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**GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL
SYSTEM FOR NURSE EDUCATORS IN THE NURSING
COLLEGES IN BOTSWANA**

By

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DISSERTATION

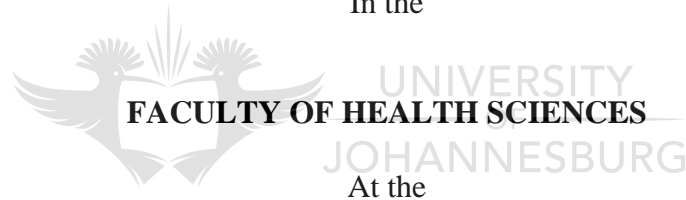
Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTERS CURATIONIS

In

PROFESSIONAL NURSING SCIENCE: NURSING EDUCATION

In the



UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

SUPERVISOR: PROF MM CHABELI

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MARCH 2015

DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate this project to my son Othata Moalafhi and my daughter Gogontle Moalafhi as a point of contact of blessings of academic excellence in their lives. They will grow up and be responsible and dedicated lifelong learners. They were praying for the completion of this study and supported me throughout. I love you and may our good Lord richly bless you. Thank you.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to start by humbling myself before our almighty God for seeing me through to the end of this study and for making all things possible. Lord, I give you all the honour and I praise your holy Name.

I express my sincere gratitude to those who have helped and supported me throughout my project. I am very grateful to my supervisor Professor Chabeli for her continuous support for the project, from initial advice at the stage of conceptual inception, to on-going supervision, encouragement and motivation until the end of the project. You have a way of encouraging your students to be lifelong learners.

A special thank you goes to my colleagues, friends and mentors (Sefe, Rose, Esther, Penny, Janet and Sandy) who helped me in completing the project and exchanged interesting ideas, thoughts, and motivation for this project. A big thank you also goes to the language editor Ms Simone Wilcock for her commitment and dedication in editing this study. Studying across the border would not have been easy without the love and hospitality I got from my friend Minah Sono and her daughter Khumo Sono by offering me accommodation, hospitality and support. They have greatly contributed to the completion of this study. I deeply appreciate everything they did for me. They have made life easier for me in Johannesburg. May the Lord bless you all.

As I kept travelling to South Africa to meet with my study supervisor, I left my children under the care of my neighbours and the Siyabu family (church elders). I thank them for allowing God to use them in a special way.

I wish to thank my son Othata and daughter Gogontle for sacrificing their time to be with me to allow me to work on this project and even help me with typing. Last, but not least, I want to thank Porchia Bergh and Kelebogile Gwabe of University of Johannesburg Department of Nursing for their technical input and the help they gave me.

SUMMARY

Performance appraisal is a continuous process for identifying, evaluating and developing the work performance of nurse educators so that the goals and objectives of the college are more effectively achieved, while at the same time benefiting individual nurse educators in terms of reward and recognition of performance, professional development and career guidance.

Performance appraisal entails structured formal interaction between an appraiser and appraisee, which usually takes the form of a periodic interview (annual or semi-annual), in which the work performance of the appraisee is examined and discussed with a view to identifying weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development. The challenge faced by the nurse educators is the lack of knowledge in execution of the performance appraisal.

The purpose of the study is to describe guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nurse educators at all eight nursing colleges in Botswana. The research design is qualitative, exploratory and descriptive. Purposive sampling was used in this study to recruit nurse educators to participate in individual semi-structured interviews. A qualitative open coding data analysis method was used. The researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the study by using Lincoln and Guba's model of trustworthiness, which is based on four strategies: credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability.

Inadequate knowledge among the nurse educators regarding performance appraisal emerged as the only main theme from the semi-structured interviews. Two sub-themes that emerged from this theme were: inadequate knowledge of the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process and inadequate knowledge of the appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal period.

The theme and the sub-themes are conceptualised within the existing relevant literature, and guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system at the eight

nursing colleges in Botswana are then described. Recommendations are made with regard to nursing education, nursing practice and nursing research.

It is recommended that the nurse educators be trained in performance appraisal with emphasis on the performance appraisal process and the application of coaching and mentoring strategies throughout the performance appraisal period.



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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Botswana has a sparse population of about 2.1 million and has a total of 27 districts. However, the population is denser in the eastern side of the country, and as a result, the majority of the nursing colleges are in the eastern part of the country. There are only eight nursing colleges in Botswana, six of them in the southern part and two in the north. The system used for performance appraisal in nursing colleges in Botswana is the performance-based reward system, which is the system used by Botswana's government as part of its public service management. The nursing colleges in the country form part of the public service.

Performance appraisal forms an integral part of personnel development. Performance appraisal refers to the systematic assessment of the nursing practitioner's knowledge, skills and conduct, which are related to their role, expectations and responsibility in terms of the job's requirements and job descriptions. This is done by a person with equal knowledge and skills who has the authority, as a supervisor, to perform the assessment. Performance appraisal entails the gathering of information and the analysis of that information in order to come to a professional conclusion (Muller, 2005: 298).

As explained by Muller (2005:298), the purpose of performance appraisal is to identify above average work ability and achievements that demand special mention, awards and even promotion. It is also used to identify shortcomings or growth potential in the work performance of the nursing practitioner concerning knowledge, skills and attitudes, which can be rectified by means of personnel development. Performance appraisal contributes to the practitioner's career management and development.

Roberts and Pregitzer (2007:19) state that research clearly demonstrates that a transparent and verifiable performance management system, in which employees understand the criteria, standards and process, is imperative. Vigorous and sustained employee participation in the development and administration of the appraisal system

facilitates transparency. There is a need to improve the mechanism and the procedures for the management and implementation of the teacher appraisal process in Botswana by training of both appraisers and appraisees. Many teachers view the current system as ineffective (Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper, 2006:438). Lack of management capacity appears to complicate the functioning of the performance appraisal systems (Mapasela & Strydom, n.d.:5).

Since 2003, the Botswana public service has been using a new system called the Performance Based Reward System (PBRs). Just like teachers, nurse educators in Botswana have long expressed their dissatisfaction with the current performance appraisal system and its results. According to Roberts (2003:89), performance appraisal is one of the most complex and controversial human resource management techniques. Performance appraisal systems have been criticised for many years (Kondrasuk, 2011: 63).

Appraisal should form an intrinsic and fundamental part of any institution nurturing personnel development, and should be aligned to the institutional strategy. The successful implementation of a comprehensive performance appraisal system can provide everyone with the direction and support they need to enhance and improve their performance (Alston & Mujtaba, 2009:26).

According to Pulakos (2004:26), appraisers and appraisees need to be able and motivated to use the performance management system effectively. Training helps to accomplish both of these objectives. When appraisers and appraisees are required to attend a structured performance appraisal training, this sends a clear message that performance appraisal is important. The results of a study by Arat, Buyukipekci & Erbas (n.d.) on the effects of performance appraisal errors on employee performance in terms of employee perceptions revealed that the perceptions of employees towards performance levels make a significant difference in the training status of performance management and the effects of performance appraisal on efficiency and effectiveness. Fineman (2006:270) highlights that managers' ability to perceive subordinates' emotions has an impact on the subordinates' satisfaction with the performance appraisal process.

Rudman (2003:437) puts forward that appraisees should be appraised at least once a year. Appraisal is supposed to be a continuous activity with day-to-day communication between the appraisees and the appraisers, so that in the final appraisal interview there are no 'surprises'. Problems should be tackled as and when they arise. A supervisor's lack of knowledge, skills and expertise in the performance appraisal system creates a problem. Another important factor in ensuring a successful implementation of the performance appraisal system is to pilot test the new process in a couple of units prior to a large scale implementation to check if the system is efficient and functions smoothly. This will also show whether management and employees understand and support the process (Pulakos, 2004:30).

Mabotsa (2006:2) established that appraisal panels in schools, which included college principals, school management teams and educators, lacked the necessary skills to implement the developmental appraisal system. In the schools, the principals and the staff development team who were required to facilitate and encourage staff to implement the developmental appraisal system lacked the necessary knowledge to lead the process. Consequently, this led to educators being frustrated by the poor implementation of the appraisal system, and hence they developed a negative attitude toward performance appraisal. Although Mabotsa's the study was done on primary school educators in South Africa, nurse educators in Botswana show some similar concerns or dissatisfaction with their appraisal system.

Many factors impact on the effectiveness of an organisation's performance management system, but three of these are the most important. Firstly, the system needs to be aligned with and support the organisation's direct and critical success factors. Secondly, well-developed, efficiently administered tools and processes are needed to make the system user friendly and well received by organisational members. Thirdly, and most importantly, is that both the managers and employees must use the system in a manner that brings visible, value-added benefits in the areas of performance planning, performance development, feedback and achieving results (Pulakos, 2004:30).

The experience the researcher has on this matter is that supervisors can sometimes use performance appraisal unfairly for their own interest. Performance appraisal

systems are not valid, reliable or clear, and have been generally accepted as being stressful for both appraisers and appraisees (Carter, Geoff, Delahaye & Brian, 2005:1).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Nurse educators in nursing colleges in Botswana have been appraised by different supervisors several times and are unhappy about the process. Despite the efforts by the Botswana government and the Botswana National Productivity Center (BNPC) to empower employees on PBRs, which also covers performance appraisal as a subtopic, nurse educators are still unhappy about the system. As already stated in the background, it was established by Mabotsa (2006:2) that appraisal panels that include college principals, school management teams and educators lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to implement the developmental appraisal system.

The government of Botswana has reviewed the appraisal system and a new improved system is in use. It is unclear what the advantage is in moving from the old system to the new and supposedly improved system if personnel are still not happy and performance appraisal remains both a challenge and a very stressful event for both appraisees and appraisers in Botswana. Researchers have developed and practitioners have implemented various changes to the evaluation criteria, rating instruments and appraisal procedures in an effort to improve the accuracy and the perceived fairness of the process. However, in spite of the attention and the resources applied to the practice, dissatisfaction with the process still abounds and systems are often viewed by employees as inaccurate and unfair (Naming, 2005:7).

According to Pulakos (2004:1), a survey by Watson Wyatt showed that only three out of ten workers agree that their company's performance appraisal system helps to improve performance. While these results suggest that there may be poorly designed performance appraisal systems in many organisations, it is typically not poorly developed tools and processes that cause difficulty with performance appraisal. Rather, difficulties arise because, at its core, performance appraisal is a highly personal and often threatening process for both managers and employees. In any situation where performance is below expected levels, there must be a problem that must be identified. Finding the problem requires an open and honest review, and should involve the people

managing performance and the performers themselves. It is usually true that performers are the best source of information to identify the problem, but unfortunately they are often not listened to attentively (Bentley, 2004:7).

The researcher therefore intends to provide guidelines to improve the performance appraisal of nurse educators in nursing colleges in Botswana. It is hoped that when nurse educators trust their supervisors to conduct a fair and unbiased appraisal their satisfaction with the system would increase dramatically (Armstrong & Applebaum, 2003:101).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions emerged from the background, rationale and problem statement:

- 1) What are the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana?
- 2) How can the performance appraisal system be improved in nursing colleges in Botswana?

1.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The purpose of the study was to describe guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nurse educators in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the study was realised by the following objectives:

- 1) To explore and describe the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system in nursing colleges in Botswana.
- 2) To describe guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nurse educators in nursing colleges in Botswana.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal refers to the systematic assessment of the nursing practitioner's knowledge, skills and conduct that are related to the role expectations and responsibilities in terms of the job requirements and job description (Muller, 2005:298). In this study, performance appraisal refers to the current system of performance appraisal for nurse educators with the performance-based reward system used at the eight colleges of nursing in Botswana.

Nurse Educators

These are nursing professionals who guide and assist students as well as providing them with a means which enable them to learn the art and science of nursing so that they can apply it to the nursing care of people who need such care (Brink, Mellish & Paton, 2001:7). In this study, the Nurse Educators are the nursing professionals employed in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana as nurse educators.

Perception

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2006:1063), perception is a way of regarding, understanding or interpreting something. In this study, perception refers to the way the nurse educators understand and interpret the performance appraisal system used at nursing colleges in Botswana.

Nursing College

According to Regulation 425 of 1985, a nursing college is a post-secondary educational institution which offers professional nursing education at basic and post basic level. In this study, a nursing college is a post-secondary educational institution which offers basic professional nursing and or post basic professional nursing course among other health courses in Botswana. It can also be referred to as a school of nursing or an institute of health sciences. There are eight nursing colleges in Botswana.

Guidelines

Guidelines are defined as systematically developed statements to assist practitioner decisions about appropriate health care for specific clinical circumstances. Guidelines are based on the most rigorous research available, and where research was available. They are based on expert opinion and consensus, promoting some of them as best practice guidelines (Field, 1995:38). In this study, the guidelines will be described based on extensive conceptualisation of findings following their interpretation by the researcher and the concluding statements.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a blueprint for conducting the study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the trustworthiness of the findings. The research design guides the researcher in planning and implementing the study in a way that is most likely to achieve the intended goal (Burns & Grove, 2009:211).

A qualitative, exploratory and descriptive research design was used in this study. According to Burns and Grove (2009:232), the purpose of a descriptive design is to provide a picture of situations as they naturally happen. It is thought that this design will describe how nurse educators perceive the performance appraisal system in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana and then come up with guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nurse educators in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana.

1.7.1 Research Method

The research method constitute the population, target population, sample and sampling method, data collection, data analysis and how to ensure trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

1.7.1.1 Target population

The population refers to all elements (individuals, objects events, or substances) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study (Burns & Grove 2009:746). The target

population for this study will be nurse educators in nursing colleges in Botswana who have been subjected to performance appraisal.

1.7.1.2 Sample and sampling method

Purposive sampling will be used to select participants for this study. This involves the conscious selection by the researcher of only nurse educators who have been subjected to performance appraisal and who are willing to participate in the study. The exact number of participants will be determined by saturation of data; that is, data will be collected from the participants until saturation is reached, which will be evidenced by not getting any new information from the participants that is different. According to Burns and Grove (2009:379), the qualitative researcher stops seeking additional participants when theoretical saturation is achieved.

1.7.1.3 Data collection

Face-to-face in-depth semi-structured interviews will be conducted at the eight nursing colleges in Botswana. The semi-structured interviews will be commenced with the qualitative, open research questions: "What are your perceptions regarding the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana?" and "How can the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana be improved?" These questions will direct the data collection process as probing, and other interview strategies will be used around them to gather in-depth information. The interviews will be conducted by the researcher, and it was estimated that the interviews would take 45 minutes to an hour. The date, time and the preferred venue for the interviews are determined by participants.

Data will be recorded on an audiotape with the permission of the participants and later transcribed verbatim. Field notes will also be taken to record the dynamics of the events as they occurred. The researcher will also carry out a pilot study to determine the clarity and accuracy of the questions posed to participants.

1.7.1.4 *Data analysis*

The researcher will use the open coding of Tech's qualitative method (Creswell, 2012:155) to analyse the data, and the steps are as follows:

- 1) The researcher will go through all the raw data of the verbatim transcripts of the in-depth interviews on the nurse educators' perceptions regarding performance appraisal of nurse educators at nursing colleges in Botswana and how the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges can be improved.
- 2) The researcher will document the participants' perceptions along the margin and ultimately on the paper.
- 3) The categories and subcategories of the participants' perceptions will be identified and described.
- 4) The raw data will be sent to the independent coder for analysis, who will be purposively selected because of their experience in the qualitative research approach using the same protocol for data analysis as described by Tech.
- 5) The researcher will then meet with the independent coder for consensus to be reached from their independent coding.
- 6) Follow-up of individual interviews will be conducted to validate the categories.

Following the completion of data analysis, a literature control will done to grasp the essential meaning of the identified theme and sub-themes (Polit & Beck, 2012:568).

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The basic issues in relation to trustworthiness focus on the following questions: How can an enquirer persuade the scientific community that the findings on an enquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What criteria are evoked? What questions can be asked that will be persuasive on this issue? (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 290). For the purpose of this study, the researcher will use Lincoln and Guba's method of ensuring trustworthiness based on the following principles: credibility, dependability transferability and conformability.

- Credibility looks into the accuracy with which subjects were identified and described. The strategies to ensure credibility will be member checking,

triangulation, peer examination, interview technique, prolonged engagement, researcher authority, time sampling and structural convenience.

- Dependability refers to the method the researcher used to account for changing conditions in the phenomena under study and changes in the design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting, thus ensuring consistency. It involves dependability audit, dense description of research methods, stepwise replication, triangulation, peer examination and a code-recode procedure.
- Transferability is the method of applicability or the method necessary to enable those interested transferring results to reach a conclusion about whether this can be contemplated as a possibility. Transferability will be ensured through dense description of data, time sampling and a nominated sample.
- Confirmability is checking whether the data confirm the general findings and lead to implications. A confirmability audit, triangulation and reflexivity will be used as strategies to ensure confirmability.

The application of these methods will be followed closely by adhering to set standards for qualitative research and will be further discussed when the study is completed.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Faculty of Health Sciences Committee for Academic Ethics (2005) at the University of Johannesburg has formulated ethical standards to guide researchers when writing their research project proposals. Five aspects are taken into consideration:

- 1) The scientific design and conduct of the study;
- 2) The recruitment of research participants;
- 3) The care and protection of research participants, confidentiality and anonymity;
- 4) The informed consent process; and
- 5) Community considerations.

Ethical considerations in this study were made in accordance with the guidelines of University of Johannesburg Faculty of Health Sciences.

1.9.1 The Scientific Design and Conduct of the Study

The research design in this study is qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual in nature. A descriptive design provides a picture of situations as they naturally happen (Burns & Grove, 2009:232). Two qualitative, open-ended questions were used to interview the participants. To evaluate the clarity of the research question, a pilot study was done before the interview process.

It is envisaged that there will be no risks that will be incurred in participating in the study. The benefit of participating in the study will be that the guidelines to improve the performance appraisal of nurse educators in nursing colleges will be described.

