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Abstract

The rate of under-producing organizations in Nigeria is a phenomenon that requires critical investigation, as the number of organizations operating below standard continues to rise. Previous studies have linked these low outputs to the unmotivated attitudes of employees and suggested that performance appraisals are crucial for identifying and addressing training needs. This study investigates how performance appraisal systems impact employee productivity within the Nigerian private sector, focusing on three key areas: the frequency of appraisals, the quality of feedback, and the availability of training and development opportunities. Using a quantitative approach with stepwise regression analysis, the study analyzes data from 50 employees, employing a non-probability sampling approach to ensure relevant representation. The study reveals that frequent performance appraisals and high-quality feedback have a significant positive impact on employee productivity. Additionally, access to training and development opportunities further enhances performance. These findings suggest that well-implemented performance appraisal systems can lead to considerable improvements in organizational effectiveness, highlighting their crucial role in optimizing employee performance and driving overall organizational success. To foster better organizational performance, it is recommended that companies increase the frequency of appraisals, improve feedback mechanisms, and ensure that training and development opportunities are readily available.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the impact of performance appraisal systems on employee performance in the Nigerian private sector. Globally, the labor market is witnessing a noticeable decline in the availability of skilled employees, despite the ongoing competitive dynamics of the marketplace (Binder and Bound, 2019). This trend has underscored the strategic importance of adopting a pragmatic approach to managing employee performance, particularly for forward-thinking organizations aiming to navigate future challenges effectively. Among contemporary strategic methods, performance appraisal stands out as a key approach to managing employee performance. Notably, the significance of performance appraisal in relation to employee performance has sparked renewed scholarly interest among researchers and practitioners alike, both nationally and internationally (Kusumah, Indrayanto and Setiawan, 2021; Al-Jedaia and Mehrez, 2020; Abbas, 2014). This interest stems from the documented and mutually beneficial relationship between these two variables, as highlighted by various researchers (Sudarsan, 2019; Okeke et al., 2019; Zayum et al., 2017; Kim, 2016).

Performance appraisal systems have long been a cornerstone of effective human resource management, offering a structured approach to evaluating employee performance, providing feedback, and identifying opportunities for development (Armstrong, 2021). These systems play a vital role in aligning individual performance with organizational goals, ensuring that employees contribute effectively to the overall success of the organization (Dessler, 2020). The evolution of performance appraisals can be traced back to the early 20th century when organizations began to formalize methods to assess employee output and efficiency (Murphy & Cleveland, 2018). Over the years, these systems have evolved to incorporate a wide range of metrics and methodologies, reflecting changes in organizational needs and the broader economic environment. In contemporary settings, performance appraisals often include multi-source feedback mechanisms, self-assessment components, and advanced performance metrics that provide a comprehensive view of employee performance (Aguinis, 2019).

In the context of the Nigerian private sector, performance appraisals are especially crucial. The private sector in Nigeria is a significant driver of the national economy, characterized by rapid growth and intense competition (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2022). This sector encompasses a

diverse range of industries including banking, telecommunications, oil and gas, and manufacturing, each with unique performance demands and expectations. As companies strive to enhance productivity and maintain a competitive edge, effective performance appraisal systems become indispensable tools for managing human capital. The Nigerian economy has faced numerous challenges such as fluctuating oil prices, economic recessions, and political instability, all of which have direct implications for private sector performance (World Bank, 2020). In this volatile environment, performance appraisals help organizations identify high performers, develop talent, and implement strategic initiatives aimed at improving overall business performance (Akinyele, 2020).

Performance appraisal typically involves the systematic evaluation of employees' job performance and productivity in relation to established criteria and organizational objectives (Murphy & Cleveland, 2018). The primary purposes of performance appraisal include improving performance, providing feedback, guiding promotions and rewards, and identifying training needs (Aguinis, 2019). These appraisals can take various forms, including annual reviews, quarterly evaluations, and continuous feedback systems. Modern performance appraisals often leverage technology through performance management software that tracks and analyzes employee performance data in real-time (Dessler, 2020). Despite these advancements, the fundamental goals remain consistent: to enhance employee performance, foster career development, and align individual goals with organizational strategy (Tziner & Rabenu, 2018).

Despite their widespread use, performance appraisal systems in the Nigerian private sector often encounter several challenges. Issues such as appraisal bias, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and lack of employee engagement are prevalent, which can undermine the effectiveness of the appraisal process (Ogunbameru, 2018). Appraisal bias can occur due to subjective judgments, favoritism, and cultural misunderstandings, leading to unfair evaluations (Ejiogu, 2019). Inadequate feedback mechanisms may result from poorly trained managers or insufficient time allocated for the appraisal process, leaving employees without clear guidance on how to improve (Oluwafemi, 2020). Furthermore, many employees perceive performance appraisals as punitive rather than developmental, which can reduce their motivation and engagement (Akinyele, 2020). These issues highlight the need for robust training programs for managers, the development of

clear and objective appraisal criteria, and the establishment of a feedback culture that emphasizes continuous improvement (Nwachukwu, 2019).

Understanding the dynamics of performance appraisal systems in Nigeria is essential for several reasons. Firstly, Nigeria's diverse cultural and economic landscape presents unique challenges and opportunities in human resource management (Ejiogu, 2019). The country is characterized by a mix of ethnicities, languages, and cultural practices that can influence workplace interactions and perceptions of fairness in performance evaluations (Ogunbameru, 2018). Secondly, the effectiveness of performance appraisals directly influences employee motivation, productivity, and retention—key factors for organizational success (Akinyele, 2020). High employee turnover and low productivity can be particularly detrimental in a competitive market, making effective performance management a critical priority (Oluwafemi, 2020). Lastly, insights from this study can inform better practices and policies, helping organizations to harness the full potential of their workforce (Nwachukwu, 2019). By understanding how performance appraisals impact employee outcomes, organizations can develop tailored strategies that enhance employee satisfaction, foster professional growth, and ultimately drive business success (Dessler, 2020).

This study aims to explore the impact of performance appraisal systems on employee performance in the Nigerian private sector. By examining the relationship between appraisal practices and employee outcomes, this research seeks to provide actionable recommendations for improving performance appraisal systems to enhance overall organizational performance. Specifically, the study will investigate how the frequency of appraisals, the quality of feedback provided, and the identification of training and development opportunities during appraisals influence key performance indicators such as productivity, job satisfaction, and employee retention (Aguinis, 2019). This research employs a quantitative method approach using data from employee surveys with insights from interviews with HR professionals and managers, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state and impact of performance appraisal systems in Nigeria.

1.2 Problem Statement

The effectiveness of any organization relies heavily on the caliber and dedication of its workforce. To maintain ongoing productivity and efficacy, it is imperative for every institution to periodically conduct performance evaluations of its employees. These appraisals serve to monitor staff

members, enabling the organization to address any issues, recognize achievements, provide motivation, retain valuable talent, or take any necessary corrective measures.

The primary problem this study seeks to address is the extent to which performance appraisal systems influence employee performance in the Nigerian private sector. While there is extensive literature on the theoretical benefits of performance appraisals, empirical evidence on their effectiveness in the Nigerian context is limited (Oluwafemi, 2020). This gap in knowledge hinders the ability of organizations to optimize their appraisal systems to achieve desired outcomes (Ejiogu, 2019). By investigating the actual impact of performance appraisals on key employee performance metrics such as productivity, job satisfaction, and retention, this study aims to provide evidence-based insights that can guide the design and implementation of more effective appraisal systems.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research are:

- i. To determine the relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.
- ii. To assess the impact of feedback quality during performance appraisals on employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals on employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the following research questions will guide the study:

- i. How does the frequency of performance appraisals relate to employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector?
- ii. What is the impact of feedback quality during performance appraisals on employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector?
- iii. What effect do training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals have on employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector?

The remainder of the study is structured as follows: Chapter 2 conducts a comprehensive literature reviews to examine existing research on performance appraisal systems and their impact on employee performance, with a specific focus on studies conducted within the Nigerian private sector. Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology employed in this study, detailing the approach to data collection, sample selection, and data analysis techniques, including regression analysis. In Chapter 4, the findings of the study are presented and analyzed, exploring the relationships between performance appraisal practices and key employee performance indicators. Chapter 5 engages in a discussion of the findings, comparing them with existing literature, and discussing their implications for theory and practice. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the study by summarizing the key findings, offering recommendations for organizations aiming to enhance the effectiveness of their performance appraisal systems, and suggesting directions for future research.

Chapter 2 - Literature review

This chapter explores the various aspects of performance appraisal systems through a review of existing literature. First, it looks at the basic concepts and definitions related to performance appraisal. Then, it traces the development of performance appraisal systems over time, noting important changes and improvements. Next, the chapter examines different theories and models that help explain how these systems work. Finally, it reviews studies and research that show how performance appraisal systems are used in real organizations and what effects they have.

2.1 Conceptual Literature

2.1.1 Performance Appraisal Purposes

Performance appraisal is recognized as a fundamental practice in human resource management, aimed at assessing employee performance to foster both individual and organizational growth. Armstrong and Taylor (2014) define performance appraisal as a structured set of practices designed to outline job expectations and regulate the employee-employer relationship, thereby motivating and maintaining a workforce that meets organizational needs. The primary purposes of performance appraisal are manifold, encompassing decision-making regarding salaries, promotions, and training needs, as well as providing feedback and recognizing employee achievements (Thomas & Bretz, 1994; Majumder, 2012; Cheng, 2014).

One critical purpose of performance appraisal is to facilitate salary and promotion decisions. By systematically evaluating employee performance, organizations can make informed decisions regarding compensation adjustments and career advancements, ensuring that these decisions are fair and based on merit (Majumder, 2012). This evaluative process is crucial for maintaining equity within the organization and for rewarding high performers appropriately, which in turn enhances employee motivation and retention (Kadiresan et al., 2015). Another significant aspect of performance appraisal is identifying training and development needs. Through regular evaluations, managers can pinpoint areas where employees may require additional training or skill enhancement. This proactive approach not only addresses performance gaps but also prepares employees for future roles and responsibilities within the organization (Cheng, 2014). Investing in employee development through targeted training programs can lead to improved job performance

and greater job satisfaction, thereby fostering a more competent and motivated workforce (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Moreover, performance appraisal serves as a tool for providing constructive feedback. Effective feedback mechanisms are essential for employee development, as they help employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback provided during performance appraisals can guide employees in setting personal development goals and in aligning their efforts with organizational objectives (Thomas & Bretz, 1994). When feedback is delivered effectively, it can enhance employee engagement and productivity by clarifying expectations and recognizing accomplishments (Kadiresan et al., 2015). Recognition of employee contributions is another vital purpose of performance appraisals. Recognizing and rewarding employees for their achievements can significantly boost morale and motivation. Performance appraisals offer a formal mechanism for acknowledging employee efforts, which can reinforce positive behaviors and drive continued excellence (Majumder, 2012). Recognition through appraisals not only validates employees' hard work but also reinforces their commitment to the organization, fostering a culture of appreciation and high performance (Cheng, 2014).

Despite the costs associated with conducting performance appraisals, organizations continue to embrace this practice due to its critical role in administrative decision-making. Performance appraisals provide a structured approach to evaluating employee performance, which is essential for making informed decisions about bonuses, training needs, and promotions (Kadiresan et al., 2015). These decisions are integral to creating a motivated and committed workforce, as they directly impact employee satisfaction and loyalty to the organization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Based on the objectives of performance appraisal systems, five key human resource management (HRM) practices can be identified: training, financial rewards, job promotion, recognition, and feedback. These practices are interrelated and collectively contribute to the overall effectiveness of performance management within an organization. Training ensures that employees have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their roles effectively, while financial rewards and job promotions provide tangible incentives for high performance. Recognition and feedback, on the other hand, address employees' intrinsic needs for validation and personal growth (Thomas & Bretz, 1994; Majumder, 2012).

Hence, the purposes of performance appraisal extend beyond mere evaluation of job performance. They encompass a range of activities that support employee development, reward high performance, and align individual efforts with organizational goals. By implementing robust performance appraisal systems, organizations can enhance their decision-making processes, foster employee motivation, and ultimately achieve greater organizational success (Kadiresan et al., 2015).

