

Performance management in the Public Sector: An evaluation of the usefulness of PMDS in Institutes of Technology in the BMW region

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This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA in Accounting, Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

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Abstract

As part of the national partnership agreements performance management (PM) systems have been introduced to the public service. The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) was first implemented in the civil service and was subsequently adapted for the higher education sector in 2005. Due to the current economic climate the government has been forced to reduce expenditure in the public sector. Now more than ever there is a greater demand on public servants to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. This approach is not only emphasised by the government but also echoed by public demands for accountability. A PM concept, such as the PMDS, is seen as a model that could deliver such efficiencies within the higher education sector.

The higher education sector, in particular academic staff, poses a problem for any PM system. The difficulties arise in assessing a lecturer's performance. Each lecturer has a range of tasks within their role and each carry out these tasks in individual ways. The challenges faced by a PM system are how to set standard for service delivery for a lecturer and how then to measure them.

This research evaluates the PMDS system within several Institutes of Technology (IOTs). It focuses on academic staff, examining the usefulness of the PMDS to both staff and management. It first identifies what the PMDS seeks to achieve before describing the process itself. It then explores different aspects of the PMDS identifying its strengths and weaknesses as well as future improvements.

The research consists of a review of the relevant literature in the subject area and also primary research. The primary research conducted produced both qualitative and quantitative information. Questionnaires were issued to a sample of lecturers from the IOTs under review and six interviews were carried out with a sample of managers. This multi method approach allowed for further exploration of the subject area while also enhancing the validity of the results.

The results indicate that the PMDS has proven useful in some aspects but that the system overall is in need of improvement. It has been more successful with regard to the development of staff but has fallen short in its usefulness for PM in the IOTs. These shortfalls are the consequence of faults with the system itself but some are also due to external factors within the higher education sector. It is clear there is the potential for a more meaningful role for the PMDS within the IOTs provided that the current challenges both inside and outside the system are addressed.

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List of Abbreviations

BMW	Border, Midland, West
BPR	Business Process Re-Engineering
BSC	Balanced Scorecard
EVA	Economic Value Added
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resource
IOT	Institute of Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NPM	New Performance Management
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PM	Performance Management
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PRP	Performance Related Pay
RI	Residual Income
ROI	Return on Investment
SL1	Senior Lecturer 1
TDP	Team Development Plan
TQM	Total Quality Management
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale for undertaking the research

The economic climate in Ireland has changed dramatically over the last two years. Government revenues have collapsed, creating a situation now, and for some time to come, of deficit budgeting compared to surpluses in the past. The government is being forced to reduce spending and cutbacks are being made across all departments. With resources so tight extra emphasis is now placed on the performance of public servants, both from the government and the public.

PM in the public sector is a concept that has been developing since the 1990s. Management techniques from industry have penetrated deep into public organisations. It is felt that, like companies, state authorities provide products and services and that their performance can be appraised (De Bruijn 2002). Interest in PM has been re-invigorated in public and non-profit agencies in recent years as a result of the convergence of two forces: (1) increased demands for accountability on the part of governing bodies, the media, and the public in general, and (2) a growing commitment on the part of managers and agencies to focus on results and to work deliberately to strengthen performance (Poister 2003).

This has been a major part of all Partnership agreements in Ireland and has expanded across all areas of the public sector. With growing interest in PM, the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) was introduced to the civil service in 2000. With its launch the former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern stated:

“This system will be central to the successful development of the Civil and wider Public Service as it faces into the 21st Century, concentrating on the cultural and behavioural changes needed to generate capacity to achieve national strategic goals”.

PMDS in the civil service was then reviewed by Mercer Consultants in 2004. This report, among other reasons, led to the implementation of PMDS in higher education in 2005.

Within schools, several barriers exist that don't arise in other areas of the public sector. It has been argued that performance management represents a threat to teacher professionalism and autonomy (Storey 2002). Higher education is also characterised by relatively decentralised practices. There is little real strategic planning, as a whole, taking place (Broad et al 2007). PMDS needs to be reviewed to ensure that it addresses these issues in practice.

1.2 Merit and Justification

The PMDS has not been reviewed since its introduction in universities in Ireland in 2005. A PM system needs to be reviewed just as the staff undertaking it must be. It should be developed and adapted to changing times and new challenges. This research will be the first of its kind and will provide a much needed review of the system in place, identifying its strengths and weaknesses. We will discover the views of lecturers, department heads and Human Resource (HR) managers. These groups can benefit from this research. It is important that all participants in the PMDS have a positive attitude and be pro-active. Results will show how it benefits both management and lecturers. The results from this research will also be of use to the Department of Education who need to assess if the introduction of PMDS has been successful. These results will give a final verdict on whether the PMDS has proven useful in the Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in the Border, Midlands, West (BMW) region.

1.3 Overview of the Research Area

1.3.1 What is PMDS?

In Ireland, the government introduced the PMDS to the Public Sector. It was introduced to meet the challenge of providing better government through better public service management. The PMDS is a process whereby both work performance and personal development are actively managed. It is a formal developmental process of self-evaluation and structured discussion aimed at the personal, professional, and career development of an individual member of staff.

1.3.2 PMDS in higher education

In accordance with the terms of *Sustaining Progress* the PMDS was introduced to Third Level institutions from 2005. Through a process of self-review/self assessment the PMDS is intended to provide for a more structured mechanism for feedback between Heads of Units and staff members, within a supportive framework. Overall it aims to improve staff performance and align the objectives of staff with that of the organisation. This will result in better quality services for students.

The key principles which underpin the PMDS within a University context are as follows;

- Development of staff to reach their full potential
- Self Review/Self Assessment
- Link to Strategic Planning
- Integrated development at three levels - University, Departmental and Individual levels
- Enhancement of Quality

- Promoting Equality

The Scheme applies to all categories and levels of staff across the institution. It is a three stage process:

1. Planning and Documentation, Pre-Review Stage
2. The Review Meeting
3. Post Review Meeting and Implementing the Action Plan

At Stage 1 the reviewee (staff member) will fill out a PMDS review form detailing their performance during the year and areas they wish to address. This is a self assessment exercise in comparison with pre-determined goals. The reviewer (supervisor) will develop future objectives to be addressed during the interview.

Stage 2 involves a face to face discussion in the Review Meeting. This meeting also offers the opportunity to highlight concerns and issues and helps plan the training and development needs for the following year.

In the final Stage, The Head of Department (HOD) will collate the outcomes arising from all reviews. The outputs from this process will form a key input into the department's overall training and development programme.

It is the responsibility of the HODs to ensure that the PMDS takes place for each staff member, that they take place effectively, that any follow-up is actioned promptly and that a record is kept.

1.4 Research Objectives

The general aim of the thesis can be broken down into a number of smaller research objectives. These sub-objectives will provide a balanced assessment of PMDS. They are designed to analyse all the elements of PMDS and provide the researcher with the information needed to develop valuable conclusions. They can be broken down as follows;

1.4.1 Describe and explain PMDS used in higher education institutions.

Before a detailed assessment of the usefulness of PMDS can be carried out we must first understand the PM system itself. This basic objective needs to be satisfied. It is from this base that the remaining objectives can be developed. From its development in Ireland, we can see that this is a system initially developed for the civil service. It was then adapted and introduced to education. There can be problems in the transfer of PM systems and processes from one sector to another and also between countries. This objective will explain how the PMDS operates in an academic environment.

1.4.2 Identify what PMDS seeks to achieve.

In identifying what PMDS seeks to achieve we must first investigate why it was developed. The benefits of PM have been seen in the private sector for many years before the public sector began to develop their own PM systems. Since then many public sector departments have been successful in implementing PM and increasing efficiency and productivity. Within the public sector the issues of accountability and trust needed to be addressed. PM has gone some way to improve public confidence in the government in certain areas. In education in Ireland, there was not a defined PM system in place. The performance of the PMDS in the civil service proved successful so it was adopted throughout the public sector. Universities provided a specific challenge as to how lecturers' performance should be addressed. The researcher must see what PMDS seeks to achieve in reference to these issues, among possible others, before the success of the system can be evaluated.

1.4.3 Examine how it benefits employers.

At the basic level, through PM, managers are able to monitor and improve the performance of their employees. They can review performance during the year and reward or discipline employees where appropriate. Certain PM systems help align the goals of employees with that of the organisation. Employers can improve communication with employees and gain feedback that can help improve their own performance and that of the business as a whole. Lecturers have responsibilities to students and to their own area of study. They have, traditionally, worked independently without regular review. The PMDS should offer employers the chance to review their staff and receive feedback during this process. It provides employees with a chance to comment on how they are being managed. The researcher must assess if PMDS is helping to align the goals of lecturers, department heads and HR managers.

In examining how it benefits employers it must also be recognised that there can be negative outcomes from PM. The PM system used must be tailored for the specific organisation. Employers must manage that system to ensure that it does not turn into an arduous task and box ticking exercise. This will involve the dedication of time and spirit. There is the danger that a PM system may just produce extra paperwork rather than improve performance. The commitment of management to the PMDS must also be assessed.

1.4.4 Investigate how it promotes employee professional development.

Just as PM helps managers improve their own performance ,it can, and is designed to, aid the development of employees. PM should motivate staff to perform at higher levels. As part of the review process employees can receive input from their managers on their performance. This can highlight areas of excellence and also areas in need of improvement. Through monitoring and reviewing, employers can help their employees develop. PM

systems should link into other HR processes in an organisation. Training can be based on the results from PM reports. By clarifying and measuring goals PM can eliminate ambiguity and gain coherence and focus in pursuit of the organisation's mission. In making employees part of the organisations strategy it can improve dedication and overall performance.

It has been seen that PM systems in universities have fostered individual growth and organisational performance. There are barriers to PM in universities that the PMDS must overcome. It has been argued that PM represents a threat to teacher professionalism and autonomy and that it may erode academic freedom and independent scholarship. The diversity of the profession has been highlighted as a possible problem in measuring performance. This objective will seek to establish if the PMDS has been able to incorporate lecturers and if it has been welcomed by those under review.

1.4.5 Evaluate the system and identify future improvements.

The final part of my analysis should reveal the areas within the PMDS that require improvement. Each PM system should be tailored specifically to the organisation and the PMDS system in IOTs should take cognisance of the specific role of academic staff and the rich complexities of the job. In the literature review we saw the characteristics of an effective PM system and the researcher will have to evaluate the PMDS system based on these criteria. There may also be other considerations in dealing with the specific nature of the PMDS but it is crucial that the process be developed and improved into the future.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Performance Management (PM)

2.1.1 What is Performance Management?

PM has several definitions. At the basic level PM is the umbrella term for all of the organisational activities involved in managing people on the job (Grote, 2000). It has been described as the process of directing and controlling employees and work units in an organisation and motivating them to perform at higher levels (Poister 2003).

Heinrich (2002) goes a little further and defines PM as the process of defining goals, selecting strategies to achieve these goals, allocating decision rights, and measuring and rewarding performance. This view is similar to that of Armstrong (2000) who defines performance management as a strategic and integrated process that delivers sustained success to organisations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of the individual contributors and teams.

