



# Effect of feedback and rewards on employee performance: City of Johannesburg Municipality's case

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**Background:** The major challenge of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality Council has been poor service delivery attributable to the poor performance management systems.

**Aim:** This study aims to determine how feedback and rewards affect the work performance of the employees in terms of work quality, quantity, and efficiency.

**Setting:** This article was guided by the responses from employees of the municipality to assert how feedback and rewards have helped to improve their work performance.

**Methods:** The stratified sampling method was adopted in the study. The sample of 371 employees was allocated to the different strata of the population using allocation proportional to size, while participants from each stratum were identified using the simple random sampling method and interviewed using structured questionnaire.

**Results:** The study showed that paid leave was the only type of reward the employees received. The respondents disagreed that employees were fairly rewarded for their performance; that the reward system facilitated attracting and retaining the right kind of people, and that the managers have regular meetings to discuss their performance progress. Feedback and rewards do not jointly significantly ( $p > 0$ ) predict work quality but are significant predictors of work quantity and work efficiency.

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that managers should be trained to link praise, recognition, cash, and non-cash rewards to specific results and all levels of accomplishments should be rewarded while ensuring effective feedback delivery.

**Contribution:** The study highlighted how managers' effective and efficient feedback and reward appraisal and management can enhance the productivity of the organisation.

**Keywords:** performance feedback; rewards; work quality; work quantity; work efficiency; employees; Johannesburg Municipality.

## Introduction

The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CJMM) has been shown to have poor service delivery attributable to unaccountability, a lack of citizen involvement, non-involvement of managers and employees in evaluation of municipality's performance, poor workforce hiring strategy, a lack of workforce capacity and capability, poor planning and policies, and a lack of monitoring and an evaluation platform (De & Bain 2012; Radebe, Vyas-Doorgapersad & Grobler 2015). The city's Performance Management System (PMS), which could have addressed some of these issues, has also been found to be faulty (De & Bain 2012; Radebe, Vyas-Doorgapersad & Grobler 2015). For instance, the 2018-2019 Auditor-General's account of Johannesburg City and that of Radebe et al. (2015) revealed several loopholes in the city's PMS (City of Johannesburg 2019; Mokgari & Pwaka 2018; Narsoo, Smith & Ndhlovu 2017) including poor feedback and rewards systems' management. Knowing that the success of an organisation depends on how well it takes care of the internal workforce, particular attention needs to be given to PMS feedback and rewards administration, which has been shown to directly affect employees and organisation's performance (Chandra & Saraswathi 2018; Manzoor, Wei & Asif 2021). However, how feedback and rewards after PMS are being practiced in the CJMM, their application to enhance employee performance, and achievement of municipality's goals are unclear. An empirical study to assess these management practices, which can be of vital importance to the organisation, is necessary and is the crux of this article.

This article aims to determine: (1) the types of rewards and performance feedback given to employees by CJMM after PMS assessment, (2) the management of performance feedback and rewards; and (3) how the rewards and feedback affect the employees' work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency. The results of this study will enable CJMM: (1) to become co-ordinated, integrated, and optimised at all levels, (2) to motivate and develop employees and recognise their outstanding performance and (3) to achieve the fundamental goal of the organisation. Additionally, other municipalities will have lessons to draw from these results, which can help them in the management of the reward systems to enhance employee's performance.

This article is arranged in five sections. The first section is the introduction followed by the background, methodology, discussion of results, and conclusions.

## Background

This section of the article will discuss the key variables of this study based on review of grey literature. These variables include performance feedback, rewards, and the combination of these two variables, which are key to enhancing employee performance in any organisation when properly managed by the managers.

### *Performance feedback*

Performance feedback directly impacts the employee's performance at work, provides specific information to help improve performance; makes performance expectations clear from the start; ensures that efficiency is heightened by reducing resentment and build-up; strengthens relationships between the managers and employees (Flanagan 2017); and directly affects intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment (Tagliabue, Sigurjonsdottir & Sandaker 2020). While Chappelow and McCauley (2019) advocate for line managers to know how to give effective feedback to employees and ensure that they are sufficiently motivated, they also caution that effective criticism needs to be delivered with respect and care as frequent or exclusively negative comments can spark defensive reactions that cloud perceptions and dampen motivation. However, Greve and Gaba (2017) are of the view that through effective feedback management is able to align the behaviour of employees towards attaining their performance goals and that of the organisation.

Performance feedback delivery is considered an effective, economic, and simple managerial practice for providing information to individuals or groups about the quality and quantity of their performance (Tagliabue et al. 2020). It is very important that managers know how to give effective feedback (Chappelow & McCauley 2019). It helps in adapting behaviour of employees towards attaining the performance goals of an organisation (Greve & Gaba 2017). Performance feedback has been found to affect other organisational variables such as intrinsic motivation, fairness, efficacy, and

organisational commitment. The findings of the study by Munyua (2020) established that intrinsic motivation and rewards contribute significantly to employees' job performance and recommended that organisations invest in non-financial rewards and incentives.

