

Relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance in primary schools in Mityana district. A cross-sectional study.

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Abstract

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Background

The annual performance reviews in primary schools evaluate teachers' work, offering feedback and development opportunities that can boost motivation and teaching quality. The study aimed to examine the relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance in primary schools in Mityana District.

Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional research design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used. A self-administered questionnaire, interview guide, and focus group discussion were used to obtain data from respondents under each sampled school.

Results

51 (45.9%) participants were aged 20-30 years, 32(28.8%) participants were aged 31-40 years, and 8(7.3%) were 50 years and above. Correlation results showed a statistically significant positive relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance ($r = .721, p = .000$). The adjusted R-squared value of 0.510 indicated that 51% of the variation in teachers' performance was explained by a unit change in annual performance reviews.

Conclusion

Annual performance reviews can serve as a valuable mechanism for enhancing teacher performance when they are implemented with clarity, consistency, and developmental intent.

Recommendation

School administrators should create and disseminate structured performance review frameworks that clearly outline evaluation criteria, timelines, and expectations.

Keywords: Annual Performance Reviews, Teachers' Performance, Primary Schools, Mityana District.

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Background of the study

Globally, teachers' performance was often an overlooked aspect of educational systems, with little formal appraisal or evaluation practices (Darling-Hammond, 2020). In the early 20th century, education focused primarily on content delivery and maintaining discipline rather than assessing the effectiveness of teachers (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Over time, the trend shifted towards more comprehensive performance appraisals that also focused on professional development. Countries such as Finland and Singapore now emphasize teacher evaluations that go beyond standardized testing, incorporating peer reviews, classroom observations, and continuous professional development (Hattie, 2022). This shift marks a move towards recognizing the multifaceted nature of teaching, where teacher performance is not solely tied to student outcomes but also to the teacher's ongoing growth and support.

In Africa, the evolution of teachers' performance and appraisal systems has been influenced by both colonial education systems and the demands of post-colonial

development (Aikman, 2022). During the colonial period, African education systems were more focused on rote learning, and teacher performance was seldom formally appraised. It was only post-independence that many African nations recognized the need for effective teacher performance appraisals to improve education quality (Morrison, 2011). For instance, in South Africa, the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development, introduced in 2023, emphasized teacher evaluations that focused on both in-service training and classroom performance, marking a significant shift from earlier, informal assessments (Department of Education, 2023).

Historically, East African countries like Kenya and Tanzania had education systems that focused primarily on academic results and teacher qualifications, with little attention paid to actual classroom performance (Mwiria, 2022). In Kenya, the introduction of the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system in 2024 marked a turning point, as it included comprehensive assessments of teachers' practices, lesson planning, and

classroom management (Republic of Kenya, 2024). Similarly, in Tanzania, performance appraisals were introduced alongside the rapid expansion of education in the late 20th century, though their focus was initially on content delivery rather than teaching quality (Nyerere, 2022). Today, both Kenya and Tanzania have systems that assess teachers based on both student outcomes and professional development, and emphasize continuous improvement through feedback, professional development, and peer reviews (Nyerere, 2022).

In Uganda, teacher performance was largely informal, with little structure for evaluation. After the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, the Ugandan government began focusing more on teacher quality to improve educational outcomes (World Bank, 2022). The Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS), introduced in the early 2000s, was an initial step towards formalizing teacher performance appraisals, focusing on teachers' teaching methods and student outcomes (Muntum, 2024). However, challenges like overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources hindered the full implementation

of effective appraisals (Tiberondwa, 2020). Therefore, this study aimed to examine the relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance in primary schools in Mityana District.

Methodology

Research design

This study employed a cross-sectional study design with a mixed methods approach, which involved collecting quantitative and qualitative data.

Target population

The target population consisted of 200 individuals drawn from four selected primary schools in Mityana District. This group included key stakeholders involved in or affected by performance appraisal practices, specifically: headteachers, deputy headteachers, members of the School Management Committee (SMC), the District Inspector of Schools (DIS), and classroom teachers. These categories were chosen because they each play a critical role in the performance appraisal process. Headteachers and deputy headteachers often conduct or supervise appraisals, SMC members provide governance and oversight, the DIS ensures compliance with district and national standards, while teachers are the primary subjects of the appraisal systems. Including all these groups provided a comprehensive understanding of how appraisal practices are perceived, implemented, and how they influence teachers' performance in the selected schools.