2.1.2 The development of performance management

In the mid to late twentieth century the focus on PM began to shift. In relation to Japanese industry, Hayes and Abernathy (1980) argued that success seemed to be due to the pursuit of both efficiency and effectiveness and that the Western methods of PM had concentrated on the former at the expense of the latter. There was a widespread view that traditional performance measures were inadequate, as characterised in Neely et al (1995). Neely & Austin (2000) described this as “measurement myopia....[caused by] measuring the wrong things”.

Since then PM has evolved. New frameworks came into place that emphasised non-financial, external and forward looking performance measures (Bourne et al 2000). Total Quality Management (TQM) and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) came to the foreground in PM theories (Radnor & Barnes 2007). One of the most successful theories in recent years has been the balanced scorecard (BSC) developed by Kaplan and Norton. If designed and implemented correctly, reported benefits include the improved articulation and communication of strategy, improved organisational control and strategic and operational process alignment (Kaplan & Norton, 1992, 2000). Despite the BSC's many advantages it can also have negative effects on an organisation. It can be a rigid tool in which an organisation may force indicators into the four perspectives. Businesses may become static in the face of the changing innovation economy. The BSC, as an internal document, is limited in its ability to account for the external environment (Voelpel et al, 2006).

Other PM methods include Return on Investment (ROI), Residual Income (RI), and Economic Value Added (EVA). ROI expresses divisional profit as a percentage of the assets employed. It encourages investment in assets and allows easy comparability between divisions. It can, however, lead to short termism among managers. RI takes into account the risk of investment, but as an absolute measure, is less comparable between divisions or companies of different sizes. EVA is an advanced form of RI that represents an earnings figure net of both the cost of equity and debt. It attempts to determine the value to shareholders. It is based on an adjusted profit figure and can include many adjustments, so again, can be open to manipulation (Drury, 2008).

New Performance Management (NPM) is the term used to describe the developments and reforms of public management since the end of the 20th century. This involved the development of performance indicators and benchmarking, personnel reforms aimed at 'normalising' public sector employment on private sector models, and introducing new management techniques and instruments (Pollitt & Homburg, 2007). Despite these improvements, Talbot (2005), highlights the problem for public services of becoming enmeshed in "red tape": bureaucratic rules that stifle management and staff initiative and places obstacles in the way of efficiency. He also suggests that there is a power contest

between managers on the one hand and staff, professionals and their representative bodies (trade unions and professional associations) on the other.

2.1.3 Aims of Performance Management

Thomas (2007) arranged the overall aims of PM into the following list:

- To help clarify organisational goals, directions and expectations
- To help organisations learn how to accomplish goals more effectively
- To communicate the priorities of the organisation
- To support strategic/business line planning by linking broad statements of direction to specific operational outputs and outcomes
- To support budgetary planning and resource allocation processes
- To monitor the operation of programs and to make continuous improvements
- To motivate public servants and to restore pride within the public service that it is making a positive contribution
- To enable citizens to make better informed decisions in the use of public programs
- To restore public confidence that they are receiving value for money in public spending
- To assess whether the organization is achieving its goals
- To strengthen internal administrative and external political accountability

Poister (2003) also highlighted that PM can be used by organisations to support a variety of management functions, such as:

- Monitoring and reporting
- Strategic planning
- Budgeting and financial management
- Quality and process improvement
- Contract management

PM provides key information on issues such as training, workforce planning and compensation and reward decisions. In short, PM is a major component of talent

management in organisations. PM is integrated with other human resource (HR) and development activities. The success of other HR functions will be influenced by the level and efficiency of PM within an organisation.

2.1.4 Performance Management Systems

PM techniques may differ from business to business. It is necessary for each individual business to design and implement a PM system suitable to their organisation and their employees' needs. In doing so it will address the elements of PM defined above. The Harvard University Executive Session on Public Sector Performance Management (2001) describes an effective PM system as one that includes strategic prioritised goals that are challenging yet not overwhelming, and are measurable/fact based on using up-to-date performance data.

The following set of characteristics has been put forward as those likely to allow a PM system to be successful:

1. *Strategic Congruence*: Individual goals should be aligned with the unit and organisational goals.
2. *Thoroughness*: All employees should be evaluated, all major job responsibilities should be evaluated, evaluation should include performance spanning the entire review period, and feedback should be given.
3. *Practicality*: The benefits of using the system (e.g., increased performance and job satisfaction) should be seen as out weighing the costs (e.g., times, effort, and money).
4. *Meaningfulness*: The standards and evaluations should be considered important and relevant, performance assessment should emphasise only those functions that are under the control of the employee, and evaluations should take place at regular intervals and appropriate moments.

5. *Specificity*: It should provide detailed guidance as to what is expected of employees.
6. *Identification of effective and ineffective performance*: It should distinguish between both these elements.
7. *Reliability*: Results should be consistent and free from error.
8. *Validity*: Measures should assess what is important.
9. *Acceptability and Fairness*: The system should be acceptable and perceived as fair by all participants.
10. *Inclusiveness*: It should include input from multiple sources on an ongoing basis.
11. *Openness*: Employees should be continually informed of the quality of their performance.
12. *Correctability*: When employees perceive an error has been made, there should be a mechanism through which this error can be corrected.
13. *Standardisation*: Performance should be evaluated consistently across people and time.
14. *Ethicality*: The system should comply with ethical standards.

Aguinis (2007) set out these characteristics as guidelines to implementing a successful PM system. He did make a point of bringing these guidelines into the context of day to day life. The reality is that PM systems are seldom implemented in an ideal way. Practical constraints may not allow for the implementation of all these features. For example, there may not be sufficient funding available or certain managers may have biases in how they determine performance ratings.

2.1.5 Benefits of Performance Management

The benefits of performance management cover many areas. At the individual level, by reviewing a person's performance it is possible to identify areas where further development is needed and improve future performance (Dransfield 2000). Drucker (1995) discusses the benefits in terms of generating new and additional resources, clearer understanding of economic chains and wealth creation. It is also claimed that if a government organisation manages to define its products, it can show its performance, which may improve the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of government action (De Bruijn 2002).

Theory suggests that clear goals and measurable results are necessary in order to prevent the diffusion of organisational energy (Rangan, 2004; Kaplan, 2001). By quantifying goals and measuring whether they are achieved, organisations reduce and eliminate ambiguity and confusion about objectives, and gain coherence and focus in pursuit of their mission (Verbeeten, 2008).

A major problem in the public sector, highlighted among the literature, is that of aligning individual goals with those of the organisation as a whole. Performance management is vital in focusing organisations towards achieving strategic objectives where individual staff objectives can be accurately aligned with organisational goals (Yu et al. 2009). New performance appraisal systems tackle this problem and are designed to “forge a visible link between organisational and individual goals and to reinforce predetermined core competencies” (Grote 2000). Concepts like the BSC have grown from being a tool for measurement to being a device for controlling the implementation of strategy (Radnor & Barnes 2007). The BSC has become one of the preferred strategic performance management tools of many public and private sector organisations (Radnor & Lovell 2003).

2.1.6 Possible drawbacks

Criticisms of appraisal suggest that it too easily degenerates into a bureaucratic ritual, that it is an insidious form of management control and that it is a tool that promotes and rewards conformity (Bowles and Coates 1993; Townley 1991, 1993). Performance evaluations rarely capture everything relevant in assessing employees' performance and their contributions to the organisation. Often evaluations are forced into standard pre-determined formats that may omit important aspects of performance (Clausen et al 2008).

Parkinson's Law (1964) states that an increase in employees leads to a reinforced increase in loss of time because internal, non-productive tasks become more voluminous. Meyer (1994) re-enforced this idea. Meyer claimed that managers, in reaction to increased competition, pile too many measures on their operations in a bid to encourage employees to work harder. As a result, team members end up spending too much time collecting data and monitoring their activities. In the public sector, multiple measures leading to frequent and voluminous reports can lead to information overload for decision-makers inside government and for legislatures, interest groups, and the public who are seeking to hold governments more accountable (Thomas 2007).

PM in the public sector can yield benefits but there are also possible negative outcomes that can arise. PM is a concept initially developed in the private sector. There is a series of difficulties in importing management practices from one context to another, in this case from the private to the public sector (Adcroft & Willis 2005). Another recurring theme in performance management is the importation of practices into the public sector from elsewhere. Walshe (2001, p. 31) sounds a note of caution and suggests "the unthinking and uncritical adoption of bright ideas from other countries [...] is foolhardy at best".

Adcroft & Willis (2005) argue that the increased use of performance measurement and the importation of private sector management principles and practices will have the dual effect of commodifying services and deprofessionalising public sector workers. Unlike many private sector organisations, public service providers must be explicit in their displays of "equity, impartiality and a certain moral enlightenment", which results in a clear "ethical distinctiveness" When such ethical distinctiveness is lost, commodification and

deprofessionalisation occur, which must necessarily have implications for all stakeholders (Pollitt 2003, p.24).

Public organisations are answerable to more bodies than the private sector. They are coming under increasing scrutiny from the media and the public. In this climate, as highlighted by Adcroft and Willis (2005), the choice of what and how something is measured can often be about creating an impression of improvement rather than delivering any real improvement.

2.1.7 Crossover from private to public

Public sector organisations are differentiated in comparison with their commercial counterparts in the private sector. There is no profit maximising focus, little potential for income generation, and generally speaking, no bottom line against which performance can ultimately be measured. The vast majority of public sector organisations still generate most of their income from the State, and have to account to several stakeholders. Consequently it was, up until recently, considered impossible to measure performance in the public sector (Boland, 2000).

Trust in government and accountability are common issues seen in the media nowadays. Concern with low levels of trust in government and the negative image of government and the public administration has stimulated governments to engage in a modernisation strategy for their public service. The implicit hypothesis on which this strategy is built is that better performing public services will lead to increased satisfaction among their users, and this in turn will lead to more trust in government (Bouckaert & Van de Walle, 2003).

The importance of linking operations objectives beyond cost and quality, has led to many of the performance measures in operations management being adopted by service organisations and even the public sector (Radnor & Barnes, 2007). Transparency and accountability were major reasons for the introduction of PM in the public sector. A careful specification and monitoring of performance, along with a set of incentives and sanctions,

can be used to ensure that the public sector managers continue to act in society's interest (Newberry and Pallott, 2004).

2.2 Performance Management in Education

2.2.1 The need for Performance Management

Universities must remain competitive to meet the demands of accrediting bodies. Administrators face increasing demands for quality and accountability from internal and external forces and constituents (McDevitt et al. 2008).

Effective performance management of professionals in knowledge based organisations has particular significance. Universities and Colleges are knowledge based organisations especially dependent on the expertise, commitment and innovation of their staff (Simmons 2002).

It is often misunderstood that large student number intakes, high graduation rates, state of the art facilities and good scholastic rankings best represent the quality of education offered in a university (Stewart & Carpenter-Hubin 2001). Instead of only focusing on external performance indicators such as those aforementioned, (Hamid et al. 2007) claims that to ensure a healthy culture, the institution has to ensure that internal performance measures are linked to the corporate goals that attempt to improve the organisation's operations. The institution should not simply be concerned with competing with peer institutions.

