026	1.051	1.075	1.160	1.019	1.069

There is a degree of alignment between Tables 6.4, 6.5 and 6.34 with Table 6.52. Although Table 6.34 analyses more or less the same issue, there was a stronger move towards disagreement at 26.7%.

There is a high proportional degree of responses towards agreement (average 50%) and strongly agreed at 11.6%, thus a total in agreement at 61.6%.

The SD at 1.076 suggests a moderate variation among respondents (Section 5.3.1). A matter of concern could be that almost a third of respondents did not agree.

Michel (2013:274-276) states that, without specific strategies, goals and standards set, implementation is aimless, employees could do the wrong things right. Hence, involvement and the establishment of accountability among all role-players at all levels create commitment and trust, towards the effective facilitation of IPMS. Furthermore, Prestera and Miller (2008:1-4) write that performance standards act as a benchmark against which individual performance outcomes are measured.

Table 6.53 reports on whether performance management feedback motivates employees to have a positive attitude towards their work.

Table 6.53: My performance management feedback motivates me to have a positive attitude towards my work

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 7. My performance management feedback motivates me to have a positive attitude towards my work.	Strongly disagree	N	31	7	11	13	31	13	5	13	31	11	6	14	31	13	17	30
		%	13.4%	19.4%	11.2%	13.8%	13.6%	16.0%	7.1%	16.5%	13.5%	14.3%	9.8%	15.6%	13.6%	16.0%	11.6%	13.2%
	Disagree	N	57	12	22	21	55	18	19	19	56	24	15	17	56	18	37	55
		%	24.6%	33.3%	22.4%	22.3%	24.1%	22.2%	27.1%	24.1%	24.3%	31.2%	24.6%	18.9%	24.6%	22.2%	25.3%	24.2%
	Neutral	N	51	7	22	22	51	13	19	19	51	13	14	24	51	19	31	50
		%	22.0%	19.4%	22.4%	23.4%	22.4%	16.0%	27.1%	24.1%	22.2%	16.9%	23.0%	26.7%	22.4%	23.5%	21.2%	22.0%
	Agree	N	70	5	34	29	68	24	20	25	69	18	21	28	67	19	51	70
		%	30.2%	13.9%	34.7%	30.9%	29.8%	29.6%	28.6%	31.6%	30.0%	23.4%	34.4%	31.1%	29.4%	23.5%	34.9%	30.8%
	Strongly agree	N	23	5	9	9	23	13	7	3	23	11	5	7	23	12	10	22
		%	9.9%	13.9%	9.2%	9.6%	10.1%	16.0%	10.0%	3.8%	10.0%	14.3%	8.2%	7.8%	10.1%	14.8%	6.8%	9.7%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.99	2.69	3.08	3.00	2.99	3.07	3.07	2.82	2.99	2.92	3.07	2.97	2.98	2.99	3.00
SD			1.218	1.327	1.181	1.218	1.222	1.349	1.121	1.163	1.220	1.306	1.153	1.203	1.222	1.309	1.163	1.214

The analyses reported in Table 6.42 and Table 6.53 are related.

The combined rate of disagree/strong disagree is at 38%. The highest proportionality of disagreement is at the senior management level (P3-P5) at 33.3% and strongly disagree at 19.4%, with the total at 52.7%. Also important is the proportion of respondents who are neutral (22.0%). The proportion rate of agreement level is at 30.2% and at strongly agreement level at 9.9%, thus a total of 40.1%. These percentages suggest that employee experiences and perceptions are more towards disagreement, confirming that performance management feedback do not motivate them to have a positive attitude towards their work, which could be the result of no or negative feedback (Table 6.30, Table 6.54, Section 3.5.4 and Section 5.3.1).

Table 6.54 reports on whether the criteria used to calculate performance ratings are fair.

Table 6.54: The criteria used to calculate performance ratings are fair

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 8. The criteria used to calculate performance ratings are fair.	Strongly disagree	N	33	4	15	14	33	19	5	9	33	10	11	12	33	7	24	31	
		%	14.2%	11.1%	15.3%	14.9%	14.5%	23.5%	7.1%	11.4%	14.3%	13.0%	18.0%	13.3%	14.5%	8.6%	16.4%	13.7%	
	Disagree	N	54	11	17	24	52	13	18	23	54	21	12	19	52	18	36	54	
		%	23.3%	30.6%	17.3%	25.5%	22.8%	16.0%	25.7%	29.1%	23.5%	27.3%	19.7%	21.1%	22.8%	22.2%	24.7%	23.8%	
	Neutral	N	61	9	24	28	61	18	23	19	60	16	18	27	61	23	37	60	
		%	26.3%	25.0%	24.5%	29.8%	26.8%	22.2%	32.9%	24.1%	26.1%	20.8%	29.5%	30.0%	26.8%	28.4%	25.3%	26.4%	
	Agree	N	69	8	36	23	67	22	19	27	68	22	18	27	67	25	43	68	
		%	29.7%	22.2%	36.7%	24.5%	29.4%	27.2%	27.1%	34.2%	29.6%	28.6%	29.5%	30.0%	29.4%	30.9%	29.5%	30.0%	
	Strongly agree	N	15	4	6	5	15	9	5	1	15	8	2	5	15	8	6	14	
		%	6.5%	11.1%	6.1%	5.3%	6.6%	11.1%	7.1%	1.3%	6.5%	10.4%	3.3%	5.6%	6.6%	9.9%	4.1%	6.2%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.91	2.92	3.01	2.80	2.91	2.86	3.01	2.85	2.90	2.96	2.80	2.93	2.91	3.11	2.80	2.91
	SD			1.164	1.204	1.188	1.132	1.167	1.349	1.056	1.063	1.167	1.229	1.152	1.130	1.167	1.129	1.154	1.153

The mean score of 2.91 suggests a move towards disagreement by respondents. The highest proportion of responses as reflected in Table 6.54 is at the level of P3-P5 which is in disagreement (13.06%) and strongly disagree at 11.1%. The average proportion of responses who disagree is at 23.3%, and strongly disagree at 14.2%, which presents a total of 37.5% in disagreement. The proportionality degree of agreements at 29.7% and strongly agree at 6.5% total up to 36.2% in agreement. Also significant is the proportion of respondents who are neutral at 26.3%.

The SD at 1.164 implies a degree of variation among respondents. These results show a balanced response relating to the question posed in Table 6.54. The responses from the category 10 years and less at 23.5% is important, and could be the result of a lack of knowledge relating to the IPMS processes (criteria) or the absence of line managers educating this category of employees regarding IPMS practices.

This analysis could be interpreted as that employees experienced the rating criteria as fair, but rather that these criteria should be consulted with individuals before the implementation thereof, which could create understanding among employees. Moynihan (2008:191-193) emphasises the rethinking of performance management approaches by stating that performance management assessments are not always objective. The administrative deadlines over-rule effective engagement in respect of individual performance management (Section 2.6.4).

Moreover, Culbert (2010:36-37) underlines the importance of objectivity and value-added engagement, feedback and performance conversations at all times. Ultimately, according to Culbert (2010:146-149), Rummier and Brache (1990:25) and Hale and Whitlam (2000:11-13), the challenge in terms of conducting effective performance reviews is to create a working environment in which all role-players can feel safe enough to engage in honest open-minded discussions, to eventually improve the institution's results, and to provide a supportive platform for employees to improve themselves.

Table 6.55 reports on the statement: My direct line manager continuously engages me on my performance improvement initiatives.

Table 6.55: My direct line manager continuously engages me on my performance improvement initiatives

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 9. My direct line manager continuously engages me on my performance improvement initiatives.	Strongly disagree	N	36	6	13	16	35	20	7	9	36	11	9	16	36	13	23	36
		%	15.5%	16.7%	13.3%	17.0%	15.4%	24.7%	10.0%	11.4%	15.7%	14.3%	14.8%	17.8%	15.8%	16.0%	15.8%	15.9%
	Disagree	N	83	15	33	34	82	17	28	37	82	29	15	36	80	33	48	81
		%	35.8%	41.7%	33.7%	36.2%	36.0%	21.0%	40.0%	46.8%	35.7%	37.7%	24.6%	40.0%	35.1%	40.7%	32.9%	35.7%
	Neutral	N	40	2	19	17	38	10	17	13	40	10	16	13	39	12	28	40
		%	17.2%	5.6%	19.4%	18.1%	16.7%	12.3%	24.3%	16.5%	17.4%	13.0%	26.2%	14.4%	17.1%	14.8%	19.2%	17.6%
	Agree	N	55	11	26	18	55	24	12	18	54	22	16	17	55	16	37	53
		%	23.7%	30.6%	26.5%	19.1%	24.1%	29.6%	17.1%	22.8%	23.5%	28.6%	26.2%	18.9%	24.1%	19.8%	25.3%	23.3%
	Strongly agree	N	18	2	7	9	18	10	6	2	18	5	5	8	18	7	10	17
		%	7.8%	5.6%	7.1%	9.6%	7.9%	12.3%	8.6%	2.5%	7.8%	6.5%	8.2%	8.9%	7.9%	8.6%	6.8%	7.5%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.72	2.67	2.81	2.68	2.73	2.84	2.74	2.58	2.72	2.75	2.89	2.61	2.73	2.64	2.75
SD			1.207	1.242	1.181	1.238	1.211	1.409	1.125	1.045	1.208	1.205	1.199	1.233	1.214	1.218	1.197	1.203

From a mean score point of view (at 2.72) there is a proportionality of disagreement at 35.8% and strongly disagree at 15.5% (total at 51.3%). The proportion of responses in agreement is at 23.7% and strongly agree at 7.8%, which reflects a total of 31.5%. There is a consistent average response rate at all the levels/categories in respect of agreement and disagreement.

The SD at 1.207 suggests a moderate degree of variation among respondents. There seems to be a disconnection between line managers and employees relating to continuous feedback and engagement of performance improvement initiatives. This statement correlates with the literature overview presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 5.

According to Culbert (2010:6-9), performance reviews should be an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall performance of the institution. Also important, performance reviews should focus on the development of individuals, taking into account their needs and inputs in respect of self-development and to improve their skills (Sections 3.4.1 and 5.3.2).

Table 6.56 reports on the statement: My direct line manager respects me during performance appraisals.

Table 6.56: My direct line manager respects me during performance appraisals

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 10. My direct line manager respects me during performance appraisals.	Strongly disagree	N	12	1	5	6	12	7	3	2	12	5	2	5	12	6	6	12
		%	5.2%	2.8%	5.1%	6.4%	5.3%	8.6%	4.3%	2.5%	5.2%	6.5%	3.3%	5.6%	5.3%	7.4%	4.1%	5.3%
	Disagree	N	18	5	5	8	18	3	8	6	17	7	3	7	17	6	11	17
		%	7.8%	13.9%	5.1%	8.5%	7.9%	3.7%	11.4%	7.6%	7.4%	9.1%	4.9%	7.8%	7.5%	7.4%	7.5%	7.5%
	Neutral	N	46	5	16	24	45	15	13	18	46	14	14	16	44	22	24	46
		%	19.8%	13.9%	16.3%	25.5%	19.7%	18.5%	18.6%	22.8%	20.0%	18.2%	23.0%	17.8%	19.3%	27.2%	16.4%	20.3%
	Agree	N	119	16	57	43	116	38	36	44	118	36	32	50	118	37	82	119
		%	51.3%	44.4%	58.2%	45.7%	50.9%	46.9%	51.4%	55.7%	51.3%	46.8%	52.5%	55.6%	51.8%	45.7%	56.2%	52.4%
	Strongly agree	N	37	9	15	13	37	18	10	9	37	15	10	12	37	10	23	33
		%	15.9%	25.0%	15.3%	13.8%	16.2%	22.2%	14.3%	11.4%	16.1%	19.5%	16.4%	13.3%	16.2%	12.3%	15.8%	14.5%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			3.65	3.75	3.73	3.52	3.65	3.70	3.60	3.66	3.66	3.64	3.74	3.63	3.66	3.48	3.72
SD			1.008	1.079	0.958	1.044	1.015	1.123	1.013	0.875	1.006	1.099	0.911	0.999	1.009	1.050	0.959	0.997

This table reports on whether employees' direct line managers respect them during performance appraisals.

There is a clear indication that almost 67% of respondents agree and strongly agree that their direct line managers respect them during performance appraisals. The SD at 1.008 shows a low variation rate among respondents.

This result could suggest some level of respect and maturity, or even fear, among line managers towards their subordinates. However, the combination of neutral responses at 19.8%, and disagree at 7.8%, and lastly, strongly disagreement at 5.2%, thus, a total of 32.8%, could raise some degree of concern relating to the statement reflected in Table 6.56.

Strycharczyk and Elvin (2014:26-29) endorse the importance of positive employee relationships between employer and employee, to ensure high-quality performance delivery (Sections 3.5.3, 3.5.4 and 3.6). Therefore, Baldwin *et al.* (2013:123) hold that ethical behaviour, when managers conduct performance management, requires ethical commitment and integrity, or adherence to an ethical code of standards.

Table 6.57 reports on the statement: The review process focuses on development and improvement needs.

Table 6.57: The review process focuses on development and improvement needs

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 11. The review process focuses on development and improvement needs.	Strongly disagree	N	34	5	13	15	33	18	8	8	34	11	10	13	34	10	23	33	
		%	14.7%	13.9%	13.3%	16.0%	14.5%	22.2%	11.4%	10.1%	14.8%	14.3%	16.4%	14.4%	14.9%	12.3%	15.8%	14.5%	
	Disagree	N	54	11	25	17	53	17	18	19	54	27	10	16	53	18	34	52	
		%	23.3%	30.6%	25.5%	18.1%	23.2%	21.0%	25.7%	24.1%	23.5%	35.1%	16.4%	17.8%	23.2%	22.2%	23.3%	22.9%	
	Neutral	N	52	10	17	24	51	14	14	23	51	11	15	25	51	21	31	52	
		%	22.4%	27.8%	17.3%	25.5%	22.4%	17.3%	20.0%	29.1%	22.2%	14.3%	24.6%	27.8%	22.4%	25.9%	21.2%	22.9%	
	Agree	N	80	8	36	35	79	26	25	28	79	22	23	33	78	27	52	79	
		%	34.5%	22.2%	36.7%	37.2%	34.6%	32.1%	35.7%	35.4%	34.3%	28.6%	37.7%	36.7%	34.2%	33.3%	35.6%	34.8%	
	Strongly agree	N	12	2	7	3	12	6	5	1	12	6	3	3	12	5	6	11	
		%	5.2%	5.6%	7.1%	3.2%	5.3%	7.4%	7.1%	1.3%	5.2%	7.8%	4.9%	3.3%	5.3%	6.2%	4.1%	4.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			2.92	2.75	2.99	2.94	2.93	2.81	3.01	2.94	2.92	2.81	2.98	2.97	2.92	2.99	2.89	2.93
	SD			1.171	1.131	1.206	1.153	1.170	1.305	1.173	1.030	1.174	1.225	1.190	1.126	1.175	1.146	1.175	1.163

The analyses reported in Table 6.42 and 6.55 have a flow similar to the analysis reflected in Table 6.57.