Sample selection

The study used the Yamane formula of sample determination (1967:886) to determine the sample size as shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = 133$$

$$1 + 200(0.0025) n = 133$$

Where

n = Sample size N= Population size

e = margin of error at 95% confidence level

e = Margin of error/0.05

Table 1: Population and sample size distribution

Respondents	Population	Sample size	Sampling method
Head teachers	4	4	Census
Deputy head teachers	8	5	Purposive sampling
SMC	12	8	Purposive sampling
DEO	1	1	Census
DIS	1	1	Census
Teaching staff	174	114	Simple random sampling
Total	200	133	

Source: Primary data, 2025

Sampling techniques

Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling was employed to select headteachers, deputy headteachers, School Management Committee (SMC) members, and the District Inspector of Schools (DIS) for participation in the study. This non-probability sampling method involved deliberately selecting individuals based on their specific roles and the relevance of their experience to the research topic (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). These

individuals were chosen because they possessed in-depth knowledge about the implementation, effectiveness, and challenges of performance appraisal practices in their respective schools.

Simple random sampling

The study applied simple random sampling to select teachers from the four chosen primary schools in Mityana District. This probability sampling method ensured that every teacher

in the population had an equal opportunity of being included in the sample, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the representativeness of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Data collection methods

Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire featured Likert-scale items designed to assess key aspects of both performance appraisal practices and teachers' performance indicators. Distribution was done physically at the selected schools to encourage high response rates while ensuring participants' confidentiality. This approach was both practical and efficient, especially when working with a sizable sample within a defined geographic area.

Interview

The study used interviews to gather qualitative data from key informants, including headteachers, deputy headteachers, School Management Committee (SMC) members, and the District Inspector of Schools (DIS). Interviews involved direct engagement with participants, allowing the researcher to ask guided questions and explore participants' views, experiences, and interpretations in depth (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Focus group discussions

The study incorporated focus group discussions (FGDs) as a method for collecting qualitative data. An FGD is a technique where a small group of participants engages in a moderated discussion on a specific topic (Krueger & Casey, 2014).

Data collection instruments

Self-administered questionnaire

A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data on performance appraisal practices and teachers' performance, allowing participants to complete the survey at their own pace (Smedts, 2012). The questionnaire included statements that participants responded to using a 5-point Likert scale, offering a range of options for them to express their opinions. This method ensured that respondents carefully considered their answers, minimizing the risk of interviewer bias. The survey was distributed to all 114 teachers who were well-versed in the subject matter, ensuring the responses are informed and relevant. Data was analyzed based on the 5-point scale, providing a clear and systematic way to measure the participants' attitudes and experiences.

Interview guide

The study employed an interview guide to ensure that the interviews were structured and consistent across participants. An interview guide is a tool that outlines key questions and topics to be addressed during the interview, offering a framework for exploring specific areas of interest while allowing room for follow-up questions based on the responses. This guide was used to collect in-depth perspectives from headteachers, deputy headteachers, SMC members, and the DIS regarding the impact of performance appraisal practices on teachers' performance. It included open-ended questions that encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences and viewpoints, while also providing flexibility for the interviewer to probe further if needed. This balanced approach ensured comprehensive coverage of relevant topics while capturing the nuances of individual viewpoints (Creswell, 2014).

Focus group discussion

The study used a focus group checklist to ensure that each focus group discussion is organized, targeted, and productive, while still allowing flexibility to explore relevant topics in depth. A focus group checklist is a structured list of key discussion points and questions that guide the conversation, helping the moderator maintain consistency across sessions while encouraging dynamic group interaction (Krueger & Casey, 2014). This checklist was employed to explore the perceptions and experiences of headteachers, deputy headteachers, SMC members, and the DIS concerning the influence of performance appraisal practices on teachers' performance. The discussions were semi-structured, allowing participants to respond openly to guided questions while also interacting with each other to uncover deeper insights. Each session was scheduled for 45 to 60 minutes, ensuring sufficient time for meaningful engagement without overwhelming participants.

