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Faculty Performance Management Systems and Their Impact on Academic Excellence in Private Higher Education

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Abstract: The increased adoption of Performance Management Systems (PMS) within Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI), has generated an international debate regarding whether these systems enhance or impede Academic Excellence. This paper reviews the literature from 2015 through 2025 to evaluate the linkage between Faculty Performance Management Systems (FPMS) and academic excellence in Private Higher Education. Using Goal Setting Theory, Expectancy Theory, Organisational Justice, and New Public Management's Perspective, this synthesis evaluates how the various components of FPMS; i.e., goals, appraisals, feedback, rewards; influence teaching performance, research outputs, student results, and institutional reputation. Although it was observed that well-structured and developmental oriented FPMS can increase faculty motivation, alignment, and productivity, the most common audit and metric based systems, prevalent in privatized sectors may result in faculty disengagement, de-motivation and loss of academic autonomy. The authors have identified several potential moderators of FPMS, such as leadership support for faculty members' participation in evaluation processes, cultural fit, and appropriate levels of accountability relative to development. Finally, implications of findings to inform policies and practices relevant to PHEIs are discussed to demonstrate the need for Hybrid Models that strike a balance between Accountability and Academic Values.

Keywords: *faculty performance management, academic excellence, private higher education, performance appraisal, new public management, academic capitalism, quality assurance.*

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Introduction

The last twenty years have witnessed significant changes in the higher education landscape due to the expansion of massification, marketisation, internationalisation, and a heightened focus on accountability and excellence (Marginson, 2016; Altbach et al., 2019). These changes are driving the emergence of private higher education institutions (PHEI's) internationally (Levy, 2018; Alam, 2021), that now account for a large share of global higher education students particularly within developing nations (Decramer et al., 2015; Sharma & Jyoti, 2019). Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) operate in an open market, therefore they need to be seen as good by potential customers to survive and grow. The same is true of their graduates' employment prospects and how well ranked their institution will be. This has driven many PHEIs to implement formal faculty performance management systems (FPMS) as tools to increase the performance of its academics relative to each other and relative to institutional goals (Naidoo, 2016; Tight, 2019); as well as to improve the academic productivity, the teaching effectiveness of those academics, and finally to achieve institutional excellence (Aguinis, 2019).

Literature Review

Defining Faculty Performance Management Systems in Higher Education In contemporary organizations, performance management has transitioned from being limited to one-time annual reviews to being a continuous process involving goal-setting, feedback, development and rewards (Aguinis, 2019; Shields et al., 2015). In addition to defining performance management in the context of higher education institutions as a means to measure the performance of faculty (i.e. academic staff) in relation to institutional goals (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018; Alach, 2017); modern FPMS are becoming increasingly formalized, standardized and quantitatively measured through the use of digital platforms (Kallio et al., 2016). Modern FPMS differ significantly from historical collegiate peer-review methods that relied upon the principles of academic professionalism (Decramer et al., 2015).Comprehensive FPMS includes (a) goal-setting and performance-planning, in which faculty set goals annually based on department and university strategic plans; (b) ongoing evaluation using student surveys, research-activity metrics, and classroom observations to evaluate performance; (c) formal appraisal meetings by department chairs/deans; (d) use of faculty feedback and coaching for career development; and (e) linkage to administrative decision-making regarding contract renewals, promotions/tenure, and merit-pay (Decramer et al., 2015; Sharma & Jyoti, 2019). While all these elements are important, their respective emphases vary widely depending upon the type of institution and the country's context. Specifically, in Anglo-American countries, especially in private universities, emphasis is placed on quantitative performance and metrics responsive to markets. Conversely, historical approaches in continental Europe emphasized collegial peer-review processes although this trend appears to be shifting (Kallio, Kallio & Blomberg, 2020; Teelken,

2015).The expansion of FPMS in post-secondary education has coincided with the rise of the "evaluative state" (Tight, 2019) characterized by government and/or accrediting bodies requiring evidence of quality and accountability (Ball, 2016). Both phenomena have occurred most rapidly in the private sector, which is subject to direct market pressure to indicate quality to future students, employers and ranking organizations. According to Naidoo (2016), the "commodification of competition" in post-secondary education has resulted in many institutions adopting corporate-type performance measurement systems as a tool to differentiate them and position them in the marketplace.