The mean score at 2.92 indicates a movement towards a balance between disagree and agree, with 23.3% at disagree, and strongly disagree at 14.7%, thus a total of 38% that disagree, with a significant proportion of respondents at neutral (22.4%). The percentages reflected in Table 6.57 relating to the proportion of agreement is 34.5% and strongly agree at 5.2%, which presents a total of 39.7% in agreement.

The results of this analysis could point in the direction of negligence from managers' side to focus on the development and improvement needs of employees. This is more evident in the category years of service of 0-10 years (at 22.2%) strongly disagree, representing the less experienced employees at Unisa. A further possibility or rationale explaining this analysis, is that the respondents are not convinced of the IPMS tool leading to further individual development. However, 49.4% of the respondents with postgraduate qualifications disagreed that the review processes focus on development and improvement of individuals.

Smither and London (2009:5-7) argue that, to enhance individual performance, the process of managing the employee's performance must be an ongoing process. Policies and procedures guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. However, the continuous engagement by informed and knowledgeable managers, remain the most important function (Section 3.2.1). Moreover, administrative compliance overrules the importance for managers to engage and reflect on individual performance improvement (Section 5.1.1).

Table 6.58 reports on whether performance appraisal does not contribute to employees' personal development.

Table 6.58: Performance appraisal does not contribute to my personal development

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 12. Performance appraisal does not contribute to my personal development.	Strongly disagree	N	25	4	11	9	24	14	7	4	25	10	6	9	25	12	13	25
		%	10.8%	11.1%	11.2%	9.6%	10.5%	17.3%	10.0%	5.1%	10.9%	13.0%	9.8%	10.0%	11.0%	14.8%	8.9%	11.0%
	Disagree	N	59	7	26	25	58	22	16	20	58	20	16	23	59	18	40	58
		%	25.4%	19.4%	26.5%	26.6%	25.4%	27.2%	22.9%	25.3%	25.2%	26.0%	26.2%	25.6%	25.9%	22.2%	27.4%	25.6%
	Neutral	N	36	3	15	18	36	10	14	11	35	8	8	18	34	14	21	35
		%	15.5%	8.3%	15.3%	19.1%	15.8%	12.3%	20.0%	13.9%	15.2%	10.4%	13.1%	20.0%	14.9%	17.3%	14.4%	15.4%
	Agree	N	71	16	28	25	69	16	25	30	71	26	19	25	70	22	47	69
		%	30.6%	44.4%	28.6%	26.6%	30.3%	19.8%	35.7%	38.0%	30.9%	33.8%	31.1%	27.8%	30.7%	27.2%	32.2%	30.4%
	Strongly agree	N	41	6	18	17	41	19	8	14	41	13	12	15	40	15	25	40
		%	17.7%	16.7%	18.4%	18.1%	18.0%	23.5%	11.4%	17.7%	17.8%	16.9%	19.7%	16.7%	17.5%	18.5%	17.1%	17.6%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			3.19	3.36	3.16	3.17	3.20	3.05	3.16	3.38	3.20	3.16	3.25	3.16	3.18	3.12	3.21
SD			1.292	1.291	1.314	1.275	1.291	1.457	1.199	1.191	1.295	1.338	1.312	1.262	1.297	1.354	1.266	1.296

The analysis reported in Table 6.55 and Table 6.57 is related to Table 6.58.

The proportionality of agreement reflects a percentage of 30.6%, with the highest proportion of agreement at post levels P3 to P5 (44.4%). The proportion of strongly agree was at 17.7% and combined with agreement reports at 48%. The combined disagreement/strongly disagreement rate is at 36.2% - with 15.5% responses at neutral.

Moynihan (2008:191-193) is of the opinion that, due to the lack of capacity and the administrative deadlines that overrule effective management of the performance management of individuals: performance management is less important than other institutional operations. Therefore, the excessive workloads of other operational matters force managers and employees to neglect the importance and continuous engagement, to improve individual performance outcomes. The latter responses could be addressed by introducing a more effective and fair IPMS, such as 'Crowdsourcing' (360°) evaluations.

The IPMS tool is used to serve self-interest by managers and employees. Managers rather opt to engage with employees through technology (emails); to avoid conflict and tension during face-to-face sessions. Furthermore, proper IPMS appraisals by managers are hampered by prioritising their own commitments, such as meetings and administrative tasks. Hence, IPMS practices serve only as an administrative compliance matter (Section 6.10).

Table 6.59 reports on the statement: My direct line manager allows me to develop to my full potential.

Table 6.59: My direct line manager allows me to develop to my full potential

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 13. My direct line manager allows me to develop to my full potential.	Strongly disagree	N	30	5	12	13	30	11	11	8	30	11	8	10	29	13	17	30	
		%	12.9%	13.9%	12.2%	13.8%	13.2%	13.6%	15.7%	10.1%	13.0%	14.3%	13.1%	11.1%	12.7%	16.0%	11.6%	13.2%	
	Disagree	N	43	4	18	20	42	9	15	19	43	17	9	16	42	17	24	41	
		%	18.5%	11.1%	18.4%	21.3%	18.4%	11.1%	21.4%	24.1%	18.7%	22.1%	14.8%	17.8%	18.4%	21.0%	16.4%	18.1%	
	Neutral	N	59	9	21	27	57	24	18	17	59	14	20	25	59	18	41	59	
		%	25.4%	25.0%	21.4%	28.7%	25.0%	29.6%	25.7%	21.5%	25.7%	18.2%	32.8%	27.8%	25.9%	22.2%	28.1%	26.0%	
	Agree	N	74	12	36	25	73	26	19	27	72	26	16	30	72	25	47	72	
		%	31.9%	33.3%	36.7%	26.6%	32.0%	32.1%	27.1%	34.2%	31.3%	33.8%	26.2%	33.3%	31.6%	30.9%	32.2%	31.7%	
	Strongly agree	N	26	6	11	9	26	11	7	8	26	9	8	9	26	8	17	25	
		%	11.2%	16.7%	11.2%	9.6%	11.4%	13.6%	10.0%	10.1%	11.3%	11.7%	13.1%	10.0%	11.4%	9.9%	11.6%	11.0%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.10	3.28	3.16	2.97	3.10	3.21	2.94	3.10	3.09	3.06	3.11	3.13	3.11	2.98	3.16	3.09
	SD			1.211	1.279	1.216	1.195	1.218	1.222	1.238	1.183	1.213	1.270	1.212	1.163	1.208	1.255	1.184	1.210

Table 6.59 reports a significant proportion of respondents who are neutral (25.4%). There is a clear indication that a significant proportion of the respondents agreed (31.9%) and strongly agreed (11.2%) with this item, with a combined percentage at 43%. A combined percentage of 31.4% is reflected at the disagreement/strongly disagreement level.

The SD at 1.211 implies some level of variation among respondents. However, with the proportion of respondents at neutral (25%) it could imply that some concerns exist among respondents that there could be challenges relating to the role of line managers in the development of individuals.

These concerns do not correlate with that of interviewees which imply that there is a lack of adequate, as well as continuous engagement and feedback from line managers relating to the performance improvement of individuals (Section 6.10). The core aim of managers should be to improve and optimise capacity of the employee to meet and exceed their own abilities and potential: towards a higher quality of performance.

Table 6.60 reports on whether the implementation of IPMS allows employees to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.

Table 6.60: The implementation of IPMS allows me to reflect on my strengths and weaknesses

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 14. The implementation of IPMS allows me to reflect on my strengths and weaknesses.	Strongly disagree	N	34	5	15	14	34	15	8	11	34	11	9	13	33	12	21	33	
		%	14.7%	13.9%	15.3%	14.9%	14.9%	18.5%	11.4%	13.9%	14.8%	14.3%	14.8%	14.4%	14.5%	14.8%	14.4%	14.5%	
	Disagree	N	56	6	24	25	55	19	20	17	56	21	11	24	56	17	38	55	
		%	24.1%	16.7%	24.5%	26.6%	24.1%	23.5%	28.6%	21.5%	24.3%	27.3%	18.0%	26.7%	24.6%	21.0%	26.0%	24.2%	
	Neutral	N	37	12	9	16	37	11	11	15	37	12	11	14	37	19	18	37	
		%	15.9%	33.3%	9.2%	17.0%	16.2%	13.6%	15.7%	19.0%	16.1%	15.6%	18.0%	15.6%	16.2%	23.5%	12.3%	16.3%	
	Agree	N	86	9	44	31	84	25	26	33	84	26	25	32	83	25	58	83	
		%	37.1%	25.0%	44.9%	33.0%	36.8%	30.9%	37.1%	41.8%	36.5%	33.8%	41.0%	35.6%	36.4%	30.9%	39.7%	36.6%	
	Strongly agree	N	19	4	6	8	18	11	5	3	19	7	5	7	19	8	11	19	
		%	8.2%	11.1%	6.1%	8.5%	7.9%	13.6%	7.1%	3.8%	8.3%	9.1%	8.2%	7.8%	8.3%	9.9%	7.5%	8.4%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.00	3.03	3.02	2.94	2.99	2.98	3.00	3.00	2.99	2.96	3.10	2.96	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
	SD			1.238	1.207	1.252	1.243	1.236	1.360	1.192	1.166	1.240	1.251	1.234	1.235	1.236	1.235	1.243	1.237

There is a significant proportion of responses at post level P3-P5 (senior management) who are neutral, at 33.3%. The mean score at 3.00 suggests a move towards agreement at 37% and strongly in agreement at 8.2%, thus a total 45.2%. The highest proportionality of agreement is at the gender category (Female) at 39.7% and the category highest qualifications (below masters) at 41.0%. The combined percentage of responses at disagree/strongly disagree is at 38.8%.

The SD at 1.238 suggests some degree of variation among the responses which, combined with the remaining results, implies a level of agreement among respondents that IPMS enables self-reflection on their strengths/weaknesses.

The above statement correlates with that of some responses from interviewees by indicating that their main motivation is the result of critical thinking and initiative and self-satisfaction by successfully implementing set targets, as was agreed upon during IPMS review and the performance agreement between managers and employees. Also, an important indication is that some responses confirmed that individuals find reward in self-pride and knowing that their work being done is well.

The contents and analysis relating to Table 6.39 have similarities to that of Table 6.60.

Pershing (2006:8-11) argues that individual performance interventions as part of the IPMS should address the total sum of the identified problem or challenge in respect of individual performance management improvement. A systematic and holistic approach to improve present and future work related tasks, through employees, will eventually enhance their performance outcomes (Pershing, 2012:14-16). Moreover, to enable self-assessment relating to performance evaluation outcomes, the focus on performance appraisals should be from the outside, in having outsiders/other employees and clients, evaluating your performance (Kenny, 2005:6).

Moreover, Crawley *et al.* (2013:172) confirm that a lack of feedback on individual performance supported by motivation from managers ensuring high quality individual performance outcomes, seems to have the highest effect in hampering effective individual performance improvements (Section 3.5.5).

Table 6.61 reflects on whether direct line managers care about employees.

Table 6.61: My direct line manager cares about me

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 15. My direct line manager cares about me.	Strongly disagree	N	30	3	10	17	30	15	6	9	30	10	5	13	28	11	19	30	
		%	12.9%	8.3%	10.2%	18.1%	13.2%	18.5%	8.6%	11.4%	13.0%	13.0%	8.2%	14.4%	12.3%	13.6%	13.0%	13.2%	
	Disagree	N	23	4	10	7	21	6	10	7	23	9	6	8	23	9	13	22	
		%	9.9%	11.1%	10.2%	7.4%	9.2%	7.4%	14.3%	8.9%	10.0%	11.7%	9.8%	8.9%	10.1%	11.1%	8.9%	9.7%	
	Neutral	N	74	10	33	30	73	19	28	26	73	26	21	25	72	28	45	73	
		%	31.9%	27.8%	33.7%	31.9%	32.0%	23.5%	40.0%	32.9%	31.7%	33.8%	34.4%	27.8%	31.6%	34.6%	30.8%	32.2%	
	Agree	N	77	12	34	30	76	30	19	27	76	21	20	36	77	27	49	76	
		%	33.2%	33.3%	34.7%	31.9%	33.3%	37.0%	27.1%	34.2%	33.0%	27.3%	32.8%	40.0%	33.8%	33.3%	33.6%	33.5%	
	Strongly agree	N	28	7	11	10	28	11	7	10	28	11	9	8	28	6	20	26	
		%	12.1%	19.4%	11.2%	10.6%	12.3%	13.6%	10.0%	12.7%	12.2%	14.3%	14.8%	8.9%	12.3%	7.4%	13.7%	11.5%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.22	3.44	3.27	3.10	3.22	3.20	3.16	3.28	3.21	3.18	3.36	3.20	3.24	3.10	3.26	3.20
	SD			1.179	1.182	1.117	1.245	1.183	1.308	1.072	1.154	1.183	1.211	1.111	1.182	1.171	1.136	1.198	1.176

Table 6.37 shows some similarity with the analysis of Table 6.61.

From a mean score point of view there is a strong move towards agreement. At the same time, the proportionality of responses that are neutral is significant (31.9%), specifically at the middle-management level (P6-P7) at 33.7%. This result could suggest uncertainty among respondents at that level. The combined score at the agreement and strongly agreement levels indicates a total of 45.3%, whereas the combined score relating to disagree/strong disagree is at 22.8%. Although not overwhelming in favour of agreement, there seems to be a proportion of respondents who perceive their managers to care about them.

Some concerns are evident at the middle-management levels, P6-P7, with a neutral score at 31.9%. This level is the core category responsible for the development of individuals, ensuring high quality performance outputs. Interviewees responses at this levels (P6-P7) correlate with the researchers observation by indicating that managers lack skills to motivate and do not engage properly with their staff. Hence, although managers could care about their staff, they still do not execute effective and efficient IPMS practices

These concerns could indicate that managers are either unwilling or lack the skills to develop and motivate individuals toward executing desired performance outputs (own observation).

Table 6.62 reports on whether direct line managers operationalise employees' performance areas.