Feedback can improve both performance and employee behaviour (Tagliabue et al. 2020). The study by the authors found that the availability of positive feedback contributed to a higher correlation with reported scores of employee behaviour, increases employee performance, including discretionary effort and job satisfaction when compared with the availability of negative feedback (Ocampo, Tan & Sia 2018).

### *Rewards*

The reward system, on the other hand, can be classified as extrinsic (pay raises, bonuses, and benefits) or intrinsic (elevating employees to positions of authority and responsibility, promotion, recognition, education, and training, appreciating staff commitment to service through letters and praise, and granting employees flexible working hours) (Fatima 2021). Rewards have a substantial impact on an organisation's ability to acquire, retain, and motivate high-potential employees, and get the higher levels of employees' work quality, work quantity, work efficiency (i.e. ability to deliver assignments or output timeously) (Fatima 2021).

Participation of employees in decision-making needs to be encouraged under the reward management system, as such practices will help organisations to accomplish their goals and objectives (Güngör 2011). It is important to determine the relationships between the managerial practice of performance feedback, reward system, and the employee performance.

A reward management system is guided by organisation's policies, processes, and practices to reward its employees for their skills, commitment, contribution, abilities, and artifice. Güngör (2011) observed that there are reward philosophies, strategies, and policies that guide different organisations in formulating a reward management system, which include reaching agreements on the processes, practices, structures, and procedures to determine which compensation, benefits, and other forms of rewards need to be given.

Karami, Dolatabadi and Rajaepour (2013) studied how a reward management system can affect employee performance using motivation as the mediating factor. The study revealed that the employee performance is significantly positively impacted by reward management and the effect that reward management system has on employee performance is significantly enhanced through motivating the employees. Stringer, Didham and Theivananthampillai (2011) also studied the relationships between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, pay satisfaction, and job satisfaction of retailers. The authors found a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation, pay, and job satisfaction. However, there was no

association between extrinsic motivation and pay satisfaction, but extrinsic motivation was negatively associated with job satisfaction. Likewise, Pratheepkanth (2011), in assessing how reward system impacted employee motivation in commercial Bank of Sri Lanka Plc, showed that rewards and recognition are significantly and positively impacted by employee motivation.

### Feedback and rewards

The 'path-goal model' (Fatima 2021) is worth adopting in providing feedback and rewards to employees of the municipality to enhance productivity. The model explains the relationship between the reward system and employee performance and depends on employees' perception of productivity. For instance, according to the model, when employees perceive that high productivity will lead to the attainment of one or more of their personal goals, they will tend to be high producers. Conversely, if they see low productivity as a path to the achievement of their goals, they will tend to be low producers. Efforts should be made by managers to change the perceptions of employees to see and appreciate high productivity. The employee would be motivated to expend a greater amount of effort in his or her work if he or she felt his or her previous effort had resulted in his or her receiving rewards (Fatima 2021).

Performance feedback and rewards are key to PMS that organisations employ to motivate employees to produce optimally in the workplace. The study by Hendricks and Matsiliza (2015) showed that performing employees are financially rewarded with a percentage of their package. In the study by Chandra and Saraswathi (2018), employees suggested that managers should communicate the mission and strategies of the organisation to the employees, set individual performance targets, carry out regular assessment of the employees, and constantly review the PMS.

How performance feedback and rewards have jointly or singly positively or negatively influenced employee performance in the CJMM in the recent past is unknown and forms the crux of this article.

## The theory and conceptual framework

The theory underlying this study is the Reinforcement Theory of motivation (Ismail, Abdul-Majid & Masibau 2017; Skinner 1938). The theory is based on the concept of 'Law of Effect', that is, the behaviour of an individual towards positive consequences tends to repeat, but the behaviour of an individual towards negative consequences tends not to repeat (the assumption is that behaviour is influenced by its consequences). The theory is very important to this study as it addresses issues of PMS assessment, performance feedback and rewards that are given to employees to enhance performance in workplace. It aims at achieving the desired level of motivation among the employees by means of reinforcement, punishment, and extinction. The reinforcement

approach is used to reinforce the desired behaviour, which in this case is the employee performance in the workplace. Thus, when an employee is complemented for quality performance through performance feedback and rewards, the reward reinforces employee's desire to perform better because of positive results of doing so (Fatima 2021). On the other hand, any application of punishment will act as a deterrent to undesirable behaviours of the employees while extinction will stop someone from performing a learned behaviour, thereby withholding a positive reinforcement or reward that may have encouraged the behaviour.

Adom, Hussein and Agyem (2018) defined a theoretical and/or conceptual framework as that structure which the researcher uses to explain the natural progression of any phenomenon. It is usually based on some theories and concepts and provides the structure and vision of the study. The conceptual framework shows how the research problem would be explored. Liehr and Smith (1999) show the conceptual framework as describing the relationship between the main concepts of a study, which in this study are the performance feedback, performance rewards (intrinsic or extrinsic rewards), and employee performance. The conceptual framework provides a pictorial or visual display of how ideas are enshrined in the variables and makes it easier for the researcher to specify the dependent and independent variables (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend 2012) (Figure 1).