Academic Excellence

A Multi-Dimensional ConceptWhile academic excellence does not have a universally accepted definition, it is often viewed differently depending on stakeholders. Based on their analysis of quality definitions in post-secondary education, Schindler et al. (2015) identified five conceptualizations: exceptional (i.e., beyond the standard); perfect/perfectionist (i.e., zero defects); fit-for-purpose (i.e., meeting the requirements of an organization's mission); good value-for-money (i.e., return-on-investment); and transformative (i.e., improving students' abilities). For PHEIs operating with a student-as-customer model, fit-for-purpose and good-value-for-money are likely to be two major concepts influencing their approach to academic excellence (Molesworth et al., 2009; Alam, 2021). At the same time, in order to maintain their academic credibility and legitimacy they must continue to uphold traditional notions of academic excellence such as discipline-specific excellence and transformative education.Based on globally recognized ranking frameworks and quality-assurance metrics, there appear to be four core dimensions of academic excellence: (1) teaching quality, which can be assessed using student-evaluations-of-teaching (SET), peer-observation of teaching, and assessment of learning outcomes; (2) research-productivity-and-impact, which can be measured using indicators such as number of publications, citations per paper, number of grants received, etc.; (3) student-success indicators such as retention-rates, graduation-rates, employability and student-satisfaction; and (4) institutional-reputation-and-accreditation-standing determined by rankings, employer-perceptions and compliance with relevant national-quality-standards (Hazelkorn, 2015; Marginson, 2016; Abramo & D'Angelo, 2015). In the case of PHEIs, these dimensions are closely tied to the competitive nature of their business environment; a high reputation for teaching-excellence or for producing graduates who meet employment expectations will positively affect both enrollment levels and tuition-income.Nonetheless, measuring these dimensions into quantifiable-performance-indicators using FPMS is problematic due to issues related to validity. For instance, student-surveys have been widely criticized for containing biases associated with gender, ethnicity/race and physical attractiveness while having limited correlation with actual-learning-outcomes (Uttl et al., 2017). Additionally, bibliometric-measures of research-excellence have been shown to encourage salami-slicing (the practice of splitting one large study into multiple smaller studies so that each is eligible for its own separate publication) self-citation and placing priority on journal-placement rather than intellectual-contribution (Abramo & D'Angelo, 2015). Therefore, the very instruments employed in FPMS to serve as proxies for academic-excellence can actually alter the academic-activities they are intended to assess.

FPMS in Private Post-Secondary Institutions: Trends and Features

Unlike publicly-funded universities which may benefit from fiscal support provided by government and have an established tradition of shared-governance among stakeholders, PHEIs operate under different governing structures and financing arrangements that drive their performance-management-practices. Specifically, unlike publicly funded universities, PHEIs are tuition-dependent and have greater managerial-freedom which results in them being exposed to increased pressure from regulatory-bodies as well as from fee-paying-students to demonstrate value-to-market. It is these environmental factors that have contributed significantly to an increase in the use of corporate-style-FPMS focusing on customer-service-teaching-excellence-efficiency-and-demonstrable-output. Several empirical studies provide insight into how FPMS operate in private universities in India. A recent Indian study conducted by Sharma and Jyoti (2019) indicated that many Indian private universities employ transparent, criterion based performance assessment systems that include areas of teaching, research and institutional service. Performance assessments were heavily linked to the advancement opportunities available to the faculty. Sharma and Jyoti's (2019) study also identified a statistically significant positive correlation between the perceived fairness of the performance assessment and faculty effectiveness, with perceived fairness mediated by job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Similarly in Kenya, Kipkemboi and Kwasira (2016) identified transparency of performance targets, frequency of performance feedback and involvement in performance target development as being predictive of employee performance in Kenyan private universities using student evaluations and research output as measures of employee performance. Also in Kenya, Kamau and Wanyoike (2017) demonstrated that performance management systems utilized in private universities positively impacted faculty motivation by enhancing expectancy and instrumentality perceptions; i.e. faculty believed that their efforts would result in recognized performance, and that recognized performance would result in valuable rewards. In contrast, there exists a large body of critical research from European contexts concerning public universities undergoing marketization, which illustrate similar issues for private providers. Kallio et al. (2016) studied Finnish universities post-NPM inspired reform and identified widespread decoupling of formal compliance with performance measurement rituals, and real-world scholarly practices continuing to exist outside of the metrics. This indicates a key risk to PHEIs, that FPMS could elicit surface level compliance, rather than meaningful improvement in academic quality. Franco-Santos and Otley (2018), in their systematic review of unintended consequences of PMS, documented numerous forms of dysfunctional behavior including gaming, manipulation of data for reporting purposes, tunnel vision toward the aspects of performance being measured, and a loss of intrinsic motivation among faculty. Thus, the literature presents a contested view. Some empirical studies identify positive relationships between well designed FPMS and faculty performance while others warn about the negative effects of utilizing metric heavy systems on professional standards among faculty. The next section will develop a multi-theory framework explaining why the results from empirical studies differ so widely.