Table 6.62: My direct line manager operationalises my performance areas

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender			
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total	
EMPLOYEES 16. My direct line manager operationalises my performance areas.	Strongly disagree	N	26	4	9	13	26	11	7	8	26	8	8	9	25	9	17	26	
		%	11.2%	11.1%	9.2%	13.8%	11.4%	13.6%	10.0%	10.1%	11.3%	10.4%	13.1%	10.0%	11.0%	11.1%	11.6%	11.5%	
	Disagree	N	37	7	14	15	36	9	12	16	37	17	4	16	37	16	19	35	
		%	15.9%	19.4%	14.3%	16.0%	15.8%	11.1%	17.1%	20.3%	16.1%	22.1%	6.6%	17.8%	16.2%	19.8%	13.0%	15.4%	
	Neutral	N	85	10	40	33	83	25	29	30	84	22	25	36	83	29	56	85	
		%	36.6%	27.8%	40.8%	35.1%	36.4%	30.9%	41.4%	38.0%	36.5%	28.6%	41.0%	40.0%	36.4%	35.8%	38.4%	37.4%	
	Agree	N	64	10	27	26	63	28	17	18	63	23	18	22	63	19	42	61	
		%	27.6%	27.8%	27.6%	27.7%	27.6%	34.6%	24.3%	22.8%	27.4%	29.9%	29.5%	24.4%	27.6%	23.5%	28.8%	26.9%	
	Strongly agree	N	20	5	8	7	20	8	5	7	20	7	6	7	20	8	12	20	
		%	8.6%	13.9%	8.2%	7.4%	8.8%	9.9%	7.1%	8.9%	8.7%	9.1%	9.8%	7.8%	8.8%	9.9%	8.2%	8.8%	
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227	
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean			3.06	3.14	3.11	2.99	3.07	3.16	3.01	3.00	3.06	3.05	3.16	3.02	3.07	3.01	3.09	3.06
	SD			1.109	1.222	1.054	1.141	1.115	1.177	1.056	1.098	1.112	1.146	1.128	1.070	1.108	1.135	1.101	1.111

As reported in Table 6.62, it is of concern that an average of 36.6% of responses was neutral, with the highest proportionality of responses at the post levels P6-P7, at 40.8%. These outcomes could imply that some challenges are being experienced by respondents relating to the statement as reflected in Table 6.62, namely, that the respondents most probably did not understand or interpreted the statement in context or incorrectly. The combined percentage of the levels at agreement/strongly agreement level is at 36.2%, whereas the combined disagreement/strongly disagreement is at 27.1%.

Hunt (2014:153) indicates that a well-designed performance management system will improve workforce performance tremendously. In addition, Nankervis *et al.* (2013:9-11) write that the alignment of IPMS and operational planning could result in improved individual performance outcomes.

Therefore, Hunt (2014:103-105) found that the basic concept of performance improvement of individuals is actually straightforward. Hence, employees will most probably do what is expected from them if: they know exactly what activities must be executed by whom, when and how; believe that they are able to do it; and are motivated and supported in doing it. Thus, setting direction, constantly giving appropriate feedback, building confidence and providing acknowledgement will ensure improved individual performance outcomes.

Table 6.63, which is the final report, reflects on whether direct line managers identify specific targets and standards of employees' performance.

Table 6.63: My direct line manager identifies specific targets and standards of my performance

			Total	Post level				Years of service at Unisa				Highest qualification				Gender		
			n	P3-P5	P6-P7	P8-P9	Total	0 – 10 yrs	11 – 20 yrs	21 yrs +	Total	Doctoral/ Masters	PG below Masters	UG and lower	Total	M	F	Total
EMPLOYEES 17. My direct line manager identifies specific targets and standards of my performance.	Strongly disagree	N	23	0	8	15	23	14	4	5	23	2	9	12	23	6	17	23
		%	9.9%	0.0%	8.2%	16.0%	10.1%	17.3%	5.7%	6.3%	10.0%	2.6%	14.8%	13.3%	10.1%	7.4%	11.6%	10.1%
	Disagree	N	62	11	25	23	59	14	24	24	62	24	12	24	60	28	33	61
		%	26.7%	30.6%	25.5%	24.5%	25.9%	17.3%	34.3%	30.4%	27.0%	31.2%	19.7%	26.7%	26.3%	34.6%	22.6%	26.9%
	Neutral	N	68	10	30	27	67	19	22	26	67	24	17	26	67	23	43	66
		%	29.3%	27.8%	30.6%	28.7%	29.4%	23.5%	31.4%	32.9%	29.1%	31.2%	27.9%	28.9%	29.4%	28.4%	29.5%	29.1%
	Agree	N	60	11	28	21	60	25	15	19	59	20	18	21	59	15	44	59
		%	25.9%	30.6%	28.6%	22.3%	26.3%	30.9%	21.4%	24.1%	25.7%	26.0%	29.5%	23.3%	25.9%	18.5%	30.1%	26.0%
	Strongly agree	N	19	4	7	8	19	9	5	5	19	7	5	7	19	9	9	18
		%	8.2%	11.1%	7.1%	8.5%	8.3%	11.1%	7.1%	6.3%	8.3%	9.1%	8.2%	7.8%	8.3%	11.1%	6.2%	7.9%
	Total	N	232	36	98	94	228	81	70	79	230	77	61	90	228	81	146	227
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean			2.96	3.22	3.01	2.83	2.97	3.01	2.90	2.94	2.95	3.08	2.97	2.86	2.96	2.91	2.97
SD			1.120	1.017	1.079	1.197	1.124	1.280	1.038	1.030	1.122	1.023	1.197	1.157	1.124	1.131	1.117	1.120

The responses reflected in Tables 6.6, 6.24, 6.34 and more specifically Table 6.39 are in alignment to the analysis reported in Table 6.63.

The spread of responses between agreement/disagreement across all levels was somewhat consistent at 25.9% and 26.7%, respectively. The combined score of agreement/strongly in agreement is at 34.1%, in comparison with that of the disagreement/strongly disagreement at 36.6%. Table 6.63 also reported a significantly high level of respondents that were neutral (29.3%). The SD at 1.120 confirms a level of variation among respondents.

More importantly, according to Risher (2014:326) is that managers contribute to the successes or failure of institutions. Hrebiniak (2006:12-31) noted that managers should indicate what needs to be achieved, how it should be achieved and by what standards. More important, according to Hale and Whitlam (1998:9-11), target setting should be the core focus of individuals, ensuring the achievement of desired objectives. However, 85 from a total of 232 respondents said no (disagree) which reflects badly for the current IPMS at Unisa.

Continual engagement and feedback on progress will also provide opportunities to change or modify original set targets for implementation, specifically due to circumstances beyond the individual's control (Hale & Whitlam, 1998:84-85; Minnaar, 2010:3-4; Michel, 2013:150-153; Barrows & Nelly, 2012:25-27) (Chapters 3 and 5).

6.7.1 Summary

In Section 6.4.1 Section C it was stated that this section dealt with matters relating to the experiences and perceptions of IPMS practices, and the influence thereof on the employee. The purpose of Section C was to determine to what extent respondents agree/disagree with the statements made, to indicate what influence performance management practices had on themselves.

This specific section's constructs were identified from the literature reviews presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 (Section 6.4.1).

Pertinent themes that emerged from the analysis of Table 6.47 to Table 6.63 will now be elaborated on. In general most respondents indicated that they experienced and perceived the IPMS practices at Unisa to have a negative influence on them, which

demonstrates that IPMS does not contribute to improved individual performance. Hence, the analysis suggested that respondents are not sure if IPMS is effective, due to the complexity of policies, procedures and the implementation of vague objectives and target setting.

It is also evident from the analysis of this section, that there is a lack of adequate feedback, support and involvement from managers, which create negative perceptions regarding IPMS practices. Therefore, there seems to be a disconnection between line managers and employees relating to the continuous engagement in performance improvement initiatives.

Also important is a pertinent theme that emerged, indicating line managers neglecting to focus on the development and improvement needs of employees. Eventually, effective performance management practices should involve people and their behaviours which is lacking if judged from the analysis of this section. Emanating from the survey, there appears to be high level of concern whether the current IPMS practices are relevant at Unisa.

The inconsistency, subjectivity and punitive approach from direct line managers, as well as subjective performance appraisal sessions, were highlighted during the analysis of the survey.

Hence, there appears to be an overwhelming need for effective and appropriate training awareness, mentorship, coaching, engagement, clear communication and commitment to ensure appropriate and effective management and implementation of IPMS practices, both at line manager and employee levels.

6.8 DATA COLLECTION AT UNISA: QUALITATIVE STUDY

This section discusses the data collection of the qualitative phase of the study, through group interviews and individual interviews.

6.8.1 Group interviews / discussions

Mouton (2001:197-199) describes the importance of combining individual interviews with that of focus group interviews, as part of the data-collection process. This approach, according to Mouton (2001:197), could indicate opinions and perceptions at another level, namely, the consensus or disagreement on issues related to the

topic of the research. More important, according to this author, is that a group interview could serve as an additional source of validation. Thus, previous individual respondents could, within a group interview, allow for new interpretive data and bring the researcher closer to the truth.

Hence, the outcomes of data collected during the analysis and interpreting of documents, policies/procedures related to the performance management practices at Unisa (Chapter 5), could be integrated with data collected. Thus, data collected from all available resources could, during the research phase, be utilised to conclude the data-collection phases. White (2003:17) continues by writing that by including multiple sources of data, it is likely to enhance the reliability and validity of data collected (Denzin, 1989:244) (Sections 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.3.1).

This section of the research was conducted during a workshop held on 24 October 2018 at the main campus, namely Muckleneuk, in the Kgorong venue. The Directorate Student Admissions and Registrations (DSAR), as well as representatives from units within the 'Student Walk', participated (Section 5.3 and Figure 5.2 in Chapter 5). As part of a strategic focus on how to enhance the Directorate's performance, in alignment with the objectives of the institution, the following question was asked to all participants: "In general, how do you experience performance management practices within DSAR"?

According to Babbie and Mouton (2007:275-278), most researchers participate in, or form part of events as observers of that which it is that they are investigating. Although the researcher in the study is currently holding two positions, as Director of Student Admissions and Registrations and as a student, possible personal biases were eliminated through triangulation, as well as the fact that the researcher only observed the session. No personal involvement occurred as the researcher left the venue and only returned at the conclusion of the workgroup session. The final outcomes in the form of documents were analysed and interpreted (see below). Hence, the researcher was not influenced by his own perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. The participants' experiences and documented views served as the only criteria to reach reliable conclusions.

A total of 194 participants were divided into groups of 18 people in each group. The information was collected and analysed from the documents that were collected from

each group's representative. Hence, it included the analysis (field notes) during their verbal responses, as well as the interpretation of their written presentations. Follow-up discussions with presenters, where applicable, were done to clarify uncertainties relating to the presentations and written documents.

The list below details the participants in the interviews:

Participants:	Number:
Deputy Directors (P5)	3
Managers (P6)	11
Supervisors (P7)	33
Advisors (P8-P9)	147
Total	194

The focus group's common characteristics were similar to the target population of the survey of this research. Hence, only administrative staff at Unisa, (see biographical information participated in the activities in Section 6.3.2).

The sub-section below provides more information on the group interviews.

6.8.1.1 Narrative in respect of analysis and interpretation in respect of the group interviews

Specific themes that emerged from the group interviews are presented below:

1. A commonality among the respondents is the fact that IPMS practices are not applied consistently, specifically in terms of the units within the same departments/directorates. This could result in different interpretations of the IPMS policies and procedures, and the latter could lead to mistrust regarding IPMS practices;
2. Concerns were raised in respect of the lack of training and individual development opportunities, which could restrict the improvement in expected service delivery outputs;

3. A common theme across all constructs, and now also within the group discussions, is that managers do not engage and provide continuous feedback relating to the performance management challenges of individuals, which restricts the support and progress towards achieving set goals effectively. Specifically, there is a lack of targets and standard setting. Employees are confused regarding what is expected from them.

Managers/supervisors are more concerned with their own performance issues and activities, and neglect to provide adequate support, feedback and engagement. The above could, if properly managed, ensure that employees meet the standards set in implementing tasks successfully. Managers do not provide recognition in respect of good performance, and they do not engage in individual development and performance management feedback sessions.

The above analyses (outcomes) were determined by the identification of thematic analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis and the interpretation thereof. Comparisons were made to eliminate possible duplication or biases. This process was repeated until no new information emerged (Section 4.7). Where there was uncertainty relating to the presented (verbal and documents) opinions of groups, follow-up discussions occurred. According to Armstrong (2010:392), is important that information can also be drawn by the writing of narratives to describe phenomena or even patterns and themes (Section 4.2.1 and 4.3.3). This gathering of information is usually difficult to be reduced to numbers. Hence, the researcher followed the above method until saturation was reached, thus, until no further new information or themes emerged.

In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2007:215) maintain that, when enhancing validity and reliability in the qualitative paradigm, researchers are more concerned with triangulation and extensive written field notes. Member checks, peer reviews, audit trails, openness and comparisons usually apply (Section 4.6).

6.8.2 Purpose, focus areas / themes

As discussed in Section 6.8.1, the questions or statements made in the interview document should be in alignment with that of the questionnaire. This approach will ensure more valid and richness of information, and which will not be as restricted as the survey questionnaire.

Therefore, questions identified should be within the following three (3) focus areas:

- University (IPMS): Policies, Procedures and Practices;
- Managers/Supervisors (responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures);
and
- Employees, as the subject of IPMS at Unisa.

These focus areas and themes were identified from the literature review, as presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 5, as well as statutory documents, policies and relevant documents relating to IPMS practices at Unisa. According to White (2003:17), data triangulation refers to data sources such as oneself, respondents, the literature review, observation, questionnaires and relevant documents applicable to the research (Section 6.4.1).

Questions identified should address the main research question, namely: *How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?* A descriptive and interpretive single case study approach was utilised to describe an intervention as a phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurs (Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2).

6.8.3 Interview approach

Interviews followed after the finalisation of the survey questionnaire and group interviews. Specific grey areas that were identified from responses, and that emanated from the survey questionnaire and group interviews, were probed during the interview phase. These probing questions were used to guide participants during the interviews to ensure more valid and richness of data.

A sample of approximately 30 participants, comprised of senior administrative staff, at post levels P3-P5, P6-P7, and junior administrative staff, at post level P8-P9, and also at this level, three union representatives participated in the interviews. The participants who presented findings within the specific group which they were attached to, were targeted for interviews. Thus, the sample and categories were in alignment with that of the categories, as indicated in the survey questionnaire. The union members' responses are embedded in the themes indicated (Section 6.8.1.1) (Table 6.1 and Section 6.48).

The interview data process was conducted at the Unisa premises. Invitations were emailed to approximately 30 Unisa staff members to participate in the interviews.

These staff members are at post levels P3-P9. An equal spread of six or seven employees per post level, were identified. The aim was for all interviewees to be exposed to the same context of questioning with that which was identified in the survey. Consent forms were provided to the interviewees to indicate that participation was voluntary and confidential. Respondents were free to withdraw from the interview at any time.

Furthermore, the interview summary completed after each session indicated the interviewee, time, place and theme.