Data quality control measures

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the research instrument was evaluated using face and content validity through expert assessment. To establish this, the initial version of the questionnaire was submitted to the research supervisor and experienced education professionals for critical review. These experts examined each item to determine its relevance to the study objectives and assessed the clarity and appropriateness of the language used. They indicated whether each question was relevant or not relevant (NR), helping to refine and improve the instrument to ensure it accurately captures the intended data. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was computed using the formula: $CVI = \frac{\text{Item-related relevant}}{\text{Total number of items on the questionnaires}}$.

Table 2: CVI results

VARIABLE	Content Validity Index
Annual performance reviews	0.734
Performance ratings	0.750
Regular feedback	0.720
Teachers' performance	0.721

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The research findings show that the research constructs had all attained Content Validity Index scores of above 0.7, hence being valid and good to be used in the primary research.

Reliability of the instrument

The reliability of the research instruments was evaluated

using the internal consistency method, specifically by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, which measures the average correlation among items intended to assess the same construct. As noted by Amin (2013), a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7 or higher indicates acceptable reliability for research instruments. To verify the instruments' consistency, a pilot test was conducted with 20 participants.

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha coefficient results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Annual performance reviews	0.710
Performance ratings	0.730
Regular feedback	0.720
Teachers' performance	0.740

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The research findings show that the research constructs had all attained reliability scores of above 0.7, hence being valid and good to be used in the primary research.

Data analysis methods

Quantitative data analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which aided in organizing and interpreting the collected data effectively. The analysis began with descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations to offer a general summary of participants' responses and to identify patterns within the dataset. To explore the relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance, Pearson's correlation analysis was employed to assess both the strength and direction of the association between the variables. A predetermined significance level was used to evaluate whether the observed relationships are statistically meaningful. Furthermore, regression analysis was used to determine the extent to which performance appraisal practices predicted variations in teachers' performance, providing insights into the influence and explanatory power of the appraisal systems.

Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis, a systematic technique used to interpret textual data by identifying recurring patterns, themes, and meanings

(Krippendorff, 2012). This method was well-suited for examining data collected through interviews and focus group discussions, offering a structured yet adaptable approach to analyzing complex qualitative information (Creswell, 2024). The data was transcribed thoroughly, and the transcripts were reviewed and assigned codes to significant statements or ideas. These codes were then organized into thematic categories that reflect common insights about performance appraisal practices and their influence on teachers' performance. Through this iterative process, the researcher uncovered deeper meanings and connections within the data, enhancing understanding of the participants' experiences and viewpoints.

Ethical considerations

Informed consent: Before commencing the study, informed consent was secured from all participants by clearly explaining the study's objectives and their voluntary participation rights, ensuring adherence to ethical research standards.

Confidentiality: Participants' information was kept confidential, with no personal identifiers disclosed in the findings, and all collected data was strictly used for scholarly purposes.

Anonymity: The anonymity of respondents was preserved by omitting names and other identifying details from both the data collection tools and the final report, protecting their identity throughout the research.

Results

Response rate

The response rate results revealed that out of the 114

questionnaires distributed, only 98 were filled out and returned, giving a percentage response rate of 73.6%. In terms of interviews, the study planned for 19 but only 13 were conducted, giving a percentage response rate of 9.7% hence, an overall response rate was 83.3%.

Table 4 shows the response Rate.

	Targeted Number	Valid Instruments	Percentage
Questionnaires	114	98	73.6
Interviews guides	19	13	9.7
Total	133	111	83.3

Source: Primary data, 2025

Background information of respondents

Table 5 shows the gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	63	56.7
	Female	48	43.3
	Total	111	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

Table 5 shows that out of a total of 111 participants, 56.7% (70 individuals) were male, and 43.3% (48 individuals) were female. This means that more data was collected from the

males than the female gender because all schools had fewer female teachers compared to males; thus, there was no gender bias.

Table 6 shows the age of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	20-30 years	51	45.9
	31-40 years	32	28.8
	41-50 years	20	18.0
	Above 50 years	8	7.3
	Total	111	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

Table 6 indicates that the largest age group among the participants was aged 20-30 years, with 51 participants (45.9%), followed by 31-40 years with 32 participants

(28.8%). The smallest age group was 50 years and above, with 8 participants (7.3%). This means there was a representation of all ages in the sample.