2.2.2 Development of Performance Management

Performance management within schools is still a recent and developing concept. Several methods such as performance related pay (PRP) have been tested in the department of education in England (Cutler & Waine 2004). The introduction of PRP in English secondary schools was a massive failure and was claimed to “break every rule in the book” (Cooper 2000). It was subject to a High Court ruling in October 2000 which ruled there had been inadequate consultation with teachers and their representatives.

There is significant evidence that traditional forms of performance appraisal are less appropriate for knowledge based organisations (Simmons 2002). The dilemma exists of how to reconcile organisational concerns for control and compliance on the one hand with employee expectations of professional development and personal aspirations on the other (Hendry et al 2000). A developmental approach to performance management in academia has been advocated. This gives the professionals the responsibility to identify aspects of their roles in which development is possible and desirable (Barry et al 2001). Concepts such as the “Balanced Scorecard” have been adapted to suit public organisations and universities.

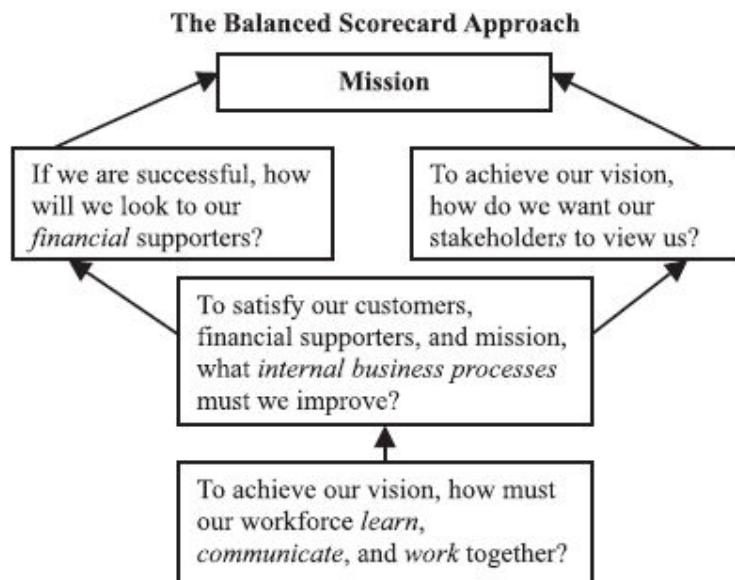


Fig 1: The Balanced Scorecard Approach. Source: Kaplan and Norton (2001).

The Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California used the BSC to gauge the effectiveness of its academic programme (Sutherland 2000) These approaches move away from traditional views of performance management and have proven a better method of performance management for these organisations (Storey 2002, Woods & Grubnic 2008). It has been proposed that the four perspectives can be applied in education as shown in the following example:

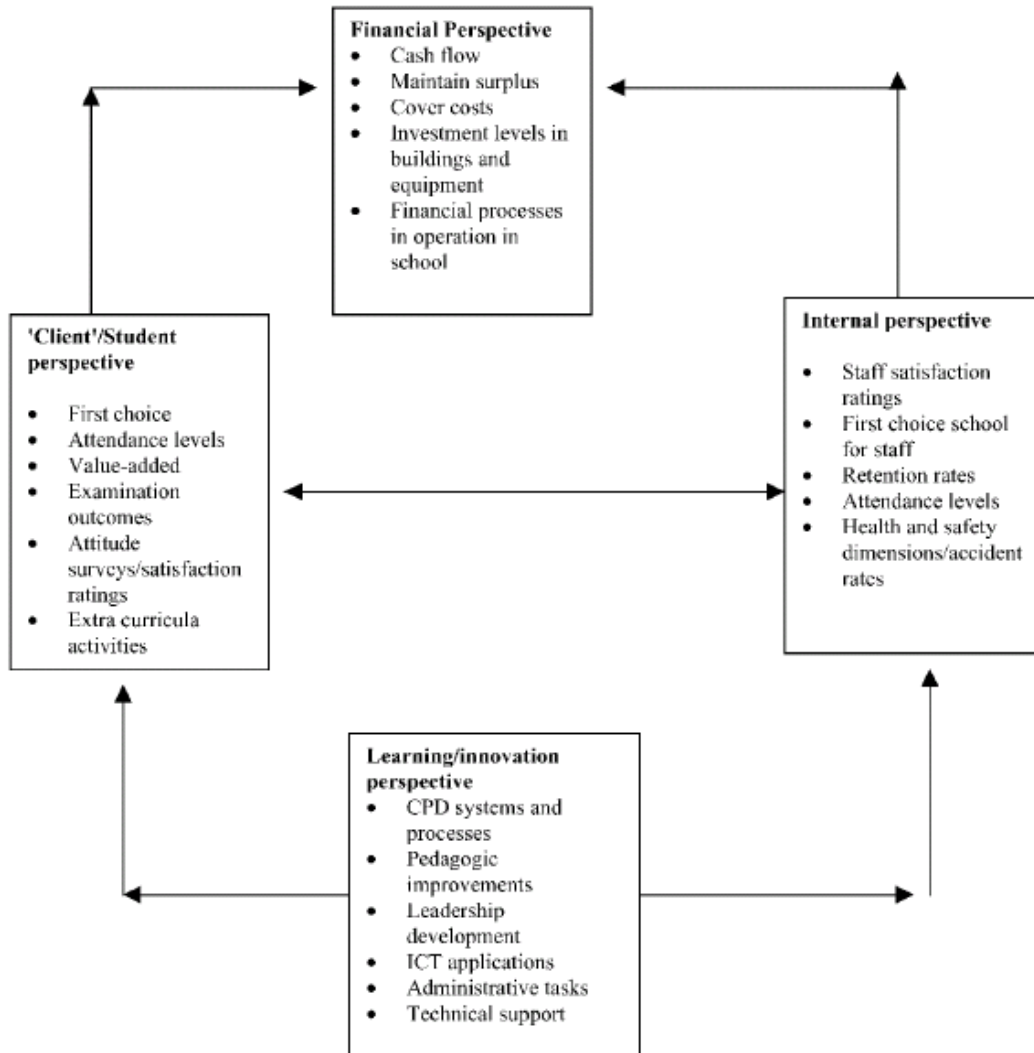


Fig 2: The academic Balanced Scorecard. Source: Storey (2002).

2.2.3 Benefits of Performance Management

Einstein & Papenhausen (2006) examined the implementation of a scorecard at a college of business. They found that a successful scorecard can furnish feedback to each member of the college that can begin a virtuous cycle that can foster individual growth and the improvement of organisational performance.

Dorweiler & Yakhou (2005) also highlight the usefulness of a scorecard in an academic context. Most colleges and universities have a mission or vision statement that sets out in broad terms the goals of the institution. Within the context of these goals, the institution must decide what it will benchmark and what performance it will measure. The BSC tracks key strategic elements through a balanced series of performance indicators to ensure that action is meeting strategic objectives, while demonstrating that the institution is meeting accountability expectations and legislative requirements.

It is recognised by O'Neil et al. (1999) that a scorecard approach could be instrumental in the strategic management of universities. If a university can align measures of effectiveness with parallel measures of its core processes and its mission, and can get both measures to a high level, it will be in a good position to maintain excellence amid turbulent change.

2.2.4 Barriers to Performance Management Implementation

Barriers to performance management still exist within universities. It has been argued that performance management represents a threat to teacher professionalism and autonomy (Storey 2002). The processes of performance appraisal may function as to erode academic freedom and independent scholarship. The challenge facing universities is one of adjusting prevailing cultures to secure closer alignment of individual and collective goals.

With the introduction of technology as aids for teaching, the job of an educator has grown in complexity to involve not only disseminating knowledge but to keep oneself up to date with knowledge (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin 1995). The diversity of the profession has been highlighted as a possible problem in measuring performance. Lecturers provide basic teaching to students but must also work to keep their own knowledge up to date through research. Storey (2002) states that instead of using a common PM system, one should be especially dedicated to academic staff to take into account the rich complexities of the job.

2.3 Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)

2.3.1 PMDS development in Ireland

Chapter 10 of *Partnership 2000 for Inclusion, Employment and Competitiveness*, and *Delivering Better Government* set out key principles to modernise the Irish public service. One of these principles was the effective management of performance at all levels. The *Programme for Prosperity and Fairness* also identified this as one of its key objectives.

In 1997, Hay Management Consultants were appointed to assist in the design and development of a performance management system for the civil service. Then in July 1998 the Government decided that consultations should begin with the civil service unions on the implementation of the PMDS. The introduction of PMDS in the Irish Civil Service was finally agreed in 2000 under the *General Council Report 1368*.

The introduction of Upward Feedback on phased basis over three years was agreed in January 2002 under *General Council Report 1398*. Then in 2004, Mercer consultants carried out an evaluation of the PMDS in the civil service. Overall reports were positive although a few areas were highlighted for improvement. 64% said PMDS was being implemented effectively and staff claimed it was a positive experience. The need for linkage with other HR policies was highlighted as a problem. In light of this, *Sustaining Progress* called for an

integrated PMDS model and an agreement on an integrated PMDS model was reached in May 2005 under *General Council Report 1452*.

The emphasis on the development of performance management systems across all public sector areas is included in the current social partnership agreement *Towards 2016*. PMDS can be seen in all Third Level institutions in Ireland.

2.3.2 Evaluation of PMDS for the Civil Service

In 2004, Mercer Human Resource Consulting Limited (Mercer) carried out an evaluation of the PMDS in place in the civil service. The purpose of this evaluation was as follows:

- To give feedback on the implementation and effectiveness of PMDS
- To recommend possible developments in PMDS in terms of addressing and improving individual/team performance and personal development and linking the system to other HR initiatives
- To provide a framework for future evaluation

The evaluation itself encompassed surveys, focus groups, interviews and workshops covering several levels of staff, senior management and trade union officials. The system was evaluated based around the following criteria:

1. Implementation
2. Process
3. Effectiveness
4. Feedback
5. Training and Development
6. Fairness and Consistency
7. Assessment
8. Linkage

In general, staff were positive about the PMDS implementation with 64% favourable responses overall. These positive results were in reference to the process, assessment,

fairness and consistency criteria of the evaluation. Staff did, however, show concern in regards to the linkage, feedback, training, development and effectiveness criteria. In particular when compared with management, lower level staff indicated considerably less positive experiences with the PMDS as regards all the criteria, except effectiveness.

Managers, who hold a key role in implementing and sustaining PMDS, were generally positive about the system. They agreed that the results enabled them to provide useful performance feedback to their staff. They did have some concerns as to how effective the system was in areas such as improving communication with staff and enabling staff to contribute more effectively to the work unit. The level of upward feedback from staff and commitment from staff were challenges addressed by management.