The interview was conducted with a semi-structured approach. Therefore, no specific questions were prepared. Hence, the interviewees were allowed to communicate their own interpretations, perceptions and experiences without continuous interruption or intervention (Armstrong, 2010:393-394) (Section 4.3.3.1). However, certain probes identified from the survey were used to seek clarity where respondents held a neutral position during the analysis of certain survey responses. Therefore, the questionnaire and group interviews were used to determine or gather factual evidence for comparison purposes with that of qualitative data (Armstrong, 2010:295) (Section 4.3.3.2). Hence, semi-structured questions (open-ended) were used to ensure that participants experienced the freedom to express their opinions. The above processes and methods enabled participants to interpret and express their experiences in an objective manner within the context of the interview (Section 4.3.3.2).

6.8.4 In-depth interview guide: Opening of the interview

The interview was scheduled electronically by the researcher for 30 minutes at a date/ time/ venue that suited the participant. The participant was greeted and welcomed to the interview session.

The researcher explained that the interview was based on a research study into the challenges facing the improvement of a performance management system at Unisa.

A sample of administrative staff on all levels in the administrative units at the University of South Africa participated in this research study. It was important for the participating staff to feel comfortable with his/her participation. The respondents completed the consent form to participate voluntarily in this research study. The

participating employees were made aware that a copy of the final approved research study would be available in the library of the University of South Africa.

The primary focus of this section is to present the findings of data obtained from the interviews that were conducted. Although the research was informed by a set of questions that were predetermined per section, some prompts to explore the participants inputs/responses further, were also asked. The data obtained through the survey and group discussions was triangulated with the responses obtained from the participants. Cross-references were made between all the chapters to ensure that all collected data, such as that emanating from the literature review, survey, group discussions and interviews, as well as all other relevant empirical data, was accurately and fairly reported. The above could indicate correlation in respect of the same concepts.

Outcomes of discussions during interviews were transcribed directly after each interview. Thereafter, the results were coded into themes/patterns using the research questions as guideline. Comparisons were made to eliminate possible duplication or biases. This process was repeated until saturation was reached, thus, until no further new information or quotations emerged (Section 4.7, 4.8) (Mouton, 1996:160-161).

The aim was for all interviews to be exposed to the same context of questioning, with that of those identified in the survey (Section 4.3.2, 6.2, 6.4, 6.8.4).

The next sections will indicate the pertinent quotations that were identified from each question asked. These pertinent quotations were selected from various direct quotations from interviews. The responses were analysed and identified per post level within the administrative units at Unisa. Only pertinent themes (quotes that were repeated two or three or more times) were selected. The same methodology was applied within the same context as that of the processes that were followed during the survey and group analysis (Section 6.4).

The data was captured, analysed and reported here for each of the three constructs of this study:

Construct A: Policies and procedures

Indicate your awareness, perceptions and experience relating to the current policies, procedures and practices of the performance

management system at Unisa.

Prompt: Elaborate to what extent does IPMS influence institutional performance?

Responses: Post levels P3-P5 (Senior Management)
Post levels P6-P7 (Middle Management)
Post levels P8-P9 (Advisors)

Construct B: Line managers

Indicate your experience and perceptions relating to the role of your line managers in respect of performance management practices.

Prompt: How do you perceive performance management in general?

Responses: Post levels P3-P5 (Senior Management)
Post levels P6-P7 (Middle Management)
Post levels P8-P9 (Advisors)

Construct C: Employees self

Indicate what influence performance management practices have on yourself.

Prompt: How does IPMS contribute to improve your performance?

Responses: Post levels P3-P5 (Senior Management)
Post levels P6-P7 (Middle Management)
Post levels P8-P9 (Advisors)

6.9 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE INTERVIEW DATA

Qualitative data is non-numerical information, such as responses gathered through interviews, observations, focus-groups or open-ended survey questions. Qualitative

research is concerned with trying to achieve a clear understanding of the problem under review in a more in-depth complex manner, than in the generalised way that is common to the outcome of questionnaires. This methodology is used to gather information in an attempt to determine how people think, feel and act and what they know. At the simplest level, qualitative analysis involves evaluating your data to determine how it answers your interview questions (Chapter 4; Babbie & Mouton, 2007:275-277; Mouton, 1996:160-161).

Firstly, the researcher made choices about which gathered information should be emphasised, minimised, or left out of the analysis altogether. Specific trends or commonalities were identified. Eventually quotes were limited that best illustrated the themes for reporting purposes to enable the researcher to do proper and relevant interpretation and reached appropriate conclusions. Thus, they enabled the researcher to step back to consider what the results mean and what the implications could be (Chapter 4; Armstrong, 2010:392-343; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:94-95).

The above methodology/approach will be applied for each of the three constructs in which the interview data will be analysed.

6.9.1 Construct A: Policies and procedures

Question: *Indicate your awareness, perceptions and experience relating to the current policies, procedures and practices of the performance management system in the institution.*

Prompt: *Elaborate to what extent does IPMS influence institutional performance?*

6.9.1.1 Responses: Post levels P3-P5, Senior Management

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“The current IPMS system is ineffective system with no real appraisal criteria.

The appraisal method, policy, and procedure do not have sufficient appraisal criteria to ensure a sound and fair appraisal.

It is still a subjective system with an appeal system that is fraudulent and do not take in to account the real performance of a staff member and the inputs of the supervisor and peers, during the appeal process.

The Processes and templates are changed by HR on an annual basis and are always late. In some cases, we only receive the performance agreement in April and how can you appraise somebody for the midyear appraisal from April to June.

Appraisal should be a mentoring system where supervisors in the broader sense should have meetings with individual staff on a monthly base“.

“During the early 2000 we had a three tier assessment process linked to a monthly assessment/mentoring process with three types of assessment. Self-assessment, peer assessment and supervisor assessment and the final mark was a combination of the assessment marks with specific rules.

The organisation’s IPMS can be summed up as, corrupt, subjective, inconsistent, and used as a tool to achieve hidden agenda’s objectives”.

“It is clear that the approach used by management for the application of the process is dependent on the relationship between the manager and the employee.

Examples of this can be found in the department in which I work.

It is also clear that the process is so flawed in its conception and application that it lends itself to interpretation which is particularly acute when managers conducting either appraisals with their staff or are involved in moderation are themselves good examples of the Peter Principle (the principle that members of a hierarchy are promoted until they reach the level at which they are no longer competent).

Therefore the conclusion that one can draw is that the IPMS is self-centred and does not focus on the well-being of the organisation”.

“We have to distinguish between the theory (what an IPMS system can have on institutional performance when implemented correctly) and the practice at Unisa. In theory I am convinced that (a proper) performance management system can benefit an organisation immensely, to the extent that as a head of an academic department I volunteered my department for a pilot of the first attempt to implement such a system (JEPA- Job Evaluation and Performance Appraisal) at Unisa before the merger”.

“Research has clearly shown that linking a monetary incentive scheme to the performance management system is counterproductive, and Unisa is a textbook case study of the perverse unintended consequences of this practice. Linking a monetary incentive (bonus) to the performance management system nullifies all potential benefits of such a system. We have seen at Unisa that the institutional performance (the greater good) becomes secondary to the individual’s performance rating. This

might not be intuitively clear, but since the link between institutional goals and measurable aspects of performance are often tenuous the locally measurable takes precedence over the less tangible institutional imperatives”.

“An example: If a manager’s key performance indicators include a number of workshops to be scheduled per annum, the individual will be tempted to arrange such workshops, even if circumstances change and the workshops no longer contribute to the performance of the institution”.

“Another problem is that the overhead caused by a bad performance management system is exponentially more than it should be. This includes dealing with scheduled formal interviews that are often adversarial in nature, appeals, and a loss of productivity as employees discuss and complain about the system and its processes.

“Furthermore, when monetary incentives are linked to the performance management system, almost all opportunity to use it as a mechanism to train, empower and improve skills disappear. It is easy to see this in action at Unisa when looking at the scores allocated across the institution. If the threshold for getting a bonus is 3,1, it becomes a very rare exception to see a score below 3,1”.

“In practice at Unisa there are several other problematic areas with the implementation of the IPMS. These include the rating scale, the (lack of a proper) moderation system, inconsistent application of the rating system, late signing of performance contracts, changes in the interpretation and application of the policies, and even management decisions that are outside of the policy. Overall there are several flaws that result in the current Unisa IPMS system not contributing to an improvement in institutional performance at all”.

“A note on the rating system: the IPMS system uses a (relatively good) word scale for performance rating that is included in every contract and evaluation form. Unfortunately, this word scale is linked to a number scale (from 1 to 5). It is accepted practice at Unisa to deviate from the five category performance classification, using instead a system with theoretically at least fifty (undefined) categories. This practice (of allocating for example a rating of 3,3), although without any theoretical basis, is condoned and even encouraged.

In summary: the current implementation of the IPMS system at Unisa is worthless at best, and (in my opinion) detrimental to the performance of the institution”.

“I believe that IPMS does influence institutional performance. The influence can be both positive and negative. The effect is dependent upon the employee. Many

employees see IPMS as a means to gain monetary benefit but they do not necessarily link the benefit to the performance and this results in a confrontational situation with the supervisor or manager. In certain instances the Unions become involved and force agreement on a rating. Some employees are indifferent and simply go through the motions and tick the necessary boxes. Institutional performance is influenced to a great extent by the manner in which an institution is managed by the top management and not the IPMS.

Unisa's IPMS does not influence the institutional performance at all. It is very subjective due to the manipulation thereof".

6.9.1.2 Responses: Post levels P6-P7, Middle Management (Managers/ Supervisors)

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

"The current IPMS seeks to make sure that all Unisa employees get to understand their respective roles within the institution, through clear job descriptions. The latter becomes a document that informs the performance agreement that employees and management representatives must engage and sign as a road map that guides performance. When the middle of the year in question arrives, the very parties who contracted as above get together again to check whether things have been going as planned, which exercise is called a performance review. It is during this review, including the monthly/continuous reviews and interventions that corrective actions are preferred with a view to 'curing' the defects or deviations.

At the end of the year, the above exercise gets summed up to evaluate individual performance on a basis of a 5-point scale. Therefore, if all the above steps of the IPMS process are followed for every member of staff, then collective net effect hereof informs institutional performance. Collective good performance realised out of the said process puts the university in a good light when performance-appraised by whichever designated structure".

"I don't see any Institutional advantages, since IPMS is not consistent over Portfolios. My experience is that there is no trust over Portfolios to discuss the ratings".

"The policy has good intentions. Lack of understanding of the policy or perception by subordinate towards their line managers create a very tense atmosphere when subordinates and their line managers are expected to discuss performance. Subordinates in general believe and demand to be rated higher than 3 in order for them to benefit financially".

“IPMS influence institutional performance by assisting management and staff to focus on the key issues and business objective to ensure sustainability”.

“It is effective when the following can be defined: Defining key performance areas (KPA’s), Defining objectives, Defining targets, Lay the foundations, Create process for performance evaluation, Begin with the employee performance appraisal process on time, Gather and analyse the data (e.g. agreed target and standard), Evaluate the process itself and revise if necessary”.

“Three basic function of performance appraisal: To provide adequate feedback to each person on his or her performance, To serve as the basis for modifying or changing behaviour towards more effective working habits, To provide data to managers with which they may judge future job assignment on time”.

I have serious reservations whether the Unisa IPMS influence institutional performance whatsoever. The IPMS policy is a very impressive document however is viewed by staff as a subjective exercise manipulated with the focus solely on the performance bonus aspect. From an administrative unit perspective, my opinion and experience is that enabling/interdependency role-players are actually the opposite, namely inhibitors”.

“My understanding (awareness) of the purpose of the IPMS is that it aims to achieve the following:-

To identify training needs of staff. That includes training needs of staff on all levels – top management, middle management as well as support staff.

In view of the monetary benefits IPMS have in stall for staff, it serves as an incentive and award system for good performance.

IPMS is a tool by which management measures not only the performance of staff but also the performance of the institution as a whole (the performance of staff, whether good or bad, has a direct correlation with the performance of the institution).

IPMS serves as, or creates, a platform for orderly and civilised discussion of work and performance related matters. Managers, supervisors and support staff can engage in an orderly manner (with emotional intelligence) to discuss matters that can/may assist staff to improve their performance”.

“What IPMS should, in my opinion, not be:

IPMS is and should not be an opportunity for managers and supervisors to belittle staff. It should be an opportunity to give constructive feedback with regard to work

performance. The IPMS interview should not be used as a rod to “punish” staff for their mistakes and their weaknesses.

IPMS interview is also not an opportunity for staff to make their grievances known by lashing out to managers and supervisors for their mistakes and weaknesses”.

“Who or what is DSAR? DSAR is made up of people – the staff appointed to work in DSAR. Ultimately the strengths and weaknesses of the staff becomes the strengths and weaknesses of DSAR and it filters through to the Institution.

The IPMS should be a tool with which weaknesses in the Department/Institution is/are identified. DSAR must put the necessary interventions in place to remedy identified weaknesses. Examples are the following:-

Managers and Supervisors that lack managerial skills should be put on courses to equip them accordingly.

Staff who lacks computer related skills should be put on computer related courses to equip them for their task....etc. etc.”

6.9.1.3 Responses: Post levels P8-P9, Advisors

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“My experience and what I have heard: IPMS influence Unisa in a negative way due to the following:

- Favouritism to advance only certain individuals;*
- Ignorance of the proper procedures;*
- Fear of rejection if managers/supervisors had to put pressure on for better performance for both sides a) lower staff to line managers and b) line manager to lower staff;*
- No fear of being caught out by favouring a staff member. There are no checks in place. Managers usually accept evidence from supervisors as a given;*
- Experience and built up knowledge does not count. If you request a higher mark then you get bold in the interview “you know these people that try and get a 4 as quick as possible”. Is that not the point of IPMS? Self-improvement, acknowledgement of hard work? Diligence? So what is the point then of IPMS? Only for a few chosen?”*

6.9.1.4 Themes in respect of Construct A: Policies and procedures

Question: *Indicate your awareness, perceptions and experience relating to the current policies, procedures and practices of the performance management system in the institution.*

Prompt: *Elaborate to what extent does IPMS influence the institution's performance?*

It was evident from the data analysis that respondents' perceptions and experiences differ at each specific post level: senior management, managers/supervisors (middle management) and advisors (junior staff). This could be the result of exposure and their frame of reference at different post levels and specific responsibilities, in respect of IPMS policies and procedures. Junior staff are not that interested in high level strategies and operations as their interest is focused on their personal experience based on the performance appraisal practices executed by their line managers/supervisors, mostly twice a year. Hence, the reason for the minimum responses at P8-P9 (advisors) levels, relating to IPMS policies.

However, it could also be the result of negligence from their line managers to adequately inform their subordinates of the purpose and contents of IPMS policies and procedures.