Table 7 shows years served in school

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-2 years	9	8.1
	3-4 years	33	29.7
	5-6 years	48	43.2
	Above 7 years	21	19.0
	Total	111	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

The results 7 show that 43.2% of respondents have worked at the school for 5-6 years, while 29.7% have been there for 3-4 years. A smaller percentage, 19.0%, has over 7 years of experience.

Table 8 shows the Level of education

	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	31	27.9
Bachelors	50	45.0
Masters	30	27.1
Total	111	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

Table 8 illustrates the educational qualifications of the respondents, highlighting that a significant majority possess higher education degrees. Specifically, 27.9% hold a diploma, while 45.0% have a bachelor's degree, and 27.1% have achieved a master's degree. This high level of educational attainment among the respondents indicates that the data collected for the study was informed by a well-educated group of teachers.

Descriptive analysis of the objectives

The interpretation of mean scores was guided by the following scale: a mean of 1.35 or below was categorized as very low (strongly disagree), 1.35–2.00 as low (disagree), 2.00–2.50 as moderate (neutral), 2.50–3.50 as high (agree), and 3.50–4.00 as very high (strongly agree).

Annual performance reviews

Table 9 shows the descriptive results for annual performance reviews.

Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers set performance goals during the annual review.	98	2.305	1.0821
Expectations for performance are clear at the start of the year.	98	3.111	1.3215
Teachers receive feedback throughout the year, not just reviews.	98	1.576	.5454
Teachers set SMART goals during the review.	98	1.889	.8846
Annual reviews focus on professional development.	98	3.101	1.4523
Teachers receive constructive feedback for improvement.	98	3.406	1.3348
Teachers self-assess their performance before the review.	98	2.067	1.1891
Peer feedback is included in the review process.	98	1.957	1.3549
Teachers need improvement get support after the review.	98	2.161	1.1544
Enough time is dedicated to the review process.	98	1.889	1.1456

Source: Primary data, 2025

Key: a mean of 1.35 or below was categorized as very low (strongly disagree), 1.35–2.00 as low (disagree), 2.00–2.50 as moderate (neutral), 2.50–3.50 as high (agree), and 3.50–4.00 as very high (strongly agree)

The item “Teachers set performance goals during the annual review” yielded a mean value of 2.305, which suggests that most teachers in Mityana District do not participate in setting their own performance goals during the appraisal process. The result implies that the process may lack teacher involvement in defining clear and targeted objectives for the year. When performance reviews do not involve individual goal setting, it may point to a lack of personalization and engagement in the appraisal system, possibly making the reviews feel externally imposed rather than collaboratively developed. These results are supported by an interview response from a respondent, who stated,

“When it comes to the annual performance reviews, we are usually presented with a list of expectations or targets that have already been set by the administrators. There’s hardly any chance for us, as teachers, to sit down with our

supervisors and discuss what we want to achieve or where we want to improve. It’s more like a top-down approach where the goals are handed to us, and we’re just expected to follow them. Honestly, it sometimes feels like the review is just a formality, not really about helping us grow. If we were more involved in setting our own goals, I believe we would take more ownership of the process and feel more motivated to improve.”. (KII, 2025)

This means that most teachers do not actively participate in setting their performance goals during annual reviews in the Mityana District.

The statement “Expectations for performance are clear at the start of the year” received a mean score of 3.111, which indicates that teachers have mixed or uncertain views regarding the clarity of performance expectations at the beginning of the academic year. The implication is that while some teachers may perceive that objectives are communicated, a significant number remain unsure, suggesting inconsistency or inadequate communication practices.

Uncertainty in expectations may lead to confusion about performance targets, potentially affecting teachers' ability to align their efforts with institutional goals.

The item "Teachers receive feedback throughout the year, not just at reviews" had a mean of 1.576, which reveals a strong consensus among teachers that they do not receive continuous feedback outside of the formal review period. The data imply that feedback mechanisms may be limited to the annual review alone, with little or no follow-up throughout the teaching calendar. The absence of ongoing dialogue about performance likely diminishes the capacity for teachers to adjust or improve their practices in real-time based on formative evaluations. This finding is echoed in a detailed interview response from a respondent, who explained:

"In most cases, we only hear about our performance once a year, during the formal review meeting. Throughout the rest of the year, there's hardly any feedback given. We just keep doing our work without really knowing whether we are meeting expectations or not. No one comes to us to say, 'this was done well' or 'you could improve here.' It's like we are left to figure things out on our own. Sometimes, you hear something indirectly or during a staff meeting, but it's not specific or helpful. I believe that if we got regular feedback, even simple comments after class visits or casual observations, it would help us know what we are doing right or wrong and adjust immediately." (KII, 2025)

This means that teachers in Mityana District largely lack ongoing performance feedback throughout the year.