The work quality metrics impact the quality of the employee's performance. They emphasise appropriate relationship between the manager and the employee, level of mentorship of employees, accomplishment of set objectives, and reporting mechanisms of the employees and assessment by managers, in addition to how well, accurately or effectively the job is performed. Thus, accuracy, appearance, usefulness, or effectiveness are all embedded in work quality. Mbore and Cheruiyot (2017) clearly explained the use of the number of defective or incorrectly produced products in production to measure employee performance quality. Thus, when the number of defective or incorrectly produced products is large, it gives an indication of low work quality. This number should be kept as small as possible.

The work quantity metric is much easier to measure than quality and this employee performance metric can be measured in different ways, namely the number of sales, number of units produced, and percentage or number of product defects or errors (Mbore & Cheruiyot 2017).

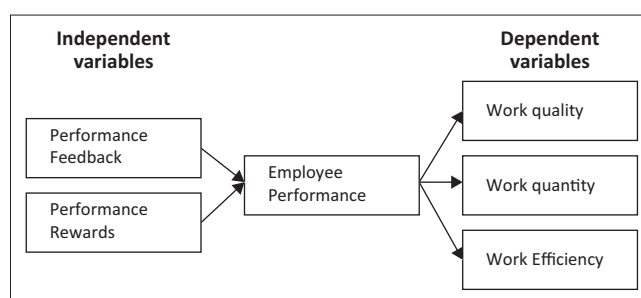


FIGURE 1: Conceptual framework for the study.

The work efficiency metrics can involve both qualitative and quantitative measures. Work efficiency combines both quality and quantity but tilts more to the quality of what is produced in a good time. It is about doing the work correctly; producing desired results with minimum effort and time (Saleh 2023). Efforts should always be made to balance quantity and quality measures (Mbore & Cheruiyot 2017). Work efficiency can be assessed when we consider resources such as length of time to produce and deliver goods to clients, time taken to serve a customer or to prepare a report, amount of money expended in production, technology deployed, and quantity of materials needed to produce a specific output (quality) (Mbore & Cheruiyot 2017).

## Research methods and design

### Coverage

The study targeted all the 40411 employees of the CJMM Council classified as top-level (managers), middle-level (Departmental supervisors), and low-level ranks (other employees)

### Sample size determination

In order to determine a statistically acceptable sample size, the Cochran's Formula (Cochran 1977) was used. The formula is given by:

$$n_0 = Z_{\alpha/2}^2 p(1-p) / e^2 \quad [\text{Eqn 1}]$$

where  $n_0$  is the calculated sample size;  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the critical value of the standardised normal distribution based on the assumed level of significance,  $\alpha$ ;  $p$  is the proportion in the population of responses to a desired response;  $e$  is the margin of error (i.e. the acceptable sampling error). When  $\alpha = 0.05$  (5%) and  $p$ , usually assumed as 0.5 (50%), then  $Z_{\alpha/2} = Z_{0.025} = 1.96$ . The margin of error,  $e$ , the difference between the population value and estimated value, is kept as small as possible to allow for credibility of the research. In this case if we assume an acceptable sampling error,  $e = 0.05$ , then:

$$n_0 = \{1.96^2 (0.5) (0.5)\} / 0.05^2 = 384.16 (\sim 384) \quad [\text{Eqn 2}]$$

### Sampling method

The stratified random sampling method was adopted in the study. This method is very appropriate where the population is heterogeneous but can be broken into more homogeneous groups called the strata. The method yields a representative sample and a more efficient estimate of the population parameters (Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific 2014). The sample size of 384 municipality employees calculated using the Cochran's formula (Cochran 1977) was allocated proportionately to all the sub-population of employees (strata) (rank of employees). For instance, suppose the overall population size is denoted by  $N$  and the stratum population sizes are  $N_1$  for stratum 1,  $N_2$  for stratum 2, and  $N_3$  for stratum 3, such that  $N = N_1 + N_2 + N_3$ . Let  $n_0$  be the statistically

acceptable sample size calculated using the Cochran's formula. To determine the proportion of  $n_0$  to be allocated to stratum 1, 2, and 3, the proportional allocation to stratum population size was calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} n_{01} &= (n_0 \times N_1 / N), \text{ the stratum 1 sample size} \\ n_{02} &= (n_0 \times N_2 / N), \text{ the stratum 2 sample size} \\ n_{03} &= (n_0 \times N_3 / N), \text{ the stratum 3 sample size} \end{aligned}$$

The simple random sampling (SRS) method was then employed in selecting the participants from each stratum for the study. The SRS is appropriate where there is homogeneity in the population, in this case, the subpopulations, and gives every employee within a rank an equal opportunity to participate in the study. The selected persons served as the participants in the study.