The first theme that was identified is that interviewees at senior and middle-management levels consistently emphasised the lack of honest feedback which could be attributed to deficiency of leadership maturity and skills, and which in return, results in a defensive mode at the individual level during performance management appraisal sessions.

The second theme commonality among interviewees is the fact that IPMS is applied inconsistently among employees in the same units, as well as between departments/directorates. This results in IPMS policies and procedures being interpreted differently and inconsistently, which could lead to the manipulation thereof by managers and employees. Furthermore, there seems to be confusion between the concepts of performance management and performance appraisal. Performance appraisal is a tool and the outcome of continuous performance management and not a separate process. The survey results (Table 6.8) showed that 55.6% of the respondents indicated a lack of involvement and consultation in

relation to their performance agreements, which confirmed the mistrust relating to IPMS practices.

A third theme that emanated from the analysis is that the interviewees' feedback alerted the researcher to the lack of training or incorrect training, which could result in the likelihood of inflated and deflated subjectivity; which could increase and become a barrier in ensuring consistent, fair and ethical performance management practices. Interviewees maintained that IPMS practices warrant that line manager's gain and maintain the necessary skills, commitment and willingness to contract with the employee in order to ensure constructive engagement, feedback and directives; and in order to develop the employee to achieve the set objectives, and to grow.

IPMS policies and procedures guide and support the execution of individual tasks. However, continuous engagement, alignment, and facilitation by informed and knowledgeable managers are important functions to ensure the development of individuals towards the successful implementation of intended set targets. Generic performance review systems over-emphasise the tick-box approach and are created for the convenience of compliance and administrative purposes only.

A pertinent fourth theme indicated that it seems that there is a distrust in how the IPMS at Unisa is implemented and managed. The system and performance management practices are subjective and inconsistent and do not take into account the real performance and development of individuals. The current IPMS is self-centred and does not focus on the well-being of the institution.

More important in respect of the fifth theme was the indication that institutional performance is influenced to a great extent by the manner in which managers apply IPMS practices, and not necessarily the policies and procedures themselves. It is clear that the administrative burden and compliance challenge to meet due dates overrule the effective management of the IPMS.

Furthermore, interviewees, claim that the IPMS is far too complex, is changed frequently, and is too administratively intense. Hence, the IPMS in its current design does not optimise institutional performance: a tick-box approach is applied and neglects proper engagement and development opportunities for the individuals. IPMS, if used correctly, could be a mechanism that can be used to release the

untapped potential of employees towards self-development and the successful implementation of tasks.

6.9.1.5 Summary of Construct A: Policies and Procedures

The preceding section identified prominent themes. The quotations that were identified from the above-mentioned responses were from the categories: Post levels P3 to P5 (Senior Administrative employees), Post levels P6 to P7 (Managers/Supervisors) and Post levels P8 to P9 (Advisors). The interpretation of these responses from the indicated categories, was benchmarked and analysed with that of the survey, as well as the analysis of Tables 6.3 to 6.25, thus, the University IPMS Policies, Procedures and Practices, which enabled a better understanding of the researched phenomenon.

Interviewees emphasised the negative effect and distrust in the way which the IPMS at Unisa is implemented and managed. The system is subjective and does not take into account the real performance of employees. It was indicated that the institutional IPMS can be described as flawed, subjective, inconsistent, and used as a tool to achieve the objectives of hidden agendas. Therefore, the IPMS is self-centred and does not focus on the well-being at the institution. An important response was that by linking a monetary incentive to the IPMS, it nullifies all the potential benefits of such a system (Tables 6.11, 6.13, 6.20, 6.23).

When monetary incentives are linked to IPMS, as the only factor that determines the focus of finalising reviews, almost all opportunities to utilise it as a mechanism to develop employees, disappear. Moreover, the current manner in which managers/supervisor implement IPMS at Unisa is ineffective at best, and detrimental to the performance of the institution. An important quote that featured was that institutional performance is influenced to a great extent by the manner in which managers apply IPMS practices, and not specifically the policies in themselves. The above-mentioned quotations were evident from all the different post levels (P3 – P9).

Smither and London (2009:5-7) and Bouckaert and Halligan (2006:5) indicate that IPMS policies and procedures guide and support the execution of individual tasks. However, continuous engagement, alignment, and facilitation by informed and knowledgeable managers, are important functions in ensuring effective performance management (Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.4.1 and 5.3.2). More importantly, Bussin

(2017:189-190) and Mosley (2013:37) maintain that generic performance review systems over-emphasise the tick-box approach that has been created for the convenience of compliance and administrative purposes only.

The literature affirms the need to manage IPMS effectively, which seems not to be the case at Unisa.

The purpose of Section A was to identify the quotations and themes relating to the awareness, perceptions and experience of the current policies, procedures and practices of IPMS in the institution, and the influence thereof on institutional performance.

The next section, Section B, analyses pertinent quotations from interviewees relating to their experience and perceptions of the role of their line managers in respect of IPMS practices.

It is important to note that only three of the six themes identified relate to IPMS Policies and Procedures, namely, administrative complaints, tick-box approach and the lack of training relating to IPMS.

6.9.2 Construct B: Line managers responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures

***Question:** Indicate your experience and perceptions relating to the role of your line managers in respect of performance management practices.*

***Prompt:** How do you perceive performance management in general?*

6.9.2.1 Responses: Post levels P3-P5, Senior Management

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“A lot can be said about performance management but to me it is a performance enhancement management system. It should be used to ensure that all staff in a work area are on the same level with regard to the performance of the listed task in job descriptions and the IPMS should above all be used to manage the staff’s performance. Peer and self-assessment should form part of the whole process.

The monetary compensation or incentive should not be the main goal but can be a secondary result of the reward process for performance.

For fear of being repetitive, line managers on a higher level than myself are prime examples of how not to manage performance. There is one exception in my department but this exception attempts are nullified by their colleagues' subjectivity".

"Line management, in my experience, concern themselves with their own scores at the expense of the team. If one takes the 2017 IPMS for example and what happened to the P4 level, this will illustrate the point. In other words, based on the selective moderation based on what many believe to be routed in the Councils view, the P4 level are responsible for the questionable performance of the institution as opposed to the higher levels, i.e. Executive Management.

Managers have the unenviable task of having to deal with the ineffective practices while implementing the current IPMS system. In most instances the preferred way of dealing with the challenges is simply to comply nominally (and complain in private)".

"I believe that I view performance management in a positive way as I am committed to administer the system as it should be implemented. Regular involvement with personnel and meaningful feedback on performance during the period of evaluation period. My line manager understands the requirements of the IPMS system.

I perceive performance management in a very negative way since supervisors and managers do not want to engage in conflict with staff members regarding the final mark given".

"There should be only 3 possible marks for example 1 (below standard), 2 (on standard) and 3 (above standard). Staff who receive a mark of 2 should automatically receive a specific percentage bonus and staff with a mark of 3 should receive a higher percentage.

Staff should be motivated by IPMS but currently this is not how it is practised".

6.9.2.2 Responses: Post levels P6-P7, Middle Management (Managers/ Supervisors)

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

"My perception of performance management in general is that it has the best intentions of ensuring sound monitoring and evaluation of performance. In the process of monitoring and evaluation, we as line managers are able to identify certain gaps and deviations on the part of our line functionaries that may require appropriate interventions. As responsible and responsive line managers, we need to discuss the

said situation timely with the affected with a view to fast-tracking implementation of the identified intervention.

In short, the IPMS process is developmental in its nature and does not seek, or has never been designed for a punitive purpose. It is therefore a necessary tool in all organisations.

IPMS is not consistent over Portfolios. On level P6, there is no overtime payment. The hours I put-in versus the remuneration amount for a good IPMS rating is scandalous. I have been on the same P6 level for over 15 years. There are no promotion opportunities for good work rendered. Newly appointed managers are on the exact same P6 level even with much less experience. So one wonders why “go the extra mile”.

“Is a good system if HR will spend fair amount of time to train staff on expectations, responsibility and practical implementations. The application of performance management is not standardised across the university”.

“In my opinion, the system relies far too much on individuals, i.e. managers and supervisor’s subjective interpretation of the performance management system.

If DSAR is used as an example; how can an advisor (or a supervisor) be sure that his/her “rating” of a staff member is really objective in terms of the whole directorate unless there is an external measuring mechanism in place? It seems that the whole system relies on the subjective interpretation of people. Subjective interpretation that can, for various reasons, easily be skewed”.

“It is my opinion that the IPMS process is treated as a very unpleasant task. Managers and Supervisors tend to complete the interviews as soon as possible without giving it the attention it deserves. Little objective feedback is given in the IPMS interview. This is something that, in my opinion, should be improved.

It seems to me that what is required is a system where as much of the subjectivity as possible must be removed from the system and be replaced with a more objective measure”.

6.9.2.3 Responses: Post levels P8-P9, Advisors

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“Does not reward for hard work. “Old hands” are over looked. Experience does not count.

In the “old dispensation” advisors were rewarded with an “advanced” menu in order to assist with effective work through. In recent years these menu “accesses” have been taken away which has reduced office effectiveness by “old hands”. This has led to downgrade of marks as the staff members’ effectiveness has been reduced/limited.

Favouritism.

There is no clear indicators for when a 4 must be given. If you request 3.5 or 3.6 you get grilled as to why you should require such a mark. Ad hoc Exemptions requires specialist knowledge on a wide spectrum of colleges. Staff at Electronics ask for 4 and in some cases get it (as in the past I have heard) so the question to be asked? Expertise does not count; and experience as well? In order to get a 4 your supervisor must just like you.

Performance Management is handled poorly“.

6.9.2.4 Themes in respect of Construct B: Line Managers responsible to implement IPMS procedures

Question: *Indicate your experience and perceptions relating to the role of your line manager in respect of performance management practices.*

Prompt: *How do you perceive performance management in general?*

It is clear, based on the responses from interviewees that the major challenges in relation to effective performance management practices, are the manner in which managers/supervisors facilitate the performance management process.

Performance management is always a dynamic target with various concerns, such as economy of scale and fairness, consistency, relevance to individuals in different working environments, and measurements in respect of certain outputs and objectives to be achieved. The focus should be on the collective efforts in setting targets toward successful implementation.

The first pertinent theme that emanated is that line managers do not seem to execute performance management in a fair and consistent manner.

The second theme that also featured in almost all respondents’ feedback is the lack of skills required of managers, managers are not committed to effective performance management and are reluctant to perform in-depth or proper management reviews. Furthermore, managers fail to understand that the most important principle they have

to apply, is a trusting and consistent behaviour and relationship with the subordinate. Managers/supervisors should be aware of a range of performance measurement techniques and instruments, as well as the ability to conduct fair and consistent appraisals in relation to agreed-upon standards and the performance of other similar staff. The use of behavioural competencies or how managers are expected to behave in a consistent manner will ensure the necessary enhancement of performance management of employees at Unisa.

The third theme that emanated is the lack of support and continuous feedback and engagement between employees and line managers, to enable growth and self-development, which becomes a barrier in managing performance management effectively.

Continual engagement and feedback on progress will provide opportunities to change and modify original set targets for implementation, specifically due to circumstances beyond the individual's control. Managers should be alerted to move away from the tick-box approach, without continuous support and engagement by managers. Line managers should move from a paper chase to engagement and conversations.

A fourth theme that emanated was that the lack of training and skills development emerged as prominent inhibitor of IPMS. Both managers/supervisors and employees should have skills training to ensure effective participation in performance management practices. IPMS in itself cannot provide answers, as it is the facilitation of the system that could generate answers. If IPMS is designed, implemented and maintained appropriately, and involves employees, employees could become ambassadors for an institution.

A very important fifth theme that emerged concerns the involvement of unions (shop stewards). As a union-driven institution, line managers are constantly taken to task if their members dispute their appraisals, and more specifically, during rating allocation. This creates fear and mistrust by managers who then avoid engaging with conflict situations and they rather ignore underperformance. Managers compromise and allocate a rating that will satisfy the individual, which prevents the management of poor performance.

Lastly, the sixth theme indicated that institutions need to employ managers who competently exhibit a result-management mind-set and an analytical-learning mode, and who have with adequate leadership experience. Unfortunately, union interventions at selection committees prevent such initiatives.

The lack of managers able to act as the interface between institutions, the planned execution objectives and the workforce becomes almost impossible due to a lack of experience, skills and the commitment to effectively oversee individual performance improvement. Currently, administrative compliances overrule the need to engage properly with individuals, and identify such development needs.

6.9.2.5 Summary of Construct B: Line Managers

Pertinent quotations on themes identified from Section B in respect of Post levels P3 to P5 (Senior Administrative employees), Post levels P6 to P7 (Managers/Supervisors) and Post levels P8 to P9 (Advisors) were indicated. The interpretation of above-mentioned quotations will be benchmarked against the analysis of Tables 6.26 to 6.45, namely, matters relating to the responsibilities of Line Managers who are responsible for the implementation of IPMS policies and procedures.

It is evident from the responses at all post levels, that there is overwhelming support for the statement that performance management practices by Line Managers/Supervisors are perceived in a negative way (mostly due to a lack of engagement, feedback, target setting and self-development support). Interviewees indicated that managers/supervisors rather concern themselves with their own ratings, at the expense of their subordinates. A pertinent quotation that surfaced is that managers/supervisors do not want to engage with employees and rather avoid conflict, thus ratings are only allocated to satisfy employees. More important, was the emphasis on the lack of objectivity during the performance appraisal interviews. Hence, IPMS is treated as an unpleasant task, and little, if any, feedback is given during IPMS interviews.

According to Hunt (2014:105-107), Van Zyl *et al.* (2012:12-13) and Noe *et al.* (2014:9-11), there should be continuous engagement and feedback on areas where improvement and support are relevant in ensuring the successful implementation of expected individual performance outputs (Section 2.7, as well as Table 2.1 in

Chapter 2). Culbert (2010:6-7) explains that managers intimidate their subordinates into silent compliance by allocating a good rating in respect of individual performance outcomes (Section 5.4.1 and Tables 6.33, 6.34, 6.37 and 6.40).

Lastly, Crawley *et al.* (2013:173), Michel (2013:77), Behn (2014:216-218), Hutchinson (2013:301-302), Barrows and Nelly (2012:32-36), Cokins (2004:22-23) and Whitlam (2000:11-14), are in agreement that the role of managers is of crucial importance to ensure improved institutional performance by improving individual performance outputs (Sections 2.7.1, 3.2.1, 3.2.3, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.5.3 and 3.5.4).

It is evident that there are some overlaps or similar themes emanating from constructs A and B. The following Section C will report on the influence that performance management practices have had on the employees themselves. It is also important to determine how IPMS contributed to the improvement of their performance.