The statement "Teachers set SMART goals during the review" yielded a mean score of 1.889, which indicates that the practice of establishing SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goals is not commonly observed during performance reviews.

The interpretation here is that teachers may not be guided or encouraged to develop structured and strategic goals, resulting in reviews that might lack direction and measurable outcomes. The low mean value points to a gap in the strategic use of performance management tools that enhance accountability and clarity.

For the item "Annual reviews focus on professional development," the mean response was 3.101, which implies a lack of consensus or clarity among teachers about whether the performance review process prioritizes their professional growth. The interpretation of this score suggests that teachers may experience the reviews as administrative formalities rather than developmental engagements. The ambiguity in responses also implies that while some teachers might view the process as somewhat beneficial, others are uncertain about its relevance to their learning and advancement in the teaching profession.

The item "Teachers receive constructive feedback for improvement" obtained a mean of 3.406, which indicates that, generally, teachers acknowledge receiving meaningful and practical feedback during performance appraisals. The interpretation of this positive result suggests that the feedback provided is seen as helpful in identifying areas for enhancement and guiding improvement efforts. It reflects a

functional component of the review process where evaluative comments are perceived as fair and actionable by a majority of the teachers. This interpretation is supported by a detailed interview response from a respondent, who shared:

"When we finally sit for the performance appraisal, one thing I can say is that the feedback we receive is usually constructive. The headteacher or deputy will take time to explain what areas we did well in and where we need to improve. They don't just criticize; they try to guide us on how we can become better teachers. For instance, I remember being told that while my lesson planning was strong, I needed to work on involving learners more actively in class discussions. That kind of specific feedback helped me reflect and try new methods in the next term. It's not just general comments; they give real examples and suggestions, which makes the feedback meaningful. Even though it doesn't happen often, when it does, it's usually useful." (KII, 2025)

This means that teachers value the constructive nature of feedback received during reviews.

The statement "Teachers self-assess their performance before the review" received a mean value of 2.067, indicating disagreement. This suggests that self-assessment is not a regular practice among teachers in preparation for their annual performance reviews. The implication is that the review process does not typically involve teachers in reflecting on their teaching and performance before formal evaluation. This lack of self-assessment may reduce the depth of teacher engagement with the appraisal process and diminish opportunities for personal insight and growth.

For the item "Peer feedback is included in the review process," the mean score was 1.957, which reflects that the review process does not commonly incorporate feedback from fellow teachers. The interpretation here is that performance evaluations are largely isolated from peer interaction or collegial perspectives. Without input from peers who observe and interact with teachers on a regular basis, the performance appraisal may miss out on valuable contextual information that could enrich its validity and relevance.

The item "Teachers needing improvement get support after the review" garnered a mean of 2.161, which indicates that, according to teachers, post-review support for those identified as needing improvement is not commonly provided. The interpretation of this result implies a disconnect between performance diagnosis and remedial action. Teachers who are flagged for underperformance may not be receiving the necessary coaching, mentorship, or training needed to address identified shortcomings, rendering the review process less effective in driving actual performance improvement. This finding is reinforced by a detailed interview response from a respondent, who expressed:

"After the review, if a teacher is told they need to improve in certain areas, that's usually where the conversation ends. There's no clear follow-up plan or structured support system to help that teacher improve. You are left on your

own to figure out how to fix the problem. For example, I was once told that my teaching methods were too rigid and didn't engage learners enough. But after that meeting, no one came to observe my class again or offered any workshop or mentoring to help me work on that issue. It's like being told to improve but not given the tools or guidance to do so." (KII, 2025)

This affirms that teachers in Mityana District generally do not receive adequate assistance after being identified for improvement.