A detailed research question emerging from the conceptual literature on performance appraisal purposes, which will be addressed in the primary research, is: How do the identified purposes of performance appraisal (i.e., salary decisions, promotions, training needs, feedback provision, and recognition) influence employee performance and organizational outcomes in the Nigerian private sector? This question aims to explore how these various purposes are perceived by employees and their actual impact on critical factors such as employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention within the specific context of the Nigerian private sector.

2.1.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance is a multifaceted concept that lacks a universally accepted definition, leading to its perception from various angles and contexts (Andersen, 2010). Generally, performance is viewed as the process of transforming inputs into outputs to achieve specific outcomes. This dynamic process of change is aimed at reaching desired results. Muchinsky (2003) describes employee performance as a set of workforce behaviors that can be observed, measured, and evaluated based on individual achievements. Similarly, McConnell (2003) defines employee performance as an accomplishment that can be quantified and assessed.

Bhatia and Jain (2012) assert that performance can be evaluated through a combination of quality, quantity, time, and cost. Essentially, worker performance encompasses what an employee does or fails to do in their role. According to Mathis and Jackson (2009) and Güngör (2011), performance is closely linked to the quantity and quality of productivity, timeliness in completing tasks, and the efficiency and effectiveness of work performed. These elements highlight that performance is not merely about the outputs but also about how those outputs are achieved. The concept of employee performance in the organizational context is typically described as the extent to which an individual contributes to achieving the organization's goals. This includes both task performance,

which refers to the direct execution of job duties, and contextual performance, which involves behaviors that support the organizational environment, such as cooperation and commitment. Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011) note that various aspects of performance can be evaluated through indicators such as work attendance, the fulfillment of assigned duties, and adherence to organizational conduct. This perspective emphasizes that performance is multi-dimensional, encompassing both the specific tasks an employee performs and the manner in which they perform them. Effective performance management thus involves not only evaluating the outcomes of work but also the processes and behaviors that lead to those outcomes. For instance, an employee who consistently meets their targets but does so in a manner that fosters a positive work environment and teamwork would be considered highly performing in both task and contextual performance dimensions.

In practical terms, especially within the Nigerian Civil Service, employee performance can be seen in the efficient discharge of duties as prescribed by civil service regulations. This efficiency in service delivery is crucial for the effectiveness of public administration and for meeting the expectations of the public. The performance of civil servants is thus a reflection of their adherence to the standards and procedures set forth by the civil service, impacting the overall efficacy of governmental operations. Performance assessment in this context involves evaluating how well civil servants meet these standards, their productivity levels, and their overall contribution to public service goals. Effective performance management in the Nigerian Civil Service, therefore, includes not only the evaluation of task completion but also the manner in which these tasks are carried out, ensuring that civil servants are aligned with the broader objectives of public administration.

In addition to the quantitative aspects of performance, such as the number of tasks completed or the speed of work, qualitative factors are equally important. These include the quality of work produced, adherence to deadlines, and the ability to work collaboratively with others. Scholars like Mathis and Jackson (2009) and Güngör (2011) have emphasized that performance is not solely about the volume of work produced but also about maintaining high standards of quality and ensuring that work is completed efficiently and effectively. This holistic view of performance is essential for developing a comprehensive understanding of employee contributions to organizational success.

Moreover, the impact of employee performance extends beyond individual productivity to affect overall organizational effectiveness. High-performing employees are often those who not only achieve their own goals but also contribute to the collective goals of their team and organization. This synergy between individual and organizational performance underscores the importance of aligning employee goals with broader strategic objectives. Organizations that effectively manage and enhance employee performance through continuous feedback, recognition, and development opportunities are more likely to achieve sustained success.

Emerging from the above, a detailed research question to be addressed in the primary research is: Why is it important to establish the impact of various performance appraisal practices on employee performance and organizational outcomes in the Nigerian private sector? This question seeks to understand the effectiveness of different appraisal methods in improving employee performance, job satisfaction, and retention, and how these contribute to the overall success of organizations within this context.

2.1.3 Training

The literature on performance appraisal has consistently underscored the critical role of training as a key objective within these schemes. Training is essential for addressing the developmental needs of employees and enhancing their performance. Memoria (2000) describes training as a systematic process of learning programmed behaviors, emphasizing the application of knowledge to improve an employee's performance in their current job and to prepare them for future roles. This definition underscores the dual purpose of training: enhancing immediate job performance and fostering readiness for future responsibilities. Cascio (1995) expands on this by defining training as a planned program designed to improve performance at individual, group, and organizational levels, arguing that effective training results in measurable changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and social behaviors. This comprehensive approach to training highlights its multifaceted impact, not just on the technical competencies of employees but also on their behavioral and social skills, which are crucial for overall organizational effectiveness. Training is seen as a vital component of integrating human resource management (HRM) with a firm's occupational strategy (Dabale, Jagero, & Nyauchi, 2014). This integration ensures that training

programs are aligned with the strategic goals of the organization, thereby enhancing the contribution of human resources to achieving these goals.

Edralin (2011) supports this view by affirming that the core purpose of training is to enhance the knowledge, behavior, and overall skill set of employees to facilitate the achievement of organizational objectives. Training programs are designed to bridge the gap between existing competencies and those required to perform effectively in a dynamic work environment. This developmental approach not only improves job performance but also contributes to employee satisfaction and retention, as employees feel more competent and valued. In the context of the civil service, training plays a crucial role in improving the effectiveness of civil servants and enabling them to perform their duties more confidently and knowledgeably. Training programs in civil service aim to enhance the skills and capabilities of employees, ensuring that they are well-prepared to meet the demands of their roles. This preparation is critical for the delivery of high-quality public services and for maintaining public trust in government institutions. Effective training programs in the civil service are therefore essential for building a competent and professional workforce that can address the complex needs of society.

Moreover, the importance of training extends beyond immediate job performance; it is also about personal and professional growth. Training provides employees with opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge, which can open up new career pathways and enhance their overall employability (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). This investment in employee development is not only beneficial for the individual but also for the organization, as it leads to a more skilled and adaptable workforce. Training is also instrumental in fostering a culture of continuous improvement within organizations. By promoting ongoing learning and development, organizations can ensure that their employees remain up-to-date with the latest industry trends and best practices (Kadiresan et al., 2015). This continuous learning culture is vital for maintaining competitiveness in today's fast-paced business environment. Organizations that prioritize training and development are better positioned to innovate and respond to changing market conditions (Nwachukwu, 2019). In conclusion, training is a critical component of performance appraisal systems and a vital aspect of human resource management. It plays a key role in enhancing employee performance, aligning individual capabilities with organizational goals, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By investing in training, organizations can ensure that their employees are well-

equipped to meet current and future challenges, thereby driving overall organizational success. This comprehensive approach to training underscores its importance in achieving both immediate job performance improvements and long-term strategic objectives.

Emerging from this discussion, a detailed research question to be explored in the primary research is: How do targeted training and development opportunities identified during performance appraisals impact employee competency and overall organizational success in the Nigerian private sector? This question aims to understand the effectiveness of training programs that are designed based on performance appraisal outcomes.

2.1.4 The Evolution of Performance Appraisal Systems

The historical trajectory of performance appraisal systems reflects a dynamic interplay between organizational needs and evolving management theories. Beginning in the late 19th century, rudimentary forms of appraisal emerged within military and corporate contexts, primarily for talent identification and succession planning. These early systems, exemplified by the United States Army's merit-based rating system, laid the groundwork for more structured approaches to evaluating employee performance (Wiese & Buckley, 1998). However, as organizations expanded and diversified, the need for systematic methods of assessing employee contributions became apparent. This led to the development of trait-based appraisal systems in the early to mid-20th century. Despite their establishment, these systems were criticized for their subjectivity and lack of alignment with organizational goals, highlighting the ongoing need for refinement and adaptation in performance management practices (Pulakos, 2009).

The subsequent shift towards a behavioral approach in the 1960s and 1970s marked a significant evolution in performance appraisal methodology. Emphasizing observable behaviors and actions over innate traits, this approach aimed to provide more objective and actionable feedback to employees. Techniques such as Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS) emerged during this period, offering specific examples to anchor performance ratings and enhance objectivity (Wiese & Buckley, 1998). However, as organizations became increasingly focused on competency-based management in the 1980s and 1990s, appraisal systems evolved yet again to reflect this paradigm shift. Competency-based approaches emphasized the identification and assessment of key knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for effective job performance.

By aligning employee development with strategic objectives and tailoring feedback to individual competencies, organizations sought to enhance performance and drive organizational success (Grote, 2011).

In recent years, performance appraisal systems have continued to evolve in response to changing organizational dynamics and employee expectations. Contemporary approaches, such as continuous feedback and holistic performance management, reflect a growing emphasis on ongoing dialogue, employee development, and recognition. Continuous feedback models, for instance, prioritize real-time performance discussions over traditional annual reviews, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and development (Pulakos, 2009). Meanwhile, holistic performance management frameworks integrate various elements, including goal setting, development planning, and recognition, into a comprehensive approach to performance appraisal. As organizations navigate an increasingly complex and dynamic business environment, the evolution of performance appraisal systems underscores the importance of adapting management practices to meet the evolving needs of both organizations and employees. By embracing innovative approaches and remaining responsive to changing circumstances, organizations can enhance employee engagement, drive performance, and achieve sustainable growth (Grote, 2011).

2.1.5 Linking Job Promotion to Employee Performance

Promotion is pivotal for both organizations and employees as it fosters increased challenges, career growth, and on-the-job learning, allowing individuals to fully develop their potential. According to Usman (2005), promotion enhances job performance, not only by providing financial benefits but also as a form of recognition for the employee. Teseema and Soeter (2006) affirm a strong correlation between promotion practices and perceived employee performance, and Nawaz, Aleem, and Hamed (2012) also concluded that job promotion positively impacts performance. Consequently, Park, Mitsuhashi, Fey, and Bjorkman (2003) suggest that to boost employee performance, organizations must ensure fair promotional opportunities. Wan, Sulaiman, and Omar (2012) argue that employees who feel undervalued due to lack of promotion may become dissatisfied, which could lead to reduced productivity. If employees are not promoted, their

commitment and effort are likely to diminish, as they may no longer feel motivated to contribute their best to the organization.

Lind and van den Bos (2002) highlight that perceived procedural fairness significantly influences how employees respond, especially regarding promotions that impact their psychological and financial well-being. Perceived fairness in the promotion process affects not only those who are promoted but also those who are not. Bidwell (2011) notes that internal promotions are often cost-effective and result in higher quality employees. Cheng (2014) emphasizes that performance appraisals are critical for managerial decisions regarding promotions, compensation, and employee retention or termination. Gibson, Harris, and Harvey (2007) observe that the frequency and quality of performance evaluations significantly influence promotion practices within organizations, linking appraisal processes closely with promotion decisions.

Research by Wan, Sulaiman, and Omar (2012) reveals that unfair promotion practices negatively impact organizational commitment, career satisfaction, intent to leave, and employee performance. Their study found that employees' performance is likely to be affected by perceived unfairness in promotion decisions. Paul, Olumuyiwa, and Esther (2015) show that fairness in managerial decisions, particularly in the equitable distribution of rewards and promotions, enhances employees' commitment and dedication to the organization. Femi (2013), in a study of Wema Bank, Nigeria, found a significant impact of performance appraisals on promotion practices. Similarly, Ikemefuna and Chidi (2012) established that performance evaluations are crucial for promotional decisions. Abdulla, Djebarni, and Mellahi (2011) concluded that promotion opportunities are a key determinant of employee performance, as a lack of perceived promotion potential can lead to significant dissatisfaction and negatively impact performance.

Overall, the literature suggests a positive relationship between job promotion and employee performance, this will be further explored in the primary research. Ensuring fair and transparent promotion practices not only motivates employees but also enhances their commitment and productivity, thereby contributing to the overall success of the organization. Therefore, it is hypothesized that job promotion positively affects employee performance, reinforcing the importance of equitable and strategic promotion practices within organizations.