### The instrument for the study

The study used a structured questionnaire for the survey. This questionnaire contained closed-ended questions on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, types of rewards offered to workers after the PMS assessment, and performance feedback. The questions were on a five-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaire was piloted to determine whether it was easy to understand, reliable, error-free, and able to collect the required data. Inconsistencies in the questionnaires were highlighted and corrected. Such an approach helped to reinforce research validity and reliability by building efficacy in the data collection. The Cronbach's alpha of more than 0.7 was calculated for each component of the questionnaire, to illustrate the questionnaires' internal consistency and reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

### Data collection

The questionnaire was self-administered and it was shared with the participants through Google documents' security, ensuring that only the intended persons could open the file by authenticating their emails. Out of the 384 distributed questionnaires, 371 participants voluntarily answered the questionnaire, giving a response rate of 96%.

### Techniques used in data analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive (frequency, mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient) and inferential statistics ( $T$ -test,  $F$ -test), while the ordinal multiple regression models were fitted to the data to determine and test how feedback and rewards affected work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency.

### Ethical consideration

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Regenesys Business School (Reference number # 139555). The study instrument, methodology, and process were approved by the ethical committees of the Municipality



Council and Regenesys Business School before embarking on the study. The participants were contacted and the content and purpose of the study were explained to them. They were informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time they felt uncomfortable to continue and there were no financial rewards for participation as the rewards can only be given in the form of policy changes and revised PMS applications. All those who agreed to participate signed written consent forms and sent it back to the researcher. The questionnaire did not contain any identification traceable to the respondents, to maintain anonymity. All electronically collected questionnaires were password protected. The cell phone contact of the researcher and Regenesys Business School were provided to participants in case they had any problems to report with the exercise.

## Data analysis

### Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants

The socio-demographic characteristics of employees, such as age, gender, marital status, and race are some of the most widely known determinants of reward preference. It is important, therefore, for an organisation or an employer to always understand the impact of these characteristics while developing methods of attracting and retaining top talent. In this section, the participants were asked to indicate their age, gender, marital status, duration of work, and job description availability.

Table 1 shows that 43% of the respondents were aged over 50 years while 34% and 23% were aged 40 years-49 years and 30 years-39 years, respectively. Those with undergraduate degrees were 91%. Majority of the participants, 66%, had served in the municipality for at least 11 years. Most workers, 99%, had job descriptions while only 60% asserted that the services offered by the employees were of quality; only 51% agreed that the employees of the municipality produced the expected quantity of produce (work quantity), while 47% of the participants agreed that there is work efficiency.

## Types of rewards received by employees after performance management system review

To enhance job satisfaction, employers need to design and implement effective reward and recognition systems that motivate and appreciate employees for their contributions and achievements. In this section, the study explored the type of rewards that employees were given and tested the significance of the agreement. The participants were asked to indicate the types of rewards they received after each PMS review on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The mean response of the participants was computed for each reward and displayed in Table 2. The table shows that the main reward that the employees at the CJMM enjoy is paid leave. The study tested the hypotheses:

$$H_0: \mu = \mu_0 \text{ (the participants do not significantly agree).}$$

**TABLE 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

Demographic characteristics	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
<b>Age (years)</b>			
18–29	1	0	1
30–39	22	23	22
40–49	35	33	34
50 and above	43	44	43
Total	100	100	100
<b>Educational qualification</b>			
National Diploma	1	3	2
Undergraduate degree	91	91	91
Postgraduate degree	8	6	7
Total	100	100	100
<b>Duration of working in the municipality (years)</b>			
0–5	17	18	18
6–10	17	15	16
11–15	24	22	22
16–20	11	19	15
Above 20	31	26	29
Total	100	100	100
<b>Have a job description?</b>			
Yes	98	100	99
No	2	0.0	1
Total	100	100	100
<b>There is work quality among the employee of the municipality</b>			
Yes	60	59	60
No	23	29	26
Do not know	17	12	14
Total	100	100	100
<b>Employees of the municipality produce the expected quantity of produce (work quantity)</b>			
Yes	52	51	51
No	31	36	34
Do not know	17	13	15
Total	100	100	100
<b>Employees can be described as efficient in the dispatch of their duties (work efficiency)</b>			
Yes	47	47	47
No	31	37	34
Don't know	22	16	19
Total	100	100	100

$H_1: \mu < \mu_0$  (the participants significantly disagree on the identified rewards)

$\mu_0 = 3$ , the test value, is the mean of the 5-point Likert scale (1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

The test statistic is:

$$T = \frac{\bar{X} - \mu}{\text{Std error}} \quad [\text{Eqn 3}]$$

where,  $\bar{X}$  is the estimated mean response, and  $\mu = \mu_0$  under the null hypothesis,  $H_0$

The test rejects the null hypothesis if  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$  at the 5% level of significance.

The results (Table 2) show that the participants significantly agreed (mean = 3,18;  $p < 0,05$ ) that paid leave is the reward

they received and significantly disagreed (mean = 2.72,  $p > 0.05$ ) that they received commendation that creates a feeling of accomplishment, pride in work (mean = 2.67;  $p < 0.05$ ), being a part of team (mean = 2.52;  $p < 0.05$ ), paid sick leave (mean = 2.15;  $p < 0.05$ ) as rewards.