The overall general feedback on PMDS was positive. This report did highlight areas of concern that needed to be addressed. Many of those areas needing further development centred on the effectiveness of the system. More clarity was needed around the assessment and rating system as well as how performance will be measured and under-performance dealt with. The PMDS needed ongoing monitoring to ensure appropriate and consistent implementation of all stages of the process. The PMDS needed to be supported by an atmosphere of honesty. Investment in training needed to be targeted at improving individual performance and the accomplishment of business objectives. The final area highlighted was that linkage of PMDS with other processes was essential to sustaining the system and the system's credibility. This area of "linkage" received the least positive feedback across all levels of staff and as such required major improvements.

Both senior management and trade unions agree that PMDS is a key element and an instrument of business planning and performance. The PMDS needs support at every level to be successful and trust among all participants is essential to the progression of the PMDS. In reviewing the opinions of both senior management and the trade unions Mercer were able to highlight the two major challenges facing the PMDS:

1. Unless managers manage performance, the PMDS becomes a paper exercise in which a large expense is incurred with little gain.

2. PMDS is focused on general service staff and will need to take into account and adapt to the training needs of professional staff.

2.3.3 PMDS for the Institute of Technology Sector

Weston Associates (in association with Terri Morrissey, David Allen, Accomplish) carried out a scoping exercise between February 17th 2004 and March 24th 2004. The aim of this exercise was to ascertain what type of Performance Management and Development System would be appropriate for the IOT sector, and how should one go about designing and successfully implementing such a system? It encompassed a widespread consultation process involving more than 700 employees from all functions and grades. This included focus groups carried out in Institute workshops, meetings with management, trade unions and directors, and a series of working sessions with the National PMDS Project Group.

From this report many potential advantages and disadvantages came to light. The vast majority of people involved in the scoping exercise believed that a well designed and implemented PMDS process would bring significant benefits to employees, the Institutes and the students. If implemented properly, it was believed the PMDS could achieve potential benefits but could also be susceptible to the following disadvantages as detailed in the table below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better training and development - general opportunity for individuals to develop - proper funding for training - able to develop self as an individual and also be a better contributor - gives clearer lines of career progression - improved career planning (although opportunities were seen as being limited) - if done properly, could lead to positive cultural change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impossibility of measuring performance for many aspects of work - use of inappropriate, de-motivating measures - failing to recognise the essential contribution made by teams - eroding the collegial approach to cross functional working - future potential misuse of the information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitate change - sharing and influencing goals and objectives - may lead to a clearer sense of direction - a more inclusive strategic planning process - should increase efficiency, reduce costs - improves level of service and organizational image - improve service to students - promotes growth and transparency of objectives (personal and organizational) - improved operational planning with less fire fighting - getting feedback on performance - how am I doing? - honest and objective feedback could lead to heightened morale - better clarity of role and work organization - more structured approach to workload - know what is expected - fairer, more open process for distribution of work - recognition for work done and other achievements - improved communication - better awareness of other people's roles and priorities - promotes initiative and creativity - people more accountable for what they do 	<p>produced in the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - likely imposition of top down targets - the tread mill effect - lack of transparency and fairness - may limit cooperation and flexibility - lack of funding to deliver agreed training and development plans - lack of agreement on objectives, need for an 'appeals' process - will get embroiled in old, ongoing disputes - may be applied inconsistently - might stifle creativity by becoming rule bound - scape goating of managers if things go wrong - undue pressure may be put on vulnerable groups (e.g. probationers)
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Table I: Potential Advantages and Disadvantages of the PMDS in the IOTs

With resources becoming more constrained, the PMDS aimed to focus training and other resources towards agreed, strategic priorities and common goals, and in particular an inclusive approach to developing services to students. The report also highlighted the large issue of trust and fear. There was a perceived poor history of developing people in the sector. For the PMDS to work, buy-in at the lowest grades in the sector was needed.

From the findings derived from the scoping exercise, an implementation plan was created. As well as detailing timing and training schedules, the report highlighted a number of factors which would be critical to the success of the PMDS system;

- Effective Leadership/Shared Goals/Management Capability
- There needs to be an Inclusive Planning Process in the Institutes
- Clarity of Purpose and Agreement on the Objectives of PMDS
- Training for PMDS
- Resources to Deliver Agreed Training and Development Plans
- Open, Flexible and Fair System

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Definition of Research

Definitions of research can range from very broad to very narrow interpretations. A broad definition might suggest that research is any kind of inquiry that generates knowledge and may include a variety of activities (Hek and Moule, 2006).

While collecting data may be part of the research process, if it is not undertaken in a systematic way, on its own, and in particular with a clear purpose, it will not be seen as research. Research can, therefore, be defined as something people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge and will contain the following characteristics: (Saunders et al. 2009)

- Data are collected systematically
- Data are interpreted systematically
- There is a clear purpose

Hek and Moule (2006) also go on to say that no single definition will be satisfactory. Instead, a working definition is necessary in order to understand research at the basic level.

The importance of the researcher should not be ignored in defining research either. Depoy and Gitlin (1994) acknowledge this role. They define research as ‘multiple, systematic strategies to generate knowledge about human behaviour, human experience, and human environments in which the thought and action process of the researcher are clearly specified so that they are logical, understandable, confirmable, and useful.’

3.2 Purpose of Research

The purpose of research can be categorised into the three general headings of exploratory explanatory and descriptive. The researcher is not confined to one of these principles. The research project may have more than one purpose or as highlighted by Robson (2002), the purpose of the research may change over time.

3.2.1 Exploratory

Exploratory research seeks new insights and assesses issues in a new light. It can be used in instances where the problem is not clearly defined or where there are few or no earlier studies to refer to. Its flexibility and openness has been criticised but Adams and Schvaneveldt (1992) state that the flexibility inherent in exploratory research does not mean absence of direction. Rather, it means that the focus is initially broad and become narrower as the research progresses.

3.2.2 Explanatory

The emphasis here is on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables (Saunders et al. 2009). These relationships should provide the reasons behind these issues providing a clearer and more trustworthy conclusion.

3.2.3 Descriptive

The focus of descriptive research is 'to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations' (Robson, 2002). It is effective in obtaining information that can be used to describe these associations. It is not used to test or verify but, rather, it can evaluate

hypotheses or ascertain cause and effect relationships (Monson and Van Horn, 2008). It is often a precursor to explanatory research or a forerunner to exploratory research.

3.3 Research Philosophy

The philosophy adopted by the researcher will be the basis on which the research design will be built. Two paradigms exist within research; positivism and interpretivism/phenomenology. These two paradigms are characterised by their application in the research process.

3.3.1 Positivism

A number of distinguishing characteristics apply to a positivist approach. Gill and Johnson (2002) described these as:

- It is deductive
- Uses controls to test hypotheses
- Seeks to explain relationships between variables
- It is a highly structured methodology to allow repetition.

This approach holds that the scientific method is the best approach to uncovering the processes by which both physical and human events occur. It also claims that a thing, idea or concept is meaningful only if it can be seen or measured (McNabb, 2002). The strengths and weaknesses of a positivist philosophy can be seen in the following table;

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economical in terms of time and for sampling large numbers. • Easily analysed and clearly demonstrates existing or emerging patterns and trends • Control over valid and reliable tests • Developed to achieve defined theoretical objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vague in terms of understanding the social processes behind the data. • Not holistic enough to interpret social actions • Rigid and inflexible.

Table II Strengths and Weakness of Positivism (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991)

3.3.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand the differences between human beings in our role as social actors. The researcher must enter the social world of the research subjects in order to understand their point of view (Saunders et al, 2009). Hussey and Hussey (1997) state that the phenomenological or naturalistic approach assumes that the social world is continually changing and that the research and researchers are part of this. In contrast to the positivist approach, we can see that interpretivism studies issues and opinions as opposed to facts.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and can change direction even though the process has commenced • Delves beyond the quest for objective facts to understand the reasons, both how and why they 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consuming both in terms of time and resources. • Sometimes difficult to reach an end conclusion and therefore patterns and trends may not emerge. • May not be adopted by policy makers

<p>exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned with interpreting social actions and processes 	<p>as it is perceived to be less credible.</p>
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Table III Strengths and Weaknesses of Interpretivism (Easterby-Smith et al. 1991)

3.4 Research Approach

Research can take two approaches. The researcher may use the deductive approach, in which he develops a theory and hypothesis and designs a research strategy to test the hypothesis. On the other hand the inductive approach may be adopted whereby the researcher collects data and develops a theory as a result of the data analysis.

3.4.1 Deductive Approach

This involves the development of a theory that is subjected to a rigorous test. As such, it is the dominant research approach in the natural sciences, where laws present the basis of explanation, allow the anticipation of phenomena, predict their occurrence and therefore permit them to be controlled (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

3.4.2 Inductive Approach

With this approach the researcher collects data and then generates theories from the analysis of this data. This approach will follow these steps:

1. Specific observations suggest generalisations.
2. Generalisations produce tentative theories.
3. The theory is tested through the formulation of hypotheses.

4. Hypotheses may provide suggestions for additional observations.

It is important to note that theories unsupported by data are meaningless. Research helps support theory and theory gives meaning to research (Kendall, 2007).

Although divisions exist between deduction and induction it is possible to combine the two within the same piece of research. The approach taken will be influenced by the emphasis of the research and the research topic. The researcher must consider the differences between deduction and induction, as detailed below, and decide which is most suitable to his research.

Deduction Approach	Induction Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific principles • Moving from theory to data • Need to explain causal relationships between variables. • Collection of quantitative data • Applying controls to ensure the validity of data • Operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition • Highly structured approach • Researcher is independent of what is being researched • Must select samples of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the meanings humans attach to events • Close understanding of the research context • Collection of qualitative data • Flexible structure to allow changes of research emphasis as the research progresses • Realisation that the researcher is part of the research process • There is less concern with the need to generalise

Table IV Deductive vs Inductive Approach Saunders et al (2009)

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The method(s) used to collect data will depend upon the research topic. The researcher must consider the benefits and limitations associated with each method. The type of information required for the research will also influence the final decision.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaire is a general term to include all techniques of data collection in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order (deVaus 2002). They are one of the most widely used data collection techniques within the survey strategy. This method has disadvantages in that response rates can be low and ambiguous questions cannot be clarified. The design of the questionnaire will affect the response rate and the reliability and validity of the data collected. Response rates, validity and reliability can be maximised by:

- Careful design of individual questions
- Clear and pleasing layout of the questionnaire
- Lucid explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire
- Pilot testing
- Carefully planned execution and administration.

Saunders et al (2009)

3.5.2 Interviews

According to Kahn and Cannel (1957), an interview is a purposeful discussion between two or more people. Interviews can be used to yield exploratory and descriptive data that may or may not generate theory (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010). Saunders et al (2009) classifies interviews as:

- **Structured Interviews:** use questionnaires based on a predetermined and standardised or identical set of questions.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** the researcher will have a list of themes and questions to be covered which may vary from interview to interview.
- **Unstructured Interviews:** these are informal and used to explore in depth a general area in which you are interested. Also referred to as in-depth interviews

3.5.3 Focus Groups

The term focus group is used to refer to those group interviews where the topic is defined clearly and precisely and there is a focus on enabling and recording interactive discussion between participants. It may focus on a particular issue, product, service or topic and encompasses the need for interactive discussion amongst participants (Carson et al, 2001). Participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic being discussed and they are encouraged to discuss and share their points of view without any pressure to reach a consensus (Krueger and Casey, 2000).