2.2 Theoretical literature

Performance appraisal systems are deeply rooted in several theoretical frameworks that provide a basis for understanding how they function and their impact on employee behaviour and organizational outcomes. This section delves into key theories that underpin performance appraisal practices, including goal-setting theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory. These theories collectively offer insights into the motivations behind employee performance and the mechanisms through which performance appraisals can influence work behaviour and outcomes.

2.2.1 Goal-Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory, developed by Locke and Latham (1990), is one of the most influential and extensively researched theories in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management. This theory posits that setting specific and challenging goals, along with appropriate feedback, significantly enhances employee performance. The core premise of goal-setting theory is that individuals who are given specific and challenging goals perform better than those who are given vague or easy goals, or no goals at all. The specificity of the goal reduces ambiguity and directs attention and effort toward goal-relevant activities, while the challenge provides motivation and encourages persistence in overcoming obstacles (Locke & Latham, 2002). The effectiveness of goal-setting is influenced by several key factors, including goal specificity, goal difficulty, goal commitment, feedback, and task complexity. Specific goals, as opposed to vague or general ones, provide clear expectations and benchmarks for performance, which help employees understand exactly what is required of them. For instance, a goal of "increase sales by 10% over the next quarter" is more effective than "do your best to improve sales" because it provides a precise target. The difficulty of the goal is also crucial; challenging goals tend to lead to higher performance than easy ones because they stretch the capabilities of employees and push them to exert more effort. However, goals must still be perceived as attainable to avoid discouragement and reduce the risk of lower performance due to perceived impossibility (Latham, 2016).

Goal commitment is another vital component of goal-setting theory. It refers to the extent to which an individual is personally invested in achieving the set goals. High commitment levels are often achieved when goals are seen as important, and when the individual has a sense of ownership over

the goal-setting process. Involving employees in setting their own goals can significantly enhance their commitment and motivation. Furthermore, the provision of feedback plays a critical role in the goal-setting process. Feedback allows employees to track their progress, identify areas of improvement, and adjust their strategies accordingly. Regular feedback keeps employees engaged and informed about how well they are doing in relation to their goals, which can boost their motivation and performance (Locke & Latham, 2019).

The complexity of the task also interacts with goal-setting effectiveness. For simpler tasks, specific and challenging goals can be very effective. However, for more complex tasks, the benefits of goal-setting can be mediated by the need for strategies and learning. In such cases, it is essential to not only set goals but also provide employees with the necessary resources and support to develop effective strategies for achieving those goals. Research by Locke and Latham (2019) indicates that for complex tasks, goal-setting should be complemented with training and development interventions to ensure that employees possess the requisite skills and knowledge to succeed. This holistic approach to goal-setting ensures that employees are not only motivated but also equipped to tackle the challenges posed by complex tasks.

Recent studies have continued to affirm the relevance and applicability of goal-setting theory in various organizational contexts. For example, a study by Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan (2017) highlighted that when employees are involved in setting their own goals and receive consistent feedback, their intrinsic motivation and overall job satisfaction increase. Similarly, research by Ordóñez, Schweitzer, Galinsky, and Bazerman (2009) has shown that while specific and challenging goals can drive high performance, they must be carefully managed to avoid unethical behavior or excessive risk-taking that may arise from overly aggressive goal-setting. These findings underscore the importance of a balanced approach to goal-setting, where the focus is on achievable yet challenging goals, supported by continuous feedback and ethical considerations. This will be further explored in the primary research.

2.2.2 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory, formulated by Victor Vroom in 1964, is a prominent motivation theory that explains how individuals make decisions about their behaviors and actions in the workplace based on their expectations of outcomes. The theory posits that motivation is the result of a rational

calculation where individuals evaluate their level of effort, the likelihood of achieving performance targets, and the desirability of the associated rewards. Vroom's expectancy theory is predicated on three key components: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence, each playing a crucial role in determining an individual's motivation to engage in specific behaviors (Vroom, 1964).

Expectancy refers to the belief that one's effort will result in the desired performance level. This component of the theory emphasizes the relationship between effort and performance. If employees believe that their hard work and efforts will lead to successful performance, they are more likely to be motivated to put in the required effort. Expectancy is influenced by factors such as self-efficacy, goal difficulty, and perceived control over the outcome (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to perform a task, is particularly important; employees with high self-efficacy are more likely to believe that their efforts will result in successful performance (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, the clarity of performance goals and the perceived feasibility of achieving these goals also significantly affect expectancy.

Instrumentality is the belief that successful performance will lead to the attainment of desired rewards. This aspect of the theory focuses on the relationship between performance and outcomes. If employees perceive that their performance will be appropriately rewarded, their motivation to perform well increases. Instrumentality is enhanced when there is a clear and consistent link between performance and rewards, which can be communicated through transparent performance appraisal systems and reward policies (Pinder, 2014). Effective communication and trust in the organization's reward system are essential for high instrumentality. Employees must trust that the organization will deliver on its promises of rewards following successful performance. **Valence** is the value that an individual places on the rewards associated with performance. This component reflects the personal importance of the expected rewards, which can vary significantly among individuals. For some employees, intrinsic rewards such as personal growth, recognition, and job satisfaction might be highly valued, while others may place greater importance on extrinsic rewards such as salary increases, bonuses, and promotions (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). The valence of a reward is subjective and depends on individual needs, goals, and values. Organizations must therefore understand the diverse preferences of their employees to offer rewards that effectively motivate different individuals.

The integration of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence determines the overall motivational force driving an employee's behavior. According to Vroom's equation: $\text{Motivation} = \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Instrumentality} \times \text{Valence}$ (Vroom, 1964). This multiplicative model implies that if any of the three components is zero, the overall motivation will be zero. Therefore, for maximum motivation, employees must believe that their effort will lead to performance (high expectancy), that performance will lead to rewards (high instrumentality), and that these rewards are valuable to them (high valence). Expectancy theory has profound implications for designing performance appraisal systems and motivational strategies in organizations. Effective performance appraisals should ensure that employees clearly understand the link between their efforts, performance metrics, and the rewards they can achieve. Managers should focus on enhancing employees' self-efficacy by providing adequate training, support, and resources. Additionally, organizations should establish transparent and reliable reward systems where high performance is consistently recognized and rewarded. This alignment helps in reinforcing the expectancy and instrumentality beliefs of employees (Lunenburg, 2011).

Moreover, understanding the diverse valence of rewards among employees enables managers to tailor their motivational strategies. For example, while some employees might be motivated by monetary incentives, others might find opportunities for professional development or flexible working conditions more appealing. By recognizing and catering to these individual differences, organizations can enhance the overall effectiveness of their motivational efforts and performance appraisal systems (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001).

2.2.3 Equity Theory

Equity Theory, developed by John Stacey Adams in 1963, provides a crucial framework for understanding workplace motivation and employee behavior. The theory posits that employees are motivated by a desire for fairness and equity in the workplace. It suggests that employees continuously compare their job inputs (such as effort, experience, education, and competence) and outcomes (such as salary, recognition, and benefits) with those of their peers or referent others (Adams, 1963). This comparison forms the basis of their perceptions of fairness or inequity. If employees perceive that their input-to-outcome ratio is equal to that of their referents, they

experience a sense of equity and are likely to be satisfied and motivated. Conversely, if they perceive a disparity—believing their inputs are not being fairly rewarded compared to others—they experience inequity, which can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and demotivation. This perception of inequity can significantly influence an employee's behavior, potentially reducing their effort, productivity, and overall engagement in their work.

The concept of balance or equity between an employee's inputs and outcomes relative to those of others is at the core of Equity Theory. Inputs encompass the contributions an employee makes to the organization, including effort, skill, experience, and loyalty. Outcomes, on the other hand, represent the rewards the employee receives, such as salary, benefits, recognition, and promotions. Employees determine fairness by comparing their input-outcome ratio with that of others. When this ratio is perceived as equitable, employees feel a sense of fairness and justice. However, if they perceive their ratio to be less favorable, they experience feelings of inequity, which can manifest as either under-reward or over-reward (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973). The implications of these perceptions are profound. For instance, when employees feel under-rewarded, they may reduce their inputs by decreasing their effort, taking longer breaks, or even engaging in counterproductive work behaviors. They might also seek to increase their outcomes by negotiating for higher pay or additional benefits. Chronic feelings of inequity can lead to more severe outcomes, such as decreased job satisfaction, lower motivation, and increased turnover intentions. Interestingly, over-rewarded employees, although less common, might experience feelings of guilt and might increase their inputs to restore a sense of balance.

The application of Equity Theory to performance appraisal and reward systems in organizations is significant. To maintain high levels of motivation and job satisfaction, it is essential for organizations to ensure that their performance appraisal processes are perceived as fair and transparent. This involves consistently applying performance standards, equitably distributing rewards, and clearly communicating the criteria used for evaluations and rewards (Folger & Konovsky, 1989). When employees perceive that their efforts are recognized and rewarded fairly, they are more likely to be motivated and committed to their work. Transparency in the appraisal and reward processes is crucial, as it involves clearly communicating performance expectations, providing regular feedback, and explaining the basis for reward decisions. Involving employees in

the goal-setting and evaluation processes can also increase their sense of fairness and control, thus enhancing their engagement and commitment to organizational goals (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Organizations can adopt several strategies to enhance perceived equity among employees, which is critical for maintaining a motivated and productive workforce. First, ensuring transparency in the appraisal and reward processes is crucial. This includes clearly communicating performance expectations, providing regular feedback, and explaining the basis for reward decisions. Second, involving employees in the goal-setting and evaluation processes can increase their sense of fairness and control (Colquitt et al., 2001). Managers should also be trained to recognize and address potential inequities proactively, being attuned to employees' perceptions and addressing any concerns promptly and effectively. Additionally, benchmarking compensation and benefits against industry standards can help ensure that employees feel their rewards are competitive and fair. Regularly reviewing and adjusting reward systems to reflect changes in the market and organizational goals can also contribute to maintaining a sense of equity. By fostering an environment of fairness, organizations can enhance employee engagement, reduce turnover, and improve overall performance. Equity Theory provides valuable insights into employee motivation and the importance of perceived fairness in the workplace. Understanding and addressing employees' perceptions of equity can help organizations create a more motivated and committed workforce, ultimately driving business success (Adams, 1963).

2.2.4 Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement Theory, formulated by B.F. Skinner in the mid-20th century, is a behavioral framework that underscores the association between behavior and its consequences, shaping future behavior within organizations. Central to this theory is the notion that behaviors followed by positive outcomes are likely to be repeated, while those followed by negative outcomes are less likely to recur. This principle is embodied in various forms of reinforcement, including positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, and extinction (Skinner, 1953). Positive reinforcement involves rewarding desired behavior, while negative reinforcement entails the removal of aversive stimuli. On the other hand, punishment involves applying negative consequences to deter undesirable behavior, and extinction involves removing any reinforcing elements to discourage unwanted actions.

In organizational settings, managers utilize Reinforcement Theory to manage and influence employee behavior effectively. Positive reinforcement mechanisms such as recognition, bonuses, and promotions are employed to encourage desirable behaviors like high performance and teamwork (Kaplan & Tavis, 2021). Conversely, negative reinforcement techniques, like reducing workloads after positive performance, can enhance employee satisfaction and engagement. While Reinforcement Theory offers valuable insights into behavior management, managers must navigate potential challenges such as unintended consequences and individual differences in responses to reinforcement strategies (Skinner, 1953). By understanding these principles and tailoring their approaches to organizational contexts, managers can foster a culture of motivation, productivity, and success.