1.9.2 Recruitment of Research Participants

Purposive sampling is used in this study to recruit research participants. A letter requesting consent describes the purpose and methodology of the study. The time and venue where the study will be conducted will be communicated to the participants. Below the letter there will be a line on which participants are to append their signatures and the date to demonstrate their acceptance of the request and willingness to participate in the study voluntarily.

1.9.3 Protection of Research Participants, Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study, should they choose to do so, without any penalty. The researcher and the independent coder will be the only people with access to the data collected during the research process. The names of participants will be omitted to ensure anonymity and a number or code will be used during interaction to enable the participants to provide information freely. The interview transcripts will be kept under lock and key for the duration of the study and on completion of the study they will be destroyed.

1.9.4 Informed Consent

Permission will be obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Johannesburg and from the management and participants of the respective nursing colleges in Botswana to conduct the study. The aim and methodology of the study will be fully described in simple language in the consent letter so that participants can understand the nature of their participation in the study.

1.9.5 Community Considerations

The results of the study will be made available to the participants on request. They will also be made available to the nursing colleges as well as the libraries at the University of Johannesburg and University of Botswana. The developed guidelines will be presented as an article in an accredited journal for publication.

1.10 ARRANGEMENT OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Background and rationale of the study.

Chapter 2: Research design and method.

Chapter 3: Description of the findings.

Chapter 4: Conceptualisation.

Chapter 5: Guidelines, recommendations, conclusion and limitations.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research design and method will be described. The chapter basically presents the research design for the proposed study, the setting where the study was conducted, the target population, the sampling method and the criteria for the selection of the sample. The procedure for data collection, data analysis and the description of how to ensure the trustworthiness of the study are also described.

2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative, exploratory and descriptive research design is used to achieve the main purpose of this research.

2.2.1 Qualitative Design

A qualitative research design is used to explore and describe the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana. This qualitative research design explores the depth, richness and complexity of the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana as perceived by the nurse educators (Burns & Grove, 2009:52). This provides a way of gaining insight into the meaning of the performance appraisal system used at nursing colleges in Botswana. A qualitative study usually yields a lot of information.

2.2.2 Descriptive Design

An accurate description of the performance appraisal system used in nursing colleges as perceived by the nurse educators is presented in order to give a picture of the situation in its natural setting. The findings of the study are described in comparison with similar relevant studies. Literature was also used to describe the usefulness and implications of the findings and the guidelines to improve the performance appraisal of nurse educators in nursing colleges in Botswana is be described.

2.2.3 Exploratory Design

This study explored the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system in nursing colleges in Botswana. New insight and understanding regarding the performance appraisal system used in nursing colleges was gained (Brink, van de Walt, & van Rensburg, 2012:11). During this research, the researcher examined new ideas and suggestions while remaining open to any fresh suggestions that may arise and no predetermined ideas were allowed to direct the research project. Literature was also explored in depth, and it was compared with the results of the study to determine similarities and differences. The findings were then combined to reflect the current knowledge about the performance appraisal of nurse educators.

2.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method constitutes the target population, sample and sampling method, data collection, data analysis and ways of ensuring trustworthiness.

2.3.1 Population



The whole country has only eight nursing colleges. The population consisted of nurse educators who have been employed at one of the eight nursing colleges in Botswana.

2.3.2 Target Population

A group of individuals who met the sampling criteria in this study were all nurse educators at the eight nursing colleges in Botswana who had been subjected to performance appraisal.

2.3.3 Sampling Criteria

It is important when identifying a population to be specific about the criteria for inclusion in the population. Sampling criteria refers to a list of essential characteristics that qualify respondents for participation in the research (Burns & Grove, 2009: 342). These are:

- Participants were nurse educators employed at the eight nursing colleges in Botswana.
- They were prepared to participate in the research and such participation was elicited by their written consent.
- They had been exposed to performance appraisal.
- Participants were both male and female.

2.3.4 Sample and Sampling Method

A purposive sample of twelve nurse educators who had been subjected to performance appraisal was selected from the eight nursing colleges in Botswana. Ten of the participants were from the southern part, and two were from the northern part of Botswana. The participants were included on the basis that they were willing to participate in the study and that they also met the sampling criteria.

Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to identify participants who could give information about the performance appraisal that was rich. Therefore, the selection of a sample group of nurse educators was based on the extent to which the nurse educators could contribute to the research study with the goal of gaining an understanding of performance appraisal.

2.3.5 Data Collection

In view of the distance from one nursing college to another, with many of these in a totally different geographical location, as well as the social commitments of nurse educators, the researcher used semi-structured, face-to-face interviews as a method of data collection to explore and describe the nurse educators' perceptions regarding performance appraisal. This method ensures that the researcher obtains the information required, and it gives the participants the freedom to provide as many illustrations and examples as possible (Polit & Beck, 2012: 532, 537). It allowed the individual free flow of thoughts, feelings and emotions, which are charged with meaning.

The most important task during the interview was to understand what is being said. The researcher aimed to describe and understand the meaning that was central in the life world of the nurse educators. During the interviews, the researcher strived to be bias-free by not bringing in pre-conceived ideas.

The interviews commenced with a qualitative open research question of “How do you perceive the performance appraisal of nurse educators conducted at nursing colleges in Botswana?” It was followed by another qualitative open research question, “How can the performance appraisal system in nursing colleges in Botswana be improved?”

Permission to use audiotapes to record the interviews was obtained from participants. The reason to audiotape the interviews was to increase the credibility of the findings by ensuring that no data was lost and that data was captured raw, as it was. The data from the audiotapes was later transcribed verbatim.

Six of the participants from the southern part of Botswana were interviewed at their homes. The researcher made appointments with the participants via telephone. A home is a natural setting that is open, comfortable and non-threatening to the participants. The researcher learnt from these participants of the workshop that was going to be conducted for the nurse educators in the country. The researcher took the opportunity to approach the nurse educators who attended the workshop and requested permission to interview them where they were attending the workshop. Of the six participants who agreed to take part in this study, four were from the southern part, from the same colleges in the south, and two were from the northern part of Botswana. This resulted in a total of 10 participants coming from the southern part and two from the north. The six interviews that were done at the workshop were conducted in the participants' hotel rooms. For participants whose interviews were done in the hotel rooms, the environment was quiet and away from noisy distractions, which made the interview process much easier. The two settings made data collection very convenient. It was suggested to the participants that appointments could be set after working hours at the participants' homes and hotel rooms or at convenient times for them.

For those interviews that were done in the participants' homes, the participants welcomed the researcher and introduced the researcher to the family members. The

participants were also asked to explain to the family members that the interview was recorded, and therefore their cooperation was needed in making the interview area as noise free as possible.

Although this was explained in the consent letters, it was emphasised before the commencement of the interview that the participants' participation was totally voluntary and that they were under no obligation to share their information with the researcher or remain in the study. It was also explained that the tapes of the interviews and the transcriptions would be kept in a safe and secure place and the tapes were not labelled with the participants' names; instead, numbers were used to label the tapes (Brink, et. al., 2012:43). The numbering was done according to the sequence of interview sessions. In other words, the tape and the transcription for the first interview were labelled '1', but the participants were not told the numbering order to avoid linking the information with them.

The first five to ten minutes were spent chatting and making some small talk with participants in order to set the participants at ease and establish a warm and comfortable rapport. Non-judgmental stances were maintained throughout the interview, as well as being relaxed and open to allow the participants to be as free as possible.

A high quality audio-tape recorder was strategically placed to capture all the dialogue between the researcher and the participant. The two research questions were also posed to the participants before recording just to make sure they understood them.

During the interview, the researcher encouraged the participants to explore the phenomenon further by nodding their head and making sounds like 'ooh' that indicated the researcher's interest and appreciation. Probing and paraphrasing was also done to encourage the participants to further elaborate on some information (Burns & Grove, 2009:540).

Follow up questions like "*What do you mean?*" and statements such as "*I am not sure if I understand the meaning of that*" were used by the researcher to seek clarity on some themes. Each interview session was summarised to highlight the main themes. The interview sessions took 45 minutes to an hour with each participant. The interviews

continued until the participants verbalised that they had exhausted all their information; they went on until data saturation was reached.

The audio-tape recorder was operated by the researcher. Batteries were always checked to ensure that power was available for the whole interview session. The audio tape recorder was switched on and placed on a small table between the researcher and the participant in order to maintain eye contact.

At the end of each interview session, the researcher stopped the tape and rewound it. A small portion of the interview was listened to while the participants were still there to check that the information had been captured. Then participants were thanked for their time and for being part of the study. They were also informed that as participants, they might be contacted again if the need arose for clarity on some collected data, to which they all agreed. Family members were also thanked for their cooperation and making the recording successful by not making a noise, especially the children.

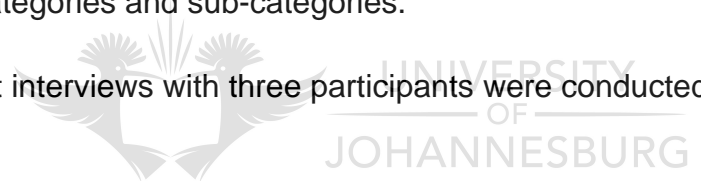
Some of the participants mentioned their names, college and their supervisor's names by mistake, but they were assured that the names would not be transcribed for the purposes of ensuring their anonymity. The researcher took field notes during the interviews to describe communication dynamics as they were observed.

2.3.6 Data Analysis

The open coding data analysis method was used in accordance with Tech's qualitative method (Creswell, 20012: 155). The steps are as follows:

- The researcher got a sense of the responses as a whole by listening to the tapes until the researcher became immersed in the data. The researcher transcribed the data verbatim and read through all the transcriptions carefully and jotted down some ideas as they came to mind.
- One interview tape was picked at a time, starting with the most interesting and the shortest. The researcher went through all the tapes with the following question in mind: what is it about? As the researcher was thinking of the underlying meaning, thoughts were written on the margin of the transcription.

- When this task had been completed with all the tapes, a list of all topics was made and similar topics were clustered together. The topics were then formed into columns that were arranged as major topics, unique topics and leftovers.
- The list and the data were then used to abbreviate the topics as codes and the codes were written next to the appropriate segments of the text. This was repeated to see whether new categories and codes emerged.
- The most descriptive wording for the researcher's topics was turned into categories. Data was then compiled and the codes were alphabetically arranged.
- Data belonging to each category was assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis made.
- An independent co-coder was purposively selected to analyse data using Tech's protocol of open-coding qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 20012:155).
- The researcher met with the independent coder to reach a consensus on the identified categories and sub-categories.
- Subsequent interviews with three participants were conducted to verify the results.



2.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness focuses on the following questions: how can an enquirer persuade the scientific community that the findings on an enquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What criteria are evoked? What questions can be asked that will be persuasive on this issue? (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 290).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used Lincoln and Guba's model of trustworthiness. The model is based on the identification of four aspects of trustworthiness that are relevant to both qualitative and quantitative studies: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability and (d) conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 290).

2.4.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the true value obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by the research participants. The activities that increase the probability of credible findings are prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, establishing the authority of the researcher and structural coherence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:294-295, 301-314).

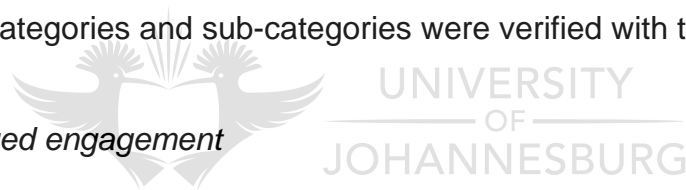
2.4.1.1 Triangulation

Different data collection methods were used to ensure credibility. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews and semi-structured observations were used to collect data from different participants. A note book was also used to take field notes.

2.4.1.2 Member checking

The identified categories and sub-categories were verified with three participants.

2.4.1.3 Prolonged engagement



Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted that ranged from 45 minutes to an hour with each participant. Some participants took longer than others. Participants were given more time to reflect on their perceptions. The researcher immersed herself in the tapes by listening to them repeatedly and as soon as possible. More time was also spent on verbatim transcriptions and data analysis.

2.4.1.4 Persistent observation

Persistent observation in this study was used to identify some characteristics and elements in situations that are relevant to the problem (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:304). The researcher persistently observed the non-verbal cues that were displayed by the participants during the interview, and these non-verbal cues guided the use of probing questions. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985:304), persistent observation provides depth to an inquiry. It involves identifying those characteristics and elements in the

situation that are most relevant to the problem being pursued and focusing on them in detail.

2.4.1.5 Peer examination

The researcher engaged a colleague who had specialised in nursing education and who holds a master's degree as co-coder to assist in data analysis. The participants' tape recordings and verbal transcripts of interviews were made available for data analysis.

2.4.2 Transferability

Transferability is the strategy used to ensure applicability. Applicability refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups. Sufficient descriptive data were presented and the following strategies were used.

- A purposive sample was used to select the participants for this study. The participants were selected from the eight nursing colleges of Botswana.
- There is a complete description of the research method used and a verbatim transcription of data collected.
- Literature control was used during the conceptualisation process.

2.4.3 Dependability

This addresses the question of whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated in the same or in a similar context. Triangulation is one strategy that ensures dependability. Lincoln and Guba (1985:316) assert that there can be no credibility without dependability. In this way, other researchers are able to trace the methods used and to prove a thick description of the data collected.

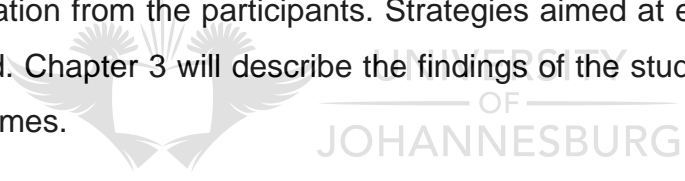
The study supervisor was engaged from the proposal stage and throughout the study to ensure the quality of the study. The research method is fully described. The researcher also kept personal and reflexive notes to promote an audit trail.

2.4.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives – the worth of the findings. In qualitative research, neutrality is defined in terms of confirmability. The neutral findings should produce the same results when applied by other researchers using the same research participants in a similar context. Neutrality promotes acceptability of the research findings by others as worthy and authentic. Confirmability was ensured by a confirmability audit and reflexivity.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter introduced and described in detail the research method. The researcher chose a qualitative exploratory, descriptive and contextual approach in order to obtain in-depth information from the participants. Strategies aimed at ensuring trustworthiness were addressed. Chapter 3 will describe the findings of the study in terms of the theme and the sub-themes.



CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the study are presented and described according to the identified theme and sub-themes. The purpose of the study was to explore and to describe the perceptions of the nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system in nursing colleges in Botswana in-order to describe guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system in the eight nursing colleges in Botswana. Twelve nurse educators were purposively selected because they had been subjected to performance appraisal. The participants underwent face-to-face semi-structured interviews, which were conducted until data saturation was reached (Brink, et. al., 2012:141). The researcher took field notes during each interview. The notes were on the dynamics of the non-verbal communication displayed by the participants during each interview.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings are described on the basis of identified theme and sub themes. The descriptions are supported with quotations from the participants in inverted commas and italics.

There was only one main theme that emerged very strongly from the semi-structured interviews: inadequate knowledge among the nurse educators regarding performance appraisal. The sub-themes that emerged from this theme were: the inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process and inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal period. The identified theme and sub-themes are discussed in Table 3.1

Table 3.1

Perceptions of nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana

THEME	Inadequate knowledge among the nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal.
SUB-THEMES	
SUB-THEME 1	Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process.
SUB-THEME 2	Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching of the appraisees.

3.2.1 Theme: Inadequate Knowledge Among The Nurse Educators Regarding The Performance Appraisal

Knowledge has always been viewed as the most valuable and strategic resource. Through knowledge, many problems can be solved and new opportunities created that are beneficial to both the nurse educators and the college. In response to the question of how the nurse educators perceived the performance appraisal system as it is applied in nursing colleges in Botswana, the participants' perception was that the nurse educators lack knowledge regarding performance appraisal. This was evidenced by the following responses:

*“Performance appraisal! That thing! **[Shaking the head]** I don't like it because our bosses do not know how to do it; it's like they were never trained on the process”*

“I will say there was some kind of training, but it was just for one week so it is inadequate. Even up to now there are still some things that we are not clear of

when we are appraised; even our appraisers seem clueless – unfortunately they are expected to do it.”

“It is like our appraisers do not really understand what an appraisal is, such that during the appraisal there seems[s] to be a lot of confusion. The reason we are experiencing a lot of problems with performance appraisal is because we just do not know what it is and why we are doing it. Why can’t our supervisors be trained, at least?”

“My friend, I trained as a general nurse and joined the public service as a very junior and inexperienced nurse working in a clinic. One funny day I was given a form to fill in quickly so that I can be given marks for the year. I did not know what marks. I filled that form in by copying from others and submitted. I have been doing that for many years. I am now in the nursing college and a senior who is expected to appraise my juniors, so I also tell them to fill in and bring the forms to me signed already with marks, and then I just append my signature and file the form. Why should I stress myself or my juniors with something that I do not know? Fortunately, I am one person who closely supervises the lecturers and that is why I am comfortable to just sign, because I know they do their job well. But I told them not to give themselves hundred per cents or the same marks and to be honest with themselves. Yes, at times if the marks are too high I adjust them. I just do not know what this thing is and why I have to do it.”

“If somebody who is supposed to be the one guiding the appraisal walks into your office and instructs you that you should come to her office the following day to finish with this boring thing of appraisal that nobody understands, how are you expected to like it? The truth is our appraisers do not know the animal called performance appraisal.”

“As it is, there is no system in place in the nursing colleges to train the old nurse educators as well as those who are joining the nursing colleges. The newly appointed nurse educators may join as senior nurse educators or junior nurse educators from the clinical service or other departments. They are as well expected to do the appraisals, either to be appraised or to appraise. Worse, the majority of us have just been recruited from clinical service, by right we are not qualified educators, what exactly are we being appraised for and by who?”