## Practice of reward system

Rewards can be monetary, such as salary, bonuses, commissions, or benefits, or non-monetary, such as feedback, praise, awards, or career opportunities. This section is interested in determining whether the rewards systems do align with the organisation's strategy and culture; whether employees and managers are involved in the process and whether the process is fair and transparent, timely and specific. A positive response to these issues is indicative of employee participation and ownership of the system, as well as providing clear feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement, which are necessary for improved employee performance.

The participants were asked to respond to seven items that addressed how rewards are being managed or practiced

based on PMS assessment to enhance employee performance, on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses of the participants. The significance of the responses was tested with the following hypotheses:

$H_0$ :  $\mu = \mu_0$  (the participants do not significantly agree);  $\mu_0 = 3$ , the test value.

$H_1$ :  $\mu < \mu_0$  (the participants significantly disagree on the effectiveness of the implementations of rewards to enhance employee performance).

The test statistic is:

$$T = (\bar{X} - \mu_0) / \text{Standard error}$$

$\bar{X}$  is the estimated mean.

The mean scores of the responses on the items are all between 1 and 2 showing that the participants disagree on the issues raised showing a negative effect of rewards on employee performance resulting from the implementation process. For example, the participants significantly disagreed that employees were fairly rewarded for their performance (mean = 1.74;  $p < 0.05$ ) or that the reward

**TABLE 2:** Test of significance of opinions of the participants on rewards received.

Type of rewards	Test of means against reference constant (value) = 3							
	Mean	SD	N	SE	Reference constant	t	df	p
Salary adjustments	1.32	0.66	371	0.03	3	-49.02	370	0.00
Pay progression	1.40	0.68	371	0.04	3	-45.64	370	0.00
Money	1.58	1.09	371	0.06	3	-25.11	370	0.00
Vacations	1.36	0.63	371	0.03	3	-50.58	370	0.00
Prizes	1.35	0.62	371	0.03	3	-51.71	370	0.00
Material objects	1.32	0.61	371	0.03	3	-52.80	370	0.00
Plaques	1.29	0.60	371	0.03	3	-54.82	370	0.00
Awards	1.30	0.60	371	0.03	3	-54.31	370	0.00
Promotion	1.31	0.61	371	0.03	3	-53.66	370	0.00
Training	1.86	1.19	371	0.06	3	-18.44	370	0.00
Pride on work	2.67	1.45	371	0.08	3	-4.38	370	0.00
Having a feeling of accomplishment	2.72	1.63	371	0.08	3	-3.27	370	0.00
Being a part of team	2.52	1.43	371	0.07	3	-6.43	370	0.00
Paid leave	3.18	1.61	371	0.08	3	2.19	370	0.03
Paid sick leave	2.15	1.46	370	0.08	3	-11.16	369	0.00
Purchases	1.45	0.76	371	0.04	3	-39.53	370	0.00
Discounts	1.53	0.75	371	0.04	3	-37.52	370	0.00

SD, standard deviation; SE, standard error.

**TABLE 3:** Rewards implementation after performance management system assessment.

Indicator	Mean	SE mean	T	df	Significance	
					One-sided p	Two-Sided p
Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance	1.74	0.036	-34.831	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
In my directorate, performance bonuses are rotated among employees	1.25	0.024	-72.409	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people	1.56	0.035	-40.859	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
Positive and negative financial and non-financial consequences of performance (e.g. salary adjustments, recognition) are utilised effectively	1.78	0.055	-22.297	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
Pay progression and performance bonuses are linked to performance achievements	1.24	0.028	-61.861	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by motivating desired levels of performance	1.64	0.047	-29.085	370	< 0.001	< 0.001

Note: Test value = 3.

SE, standard error.

system facilitated the implementation of the organisation's strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people (mean = 1.25,  $p < 0.05$ ), or that the reward system motivated the desired levels of performance (mean = 1.64,  $p < 0.05$ ).

## Practice of performance feedback

Providing feedback to employees is key to improved employee performance. It is a critical part of the performance management. It is important that this is performed effectively to ensure that employees understand their strengths, areas for improvement, and what they need to do to attain their individual goals and that of the municipality. The process of achieving this in the municipality is examined in this section.

The participants were asked to respond to five item indicators of performance feedback that addressed how feedback is provided to employees after PMS assessment, on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

The hypotheses are as follows:

$H_0$ :  $\mu = \mu_0$  (the participants do not significantly agree);  $\mu_0 = 3$ , the test value.

$H_1$ :  $\mu > \mu_0$  (the participants significantly agree on the implementation of performance feedback to enhance employee performance).

The test statistic is:

$$T = (\bar{X} - \mu_0) / \text{Std. error.}$$

$\bar{X}$  is the estimated mean.

The results of the analyses are shown and tested in Table 4. The results show that participants significantly agreed that their performance appraisals were fair reflections of their performance (mean = 3.53;  $p < 0.05$ ); that the current PMS was used as a tool to achieve individual goals (mean = 3.99;  $p < 0.05$ ), and that they received regular feedback on how well they were performing in the duties (mean = 3.17,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, there was no significant agreement reached on whether the managers do provide them with constructive criticism during my reviews (mean = 3.06,  $p > 0.05$ ).