Theoretical Framework

An integrated theoretical framework will be developed to account for the underlying mechanisms through which FPMS impact academic excellence within PHEIs. The main theoretical models to apply to this study will include goal-setting theory, expectancy theory, organizational justice theory, and critical frameworks regarding both new public management (NPM) and academic capitalism.

Goal Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory suggests that employees' performances will increase when employees are assigned specific, difficult goals relative to what has previously occurred (Locke & Latham, 2019). When employees receive feedback on their progress toward achieving the goals set during annual performance planning sessions, employees will become focused on achieving the goals and improve productivity. Studies supporting the findings of Locke and Latham (2019) have consistently supported this relationship across various industriesIn addition to these theoretical models, there is evidence from studies in higher education indicating that clear goals have been associated with positive correlations with both self-reported performance evaluations by faculty members and their overall satisfaction (Decramer et al., 2015). For instance, if a private university sets specific target numbers of publications for each department/department member and allocates resources to support research efforts, faculty may commit to publishing more papers and spend more time publishing, assuming that the goals set are reasonable and justified. Nevertheless, goal-setting theory outlines many potential constraints on its use. Such constraints include imposing goals on employees without first obtaining input and/or consent from them; emphasizing measurable output metrics over the quality of work; and establishing conflicting goals leading to role ambiguity. Academic work is characterized by autonomy and intrinsic motivation; however, externally-imposed targets can negatively influence an individual's intrinsic interest in scholarly pursuits and teaching (Macfarlane, 2016). Therefore, whether FPMS affect faculty performance via goal-setting depends largely on how faculty are involved in negotiating goals and what type of goals are established

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) is another lens for analyzing motivation that considers the cognitive calculations faculty make about whether effort will lead to performance (expectancy); whether performance will be rewarded (instrumentality); and whether those rewards are valued by faculty (valence). In private higher educational institutions where appraisals directly determine important incentives, such as salary increases, promotions, or contract renewals, the level of instrumentality between performance and reward is high. If furthermore faculty believe their effort leads to realized performance (high expectancy), then they will also value the financial or symbolic rewards. A study done by Kamau and Wanyoike (2017) found that in Kenyan private universities whose faculty believed there was strong instrumentality between performance and rewards showed both higher motivation and higher performances. The process of measuring work through numbers can also reduce expectancy if faculty view the metrics as unfair. For example if a faculty member believes excellent teaching cannot be captured by student evaluation scores due to bias then expectancy diminishes and therefore motivation to provide excellence in teaching lessens. The validity and fairness of these appraisal tool is therefore central in the mediating role it plays with respect to the relationship between FPMS-excellence and expectancy theory and justice theory.

Organizational justice theory

Justice theory in organizational terms distinguishes between distributive justice (outcome fairness), procedural justice (process used to determinate outcomes), and interactional justice (treatment by colleagues or supervisors with respect to information sharing) (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). In academia, justice is crucial for how faculty respond to the use of performance management systems. Procedural justice is particularly important when faculty have input into developing performance standards, when the application of performance standards is consistent, and when faculty are provided opportunities for discussion or appeal of ratings. Faculty will more likely accept the system and engage positively. However, schools using perceived arbitrary, opaque, or biased systems generate trust, cynicism and opposition to performance appraisals.

New Public Management and Academic capitalismThe transformation of governance of higher education through new public management provisions the macro-institutional context for the spread of FPMS. NPM advocates efficiency, measureable outputs, customer service, and competition among universties as corporations (Ball, 2016; Tight, 2019). This ideology underlines the development of performance indicators, league tables, and performance-based funding which all cascade down to the level of faculty-specific performance management systems. Academic capitalism theory which examines how markets and market-like behavior has penetrated the university environment further explains the logic of FPMS in private higher educational institutions. As market actors, PHEIs commercialize education and research; academic labour is now frequency managed through performance metrics similar to those used by private corporations. Faculties are seen as "responsibilized" individuals whose productivity is continuously compared against their institutional key performance indicator(s). The FPMS becomes a technology of control that allows the alignment of academic subjectivity with institutional marketing strategies and may displace traditional academic values of curious-directed research and critical pedagogy. These critical perspectives do not necessarily negate the effects on motivation proposed by goal setting and expectancy theory but rather point out that FPMS operates within power-laden contexts where definitions of what it means to "perform" and "excel" are themselves products of political process and market pressures. The impact of FPMS on academic excellence is therefore mediated by both design of FPMS and degree to which faculty internalize or resist managerializing logics.