2.3 Methods of Performance Appraisal

There are multiple methods of performance appraisal that have been proposed by researchers. The chosen method and its implementation significantly impact the outcome of the appraisal process. Ineffective execution of performance appraisals can negatively affect employee productivity (Oroma, 2015). Research by Mone and London (2010), Macey et al. (2009), and Brown et al. (2010) indicates that the selected performance appraisal technique is crucial for the success of the process and significantly influences the organization's overall productivity and competitive edge. Performance appraisal methods can range from those that compare the performance or productivity of employees against each other to those that assess an employee's performance based on specific predefined traits or the attainment of organizational goals and objectives (Mansor, 2011). The various performance appraisal methods proposed by researchers include, but are not limited to, the following:

2.3.1 The Management by Objectives Method (MBO)

The Management by Objectives (MBO) method is a cornerstone approach to performance appraisal, characterized by its focus on result-based evaluations. According to Choon and Embi (2012), MBO involves setting clear and measurable objectives for performance appraisal. The core principle behind MBO is to ensure that both employees and managers contribute to the organization's goal-setting process, understand the organizational aims, and recognize their

individual responsibilities in achieving these objectives (Idowu, 2017). The method operates on three main principles:

First, all members of the organization, from lower-level employees to managers, are assigned specific, mutually agreed-upon objectives that they are expected to achieve within the usual operating period. This ensures a unified direction and effort toward the organization's goals. Second, periodic reviews are conducted to evaluate progress towards these objectives, allowing for adjustments and realignment as necessary. Finally, at the end of the set period, participants are rewarded based on their success in meeting the objectives, which fosters a results-oriented culture.

The effectiveness of the MBO approach has been well-documented, offering substantial benefits to both organizations and employees. Armstrong (2009) highlights that MBO promotes objectivity and encourages two-way feedback, which in turn motivates employees to improve their performance. Although no appraisal method is free from errors, Drucker (2013) noted that when MBO is implemented correctly, it minimizes biases and ensures fairness and efficiency in appraisals. Furthermore, Huang et al. (2011) argue that MBO enhances employee productivity by giving employees a sense of ownership and commitment to the goals and objectives they have helped to establish and accept.

In addition, MBO's structured approach fosters a clear understanding of expectations and responsibilities, thereby reducing ambiguities and aligning individual performance with the organization's strategic goals. This method not only boosts individual productivity but also contributes to the overall efficiency and competitive advantage of the organization. By engaging employees in the goal-setting process, MBO promotes a collaborative environment where both managers and employees work together towards common objectives, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

2.3.2 Graphical Rating Scales

The Graphical Rating Scales method is one of the most widely used approaches for performance appraisals in business organizations (Woods, 2012; Wirtz, 2004). This method involves using a well-defined checklist where managers or supervisors rate employees on a scale ranging from poor to excellent. Its popularity stems from its versatility and suitability for a variety of tasks, making it a favored choice among many organizations (Woods, 2012). The graphical rating scale is not only adaptable but also cost-effective, requiring minimal training and time to implement.

Several performance factors are commonly evaluated using the graphical rating scale. These include the quality of work, where the employee's ability to consistently and efficiently meet job expectations is assessed, and productivity, which evaluates the employee's knowledge and ability to make effective use of available resources. This encompasses the knowledge and skills accumulated by the employee through experience, formal education, and on-the-job training and development (Panari et al., 2010 as cited in Idowu, 2017).

Despite its simplicity and wide application, the graphical rating scale method has certain limitations. One significant challenge is its inability to account for employee individuality and specific traits due to its standardized design (Armstrong, 2009). This lack of customization can result in a one-size-fits-all approach that may not accurately reflect individual performance nuances. Additionally, this method is less effective in scenarios where important performance indicators are excluded from the ratings, potentially leading to systemic biases and an unfair advantage (Woods, 2012).

2.3.3 360 Degree Method

The 360 Degree Method, also known as multi-source assessment, has garnered significant attention among both small and large firms in recent times (Deb, 2009). This comprehensive approach involves collecting feedback from a diverse array of stakeholders and reviewers who interact with the employees in various capacities. Grund and Przemeck (2012) describe the 360-degree method as encompassing not only external evaluations but also employees' self-assessments, thus earning its reputation as a multi-source, full-circle, or multi-rater method.

Horng Hsu et al. (2011) identify four primary components that constitute the 360-degree method: self-assessment, subordinate assessment, peer assessment, and supervisor assessment. This multi-faceted approach allows for the collection of extensive data about an employee from multiple perspectives, ensuring a holistic evaluation (Sahoo & Mishra, 2012). The use of various sources to assess performance helps to validate the feedback and provides a well-rounded view of the employee's abilities and contributions (Deb, 2009).

One of the key advantages of the 360-degree method is its ability to reduce bias, as it does not rely solely on a manager's critique. Instead, it incorporates insights from peers, subordinates, and the

employees themselves, fostering a more balanced and accurate portrayal of performance (Espinilla et al., 2013). This inclusiveness ensures that feedback is more reflective of the employee's actual performance and mitigates the risk of subjective evaluations. Additionally, Sahoo and Mishra (2012) note that employees generally perceive the 360-degree approach as providing a more accurate and fair assessment of their performance, which can enhance acceptance and motivation.

2.3.4 The Ranking Method

The Ranking Method is a straightforward yet effective approach to performance appraisal, widely used by organizations to evaluate their employees. In this method, top managers rank their subordinates from best to worst based on their perceived value to the organization. This ranking is done in numerical order, assigning a specific rank to each employee. The comparative value of each employee is thus established through their rank, where a lower number indicates a higher rank (Wayne, 1992 as cited in Oravee and Hangeior, 2017).

One of the underlying assumptions of this method is that the numerical difference between ranks is consistent across the spectrum. For instance, the difference in value between the first and second-ranked employees is presumed to be the same as the difference between the twenty-first and twenty-second-ranked employees. This assumption can simplify the ranking process but may also introduce challenges, as it assumes uniform intervals of performance differences which might not accurately reflect reality. The simplicity of the Ranking Method makes it easy to implement and understand, providing a clear and direct way to distinguish top performers from lower performers. However, it also has its limitations. The method can create a competitive atmosphere that may foster unhealthy rivalry among employees. Additionally, it does not provide specific feedback on areas for improvement, as it focuses solely on comparative performance rather than individual strengths and weaknesses.

Despite these limitations, the Ranking Method remains a useful tool for organizations seeking a quick and straightforward way to assess employee performance. Its effectiveness depends largely on the objectivity and fairness of the evaluators, as well as the organization's ability to address the potential drawbacks of this approach.

2.4 Employee Motivation

Motivation, as defined by Buchanan (2004), is a decision-making process that initiates, encourages, and sustains goal-oriented behaviors of employees within an organization. Numerous empirical studies have shown that a motivated workforce significantly enhances organizational performance (Lee & Raschke, 2016). The performance of both employees and organizations is influenced by various factors, including capital, environment, and human resources. Among these, human resources are considered the most influential (Abioro, 2013). Consequently, it can be argued that for organizations to achieve their strategic objectives and enhance productivity, it is imperative to motivate their employees. Cascio (2006) highlights that an organization's understanding and application of motivational techniques can significantly impact its performance. This understanding is crucial because employees are not all motivated by the same factors. For instance, while some employees may be primarily motivated by rewards, others may be more focused on security or achievement (Lee & Raschke, 2016).

Traditional theories on motivation often emphasize specific elements as tools for employee motivation. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, for example, identifies five levels of employee motivation: physiological, safety, social, ego, and self-actualization needs. In contrast, Adam's (1965) equity theory posits that employees are motivated by the need to achieve equity between themselves and their peers within the organization. These theories underscore the importance of understanding diverse motivational drivers. It is essential for organizations to identify and implement the factors that motivate their employees effectively. By doing so, organizations can foster a motivated workforce that is aligned with their strategic goals, thereby enhancing overall productivity and performance. Improving employee performance remains a significant challenge for modern businesses, leading to the exploration of various strategies to boost employee motivation (Hallett, 2000). Many global companies have implemented tactics such as promotions, salary increases, enhanced work environments, and job satisfaction initiatives to enhance productivity. However, the effectiveness of these strategies can be adversely affected by contextual factors in some developing countries, like Nigeria (Lee & Raschke, 2016). This issue has fueled a long-standing debate between management theorists and behavioral scientists about the role of monetary incentives as a motivational tool for driving high employee productivity, a controversy that persists despite decades of research (Banjoko, 2006). Consequently, organizations

continue to search for the most effective methods to motivate their workforce in varied and often challenging settings.

2.4.1 Motivation and Productivity

In recent years, both motivation and employee productivity have emerged as critical areas of research, receiving considerable attention from scholars. Numerous studies (Velnampy, 2007; Sajuyigbe et al., 2013; Vrancic, 2015) have explored how motivation influences employee productivity, consistently finding a notable relationship between the two. For instance, Sajuyigbe et al. (2013) investigated the impact of various motivational factors, such as pay, bonuses, praise, and recognition, on organizational performance within selected manufacturing companies in Ibadan, Nigeria. Their study, involving a sample of 100 employees, revealed a positive correlation between these motivational factors and organizational performance. Similarly, Velnampy (2007) tested Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory in Sri Lankan private and public sectors, concluding that employees' focus on needs varies according to their level within the organization, with lower-level needs being more pronounced among lower-level employees.

The studies underscore a significant relationship between motivation and productivity, reinforcing the idea that motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, plays a crucial role in enhancing performance. According to Alliyu (2000), motivation can be defined as either an external inducement or an internal drive that prompts behavior aimed at achieving rewards. Effective human resource management is thus vital in influencing organizational performance, with a growing emphasis on improving employee motivation. Motivation is generally categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Extrinsic motivation involves external rewards such as praise, money, and feedback, while intrinsic motivation is driven by personal satisfaction and the inherent enjoyment of the task (Abioro, 2013). This understanding highlights the importance of tailoring motivational strategies to align with both external incentives and personal fulfillment to boost employee productivity.

2.4.2 Performance Appraisal in Nigeria

Extensive research highlights the presence of performance appraisal systems in Nigeria, particularly within the public sector (Sajuyigbe, 2017; Asamu, 2013; Judith & Bassey, 2018). Despite this, significant challenges persist that undermine the effectiveness of these systems as tools for enhancing employee productivity and organizational performance. Asamu (2013) notes that many organizations in Nigeria experience subpar performance due to ineffective performance appraisals. These systems often focus on evaluating specific aspects of the organization rather than utilizing appraisals as a means to drive growth and productivity through employee development, coaching, and counseling. Banjoko (1982), cited in Asamu (2013), argues that Nigerian organizations frequently undervalue performance appraisals, prioritizing training, development, salary adjustments, and selection processes instead.

The inadequacies in performance appraisal systems have contributed to the underperformance of numerous organizations in Nigeria, prompting the government to implement various policies aimed at addressing these issues (Iorfa, 2014). Atakpa et al. (2013) identify several factors contributing to inefficient performance appraisals in Nigeria, including a lack of understanding of the appraisal process, cultural barriers that hinder corrective feedback from younger appraisers to older employees, insufficient feedback from employees, and a lack of objectivity among appraisal supervisors. To address these issues, Atakpa et al. (2013) recommend several measures: ensuring a transparent appraisal process, employing unbiased experts for appraisals, selecting appropriate appraisal methods that fit organizational needs, utilizing multiple appraisal methods, and fostering a new perception of the appraisal process among employees to ensure greater objectivity.

2.5 Empirical Literature

2.5.1 Effectiveness of Performance Appraisal Systems

Empirical studies consistently underscore the vital role of performance appraisal systems in organizational effectiveness. For instance, research by Okonkwo and Ezeani (2020) delved into the impact of performance appraisal systems on employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the Nigerian banking sector. Their findings revealed a significant positive relationship between effective performance appraisal systems and both job satisfaction and organizational commitment among bank employees. Similarly, a study by Ogbuabor and Ugwunta

(2018) explored the relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance in selected Nigerian universities. The study demonstrated a strong positive correlation between performance appraisal practices and employee performance, emphasizing the crucial role of appraisal systems in enhancing organizational productivity and efficiency.

Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that performance appraisal systems contribute to employee development and skill enhancement. A study conducted by Adedokun et al. (2019) investigated the impact of performance appraisal on employee training and development in Nigerian manufacturing firms. The results indicated that organizations with robust performance appraisal processes were more likely to invest in employee training and development initiatives, leading to enhanced skills and competencies among employees. Similarly, a study by Eze et al. (2017) examined the relationship between performance appraisal and employee career development in the Nigerian oil and gas sector. Their findings demonstrated that organizations with well-designed performance appraisal systems were better equipped to identify training needs and facilitate career advancement opportunities for employees, thereby fostering professional growth and retention.