3.5.4 Case Study

Robson (2002) defines case study as a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. The case study strategy will be of particular interest to a

researcher who wishes to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research and the processes being enacted (Morris and Wood, 1991). It can be a very worthwhile way of exploring existing theory and a well constructed case study strategy can enable a researcher to challenge an existing theory and also provide a source of new research questions (Saunders et al, 2009).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by a researcher and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data. This means that each stage in the research sequence may be a potential source of ethical problems. It is important to remember that ethical principles are not absolute but must be interpreted in the light of the research context and of other values at stake (Cohen et al, 2000). As part of this research it was necessary to gain approval from an external Ethics Committee. This ensures that the research carried out is free of any ethical dilemmas.

3.7 Research Questions and Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the usefulness of PMDS in the Institutes of Technology in the BMW (border,midlands,west) region. This general aim can be broken down into a number of smaller research objectives. These sub-objectives will provide a balanced assessment of PMDS. They are designed to analyse all the elements of PMDS and provide the researcher with the information needed to develop valuable conclusions. These include:

- Describe and explain PMDS used in higher education institutions.
- Identify what PMDS seeks to achieve.
- Examine how it benefits employers.
- Investigate how it promotes employee professional development.
- Evaluate other aspects of the system and see if it can be improved.

Ensuring that a defined relationship exists between the research question, objectives and primary research conducted is critical to the success of this paper.

3.8 The Researcher's philosophy

The research was predominately interpretive in nature as opposed to a positivist approach. Positivism is when there is only one truth whereas interpretivism accepts that there are many truths. The subject matter of the usefulness of the PMDS in IOTs could possibly have many truths. In undertaking this research, it was necessary that the researcher understand the differences between humans in our role as social actors. The PMDS incorporates all staff members from lecturers to managers. The relationship between these groups is an important element of how the PMDS functions. The researcher was concerned with understanding human perceptions and behaviours regarding the PMDS from the participants own frame of reference. An interpretive approach was, overall, most suited for this research. It is important to note that there is also an element of positivism within the research. The questionnaire will produce quantitative data, as opposed to the qualitative data derived from the interviews, which is highly specific and precise.

3.9 The Purpose of the Research Undertaken

The purpose of the research undertaken was both exploratory and descriptive in nature. From adopting a combination of both of these concepts the researcher was able to delve deeper into the subject matter and draw collective conclusions from the different data collected. From the issues highlighted in the exploratory stages, the researcher was able to refine research objectives and proceed to describe different aspects and outcomes of the PMDS.

3.10 The Researcher's Approach

The researcher adopted an inductive approach in conducting this research. This synchronised the views of various experts in this area and allow a comparison and contrast of these view to be made. As opinions and views were gathered, this data could then be used to develop a theory. Interviews carried out at the IOTs provided qualitative data. The research involved collecting these opinions and building a theory from the data collected. Although an inductive approach is time consuming compared to a deductive approach, it is necessary to generate new opinions. This allows for a wider view on the topic and will allow the researcher to analyse these views.

3.11 Primary and Secondary Data

The researcher used a multi-method approach analysing secondary data and primary data. The research required a structured content analysis of performance management in the public sector with emphasis on higher education and PMDS. An in depth review of literature on the subject area was carried out providing a strong base on which to build further research. There was a broad range of literature available to the researcher but literature on the PMDS itself proved limited.

In conducting primary research, the researcher generated both qualitative and quantitative data. By combining the two methods the researcher was able to draw on the benefits of each method while minimising their individual weaknesses. Quantitative methods ensure high levels of reliability of data gathered and qualitative methods present the opportunity to collect more in-depth knowledge.

3.12 Sampling

This research was conducted in the BMW region and as such the following IOTs were analysed:

- Letterkenny IT
- Sligo IT
- Athlone IT
- Galway-Mayo IT
- Dundalk IT

This is all of the IOTs in the BMW region and as such the whole population was surveyed as a census. This increased the validity and generalisability of the research findings.

3.13 Data Collection Tools utilised

The researcher chose to use both interviews and questionnaires. It would have been unsuitable to use a focus group due to the geographic separation of the colleges and a case study approach would not have been feasible. A focus group within one institute could have proved useful but was unsuitable because of the time constraints for carrying out primary research (May/June). This is the busiest time of year for lecturers and scheduling several for one time slot would have proved impossible. The results from case studies can also prove to be bias as participants often act differently in the presence of an observer. The methods selected provided both qualitative and quantitative data enhancing the validity of the findings. Considering the type of information the researcher sought, as well as the time and financial constraints placed upon him, this approach was the most suitable.

Interviews were carried out with three HR managers, two HODs and a Head of School. The HR manager oversees the process and function of PMDS in their relative institutions. They were able to give broad views on the system and identify benefits and drawbacks on a wider scale. The heads of departments/school, as those who carry out reviews, were able to give personal insight on the process and feedback on its use within their department. The use of

interviews provided invaluable insight into how the PMDS was implemented and the benefits and problems that have arisen since its introduction. Interviews provide advantages in that they;

- Allow the opportunity to probe answers
- Ensure the key people have been consulted
- Increase validity of results

Questionnaires were sent to fifty lecturers at random from the IOTs selected. These questionnaires provided quantitative data on the usefulness of the PMDS to academic staff. Scale questions were used throughout the questionnaire in order to collect a more in depth view of opinions and beliefs. The Likert style rating scale was used whereby the respondent is asked how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement on a five point scale. An open question finished the survey allowing lecturers the opportunity to comment further on the PMDS. As well as increasing the validity of the findings, the questionnaires were essential to gain the perceptions of those at the base level of the PMDS. Conducting research across the three staff levels among the IOTs increased the generalisability of the results. Although the response rate was slightly low at 30%, research has revealed that a low response rate does not necessarily indicate that the results are inaccurate. These studies have shown that the substantive conclusions of a study remain unaltered even with an increase in response rate (Yang & Miller, 2008).

3.14 Limitations/ Barriers

The limitations faced by the researcher were access to information, time and money. The research was carried out by a sole researcher which limited the extent to which research could be carried out. The time to complete the study was also limited with the primary research being carried out post exams (24th May) and a final deadline of 31st July 2010. Questionnaires were carried out via an online survey website to avoid the costs of printing

and postage. The response rate may have proved higher if the researcher had the available funds to offer a monetary incentive.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Findings

4.1 Introduction

The primary research conducted through the IOTs comprised six interviews, three of which were carried out with a Human Resource Manager, two with a Head of Department (HOD) and one with a Head of School, and the distribution of questionnaires to a random sample of 50 lecturers within the institutes. The findings from this research are grouped under each research objective. These objectives were set out in chapter 1 and the research was conducted in accordance with these targets.

The response rate to the questionnaires was 30%. The questions asked used the Likert style rating scale whereby the respondent was asked how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement on a five point scale. (strongly disagree=1.....strongly agree=5). A summary of the questionnaire and responses are included in Appendix 1.

4.2 Describe and explain PMDS used in higher education institutions.

4.2.1 The Process

The PMDS has two components in that it is a performance management system and it is also used in the development of lecturers. The PMDS offers a systematic approach to ensuring that the strategy of the college is reflected in the day to day work of lecturers. It emerged from the interviews that the PMDS, as implemented, seems more focused on the development of lecturers rather than the management of their performance.

From analysis of the literature and the guidelines of several colleges I outlined the PMDS process in chapter 1 and chapter 2. The primary research conducted compliments the literature reviewed. Reviews are conducted by management grades for and in collaboration with sub-ordinate staff. Reviews are carried out by the staff member in the management position above you. Each lecturer, or reviewee, is given a personal assessment form to fill out before the interview will take place. The manager, or in this case the HOD, meets with staff individually, reviews the completed form, assesses performance over the previous year and objectives for the following year are negotiated. Consideration is also given to the personal development and training needs of the staff member. A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is created from these objectives. The process also incorporates a Team Development Plan (TDP) stage where department wide strategic goals are set down.

An important element of the PMDS is that the objectives set out are discussed and agreed by both the lecturer and the manager. It has been argued that PM represents a threat to teacher professionalism and autonomy (Storey 2002). The PMDS, however, is a process of open negotiation between the two parties so the lecturer's academic independence is not impeded. Lecturers, instead, receives feedback and agrees targets as opposed to having targets placed upon them.

4.2.2 Difficulties in the Process

It was discovered that several aspects of the PMDS outlined in the original planning process have not always been completed. Problems in the administration of the process were identified by the primary research. A major problem faced by the reviewers (HODs) is that their workload and other responsibilities do not allow adequate free time to carry out the PMDS process thoroughly. The PMDS is an annual review but several departments were unable to complete the process due to the time constraints. The flat management structure of the departments mean that HODs have to carry out many reviews each year. In some instances a HOD may have up to 30 reviews to carry out, each of which may take 3hours to complete between preparing for the review, conducting the meeting and compiling the post

review file and development needs to be passed on to the HR department. This is in addition to the department wide TDP discussions which need to take place beforehand. This problem was highlighted in interviews with management and also in the survey of lecturers.

The PMDS Process: Adequate time and resources were provided within my department to conduct the PMDS process

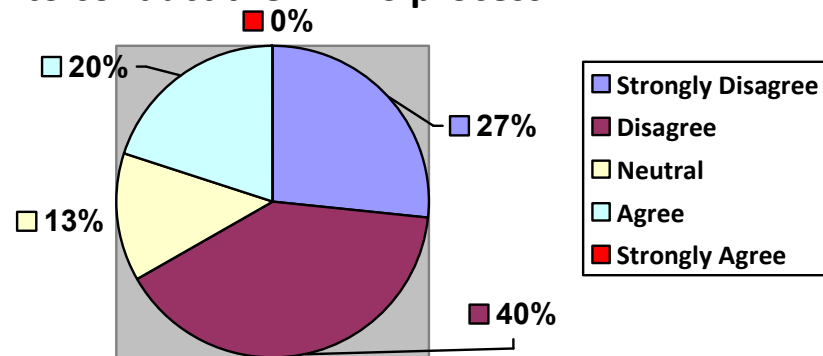


Figure 3 Time and Resources dedicated to the PMDS process

Scheduling difficulties also hindered the administration of the process. The beginning and end of each semester is regarded as too busy for the review meetings to take place. Once the summer exams are completed time opens up for lecturers but the HODs interviewed pointed out that it is a very busy time of year for them. It was indicated that the only satisfactory time centred on a two week slot in the middle of each semester. The PMDS process needs to be organised efficiently and effectively with appropriate time and resources dedicated towards it. It is clear from this research (Fig. 3) that those surveyed feel this is not the case within their departments.

The PMDS form itself came under criticism. Lecturers have complained that the form contains too many questions which overlap and several questions are not relative to their particular role.