“It is only that other people are coming up as managers or new recruits joining the colleges, so it is expected that they should be trained or orientated on performance appraisal at departmental level when they did not go for that very core initial training. The initial training is as well not adequate because even those who have gone through it still experience problems with the system”

“Some people say they have been trained, but I don’t see the difference between us who were never trained and them. They are even worse than us because they confuse us more.”

The participants perceived the appraisal as something that is done as a formality and not because the nurse educators know why it has to be done. This was evidenced by the following responses:

“The purpose is not known; it is just the formality of doing things and there are times that I feel like going back to clinical service where I knew what I was doing and that made performance appraisal something to appreciate. As it is now, everybody seems to have a negative attitude towards it, the reason being we don’t know what exactly it is and what to do, so we don’t like it, period. Maybe training us will help”

“The nurse educators should receive periodic training on our core responsibilities and the appraisal itself, or at least reminders of why they should be doing the performance appraisals. The nurse educators who are appraising should be made accountable for making sure that everybody understands it. Some of us do not even know the definition of performance appraisal.”

*“You are going to be surprised by what I’m going to tell you. I used to work with our HOD in one institution way back before being HOD, and now she is the HOD and due to transfers we are together in this institution, and when she was appraising me she brought the mistakes that I did donkey years back in the former institution into the last appraisal. Funny enough, she appraised me in the last quarter and it was not an issue of discussion. I personally had forgotten about it. What exactly is all this? She did not have anything to use to pin me down except using that. That day **[with wide eyes]** I put my foot down and did not allow the discussion to go in that direction and I was labelled a difficult person.*

This is frustrating and intimidating; we are adults and we shouldn't be treated like children in the olden days. These people should be trained so that they do not do these things.

Some of the participants highlighted that when they were trained, they were not trained on how to use all the required documents. The current system was apparently introduced and implemented hurriedly before it was well understood, and therefore it is still not implemented well or as intended. This was indicated in the following quotations:

“Another thing that I would like to share is that some of the things were not introduced during the training; they came later when we were already implementing, and this caused confusion, like the section on personal attributes. It was not part of the training: a loose form was sent to us to implement but we did not have a common understanding of what these attributes mean.”

*“The other form that came late was the performance log, and nobody knew what it was; everybody has their own version of filling it in, even us, we do it the way we want. It is even worse if your appraiser can be somebody senior coming straight from the clinical area” **[nodding the head with a frowned face and looking down]**.*

*“I think the introduction of the new system was hurried, that is why we ... **[lifting up the shoulders]** do not understand it and those who think that they understand it explain it differently which shows we are not at the same level.”*

Some of the participants attributed unfair administration of performance appraisal to a lack of knowledge regarding performance appraisal, as shown in the following responses:

“We must focus on the purpose of the performance appraisals, not on the nurse educator's thinking; maybe a manual or policy would help. Maybe it is there, but because we are not trained, we will not know of the existence of such documents.”

*“Sometimes you are labelled in an appraisal session, and that is **very, very** intimidating and so unfair. Nurse educators should not be labelled **[with an angry tone as if re-living the experience]**. The reason we are labelled is the*

different understanding about performance appraisal, which then brings arguments. I think training will help us have the same and better understanding.”

Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process and inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding the mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal period emerged as the two sub-themes from the descriptions that were given by the participants during the interviews.

3.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process

Participants were of the perception that they did not understand the process of performance appraisal. Some had an idea that performance appraisal had some steps that needed to be followed, and some viewed it as a process that was never understood. The responses below further show why the nurse educators had this kind of perception.

“There is one area that I was always given low marks on: initiative. With every appraisal, I will be given low marks for initiative. The appraiser would say she could not give me high marks because ‘initiiveness’ was not there. I will then quote that I had done one, two and three and developed this and that. My supervisor’s response would be that the initiatives were part of my job; therefore, I should come up with something else that was not part of my job. Then you wonder as to our understanding of the word initiative, what I thought was being initiative, my appraiser did not take it to be initiative and once you do not understand that the same way, it means you would be working hard to be initiative, while the other person does not see that to be an initiative. I think we all should be trained not just on appending marks but even the meaning of all the concepts used and the steps to take during the performance appraisal period.”

“My dear, I understand this is supposed to be a process with steps to follow. As for us, we see our bosses when marks are wanted by administration staff at the end of the quarter, especially Quarter 1. We then quickly do the contracts, put marks and submit. There are some educators that are never assessed and nobody says anything about them and when they are to be promoted, the marks will be appended retrospectively.”

We have to be taught the full details of what this thing is all about, how it is done and why, even just basic information about the steps. [Looking straight into my eyes] We don't know how to do this thing and I don't think we will ever understand it."

"The thing is, appraisals are never planned because we do not know what we are doing. I was once called to my supervisor's office, only to be told to sit down for an appraisal. [The participant paused and laughed] I just felt coldness running down my spine, but what else would I do except for yielding?"

"Being caught unaware will never work for anybody; we have to be told well in advance that we are going to be appraised. An appraisal session is a nightmare for some of us. Maybe it should just be abolished if we cannot be trained to understand it."

According to the participants, appraisers did not know how to set objectives, yet they regarded the ability to do so as a very important step in the performance appraisal process. In some instances, performance objectives were dictated to the nurse educators by their supervisors instead of being discussed beforehand and the parties reaching an agreement about them:

"Some objectives are dictated to us instead of involving us in setting our own objectives. This shows that we do not understand the performance appraisal process, even just setting of objectives, which forms the basis for the performance period."

"We all do not know how to set objectives; I'm even confused and I wish not to ever do it again. If at least our supervisors understood it, they would guide us"

The responses from the interviews regarding the performance appraisal process indicated that both the appraisers and appraisees had inadequate knowledge regarding the performance appraisal process. In response to being asked how the perception of inadequate knowledge among the nurse educators about the performance appraisal process can be addressed, the participants indicated the following:

"There was a need to conduct in-service training for both appraisers and appraisees. The workshops should focus on getting the people to understand the

purpose of performance appraisal, how to use the appraisal tool and the whole process of appraisal.”

The participants were of the perception that everybody should be trained – not just a few nurse educators. This was expressed by almost all the participants, as evidenced by the following responses:

“Workshops or meetings to explain the performance appraisal process thoroughly have to be conducted, and it should be clarified what is expected of the nurse educators. I do not even know if there are any tools to guide us on doing this thing.”

“The biggest problem is that training covers just a few people and they are not able to guide us. We all have to be trained.”

“We need to be thoroughly trained because as it is you are to find your way on how to be appraised or complete the appraisal forms basing this on the past experience, yet all that I know is the bad side of performance appraisal that I experienced. Funny enough, even if I’m to change how I complete the form, my appraiser will not pick that, because they lack the knowledge of how the form is filled. Appraisals are difficult to do. There is a need for guidelines to help us.”

“Training for all, number one, otherwise we may as well forget about it.”

In-service workshop and performance appraisal guidelines came up very strongly as a major strategy to address the lack of knowledge. The following responses provide evidence of the participants’ views regarding the role of training in aiding the process of staff appraisal:

“The implementers must be thoroughly trained and guided on how to implement the performance appraisal. If guidelines were availed to us we all would be referring to them.”

“Boss or not boss, we all must be trained on performance appraisal, what it is, its purpose or aim, what are the stages involved and how to give feedback. We do not know all of these things – they are key to good and effective appraisals. I wonder if these people are hiding guidelines from us, because I have never seen them.”

*“My sister, we are at the mercy of our supervisors; appraisals are done the way they feel is right and they kind of change every quarter. Unless our appraisers are trained on how to implement what they have been trained on, we are just playing. I am told it is a process that has to be followed, what we are doing is something else. If I had the option **[looking up and straight into my eyes]** I will not do it. How come you chose this topic, what really interests you? I don’t even think you understand it as well.”*

3.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching during the performance appraisal period

Participants were of the opinion that mentoring and coaching were very important as part of the appraisal period, yet they were not done in these nursing colleges. The participants’ perception was that there was lack of mentoring and coaching before the commencement of appraisal sessions. The following responses testify to this:

“The other thing is that there is no mentoring throughout the appraisal before the formal appraisal – even if you can be given low marks, nobody cares.”

When probed further to clarify what mentoring was, the participant had this to say:

“Mentoring is whereby you have somebody who directs you, who supports you where you need help. In other words, guidance and support are very important, so that by the time you sit down with your supervisor for a formal appraisal, he or she knows you better and is in a position to point out your strengths and weaknesses and help you to improve.”

To show that there is lack of mentoring and coaching, some participants expressed the following:

“Appraisals have to be accounted for, and that can only be possible through on-going support, guidance and communication. I had a big problem when I started teaching because I’m not a trained educator, but nobody knew because of not having coaches and mentors. Up to now I don’t know if my teaching is okay. This also prevents surprises during the interview period.”

Nurse educators have to be mentored and coached, so that their weaknesses will be identified and an effort made to help them improve instead of being punished with bizarre ratings that have no meaning.”

“Our supervisors do not know how to coach or guide us.”

“When you are appraised, your supervisor has to have a lot of knowledge about you, not to rely on the information you are being asked as an appraisee or worse asking your colleagues behind your back. These people have to monitor and guide us.”

Lack of coaching and mentoring was further evidenced in the following quotation:

“Some senior nurse educators will just sit in their offices throughout and not guide or support their juniors. There will be no communication at all; the next thing you are called to be appraised.”

“Instead of coaching and mentoring us, they monitor or police us.”

The participants also raised their need to be appraised by their immediate supervisor, who knew them better and worked closely with them. If one is assessed by the head of department, it makes mentoring and coaching difficult, because there are many nurse educators to appraise and mentor, and the management duties of the head of department take most of their time. This was evidenced by the following citations:

“There is a need to be appraised by your immediate supervisor, who can mentor you and is in constant communication with you. The immediate supervisor works closely with you.”

“Senior lecturers have to be actively involved in the performance appraisals so that one is assigned to appraise a few nurse educators, not the whole department being appraised by the head of department, so there can be easy follow-up or mentoring.”

“Being appraised by your immediate supervisor makes follow-up easy and also avoids unnecessary arguments and surprises during appraisal.”

When asked what should be done to address the problem of lack of knowledge by appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching before formal appraisal, the participants expressed the need for appraisees to be supervised and appraised by their immediate supervisors. They were also of the perception that appraisers must be trained to coach and mentor their appraises, and this was evidenced by the following citations:

“I want to stress that point that I said earlier of being appraised by your immediate supervisor. If there is any college where the head of department appraises everybody like in our college, then that should be changed so that everybody is appraised by their immediate supervisor for easier coaching.”

“I hope this only happens in our college – otherwise no!” [Shaking the head and sitting back]

“The other way is to reduce the number of nurse educators that one appraiser appraises by involving a lot of senior nurse educators in the performance appraisals. Like I have said earlier, it will make mentoring and coaching easy.

“Nurse educators should be followed by their supervisors, not HODs; they should be taught, coached and corrected throughout the year, not just to be told you did not do this and that during the formal appraisal.”... [Frowning]

There should be no ‘surprises’ at the end of the year. The weaknesses of the nurse educators should be identified and communicated to them throughout the quarter so that they have an opportunity to improve their performance.

This has been evidenced by the following response:

“Usually, if you keep on being checked, coached, problems solved, and being told well done, at the end there will be no surprises. Your supervisor should not point out old problems that were never communicated before during the last appraisals.”

Free and open communication should be encouraged between nurse educators and their supervisors in order to strengthen coaching and mentoring. Elaborating this further, one of the participants said:

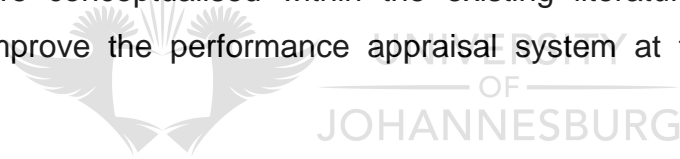
“There has to be dialogue throughout to strengthen mentoring. As it is, we meet our appraiser to talk about performance the day you are appraised and that’s it. Even the performance contracts are never discussed. One is only told to bring the contract for signing without having set and agreed on what to include, and then we also write whatever that comes out of our heads. There are times that we even set ourselves easy targets which some of the appraisers would even

have guts to rate you low for them. I mean, how do you explain this?"....
[Laughing jokingly].

3.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher focused on a description of the findings of the study. Transcribed interviews and field notes were used in this process. The theme that came out strongly from the responses was inadequate knowledge among the nurse educators regarding performance appraisal and the sub-themes were inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process and inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding the mentoring and coaching of appraisees.

The identified theme and sub-themes were expressed in different ways. The participants' responses indicated that a lot has to be done to improve the current performance appraisal system at nursing colleges in Botswana. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are conceptualised within the existing literature in order to describe strategies to improve the performance appraisal system at the nursing colleges in Botswana.



CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUALISATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to conceptualise the research findings using the relevant literature. The researcher's interpretation was made, followed by concluding statements from which guidelines were described.

4.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF FINDINGS

According to Neuman (2006:182,183,186), conceptualisation is the process of taking a construct and refining it by giving it a conceptual or theoretical definition. It is the process of thinking through the meanings of a construct and forming coherent theoretical definitions as one struggles to make sense or organise the data and one's preliminary ideas about it. Key concepts in a study will also be clarified and analysed. It also refers to the way in which one's research is integrated into the body of existing theory and research (Mouton, 2009:109). Conceptualisation was done in accordance with the identified theme and sub-themes shown in Table 3.1.

4.2.1 Inadequate Knowledge Among Nurse Educators Regarding Performance Appraisal

All the participants in this study had a perception that appraisers had inadequate knowledge regarding the performance appraisal process. This came out clearly as the only theme and it was expressed by all the participants. The participants' reasons for the aforesaid perception are borne from the fact that only a few nurse educators had been trained, and even these did not effectively implement what they had learnt. The majority of the nurse educators have not been trained on performance appraisal, and as a result they simply do what they are told to do, regardless of this being wrong or right. The appraisers and appraisees did not interpret the administration of performance appraisal in the same way.

When asked how the problem of the inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding performance appraisal could be improved, the participants suggested that

appraisers be trained on everything that involves the administration of a performance appraisal. Inadequate knowledge and a lack of training resulted in numerous challenges and problems during the performance period. The results convincingly indicated that the perceptions that the nurse educators have regarding the performance appraisal system used in Botswana are a result of inadequate training and preparation of the appraisers and appraisees on performance appraisal.

Literature also suggests that inadequate knowledge regarding performance appraisal leads to the failure of the system. A survey of 120 managers in five large organisations in the United States revealed that one of the main reasons why performance appraisals failed was because appraisers lacked the skills and motivation to conduct appraisals (Kumar, 2005:7). Performance appraisal in American organisations remains a widespread and common practice despite documented criticism of the process by practitioners and researchers alike. Exhaustive research has been conducted on a range of related topics with limited advances in the understanding and practice of performance appraisal (Walsh, 2003:7).

A lack of knowledge regarding performance appraisal has resulted in appraisers and appraisees developing a negative attitude towards performance appraisal. What came out clearly from the participants' responses was that everybody has a negative attitude towards performance appraisal simply because they do not know what is it and what to do. This is because they were not trained, and those who were trained are failing to implement what they were trained on and are as equally confused as the others. According to Kumar (2005:18), performance appraisal has the potential to be one of the most effective management tools in the entire management toolkit. Considering the importance of the appraisers to the success of the administration of performance appraisal, many organisations have done little to motivate or prepare appraisers to conduct effective appraisals.

The researcher is of the opinion that one cannot effectively participate in the implementation of a particular performance appraisal system without the knowledge, experience and requisite skills. Priority should therefore be given to training before one can conduct performance appraisals. In a study of teacher's perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher appraisal in Botswana, responses to the open-ended items indicated inadequate understanding of the appraisal system and procedures that led to

poorly conducted staff appraisals (Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper, 2006:435). It is worth noting that the system that the teachers in Botswana use is similar to the system that the nurse educators use in nursing colleges. This system is for all government employees. Inadequate knowledge regarding performance appraisal does not only affect nurse educators, but it is also a problem among secondary (high) school teachers in Botswana. The results indicated that the nurse educators would appreciate even basic training or sensitisation on performance appraisal to help them to approach what is expected of them.

The study conclusively indicated that there was a need for appraisers to be guided on how to conduct effective performance appraisals by following the process of performance appraisal, monitoring performance, as well as coaching and mentoring appraisees (Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper, 2006:435).

Dhiman and Singh (2007:83) explain that without knowledge on how to conduct performance appraisals, appraisers in the nursing colleges will not be equipped with the tools to effectively carry out staff performance appraisals. The results of this study indicate that as a result of lack of training, the way the performance appraisal system is conducted demotivates and frustrates both the appraisers and appraisees and does not yield good results; therefore, the nurse educators perceive the whole appraisal process as something that wastes their time and the government's resources. This was illustrated by the results of the study showing that there is no consistency in the way the performance appraisal is conducted, as every appraiser administers it according to their understanding or according to how they have seen it being done. It then changes from one appraiser to the other. The ideal situation, according to the researcher, is one where the nurse educators are trained so that there is consistency.

According to Walsh (2003:7) literature shows relative agreement regarding the structural and procedural components of a well-designed performance appraisal system. Many organisations have implemented systems that are based on accepted practices and procedures only to have them rejected by the users. Clearly, there is more to an effective performance appraisal system than a technically sound rating format and well-defined policies and procedures. Walsh, (2003:7) goes on to explain that there is, however, no commonly accepted method or most efficient approach to

evaluating the effectiveness or success of a performance appraisal system based on a set of well-defined variables.

Identifying and organising the most important variables in performance appraisal has proved to be a challenging task to researchers and practitioners. In agreement with Walsh (2003:7) the researcher is of the opinion that the focus of improving the processes of performance appraisal in nursing colleges in Botswana should be based on research findings, because there is no documented system that has been said to be perfect. The results of this study show that in cases where training was done, it was not effective because the nurse educators that have been trained have not demonstrated an understanding of how to conduct performance appraisal. There were also some performance appraisal tools that were introduced after the training, and appraisers had to figure out how to use the tool.