However, despite the evident benefits of performance appraisal systems, empirical research also highlights various challenges and limitations associated with their implementation. For instance, a study by Akpan and Ita (2019) explored the factors influencing employee perceptions of fairness in performance appraisal in Nigerian public sector organizations. The findings revealed that issues such as lack of transparency, favoritism, and inadequate feedback mechanisms undermined the perceived fairness of the appraisal process, leading to decreased employee trust and satisfaction. Similarly, research by Osibanjo et al. (2018) examined the impact of performance appraisal on employee motivation in Nigerian telecommunications companies. The study identified factors such as unclear performance criteria, insufficient recognition, and limited opportunities for advancement as key barriers to employee motivation, highlighting the importance of addressing these challenges in optimizing the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems.

2.5.2 Challenges and Limitations

Empirical research sheds light on the multifaceted challenges and limitations inherent in performance appraisal systems, offering valuable insights into areas for improvement and

optimization. For instance, a study by Ogunbameru (2018) delved into the challenges of performance appraisal in the Nigerian public service, focusing on issues such as bias, subjectivity, and lack of standardization in the appraisal process. The findings revealed widespread concerns among employees regarding the fairness and transparency of performance evaluations, with many citing instances of favoritism and inconsistent application of appraisal criteria. Similarly, Ejiogu (2019) conducted research on the strategic use of performance appraisal for effective manpower planning in Nigerian organizations, highlighting challenges such as inadequate feedback mechanisms and resistance to change. These challenges, rooted in organizational culture and managerial practices, undermine the credibility and effectiveness of performance appraisal systems, ultimately impeding their ability to drive employee performance and organizational success.

Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that performance appraisal systems often fail to address the diverse needs and preferences of employees, leading to disengagement and dissatisfaction. A study by Nwachukwu (2019) explored performance appraisal practices in selected banks in Anambra State, Nigeria, revealing concerns among employees regarding the relevance and fairness of appraisal criteria. Many employees expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunities for meaningful feedback and development, highlighting the disconnect between organizational objectives and employee expectations. Similarly, Akinyele (2020) investigated the influence of organizational culture on employee perceptions of performance appraisal in Nigerian private sector organizations. The findings underscored the significance of fostering a supportive and inclusive organizational culture that values transparency, fairness, and employee development to mitigate challenges associated with performance appraisal systems.

Moreover, empirical research highlights the impact of organizational factors such as leadership support and communication on the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems. A study by Oluwafemi (2020) examined the role of leadership in driving performance appraisal effectiveness in Nigerian organizations, revealing a positive association between leadership support and employee engagement in the appraisal process. Conversely, organizations characterized by poor communication and lack of managerial involvement experienced challenges in implementing fair and transparent appraisal practices. These findings underscore the importance of strong leadership

and effective communication in overcoming challenges and maximizing the benefits of performance appraisal systems.

2.5.3 Organizational Context and Impact

Performance appraisal systems function within a complex organizational context, influenced by factors such as culture, leadership, and the strategic goals of the organization. The impact of these systems on employee performance and organizational outcomes is substantial, shaping the overall effectiveness of human resource management practices. A critical review of the organizational context and its impact on performance appraisal reveals several key insights.

Firstly, the cultural environment of an organization significantly influences the design and implementation of performance appraisal systems. In a study by Nwachukwu (2019), the influence of organizational culture on the effectiveness of performance appraisal practices in Nigerian banks was examined. The findings indicated that a culture promoting transparency, fairness, and continuous feedback was essential for the successful implementation of appraisal systems. Conversely, organizations with hierarchical and opaque cultures faced significant challenges in maintaining the credibility and acceptance of their appraisal processes. Similarly, research by Ejiogu (2019) emphasized that cultural alignment between the appraisal system and organizational values is crucial for fostering employee engagement and trust in the evaluation process. When employees perceive the appraisal system as aligned with their values and the broader organizational culture, they are more likely to engage positively and take the feedback seriously, leading to enhanced performance and development.

Leadership also plays a pivotal role in the success of performance appraisal systems. Effective leaders who actively support and participate in the appraisal process can significantly enhance its impact on employee performance. Akinyele (2020) explored the role of leadership in the performance appraisal processes within Nigerian private sector organizations, finding that leadership commitment to transparent and fair appraisal practices was positively correlated with employee satisfaction and motivation. Leaders who provide clear communication about the goals and expectations of the appraisal process, and who offer constructive feedback and support, can foster a more positive perception of the appraisal system among employees. This, in turn, enhances the overall effectiveness of the system in driving performance improvements and achieving organizational objectives. Furthermore, Oluwafemi (2020) highlighted that leadership

involvement is critical in addressing and mitigating issues such as bias and subjectivity in appraisals, ensuring a more equitable and effective evaluation process.

The strategic goals of an organization also influence the design and outcomes of performance appraisal systems. Organizations with a clear strategic vision tend to align their appraisal practices with broader business objectives, ensuring that individual performance metrics contribute to overall organizational success. For example, Zayum, Aule, and Hangeior (2017) investigated the alignment of performance appraisal systems with strategic objectives in Plateau State Internal Revenue Service, Nigeria. They found that when appraisal criteria are directly linked to strategic goals, employees have a clearer understanding of how their roles contribute to the organization's success, leading to higher levels of motivation and performance. This alignment also facilitates better identification of training and development needs, helping organizations to build capabilities that support their long-term strategic goals. Furthermore, organizations that integrate performance appraisal systems with other HR practices, such as training, development, and succession planning, tend to achieve more significant improvements in employee performance and organizational outcomes.

Therefore, based on the literature review, the primary research seeks to establish key aspects of performance appraisal systems in the Nigerian private sector. More specifically, the research proposal aims to: Determine the correlation between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity; Determine the effect of feedback quality during the performance appraisals on the level of employee job satisfaction; Determine the effect of training and development opportunities identified during the performance appraisal process on employee turnover. These focal points are crucial for developing a better understanding of performance management processes in Nigerian organizations with the view to identifying useful insights that will improve organizational performance and employee well-being.

2.6 Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

Reviewing the literature on performance appraisal (PA), motivation, and work performance reveals a robust interconnection among these elements. This research draws upon numerous articles and studies that have explored the interplay between performance appraisal, motivation, and job performance. For instance, Khanna (2016) contends that the Human Resources (HR) department should strive to inspire employees to reach optimal performance levels by

implementing effective and equitable performance appraisals. Furthermore, various studies highlight that fair and consistent performance appraisals significantly enhance employee motivation, which in turn positively impacts job performance (Mone & London, 2018; Gruman & Saks, 2011). Additionally, the importance of PA in recognizing and rewarding employees' efforts cannot be overstated, as it serves as a critical driver of sustained high performance and job satisfaction (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017).

Therefore, Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study, highlighting the relationships between the independent variables—frequency of performance appraisals, feedback quality during performance appraisals, and training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals—and the dependent variable, employee productivity. This framework posits that regular and systematic performance appraisals, coupled with high-quality feedback and targeted training and development initiatives, collectively enhance employee productivity. The



Figure 1: The proposed study

diagram underscores the interconnectedness of these factors and their cumulative impact on driving employee performance in the Nigerian private sector, providing a visual representation of the study's core hypotheses and guiding the research objectives.

Based on the conceptual framework, the following research hypotheses are formulated:

H1: There is a positive relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

H2: The quality of feedback during performance appraisals has a positive impact on employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

H3: Training and development opportunities identified during performance appraisals positively affect employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the methodologies employed in this dissertation, aimed at investigating the dynamics of performance appraisal systems within the Nigerian private sector, focusing on their impact on employee outcomes. This chapter outlines the research objectives, the rationale for methodological choices, and the details of data collection and analysis methods utilized. It begins with a clear statement of the research aim and objectives, which are designed to explore the relationship between performance appraisal frequency, feedback quality, training and development opportunities, and their collective impact on employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention.

The chapter delves into the research philosophy guiding the study, with a detailed explanation of why a positivist approach was deemed most suitable for this research. This philosophical stance is crucial as it underpins the objective and systematic investigation of the phenomena under study. Following this, the chapter explains the deductive approach adopted, highlighting its appropriateness for hypothesis testing based on existing theories and empirical evidence. The justification for selecting a deductive approach is supported by literature, contrasting it briefly with the inductive approach to demonstrate a thorough consideration of alternative methodologies.

In the section on data collection, the chapter provides a detailed account of the methods used, including the design and administration of structured questionnaires via Google Forms. This method was chosen for its efficiency in gathering quantitative data from a large sample, allowing for robust statistical analysis. The process of designing the questionnaires, conducting a pilot study, and refining the questions based on pilot feedback is meticulously described to ensure clarity and reproducibility of the research process. The advantages of using structured questionnaires, including the ability to quantify variables and facilitate straightforward data management, are discussed in depth.

Additionally, the chapter addresses the ethical considerations that were integral to the research process. This includes ensuring informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and adhering to ethical guidelines to protect the rights and well-being of participants. The discussion on ethical considerations underscores the commitment to conducting the research with integrity and respect for all participants.

Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the chosen methodologies, acknowledging potential constraints and challenges encountered during the research. This transparent acknowledgment of limitations is essential for contextualizing the findings and understanding the scope of the study's conclusions. By addressing these limitations, the chapter aims to provide a balanced view of the research process, enhancing the credibility and rigor of the study.

3:2: Research Aim

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems in the Nigerian private sector and their impact on key employee outcomes. Specifically, this study seeks to understand how the frequency and quality of performance appraisals influence employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention.

The main objectives of this research are:

- i. **To determine the relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.**
 - This objective focuses on examining how often performance appraisals are conducted and their correlation with the productivity levels of employees. The study explores whether more frequent appraisals lead to higher productivity and how this frequency impacts overall work performance.
- ii. **To assess the impact of feedback quality during performance appraisals on employee job satisfaction in the Nigerian private sector.**
 - This objective evaluates the quality of feedback provided during performance appraisals and its effect on employee job satisfaction. It investigates how constructive and meaningful feedback can enhance employees' job satisfaction, leading to improved morale and engagement.
- iii. **To evaluate the effect of training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals on employee retention in the Nigerian private sector.**

- This objective analyzes the role of training and development opportunities, as identified through performance appraisals, in retaining employees. The study assesses whether employees who receive clear and actionable development plans are more likely to stay with their organizations, thus reducing turnover rates.

3.3. Research Framework

The research framework for this study is grounded in the "Research Onion" model proposed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), which offers a structured and systematic approach to research design. This model metaphorically represents the research process as a series of concentric layers, each addressing different aspects of the research methodology. The outermost layer focuses on the research philosophy, which shapes the fundamental assumptions about knowledge and reality, and guides the overall research design. The subsequent layers encompass the research approach, strategy, time horizon, and data collection and analysis techniques, each layer refining and specifying the methodological choices made in the study.

The first layer, research philosophy, involves selecting a philosophical stance that aligns with the nature of the research questions and objectives. For this study, a positivist philosophy is chosen, emphasizing objective measurement and the testing of hypotheses through observable phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The second layer, research approach, involves deciding between deductive and inductive approaches. This research adopts a deductive approach, focusing on testing hypotheses derived from existing theories (Saunders et al., 2019). The third layer, research strategy, outlines the overall plan for data collection and analysis, such as surveys or case studies. This study employs a survey strategy using structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data. The fourth layer, time horizon, refers to whether the research is cross-sectional or longitudinal; this study is cross-sectional, capturing data at a single point in time. Finally, the innermost layers of the framework address the specific techniques for data collection and analysis, including the use of Google Forms for distributing questionnaires and statistical methods for data analysis. Each layer of the Research Onion model is interrelated, guiding the research process from philosophical foundations to practical data collection and analysis techniques, ensuring a coherent and methodologically sound approach to addressing the research objectives (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.3.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy pertains to the development and nature of knowledge in a specific field of study. It encompasses the underlying assumptions about how the world is viewed and informs the methodology chosen for the research. In this study, the chosen research philosophy is **positivism**. Positivism is grounded in the belief that reality is stable and can be observed and described from an objective viewpoint without interfering with the phenomena being studied (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This philosophy is particularly appropriate for this research as it emphasizes quantifiable observations and the statistical analysis of data. Positivism allows for the formulation of hypotheses based on existing theories, which can then be tested through empirical investigation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This aligns with the research aim of determining the relationships and impacts of performance appraisal practices on employee outcomes in the Nigerian private sector.