4.3 Identify what PMDS seeks to achieve.

4.3.1 The Independent role of lecturers

It is agreed that a PM system is needed in the education sector. Lecturers, in their role, operate in an independent manner and have a lot of autonomy in comparison to other jobs. They design their own courses and set their own exams with little influence from management. The job was described in one instance as like ‘independent contractors.’ It was found that lecturers may give primary allegiance to their subject area. No one is checking what they are teaching on a day to day basis. The PMDS provides a periodic discussion on what they are teaching, what the direction of the department is and what they are doing to ensure their skills are up to date that and they are teaching with up to date subject materials.

4.3.2 Accountability

Accountability is an issue at the forefront for the Irish government. In the current economic climate, emphasis is placed on efficiency and value for money within the public service. One interviewee stressed that the ‘public purse cannot take the current strain’. The need to maximise resources will become even more important for the government in the future and the PMDS should be used to help ensure lecturers and management are performing to an acceptable standard. A PM system can go some way to satisfying the public demand that their taxes are being put to good use.

4.3.3 Primary objectives of the PMDS

From discussions with HR managers I derived that the PMDS has two over-arching objectives. The first objective is to ensure that the strategy of the institute is disseminated down through the departments to all staff. Each member of staff should know their own role. The second objective is to ensure that staff are adequately skilled to carry out these roles.

At the basic level, the PMDS provides a formal process for a meeting to take place between the lecturer and the HOD each year. This meeting is used to analyse the lecturer's performance, discuss their views on their job and identify any training and development requirements. Through this formal discussion lecturers can also receive recognition for work well done. The PMDS has the potential to improve communication and morale within the IOTs.

4.4 Examine how it benefits managers.

4.4.1 Training

The interviews carried out highlighted the areas where the PMDS benefits the organisation and also aids the performance of managers. For management to benefit from the process they first need to be adequately trained to carry out the reviews. It was agreed by all those interviewed that the basic training provided was adequate. It was also recognised that managers could only improve their reviewer skills through active participation and experience. Through experience comes greater knowledge and understanding. It was suggested that more practical examples, such as anonymous video clips of reviews, would have improved the training experience.

4.4.2 Communication

The PMDS offers managers the opportunity to formally sit down with their staff once each year to discuss their performance and needs. Those interviewed saw it as another communication tool they can utilise to improve relations with staff. The process allows management to formally recognise the contributions staff have made over the previous year. Staff also have the regular opportunity to meet management and share their views and concerns.

The PMDS process extracts information on how employees feel in their job. Managers can use this information to gain an overview of attitudes and morale within their department and identify problem areas that otherwise would go unnoticed. As highlighted by a HR manager the number of disputes between staff and managers can decrease due to the fact that managers discuss the feelings of staff members on a periodic basis.

4.4.3 Development of staff

As part of the PMDS process the training and development needs of lecturers can be identified. This allows management to organise and manage the training budget. As well as identifying the needs of the individual the PMDS can be used to identify the needs of collective groups. This enables management to allocate resources accordingly and prioritise training where necessary.

4.4.4 Aligning strategy

As well as aligning the goals of lecturers with those of the institute managers can use the PMDS to align the goals of lecturers with those of the department. There were mixed views among managers in regards to this point. Some found that the PMDS was unsuccessful in this regard while others claimed it had limited success. This viewpoint is shared in the response from lecturers detailed in the next section.

The TDP aspect of the PMDS was criticised in that it had limited success. It proved a duplication of planning activities that were already being carried out within the department. It was suggested that the TDP should be integrated into the strategic planning activities of the department rather than be conducted as a separate activity involving an external facilitator.

4.5 Investigate how it promotes employee professional development.

4.5.1 Training

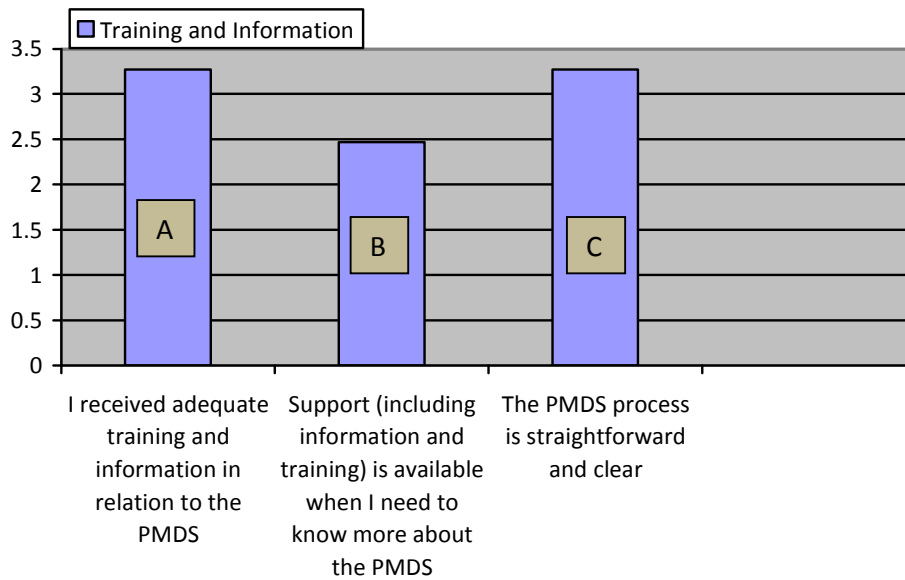


Figure 4 Training and information

Just as managers received training for the PMDS, staff must also receive such training in order to be able to carry out the process successfully. Adequate training and support is crucial for the success of a PM system. The above table clearly shows that, on average, respondents received adequate initial training and had a good general understanding of the

system. The average ratings of column A and C were both 3.27. The questionnaires did highlight that subsequent support and information is limited, receiving an average rating of 2.47 (Column B).

4.5.2 Development

The strongest element of PMDS appears to be the training and development of lecturers. It gives lecturers a structured opportunity to discuss their training needs and helps management to organise their training plans and budgets. It is important, however, that when the needs of the lecturers are raised that the institute responds to these needs. It has in some cases de-motivated staff when their requests are denied. In the current economic climate institutes must endeavour to best allocate resources in a fair and equitable manner, providing explanations when prioritisation is required, particularly in the areas of staff training and development otherwise morale will suffer.

4.5.3 Communication

The PMDS also ensures that new lecturers are given the opportunity to sit down with their HOD and discuss their role and needs. The independent role of the lecturer can be daunting for a new recruit and such a meeting with their manager can help ease them into the system. It was also highlighted that the PMDS forces managers, who previously would have avoided discussions with certain staff members, to sit down with their staff and identify their feelings and needs within the job. Communication is paramount to a successful manager-subordinate relationship and the PMDS ensures that all employees are given a chance to voice their concerns and opinions.

4.5.4 Performance

An effective PM system should improve the performance of staff. Through improved communication with management staff motivation should increase and consequently productivity. With regard to improved communication and motivation, many respondents retained a neutral position. The PMDS may not have excelled in these areas but the potential for success in lecturer performance exists. From the table below we can see that in relation to improvements in communication, 53% of respondents gave a 'neutral' response, resulting in an overall average rating of 2.6 (Column A). Again respondents believed the feedback received from their HOD during the PMDS process provided some benefit. 47% of respondents gave a 'neutral response' to this statement but the average rating was 2.8 (Column B). Respondents were more critical of the motivational aspects of PMDS. 47% of respondents disagreed and the statement received an average rating of only 2.33 (Column C). It's clear that the PMDS has not been successful in motivating lecturers to perform better.

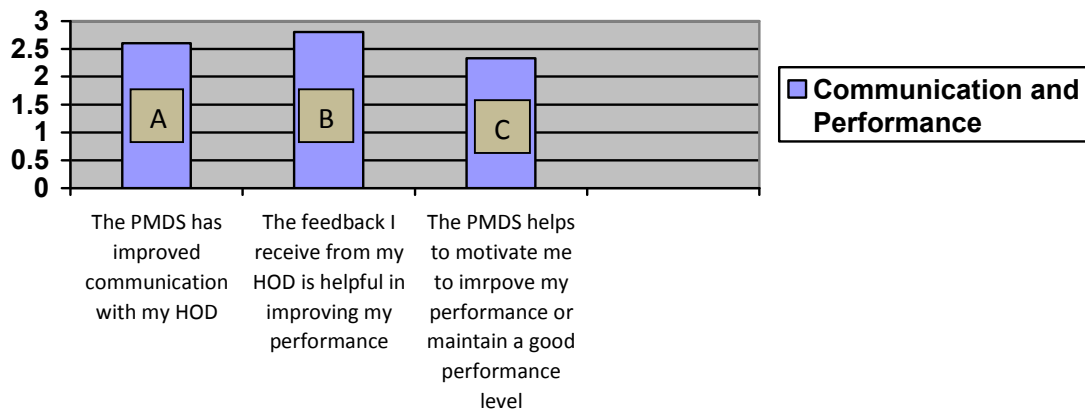


Figure 5 Communication and Performance

4.5.5 Aligning Strategy

One of the objectives of PMDS is to align the goals of the individual with those of the department and institute as a whole. The PMDS has not been successful in achieving this. The view of lecturers on this subject is clearly shown in the pie-chart below. It is significant that none of the respondents agreed with this statement put before them in the questionnaire. 27% of respondents remained neutral while the remaining 73% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Strategy: The PMDS has given me a better understanding of my role in relation to the strategy of my department and the institute as a whole

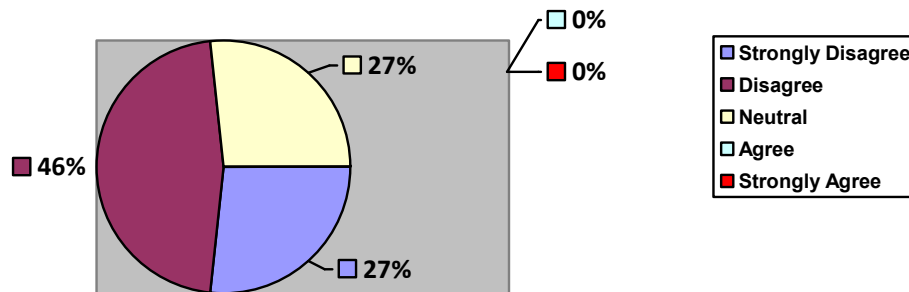


Figure 6 Strategy alignment

4.6 Evaluate other aspects of the system and identify areas for future improvement.

4.6.1 Openness and Fairness

It emerged from all the interviews and questionnaires that the PMDS is an open and fair process. This is one of the characteristics required by a successful PM system laid down by (Aguinis) 2007. At its inception there were concerns as to what objectives lecturers would

be assessed against. This concern has proved a problem. 47% of respondents agreed that their performance was assessed against objectives agreed with their HOD. The same percentage again agreed that they were given the opportunity to highlight any issues they had prior to their interview.