Pulakos highlights that a critical component that affects the appraisers' ability to appraise effectively is their knowledge of appraisal norms, policies, procedures, and outcomes, as well as the organisational support in terms of training on performance appraisal (as cited by Dhiman & Singh, 2007: 84). Acts, policies and procedures are the rules by which an organisation's success or failure is pursued, and the lack of such knowledge is not an acceptable excuse. Literature suggests that legislation, values, philosophy and the guiding principles of performance appraisal are key to the understanding of the performance appraisal (Kumar 2005: 12, and Guideline System and reference Manual, Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:7). According to the researcher, the guiding documents for performance appraisal differ from country to country and from organisation to organisation. Knowledge on the legal and guiding documents on performance appraisal would reduce lawsuits because it improves the application and utilisation of performance appraisals.

According to Kuvaas (2006:510) there is a need to have a performance appraisal policy in an organisation in order to improve employee performance. Fineman (2006: 270) puts forward that a performance appraisal policy can be the best tool for measuring employee performance and guiding employee development and improvement, although it can be seen as a frustrating ritual of the modern organisation. Performance appraisal policy procedures can be poorly designed, resulting in a cumbersome and difficult policy to administer (Stone 2002:2). The results showed that the available policy framework is

not known by the nurse educators, undermining its use in training the nurse educators and guiding the administration of performance appraisal. This was illustrated when the study participants alluded to the fact that they did not even know if there was a manual or a policy that is followed. Commitment from the organisation to implement performance appraisal policy correctly is very important. This commitment includes logical and technical support, in-depth job analysis and on-going training (Wade & Recardo, 2001:38).

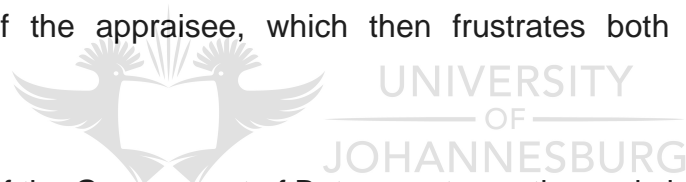
Appraisers with knowledge of legal compliance issues would be in a position to generate a written rating document that is representative of the appraisee's actual performance and not one that is filled with unsubstantiated information that would make the document difficult to legally defend (Kumar, 2005:12). Botswana as a country has policy guidelines, procedures and laws that guide and govern the administration of a performance appraisal system within the public service. These include the Public Service Act number 30 of 2008, The Consolidated General Orders of 1996 and the Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines for the Botswana Public Service (2003). Appraisers and appraisees have to be trained on the application of these legal documents to the performance appraisal process. According to the findings of this study, the nurse educators did not know of the existence of said guiding documents.

Part V, clause 15 of the Public Service Act (Act number 30 of 2008) states that an officer responsible for supervising the employee and for monitoring and assessing the performance of the employee, shall ensure that the performance assessment cycle is adhered to by conducting annual performance appraisals and conducting at least two performance reviews in an assessment cycle.

According to the Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines for the Botswana Public Service (2003:4) the Government of Botswana, as the employer, has delegated well-defined responsibilities and authorities to ministries across the public service so that they can be held accountable for decisions associated with matters relating to employee performance and for making efforts to engage employees in the performance appraisal process. Employees are held accountable for their own performance level and for their contributions to the objectives of the

government. Lack of training, as revealed in the results, can hamper the good intentions of the performance appraisal system.

The heads of departments must clearly define in their organisations which officers are supervisors with the responsibility to appraise staff and submit staff performance appraisal forms. They must ensure that these supervisors are well trained on the completion of staff performance appraisal forms and their implications (The Consolidated Botswana Public Service General Orders, 1996:18). The reporting officer who has to be trained on the administration of staff appraisal forms is normally the officer's immediate supervisor. The results of this study have demonstrated that owing to lack of training, the Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines (2003) are not followed in the colleges of nursing. The guideline prescribes that the immediate supervisor should be the one administering the performance appraisal. In some instances, according to the results, the nurse educators are appraised by the heads of department, who have administrative duties to perform as well. Therefore, the head of department fails to monitor and capture the actual performance of the appraisee, which then frustrates both the appraiser and the appraisee.



It is the policy of the Government of Botswana to continuously improve the effectiveness of its organisations and people so as to achieve National Development Plans (NDP) and the National Vision 2016. The intent of the policy framework is to provide an objective approach for improving and rewarding employee performance in a manner that facilitates the improvement of an organisation's overall performance. The Botswana Performance-based Reward System provides a process that allows a linkage between the performance appraisal system and individual accountability. Successful performance occurs when employees know what to do, are able to do it, want to do it and are trained to do it (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and guidelines, 2003:3).

According to the Handbook for Staffing Practices in Student Affairs, University of Georgia (n.d.), the rationale for having a policy on performance appraisal is that it can be viewed as the process of assessing and recording staff performance for the purpose of making judgments about employees that lead to decisions.

Literature points out that training will enhance the nurse educator's knowledge of the objective of conducting performance appraisals and promote ownership. Some of the participants view the performance appraisal system as something done for the appraisers or for the government by indicating that they would not stress themselves about something they do not understand. This is supported by the statement that the appraisers would rather ask the appraisees to appraise themselves and then have them both sign for the marks. The objectives of performance appraisal policy can best be understood in terms of potential benefits Norman, Resnick-West & Lawler as quoted by (Handbook for staffing practices in student affairs: University of Georgia. n.d.).

The objectives of performance appraisal policy include increasing motivation to perform effectively, increasing self-esteem, gaining new insight into staff and supervisors, better clarifying and defining job functions and responsibilities, developing valuable communication among appraisal participants, encouraging increased self-understanding among staff as well as insight into the kind of development activities that are of value, and distributing rewards on a fair and credible basis. It also includes clarifying organisational goals so they can be more readily accepted and improve institutional/departmental manpower planning, test validation, and development of training programmes. In my opinion, training should be done in such a way that it will promote ownership of the system and accountability. This would greatly reduce frustrations that are related to performance appraisal administration and improve the way the appraisees perceive performance appraisal (Handbook for staffing practices in student affairs: University of Georgia. n.d.).

Although this was not shown by the results, literature further suggests that appraisers and appraisees must have knowledge and understanding of the philosophy and nature of the appraisal system (Kumar, 2005:8). The philosophy of performance appraisal is to deliver on set and agreed plans, improve and sustain productivity at all levels and inculcate a culture of performance, accountability and focus on results (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:16,17). The philosophy influences the practice of performance appraisal and it forms the fabric of related decision-making.

Performance appraisal in the Botswana public sector is premised on Botswana's National Vision 2016, which recognises the importance of improving the performance of the public service. The aim is to improve quality, effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency

in service delivery. One of the hallmarks of the modern philosophy of the performance appraisal system is performance orientation (Sou, 2001:38). Employees and supervisors are expected to continuously improve performance levels and standards of performance, removing barriers and bottlenecks that prevent individuals from reaching new heights in performance. All employees are encouraged to have initiative and build on their will and capacity to improve organisational performance (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:15).

According to Dechev (2010:61) performance appraisal should add value; otherwise, problems with resistance and non-participation will pop up on the surface. It should also identify college barriers, offer an opportunity to explore career aspirations and provide employees with feedback and honest dialogue. The understanding of the purpose and philosophy of performance appraisal helps appraisers to conduct performance appraisals meaningfully and fairly, and therefore preventing potential legal actions. An effective performance appraisal process must drive employee behaviour to align with the organisation's core values, goals and strategy (Pulakos, 2004:1).

There is no right way to conduct a performance appraisal, but it still has to be conducted appropriately to avoid legal issues that can place the nursing college at risk. It should also be remembered that although objective measures of performance often suffer from several glaring weaknesses like modification of performance results by situational characteristics, literature suggests the importance of performance appraisal principles that appraisers and appraisees should follow for effective administration of a performance appraisal system. This was also not revealed by the results of the study. The Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors (2006:6), Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, (2006:293) and Kirkpatrick (2006:67) have suggested the following general principles of performance appraisal to form part of the preparation of the managers, appraisers and appraisees for the administration of performance appraisal:

- Appraisers must have knowledge and understanding of the performance appraisal process and use it effectively. All appraisers must be well trained on performance appraisal and training must be followed by refresher training sessions so that appraisers do not lose their skills and competencies.

- Always start with the description of the nurse educator's job design to determine the necessary characteristics for successful job performance. From the job design, determine the job standards that must be communicated and accepted by the management and the appraisees.
- The format must be practical and simple. A long and difficult tool or format yields confusion and de-motivation. The appraisal format should be practical, simple and aim at fulfilling its basic functions. Cintron & Flaniken (n.d.: 31) explain that performance criteria, rating procedures and feedback should facilitate communication between the appraisers and appraisees concerning behaviour, work processes and opportunities to improve. Komati & Zhou (2013:2) are of the opinion that simplifying the system is one of the most efficient and effective improvements to make to a performance appraisal system.
- Performance appraisal must be done regularly and routinely. Performance appraisal must also be structured formally with agreed schedules. Informal contacts and interactions should be incorporated within the formal schedule, but must also be communicated.
- Feedback has to be timely and noticeable. If feedback is not timely, it loses its value and may only have limited influence on performance. The appraisee must be made aware of the information used in the appraisal. The performance appraisal process encourages on-going feedback.
- The responsibility for performance appraisal should be placed at a senior level in the organisation so as to ensure commitment and involvement throughout the management hierarchy.
- The appraisal period is normally the total reporting period, which varies from country to country or from institution to institution. The reporting period for the colleges of nursing is in accordance with the Botswana Government financial year, which starts on 1st April and ends on 31st May of the following year.
- The person who is to appraise an employee is the appraisee's immediate supervisor. According to Grobler et al. (2006:293), the standard approach has been to have a single rater, with the immediate supervisor performing appraisal as a managerial duty.

- The criteria for individual performance appraisal must be aligned with the goals of the unit and the nursing college. The individual performance appraisals apply directly to the performance standards and objectives expected of the nurse educator.
- Performance appraisal has to contribute to improved performance and individual professional development. Performance appraisal concentrates on areas of strength, as well as the appraisees' weaknesses. The performance appraisal system makes provision for individual development plans that serve to initiate preventive and corrective actions, as well as making adjustments to improve the appraisees' performance.

Training has been said to be an appropriate step that can be taken to improve the way performance appraisals are conducted. It creates an awareness and acceptance of the system by both the appraisers and appraisees (Wikipedia, 2012:4). It therefore has to include all the necessary content for the nurse educators to be able to have adequate knowledge regarding performance appraisal. According to the results, none of the principles is being followed and none of the participants mentioned anything concerning principles. Hence, one can subjectively conclude that the nurse educators did not know anything about the principles of performance appraisal because they were not trained, or because the training was not effective for those who had once been trained.

The sub-themes that emerged from the lack of knowledge regarding performance appraisal were: inadequate knowledge by the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process and inadequate knowledge by the appraisers regarding mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal period.

4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Inadequate knowledge of the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process

Saeed & Shahbaz, (2011:63) are of the same view as the study participants, mentioning that the other commonly identified issue hindering the success of the performance appraisal is the employee's lack of understanding of the performance appraisal process. They further explained that some performance appraisal consultants and trainers believe that the performance appraisal system has to achieve what is expected.

According to the researcher, the understanding of the process of performance appraisal by the appraisers should be taken very seriously, because it is the yardstick for the success of the performance appraisal in any organisation. The researcher is of the opinion that the understanding of the process of performance appraisal should answer the 'what and why' of performance appraisal. Just as the literature and the study participants suggested, appraisers should therefore be thoroughly trained on the process of performance appraisal.

In this study, participants clearly articulated the fact that appraisers and appraisees do not understand the details of the process of performance appraisal. According to Pulakos (2004:89), effective performance appraisal systems have a well-articulated process for accomplishing performance appraisal activities, with defined roles and timelines for both appraisers and appraisees. To address the need for appraisers to understand the performance appraisal process, a number of authors and researchers on performance appraisal, like Armstrong (2009:621), have identified four basic integrated phases in the performance appraisal process that appraisers and appraisees have to know very well in order for them to conduct effective performance appraisals. Details of each phase with specific steps will be described below:

Phase 1: Performance planning

Phase 2: Performance management

Phase 3: The final performance appraisal review

The stages of each phase are described to enable better understanding of the performance appraisal process.

(a) Phase 1: Performance Planning

Performance planning is basically a discussion. It is the first and most important phase of an effective performance appraisal process (Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006:6). At the beginning of the performance appraisal cycle, it is important to review with the employees, their performance expectations (Pulakos, 2004:4). This phase has been described as the bedrock that sets the coming year's activities into motion. The performance planning

stage is a stage in which the manager plans for the realisation of performance expectations and arranges for the availability of resources required for attaining the set objectives. It is said to be the most valuable part of the performance appraisal process. It is also referred to as the planning conversation or the performance and development agreement (Armstrong, 2009:621). This is an enabling stage. The Botswana Government performance period is from the 1st of April to the 31st of March of the following year (Performance Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:10).

Participants in this study pointed out that their supervisors only call for marks when they are asked to submit the marks at the Department of Human Resources. When marks for the first quarter are called for, some appraisees do not even have a performance contract, so the contract is quickly drawn up and performance marks figured out. There is no proper planning because the nurse educators do not know if there is a plan to be made. Training of appraisers should aim at teaching them how to conduct a performance plan and come up with a documented and signed performance contract. Training would also emphasise the importance of this stage.

During planning, the appraisee must understand the key tasks of the job, the results and conduct required in the job, and the standards of performance. The performance meeting does not only focus on the discussion of the appraisee's job duties, responsibilities and priorities, but also provides an opportunity for the appraiser to coach the appraisees on how to become more proficient and productive (Supervisor's Guide to Performance Appraisal, UNI, n.d.:3). Performance planning also includes an understanding of the purpose of performance appraisal and a nurse educator's job description in order for the appraisers and managers to be able to determine performance requirements (Grobler et al., 2006:267).

➤ *The purpose of performance appraisal*

As explained in Chapter 1, performance appraisal is a process by which organisations evaluate employee performance based on the pre-set standards. It is a means of getting better results by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competency requirements (Armstrong, 2009:618).

The performance management system enables managers to identify employees who are effective in their jobs and those who are not performing to expectations (Jubenkanda, 2004:86). Effective managers recognise a performance appraisal system as a tool for managing rather than a tool for measuring subordinates. Such managers use performance appraisal to motivate, direct and develop subordinates, and to maximise access to resources in the organisation to improve productivity (Boachie-Mensah & Seidu, 2012:75). The main purpose of performance appraisal is to help managers to effectively deal with staffing issues in the institutions and use human resources, and ultimately to improve productivity.

A clearly stated purpose and appraisal procedure, unambiguous and relevant rating criteria and standards, as well as clearly stated implications of outcomes for the assessor would improve their ability to appraise (Dhiman & Singh, 2007:84). All the educators should have a thorough understanding of the purpose, principle, process and procedures of performance appraisal.

The results of a study that was conducted in Ghana on employees' perception of their performance appraisal system revealed that employees were not well informed about the time, process and purpose of performance appraisal (Boachie-Mensah & Seidu, 2012:82). Training of appraisers should be on the nuts and bolts of the performance appraisal: what performance appraisal is, the purpose of performance appraisal and how to set objectives (Bacal, 2002:208). Participants in this study pointed out that they participate in the appraisals just because they are required to; otherwise; technically they do not know why they should do the appraisals. The nurse educator's ability to appraise effectively is enhanced with knowledge and skills, resulting in greater motivation of appraisees. Knowledge equips the nurse educators to think and make effective decisions. Highly effective managers and leaders need to manage their own performance as well as the work and productivity of their employees (Alston & Mujtaba, 2009: 25).

The clarity of the purpose of teacher performance appraisal in Botswana plays a crucial role in making the process more effective. However, in the current system, there is a need to enhance this clarity through training and collaboration. All those involved in the

performance appraisal process should possess knowledge and understanding of its purpose if the whole system is to be effective (Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper, 2006:38).

A good performance appraisal system has both managerial and staff benefits. The organisation's needs and priorities are reflected in the stated purposes of the performance appraisal system. However, the success of such a system depends on the behaviour and dispositions of those participating in the performance appraisal process (Fletcher, 2002: 115; 119). Generally, literature suggests that appraisers can become effective decision-makers when they understand the purpose of performance appraisal and are able to explain it to appraisees. The performance appraisal system must ultimately transform the prevailing culture into one that is committed to providing service in a manner that is user friendly and that is delivered with professionalism and integrity. This can only happen if performance is managed throughout the performance appraisal period.

According to Credlin (n.d.), an effectively designed performance appraisal system serves as a contract between the college and the employee, and acts as a control and evaluation system. Performance appraisal provides a framework for future employee development by identifying and preparing individuals for increased responsibilities. It also establishes the value of an individual's contribution to the college and helps to evaluate individual accomplishments. An effective performance appraisal system provides a format for dialogue between the appraiser and the appraisee. It also improves an understanding of personal goals and concerns and outlines what is expected from employees against their actual performance levels.

➤ *Values of performance appraisal*

Tyre (n.d.) explains that values speak to how things should be accomplished in an organisation, so that daily actions reflect the organisational philosophy. Clearly articulated values result in significant payoffs for appraisers, appraisees and the organisation in terms of career success because they are guided by ethical standards. Jonny (2006:1–8) and the Guideline System and Reference Manual of the Civil Service of Jamaica (2006:1) have suggested that the following values of performance appraisal should be discussed during the planning phase:

Mutual respect and trust – All performance interviews, discussions and feedback are to be conducted on the basis of acceptable principles of courtesy, trust and an understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities.