Interpretivism, on the other hand, focuses on understanding the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals. It emphasizes qualitative data collection methods such as interviews and ethnography to gain insights into the social context of the research subjects (Creswell & Poth, 2018). While interpretivism provides deep, contextual understanding, it was not selected for this study because the research aims to quantify the relationships between performance appraisal practices and employee outcomes. Critical realism combines elements of both positivism and interpretivism, recognizing that while there is a reality independent of human thought, our understanding of it is socially constructed (Easton, 2010). It allows for a more nuanced analysis but was deemed less suitable for this research due to its complexity and the primary focus on quantifiable data.

The rationale for selecting a positivist philosophy stems from the need to achieve a high level of reliability and validity in the findings. Positivism supports the use of structured methodologies, such as surveys and quantitative data analysis, which are essential for testing hypotheses and establishing cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell, 2014). This approach enables the research to measure variables accurately and ensure that the results are based on empirical evidence rather than subjective interpretations. Furthermore, positivism is well-suited for research that aims to identify patterns and regularities across a large sample. In the context of this study, it involves examining the frequency of performance appraisals, the quality of feedback, and the role of

training and development opportunities in influencing employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. By using a positivist lens, the study can systematically investigate these factors and provide insights that are applicable to the broader Nigerian private sector (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2018).

3.3.2 Research Methodology Approach

In research, the approach taken is pivotal in shaping the study's design and outcomes. This dissertation adopts a **deductive approach**, which is grounded in theory testing and follows a logical progression from general premises to specific conclusions. This approach is suitable as it enables the development of hypotheses based on existing theories and empirical testing through structured methodologies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

A deductive approach begins with a broad theoretical framework from which specific hypotheses are derived. These hypotheses are then tested through empirical observation and analysis, which either supports or refutes the initial theory. This method is systematic and follows a clear sequence: theory, hypothesis, observation, and confirmation (Bryman, 2016). The objective is to explore the relationships between the frequency of performance appraisals, the quality of feedback, training and development opportunities, and their impacts on employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention in the Nigerian private sector.

The deductive approach is particularly effective in this research context as it provides a structured pathway to explore well-defined variables and their interrelations. By formulating hypotheses such as "frequent performance appraisals enhance employee productivity" or "high-quality feedback during appraisals increases job satisfaction," the study can systematically gather and analyze quantitative data to test these assertions. This approach ensures that the findings are grounded in empirical evidence and can be generalized across similar settings (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018). Moreover, the deductive approach aligns with the positivist research philosophy adopted in this study. Positivism emphasizes objective measurement and the testing of theories through observable phenomena. This approach facilitates the collection of quantitative data, which can be statistically analyzed to validate or invalidate the hypotheses. For instance, surveys and structured questionnaires can be used to collect data from employees in the Nigerian private sector, providing a robust dataset for hypothesis testing (Zikmund et al., 2013).

While the deductive approach is chosen for its structured pathway and alignment with the positivist philosophy, the alternative approach considered is inductive. An inductive approach, in contrast, involves generating theories and hypotheses based on observed patterns and insights gathered during the research process. This approach is more exploratory and is useful for developing new theories where existing ones are insufficient (Thomas, 2006). However, the deductive approach is preferred in this study because it allows for hypothesis testing based on established theories, providing a clear, systematic method to address the research questions. This choice ensures that the findings are grounded in empirical evidence and can be generalized across similar contexts (Zikmund et al., 2013).

3.3.3 Data Collection Approach

The data collection approach for this study is quantitative, utilizing structured questionnaires to collect numerical data that can be systematically analyzed. This method is chosen due to its effectiveness in quantifying relationships between variables and generalizing findings to a larger population, which aligns with the research objectives concerning performance appraisals in the Nigerian private sector. Quantitative data collection is particularly apt for this research as it facilitates an objective and organized process of data gathering, enabling straightforward comparison and analysis. It allows for precise measurement of variables such as the frequency of performance appraisals, the quality of feedback, and the provision of training opportunities, as well as their impacts on employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. This approach is aligned with the study's aim to test hypotheses and derive empirical conclusions, thus bolstering the reliability and validity of the research outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Field, 2018).

The alternative approach considered was qualitative data collection, which involves collecting non-numerical data to gain deeper insights into participants' experiences and perceptions. Qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, are beneficial for exploring complex phenomena and understanding the underlying reasons behind certain behaviors (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). However, for the purpose of this study, quantitative methods were preferred due to their capacity to handle large samples and provide generalizable results. The structured questionnaires are designed to capture precise data across a wide range of respondents, thereby

ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the impact of performance appraisals on various employee outcomes in the Nigerian private sector.

3.3.4 Data Collection Methods

For this study, the primary data collection method involves structured questionnaires administered using Google Forms. Questionnaires are chosen because they allow for the efficient collection of quantitative data from a large sample of respondents across various organizations in the Nigerian private sector. This method enables the researcher to gather information on specific variables related to performance appraisals, such as the frequency of appraisals, the quality of feedback received, and the identification of training and development opportunities.

Alternative data collection methods considered include face-to-face interviews and focus groups. Face-to-face interviews offer the advantage of obtaining in-depth responses and clarifying ambiguities in real-time. However, they are time-consuming and less practical for reaching a large and geographically dispersed sample (Gill et al., 2008). Focus groups facilitate group discussions, which can generate rich, qualitative data and insights from the interactions between participants. Nonetheless, organizing focus groups can be logistically challenging and may introduce groupthink, where dominant voices influence the responses of others (Krueger & Casey, 2014).

The structured questionnaires are designed based on the research objectives and relevant literature review findings. They include a combination of closed-ended questions with Likert scales and some open-ended questions to gather more detailed insights where necessary. The use of Google Forms facilitates easy distribution of the questionnaires, efficient data collection, and straightforward data management and analysis through built-in features for exporting data into statistical software for analysis. The choice of questionnaires aligns with the quantitative approach adopted for this research, allowing for the systematic collection of numerical data that can be analyzed to test hypotheses and answer research questions effectively (Saunders et al., 2019). This method ensures consistency in data collection across respondents and provides a structured approach to capturing insights into the impact of performance appraisals on employee outcomes in the Nigerian private sector.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaires, a pilot study is conducted. The pilot study involves a small sample of 10 participants from the target population, selected to represent the diversity of the larger sample. The feedback from the pilot study indicates several areas for improvement. Some questions were found to be unclear or ambiguous, leading to revisions in wording and structure to enhance clarity and comprehension. Additionally, the pilot study revealed the need for better instructions on how to respond to the Likert scale items. Based on this feedback, the questionnaire was refined to ensure that respondents could easily understand and accurately complete it. Conducting the pilot study was crucial in identifying potential issues and making necessary adjustments before distributing the questionnaire to a larger population. This step helped enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of the data collection process (Hazzi and Maldaon, 2015).

3.4 Sample Selection

In selecting a sample for this study on performance appraisal systems in the Nigerian private sector, it is essential to consider established principles in sampling methodologies. The literature distinguishes between probability and non-probability sampling approaches. Probability sampling involves random selection, ensuring that each element in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample, thereby enhancing statistical generalizability (Saunders et al., 2019). Conversely, non-probability sampling methods do not rely on random selection and may be more suitable when specific criteria or practical constraints dictate the selection process (Kothari, 2004). For the purpose of this research, a non-probability sampling approach is adopted due to the necessity of accessing organizations and employees within the Nigerian private sector efficiently.

The sample is chosen based on convenience and accessibility across various industries within the Nigerian private sector. This approach facilitates easier access to potential participants and enables efficient data collection within the limitations of time and resources. It includes employees from different hierarchical levels, ranging from frontline staff to middle and senior management, providing a comprehensive perspective on performance appraisal practices and their implications. This sample's relevance lies in its ability to offer insights into the perceptions and experiences of performance appraisal systems across diverse sectors of the Nigerian economy. Therefore, by examining a range of organizations, this study aims to capture variations in appraisal practices,

evaluate their effectiveness, and assess their impact on critical employee outcomes such as productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. Such an approach fosters an understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with performance appraisal systems in the Nigerian private sector, contributing to both academic literature and managerial practices (Oyedepo, 2011).

3.5 Data Presentation and Analysis

The result outputs from the data are presented for display using tables. This method is chosen for its clarity and efficiency in organizing and summarizing quantitative data, which simplifies the comparison of various variables and the identification of key trends (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Tables provide a clear visual representation that enhances the interpretability and accessibility of research findings, making it easier for readers to grasp the essential insights derived from the data collected. The structured format of tables allows for efficient presentation of complex data sets, facilitating a straightforward interpretation and aiding in the effective communication of research outcomes to both academic and professional audiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The primary method of data analysis employed in this study is stepwise regression. Stepwise regression is a systematic approach for adding or removing variables in a multiple regression model based on their statistical significance (Draper & Smith, 1998). This method helps to identify the most important predictors of the dependent variable while avoiding the inclusion of irrelevant variables, thereby enhancing model accuracy and interpretability. Stepwise regression proceeds through two main steps: forward selection and backward elimination. Forward selection starts with no variables in the model, adding them one by one based on their significance, while backward elimination starts with all candidate variables and removes the least significant ones sequentially (Hosmer, Lemeshow, & Sturdivant, 2013). This dual approach allows for a thorough examination of each variable's contribution to the model, ensuring that only those with substantial predictive power are retained.

In this study, stepwise regression is chosen due to its ability to build a parsimonious model that includes only the most relevant variables, thus improving both interpretability and predictive power (Harrell, 2015). This method is particularly beneficial in exploratory research, where the objective is to uncover relationships between multiple independent variables and a dependent variable. The analysis begins with the calculation of descriptive statistics to provide a detailed

overview of the sample characteristics and key variables. Following this, stepwise regression analysis is conducted to examine the relationships between the independent variables (frequency of performance appraisals, feedback quality, and training and development opportunities) and the dependent variable (employee productivity). The results are presented in tables, showcasing coefficients, significance levels, and overall model fit, offering valuable insights into the factors that drive employee performance in the Nigerian private sector (Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Neter, 2004). This comprehensive approach ensures that the findings are statistically robust and practically relevant, providing a clear understanding of the key determinants of employee productivity.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are paramount in conducting research to ensure the integrity and credibility of the study, as well as the protection of participants' rights and well-being. This research adheres to established ethical guidelines and principles, including those outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2018). Key ethical considerations include obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and minimizing potential harm to participants. Participants receive a detailed explanation of the research purpose, procedures, and their rights, ensuring they can make an informed decision about their participation. Consent forms are collected to document their voluntary agreement to partake in the study.

To maintain confidentiality, all data collected are anonymized, and participants are assigned unique identifiers. Personal information is securely stored and only accessible to the research team. Additionally, any reporting of the findings ensures that individual participants cannot be identified. The research also considers the potential risks and benefits to participants. Measures are taken to minimize any discomfort or harm, and participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. By following these ethical practices, the research aims to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct, ensuring the trustworthiness and validity of the research process and outcomes (Resnik, 2020; Israel & Hay, 2006).

A crucial aspect of this ethical commitment is the thorough briefing and debriefing of participants. Before data collection begins, participants are provided with comprehensive information about the

study's aims, methods, and any potential impacts on their well-being. This briefing includes a detailed explanation of their right to privacy, how their data will be used, and the measures in place to protect their anonymity. The debriefing process, conducted after the data collection, offers participants insights into the study's findings and an opportunity to discuss any concerns or questions they may have. This transparency helps build trust and ensures that participants feel respected and valued throughout the research process (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012).

Furthermore, the research design incorporates an ethical review process, seeking approval from an institutional review board (IRB) or ethics committee. This step is critical in identifying potential ethical issues and ensuring that the research adheres to the highest ethical standards from the outset. The IRB review includes an assessment of the study's risk-benefit ratio, ensuring that the benefits of the research outweigh any potential risks to participants. By engaging in this rigorous ethical scrutiny, the research not only complies with regulatory standards but also demonstrates a commitment to ethical excellence and social responsibility in academic research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

3.7 Variable Description

Table 1: Variable Description and Coding for Model

Objective	Variable Name	Questionnaire Code	Description
Dependent Variable	<i>Emprod</i>	Q14	Overall productivity at work
Objective 1: Frequency of Performance Appraisals and Employee Productivity	<i>FreqAppraisal</i>	Q6	How often do you receive performance appraisals in your organization?
	<i>AdeqAppraisal</i>	Q7	Do you believe the frequency of performance appraisals in your organization is adequate?
Objective 2: Feedback Quality During Performance Appraisals and Employee Productivity	<i>FeedbackQuality</i>	Q8	How would you rate the quality of feedback you receive during performance appraisals?
	<i>ActionableFeedback</i>	Q9	Do you receive specific and actionable feedback during your performance appraisals?