4.6.2 Assessing lecturer performance

From my primary research it was highlighted, as in the literature, that a particular problem exists in any PM system in education. That is, the problem of assessing the performance of a lecturer. This problem was highlighted in every interview. It was also noted that the PMDS does not address this problem. The PMDS, as implemented, tends to place more emphasis on the development of the lecturer. Any effort at measuring lecturer performance would need to be a balanced approach. The danger exists that in setting certain goals the lecturer may work towards the specific goals at the expense of other areas of their job e.g. if a key performance indicator (KPI) of average mark per student was set down it may encourage grade inflation. Comparisons between lecturers would also prove difficult. For example, each lecturer delivers their lectures in different ways, each reflecting their own personality. Availability to students is also a service to be associated with a good lecturer but the problem arises as to how one measures this.

4.6.3 Performance Related Pay, Promotion and Disciplinary

Procedures

The PMDS is not related to promotion, performance related pay or disciplinary procedures. Conflicting opinions arose within the research in this regard. Half of those interviewed are in favour of it while half are against. It has been suggested that by keeping the system free of these components it has made lecturers more open to the process. It could be argued that performance related pay can be beneficial but problems with implementation could arise

unless the measurement system is accepted by everybody. The difficulty in setting performance measures for lecturers creates a major barrier to such an approach. Cooper (2000) described the introduction performance related pay in secondary schools in England as a 'massive failure.' It also came to light that the current academic contract would need to be revised to facilitate this approach.

The above issue was contrasted in other interviews. The opinion was that the PMDS cannot function unless it has 'teeth' i.e. it is linked in some form to pay, promotion and disciplinary procedures. The current process is completely dependent on the positive approach of both parties. For many people, there is no incentive to actively partake in the process. It is believed that by introducing the 'carrot and stick' to the process it would give it greater meaning and result in a more active approach among staff. The verdict in one interview was that the 'benefits of the PMDS do not outweigh the costs.'

In relation to incorporation of the PMDS in the promotion process, the promotional structure within the institutes gives rise to problems. Lecturers can be promoted to a non management level of Senior Lecturer 1 (SL1) or the next step; HOD. Could information assessing the performance of a lecturer be used in deciding if they would make a good manager? A problem could also arise if these posts were open to public competition where prospective candidates may not all have participated in the PMDS previously.

Several managers interviewed highlighted that the PMDS lacks any method of managing under-performance or rewarding high performance. Lecturers can receive recognition for the work done from their HOD but do not receive any tangible rewards. Similarly a HOD can only encourage change in the practices of under performing lecturers as part of the review. As highlighted by one interviewee, the HOD may recommend an under performing lecturer attend a training course but that lecturer is not obliged to enhance their skill set. It can prove de-motivating for lecturers who do work hard and make those efforts to improve their skill sets that they are not being rewarded.

4.6.4 Feedback

Feedback is not incorporated into the process. The views of the students, the customers, are not considered nor do lecturers provide formal feedback on how they are being managed. The PMDS review does provide one question where the lecturer can provide limited feedback but the research has shown that this does not occur. It was suggested that the PMDS should incorporate external information such as feedback from students and that this would facilitate a more meaningful discussion.

4.6.5 Role of the HR Department

The role of the Human Resource (HR) Department in the PMDS process is limited. The only information passed onto the HR department is that the review has taken place and information on the development and training requirements of staff. The HR department is quite removed from the process. Interviews with HR managers showed that the PMDS process could be very useful to the HR department. It would allow HR managers to assess morale among staff and help them maintain a better overview of all the staff of the institute. From an organisational perspective the information needs to be correlated centrally and analysed for the PMDS to be of benefit at an institute wide level.

4.6.6 Overall

The overall response of those interviewed is that the PMDS has been successful in some areas but is lacking in several key aspects as outlined previously. The research has shown that this is the general view of managers and lecturers alike. Other failings in certain circumstances were due to factors outside the design of the PMDS i.e. the attitudes of the participants. The opinions of those lecturers surveyed are set out in the pie chart below (Fig 7). It can be seen that only 20% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement put to them.

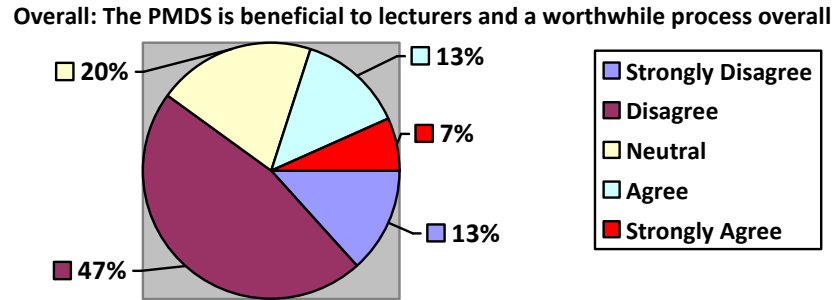


Figure 7 Overall opinion

4.7 External Factors

4.7.1 Attitude

The PMDS in the education sector is not unlike other sectors in that its success depends primarily on the attitude of participating workers and managers. If approached positively and enthusiastically the process can be rewarding to both employees and employers. If those involved treat it as 'chore' it can fall into a paper exercise with no real benefits. This is a view shared among all those interviewed. There seems to be areas where it is managed positively and it is a worthwhile process but also areas where neither the manager nor lecturer believe in the process and as a result the PMDS fails to produce any benefits. Neither the employer nor employee can achieve any of the benefits associated with the PMDS unless both parties buy in to the process itself. The emphasis is firstly on management to be pro-active towards the system. Attitude is interpreted from the top down and those lower level employees will respond to the attitudes of their superiors. This culture must emanate from the head of the institute down through the ranks. There have been failures among the institutes in this regard. One respondent highlighted that their HOD had forgotten and re-scheduled their meeting so many times that the process had lost all its relevance.

4.7.2 Industrial Relations Climate

Recent unilateral pay cuts and levies couple with a recruitment and promotions embargo has damaged industrial relations in the public sector. The damage is apparent in the higher education sector. TUI members will not now cooperate with the PMDS process. Union support will be necessary for the system to once again become operational. This issue of non cooperation is of course not confined to TUI members but spans across the public service. It has been highlighted that some of the problems within the PMDS may be overcome through ongoing experience. In discussions with managers it was agreed that with any new system the more reviews you carry out the better at it you will become. Through time the process would become more efficient and effective but current union opposition is now the principal obstacle.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 The need for a PM system within IOTs

It is clear from the relevant literature and my specific research among IOT lecturers and management that there is a definite need for PM in the IOTs and the higher education sector. Lecturers fundamentally operate independently. They set their own exams and design their own courses. The level of participation from management is minimal. There was no system of periodic review leaving lecturers to act in whatever way they deemed appropriate. A certain level of monitoring and review is required to ensure that lecturers are performing to generally accepted standards.

A PM system would not only ensure lecturers are working to expected standards and in unison with the goals of the institute but would also support them in delivering a high quality service to students. An effective PM system would encourage, motivate and help lecturers improve their skill set. The PMDS would provide management with a useful framework for improving communication with staff and identifying their training needs.

Performance and accountability are issues that have attracted significant public interest over recent years. With government expenditure cutbacks the emphasis on efficiency has increased. The government and the public, now more than ever, are demanding that their money is spent wisely with a much greater emphasis on accountability within public services. A PM system can go some way to ensuring this. It can be used to strengthen internal administration and external political accountability. Public unrest in the current economic climate must be addressed. With the introduction of fees for higher education under renewed debate, accountability and performance will take centre stage. If the public

are to be expected to pay fees then the pressure on colleges in Ireland to ensure lecturers are performing well will increase dramatically.

The primary objectives of the PMDS within the IOTs are to align the commitments and direction of lecturers with those of the institute and ensure lecturers are adequately skilled to perform their duties. The introduction of the PMDS was the first step in addressing the issues described above. I refer to it as the first step because despite its advantages and successes the system itself is lacking in several aspects.

5.1.2 The advantages of the PMDS

The PMDS concept brought a PM system formally into the management and service delivery of the higher education sector in Ireland. It had proved successful in the civil service and has had some success in higher education. Its major success has been in the development of lecturers. The PMDS process identifies the training needs of lecturers. It allows lecturers the opportunity to highlight areas they wish to improve on. It also aids managers in organising training budgets and identifying collective needs as well as individual ones.

The PMDS has also served to improve communication between staff and management. At the basic level it provides for a formal discussion between the two parties. In situations where managers and particular staff rarely interact, the PMDS process provides for an obligatory meeting to take place addressing this interaction deficit. This formal periodic review allows staff to discuss their performance and issues they have with their particular role.

The PMDS can also improve the performance of those under review. The process gives lecturers the opportunity to receive feedback on their performance. They can receive recognition for a job well done. Managers can also use the process to improve the performance of their staff. Lecturers can receive advice and recommendations from their HOD on how to improve their performance.

5.1.3 The Disadvantages of the PMDS

As mentioned above the PMDS process identifies the training needs of the lecturers reviewed. This process can aid lecturers but there is also a possible negative outcome. In the current economic climate cutbacks in funding have occurred across the Public Sector. IOTs like many others are now operating on lower funding and resources for the training and development of staff are limited. Requests for training may not be feasible in some cases. The resources may be unavailable or may be prioritised to other areas. This can have a major negative effect on morale and motivation.

The PMDS can be useful in improving the performance of lecturers, primarily through training and development, but the research showed that in regards to motivating employees the system is unsuccessful. The process only allows for a verbal recognition of the work done and any recommendation for improvement is only advisory. There seems to be no major motivating factors for lecturers to participate pro-actively in the process. The process itself lacks any tangible methods of rewarding staff or methods of managing under-performance. Managers can only encourage changes in the practices of those under reviews.

One of the main objectives of the PMDS is to align the strategy of the college with the departments and the lecturers. This goal should be successful in all areas but the research has shown that this is not the case. The process allows management to align the goals of the lecturers with that of the department in regards to allocating resources to training in areas the department wishes but in general the PMDS process does not disseminate the strategy to lecturers effectively.

5.1.4 Barriers to performance management in the IOTs

Several barriers to the effective implementation of the PMDS currently exist in the IOTs. The PMDS is a system dominated by the attitudes towards it and the perceptions surrounding it. As well as overcoming these obstacles the PMDS also has the difficult task of assessing lecturer performance.

The PMDS has potential benefits but some of these benefits are conditional on the active participation and positive attitude of those involved. In circumstances where the process is approached positively by the HOD and the lecturer the process can prove effective. This is not always the case. The PMDS can sometimes be approached as a 'paper exercise' with minimal discussion between manager and employee. Where the process is approached as such no real benefits can emerge. A poor attitude towards the process can be with the manager, the lecturer, or both. Leadership must be shown from the top down and a positive approach to the PMDS cannot be expected of staff if it is not reflected in management.

Employees' attitudes are often influenced by their working environment and general industrial relations harmony. Currently in the higher education sector the industrial relations climate is not good. Due to Union opposition at this point in time the PMDS has been put on hold. Members of the TUI will no longer participate in the process. The PMDS process would improve through experience and time but currently it is at a stand still. The future of the PMDS will require the support of teacher unions.