Clarity and open communication – The formation of open and trusting communication throughout the performance appraisal is vital for an open and participative environment that fosters the development of a positive, proactive and challenging college climate. Appraisees must clearly understand their roles, responsibilities and what is expected of them. Feedback on performance must be given on a continuous basis. Performance appraisal should be done in the presence of the appraisee, and it should be accompanied by constructive dialogue that focuses on ways to enhance the officer's performance and the department's productivity.

Fairness – Decisions and actions are made and taken with due regard to changing circumstances and environments as they relate to the achievement of objectives. All the decisions made should be discussed and agreed upon by the appraiser and the appraisee.

Participatory – An effective appraisal system should involve management, appraisers and appraisees. Appraisal meetings and interviews should be scheduled so that they suit both appraisers and appraisees. An individual development plan should be developed jointly by the appraiser and the appraisee. Appraisers must explain the importance of taking performance appraisal seriously, including participating in all its stages. Participatory performance appraisal is an essential and proven attribute of an effective performance appraisal system (Roberts, 2003:89).

Reliable and consistent – The appraisal system should include both objective and subjective ratings to produce reliable and consistent measurements of performance.

Equitable treatment and fairness – Appraisees must be treated equally and should have appropriate access to the benefits, training and resources needed to achieve the set targets. All decisions made should be with regard to changes in circumstances and environment as they directly relate to the achievement of objectives. Performance appraisals are made against agreed, clearly stated targets.

Racism, religion, and gender sensitive – Appraisers are evaluated on clear work-related elements. Appraisers have to make a point of constantly re-examining their judgments to make sure that they do not discriminate against appraisees with regard to their race, religion and gender. Performance feedback has to be legitimate at all times. Accepted principles of fairness should be applied at all times to avoid lawsuits.

Objectivity – Assessments are made against clearly stated targets

- *Discuss the nurse educator's job design/description*

Grobler et al. (2006:137) explain that a job design determines how work is performed and therefore greatly affects how an employee feels about a job, how much authority the employee has over the job, how much decision-making an employee performs on the job and how many tasks an employee should complete. Job design is the description of the content, functions and relationships of the job in a way that both accomplishes organisational goals and satisfies the personal needs of the individual job-holder, in this case, the nurse educator. The college managers, human resource practitioners and nurse educators are supposed to be partners in the development of these job designs.

As already explained, the colleges of nursing fall under Botswana's Ministry of Health, they are public institutions and the public service of Botswana is managed by the Department of Public Service Management. This department is responsible for the development of job designs for the various government departments. However, the researcher is of the opinion that a copy of the nurse educator's job design should be obtained from the Department of Public Service Management.

The process of developing job designs and the involvement of critical stakeholders in the Botswana public service is yet another interesting topic to be researched. It would be of benefit if the nurse educators could be involved by the Department of Public Service Management in the development and the review of the nurse educator's job design.

From the explanation of what a job design is, it is quite clear that appraisers have to thoroughly understand a nurse educator's job design in order for them to lead the

discussion that helps the appraisees understand their job purpose, roles and responsibilities. The job purpose is a statement that defines in broad terms what the post holder is held accountable for. An accurately phrased job purpose is a safeguard for all concerned. It must point out future outcomes and be descriptive of the end results for which the job-holder is responsible. The job purpose must show its uniqueness to a particular post (a role that is person-specific). For example, all teachers have a teaching role, but not all of them are coordinators or heads of department (Poster & Poster, 1993: 43, 44). The results of this study did not demonstrate the nurse educators' knowledge of the importance of discussing the values of performance appraisal and the nurse educator's job design.

➤ *Contracting*

This is a crucial stage in the performance planning phase. The performance contract is the nurse educator's personal commitment to the desired objectives, their work performance and the expectations for their individual behaviour. Contracting is mainly the discussion, agreement and documentation of the key issues of the performance appraisal contract. Contracting is a stage where the appraiser and the appraisee discuss and agree upon performance expectations and goals for the upcoming year, as well as identify key responsibilities using the job description, specific assignments, tasks, projects and operational and development goals. The appraiser and the appraisee also discuss competencies/values and ensure a common understanding of the expected behaviour, as well as agree on a schedule for regular coaching, mentoring and the dates for the quarterly performance reviews (New York University Performance Appraisal Communication Guide for Supervisors, n.d.).

The contract ends with documentation of what has been agreed between the appraiser and the appraisee, and is sealed by the parties signing to show their commitment (Poster & Poster, 1993:47). Both the appraiser and the appraisee are signatories to the performance contract.

According to the researcher, the performance contract (agreement) is intended to set high standards for every nurse educator so that they can meaningfully contribute to the achievement of the college's overall objectives by asking them to set their own objectives. High performance will only take place when expectations are high. The idea

is to allow the nurse educators to have new experiences and to inspire each other to be motivated to exceed their limitations, break out of their comfort zone and achieve something that will honour them, the college and the students, and above all, help them feel proud of their contribution to their own success.

The performance appraisal contracting should be discussed, documented and signed as close as possible to the beginning of the new performance period to allow the appraisees to have a bulk of time to deliver on them (Appraisal Smart, 2013:2). The key issues to be discussed during the contracting stage are discussed separately:

- Agreement on the individual's key performance areas (KPAs), key performance indicators (KPIs) and tracking sources.

Both the KPAs and the KPIs are part of the contract and should be discussed during contracting. Appraisers and appraisees can only begin to define the objectives if they both understand and agree on the KPAs and KPIs.

Key Performance Areas (KPAs), according to Poster & Poster (1993:47), are a means of grouping responsibilities under a limited number of headings. They delineate areas of responsibility. They must also be areas important enough to be appraised. KPAs are central to an integrated growth plan, and the process of arriving at the KPAs contributes to clarifying the expected performance results, therefore helping the appraisee stay focused.

Examples of the nurse educator's KPAs include: teaching, learning and assessment; management and administration; research; community engagement; and personal professional development.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are a means of giving substance to the KPAs by setting out what needs to be done to realise them during contracting. They must be phrased with absolute clarity. It is from the KPAs that the related KPIs are set. The KPIs are quantifiable measurements that are agreed to beforehand and reflect critical success factors. For example, the college can focus its KPIs on the graduation rates of students, while the appraisees can focus their KPIs on the success rate in a particular subject or the number of students who are above average (Poster & Poster, 1993:47).

KPIs measure performance. They can be used to evaluate success in a particular activity. Success is defined as making progress towards strategic objectives. Choosing the right KPIs depends on what is important to the college.

Tracking sources: It is important that information sources that can be used to effectively and efficiently track performance are identified. According to the Guideline System and Reference Manual for the Civil Service of Jamaica (2006: 3, 4), tracking sources should always be part of the discussion of the performance contract. The information sources have to be kept minimal to simplify the performance appraisal process and they must provide sufficient and reliable performance information. Performance tracking sources should be verifiable and measurable.

Examples of performance tracking sources include learner guides, mark sheets, timetables and class lists (University of Johannesburg Academic Performance Contract, 2013:1).

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- Identify the most important competencies that the individual must display in doing the job

During a performance planning meeting, the appraiser and the appraisee identify and agree on the competencies required for the appraisee to display superior performance. Appraisers must commit themselves to provide appraisee with training, coaching, mentoring and other competency development activities throughout the performance period (Workitect, 2006:1, 2).

There are at least nine general competencies that all staff is accountable for. These competencies are the skills, attributes, traits or behaviours that are expected of everyone regardless of their job description. The nine competencies are: leadership, decision-making, initiative, problem solving, team building, knowledge of work, managing diversity, quality/output and customer care (Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006: 37).

Most of these competencies can be learnt through self-initiated learning (e.g. observation and emulation, trial and error) as well as a positive attitude and a willingness to break out of one's comfort zone. Although the appraisers and the rest of the management team are responsible for guiding the appraisees, it takes commitment for them to achieve professional development (Saville Consulting, 2009:3; Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006: 37; Performance and Development and Review Document FORM DPSM 6, 2006:4, 5; Teacher Performance Appraisal, 2011: 7).

- Developing a common understanding of the goals and objectives that need to be accomplished

From the three elements – job specification, KPAs and KPIs – the appraiser and the appraisee together establish the objectives of the appraisee. Objectives indicate agreed expectations of achievement or attainment, if possible within the agreed period of time. The objectives need to be related to the nursing college's objectives (Poster & Poster, 1993:47).

Clear performance objectives make the performance appraisal process much easier for both appraisers and appraisees. They enable supervisors to focus directly on job performance rather than personality. The training of appraisers should focus on teaching them to set realistic objectives. Appraisers have to be prepared to determine specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related (SMART) objectives and learn how to talk about them from the content. The objectives are to be 1) clearly defined; 2) measurable and with verifiable results; 3) accepted – the objectives are a result of a clear agreement on operational and business objectives; 4) Realistic – the objectives can be achieved in the current business context and as part of the overall strategy; and 5) time-related – the period for the completion of the objectives is determined (Elverfeldt, 2005:26 & 28).

Setting objectives is a participatory activity, and the importance of involving appraisees in the development of objectives that are in line with the college's objectives has to be emphasised. Objectives should be set jointly with the appraisees (Kumar, 2005:11), and only if conflicts arise that cannot be resolved, the appraiser or line manager makes the final decision on the strength of his/her overall responsibility for the college and

(Elverfeldt, 2005:26). The appraisal system needs to be based on objectives whose achievement is measurable (Lawler, 2010:5).

Objectives should be flexible to allow for assistance or the adjustment of targets in line with resources and priorities. During the setting of objectives there has to be consensus between the appraiser and the appraisee with the aim of establishing objectives that will 1) improve the performance of the individual nurse educator; and 2) raise the standard of what the college collectively has to offer to the students and stakeholders. From the list of objectives developed, what follows is prioritising the objectives with the two aims in mind (Poster & Poster, 1993:50).

- Having a common understanding of the standards and ratings

The U.S Department of the Interior (2004:9) defines performance standards as expressions of performance threshold(s), or expectation(s) that must be met for each element at a particular level of performance. They must be focused on results and include credible measures (quality, quantity, timelines and cost effectiveness). Appraisers need to understand what standards of performance are in order to conduct effective performance appraisals and be able to convey these standards to the appraisee during contracting.

Anthony, Kacmar and Perrewe (2002: 363) are of the idea that performance standards should be derived from the job design information; in these, the levels of performance deemed to be acceptable versus those that are unacceptable are developed. They further explain that a good performance standard describes what an employee should have produced or accomplished upon the completion of a specific activity. It focuses on the results or the degree of accomplishment achieved. It is therefore important to include the formulation and understanding of standards in the training of the appraisers in the nursing colleges. Kirkpatrick (2006: 17) defines performance standards as the conditions that exist when the work has been done in an acceptable manner. They explain how well the job should be done. The standards become the basis on which performance should be judged. Standards are necessary to guide the behaviour of nurse educators.

The following are some of the examples of performance appraisal standards as discussed in the U.S. Performance Appraisal Handbook (2004:7):

- **Quality:** Describes how well the nurse educator is expected to perform the work. This standard specifies accuracy, precision, appearance or effectiveness: e.g. 100% of students' projects have been marked and the marks moderated and accepted without queries. Measures include the customer (student) satisfaction rate, which can be measured through a customer survey or feedback.
- **Quantity:** Addresses how much work the nurse educator is expected to produce within a certain period of time. Measures are expressed as a number of products or services expected, or as a general result to achieve.
- **Timelines:** Addresses how quickly, when, or by what date the employee is expected to produce the work.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Addresses Pula savings or cost control. These should address cost-effectiveness on specific resource levels (money, personnel or time) that can generally be documented and measured, e.g. disseminating a study guide using student e-mails as opposed to giving hard copies or engaging a trainer to do the training in-house to cater for a larger group as opposed to sending people for a short course.
- **Effects of effort:** Addresses the ultimate effect to be obtained and expands statements of effectiveness by using phrases such as: 'so that', 'in order to', or 'as shown by'.
- **Manner of performance:** Describes conditions in which an individual's personal behaviour has an effect on performance, for example; whether it assists other employees in the work unit in accomplishing assignments.

Performance rating is a way of judging performance. It is an effective way to justify, support, clarify, qualify or explain the ratings that the appraiser assigns to the appraisee's performance, and this explains why it is very important to always fill in the comment section of the appraisal. Justifications and explanations of ratings should always correlate with the ratings of performance and with the message that one sends to the appraisees about their quality of performance (Montgomery College Performance

Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006:37). Most institutions use numbers or percentages to rate appraisees, but whatever scale is used, appraisers should have the option of indicating 'not applicable' or 'do not know' when appropriate. Six choices including 'not applicable' or 'do not know' are generally considered sufficient to eliminate ambiguity, accurately capture the appraiser's opinion and measure subtle behavioural changes.

According to the researcher, ratings should therefore be discussed during contracting to promote a common understanding between the appraisee and appraiser. Holding discussions with the appraisee helps to reduce bias and also helps the appraisees to rate themselves objectively. Different articles and manuals (Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006:37, and Kirkpatrick, 2006:37- 40) have suggested the following ways to guide ratings:

- Exceptional/Outstanding (5 or 95–100%): The nurse educator demonstrates particularly excellent performance that is of such high quality that organisational goals have been achieved that would have otherwise not been achieved. The employee demonstrates mastery of technical skills and a thorough understanding of the mission of the organisation and that has a fundamental impact of the completion of programme objectives. The nurse educator exerts a major positive influence on management practices, operational procedures and/or programme implementation, which contributes substantially to organisational growth and recognition. Difficult assignments are handled intelligently and effectively with little supervision. Complicated or controversial subjects are presented or explained effectively to a variety of audiences so that desired outcomes are achieved.
- Superior/very good (4 or 80–94%): Employee demonstrates unusually good performance that exceeds expectations in critical areas and exhibits a sustained support of organisational goals. The nurse educator shows a comprehensive understanding of the objectives of the job and the procedures for meeting them. Effective planning by the employee improves the quality of management practices, operating procedures, tasks, assignments and or programme activities.

These nurse educators develop and/or implement workable and cost-effective approaches to meeting organisational goals.

- Fully successful/Good (3 or 65–79%): The employee demonstrates good and sound performance that meets organisational goals. All critical activities are generally completed in a timely manner and the supervisor is kept informed of work issues, alterations and the status of tasks. The employee effectively applies technical skills and organisational knowledge to get the job done. The employee successfully carries out regular duties while also handling any difficult special assignments. The employee communicates clearly and effectively.
 - Minimally successful/satisfactory (2 or 50–64%): The employee's work frequently needs revision or adjustment to meet a minimally successful level. All assignments are completed, but often require assistance from supervisor and or peers. Organisational goals are met only as a result of close supervision. Development and support are required. Employee shows a lack of awareness of policy implications or assignments; inappropriate or incomplete use of programmes or services; circumvention of established procedures, resulting in unnecessary expenditure of time or money; reluctance to accept responsibility; disorganisation in carrying out assignments; lack of clarity in writing and speaking and/or failure to promote team spirit.
 - Unsatisfactory (1 or 49% and below): The employee's performance is unsatisfactory. The quality and quantity of the employee's work are not adequate for the position. Work products do not meet the minimum requirements expected. The employee demonstrates little or no contribution to organisational goals; failure to meet work objectives; inattention to organisational priorities and administrative requirements; poor work habits resulting in missed deadlines and/or incomplete work products; strained work relationships; failure to respond to client's (students') needs; and/or lack of response to supervisor's corrective efforts.
- Frequency of the performance appraisal meetings

The frequency of the formal performance appraisal meetings should be discussed during performance planning. The frequency differs from organisation to organisation. The colleges of nursing in Botswana use the government system of quarterly evaluations. According to Grote (2002:12), once a year the appraiser meets with the appraisee for a performance planning discussion. Over the year, the appraisee works to achieve the goals, objectives and key responsibilities, while the appraiser provides coaching and feedback, creating conditions that motivate and resolve any performance problems that arise. Every quarter, the appraiser and the appraisee meet to review performance against the plans and objectives. This process not only transforms performance appraisal from an annual event to an on-going process, but it will also tightly link the performance of each appraisee with the mission and values of an organisation. Ideally, performance appraisal should be conducted more often (Kondrasuk, 2011: 67).

According to an article by Sytch and Derue (2010), there should be a full record of the employee's activities. If not, research shows that one should base evaluations on the most recent or salient events, which are more readily retrievable from memory. The odds of such an evaluation being comprehensive and unbiased are quite low.

One could then challenge the idea of conducting a yearly review by asking why the appraisees would want to hear about how they are doing just once per year. Generally, a better practice is to have three or four mini conversations per year. That way, employees receive more frequent information and can better gauge where they are and what they need to do to be more effective. Equally important is that employees should be told about what they are doing well so that they continue. The other school of thought is that setting goals once per year is not an ideal practice when change is a constant. Instead, it is better to implement a practice of setting goals each quarter and then adjusting and updating them as needed.

It can be argued that the frequency of a performance appraisal interview depends on the type of appraisal to be conducted. Large organisations generally do appraisals once a year depending on their budget. Organisations that implement developmental appraisal conduct the performance appraisal of employees more than four times a year. Developmental appraisal constantly checks to see if the needs of the appraisee are aligned with organisational goals. The performance-based appraisal takes place once or

twice yearly on a formal basis, but some authors challenge its appropriateness to the organisation (Sytch & Derue, 2010:1).

Nursing colleges in Botswana conduct formal appraisals quarterly, as do other government departments. According to the researcher, the quarterly performance appraisals force appraisers to pay close attention to the appraisee's performance throughout the performance appraisal period, and these appraisals are accompanied by continuous mentoring and coaching. The formal appraisals are complemented by informal feedback in the form of brief discussions that take place weekly or monthly between the appraiser and the appraisee to allow easy mentoring, coaching and monitoring of performance.