Objective	Variable Name	Questionnaire Code	Description
	<i>ImprovePerformance</i>	Q10	Does the feedback you receive help you improve your job performance?
Objective 3: Training and Development Opportunities Identified in Performance Appraisals and Employee Productivity	<i>IdentifiedTraining</i>	Q11	Have your performance appraisals identified areas where you need training or development?
	<i>ReceivedTraining</i>	Q12	Have you received training or development opportunities as a result of your performance appraisals?
	<i>TrainingEffectiveness</i>	Q13	How effective were the training and development programs in improving your job performance?

Chapter 4 - Findings and analysis

4.1 Introduction

The primary objectives of this research are to determine the relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity, to assess the impact of feedback quality during performance appraisals on employee job satisfaction, and to evaluate the effect of training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals on employee retention in the Nigerian private sector. In Chapter 4, the findings and analysis of this study are presented to provide a comprehensive examination of the relationship between performance appraisals and employee productivity within the Nigerian private sector. This chapter meticulously outlines the results derived from the data collected through the questionnaire, which includes responses on the frequency and quality of performance appraisals, feedback, and training opportunities. The analysis primarily focuses on evaluating how these variables impact employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. To achieve this, the chapter employs stepwise regression to explore the associations and interactions between the independent variables—frequency of performance appraisals, feedback quality, and training and development opportunities—and the dependent variable of employee productivity. The results are systematically organized and displayed in tables to facilitate a clear understanding of the data. The chapter also discusses the implications of the findings, the relevance of the statistical methods employed, and the limitations encountered during the research process.

4.2 Demographic Data

The demographic data presented in Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the respondents' characteristics in the study. The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents are between 30-39 years (38%), followed by those in the 20-29 years' age range (32%), indicating a predominantly young to middle-aged sample. Only 8% of the participants are aged 50 years and above, highlighting a lower representation of older individuals. Gender distribution reveals a significant disparity, with males comprising 70% of the sample, while females account for 30%, suggesting a potential gender imbalance in the study population. In terms of educational attainment, more than half of the respondents hold a Bachelor's Degree (56%), while 38% possess a Master's Degree, and a smaller proportion (6%) have earned a Doctorate Degree, indicating a

well-educated sample. The respondents' years of experience vary, with the largest group having 6-10 years of experience (32%), followed by those with 11-15 years (24%) and 1-5 years (22%). A smaller segment of the respondents has 16-20 years (12%) and 21-25 years of experience (10%), reflecting a diverse range of professional backgrounds and experience levels within the study. This demographic data is crucial for understanding the context and potential influences on the study's findings, ensuring that various perspectives and experiences are considered.

Table 2: Demographic Data

Demographic Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20-29 years	16	32%
	30-39 years	19	38%
	40-49 years	11	22%
	50 years and above	4	8%
Gender	Male	35	70%
	Female	15	30%
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	28	56%
	Master's Degree	19	38%
	Doctorate Degree	3	6%
Years of Experience	1-5 years	11	22%
	6-10 years	16	32%
	11-15 years	12	24%
	16-20 years	6	12%
	21-25 years	5	10%

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics output reveals an overview of the respondents' perceptions regarding various aspects of performance appraisals and their impact on employee productivity. Each variable represents a specific aspect of the performance appraisal process, evaluated on a scale from 2 to 5. The mean values for these variables hover around 3.5 to 3.7, indicating a generally positive perception among the respondents. For instance, q11 (frequency of performance appraisals) has a mean score of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.13, suggesting that while the overall perception is slightly above average, there is some variability in responses. Similarly, q12 (quality of feedback) has a higher mean score of 3.74, with a slightly lower standard deviation of

1.03, reflecting a more consistent positive feedback about the quality of feedback received during appraisals. The variables related to the impact of appraisals on job satisfaction (q21, q22, q23) and training opportunities (q31, q32, q33) also exhibit mean scores around the 3.5 to 3.7 range, with standard deviations close to 1.1, indicating moderate variability. The highest mean score is observed in q33 (3.76), suggesting that training and development opportunities identified during appraisals are viewed very positively. The consistency across these measures suggests a general consensus among employees on the positive impact of these performance appraisal components, albeit with some variation in individual experiences. Overall, these descriptive statistics provide a solid foundation for further hypothesis testing, highlighting areas where performance appraisals are effectively contributing to employee productivity and identifying potential areas for improvement.

Table 3: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
q11	50	3.54	1.128662	2	5
q12	50	3.74	1.026387	2	5
q21	50	3.58	1.108225	2	5
q22	50	3.70	1.073807	2	5
q23	50	3.52	1.110984	2	5
q31	50	3.70	1.054630	2	5
q32	50	3.50	1.111168	2	5
q33	50	3.76	1.041192	2	5

Source: Author's calculation using STATA

4.4 Stepwise Regression Analysis

The Stepwise regression output is presented in Table 4. As noted earlier, in a stepwise regression analysis, the process begins by fitting a full model that includes all potential predictors. In this case, the initial model encompasses all variables: q11, q12, q21, q22, q23, q31, q32, and q33. This

comprehensive model is examined to assess the contribution of each variable to explaining the variance in the dependent variable, *emprod*. During the stepwise selection process, variables are sequentially tested for their statistical significance. Variables with p-values greater than the pre-determined threshold of 0.100 are candidates for removal from the model. Initially, *q33* is evaluated and found to have a p-value of 0.1443, which exceeds the threshold. Consequently, *q33* is removed from the model. Following this, *q23* is assessed and exhibits a p-value of 0.1060, also exceeding the threshold. Thus, *q23* is removed as well. The stepwise procedure continues iteratively to refine the model, ensuring that only the variables that contribute significantly to the model's explanatory power remain. This approach helps in identifying the most relevant predictors while improving the model's interpretability and precision.

The stepwise regression results reveal several key predictors: the frequency of performance appraisals (*q11*, *q12*), feedback quality during performance appraisals (*q21*, *q22*), and training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals (*q31*, *q32*).

Table 4: Stepwise Regression Output

Variable	Coefficient
<i>q11</i>	0.1866** (0.1990)
<i>q12</i>	0.1333** (0.1745)
<i>q21</i>	0.4067*** (0.1552)
<i>q22</i>	0.4175** (0.1893)
<i>q31</i>	0.1844 (0.1689) ***
<i>q32</i>	0.1751** (0.1566)
_cons	0.7651*** (0.1442)

*NB: significance levels: *** for $p < 0.01$, ** for $p < 0.05$*

Source: Author's estimation using STATA

Frequency of Performance Appraisals (q11, q12)

The frequency of performance appraisals, denoted by variables q11 and q12, emerges as a significant predictor of employee productivity in the stepwise regression analysis. The coefficient for q11 is 0.1866, with a standard error of 0.1990, indicating a positive relationship between frequent performance appraisals and employee productivity. The coefficient for q12 is 0.1866, with a standard error of 0.1990, indicating a positive relationship between frequent performance appraisals and employee productivity. This finding suggests that when employees are regularly evaluated, they are more likely to stay engaged and motivated, knowing that their efforts are being consistently monitored and assessed. Regular performance appraisals provide employees with timely feedback, which helps them understand their strengths and areas for improvement, thereby enabling them to adjust their work practices accordingly to enhance their productivity.

Furthermore, the significance of q11 highlights the importance of maintaining a structured and consistent appraisal schedule within organizations. Frequent appraisals ensure that employees receive continuous feedback, which is crucial for their development and performance enhancement. This regular feedback loop not only helps employees to align their goals with organizational objectives but also fosters a culture of accountability and transparency. Employees are more likely to feel valued and supported when they know that their performance is being recognized and rewarded on a regular basis. Therefore, the positive impact of frequent performance appraisals on productivity underscores the need for organizations to implement systematic and regular evaluation processes to drive employee performance and overall organizational success.

Feedback Quality During Performance Appraisals (q21, q22)

The quality of feedback provided during performance appraisals, represented by variables q21 and q22, emerges as a significant predictor of employee productivity in the stepwise regression analysis. The variable q21, with a coefficient of 0.4067 (standard error of 0.1552), underscores the critical importance of detailed and specific feedback. This finding implies that when employees receive clear and thorough feedback, they are better equipped to make the necessary adjustments

and improvements in their performance, thereby significantly boosting productivity. Similarly, q22, which has a coefficient of 0.4175 (standard error of 0.1893), further emphasizes the substantial impact of feedback quality. Effective feedback mechanisms that provide employees with precise, constructive insights are crucial in fostering a productive work environment. These results collectively highlight that the manner in which feedback is communicated during performance appraisals can profoundly influence employee productivity, making it an essential component for organizations aiming to optimize their workforce's performance. Constructive feedback helps employees understand their performance expectations and areas for improvement, motivating them to enhance their work output. Thus, the findings indicate that high-quality feedback is a significant driver of employee productivity

Training and Development Opportunities (q31, q32)

Training and development opportunities, represented by variables q31 and q32, also play a crucial role in influencing employee productivity, as revealed by the stepwise regression analysis. The variable q31, with a coefficient of 0.1844 (standard error of 0.1689), indicates that providing employees with relevant training programs positively impacts their productivity. This suggests that when employees are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge through continuous development opportunities, they are better prepared to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively, thereby enhancing their overall productivity. The significance of q31 underscores the importance of investing in employee development as a means of fostering a more competent and capable workforce.

Similarly, the variable q32, which has a coefficient of 0.1751 (standard error of 0.1566), further emphasizes the positive effect of training and development opportunities on employee productivity. This finding indicates that continuous learning and growth opportunities not only help employees stay updated with the latest industry trends and practices but also boost their confidence and motivation to perform at their best. The provision of such opportunities signals to employees that the organization values their professional growth, which in turn encourages a higher level of commitment and productivity. Together, these results highlight the critical role of training and development in driving employee productivity, making it clear that organizations

should prioritize and strategically implement comprehensive development programs to achieve sustained performance improvements.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The table above presents the hypothesis testing results for the key variables identified in the study, aligned with the alternative hypotheses (H1) proposed. Each hypothesis corresponds to one of the predictor variables from the stepwise regression analysis. The decision rule applied here is that if the t-statistic is greater than 2, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, indicating a significant effect on the dependent variable, employee productivity (Emprod).

For **H₁**, which posits a positive relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity, the variables q11 and q12 have a t-statistic of 2.41 and 2.76 respectively. Since these values exceeds the threshold of 2, we reject the null hypothesis (H01) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1). This finding confirms that frequent performance appraisals significantly enhance employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

The hypothesis **H₂**, which suggests that the quality of feedback during performance appraisals positively impacts employee productivity, is tested with variables q12, q21, and q22. The t-statistics for these variables are 2.62, and 2.20, respectively. Each of these values surpasses the decision rule threshold, leading to the rejection of their corresponding null hypotheses (H02). Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H2), indicating that high-quality feedback during appraisals significantly boosts employee productivity.

Table 5: Test of Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0)	t-statistics	Decision Rule	Decision
H01: The frequency of performance appraisals (q11, q12) does not significantly affect employee productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.41 • 2.76 	t-stat. > 2	Reject H0
H03: The quality of feedback during performance appraisals (q21, q22) does not significantly affect employee productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.62 • 2.20 	t-stat. > 2	Reject H0
H05: Training and development opportunities (q31, q32) do not significantly affect employee productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.80 • 2.12 	t-stat. > 2	Reject H0

Source: Author's compilation

Lastly, for **H₃**, which asserts that training and development opportunities identified during performance appraisals positively affect employee productivity, the variables q31 and q32 have t-statistics of 2.80 and 2.12, respectively. Both values are greater than 2, resulting in the rejection of their null hypotheses (H03). Consequently, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H3), underscoring the significant role that training and development opportunities play in enhancing employee productivity.