**TABLE 4:** Opinions of participants about practice of performance feedback.

Feedback indicator	Mean	SE mean	T	df	Significance	
					One-sided p	Two-sided p
I receive regular feedback on how well I am performing my duties.	3.17	0.048	3.579	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my performance progress.	2.98	0.067	-0.283	370	0.389	0.777
My manager provides me with constructive criticism during my reviews.	3.06	0.060	1.034	370	0.151	0.302
I am aware that the current performance management system is used as a tool to achieve individual goals.	3.99	0.045	21.747	370	< 0.001	< 0.001
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	3.53	0.056	9.437	370	< 0.001	< 0.001

SE, standard error.

Note: Test value = 3.

## Effect of performance feedback and rewards on work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency of the employees

Work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency are indicators of work performance. Thus, how well the employees performed at work was assessed by their perceptions of the quality, quantity of their outputs and how efficient (accuracy and timing) they are in their job performance. Three questions were asked the participants: (1) Do you think that there is work quality among the employee of the municipality? (2) Do you think that the employees of the municipality produce the expected quantity of what they are supposed to produce (work quantity)? and (3) Do you think that the employees of the municipality can be described as efficient in the dispatch of their duties (work efficiency)? They responded, Yes, No, and Don't know. These questions formed the dependent variables in the fitting of the ordinal multiple regression models to test how performance feedback and rewards affect work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency.

### Effect of performance feedback and rewards on work quality of the employees

An ordinal multiple regression model was fitted. The dependent variable was, 'Do you think that there is work quality among the employee of the municipality?' The responses were coded, 1 = Yes, 2 = No and 3 = Don't know. The independent variables were performance feedback and rewards. The result ( $F = 1.4867$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the model is not significant, meaning that performance feedback and rewards jointly do not predict the work quality of the employees. These variables explain only 6% of the total variation in work quality showing that there are likely other variables that contribute to explain the total variation which have not been considered in this study.

The test of significance of the individual variables is shown in Table 5. None of the variables is significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). For instance, the variables, 'I receive regular feedback on how well I am performing my duties' and 'The manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my performance progress'

after controlling for the other variables, do not significantly ( $p > 0.05$ ) predict quality performance at workplace.

### Effect of performance feedback and rewards on work quantity of the employees

The study tested the overall fit of the ordinal multiple regression model with the ordinal dependent variable, 'Do you think that the employees of the municipality produce the expected work quantity?' with responses coded as 1 = Yes, 2 = No, and 3 = Don't know. The independent variables were performance feedback and rewards. The results of the analysis show that performance feedback and rewards jointly significantly ( $F = 2$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) predict the work quantity of the employees of the municipality council, explaining only 6% of the total variation in work quantity ( $R^2 = 6\%$ ). Thus, there are other variables that contribute to explain this variation, which have not been considered in this study.

A test of the significance of individual variables (Table 6) shows that most of the indicators of performance feedback and rewards do not significantly ( $p > 0.05$ ) predict work quantity of the employees. Only the variable, 'The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people', significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) predicts but negatively correlates ( $b < 0$ ) with work quantity.

### Effect of performance feedback and rewards on work efficiency of the employees

The study tested the overall fit of the ordinal multiple regression model with the ordinal dependent variable, 'Do you think that the employees of the municipality can be described as efficient in the dispatch of their duties (work efficiency)?' with responses coded as 1 = Yes, 2 = No, and 3 = Don't know. The independent variables were performance feedback and rewards.

**TABLE 5:** Test of significance of the individual variables ( $N = 371$ ).

Indicators of performance feedback and rewards	Regression summary for dependent variable: There is work quality among the employee of the municipality			
	<i>b</i>	SE of <i>b</i>	<i>t</i> (359)	<i>p</i>
Intercept	1.43	0.24	6.01	0.00
<b>Feedback</b>				
I receive regular feedback on how well I am performing my duties	0.08	0.06	1.47	0.14
My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my performance progress.	-0.07	0.05	-1.28	0.20
My manager provides me with constructive criticism during my reviews.	0.04	0.06	0.73	0.47
I am aware that the current performance management system is used as a tool to achieve individual goals.	0.05	0.07	0.83	0.41
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	-0.02	0.05	-0.48	0.63
<b>Rewards</b>				
Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance.	-0.04	0.07	-0.58	0.56
In my directorate, performance bonuses are rotated amongst employees.	-0.01	0.11	-0.08	0.94
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people	-0.06	0.08	-0.83	0.41
Positive and negative financial and non-financial consequences of performance (e.g. Salary adjustments, recognition) are utilised effectively.	0.00	0.04	0.07	0.94
Pay progression and performance bonuses are linked to performance achievements.	0.08	0.09	0.90	0.37
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by motivating desired levels of performance.	-0.08	0.06	-1.35	0.18

SE, standard error.