The statement "Enough time is dedicated to the review process" had a mean score of 1.889, categorized as disagree, which points to a perception among teachers that the

appraisal process is rushed or inadequately timed. The interpretation of this response indicates that reviews may be conducted hastily, possibly limiting thorough discussion, thoughtful evaluation, and meaningful feedback. Insufficient time allocation may contribute to a superficial understanding of performance and reduce the overall utility of the review process in supporting teaching excellence.

Correlation analysis

The Pearson correlation was run to establish the relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance.

Table 10: Correlations between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance

		Annual performance reviews	Teachers' performance
Annual performance reviews	Pearson Correlation	1	.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	111	111
Teachers' performance	Pearson Correlation	.721**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	111	111

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2025

Table 10 shows that the study findings revealed a moderate correlation coefficient of .721**, which is significant at the 0.01 level; this was presented by $(r(111) = .721, P=0.000)$. This means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables, implying that enhanced annual performance reviews will lead to changes in teachers' performance.

Regression analysis

The linear regression analysis was done to establish the predictive power of annual performance reviews on teachers' performance

Table 11: Model Summary for annual performance reviews and teachers' performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Error of the Estimate
1	.721 ^a	.518	.510	.46183

a. Predictors: (Constant), Annual performance reviews

Source, Primary data, 2025

Table 11 shows that the adjusted R-squared, which is a statistical measure of the variation within a dependent variable, was 0.510, which indicates that there was a 51.0% variation in teachers' performance caused by a unit

change in annual performance reviews. This shows that 51.0% changes in teachers' performance are explained by annual performance reviews.

Teachers' performance

Table 12: Descriptive results for teachers' performance

Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers plan lessons in advance for effective teaching.	98	3.188	1.1093
Teachers use diverse teaching strategies to meet student needs.	98	2.711	1.0172
Teachers assess student progress regularly.	98	4.535	.5002
Teachers adjust their teaching based on student performance.	98	1.282	.4514
Teachers maintain accurate student grade records.	98	4.847	.3609
Teachers use performance data to guide instruction.	98	3.547	1.0381
Teachers engage students in active learning.	98	2.282	1.1052
Teachers provide timely feedback on assignments.	98	1.252	.4359
Teachers set high academic expectations.	98	2.888	1.1064
Teachers collaborate to improve teaching practices.	98	4.594	.4925

Source: Primary data, 2025

Key: a mean of 1.35 or below was categorized as very low (strongly disagree), 1.35–2.00 as low (disagree), 2.00–2.50 as moderate (neutral), 2.50–3.50 as high (agree), and 3.50–4.00 as very high (strongly agree)

The statement “Teachers plan lessons for effective teaching” had a mean score of 3.188, which suggests that while some teachers might engage in proactive lesson planning, others may do so inconsistently or may not recognize it as a standard expectation. The ambivalence reflected in the score indicates a lack of clarity or uniform practice across schools when it comes to preparing lessons ahead of instructional time. Lesson planning is a fundamental teaching practice, and this uncertainty suggests variation in teacher preparedness and planning routines.

For the statement “Teachers use diverse teaching strategies to meet student needs,” the mean score was 2.711, which implies that teachers are uncertain about whether they adequately apply a variety of instructional strategies to cater to learners’ diverse needs. The use of different teaching methods, such as group work, visual aids, interactive activities, or differentiated instruction, is essential for addressing the varying learning styles within a classroom. The score reflects that such practices may not be consistently implemented, possibly due to a lack of training, resources, or confidence among teachers. This interpretation is reinforced by a detailed interview response from a respondent, who shared:

"Sometimes, I try to use different ways to teach my students, like asking them to work in groups or using pictures to explain ideas, but it is not something I do all the time. Many times, I stick to the usual methods because I am not always sure how to plan other activities, or I don't have enough materials to support them. Also, with many students in the class, it can be hard to manage different teaching methods at once. I think we need more guidance and resources to

help us use a variety of teaching strategies regularly to reach all students well." (KII, 2025)

These results show that the use of diverse instructional approaches is inconsistent among teachers, potentially due to challenges such as limited training, resources, or confidence in applying varied teaching techniques effectively.

The item “Teachers assess student progress regularly” received a high mean score of 4.535, which finding indicates that teachers overwhelmingly believe they consistently track and evaluate their students’ academic performance over time. Regular assessment plays a critical role in identifying learning gaps, monitoring progress, and guiding instruction. This strong agreement suggests a high level of commitment among teachers in Mityana District to measuring student learning outcomes through periodic tests, quizzes, or continuous assessments.