- Documenting and signing a performance contract

Discussion of a performance contract should always end with a written and signed contract. The responsibility for this lies with both the appraiser and the appraisee through face-to-face discussion and mutual agreement. The document must represent consensus on what has been decided. The contract is a living and fluid document that can be adjusted during the course of the performance period should there be changes in the objectives or if issues arise that can be a hindrance to performance. The changes should be done following a mutual agreement between the appraiser and the appraisee. The contract serves as a point of departure and reference whenever there are issues and concerns during the performance period. Both the appraiser and the appraisee append their signatures at the end of the contract (Poster & Poster, 1993:47, 53).

(b) Phase 2: Performance Management

Kumar (2005:11) explains that during the performance management phase, the appraiser must monitor and record the appraisees' behaviour and performance, provide feedback and assist them through problem-solving to help them to successfully achieve their delegated responsibilities. For an organisation to be effective in terms of its goals, it is very important to monitor or measure its employees' performance on a regular basis (Anderson, 2002: 2).

The Guideline System and Reference Manual of the Civil Service of Jamaica (2006:3) further explains that the value of an appraisal management system is lost unless the results are continually communicated to the appraisees in a way that encourages them to take positive steps to improve their effectiveness in the workplace. Appraisers have the responsibility to motivate appraisees by creating conditions that allow them to achieve a highly productive level of performance. The more an appraiser knows appraisees' needs and desires related to their work performance, the more the appraiser understands what motivates them. At this stage, the appraiser must display good problem-solving, observational and coaching skills. They must also have knowledge of legal issues (Kumar, 2005:11,12).

During this phase, appraisers have to make effective and non-biased decisions concerning appraisees' performance and skilfully create a written record of their observations and conclusions about the nature of the appraisee's performance (Kumar, 2005:12). This phase is divided into stages that are repeated quarterly until the end of the performance period, when the final performance review is done.

➤ *Stage 1: Gathering performance Appraisal data*

Kirkpatrick (2006:51) states that the appraiser should gather data from sources that make appraisal fair and accurate. If this is not done, the end of year formal appraisal will be based on hazy memories or on only the most recent behaviour and accomplishments of the employee. Kirkpatrick (2006:52) further explains that a performance record is not a yardstick or a rating method. It is a procedure for collecting significant facts about employee performance. These facts are gathered in such a way that they will be of maximum use to the supervisors and management, both in improving the employees' understanding of the requirements for their present job and in developing their potential for more responsible positions. In gathering performance information, the manager should have one objective, and that is to make an accurate appraisal of performance.

Performance information can be obtained from performance records and from other people who have had dealings with the appraisee (Kirkpatrick, 2006:52). Performance records include classroom observations, student growth data, portfolios, student surveys, classroom artefacts and records of quantity of production, quality of work,

compliance with deadlines and schedules, safety, actual costs versus budget costs, absenteeism, and the number of complaints from customers (students) and co-workers. Others who have dealings with the employee include the supervisor, staff personnel, people served by the employee, and even people in other departments with whom the employee works. Information sources should be kept to a minimum, as this assists in simplifying the performance management process. During the performance planning meetings, these should be identified and agreed on with the employee. A number of authors of 360 degree feedback like Alexander (2006:2) suggest the immediate supervisor, peers, subordinates and self-assessment as sources of performance appraisal information. 360 degree performance feedback is a formalized process whereby an individual receives feedback from multiple individuals (Alexander, 2006:2) Professional development activities may include the use of external sources like consultants, coaches and mentors, whose information feeds into the appraiser's report because they are partners in the appraisee's professional development plan.

The more sources are used the better, but each source must be carefully selected to provide objective data. All these data should then be analysed and compared with the standards of performance to arrive at the most accuracy. The researcher recommends training that aims at helping the nurse educators to understand the sources of data, their use in data collection, analysing performance appraisal data and the type of data to collect or record for the purposes of performance appraisal. Through formal and informal observation, continual feedback, non-classroom observation and anecdotal data collection, the appraiser obtains representative samples of the appraisee's performance throughout the performance period from which conclusions about the appraisee's competence are drawn and measured against the established criteria.

Kumar (2005:12) reasons that the training of appraisers should aim at developing their ability to make sound judgements, effective decisions, and write unambiguously and clearly in creating a written document on the appraisees' performance.

- *Stage 2: Appraiser and appraisee preparation for the quarterly appraisals*
- Appraiser preparation for the quarterly appraisals

As coaches, all appraisers should keep a performance log for each appraisee. This is to allow the effective gathering of performance information that is complete and objective (Kirkpatrick, 2006: 57). It is important to have all the relevant documents ready to support the final performance appraisal. These documents include the performance contract, the list of agreed assessment mechanisms for competencies, notes from the quarterly appraisals and the journal notes (Guideline System and Reference Manual; Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:14).

It is important that the appraiser and the appraisee agree on the use of a performance log or journal to record observed performance regularly. This provides an accurate reference for the final performance review. (Guideline System and Reference Manual: Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:4). The guideline further explains that entries to the log should include observations regarding performance, changes in objectives and priorities, new instructions or directions, performance feedback received from other sources, emerging performance difficulties, efforts made to reinforce favourable behaviour and to motivate the appraisee, key performance decisions made with the employee, performance improvements made, changes to developmental needs and potential training opportunities, barriers or opportunities affecting performance, work problems and achievements, performance intervention and any other information that will add value to employee appraisal. This serves to monitor and report on progress and summarise performance. This record-keeping practice also facilitates the coaching and performance diagnosis process, and thus allows the college to put into practice a mind-set of continuous performance improvement.

Throughout the performance period, the appraiser's responsibility is to clarify all issues and concerns, provide training according to the needs of the appraisee, communicate appropriate consequences, provide continuous feedback in the form of informal meetings and remove obstacles that are likely to hinder the performance of the appraisee. Where there is a performance shortcoming, the appraiser needs to clearly identify an employee's performance before discussing it with them. The appraiser also needs to identify exactly what the appraisee must do in order to meet the set performance standards. Training should be provided and performance barriers should be eliminated to facilitate performance improvement (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003: 15).

- Appraisee preparation for the quarterly appraisals

Appraisees have the responsibility to provide their appraisers with current information on their accomplishments, starting from when goals are set. They are the supervisors of their own career. Literature suggests that appraisees have to keep a record of their objectives and achievements (as listed in the performance contract); career objectives and achievements (e.g. published work, volunteer work); barriers to meeting objectives with recommendations, testimonials or comments relative to their performance; feedback received regarding their performance and any changes in the performance appraisal contract. The appraisee then conducts a self-assessment by summarising their achievements during the performance period in relation to the work plan (Guideline System and Reference Manual: Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006: 14, Kirkpatrick, 2006: 57, Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:15).

➤ *Stage 3: The Quarterly Performance Appraisal Meetings*

During the performance management period, the appraiser schedules quarterly feedback sessions during the year in order to assess progress against targets and performance in critical areas of competence, identify any significant obstacles that may require specific interventions, and lastly, offer any assistance or adjust targets in line with resources and priorities (Guideline System and Reference Manual; Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:3). Most authors suggest that performance appraisals that occur between contracting and the final performance appraisal can be conducted just once a year, twice a year (for the mid-year performance period) or quarterly. However, the Performance Review and Evaluation Manual (2001:5) outlines that each calendar year, appraisees should be appraised on or before the anniversary of their appointment to their positions. Appraisers are to establish the annual review date based on any significant change in job duties or appointment to a new position.

The Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines for the Botswana Public Service (2003:15) state that the quarterly appraisal sessions are key to the exchange of information.

Holding a dialogue between the appraiser and the appraisee serves to train, teach and guide, resolve problems, provide positive reinforcement, improve and adjust performance, review and summarise performance to date and initiate and discuss other human resource processes/programmes required to address the appraisee's particular needs and circumstances. The framework further explains that informal feedback need not be scheduled and should occur at least once a week. This informal feedback is conducted throughout the performance appraisal period and can be used as part of the preparation for the quarterly or biannual appraisals.

The Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines for the Botswana Public Service (2003:15) explains that supervisors are strongly encouraged to hold quarterly meetings to review the progress on each objective. As explained before, quarterly appraisals provide an opportunity for the supervisee and supervisor to discuss work and development objectives in relation to progress, barriers, opportunities, resources and tools.

The role of the appraiser is to provide positive reinforcement, review and change work expectations, address the employee's development needs and solve work performance problems, while the role of the appraisee is to seek direction, discuss or inform appraisers of circumstances affecting work expectations, request training and make their own development needs known.

An appraisee or appraiser may initiate the meeting, and if a meeting agenda was prepared during the first step (performance planning), it should be followed. Any performance decisions should be noted and the appraiser must facilitate the communication and understanding of the organisational context required for individual performance (vision, values, objectives, and strategies). This includes coaching appraisees to overcome difficulties, building skills and applying learning to new opportunities. The appraiser has to record observed performance regularly (Guideline System and Reference Manual; Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:4).

The appraiser must conclude all meetings by summarising what was said and what will be done. All sensitive issues must be dealt with immediately. If objectives change or are replaced during the course of the year because of a change in priorities, an addendum should be attached to the performance contract indicating the changes and reasons for

the changes (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:15).

The appraisee has to solicit performance feedback and coaching, communicate openly with his or her supervisor on progress and problems in achieving objectives and actively participate during the performance appraisal meeting. The appraisee works diligently at identifying and removing barriers to performance, or enlists help to remove barriers outside their own control. Appraisees and appraisers have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that fosters and sustains mutual trust, respect and professional collaboration (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:16).

➤ *Stage 4: Dealing with Performance That Does Not Meet Expectations*

If at any time during the course of the year the employee fails to meet the targets and expectations associated with a high priority objective, then the employee's overall performance does not meet expectations.

The appraiser starts by explaining the performance issue and gives specific examples of what the appraisee has to work on and its impact on the appraisee as an individual and to the college as an organisation.

As soon as performance challenges start appearing during the performance period, their root causes must be identified and dealt with appropriately. Not all performance issues need to be addressed through training, as the majority of issues need a thorough analysis to identify the problem and its cause.

An appraiser has to have documentation available. They should mark entries in employee notes or journals with paperclips so that they can quickly show examples of problems the employee has had with performance and/or behaviour during the past year. They should also document the times they have spoken to the employee about his/her performance. This chronological history will assist in discussing the specific dates of performance deficiencies. Appraisers should have written performance standards to show the employee (these standards should be distributed to all employees when they are hired or when a promotion is granted). The employee should

be shown examples of how their work does not meet performance objectives and the possible cause of the deficiency should be discussed with them.

The appraiser and the appraisee explore ways to address the performance issue together, identify obstacles to success and develop a performance plan for improvement, taking into consideration the strengths that the appraisee has (Guideline System and Reference Manual; Civil Service of Jamaica, 2006:8). Short-term goals that are specific and achievable should be set for the employee, and the level of performance expected for the person's work to be considered acceptable should be explicitly stated.

A contract with the employee to improve performance within a certain period of time should be made, and measurable standards for improvement should also be set. The appraiser and appraisee should then work together to determine how performance objectives can be accomplished. The appraiser should be positive about the employee's ability to improve, and an action plan should be established with the appraisee. The appraisee should schedule a mentoring and coaching programme with a senior co-worker or peer, or closer supervision. Action plans may also include job reassignment or transfer, referral to the employee assistance programme for counselling and considering lowering performance standards for a short time.

A 'follow-up on progress' meeting should be scheduled in one or two months to assess the progress that has been made or establish another way to monitor the worker's progress towards achieving the established goals.

The appraiser should consult with the Department of Human Resources or the ministry performance unit for guidance and support with performance that does not meet expectations and/or for implementing a training and development work plan, a demotion or a disciplinary action such as a termination of service in accordance with the Botswana Government General Orders (Performance Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:15).

- Monitoring performance

Performance appraisal, as already stated, is a continuous process involving on-going feedback. Even if performance is appraised only quarterly or annually, it has to be managed each day throughout the performance appraisal period through monitoring. The research participants perceived monitoring as very important in performance appraisal and are of the opinion that appraisers should monitor appraisees, but not police them. The respondents' inadequate knowledge regarding the performance appraisal process showed quite clearly that performance monitoring is not done.

Monitoring forms part of the appraisal process. It is not a stage; rather, it is a continuous activity that cuts across all the stages. Appraisers should monitor appraisees' performance of delegated assignments and projects. Monitoring means consistently measuring performance and providing on-going feedback to employees and work groups on their progress towards reaching their goals. Supervisors can identify unacceptable performance at any time during the appraisal period and provide assistance to address such performance rather than wait until the formal performance appraisal (Mars, 2007:35).

Laurel (2013:1) explains that monitoring involves conducting periodic checks to determine an appraisee's level of performance in relation to established standards. Monitoring provides the data by which performance can be appraised at the end of the performance period.

In the researcher's opinion, appraisers who have no time to monitor and facilitate the performance of the appraisees are like nurse educators who have no time to follow students in their clinical practice. The issue as explained in the interviews is that appraisers depend on the appraisees to tell them what they have achieved, how and when. Appraisees are likely not to tell the truth on realising that their performance is not monitored.

According to the researcher, monitoring helps the appraisers to conduct performance appraisals responsibly and not just depend on the appraisees to tell them what they have done. It also promotes trust, commitment and avoids unfairness. It has been found that monitoring is crippled by the practice of not being appraised by one's immediate

supervisor. If the heads of departments appraise, they tend to focus on a large number of appraisees, making it difficult to monitor performance. In response to a question on how performance appraisal can be improved in nursing colleges, the nurse educators opined that line managers or immediate supervisors are most suitable for conducting the appraisals because they work closely with the appraisees. Therefore, they know them better and would also be able to monitor them more closely and effectively.

Monitoring can take several forms, which depend on the nature of the performance that is being appraised. However, it is advisable to use existing systems or tools that allow close monitoring like reviewing work done, observing appraisee activities, reading reports, charts, time sheets, work records or logs and appraisee self-reporting (Laurel, 2013:1).

Besides working closely with appraisees to monitor their performance, some organisations use computer methods that allow appraisers to assess if appraisees are working as expected or doing their personal errands. It has been argued by researchers that the use of computer methods has legal implications for employee privacy and apparent increases in stress from the constant monitoring of performance. Nevertheless, supporters of the computer based monitoring systems claim that from the worker's perspective, there are several benefits, like provision of timely feedback on work performance, which enable employees to take corrective action when necessary. Regular feedback may satisfy the appraisee's need for self-evaluation and reduce performance uncertainty (Schleifer & Shell, 1992: 49–50).

- Appraisee dissatisfaction with the performance appraisal marks

Dissatisfaction with performance appraisal can happen during the quarterly review meetings or during the final review meeting. Appraisee dissatisfaction with performance appraisal scores would be positively related to work performance because performance appraisal often includes equipping employees with new knowledge and skills. It may also contribute to employees' perceived investment in their development and feedback. Using a social exchange lens, employees who believe their organisation is committed to providing them with developmental activities may feel obliged to repay the organisation through high work performance. However, should it happen that the appraisee is not

satisfied with their performance appraisal results, steps have to be taken to address the dissatisfaction.

The performance appraisal system used in the nursing colleges in Botswana does not outline a performance appraisal appeals procedure. The Botswana Public Service's Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines are also silent on the issue of performance appraisal appeals. In a brief discussion with one of the human resource officers about performance appraisal appeals, it was clear that there was no system in place to address them. Officers are advised to follow the appeals procedure in the 1996 Botswana Public Service General Orders. Literature suggests that giving the employee the right to appeal an unsatisfactory performance appraisal to a higher level of supervision enhances the employee's perception of the performance appraisal as fair and promotes good employee relations (Mayhew, 2013:1).

According to section 58 of the Consolidated General Orders (1996:45), any officer against whom an adverse decision has been made under this section shall have a right to appeal at each of the following levels above the level at which such adverse decision was made, which appeals shall be prosecuted in the order given: Head of station; Head of department; Director; Permanent secretary; Permanent Secretary to the President lastly, the Public Service Commission. The Consolidated General Order further explains that each of such appeals shall be in writing, shall be delivered within fourteen days to the person or body to whom the appeal is being made, and shall state in full the grounds for the appeal and the part of the decision being appealed against.

Mayhew (2013:1) has suggested that the appraisee has to state the intention to appeal the unsatisfactory performance in a non-confrontational manner. Upon learning of the intention to appeal the performance appraisal, the appraiser may give the appraisee an opportunity to explain the reason why they see the appraisal as unfair and may review it with the appraisee. It may also be advisable to review the employee handbook's policy on appealing a performance appraisal and to photocopy the performance appraisal to use as a working copy for drafting the appeal. A comparison of the previous year's performance appraisal with the current one should be made and all performance appraisal materials available should also be reviewed. The appraisee is to fill the performance appraisal appeals form or compose a letter stating the reasons why the

performance appraisal is unfair, as well as provide concrete examples of job performance that illustrate these comparisons. While writing the appeal, a line-by-line comparison of previous appraisals to the current one should be made, giving examples showing how performance meets or exceeds performance standards by pointing out the absence of any warning notices or disciplinary forms regarding performance throughout the performance period. The appeal should be finalised by attaching copies of pertinent documents and scheduling a meeting with the appraiser's supervisor. The supervisor may schedule a meeting with the human resources officer or the next level of management to review the appeal. The results of the appeal shall be notified in writing to the appraisee (Botswana General Orders, 1996:46 and Mayhew, 2013:1).

(c) Phase 3: The Final Performance Appraisal Review/Interview

The final performance appraisal interview is an important phase in the process of performance appraisal. It takes place at the end of the performance appraisal period, just before the beginning of the new period. The Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines for the Botswana Public Service (2003:19) affirm this by explaining that the final performance appraisal meeting marks the end of a performance appraisal period. It occurs at the end of the performance period just before commencing the development of the next year's performance and development plan. This differs from organisation to organisation. The performance appraisal system used in the nursing colleges in Botswana starts on the 1st of April and ends on the 31st of March of the following year. Therefore, the final performance interview is done during the last week of March.