**TABLE 6:** Test of significance of individual indicators of performance feedback and rewards ( $N = 371$ ).

Indicators	Regression summary for dependent variable: Produce work quantity			
	<i>b</i>	SE of <i>b</i>	<i>t</i> (359)	<i>p</i>
Intercept	1.75	0.23	7.47	0.00
<b>Feedback</b>				
I receive regular feedback on how well I am performing my duties	0.09	0.06	1.68	0.09
My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my performance progress.	0.04	0.05	0.73	0.47
My manager provides me with constructive criticism during my reviews.	-0.08	0.06	-1.24	0.21
I am aware that the current performance management system is used as a tool to achieve individual goals.	-0.03	0.07	-0.40	0.69
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	0.02	0.05	0.38	0.71
<b>Reward</b>				
Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance.	-0.09	0.07	-1.36	0.17
In my directorate performance bonuses are rotated amongst employees.	0.15	0.11	1.47	0.14
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people.	-0.15	0.08	-1.98	0.05
Positive and negative financial and non-financial consequences of performance (e.g. salary adjustments, recognition) are utilised effectively.	-0.04	0.04	-0.88	0.38
Pay progression and performance bonuses are linked to performance achievements.	0.11	0.08	1.28	0.20
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by motivating desired levels of performance.	-0.07	0.06	-1.23	0.22

SE, standard error.



The results show that the performance feedback and rewards jointly significantly ( $F = 2.412$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) predict work efficiency of the employees, explaining only 7% of the variation in work efficiency ( $R^2 = 7\%$ ).

When the significance of the individual indicators of performance feedback and rewards were tested (Table 7), the results show that only the indicators of reward namely, 'Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance' and 'The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people' significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) predicted work efficiency, holding the performance feedback variables constant.

## Discussion of the results

This article set as its objectives: (1) to determine the types of rewards given by the CJMM Council to employees after PMS assessment; (2) to determine the management of performance feedback and rewards; and (3) to show how performance feedback and rewards affect the work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency of the employees.

The study showed that paid leave was the only reward that employees got. There is significant disagreement ( $p < 0.05$ ) by the participants that the implementation of reward systems after the PMS assessment enhances employee performance. Rewards are central in PMS adoption and implementation as they significantly influence employee engagement and motivation, which are critical determinants of employee performance (Fatima 2021; Güngör 2011). Effective reward management integrates organisation's policies, processes, and practices and aligns them with rewarding employees according to their productivity, skills, and competence (Karundeng & Tambunan 2021; Salah 2016). Surprisingly, the

municipality hardly realised this. It is therefore no wonder why the participants do not see the positive impact of rewards in enhancing productivity. These results imply that the municipality has not built its use of rewards to impact employees' work performance significantly. They are in line with the 2018-2019 Auditor General's report that quoted dissimilarities between rewards systems for Municipal Entities, Core Administration, and Section 56 employees as fundamental inefficiencies affecting service delivery in the municipality (City of Johannesburg 2019). It is imperative to observe that when employees receive rewards based on non-merit factors, they are most likely to shadow their skills and limit their efforts, and these will negatively affect work quality, quantity, and efficiency. Rewards are expected to boost employees' motivation and desire to be more productive. In line with Skinner's reinforcement theory (Skinner 1938), the rewards do reinforce one's desire to perform better because of positive results of doing so and often synergises employees to effortlessly work towards achieving individual performance targets. When rewards are not implemented, how can employees be gingered to put in more effort to accomplish the organisation and individual's goals? The findings of this study are also in line with the study by Fatile (2014), who observed that PMS in Africa have not been able to achieve the expected level of performance, which can improve productivity. Rewards' implication on employee performance depends on the manager's attitude and selection of types of rewards (Chappelow & McCauley 2019). Any manager who seeks to build positivity in their team ought to choose those motivational rewards such as money and awards instead of punishments and sanctions that tend to punish poor performance without recognising individual efforts and commitments. Not rewarding even small accomplishments demotivates employees from becoming productive in the workplace (Greve & Gaba 2017; Tehseen & Hadi 2015).

**TABLE 7:** Test of significance of individual variables ( $N = 371$ ).

Indicators	Regression summary for dependent variable: There is work efficiency					
	$b^\dagger$	SE of $b^\dagger$	$b$	SE of $b$	$t$ (359)	$p$
<b>Intercept</b>	-	-	1.85	0.24	7.59	0.00
<b>Feedback</b>						
I receive regular feedback on how well I am performing my duties.	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.06	1.30	0.20
My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my performance progress.	0.09	0.09	0.05	0.06	0.97	0.33
My manager provides me with constructive criticism during my reviews.	-0.14	0.10	-0.10	0.06	-1.50	0.13
I am aware that the current performance management system is used as a tool to achieve individual goals.	-0.07	0.08	-0.06	0.07	-0.93	0.35
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	0.12	0.07	0.08	0.05	1.66	0.10
<b>Reward</b>						
Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance.	-0.14	0.07	-0.15	0.07	-2.09	0.04
In my directorate performance bonuses are rotated amongst employees.	0.11	0.07	0.17	0.11	1.59	0.11
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people	-0.20	0.07	-0.22	0.08	-2.85	0.00
Positive and negative financial and non-financial consequences of performance (e.g. Salary adjustments, recognition) are utilised effectively.	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.05	0.04	0.97
Pay progression and performance bonuses are linked to performance achievements.	0.07	0.06	0.10	0.09	1.09	0.28
The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by motivating desired levels of performance.	-0.01	0.07	-0.01	0.06	-0.13	0.90

SE, standard error.