6.9.3 Construct C: Employees self

Question: *Indicate what influence performance management practices have on yourself.*

Prompt: *How does IPMS contribute to improve your performance?*

6.9.3.1 Responses: Post levels P3-P5, Senior Management

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“During my 38 years of employment, the Unisa IPMS played no role in my performance. My main motivation was by critical thinking and initiative. Self-satisfaction of achieving the implementation of a project or achieving a set goal was my motivation to improving my performance. To ensure that you always should aspire to leave the work place after a day’s work, a better place to come back to the next day”.

“Absolutely no positive impact on a personal level. In fact quite the opposite. This is possibly why I support the notion of there being a hidden agenda. Management should know (especially at the higher levels) that IPMS is an ongoing process and should not be ‘managed 3 times a year through the drawing up of an agreement plus the 2 appraisals”.

“No contribution, or perhaps a negative contribution. At the very least there is a high level of irritation, and wasted time in complying to the requirements. (This is done only to protect my line managers from harassment.) I prefer to ignore the flawed system whenever possible”.

“I am a person who always seeks to perform my responsibilities to the best of my abilities. I would do this even if there was no IPMS system in place”.

“IPMS will never influence my own performance, since my performance is linked to my own work ethics”.

6.9.3.2 Responses: Post levels P6-P7, Middle Management (Managers/ Supervisors)

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“The IPMS has been contributing to my improved performance in a manner that it compels me to always visit the performance agreement as a reference document and also guides me as a road-map in achieving the university’s expectations in the form of performance standards. On-going feedback that I receive from my line manager in the course of discharging my agreed to tasks is a critical part of the developmental process contemplated by the IPMS.

I personally do not allow the IPMS reward system to influence my performance and work ethics, since if I do, I will work with a no-care attitude”.

“Clear set goals and standard motivate me to achieve what the employer expect from me. It also give me an opportunity to seek feedback from my line manager to check if making progress to meet the set goals and standards.

Line managers need to understand their role and responsibilities in the implementation and practice of IPMS: They need to prepare IPMS on time and not wait for that time; They must give their employees feedback about their work on time and also discuss with them where they is grey areas and try to monitor it.

Benefit of performance management system will include:

Consistency, motivation, morale; Retention, organizational impacts; Training needs and firing risks; Performance planning includes :(Employee goal setting and objective setting); Ongoing performance communication; Data gathering, observation and documentation;

“In all honesty, I must say that the IPMS contributes little to my performance. During the year, through all the busy times of DSAR, I rarely think of how my work and what I do and not do, will influence my performance rating”.

“When I rate myself, I keep the scores within the accepted score rating. Experience have taught me that whatever you do, whatever proof you provide of your performance during the year, the scores are always lowered. It does not matter how well you motivate a high score. This is demoralising and demotivating staff. During the performance interview this leads to stressful debates with the result that staff becomes negative towards the process. The end result is that I try to get it over and done as soon as possible without giving attention to important issues. The administrative process with regard to the IPMS is, for me personally, an administrative nightmare. Year after year, the Oracle system is a problem for me since I find the uploading of scores and documents to be a challenging task”.

6.9.3.3 Responses: Post levels P8-P9, Advisors

Pertinent quotations (selected direct quotations):

“IPMS does not affect me as it used to do in the past.

- Previously, it had a negative effect on my performance. I used to think what is the use? Why all the stats?*
- I have had to change my personal perception: a) self-pride in my work to keep pushing no matter to what end; b) The reward in having done the work and being good at it, in myself, gave me the motivation to push on; c) Not being reliant on false praise, or no praise to make the person that I wish to become; d) Acceptance of my position, knowing that today I may not have the power to change things, but tomorrow is still to come; e) the knowledge that if another staff member gets a higher mark than me for less challenging work, that I will not use this a measuring stick for my own abilities, and knowing that somebody would change that practice of unfairness one day.*
- IPMS does not contribute to improve my performance. I choose that it does not affect me negatively or positively”.*

6.9.3.4 Themes in respect of Construct C: Employee self

Question: *Indicate what influence performance management practices have on yourself.*

Prompt: *How does IPMS contribute to improve your performance?*

Evident is the golden thread (theme) that emerged during the analysis of interviewees' responses, namely, theme one that the current IPMS at Unisa contributes very little, if any, towards the self-improvement of individuals. On the contrary, IPMS and specific the implementation thereof demoralise staff and is experienced as flawed in every sense. Managers do not communicate, discuss, involve and explain the purpose, procedures and implementation phases of IPMS. More specifically, at lower level (junior staff) these experiences were evident relating to IPMS practices which are based on the two tense appraisal sessions per academic year, which usually last a few minutes per session. This factors prevents the development of individuals and support from managers.

Although HR policies and procedures play an important supportive platform, knowledgeable managers and their team members must work together to ensure ownership and accountability. Managers must monitor the performance of individuals on a continuous basis and support employees by setting targets and providing feedback on progress. The above entails the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems and institutional culture, which could result in high performance institutions. Nevertheless, it seems the lack in implementing the above aggravates the frustrations and mistrust in the current IPMS at Unisa. There seems to be a disconnection between managers and employees relating to continuous engagement in respect of the improvement of individual performance. Effective performance management practices should ultimately involve people and their behaviours, which from the analysis of this section seems to be absent.

Theme two confirms the inconsistency, subjectivity and instructions from managers during performance appraisals, and which have led to various concerns raised by interviewees. Moreover, it seems that individuals participate in performance management practices as a means to an end, and not because they see the possible value in it.

Moreover, theme three endorses the punitive approach from managers during performance appraisals.

Individual performance improvement could be seen as all activities within performance management practices, such as gathering, analysing, interpreting and

the feedback thereof. Therefore, it should be regarded as a continuous supportive practice that allows individuals to grow. Managers/supervisors and employees should be on the same team, supporting one another to produce high-level quality results.

6.9.3.5 Summary of Construct C: Employee self

Section C reported on the pertinent quotations and themes identified from interviewees at Post levels P3 – P5, P6 – P7 and P8 – P9, relating to the influence performance management practices have had on themselves, and how IPMS contributed to the improvement of their performance.

Interviewees reported that, in general, IPMS had no positive impact on a personal level, and the only contribution is that of negativity, stressful debates and demoralised experience. Some interviewees indicated that employees will in any case always seek to perform their responsibilities to the best of their abilities, even without an IPMS in place. Interviewees indicated that their performance outputs are linked to their own work ethics, hence IPMS will have no effect on their efforts to perform in alignment with what is expected from them. In most cases, there was a clear indication that IPMS lacks motivational impact and personal development.

There also seems to be disconnection between line managers and employees relating to the continuous engagement of individual performance improvement initiatives. Emanating from the interviews there appears to be a high level of concern about whether IPMS is relevant at Unisa (Tables 6.48, 6.49, 6.52, 6.58, 6.59, 6.61).

Mizrahi (2019:102-104) indicates that the major factor that demotivates managers from utilising the IPMS, is the dysfunction of IPMS and the resulting gaming factor, namely, deliberate distortions in the IPMS, which include activities that consume resources, but do not necessarily improve individual performance outputs. The quantity of services may improve, but not necessarily the quality thereof (Section 5.3.1). Employees focus on the gathering of evidence, more specifically, high statistical outputs that support them during IPMS appraisals to ensure the allocation of high ratings. In the process, the quantity of work (fault factor) increases, which could have a negative effect and perception on the high quality service delivery expected from employees.

6.10 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, the researcher analysed and interpreted the data collected in respect of the survey/questionnaire, group interviews and face-to-face interviews. This data was triangulated and common themes were identified, which eventually should answer the research questions. Henceforth, the above could enable the investigation and implementation of an enhanced IPMS at Unisa. The conclusions could also result in recommendations to improve individual performance management outcomes, and result in improved institutional performance.

Pertinent themes and commonalities relating to the responses identified from the survey with that of the interviewees and group discussions are discussed below.

The purpose of Section A of the survey, was to determine to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed with statements about their awareness, perceptions and experience regarding the current policies, procedures and practices relating to the IPMS at Unisa. Important indicators emerged which should be taken into consideration for attention in the institution.

There was a clear indication, across all levels, that parts of job contents are not captured in the IPMS templates. A further interesting observation was that responses from the higher levels (senior employees) tended to be more conceptual, directive and innovative, in comparison with the responses from staff members at the operational levels which were much more detailed and specific (Tables 6.3, 6.6). Furthermore, the survey results (Table 6.7) found that 55.6% of the respondents indicated a lack of involvement and consultation in relation to their performance agreements, which confirmed the mistrust relating to IPMS practices.

Moreover, a major concern raised by all levels pointed at the unfair and inconsistent application of standards, mainly that the same standards are not applied to all. Almost 50% of respondents raised their concern that they perceived that the line managers' actions do not match their words. More importantly, 50% of the respondents also indicated that the IPMS at Unisa is only utilised for compliance and administrative purposes (Tables 6.13, 6.18, 6.23).

There seems to be consensus among employees that the IPMS criteria do not consistently measure what it is intended to measure. Therefore, the respondents,

with 53% in agreement, are of the opinion that little conversation with regard to target setting and standards exists (Tables 6.19, 6.25; Section 6.9.1).

The purpose of Section B of the survey was to analyse the staff members' experience and perceptions of the role of their line managers relating to performance management practices.

Serious concerns were raised by respondents (60%) across all levels and categories that they are unsure/disagree, that performance appraisals assist in identifying areas for further individual development (Table 6.43).

A matter of serious concern that was identified from the respondents at all levels is that the IPMS appraisal does not lead to any coaching or mentoring. This statement was made by nearly 70% of the respondents (Table 6.43).

Moreover, there was overwhelming support/agreement among respondents that they support and prefer feedback on their performance from peers, staff and line managers (Table 6.45).

The purpose of Section C of the survey was to determine what influence performance management practices have on the individual. Nearly 57% of the respondents agreed that the IPMS at Unisa contributes little, if any, to enhanced individual performance, whereas 45% of the respondents perceived IPMS in a negative way (Tables 6.47 to 6.49). Furthermore, there was some doubt and disagreement that performance appraisal outcomes enhance Unisa's performance.

Respondents emphasise the fact that, although the criteria used to calculate performance ratings could be fair, the criteria are not discussed with employees, specifically before evaluations took place (Table 6.55). There is a clear indication from respondents that a disconnection between managers and employees relating to continuous feedback and engagement of performance initiatives does exist (Table 6.56).

The findings of the above-mentioned analysis were complemented, as was indicated in this chapter, within the contents of the three constructs, which correlate with the themes identified during the group discussions, which endorsed the finding that the implementation by managers at the IPMS, is perceived as being subjective.

It was evident from the data analysis of the interviews (Sections 6.9.1.4, 6.9.2.4, and 6.9.3.4) that the respondents at specific post levels, namely, senior management, managers/supervisors (middle management) and advisors (junior staff) had differing perceptions and experiences. This could be the result of exposure and their frame of reference at different post levels and specific responsibilities regarding the IPMS policies and procedures. Obviously, junior staff members are not that interested in high level strategies and operations; their interests are focused on their personal experience based on the performance appraisal practices executed by their line managers/supervisors, mostly twice a year. This could be the reason for the minimum responses by P8-P9 (advisors) levels in relation to IPMS policies. However, it could also be the result of negligence from their line managers to adequately inform their subordinates of the purpose and contents of IPMS policies and procedures.

Interviewees on senior and middle-management levels consistently emphasised the lack of honest feedback which can be attributed to deficiencies in leadership maturity and skills, which in return results in a defensive mode at individual level during performance management appraisal sessions.

A commonality among interviewees is the fact that IPMS is applied inconsistently among employees in the same units, as well as between departments/directorates. Above allows IPMS policies and procedures to be interpreted differently and inconsistently, which could lead to the manipulation thereof by managers and employees. Furthermore, there seems to be confusion between the concepts performance management and performance appraisal. Performance appraisal is a tool and the outcome of continuous performance management and not a separate process.

Interviewees' feedback alerted the researcher to the lack of training or incorrect training, which could result in the likelihood of inflated and deflated subjectivity. This could increase and become a barrier in ensuring consistent, fair and ethical performance management practices. Interviewees maintained that IPMS practices warrant that line managers should gain and maintain the necessary skills, commitment and willingness to contract with the employees, in order to ensure constructive engagement, feedback and directives to develop the employee to achieve set objectives.

IPMS policies and procedures guide and support the execution of individual tasks. However, continuous engagement, alignment, and facilitation by informed and knowledgeable managers are important functions to ensure the development of individuals towards the successful implementation of intended set targets. Generic performance review systems often over-emphasise the tick-box approach, and are created for the convenience of compliance and administrative purposes only.

Therefore it seems that there is a distrust in how the IPMS at Unisa is implemented and managed. The system and performance management practices are subjective and inconsistent and do not take into account the real performance and development of individuals. Hence, the current IPMS is self-centred and does not focus on the well-being of the institution.

More important, was the indication that institutional performance is influenced to a great extent by the manner in which managers apply IPMS practices, and not necessarily the policies and procedures in themselves. Furthermore, the interviewees claim that the IPMS is far too complex, changes frequently, and is too administratively intense. The IPMS in its current design does not optimise institutional performance. However, if used correctly, the IPMS could be a mechanism that can be used to release the untapped potential of employees towards self-development and the successful implementation of tasks.

It is clear based on the responses from interviewees that the major challenges in respect of effective performance management practices, are the manner in which managers/supervisors facilitate the performance management process.

Performance management is always a dynamic target with various concerns, such as economy of scale and fairness, consistency, relevance to individuals in different working environments, and measurements in respect of the specific outputs and objectives to be achieved. The focus should be on collective efforts in setting targets toward successful implementation.

However, line managers do not seem to execute performance management in a fair and consistent manner. Mostly, due to a lack of the required skills, managers are not committed to effective performance management and are reluctant to perform in-depth or proper management reviews. Furthermore, managers fail to understand that the most important principle they have to apply, is a trusting and consistent

behaviour and relationship with subordinates. Managers/supervisors should be aware of a range of performance measurement techniques and instruments, as well as the ability to conduct fair and consistent appraisals in relation to the agreed-upon standards and the performance of other similar staff. The use of behavioural competencies or how managers are expected to behave in a consistent manner will ensure the necessary enhancement of performance management of employees at Unisa. The lack of support and continuous feedback and engagement between employees and line managers to enable growth and self-development, have become a barrier in managing performance effectively.

Continual engagement and feedback on progress will provide opportunities to change and modify the original set targets for implementation, specifically due to circumstances beyond the individual's control. Hence, managers should be warned to move away from the tick-box approach, without continuous support and engagement by managers. Line managers should move from a paper chase to engagement and conversations. Moreover, the lack of training and skills development emerged as a prominent inhibitor of IPMS. Both managers/supervisors and employees should have skills training to ensure effective participation in performance management practices. IPMS in itself cannot provide answers: it is the facilitation of the system that could generate answers. If IPMS is designed, implemented and maintained appropriately, employees could become ambassadors for an institution.