A major problem for any PM system in higher education is that of assessing the performance of a lecturer. The role of a lecturer is particular to their subject area and there are several aspects to their performance. For a PM system to be effective it will need to address this issue. The PMDS, in its present format, does not do so. The PMDS does not include any standard measures to which the performance of a lecturer can be assessed. The present model does not provide for feedback from students who are the customers for IOTs. There needs to be stronger direction and support from the PMDS in managing under-performance.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 More information available to the Human Resource

Department

As part of the current process the only information passed on to the HR department is that the review itself took place and the training and development requirements of those reviewed. As such, the HR department plays a limited role in the PMDS process. It acts as an overview body ensuring the administration of the process. The HR department could be much more involved in the PMDS. The information attained as part of the review meeting could benefit the institute as a whole. As a part of HR functions they endeavour to ensure morale is positive among staff. If this basic requirement is achieved then productivity and communication will also improve. The combined views of management and staff, as derived from the PMDS process could be analysed centrally. One of the keys to successful management is access to appropriate information on a timely basis. This information would give the HR department a better overview of the opinions and feelings among staff. They, in turn, could take appropriate measures to address matters of concern which otherwise could be overlooked. The PMDS could be used at the higher management level for more than managing training budgets and has the potential to better aid the HR manager in their job.

5.2.2 Re-Design the administration of the Process

The PMDS was designed as a yearly review process but since its inception problems have arisen in the organisation and administration of the process. Currently, HODs do not have the time and resources available to them to carry out the PMDS process thoroughly and effectively. As seen in chapter 4 the time the process takes up is considerable and when aggregated with the managers other duties the stress becomes apparent. A revision of the process itself may be necessary to make it more feasible for HODs to carry out the reviews

thoroughly. The PMDS cycle could possibly be extended to two years allowing reviewers the time to manage the process effectively. If the PMDS was to be kept to a yearly cycle it would be desirable to incorporate additional reviewers. This would prove difficult in the current management structure within departments but this managerial role could possibly be added to the duties of the SL1.

As well as the administration of the PMDS the performance review form needs to be reviewed. The form is standardised across staff and departments. Repetition appears in several questions while others bear little or no relevance to the lecturer's particular role. It could prove more effective if each department were allowed to adjust certain parts of their own review forms to suit their own staff. This would not involve an overhaul of the current format but rather a modification to make it more relevant to the particular staff members under review.

It was also found, as part of this research, that the TDP aspect of the PMDS process proved surplus to requirements within certain departments, achieving limited success. Departments already have processes in place for managing their own strategy and developing business plans. Instead of having a separate external TDP process, it could prove more beneficial to incorporate it into the processes already in place within the department. This could save time and money and by keeping this function internal staff may feel more involved and attain a better understanding of their role in terms of the overall strategy of the department and college, as the PMDS aims to do.

5.2.3 Link in some form to performance related pay and the promotion process

One of the outcomes from this research was that there was a lack of motivation for lecturers to participate pro-actively in the PMDS process. The system itself lacked any method of rewarding those who performed well or addressing under-performance. As a result the process only operated effectively for those who approached it with a positive attitude. The only reward for these employees is verbal recognition of a job well done. By

linking the PMDS in some way to pay and promotion it could cause a shift in the approach by many lecturers. It would provide tangible rewards encouraging a more active approach among lecturers. The system also requires the capability to manage under-performance. Managers could use the system to address weaknesses among staff. This would improve the performance of many employees and the benefits would filter through to the students improving the services provided by IOTs.

A change of this magnitude would require revision of the academic contract as well as a change of culture within the higher education sector. To implement such a change effectively several problems must be addressed. In relation to promotion for lecturers it must be acknowledged that the characteristics of a good lecturer are not necessarily the characteristics of a good manager. There is also the issue of public competition to be considered and how comparisons between internal and external candidates would be made. The final problem is one that exists for any PM system linked to pay and promotion, that is a tendency for employees to focus on those measures against which these rewards are related. A balanced measurement approach, as well as extensive discussions with lecturers, would be essential to the success of such a PM system within the IOTs. The co-operation of both the IOTs and staff would ensure that the system be both fair and equitable.

5.2.4 A Balanced Measurement Approach

For the PMDS to be linked to pay or promotion then it would need a fair set of measures against which a lecturer's performance would be assessed. Even if this is not the case the PMDS could still benefit from incorporating several additional factors into the process. A balanced measurement approach would measure a lecturer's performance based on several factors ranging from student grades to time available to students and the standard of their research. Extra factors, such as time promoting their subjects and the institute itself to the prospective students, could also be weighed into their performance rating. All aspects of the services provided by a lecturer should be analysed and reviewed.

Another deficit of the PMDS process is feedback. Managers give their thoughts and opinions on the lecturer's performance but feedback can work both downwards and upwards. Many PM systems, such as the PMDS in the civil service, incorporate upward feedback as part of the process. Lecturers would, as part of the process, give feedback to their HODs on how they are being managed.

Students currently have the option to provide feedback at the end of each year. This process is separate from the PMDS. While students are not employees and therefore are not part of the business organisation, they are in effect customers of the service and the benefits of feedback from these stakeholders should be considered. If this feedback cannot be incorporated into the PMDS process then it should possibly be ancillary to it. This information should be included in attaining a fair representation of lecturer performance. This would give another measurement of the performance of lecturers and the final service they are providing to students. An average mark would need to be used ignoring those few students who may be very critical or overly positive due to personal relationships with the lecturer. This feedback could be used, to some extent, as one of the measures in assessing lecturer performance. In essence, the PMDS could incorporate a 360 degree review with feedback from several sources and directions being utilised.

5.3 Areas for Further Research

This research examined the IOTs in the BMW region. This gives us a limited view of the PMDS process in general as the PMDS is used in all the IOTs in Ireland as well as other universities and colleges in the higher education sector. Research examining the PMDS across the higher education sector would give a better overall picture of its success in Ireland. Other issues and problems could also come to light from more extensive research.

A case study analysis of one or several IOTs/universities could provide rich information on the PMDS. Such analysis would provide an in depth evaluation of the PMDS process in action and gather extensive views and opinions among management and staff.

It was highlighted among the literature and discussed in interviews that a different form of PM system could prove more beneficial in higher education. Research could be conducted into the possibility of indentifying KPIs for lecturers or adapting a BSC approach. Comparisons could also be made against PM systems from other countries. By analysing several options and identifying their possible strengths if applied to IOTs and universities the PMDS could be modified to better suit the role of the lecturers in the IOTs and indeed the wider higher education sector.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. Training and Information							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
1.1 I received adequate training and information in relation to the PMDS.	0.0% (0)	33.3% (5)	13.3% (2)	46.7% (7)	6.7% (1)	3.27	15
1.2 Support (including information and training) is available when I need to know more about the PMDS.	20.0% (3)	33.3% (5)	26.7% (4)	20.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	2.47	15
1.3 The PMDS process is straightforward and clear.	0.0% (0)	26.7% (4)	26.7% (4)	40.0% (6)	6.7% (1)	3.27	15

2. The PMDS Process							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
2.1 Adequate time and resources were provided within my Department to conduct the PMDS process.	26.7% (4)	40.0% (6)	13.3% (2)	20.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	2.27	15
2.2 My performance is assessed against the objectives agreed with my head of department.	13.3% (2)	13.3% (2)	20.0% (3)	46.7% (7)	6.7% (1)	3.20	15
2.3 I was given the opportunity to highlight any particular issues I had during the year before my interview.	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	50.0% (7)	7.1% (1)	3.36	14

3. Communication							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
3.1 My head of department listens to me during my performance reviews and considers my ideas going forward.	6.7% (1)	13.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	73.3% (11)	6.7% (1)	3.60	15
3.2 The PMDS has improved communication with my head of department.	6.7% (1)	33.3% (5)	53.3% (8)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.60	15
3.3 The feedback I receive from my head of department is helpful in improving my performance.	13.3% (2)	20.0% (3)	46.7% (7)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)	2.80	15

4. Performance							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The PMDS helps to motivate me to improve my performance or to maintain a good performance level.	13.3% (2)	46.7% (7)	33.3% (5)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.33	15

5. Upward Feedback							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Upward feedback has been implemented in my department as part of PMDS.	60.0% (9)	13.3% (2)	20.0% (3)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.73	15

6. Strategy							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The PMDS has given me a better understanding of my role in relation to the strategy of my department and the college as whole.	26.7% (4)	46.7% (7)	26.7% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2.00	15

7. Overall							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
PMDS is beneficial to lecturers and a worthwhile process overall.	13.3% (2)	46.7% (7)	20.0% (3)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)	2.53	15

8. If you have any further comments on the PMDS, please include them below.

	answered question	2
	skipped question	13
1. The reason that I strongly disagree is that my HOD has forgotten/rescheduled my PMDS so many times that it has lost its relevance. The format is useless as there are no resources provides to address issues		Mon, Apr 26, 2010 9:03 AM
2. I think PMDS can be very effective in empowering staff. Unfortunately, due to time and resource constraints, it's not always possible to conduct PMDS regularly with staff.		Thu, Apr 22, 2010 10:26 AM

Appendix 2: Interviews

The six interviews conducted were recorded and are stored electronically in mp3 format. Detailed below are the semi-structured interview schedules used.

Interview-HR Manager

Objectives

1. What are the objectives of the PMDS?
2. Is it a useful management tool?

Benefits

3. Is it successful in aligning the goals of the departments and individuals to those of the college? Do you think a threat to academic freedom exists?
4. In light of cut-backs in public expenditure do you think it is feasible to continue the PMDS? Will the benefits outweigh the costs (time and money)?
5. Has the PMDS been linked to other HR processes? e.g. is it used in managing training budgets etc....
6. Has the current management of PMDS by each department been successful?
7. Has feedback on the system been positive?

Challenges

8. What are the challenges/weaknesses of the PMDS?
9. What are your thoughts on union involvement in the PMDS and the implications of this going forward?
10. Would you agree that a major challenge to a performance management system is the difficulty in measuring the performance of lecturers? Does the PMDS address this?
11. Do you think the PMDS would be more useful if it was linked to performance related pay, promotions and disciplinary procedures?
12. Are there any other areas of the PMDS you feel need improvement?

PMDS Interview – Head of Department

1. Do you feel you received enough training and development to carry out the process?
2. Considering your workload and other duties, do you have enough time to carry out the PMDS process effectively?

Benefits

1. Has the performance and motivation of staff improved?
2. Has it helped in the development of lecturers?
3. Has the PMDS been useful in business planning of the department?

Communication

4. Has communication with staff improved?

Challenges

5. What are the challenges/weaknesses of the PMDS?
6. Was the introduction of the PMDS well received?
7. Is it an open and fair process?
8. Does the review process represent a threat to the academic freedom of lecturers?
9. A) Would you agree that a major challenge to the PMDS is the difficulty in measuring the performance of lecturers?
B) Has the PMDS addressed this?
10. Has the PMDS been useful for managing under-performance?
11. Do you think that it should be linked to performance related pay, promotions and disciplinary procedures?
12. What other areas of the PMDS do you feel need improvement?