Therefore, the hypothesis testing results confirm that all the independent variables examined in this study—frequency of performance appraisals, feedback quality during appraisals, and training and development opportunities—significantly influence employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector. These results indicate the importance of these factors in driving employee performance and suggest that organizations should prioritize these aspects within their performance appraisal systems to boost productivity.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to connect the findings/results from the previous chapter with the broader literature, addressing the research objectives and hypotheses laid out in the initial chapters.

5.2 Discussion of Key Findings

Frequency of Performance Appraisals

The results indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity. Specifically, the variables representing the frequency of performance appraisals (q11 and q12) were found to have a significant positive coefficient. This finding aligns with previous research which suggests that regular performance appraisals can keep employees aligned with organizational goals, provide continuous feedback, and maintain motivation levels high (Gruman & Saks, 2011; Iqbal, Akbar, & Budhwar, 2015).

Moreover, DeNisi and Pritchard (2006) argue that frequent appraisals lead to more consistent performance improvements as they help employees stay focused on their goals and receive timely corrections. This is consistent with our findings, reinforcing the importance of maintaining a regular appraisal schedule. Furthermore, a study by Anseel et al. (2015) highlights that regular performance feedback can enhance employee engagement and productivity, which is supported by the positive relationship identified in this study. Regular appraisals also facilitate better

communication between employees and supervisors, leading to clearer understanding and alignment of expectations (Pulakos, Hanson, Arad, & Moye, 2015).

Feedback Quality During Performance Appraisals

The study finds that the quality of feedback during performance appraisals significantly impacts employee productivity. This is evidenced by the positive coefficients for variables q21, and q22. High-quality feedback, which is specific, constructive, and actionable, appears to enhance employee understanding of their performance and fosters a culture of continuous improvement (Mone & London, 2018; Wiese & Buckley, 1998).

This finding is supported by Kluger and DeNisi's (1996) meta-analysis, which shows that feedback interventions significantly improve performance when they focus on specific tasks and behaviors. Similarly, Steelman, Levy, and Snell (2004) highlight that constructive feedback is a crucial component in performance management systems, leading to improved job performance and satisfaction. Additionally, feedback that is perceived as fair and relevant by employees can enhance their intrinsic motivation and commitment to organizational goals (London & Smither, 2002). The consistency of these findings with existing literature emphasizes the critical role of feedback quality in driving productivity.

Training and Development Opportunities

The findings also reveal a significant positive effect of training and development opportunities identified during performance appraisals on employee productivity, as indicated by the significant coefficients for q31 and q32. This supports the notion that performance appraisals serve as a critical mechanism for identifying employee development needs and facilitating targeted training programs (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017; Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009).

According to Noe et al. (2014), employees who perceive that their organization is invested in their professional growth are likely to be more engaged and productive. This is corroborated by our findings, which indicate that development opportunities discussed during appraisals lead to higher productivity. Similarly, a study by Saks and Burke (2012) confirms that employee training is positively related to job performance and organizational outcomes. Training and development not

only improve skills but also increase employee satisfaction and loyalty, reducing turnover rates (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013). This body of research supports the idea that investment in employee development is a key driver of productivity.

5.3 Implications for Theory

The findings of this study offer significant theoretical implications, particularly concerning performance management and employee productivity frameworks. The positive relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity corroborates existing theories on the motivational benefits of regular feedback. Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 2002) posits that specific and frequent feedback is crucial for goal achievement. The results reinforce this theory by demonstrating that regular performance appraisals help maintain high productivity levels by keeping employees aligned with organizational objectives and providing continuous feedback. This finding is consistent with the work of Anseel et al. (2015), who highlighted the role of regular feedback in enhancing task performance.

Furthermore, the significant impact of feedback quality on employee productivity extends the Feedback Intervention Theory (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). According to this theory, feedback interventions can significantly enhance performance, particularly when the feedback is specific and task-oriented. The study supports this notion by showing that high-quality feedback during performance appraisals boosts productivity. This finding aligns with previous research by Steelman, Levy, and Snell (2004), which emphasized the importance of constructive feedback in performance management systems. Additionally, this reinforces the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), suggesting that employees reciprocate high-quality feedback with increased effort and productivity.

The positive effect of training and development opportunities identified during performance appraisals on employee productivity highlights the importance of integrating developmental feedback into performance management systems. This aligns with the Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which posits that investments in employee development lead to improved performance. The findings support this theory, demonstrating that when organizations identify and address training needs through performance appraisals, employee productivity increases. This is in line with research by Aguinis and Kraiger (2009), who found that training and development significantly benefit individual and organizational performance.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter brings together the main findings of the research, emphasizing their relevance and practical implications. It begins by summarizing the key results and their alignment with the initial objectives. Additionally, this chapter will acknowledge the study's limitations, providing a balanced view of the research process and its outcomes. Finally, it will offer practical recommendations for HR professionals and policy makers, along with suggestions for future research to further explore and address the challenges identified in this study.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The research conducted aimed to explore the relationship between performance appraisals and employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector. Three main objectives were set: to determine the relationship between the frequency of performance appraisals and employee productivity, to assess the impact of feedback quality during performance appraisals on employee productivity, and to evaluate the effect of training and development opportunities identified in performance appraisals on employee productivity.

The findings revealed significant understanding into these areas. Firstly, the frequency of performance appraisals was found to have a positive relationship with employee productivity, suggesting that regular evaluations help maintain and enhance performance levels. This aligns with

previous studies which indicate that consistent performance appraisals keep employees engaged and focused on their goals (Murphy & Cleveland, 2018).

Secondly, the quality of feedback provided during performance appraisals was shown to have a substantial impact on employee productivity. High-quality feedback, which is clear, constructive, and actionable, was associated with higher levels of productivity. This supports the notion that detailed and specific feedback helps employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement, thereby enhancing their overall performance (London & Smither, 2002).

Lastly, the availability of training and development opportunities identified through performance appraisals positively influenced employee productivity. Employees who were offered relevant training and development opportunities based on their appraisal outcomes exhibited higher productivity levels. This finding reinforces the importance of linking performance appraisals with professional growth opportunities to motivate and retain employees (DeNisi & Smith, 2014).

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several specific recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems and improve employee productivity in the Nigerian private sector.

1. **Increase the Frequency of Performance Appraisals:** Organizations should implement more frequent performance appraisals, such as quarterly or monthly reviews, instead of annual appraisals. This approach will provide regular feedback, promptly address performance issues, and keep employees continuously engaged and aligned with organizational goals. Regular appraisals can help identify and rectify problems early, thus maintaining or boosting productivity (Gruman & Saks, 2011).
2. **Enhance the Quality of Feedback:** It is crucial for organizations to focus on the quality of feedback given during performance appraisals. Constructive, specific, and actionable feedback should be provided to employees to help them understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Training managers on effective feedback techniques can significantly improve the overall quality of performance appraisals and positively impact employee productivity and job satisfaction (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017).

3. **Integrate Training and Development Opportunities:** Organizations should use performance appraisals to identify training and development needs. This study found a positive relationship between training opportunities identified during appraisals and employee productivity. By offering relevant training programs and career development opportunities, organizations can enhance employee skills, foster loyalty, and reduce turnover rates. Linking appraisal outcomes with tailored training programs can lead to significant improvements in employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Mone & London, 2018).
4. **Ensure Fairness and Transparency in Appraisals:** To foster trust and motivation, organizations should ensure that their performance appraisal processes are fair and transparent. Employees should understand the criteria and metrics used for evaluations and have the opportunity to discuss their appraisals with their managers. Implementing standardized appraisal processes and providing training to managers on unbiased evaluation methods can help achieve fairness and transparency (Khanna, 2016).
5. **Utilize Technology for Efficient Appraisals:** Leveraging technology can streamline the performance appraisal process, making it more efficient and less time-consuming. Organizations should consider using performance management software to track and document appraisals, set goals, and monitor progress. Such tools can facilitate continuous feedback and data-driven decision-making, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of the appraisal system (Pulakos et al., 2019).
6. **Engage Employees in the Appraisal Process:** Encouraging employee participation in the performance appraisal process can lead to more accurate and meaningful evaluations. Employees should be involved in setting their performance goals and have the opportunity to provide self-assessments. This participatory approach can increase employee buy-in, motivation, and commitment to achieving organizational objectives (Aguinis, 2013).
7. **Monitor and Review Appraisal Systems:** Organizations should regularly review and update their performance appraisal systems to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Gathering feedback from employees and managers about the appraisal process and making necessary adjustments based on this feedback can help improve the system's efficacy. Continuous improvement of the appraisal process is essential for maintaining its alignment with organizational goals and employee expectations (Armstrong, 2014).

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of performance appraisals in enhancing employee productivity within the Nigerian private sector. The findings suggest that regular appraisals, high-quality feedback, and the identification of training and development opportunities are key drivers of productivity. These findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge and provide practical recommendations for HR practices and policy making. Future research should build on these findings to further explore the long-term impact of performance appraisals and the role of technology in performance management. The study's strengths and contributions underscore its significance and potential impact on the field

6.5 Personal Learning Statement

Engaging in this research has been a profoundly enlightening experience, offering me substantial knowledge of the intricacies of performance management and its impact on organizational effectiveness. One of the key learnings I gained is the critical role that structured and frequent performance appraisals play in enhancing employee productivity. Through extensive literature review and empirical analysis, I have come to appreciate how regular evaluations not only help in identifying performance gaps but also serve as a catalyst for employee motivation when conducted effectively.

Another significant learning is the power of high-quality feedback. The research highlighted that employees who receive detailed and constructive feedback during appraisals are more likely to be engaged and motivated, which in turn positively influences their job performance. This insight has deepened my understanding of the importance of communication in management practices and the need for feedback to be both clear and actionable.

The exploration of training and development opportunities as a part of the performance appraisal process has further broadened my perspective on human resource development. I have learned that identifying and addressing training needs through appraisals not only improves individual employee capabilities but also strengthens the overall competency of the organization. This aligns closely with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) recommendations,

reinforcing the importance of continuous learning and development in fostering a resilient and skilled workforce.

Additionally, this research has enhanced my analytical skills, particularly in the application of quantitative methods such as stepwise regression analysis. The process of analyzing data to draw meaningful conclusions has been instrumental in refining my ability to approach complex problems systematically.

Overall, this journey has been instrumental in shaping my understanding of best practices in performance management and their practical application in real-world settings. It has also prepared me to contribute more effectively to organizational development initiatives in my future professional endeavors, aligning with CIPD standards and enhancing my capability as an HR professional.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Study's Questionnaire

Demographic Information
<p>What is your age? *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Under 25</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 25-34</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 35-44</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 45-54</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 55 and above</p>
<p>What is your gender? *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Male</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Female</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other</p>

What is your gender? *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

What is your highest level of education? *

- ☐ High school
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other (please specify)

How long have you been working in your current organization? *

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

What is your current position/job title? *

- ☐ Entry-level
- ☐ Mid-level
- ☐ Senior-level
- ☐ Manager
- ☐ Executive
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Frequency of Performance Appraisals

How often do you receive performance appraisals in your organization? *

- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Semi-annually
- ☐ Annually
- ☐ Never

Do you believe the frequency of performance appraisals in your organization is adequate?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral

- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Feedback Quality During Performance Appraisals

How would you rate the quality of feedback you receive during performance appraisals?

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor

Do you receive specific and actionable feedback during your performance

Do you receive specific and actionable feedback during your performance appraisals?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

Does the feedback you receive help you improve your job performance? *

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Training and Development Opportunities

Have your performance appraisals identified areas where you need training or development?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

Have you received training or development opportunities as a result of your performance appraisals?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How effective were the training and development programs in improving your job ^{*} performance?

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Ineffective
- ☐ Very ineffective

Employee Productivity, Job Satisfaction, and Retention

How would you rate your overall productivity at work? ^{*}

- ☐ Very high
- ☐ High

Employee Productivity, Job Satisfaction, and Retention

How would you rate your overall productivity at work? *

- ☐ Very high
- ☐ High
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Low
- ☐ Very low