$^\dagger$ , level of significance is 5%.

The reinforcement theory emphasised that an organisation must ensure that their interaction with the employees recognises their hard work and commitment to foster individual drive to achieve personal and organisational goals (Lipnevich & Panadero 2021). Nxumalo et al. (2018) also argue that PMS, with subsequent rewards and feedback, supports accountability, responsibility, and commitment, which have a significant positive influence on employee performance by enhancing efficiency in service delivery or commodity production processes.

The participants in this study significantly disagree ( $p < 0.05$ ) that they receive regular feedback on how well they are performing in their duties; that their performance appraisals are fair reflections of their performance, and that the current PMS is used as a tool to achieve individual goals. When taken jointly, the results show that while performance feedback and rewards do significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) predict the work quantity and work efficiency of the employees of the municipality; they jointly do not predict the work quality of the employees. Any variable that predicts work efficiency ought to predict work quality as efficiency embraces both quality and timeliness to complete an assignment. It points to lapses in the role of managers to encourage fairness in rewards and provide employees positive feedback in areas where they have excelled and where there are lapses for improvement and how they can improve performance. The study findings are in line with those of Radebe et al. (2015) who found that although managers and subordinates in the municipality set objectives jointly, they do not participate in the evaluation of the municipality's performance, and there is a lack of uniformity and non-involvement of communities (employees) at the lower level of management (City of Johannesburg 2019). Gnepp et al. (2020) asserted that unfavourable performance feedback can trigger coping and defensive mechanisms which do not support the employees' efforts to perform better. Jampol and Zayas (2020) highlighted that lack of feedback threatens workers' self-esteem, disappoints employees, and prompts them to shift their attention away from their responsibilities.

The variables, 'My manager provides me with constructive criticism during my reviews', 'I am aware that the current PMS is used as a tool to achieve individual goals', 'Employees are fairly rewarded for their performance', and 'The reward system facilitates the implementation of strategy by attracting and retaining the right kind of people', are negatively correlated with work quality, work quantity, and work efficiency ( $b < 0$ ). The negative relationship between feedback and employees' work quality, quantity, and efficiency imply that the managers have not built efficacy in offering supportive and future-oriented criticism that can mould employees' efforts toward enhancing their work quality, quantity, and efficiency. The results support the findings of the study by Tagliabue et al. (2020) that showed that the availability of positive feedback contributed to a higher correlation with reported scores of employees' behaviour

when compared with the availability of negative feedback. It reveals how much the Johannesburg municipality has lapsed in the implementation of PMS rewards and feedback to employees.

## The practical impact of the research on business

The role of the CJMM as conferred by *Municipal Structures Act, 1998* (Act No. 117 of 1998) is for the municipal managers to ensure that efficient services are delivered to the people. Unfortunately, the results of this study point to the inability of managers to encourage employees' work performance (Radebe et al. 2015), which inadvertently affects service delivery to the communities. When employees are rewarded for good performance and feedback provided, employees are motivated, and talents retained. The overall productivity and output of the organisation improves. It is expected that the results of this study will stimulate the performance of CJMM to become co-ordinated, integrated, and optimised at all levels; employees' will be motivated and developed, and outstanding performance recognised as well as achieving the fundamental goal of the organisation.

## Conclusion and recommendations

In light of the findings in this study, the City of Johannesburg Municipality should address the following when providing feedback and rewards to enhance productivity:

1. Managers should be trained to tie praise, recognition, cash, and non-cash rewards to specific results produced and these should be clearly explained to the employees.
2. It is necessary to reward all levels of accomplishments as this will encourage the less performing employees to work harder to meet municipality's expectations.
3. There should be fairness in the rewards based on existing policies and guidelines, and employees must be provided adequate feedback on the procedures.
4. Managers and employees should be part of the development of guidelines about the management of rewards and managers should provide regular feedback to employees on their performance.

## Limitations

The study is based only on the CJMM. The results, however, may not be generalisable to other municipalities and are based on information supplied by humans who are susceptible to bias. It is only hoped that the participants supplied correct information. However, the excellent methodology adopted in this work, which is efficient and with minimal bias, can be replicated in other municipalities to determine the feedback and rewards managements.

## Area for further studies

A recent study by Kalonda and Govender (2021) has quoted corruption and inefficient use of resources as critical

hindrances to reliable services in Johannesburg municipality. This finding needs to be critically studied to determine how they may have contributed to lapses in PMS rewards and feedback to employees. In addition, the mixed method research is recommended for further studies rather than only the quantitative method to enhance extensive probing.

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## Competing interests

E.A. and N.O.A. contributed equally to this work.

## Authors' contributions

E.A. was the student who conducted the original research and produced the thesis from which the article is extracted. He was part of the development of the article. He participated in the data analysis. N.O.A., as his supervisor, oversaw the project and developed this article.

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## Data availability

The data for this study were primary data and all tables were developed from the primary data.

## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

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