The statement “Teachers adjust teaching based on student performance” had a mean value of 1.282, which is a particularly low score and indicates that teachers do not commonly modify their instructional methods in response to the academic performance or learning needs of their students. This may point to rigid teaching styles where feedback from assessments is not used to tailor or adapt lesson delivery. Such a result suggests a disconnect between student performance data and actual instructional decision-making, which could hinder efforts to support struggling learners effectively. This interpretation is supported by a detailed interview response from a respondent, who explained:

"In most cases, I teach the same way throughout the term, even if some students are struggling to understand the lessons. I don't often change my teaching style or methods based on how well the students are doing because I am not sure how to adjust, or I don't have enough time to prepare different plans. Sometimes, I just follow the usual lesson

plan without making changes, even when I notice some students are falling behind. It feels like there isn't much support or guidance on how to change teaching to help students who are having difficulties." (KII, 2025)

This means that adapting teaching methods based on student performance is not a common practice among teachers, potentially due to a lack of knowledge, time constraints, or insufficient support for differentiated instruction.

For the statement "Teachers maintain accurate student grade records," the mean score was 4.847, which indicates an almost universal consensus that teachers consistently and correctly record students' grades. Maintaining accurate records is essential for tracking academic progress, preparing report cards, and informing parents or guardians. The exceptionally high score reflects strong administrative discipline and accountability among teachers when it comes to managing student performance data.

The item "Teachers use performance data to guide instruction" yielded a mean of 3.547, which suggests that many teachers actively refer to student performance metrics such as test results, continuous assessments, or classroom participation to shape their instructional plans. Teachers who use data to inform teaching decisions are better positioned to address knowledge gaps and reinforce learning. The agreement on this item implies a reasonably widespread adoption of data-driven teaching practices in Mityana District, though not necessarily universal.

The statement "Teachers engage students in active learning" had a mean value of 2.282, which means that teachers generally do not perceive themselves as fostering interactive and participatory classroom environments. Active learning involves strategies like group discussions, problem-solving tasks, and hands-on activities, which encourage students to take responsibility for their learning. The result suggests that passive, lecture-based instruction may be more common, limiting opportunities for learners to be actively involved in the educational process. This insight is reinforced by an interview excerpt from a respondent (KII, 2025), who elaborated in detail:

"In my classroom, most lessons are teacher-centered, where I explain the topic and students listen quietly. I don't often organize group work or activities that make students think or participate actively because it takes extra time to prepare and manage. Sometimes, I feel the class is too large to allow for many activities, so I rely more on talking and writing on the board. Many students just copy notes rather than discussing or solving problems together. I wish we had more training on how to involve students actively, but for now, it's mostly traditional teaching." (KII, 2025)

This implies that active learning strategies are not widely practiced, likely due to challenges such as time constraints, large class sizes, and limited professional development on interactive teaching methods.

The item "Teachers provide timely feedback on assignments" recorded a mean of 1.252, which is interpreted as strongly disagree. This suggests that most teachers do not return assignments with comments or grades in a prompt manner. Timely feedback is crucial for students to

understand their mistakes, reinforce learning, and improve future performance. The strong disagreement points to delays in the feedback process, which may weaken its effectiveness in supporting student progress.

The statement "Teachers set high academic expectations" had a mean score of 2.888, which reflects uncertainty among teachers regarding whether they consistently encourage students to reach ambitious academic goals. Setting high expectations can significantly influence student achievement, as it promotes a culture of excellence and effort. The neutral response may imply inconsistent application of this principle or unclear communication of expectations to students. This perspective is supported by the detailed interview response from a respondent, who explained:

"Sometimes, I try to push my students to do their best, but it is not always easy to set very high expectations because some students struggle with the basics. I worry that if I expect too much, they might feel discouraged or give up. Also, many students come from difficult backgrounds, so I try to balance between encouraging them and not overwhelming them. I don't always clearly communicate very high goals because I want to keep things realistic and achievable for each child." (KII, 2025)

This means that while some teachers do encourage high standards, there is hesitation or inconsistency in setting and communicating strong academic expectations, often due to concerns about student readiness and motivation.