The final performance appraisal meeting's sole purpose is to summarise and document all discussions that occurred between the signing of the plan and the final performance appraisal meeting. It is a conversation that sums up the feedback that has been occurring between the appraisee and the appraiser. It is a very important part of the appraisal process that requires the appraisers and appraisees to be well prepared for it to be fruitful. The performance appraisal interview gives the appraiser an opportunity to discuss the appraisee's performance record and to explore areas of possible improvement and growth. It also provides an opportunity to identify the appraisee's attitudes and feelings more thoroughly and thus enhances mutual understanding and improves communication.

The final performance appraisal highlights achievements so that they can be recognised, acknowledged and valued. It raises constraints that affect performance for discussion so that they can begin to be resolved. The meeting also sets a tone to agree on what is expected (that is, significant job segments and standards of performance) for the next appraisal performance (Kirkpatrick, 2006:56).

The final review has to be well planned and conducted with sensitivity (Montgomery College Performance Appraisal Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors, 2006:7). The New York University Performance Appraisal Communication Guide for Supervisors (n.d.) explains that the meeting is normally face-to-face and takes place in a private location. Sufficient time is allowed for discussion.

According to Plowman (2012:1), companies understand that all performance factors are not equally important and use weighted averages to obtain a better, more rounded picture of the appraisee's successes and failures in terms of performance. The overall performance rating is achieved by multiplying the average performance rating by 0.8, and the overall rating for the personal attributes (behaviour) is obtained by multiplying the average results by 0.2 (Performance-Based Reward System Form DPSM 6, 2006: 2, 5). The two are then added together to get the final mark. Although the form and the guideline do not show why one should multiply the performance rating by 0.8 and the personal attributes by 0.2, the calculation, according to the researcher, indicates that the performance rating contributes 80% to the final mark and personal attributes contribute 20%.

The focus of the final performance meeting should be on future performance and appraisers should ensure that they have the same understanding as the appraisees regarding future expectations of performance. The appraiser has to ensure that the appraisees take responsibility for their improvement and that they give positive recognition for performance that reinforces the goals of the work unit. There is also a need to discuss the appraisee's interests and potential new responsibilities (Performance-Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003: 21; Kirkpatrick, 2006: 61).

A record of the discussion is made in the presence of the appraisee and should be factual and inferential. Documentation can focus on the actions of the appraisee and the

results of the appraisee's job performance. All documentation should be in written form and shared with the appraisee. The final performance appraisal meeting should always end with the appraiser making recommendations for the progression of the appraisee.

The appraiser may make recommendations by indicating whether the appraisee is or not ready for promotion to the next level, approving a particular learning experience for the next performance period and recommending monetary or non-monetary reward depending on the policy of the college. The appraisal meeting interview should be summarised and review the objectives/goals set for performance improvement. There should be an attempt to obtain an acknowledgment from the employee that indicates there is a clear and mutual understanding, and agreement should be given by the appraiser. The interview should be closed by commenting on the positive aspects of the employee's performance, encouraging or offering assistance. The appraisee should be invited to a formal discussion anytime they wish. The interview should be concluded on a positive note, emphasising the benefits of your dialog and thanking the appraisee (Performance Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines, 2003:19, 21; Kirkpatrick, 2006:61).

Giving performance appraisal marks (grading) is the output of the performance appraisal process. Grading concludes what was done for the entire performance period and appraisees are not always satisfied with the marks that appraisers give to them.

According to Anglictina (2004:6), research studies show that employees are likely to feel more satisfied with their appraisal results if they have the chance to talk freely and discuss their performance. It is also more likely that such employees would better be able to meet future performance goals. When concluding a study on the effects of performance appraisal on employee attitudes, Anglictina (2004:6) opined that there is evidence that performance appraisal is very hard to do right, because there are not many solutions that would have no opponents.

4.2.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Inadequate knowledge of the appraisers regarding the mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal period

A lack of mentoring and coaching came out clearly from the interviews as one of the themes in the perceptions of the participants about performance appraisal. Most of the

participants expressed the view that they were never coached or mentored during the performance appraisal period and they were surprised when told they had not performed well when they were being appraised. Stone (2002:2) is of the opinion that a large number of managers are poorly trained on how to give feedback to appraisees, and they provide little coaching, mentoring and support.

When asked what can be done in terms of the problem of mentoring and coaching, participants were of the opinion that mentoring and coaching are a very important part of the appraisal process and should be incorporated in this process. The participants further expressed that appraisers police them instead of giving them support and guidance. The participants suggested the need for appraisees to be equipped with coaching and mentoring skills. The study participants perceived mentoring and coaching to be vital in their professional development; therefore, appraisers should be held accountable for coaching and mentoring appraisees. The majority of the study participants expressed their wish to be appraised by their immediate supervisors so that there is constant communication and feedback that will make mentoring and coaching possible. Martin (2010:1) expressed that strategies for developing the capabilities of employees are an important part of any organisation's overall corporate strategy. Organisations can no longer expect to be competitive unless they retain employees, inspire them and support them to learn continuously. Coaching and mentoring are seen as essential aspects of an effective organisational learning strategy.

According to Connor & Pokora (2008:2), mentoring and coaching are complementary activities that are difficult to separate if implemented well. Both help people to take charge of their own development. The coaching and mentoring relationship facilitates insight, learning and change. Through this relationship, potential is identified, possibilities become reality and tangible results are delivered. Coaching and mentoring help appraisees to see the present as a springboard to the future and to be strategic about their own development. Connor & Pokora (2008: 2) further explain that whether the person seeks help with a specific work issue of current concern, or a long-term career question, the coach or the mentor will facilitate exploration, help in the formulation of goals and provide support while action is implemented.

(a) Mentoring

Mentoring relationships are the cornerstone of an effective team and organisation. Mentoring is the process in which an experienced member of the institution (called the mentor) provides advice, information and guidance to a less experienced individual (called the protégé) for the protégé's personal development (Brevis, Smith, Cronje, & Vrba, 2007:308). It is therefore very essential for the appraiser to be competent in mentoring when assigned with the responsibility to conduct performance appraisals.

The researcher is of the view that mentoring enhances confidence from setting, working towards and achieving ambitious goals, with greater sense of self-worth. Mentoring focuses on longer-term development, career management and other appraisee issues. Mentoring addresses the whole Nurse Educator's career and aims to boost the Nurse Educator's individual capabilities and standing in the college. One US study on the benefits of mentoring found that new insurance agents with mentors outperformed other new agents by 20% in their first year (Martin, 2010:5).

Mentoring also addresses the Nurse Educator's inner self (how to behave in the workplace, workplace values and personal dilemmas). It is a process of aiding another with transitions; the whole idea is about one person helping another. Educators who received appropriate explanation and supervision of their performance despite low performance appraisal results reported high levels of job satisfaction and professional commitment (Mabotsa, 2006:2).

The Australian Graduate School of Management survey for 2001 found that 26% of all organisations with mentoring schemes in place for managers, had a profit increase from 19% in 1996 (Martin, 2010:5). In the process of mentoring, a Nurse Educator is assisted with transitions (Mason, 2012:2).

The specific things that can be achieved through the mentoring process include advancement of employee's careers, solidification of relationships between managers and staff, a deepening of the commitment to the goals and values of an organisation, and the development of personal connections (Mason, 2012:2). Mentors should show the mentees how to do things and offer encouragement but not perform tasks for their mentee's and should aim to focus on the future of the Nurse Educator (mentee).

Performance enhancement is important (Martin, 2010:66). The best relationships have the potential to create value for the employee, the mentor and the organisation as a whole (Lantz, 2013:2).

The appraiser and the appraisee agree and set dates weekly or monthly to meet for feedback and the appraisee is given an opportunity to go and implement the plan and consulting when necessary. Mentoring recognises that an individual is capable of resolving most problems for themselves and simply needs a person to support them with ideas and help the mentee see things in a different light. They can help appraisers face issues and weaknesses they would prefer to ignore and can boost confidence and lift morale. A vital role of an appraiser is also to inspire, to encourage a vision and to make appraises active and leave the vision to the possibilities of success.

The meetings may be called at the discretion of either the appraiser or the appraisee and every meeting must have an agenda. The agenda should be wide enough to include personal, career growth and solve problems in working relationships. Some mentoring is also done during the performance appraisal review. Mentors must have sufficient time for regular contacts and face-to-face meetings and the meetings should be held in a more open and relaxing place free from disruptions. Appraisers and appraisees must honour appointments. Self-discipline has to follow through. This is very essential for the survival and fruitfulness of the relationship; but can be encouraged by a good mentor, (ACCA Guide to Coaching and Mentoring, 2000: 8)

Mentoring can often be used to accelerate someone's integration into a new role by learning how things are done, how they can use their strengths and what new skills they need to develop to perform their new role effectively. Mentors can give constructive advice and feedback and act as role models. The mentoring and coaching sessions must have real life scenarios that may include supporting documents (ACCA Guide to Coaching and Mentoring, 2000:7)

Good mentors will provide supportive, constructive and encouraging feedback, but they will always ask you to take responsibility for your decisions. Though it may sometimes be tempting, appraisers must not become actively involved in an appraisee's day-to-day work and personal issues because it will impair the relationship. In cases where a third party has to be involved, the mentor should never act on behalf of the appraiser because the whole point of mentoring is that they give appraisers the confidence to

speak for themselves. Appraisers have to use their judgement to decide when to give full responsibility to the appraiser (ACCA Guide to Coaching and Mentoring, 2000: 7;8).

The researcher therefore agrees with the study participants and available literature that mentoring should be part of the performance appraisal process and the appraisers should be equipped with mentoring skills. Personnel and Training Department has to select and train sufficient numbers of people to be mentors and coaches. Additionally, there should be an agreed procedure to screen applicants because not everybody can be a mentor. Mentors should have strong verbal and written communication skills, a working knowledge of mentoring and coaching topics and a previous experience in running training, mentoring or coaching sessions.

(b) Coaching

When defining coaching, Rock (2001:1) stated that coaching is a way of speeding up how people learn. It is a learning tool, a method of changing behaviour. Coaching is simply a way of changing the way people apply themselves to any situation. It takes someone through an experiential learning cycle in a systematic way with the intention of improving the capability to apply specific skills or deal with problematic situations.

According to Osborne (2012:1), the benefits of training programmes are sometimes difficult to sustain on return to work. Managers return to the 'real world' and are confronted with the challenges and the day to day obstacles that prevent the application of new skills. Coaching provides an ideal way to meet the individual's specific development needs.

The coach and protégé meet when needed and focus on specific aspects of the protégé's job only (Brevis et al., 2007:309); therefore, the appraiser has to be somebody who is skilful and knowledgeable about the job to be done in order to be able to coach the appraisers. Coaching can also be achieved through quarterly or more frequent informal appraisals before the formal appraisal. There are times where training on its own cannot translate into improved performance. Coaching can therefore be used to support the employee in what was learned and how to apply that knowledge in the workplace. Coaching is made up of constructive and consistent feedback, resulting in improved performance. The interview findings clearly suggested the need to improve

the way feedback is given by using coaching skills so that problems will be solved as and when they occur rather than employees having to wait for the performance review meeting to hear about problems for the first time. Participants expressed that they are sometimes told about old mistakes that had never been addressed during a final review meeting.

Coaching keeps employees on the right track, provides positive reinforcement for good behaviour and quick feedback for unacceptable or decreasing performance (Kumar, 2005:12). The coaching process is more about eliciting information, asking questions, and examining details than telling people what to do. A good coach expands on principles of leadership and empowerment. The other reason for coaching is to help the employee with a performance improvement plan that was developed as part of the performance review programme. The manager should periodically see how the employee progresses and provide help in implementing the plan (Kirkpatrick, 2006:94).

Appraisers use coaching as an opportunity to communicate key company values and provide clear and specific performance feedback to increase employee self-esteem and competence (Roberts & Pregitzer, 2007:20). According to Allan (2012:1), where coaching is of a more technical nature, choosing an immediate manager can be an effective choice, provided that the manager is very conversant with the skills in question. Participants in the study strongly felt that coaching and mentoring are very important in the process of performance appraisal. They suggested that their immediate supervisor be allowed a few officers to appraise so that it will be possible for the supervisor to coach and mentor them.

The researcher views coaching and mentoring as solutions to 'surprises' during a performance appraisal review because they cultivate constant interaction and feedback between appraisers and appraisees. Coaching and mentoring help the appraisees to assess their current situation, define objectives and target areas that need to be strengthened or improved. Both the appraisee and appraiser will understand and overcome barriers that may inhibit progress and this will hold them accountable for implementing the action plans and reaching the objectives set.

Essential coaching is about one person helping another to excel. It is an equal partnership where the person being coached sets the agenda and the coach helps them

find the best way to reach their goals. A good coach will present more questions than answers, and challenge the person being coached to consider new perspectives and different approaches when dealing with problems at work. Your coach is a facilitator, who will help you discover your own path to success (Family Services Employee Assistance Program, 2003:n.p.).

The ultimate challenge and responsibility of the appraiser is to coach to maximum performance. The appraiser should use all the available tools, resources, support, and ideas of peers and direct reports to coach the employee to performance. Sometimes employees understand expectations but are not performing owing to motivation issues. Perhaps they are going through a difficult time in their personal lives. The manager needs to ask appropriate questions to discover what the gaps are between motivation and performance and then do something to close the gaps (Kirkpatrick, 2006: 173).

The researcher is also of the idea that appraisers should therefore be trained in mentoring and coaching with emphasis on how to incorporate these important aspects in the performance appraisal process. According to Bowes (2013:1), the concept of the performance appraisal process has changed slowly; hence, it is understandable that managers and supervisors still engage in old-style behaviour and do not carry out the process of performance appraisal effectively. There is a lack of training on providing feedback, coaching and mentoring to employees. The result is that employees become dissatisfied, and if not given the opportunity to discuss their concerns, they may become disgruntled and leave the college.

To conclude the aspect of mentoring and coaching, the researcher's view is that skill, knowledge and commitment are prerequisites for a nurse educator to be an appraiser who can effectively coach and mentor. The appraisers' communication skills should be at a level where the art of listening has been mastered, and they should have patience. In coaching and mentoring, informed decisions have to be made by appraisees and appraisers. Better interpersonal relationships are a natural outcome of effective coaching. Most people will appreciate one's interest and concern for them. Employees who are willing to assume responsibility for their own growth and development, who are receptive to positive and negative feedback and who are willing to accept suggestions and advice will benefit from coaching and mentoring.

Participants in the study strongly felt that coaching and mentoring are very important in the process of performance appraisal. The researcher views coaching and mentoring to be a solution to 'surprises' during a performance appraisal review because they cultivate constant interaction and feedback between appraisers and appraisees. Coaching and mentoring will help the appraisees to assess their current situation, define objectives and target areas to strengthen or improve. Both the appraisee and appraiser will understand and overcome barriers that may inhibit progress and will be held accountable for implementing the action plans and reaching the objectives set. The appraisers and appraisees will develop professionally and the acquisition of knowledge and skills, including technical expertise, relationship building, initiation, risk taking, and team building will be fostered. The researcher is of the idea that mentoring and coaching allow an opportunity for good and free communication and interpersonal relationships. As a result, there will be consistent measurement of performance and provision of on-going feedback to nurse educators. Appraisers should therefore be trained in mentoring and coaching with emphasis on how to incorporate these important aspects in the performance appraisal process.

4.3 SUMMARY



The focus of this chapter was on conceptualisation of the research findings using the relevant literature. The researcher integrated the findings of the research into the literature and made an interpretation that was followed by concluding statements from which guidelines have been described. Conceptualisation has been done in accordance with the identified theme and sub-theme. Guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nursing colleges in Botswana, as well as the study's limitations, recommendations and conclusions will be presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

GUIDELINES, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the guidelines to improve the performance appraisal system of nursing colleges in Botswana, as well as the limitations, recommendations and conclusions derived from the study.

5.2 GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM IN NURSING COLLEGES IN BOTSWANA

Guidelines are defined as systematically developed statements to assist practitioner decisions about appropriate health care for specific clinical circumstances. Guidelines are based on the most rigorous research available, and where research was available. They are based on expert opinion and consensus, which promote some of them as best practice guidelines (Field, 1995:38). Guidelines are a set of instructions or procedures that elaborate in detail the steps to be followed in the execution of a particular process. Often, guidelines are issued by regulatory authorities and/or statutory bodies in relation to compliance with various laws, rules and available regulations. Guidelines are intended to assist individuals in the workplace in terms of specific issues. They are intended to complement the development of policies and protocols in the workplace. Guidelines determine a course of action and streamline particular processes according to a set routine or sound practice (Wikipedia, 2012).

According to Charmy (1999:1), before guidelines are developed, one must be sure of what exactly is to be achieved. When defining what a guideline is, Charmy stated that a guideline is a tool; a means to an end. If objectives are established, it will be easier to decide whether a specific guideline is likely to help. Guidelines reduce unacceptable or undesirable variations in practice and provide a focus for decision-making. Guidelines allow professionals from different disciplines to come to an agreement about a particular issue and devise a quality framework.

These guidelines emanated from the conceptualisation of the study findings made by the researcher.

5.2.1 Theme: Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal system

The objective is to improve the knowledge of the appraisers and appraisees on the topic of performance appraisal.

- Train all the nurse educators on performance appraisal. Once an appraiser is appointed, they should be afforded refresher training on how to conduct a performance appraisal, and that should be the first step before one can start appraising.
- The nurse educators should read and understand all the policies and manuals that guide the implementation of performance appraisal in the Botswana Public Service.
- The following documents guide the implementation of performance appraisal in the Botswana Public Service:
 - Public Service Act No. 30 of 2008;
 - Consolidated General Orders 1996: General orders governing the conditions of service of the public service of the Republic of Botswana;
 - The 2003 Performance Based-Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines; and
 - Any other document that can support performance appraisal and the laws relating to fair employment practices.
- Always have the philosophy of performance appraisal in mind: performance oriented culture.
- The focus of performance appraisal should be on the results, with the aim to improve appraisees' performance and promote their professional development.
- Always aim to improve the quality, effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency of performance.