Line managers are constantly taken to task if their members dispute their appraisals, and more specifically, during rating allocation. This creates fear and mistrust among managers and they avoid engaging with conflict situations. Therefore, managers often compromise and allocate a rating that will satisfy the individual. The latter action prevents the management of poor performance. There is a need to employ managers who competently exhibit a result-management mind-set and an analytical-learning mode, and who have adequate leadership experience. Unfortunately, union interventions at selection committees prevent such initiatives.

The lack of managers acting as the interface between the institution's planned execution objectives and its workforce became almost impossible due to a lack of experience, skills and commitment to oversee effective individual performance

improvement. Currently, administrative compliances overrule the need to engage properly with individuals to identify such development needs.

A golden thread that emerged during the analysis of the interviewees' responses was that the current IPMS at Unisa contributes very little towards the self-improvement of individuals. On the contrary, the IPMS, and specifically the implementation thereof demoralises staff and it is experienced as flawed. Managers do not communicate, discuss, involve and explain the purpose, procedures and implementation phases of the IPMS. The perception is specifically at lower level (junior staff) that IPMS practices become a stressful experience, and that it ignores the development of individuals.

Although HR policies and procedures constitute an important supportive role, knowledgeable managers and their team members must work to ensure ownership and accountability. Managers must monitor the performance of individuals on a continuous basis and support employees by setting targets and providing feedback on their progress. The above entails the optimal use of the right combination of people, planning, technology, effective performance management systems and institutional culture, which could result in high performance institutions. Nevertheless, it seems the lack in implementing the above aggravates the frustrations and mistrust in the current IPMS at Unisa. There seems to be a disconnection between managers and employees with regards to continuous engagement in the improvement of individual performance. Effective performance management practices should involve people and their behaviours.

The inconsistency, subjectivity, punitive approach, and instructions from managers during performance appraisals led to various concerns being raised by interviewees. It seems that individuals participate in performance management practices as a means to an end, and not because they see the possible value in it.

Individual performance improvement could be seen as all the activities within performance management practices, such as gathering, analysing, interpreting and the feedback thereof. The end result should be a continuous supportive practice and development approach to allow individuals to reach their full potential. Managers/supervisors and employees should be on the same team, supporting one another to produce high level quality results.

The researcher of this study observed the urge from employees to implement a more fair and objective evaluation tool at Unisa which ensured various inputs or feedback from staff and managers on their performance outcomes. As such, the most appropriate tool that was mentioned and proposed to address this challenge was the introduction of a 360 degree model. This model is not currently considered for use at the University.

This research study will be concluded in the next chapter where possible recommendations will be presented. These recommendations emanate from the review of the literature, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected.

CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this study was to investigate processes and approaches in order to manage the improvement of individual performance outputs on a continuous basis at Unisa. Hence, if correctly managed, the performance of individual employees would inevitably improve, which in turn may lead to improved institutional performance. The end result could be high quality service delivery in the institution (Section 1.5).

This study covered the evaluation of the literature review and also entailed an in-depth empirical investigation. Moreover, the interaction and interventions relating to the performance management practices, and the description thereof, as well as the analysis of policies, procedures, documents and communication related to current performance management practices at Unisa, formed part of this study.

The analysis of literature in Chapters 2 and 3 was followed by the discussion of the research methodology in Chapter 4, and the empirical analysis of documents in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 described the data collection which emanated from the interviews, questionnaires, group discussions, as well as the analysis and interpretation thereof.

This chapter is the final chapter and presents the findings from the previous chapters. Various recommendations and conclusions will be provided.

The outcomes related to the above could ultimately contribute to the improvement of a performance management system at Unisa. This is in alignment with the main research question: *How can the performance management system (IPMS) at Unisa be improved?*

7.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: STUDY AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The main theoretical aim was to focus on the processes and approaches in order to manage the improvement of individual performance on a continuous basis. Individuals are eventually the end-result performers. However, without the proper

setting of strategies, structures, job contents and the expectations of the individual, the successful implementation of specific intended objectives and targets will fail.

Each study research question will be addressed below.

Research question 1: What has been published on the performance management system?

The focus was on a conceptual analysis of performance management. This research objective was dealt with in Chapter 2. It emerged from the study that the literature review served as a critical synthesis of existing performance management approaches and practices. This assisted to ensure that there are adequate directives enabling improved individual performance outputs. It also identified the general challenges encountered in the implementation of an effective performance management system. A pertinent theme identified is that performance management processes in general receive much criticism, especially due to the lack of competent and committed managers accountable for performance management practices. Appropriate employee supervision, training and continuous development should form an integrated intervention to ensure the appropriate management of individual performance. More specifically, this means to lead by example, coaching, support, target setting and continuous feedback and engagement.

Research question 2: What are the purpose, components and attributes of performance management systems?

The focus was to describe the components, and attributes that could ensure or support the improvement of individual performance. Important principles relating to the practices and implementation of performance management approaches were discussed and described. Effective performance management involves people and their behaviours, commitment, motivation levels, and the continuous engagement between themselves and their line managers. Managers should familiarise themselves with the supportive contributions, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories, as an embedded part of an effective performance management system.

Research question 3: How should the performance management systems at Unisa be investigated?

The research design and methodology defined the most appropriate research approach to conduct empirical research and the research methodology. The unit of analysis, observation and data collection were explained. For the purpose of this study, qualitative and quantitative research paradigms were used. The research design and methodology focused on a case study design. Likewise, the population, sampling procedures and data collection methods were also discussed.

The objective was realised through the implementation of this research design, namely, to have identified the most appropriate methods to gather quantitative and qualitative data on how employees perceived, experienced and observed performance management practices at Unisa. The research design and methodology was reported in Chapter 4.

Research question 4: What are the current performance management practices and policy framework at Unisa?

The objective was to gather and interpret as much as possible empirical data in respect of the performance management policy framework, practices and the implementation thereof at Unisa.

The focus was on the characteristics of Unisa's individual performance management environment, and more specifically, to explore the individual performance management practices within the administrative units of Unisa. The ultimate aim was to enable high quality institutional student administrative service delivery outcomes. The above was reported in Chapter 5.

Research question 5: What are the experiences, and expectations of employees visa-versa performance management systems at Unisa?

This objective was to analyse and interpret research data collected by utilising self-administered questionnaires and follow-up personal interviews, as well as group discussions. The interviewees' views, perceptions and experiences were described. These findings, as discussed in Chapter 6, could provide appropriate implementation approaches to enhance individual performance. In Chapter 7 the consolidated findings are reported.

The research, as part of research question 5, identified three major themes or constructs, and these were categorised as constructs A, B and C in relation to the

questionnaire and personal interviews. More important is that the group discussions' themes were also in alignment with the above constructs (see themes/constructs below) (also Sections 6.4, 6.4.1, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8 and 6.8.2).

The types of questions asked were determined by, or based on the literature review and empirical studies, that is, they answered the objectives and aims of this study. The performance management practices and interactions that were analysed at Unisa (Section 6.4). These three research questions are discussed below.

Construct A: University (IPMS): Policies, procedures and practices

Question one: *Indicate your awareness, perceptions and experience relating to current policies, procedures and practices of the performance management system in the institution.*

The aim was to determine to what extent IPMS policies and procedures influenced institutional performance.

Construct B: Managers/Supervisors (responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures)

Question two: *Indicate your experience and perceptions relating to the role of your line managers/supervisors responsible for the implementation of IPMS.*

The aim was to determine how employees perceived the influence of line managers in the management of performance at Unisa.

Construct C: Employees (the subject of IPMS)

Question three: *Indicate what influence IPMS practices have on yourself.*

The aim was to determine how IPMS contributed to the improved individual performance of the employee.

The findings and answers to the above-mentioned three constructs will be discussed in the next sections.

Research question 6: How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?

The recommendations emanating from this study could eventually enhance individual performance management practices and outcomes towards high quality

service delivery at Unisa. This may improve the management of performance at Unisa, which is in alignment with the main research question: *How can the performance management system at Unisa be improved?*

The main conclusions of each objective confirmed that the study addressed each objective of this research.

7.2.1 Summary of findings (questionnaire/personal interviews/survey and group interviews)

The summary of pertinent findings included that of the questionnaires, personal interviews and group discussions in combination. Pertinent themes' characteristics were reported to the target population of all three the constructs, namely, constructs A, B and C (Sections 6.4.1, 5.3 and Figure 5.2).

Moreover, the pertinent findings/themes identified and reported included that of all the administrative post levels, from P3 – P9, within the three constructs, A, B and C.

Triangulation was applied to eliminate duplication or biases. This solution was applied until there was no new information (Section 4.7).

The pertinent findings will now be discussed.

The survey provided a general indication in respect of the three constructs and the group/personal interviews provided the greater in-depth understanding behind each of the themes.

7.2.2 Question one:

Indicate your awareness, perceptions and experience relating to current policies, procedures and practices of the performance management system in the institution.

The aim was to determine to what extent IPMS policies and procedures influenced institutional performance.

Employees emphasised the negative effect of and distrust in the way which the IPMS at Unisa is implemented and managed. According to employees, the IPMS is subjective and complex and does not take into account the real performance of employees. In addition, the IPMS is seen as self-centred and does not focus on the well-being of the institution. An important response was that linking a monetary incentive to the IPMS nullifies all the potential benefits of such a system, and all the

opportunities to utilise it as a mechanism to develop employees, disappear. It was reported that institutional performance is influenced, to a large extent, by the manner in which managers apply IPMS practices, and not specifically by the policies and procedures themselves.

There was also a clear indication across all levels that parts of employees' job contents were not captured in the IPMS templates. A major concern raised by all the respondents pointed at the unfair and inconsistent application of standards by managers or supervisors. Managers appear not to lead by example, and therefore employees perceived that IPMS practices at Unisa are only practised for compliance and administrative purposes.

There was little support for the possibility that the IPMS in the institution has met all the employees' requirements, expectations and support, towards enhancing their performance and that of the institution.

It was also evident that the lack of support and continuous feedback and engagement between employees and line managers was a critical concern among employees in order to enable self-development and growth.

In summary, the following six common themes were identified in relation to the survey/questionnaire, group interviews and face-to-face interviews, which were triangulated, to enable the identification of these six themes:

1. Interviewees/respondents at senior and middle-management levels consistently emphasised the lack of honest feedback, which could be attributed to deficiencies in leadership maturity and skills;
2. The second commonality among respondents is the fact the IPMS is applied inconsistently among employees in the same department/directorate, which leads to different interpretations and inconsistencies;
3. A third theme that emanated is that interviewees' feedback warned about the lack of training or incorrect training, which could result in the likelihood of inflated and deflated subjectivity;
4. A fourth theme that emanated is that there seems to be a distrust in the manner in which IPMS at Unisa is managed and implemented. The current IPMS is self-centred and does not focus on the well-being of the institution;

5. More importantly, the fifth theme indicated that institution performance management practices are to a great extent influenced by the manner in which managers apply IPMS, and not necessarily by the policies and procedures in themselves. The administrative burden and compliance factors required to meet deadlines and due dates overrate the effective management of the IPMS;
6. Lastly, and also an important theme that was identified is that respondents claim that the IPMS is far too complex and changed frequently, which make it too administratively intense. A tick-box approach is applied and it neglects proper engagement, and consequent individual development opportunities.

7.2.2.1 Recommendations

Recommendations relating to the summary of the common themes will be addressed in this section. Certain recommendations could provide mitigation actions to more than one specific theme. An example is that in-depth training on IPMS practices could be applicable to all identified themes.

Performance management includes a series of information categories, such as strategic goals, objectives, performance measures and targets. The process of planning and the implementation of performance management objectives link to the idea of strategic management. It entails a process of backward planning where the outputs can lead to expected planned outcomes. The effective management of performance entails co-analysis, co-decision, co-design and co-evaluation, which will lead to the objective setting of targets for implementation by individuals. Without the involvement of individuals in target setting, the management thereof will become a set of uneducated guesses. The focus should be on developing managers and employees to plan and set expectations, evaluate and review outcomes, agree on improvement plans, and sometimes, to reward performance.

It was evident from the literature review that performance management entails three core principles, that is, performance management serves as a system to manage institutional performance, performance management is a system for managing employee performance, and performance management is a system that should integrate the management of institutional and employee performance.

A holistic view or integrated approach in relation to performance management should include taking the right decisions and selecting the right staff, aligning the job content

with that of goals to be achieved, setting targets, coaching, setting standards, measuring, performance appraisals, and monitoring, as well as mentoring.

Carefully designed and applied performance management has the potential to align individuals' attitudes and behaviour with institutional priorities, which could lead to goal achievement. The implementation of quarterly appraisals, or progress evaluations, could enforce continuous engagement between managers and employees, which could enhance performance outputs. During the planning and implementation, attention should also be focused on behavioural factors, such as motivation, incentives, interpretations and continuous development initiatives. Management quality is a significant indicator of institutional and individual performance improvement.

Policies and procedures guide and support the intended execution of individual tasks. However, the continuous engagement and alignment facilitation by informed and knowledgeable managers, is the most important function. It is thus clear that agreed-upon transparent policies and goals are of critical importance for implementation, as these could eliminate negative expectations in respect of IPMS. The current IPMS over-emphasises a culture of compliance and managerialism, rather than focusing primarily on achieving effective service delivery objectives. The above can only be achieved through continuous engagement, support and the development of employees, in order to meet the expectations of the institution.

The linking of monetary incentives to IPMS nullifies all the potential benefits of such a system and eliminates all opportunities to develop employees. Performance reviews should become an opportunity to engage with employees towards the improvement of the overall performance of the institution. Managers appear not to understand that the most important principle they should apply to ensure quality employee performances, is a trusting relationship with the employees working with them.

It is imperative that managers/supervisors should attend IPMS training on an annual basis. This requirement should be embedded in the IPMS policies and procedures.

Lastly, poor work performance should be managed according to the applicable directive of the Labour Relations Act, Schedule 8, and the IPMS Policies preventing appropriate poor performance mitigation actions.

7.2.3 Question two:

Indicate your experience and perceptions relating to the role of your line managers and supervisors responsible for the implementation of IPMS procedures.

Respondents across all levels and categories raised serious concerns, in that they are in disagreement that performance appraisals assist in identifying areas for further individual development. Furthermore, it was stated that IPMS does not lead to any coaching or mentoring by managers and supervisors. An overwhelming response from employees is that they prefer feedback on their performance from peers, staff and their line managers.