The item "Teachers collaborate to improve teaching practices" had a high mean of 4.594, placing it in the strongly agree category. This indicates that teachers in Mityana District actively engage in collaborative practices, such as sharing lesson plans, co-teaching, or participating in professional learning communities. Such collaboration supports professional growth, facilitates the exchange of ideas, and enhances teaching quality. The strong agreement underscores a culture of teamwork and collective improvement within the teaching workforce.

Discussion

Annual performance reviews and teachers' performance

The study revealed a statistically significant relationship between annual performance reviews and teachers' performance. The regression analysis confirmed that annual performance reviews have a significant effect on teachers' performance. This finding aligns with the work of Mensah and Agyemang (2020), who found that performance appraisals in Ghanaian public schools positively influenced teacher motivation and accountability, resulting in improved classroom delivery and learner outcomes. Their study emphasized that when performance reviews are regular and well-structured, they help clarify expectations and provide feedback that enhances teacher growth. This suggests that annual performance reviews function not only as a management tool but also as a mechanism for professional development.

Similar results were reported by Nankunda and Kaggwa (2021), who studied secondary schools in central Uganda and found that performance reviews significantly contributed to instructional planning and student-centered pedagogy. Their study argued that such reviews create room for dialogue between teachers and administrators, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This is consistent with the current study's findings, which suggest that reviews, when meaningfully conducted, improve not just individual performance but also overall teaching quality. The results also echo those of Mwangi and Njeru (2019), who emphasized that appraisal systems improve commitment to institutional goals by aligning teacher efforts with measurable objectives.

However, some studies present contrasting findings. For instance, Okello and Namatovu (2020) reported that in some Ugandan secondary schools, annual reviews had little to no impact on performance due to their rigid, checklist-based nature that lacked meaningful feedback. Teachers in such environments perceived the reviews as a mere administrative formality, which diminished their effectiveness. This discrepancy highlights that while the structure and frequency of reviews matter, the quality and intent of the process are equally critical. The current study supports the positive potential of annual reviews but underscores the need for reviews to be constructive, participatory, and aligned with individual development goals.

Furthermore, the study by Tadesse and Berhanu (2021) in Ethiopia found that performance reviews sometimes led to stress and job dissatisfaction among teachers when implemented without transparency or when used primarily for punitive purposes. Their findings show that when reviews are not linked to developmental outcomes but are instead used as monitoring tools, they may result in unintended negative consequences such as reduced morale and resistance to change. While the current study has found a significant positive impact, it is important to consider the emotional and professional context in which reviews are conducted, particularly in resource-constrained education systems.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that in primary schools in Mityana District, annual performance reviews play an important role in enhancing teacher performance when conducted with clarity, consistency, and a focus on development. Such reviews appear to contribute to better instructional planning, increased teacher motivation, and greater accountability, particularly when they include meaningful feedback and encourage collaborative dialogue. However, the effectiveness of these reviews depends on their design and implementation, with a need to move beyond mere administrative procedures to processes that genuinely support professional growth and build trust between teachers and administrators, while also considering the unique educational context and resource limitations of the district.

Recommendation

The study recommended that school administrators should create and disseminate structured performance review frameworks that clearly outline evaluation criteria, timelines, and expectations. These guidelines should be accessible to all teachers and aligned with curriculum goals, national education standards, and school-specific objectives to ensure transparency and fairness.

The study recommended that the Ministry of Education or local education authorities should organize capacity-building workshops for school leaders and PTA representatives involved in appraisals. These sessions should focus on delivering developmental feedback, conducting participatory reviews, and supporting teachers in creating individualized improvement plans.

The study recommended that school administrators, in collaboration with district education officers, should ensure that annual reviews are not isolated activities but are linked directly to opportunities for training, mentorship, and resource allocation. Identified gaps in teacher performance should inform tailored in-service training programs and continuous learning initiatives.

The study recommended that PTA members should be sensitized about the role of performance reviews in improving educational outcomes. They can support implementation by providing logistical resources for review processes and participating in monitoring committees to ensure that the reviews are conducted regularly, fairly, and with developmental impact in mind.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Author contributions

Zavuga Rhona Nabaweesi was the principal investigator. Dr. Frank Pio Kiyangi supervised the research project.

Data availability

Data is available upon request.

Informed consent

All the participants consented to this study.

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