- Offer appraisees an opportunity to explore their career aspirations.
- Schedule performance appraisal meetings. They must be conducted regularly and routinely.
- Take great care in preparing performance appraisal reports; the reports must show evidence of how employees are have carried out their duties, noting areas of particular abilities or weaknesses.
- The performance period starts from 1st April and ends on 31st March of the following year.
- The appraiser is the immediate supervisor of the nurse educator.
- Align the objectives of the individual nurse educator with the unit's and college's objectives.
- Understand the process of performance appraisal.
- It is the responsibility of the college management to review the effectiveness of the performance appraisal processes to guide implementation.



5.2.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers and appraisees regarding the performance appraisal process

The objective is to enhance the knowledge of the appraisers in understanding the process of performance appraisal.

(a) Phase 1: Performance planning

- The purpose of performance appraisal

Appraisers should demonstrate their understanding of the purpose of performance appraisal by:

- Assessing the appraisee's effectiveness on the job and taking appropriate action.
- Transforming the performance culture of appraisees so that they become

committed service providers by guiding them on how to improve their performance, and providing them with on-going feedback, coaching and mentoring.

- Making decisions should be based on the results of performance appraisal.
- Explaining the purpose of performance appraisal to individual appraisees during performance planning.

➤ The values of performance appraisal

Appraisers should adhere to the values of performance appraisal by:

- Discussing the values of performance appraisal with appraisees during performance planning.
- Conducting performance appraisals based on mutual respect and trust.
- Cultivating open and clear communication channels throughout the appraisal process.
- Conduct performance appraisal in the presence of the appraisee, accompanied by constructive dialogue throughout the performance period.
- Being fair when taking actions and making decisions.
- Making the performance appraisal exercise a participatory process that engages management and appraisees.
- Completing both subjective and objective ratings to ensure reliability and consistency in performance measurement.
- Appraising based on work-related elements and treating appraisees equally and fairly without discrimination.
- Appraising should be based on agreed targets. All appraisers should be trained on performance appraisal to enable them to understand the process well.

➤ The nurse educator's job design

- Always start the performance appraisal process by discussing the job design and the standards for measuring performance with the appraisees and management.
- Clarify and delegate job responsibilities and expectations for which the appraisee is held accountable.
- Employees are held accountable for their decisions.
- Performance appraisal should be within the control of the appraisee's job behaviour.

➤ Contracting

- Discuss and agree with the appraisee on the key performance areas, key performance indicators and the data sources that will be used to track performance.
- Clearly identify the most important competencies that the appraisee must display.
- Commit to providing the appraisee with training, coaching, mentoring and other competency development activities throughout the performance period.
- Discuss resources and assumptions made in achieving performance expectations.
- Discuss and select performance objectives and agree with the appraisee on measures and targets that will meet the expected performance level.
- Prioritise objectives and discuss expectations related to how results will be achieved.
- Discuss and agree on both evaluative and developmental objectives.
- Discuss the criteria for performance that exceeds performance expectations and that falls below the expected performance level.
- Discuss the consequences relating to poor performance.

- Discuss how performance objectives will be monitored.
- Ask the appraisee to summarise what has been agreed on the performance appraisal form.
- The appraiser and the appraisee should then sign the performance appraisal form: This becomes the performance contract.
- The authorising official then approves the performance contract.

(b) *Phase 2: Performance management*

- Quarterly reviews

- Schedule a meeting by setting a suitable date with the appraiser at the end of every quarter: Quarter 1 ends in June, Quarter 2 ends in September, Quarter 3 ends in December and Quarter 4 ends in March.
- Conduct informal meetings with the appraiser as checkpoints to monitor how the appraisee is performing by identifying unacceptable performance and provide assistance to address the challenges immediately.
- Deal with all performance obstacles as they occur and offer guidance. There should be no 'surprises' during the review meetings.
- Give on-going feedback to the appraisee on both good and unsatisfactory performance.
- Remind the appraisee about the agreed date and time of the performance review meeting.
- The appraiser and the appraisee should come prepared to discuss the major accomplishments achieved and the priorities for the remaining performance period.
- An appraiser should prepare by keeping a performance log for each appraisee and have all the data sources ready to support them in the performance review meeting.

- Appraisees should prepare by reviewing their files and journals of what has been accomplished to date, challenges, obstacles and records of feedback received. A self-assessment record should also have been done prior to the meeting. This will then be discussed by the appraiser and the appraisee during the meeting and marks agreed and appended.
- During the performance review meeting, discuss performance to date.
- Share with the appraisee the goals that have been done effectively and the ones that the appraisee ought to focus on for the rest of the year.
- Provide specific, behavioural examples of what the appraisee has done particularly well, and examples of anything that needs to change.
- Discuss the appraiser and appraisee's expectations about what the appraisee should accomplish by the end of the review period.
- Agree on how goals should be prioritised for the remainder of the performance period.
- Ensure a shared understanding of performance expectations to minimise unpleasant 'surprises' at the end of performance period.
- Find out what challenges are faced by the appraisee. Ask how best the appraisee can be helped to deal with the challenges, and then follow through.
- Complete the discussion by thanking the employee for their hard work and encourage them in their work for the remainder of the performance period.
- Give the appraisee a chance to summarise the discussion.
- Document the discussion and give the record to the appraisee to sign – the appraiser should also sign this.
- Give a copy of the signed appraisal document to the appraisee.
- The review should be done at the end of the first, second and third quarters as per the requirement in the 2003 Botswana Performance Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines.

- How to deal with performance that does not meet expectations.
- Identify and assess the problem correctly and specifically.
- The appraiser should organise the meeting with the appraisee to discuss the problem.
- Let the employee know the purpose of the meeting in advance so they can adequately prepare for it.
- It is important that the meeting takes place in private and in an environment that is comfortable and non-threatening, away from distractions and interruptions.
- Discuss the outcomes the appraisee wishes to achieve from the meeting.
- The meeting should be an open discussion and the appraisee should have an opportunity to have their point of view heard and duly considered.
- The appraiser should listen to the explanation of why the problem has occurred or to any other comments that the appraisee makes.
- When having this type of meeting, the appraiser should also refer to recent positive things that the appraisee has done to show them that their strengths are recognised and appreciated.
- Talk about the issue and not the person.
- Where possible, it is important that a solution is jointly devised with the appraisee.
- A clear mentoring and coaching plan of action should be developed with the employee to implement the solution.
- A date should be set for another meeting with the appraisee to review progress and discuss the appraisee's performance against the agreed action plan.
- Keep a written record of all discussions relating to under-performance in case further action is required. Generally, it may also be used as evidence if legal action is taken on the matter.

- Monitor the appraisee's performance and continue to provide feedback and encouragement.
 - A meeting to review and discuss the appraisee's performance should be held even if there is no longer an issue.
 - Provide both positive and negative feedback to the appraisee and work with the appraisee to ensure that performance improvements are sustained.
 - More serious action may need to be taken if the employee's performance does not improve, including further counselling or issuing formal warnings. Refer to the human resources office for guidance on this issue.
- Appraisee dissatisfaction with the performance appraisal marks

The following steps should be taken by the appraisee when they are not satisfied with the performance appraisal marks allocated to them:

- State clearly the intention to appeal.
- Review the policy on appealing performance appraisal.
- Make a copy of the performance appraisal for use during the appeal process.
- Review past appraisals and compare them with the current one.
- Fill in the performance appraisal appeals form or write a letter stating the reasons why the performance appraisal is deemed unfair, citing concrete examples of how performance meets or exceeds the performance standards.
- State that you have never been warned or a disciplinary action taken against you.
- Attach other relevant documents to support your case.
- Practice how the appeal statement will be presented.
- Schedule a meeting with the appraiser's supervisor to state the case being appealed.

- Depending on the individual college, the appeal is reviewed by the next level management or the human resources manager.

(c) Phase 3: Conducting the final performance appraisal

- Conduct a final review meeting at the end of the performance period in March of the following year.
- Agree with the appraisee on the date and time of the final appraisal.
- Remind the appraisee to do self-appraisal before the final appraisal meeting.
- Put the employee at ease by creating a sincere and open atmosphere for joint discussion.
- Establish the purpose of the discussion. Advise the employee on what needs to be accomplished during the meeting.
- Review the employee's overall job requirements and responsibilities against the contract that was signed at the beginning of the performance period.
- Facilitate the discussion by comparing the appraiser's assessment with the appraisee's self-assessment.
- Discuss the objectives that have been reached and how they have improved the employee's skills and performance.
- Discuss objectives that need further work. What obstacles have prevented the employee from reaching some of the targets?
- Determine whether the timeframes set for reaching the objectives were realistic.
- Calculate the average performance mark by averaging the marks for the performance objectives and the behavioural objectives as shown in the 2003 Botswana Performance Based Reward System Programme Framework and Guidelines.

- Provide recognition for desirable behaviour with a score 95–100% or 80–94%, especially since the last review. Let the appraisee know how much their value and work is appreciated.
- Discuss objectives that have not been met (50–64% or 49% and below).
- Ask for the employee's views on problems, suggestions for changes, improvements, etc. Do not interrupt the employee's commentary. Allow the appraisees to express their feelings when hurt. Be a good listener.
- Thank the appraisee for their input. If the meeting has included discussion of major concerns about the quality of the employee's performance, reassure the appraisee that the two of you can team up to ensure the appraisee successfully overcomes the challenges together.
- Outline one or two areas of performance where improvements are needed and ask for the employee's suggestions.
- Avoid using subjective, vague, or overly broad descriptions, such as 'poor attitude' or 'no initiative'. Give specific, objective comments and/or examples.
- Be consistent. If an issue (weakness in performance) was mentioned on the previous performance appraisal, it should be mentioned again if it is still an issue. An omission may lead to the assumption that the problem has been resolved. Conversely, if there has been improvement since the last appraisal, acknowledge it.
- Problems that are not related to work performance, such as absenteeism or tardiness, generally should be handled as they occur, not as part of the annual performance appraisal.
- Outline and discuss future action plans for improvement with the appraisee.
- Let the appraisee know what behaviour is expected of them, and whether there is desire to reinforce positive behaviour or make a change.
- Encourage the appraisee to make a plan for self-improvement. Include training or development plans when appropriate.

- Set a realistic timeframe for improvement. If you need assistance, consult with the human resources office.
- Ask the appraisee if there are any remaining items on the performance appraisal that need to be addressed.
- Set new career objectives for the upcoming year. Discuss what the appraisee needs to learn to reach these objectives and how the appraisee can obtain the knowledge and experience needed.
- Assign responsibility for reaching these goals. Let the appraisee know to what extent they will be helped and what they must do independently.
- Decide together on a first step that will start the appraisee toward reaching a tangible goal.
- As the officer responsible for recommending employees for promotion, the appraiser must be prepared to discuss the appraisees. The appraiser must be as honest as possible and not set unreachable expectations. Refer the appraisee to a human resources officer for further information.
- Conclude on a positive note, emphasising the benefits of dialogue and the positive aspects of the appraisee's performance.
- Thank and invite the appraisee to a formal discussion anytime the appraisee wishes.

5.2.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Inadequate knowledge among the appraisers regarding the mentoring and coaching of appraisees

The objective is to strengthen appraisers' knowledge on mentoring and coaching of appraisees during the performance appraisal process.

(a) Mentoring of appraisees

- All appraisers should be trained on mentoring.

- Appraisers must have the commitment to mentor and coach appraisees throughout the performance period.
- Discuss mentoring with the appraisee during performance appraisal contracting.
- Agree on what the appraiser needs to be mentored on. Develop and implement a mentoring and coaching plan.
- Select a project or an activity that will be used to mentor the appraisee. Whatever is selected has to be aligned with the objectives that were set during performance contracting. The project or activity must allow the appraiser and the appraisee to stretch their intellectual capacity in making decisions.
- Work with the appraisee to develop a project plan that is then broken down into actions with due dates for their achievement.
- Allow the appraisee to implement the plan while the appraiser offers support and guidance.
- Agree on a schedule to meet regularly: weekly to monthly. The schedule should be honoured.
- The meeting may also be called as and when the need arises.
- Every meeting should have an agenda and the agenda should include both work and personal issues.
- Appraisees must always be mentored when given new roles or promotions.
- Give appraisees space to think through the problems or even face other people by themselves.
- Once the appraisee has gained competence in the different aspects of the project or the activity, the appraisee is given full responsibility.
- Give feedback to appraisees on a continuous basis.
- Measure the success of the mentoring process during final performance review as it feeds into the developmental objectives.

(b) Coaching of appraisees

- All appraisers should be trained on coaching and they must be commitment to coaching appraisees throughout the performance period.
- Discuss mentoring with the appraisee during performance appraisal contracting.
- Observe the appraisee's performance and identify which areas the appraisee needs to be coached on.
- Define skills in need of improvement or acquisition in order for the appraisee to satisfactorily perform a job and reach minimum performance targets.
- Check previous performance appraisals for specific training and development that was recommended and check whether the recommendations have been implemented. Formally and informally communicate the observations made to the appraisee and intentions to coach the appraisee on the identified needs.
- Plan and locate time for coaching the appraisee.
- Prepare real-life scenarios, including supporting documentation.
- Set expectations and explain them to the appraisee.
- Identify areas of good performance for praise.
- As much as possible, let appraisees find their own answers and provide constructive criticism.
- The appraiser may have to show and tell the appraisees what to do, because coaching is concerned with getting the results and not necessarily the professional development of the appraisees.
- Know when to delegate full responsibility to the employee.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made are based on the study findings.

5.3.1 Nursing Education

All appraisers, principals and managers should be trained on performance appraisal for them to understand the legislation, philosophy, purpose and the process of performance appraisal. All the nurse educators must understand how the performance appraisal system works in relation to their individual contracts and how it aligns with the core values, goals and the strategy of the college. Although many different authors regard performance appraisal as a difficult management tool, training the nurse educators will greatly reduce the errors made when implementing a particular system like that used in the nursing colleges in Botswana.

The documents guiding performance appraisal should be circulated to all the nurse educators and a sensitisation workshop must be conducted to familiarise the nurse educators with these documents.

If any new documents are introduced to strengthen the current system, they should be well disseminated in a sensitisation workshop, and the workshop should target everybody, including the college management. The newly developed performance appraisal guidelines should be used in nursing colleges to improve the practice of performance appraisal.

All the decisions made about nurse educators regarding promotions, termination of employment and career advancement must be based on performance results. Managers should be directly accountable for staff performance appraisals.

Poor performance must be dealt with as soon as it is identified. The mentoring and coaching of nurse educators must be part of the performance appraisal process. A performance appraisal grievance procedure must also be clearly documented.

5.3.2 Research

Further research should be done to determine the effectiveness of the performance appraisal tool used in nursing education and to gauge if there is need to develop a performance appraisal tool that is specific to this field rather than use the current system, which is applicable for all Botswana public services. A performance management system that caters for too many ministries and departments with different portfolios is likely to fail owing to its lack of focus.

Further research should be done after two years of implementation of the developed guidelines in nursing education to determine their effectiveness.

Research on the effectiveness of an automated system in the organisations that are already using one will be of great benefit to explore the possibility of introducing such a system to the nursing colleges in Botswana as an effort to improve performance monitoring.

5.3.3 Nursing Practice



The performance appraisal system used in the Botswana Public Service is used for evaluative and developmental purposes. The evaluative purpose, despite having its own weaknesses, is widely implemented, whereas the developmental purpose is inadequately exercised.

The results of developmental appraisal should be used to guide the organisation's training plan, mentoring, coaching and other developmental activities. Managers in nursing institutions and facilities should take advantage of the current performance appraisal system and use the results of developmental appraisal to develop the nurse practitioners to become competent, reflective and life-long learners who are motivated. This will develop their capabilities and make them better nursing practitioners. Coaching and mentoring strategies should be taken seriously to avoid having nurses saying that their career development is not a priority for their managers.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

The major limitation for this study was the fact that although six colleges of nursing are in the southern part of Botswana, only one college of nursing is in Gaborone city where the researcher lives. This made data collection very difficult. The researcher had to travel some distance to reach the participants outside Gaborone. The researcher made use of the opportunity of the workshop planned for all the nurse educators to interview the other study participants until data was saturated.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe nurse educators' perceptions regarding the performance appraisal system conducted in nursing colleges in Botswana, and this purpose has been achieved. The two research questions were thoroughly addressed by the participants and guidelines to improve the performance appraisal of nurse educators in Botswana were developed.

The success of any system of performance appraisal is an achievement of the intended results, as well as the professional growth of appraisees. Mentoring, coaching and feedback have been seen as the main drivers of appraisees' professional development in that they can improve performance, motivate and pave a good career path for the appraisees.

Inadequate training of nurse educators on performance appraisal seems to be the root of the negative perceptions of the nurse educators regarding the performance appraisal system used in the nursing colleges in Botswana. Inadequate training has been the main theme that emerged from the responses of all the participants of this study.

Training is the cornerstone of the effective implementation of the performance appraisal process. Training ensures that expectations are realistic, feedback is accepted by appraisees and all parties act on it. Training prepares appraisers to effectively conduct performance appraisals and give them the confidence to apply the skills needed, as well as being in control of the whole process. Training of appraisers should be made a priority and should be compulsory, as it is an integral part of college management.

Objectivity in performance appraisals cannot be ignored. Given the guiding legal tools and effective performance appraisal training, appraisers should apply their ethics and professionalism to aim for the highest standards of fairness by avoiding all forms of appraiser bias. Improving performance is the *raison d'être* of performance appraisal.



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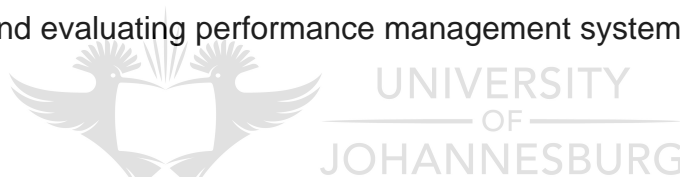
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