Pertinent themes emanating from the respondents consistently refer to the lack of motivation, support, engagement, commitment and negative attitudes in terms of IPMS practices. In addition, subjective performance appraisals, lack of skills, experience and the knowledge levels of line managers regarding the implementation of the IPMS were highlighted. There was also an indication that IPMS at Unisa is experienced as two performance appraisal sessions per annum, which are usually used for punitive reasons. It was also reported that effective IPMS is constantly hampered with barriers, such as a lack of adequate capacity, skills and commitment from managers.

Managers were more concerned about their own ratings and performance issues than with those of their subordinates. Various responses indicated that managers and supervisors do not want to engage in conflict with employees and allocate ratings to avoid any conflict situations. Interviewees reported that managers and supervisors tend to interpret performance management in their own subjective ways, without taking into account evidence as a measurement support tool. IPMS is treated as a very unpleasant task and little, if any, feedback is given during IPMS interviews. The responses from some interviewees suggested feedback from more than one participant during performance reviews would be preferable. The above responses imply unhappiness with one-on-one performance appraisals by managers/supervisors.

In summary, the following five (5) common themes were identified relating to the survey/questionnaire group discussions and face-to-face interviews, which were triangulated to enable the identification of these five themes:

1. The first theme that emanated from the research analysis is that line managers/supervisors do not seem to execute performance management practices in a consistent and fair manner;
2. The second theme featured in almost all the respondents' feedback, indicating that due to a lack of skills and the required knowledge, managers are not committed to effective performance management and are reluctant to perform in-depth or proper performance management reviews, and that no feedback, target and standard setting occur to ensure employees understand what is expected from them;
3. A third theme that emanated is the lack of support and continuous engagement between employees and line managers, to enable growth and self-development;
4. A fourth theme that emerged was the lack of training and skills development as a prominent inhibitor of IPMS. Both managers and employees should be exposed to relevant training to ensure their effective participation in performance management practices. Managers should be warned to move away from the tick-box approach;
5. An extremely important fifth theme that emerged is the involvement of labour unions (shop stewards). Line managers are constantly taken to task if their members complain or dispute the manager's behaviour, specifically during performance appraisals. This creates fear and mistrust among managers and they avoid engaging in conflict situations, and they rather ignore the underperformance of employees;
6. Lastly, the sixth theme indicated that managers do not act as the interface between institutions' planned execution objectives, and that administrative compliance overrules the need to engage promptly with employees.

7.2.3.1 Recommendations

Recommendations in respect of the above summary of common themes (Section 7.3.3) will be addressed in this section. Certain recommendations could provide solutions to more than one specific theme.

"Crowd sourcing" or 360° evaluation, as a new innovation, should form part of a more objective approach towards performance appraisals. This approach

aggregates and highlights the opinions and thoughts of many individuals, to arrive at a richer, more accurate observation of performance, which is more than one person alone could provide. The flaws of the current traditional outdated reviews can be addressed. Moreover, the performance management reviews, taking into account the opinions of managers, internal customers and others who witness day-to-day work outputs, could maintain the appropriate and relevant strengths of the traditional performance management model, without having to abolish it entirely.

IPMS training in respect of managers/supervisors should be captured in the Unisa IPMS policies and procedures. More importantly, poor work performance should be managed with the support of senior management, according to the directives of the Labour Relations Act Schedule 8, of the IPMS Policies and Procedures.

Only one or two performance appraisals per annum lead to a lack of continuous engagement among employees and management, which is not appropriate towards the development of employees. Performance reviews once or twice a year should be replaced with performance previews, which is an ongoing communication process between managers and subordinates, working as a team asking the question: what can be done to get the results that the institution seeks to achieve? Therefore, performance previews could focus on achieving results, whereas performance reviews should focus on individual development.

7.2.4 Question three:

Indicate what influence IPMS practices have on yourself.

Interviewees reported that, in general, the IPMS had no positive impact on a personal level, and that the only contribution was that of negativity, stressful debates and demoralised experience. Moreover, some interviewees indicated that they would, in any case, always seek to perform their tasks to the best of their abilities, even without the IPMS in place. Therefore, performance outputs are linked to their own work ethics. In most cases, there was a clear indication that the IPMS lacks motivational impact and personal development.

Moreover, efforts from the line managers to focus on employees appear to be largely absent. Interviewees highlighted inconsistency, subjectivity and punitive approaches from direct line managers, as well as stressful performance appraisal sessions.

Lastly, respondents clearly indicated that a disconnection exists between managers and employees, specifically with regards to continuous feedback and engagement in performance initiatives.

In summary, the following three common themes were identified relating to the survey/questionnaire, group discussions and face-to-face interviews, which were triangulated to enable the identification of the above themes:

1. Theme one that emanated indicated that the current IPMS at Unisa contributes very little, if any, towards the self-improvement of individuals. On the contrary, the IPMS and the implementation thereof demoralises employees, and it is experienced as flawed in every sense;
2. Of importance is the second theme's contents, respondents confirmed that the inconsistency and subjectivity of IPMS practices lead to various concerns from respondents, which seems to be that IPMS is a means to an end, and not because of any value it adds;
3. Moreover, theme three indicated that respondents raised their concerns in respect of the punitive approach by managers during performance appraisal sessions.

7.2.4.1 Recommendations

Recommendations relating to the above summary of the common themes will be addressed in this section. Certain recommendations could provide mitigation action to more than one specific theme. An example is that in-depth training on IPMS procedures and policies, as well as the implementation thereof, could be applicable to all identified themes.

The major factor that demotivates managers or supervisors from utilising the IPMS is the dysfunction of the IPMS and the resulting gaming factor, namely, deliberate distortions in the IPMS, which include activities that consume resources, but do not necessarily improve individual performance outputs. The quantity of service may improve, but not necessarily the quality thereof. The question is not whether to do performance management, but rather how to do it effectively. People and processes should seamlessly work in concert to enable high individual performance outcomes. Maintaining an effective IPMS may include the development of appropriate training,

recruitment of people with new skill sets, and the establishment of rewards for high quality and appropriate behaviours.

The important issues, such as the required skills, attitudes or values, are usually ignored. Performance reviews should focus on the development of individuals, taking into account their needs and inputs in respect of self-development for improvement of their skills. Employees will most probably do what is expected from them, if they know exactly what activities should be executed by whom, when and how, and believe that they are able to do it, and are motivated and supported in doing so.

Employees should, as part of their self-development needs, also explore alternative ways or methods of ensuring continuous self-development and training. Some of these opportunities are workbooks, stretch-exercises, computer-based training, videos, social media and workshops. Training that will not contribute to the successful implementation of specific job contents should be avoided.

In-depth training annually for managers/supervisors in respect of IPMS policies, procedures and the implementation thereof should form part of IPMS Policies and Procedures.

Ultimately, effective performance management involves people, their behaviour, commitment and relationships with their line managers. If the latter is correctly managed, the performance of employees will improve.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Each study has some limitations within the research methods, philosophy and scope of focus. This study was limited to the focus on how to improve Unisa's performance, which in turn, could improve institutional performance. It is to be noted that the findings of case studies are not necessarily transferable to other case studies.

As such, the findings and recommendations were restricted to the administrative staff and units at Unisa, as an Open Distance Teaching Institution (ODeL). Also importantly, the survey and interview respondents comprised of a specific target group of Unisa staff members (Sections 5.3, 6.3 and 6.3.2).

A case study design was utilised to combine and use different data-collection methods namely, survey questionnaires, observations, interviews and document

analysis. Triangulation counteracted any possible bias relating to the research methods and data sources (Section 4.3.3).

7.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a continuous effort from various public sectors to implement change to ensure the more effective and efficient performance management of their employees. A barrier to achieving the latter is constantly being derailed by employee resistance to committing themselves to adhere to various approaches in efforts to enhance their performance improvement. It was evident from this study that there is a lack of engagement, involvement and support, as well as a lack of appropriate knowledge and skills at manager levels on how to manage the IPMS. The latter may lead to the ineffective execution of performance management practices. Furthermore, the result of a lack of commitment from managers to engage with employees may hamper self-development, which could have a negative impact on individual performance and individual performance outputs (London, 2013: 155-163). In addition, the lack of commitment, knowledge and skills at manager level have hampered the motivation levels of employees to perform up to standard. Moreover, the top-down nature of top management and a lack of change in management processes have affected employees negatively. Managers must be cognisant of the effect of not knowing how to motivate employees regarding motivational theories.

Since positive employee attitudes are often highly important in enabling improved individual performance, managers should familiarise themselves with techniques to persuade employees: to accept intended change in efforts to ensure a high level of commitment towards self-development, motivation and urge, which will lead to the improvement of their performance outcomes. Managers and employees should see the benefits for themselves, by committing themselves to become high performers. Awareness of effective performance management practices and continuous training in respect of new trends relating to effective HR management and performance management practices, should be embedded in the IPMS Policies and Procedures. Awareness (Sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.4), should be explored to address the lack of awareness amongst employees to understand the benefits of high performance. Hence, motivational theories could be used by management as an approach to ensuring the improvement of performance management, by appealing to the

cognitive dimension of employees (Ohemeng, Asiedu & Obuobisa-Darko, 2018:374-384; Michel, 2013:150-151).

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the research study of which the outcomes could contribute to the improvement of the performance management system of the University of South Africa. Moreover, processes and approaches were identified for managing performance management of individuals continuously, and if managed correctly, the performance of individuals could inevitably improve. This, in turn, may lead to improved institutional performance. Furthermore, this study's outcomes could also make a significant contribution to the body of existing literature in the discipline of Public Administration.

The following possible contributions were identified:

- The survey/questionnaires within three prominent constructs;
- The triangulation and mixed-method approach used for this study; and
- The case study model applied for the research at the University of South Africa as an institution of higher education.

Effective performance management involves people, their behaviour, commitment and relationship with their line managers. If correctly managed, the performance of employees will improve.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



05 March 2014

REF: PAM/2014/HARDING_2

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

This is to certify that the application for ethics clearance submitted by

Richard Harding

Student Number 414-619-0

for the doctorate study

The Implementation of a Real-Time On-Line

Student Self Help Administrative Service at the University of South Africa

is unconditionally approved and full ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Public Administration and Management (PAM), CEMS is given. The committee met and deliberated on 23 October 2013 but now on the date of this letter confirms that Mr. Harding has fulfilled the four (4) requirements stipulated in the 25 October 2013 letter giving conditional clearance. .

The conditions were applied in recognition that the researcher is a senior manager and employee of Unisa but at this time the potential conflict of interest has been mitigated. This full clearance will be sent to the CEMS Research Ethics Committee for notification.

For the Committee,

Darrell Myrick

Prof. D. Myrick

Convening Chair for the PAM Ethics Committee

myricd@unisa.ac.za

SECTION 5 – DECLARATION

STATEMENT AGREEING TO COMPLY WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN UNISA POLICY ON RESEARCH ETHICS

I, RC Harding (full name of applicant), declare that I have read the Policy on Research Ethics of UNISA (2012) and the contents of this document are a true and accurate reflection of the methodological and ethical implications of my proposed study. I shall carry out the study in strict accordance with the approved proposal and the Policy on Research Ethics of Unisa. I further undertake to inform the relevant research ethics review committee of the College of Economic and Management Sciences in writing of any adverse events that occur arising from the injury or harm experienced by the participants in the study. I shall also notify the relevant CEMS research ethics review committee if any changes to the study are proposed. I shall maintain the confidentiality of all data collected from or about the research participants, and impose strict controls in the maintenance of privacy. I shall record all data captured during interviews in accordance with ethical guidelines outlined in my proposal. Paragraph 5 of the Policy on Research Ethics places huge emphasis on the integrity of the research and I shall ensure that I conduct the research with the highest integrity taking into account Unisa's Policy for Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism. No data that was gathered retrospectively will be used.



..... (Signature)

..... 2013/09/10 (Date)

2 Approved by supervisor (if applicable)

I.....(name of supervisor) declare that I have checked that this form is complete and I subsequently approve the submission of the proposal for ethical clearance. If applicable, I will ensure that the student reports unanticipated problems or serious adverse events to the RERC.

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

3 Approved by co-supervisor (if applicable)

I.....(name of supervisor) declare that I have checked that this form is complete and I subsequently approve the submission of the proposal for ethical clearance. If applicable, I will ensure that the student reports unanticipated problems or serious adverse events to the RERC.

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)



APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



PROF L LABUSCHAGNE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
Tel: +27 12 429 6368 / 2446 Fax: +27 12 429 6960
Email: //labus@unisa.ac.za
Address: Theo van Wijk Building, 10th Floor, Office no. 50 (TvW 10-50)

25 February 2014

Mr RC Harding
Department of Student Admissions and Registrations

Dear Mr Harding

PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH INVOLVING UNISA STAFF, STUDENTS OR DATA

A study into Implementation of a real-time, online student self-help administrative service at the University of South Africa

Your application regarding permission to conduct research involving Unisa staff, students or data in respect of the above study has been received and was considered by the Unisa Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee (SRIHDC) on 13 February 2014.

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission has been granted for this study as set out in your application.

We would like to wish you well in your research undertaking.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and strokes, positioned above a horizontal line.

PROF L LABUSCHAGNE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: RESEARCH



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APPENDIX C: CONSENT LETTER

Invitation and consent

I am interested in how you (as end-user) experience the "On-line student application/registration and general student administration functionality during the registration periods". I am currently enrolled for the DLitt et Phil (PBL) degree at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and I am conducting a study to explore the outcomes of your experience to enable enhancements and improvements to the current system and to ensure streamlined on-line correct student administration activities.

If you agree that I could contact you to participate in the study, I will arrange a consultation session with you. This should not take you more than 20 minutes. You could also possibly be asked to respond to follow-up questions by e-mail.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. All information obtained during the course of this study is strictly confidential and will only be used for research purposes and not released for any employment-related performance evaluation, promotion and/or disciplinary purposes.

Thank you for your willingness/response to my request.

Kind regards

Richard Harding
Director: Student Admission and Registrations
E-mail: hardirc@unisa.ac.za


30/9/2013



APPENDIX D: DECLARATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDIT



Retha Burger
SA (Pty) Ltd

tel: 012 867 3864
cell: 083 653 5255

fax: 012 867 3864
e-mail: retho@skillnet.co.za

Independent Skills Development Facilitator

Dear Mr Harding

This letter is to record that I have completed a language edit of your PhD thesis entitled "THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA".

The edit that I carried out included the following:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Punctuation
- Pronoun matches
- Word usage
- Sentence structure
- Correct acronyms (matching your supplied list)
- Captions and labels for figures and tables
- Spot checking of 10 references

The edit that I carried out excluded the following:

- Content
- Correctness or truth of information (unless obvious)
- Correctness/spelling of specific technical terms and words (unless obvious)
- Correctness/spelling of unfamiliar names and proper nouns (unless obvious)
- Correctness of specific formulae or symbols, or illustrations.

Yours sincerely

Retha Burger

11 April 2020