Impact of FPMS on Dimensions of Academic Excellence

This section summarizes evidence from research on the effect of FPMS on the four Dimensions of Academic Excellence referenced earlier while also attending to the mediating mechanisms identified by theoretical framework references.

Some PHEI’s have started using student success metrics as part of faculty evaluation e.g. course completion rates, and graduate employment statistics. While student success metrics can help to make sure faculty is working toward the same objectives as

the institution, they can also raise questions about validity. Student success is caused by multiple factors including student background, institutional resources, and labor market conditions, all of which are outside the scope of what a single faculty member can affect. When unrealistic expectations regarding causality exist among student success metrics and teaching effectiveness, then faculty will find ways to "game" the system i.e. reduce academic standards so more students complete courses, or shift focus away from unmeasurable important aspects of an education (i.e. developing critical thinkers). One notable area missing in the literature is rigorous empirical studies that show direct connections between design elements of FPMS and student success metrics within the context of private higher education. By theory, if FPMS increases faculty members' intrinsic motivation and professional growth (through procedural justice and developmental feedback), it would likely increase the amount of learning that takes place. However, if FPMS leads to increased levels of stress, surface compliance and/or a transactional way of teaching.

Institutional Reputation and Accreditation

Within the private sector, institutional reputation is both a cause and consequence of academic excellence. Accrediting agencies, and ranking organizations now assess faculty qualifications, research output, and teaching quality. If a PHEI is able to successfully implement an effective FPMS, it provides the data, as well as the developmental process needed to support accreditation requirements, and potentially improve its standing in rankings. Alam (2021) noted how private universities in Bangladesh were required to develop faculty appraisal systems when implementing quality assurance frameworks established by the government. These appraisal systems helped contribute to improvements in institutional quality ratings and subsequent increases in student enrollment. FPMS can act as a signaling mechanism to external stakeholders (future students, parents, etc.) that demonstrates an institution systematically evaluates and monitors the performance of its faculty. Reputational capital that is created through this type of systematic monitoring and reporting helps attract better students, and subsequently better faculty which ultimately contribute to a positive cycle of excellence (Hazelkorn, 2015). Most PHEI's who achieve international accreditation (such as business schools achieving AACSB accreditation) require robust performance management as part of their ongoing assessment and improvement processes. Although FPMS can create a greater sense of institutional reputation, it can also lead to the potential for instrumentally reducing the essence of academic excellence to superficial metrics used to rank institutions. As Marginson (2016) described, institutions can use rankings as a means to play a "ranking game." Institutions may encourage faculty to focus on producing results that are ranked high in specific categories regardless of whether those results support the institutions' missions or address local development issues. Therefore, although FPMS can contribute to enhancing institutional reputation, it creates a risk that academic excellence will be reduced to being judged based on superficial metrics.

Challenges, Unintended Consequences, and Tensions in Private Higher Education

While there is significant theoretical merit for implementing FPMS, its application in PHEI's is subject to numerous challenges that can negate the very basis of academic excellence that it seeks to promote.5.1 Metric Fixation and GamingMetric fixation is widely criticized in performance management literature (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018). Within the private higher education context, where accountability mechanisms drive the need for measurable outputs, FPMS tends to transform academic work into a dashboard of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The reductionist nature of this transformation has been documented to produce numerous unintended consequences. Specifically, faculty may attempt to "gaming" techniques -- altering their behavior solely for purposes of optimizing numerical representation rather than enhancing their actual performance. Examples of such "gaming" behavior include strategically publishing articles in journals that are of poor quality but meet the journal publication threshold; inflating grades in order to increase student Success/Educational Effectiveness/Teaching (SET) scores; and providing a facade of service activity in order to obtain additional points. Kallio et al. (2016) reported similar examples of decoupling strategies employed by Finnish academics as a response to performance measurement regimes. Such decoupling strategies undermined the academic integrity of the university.

Threats to Academic Freedom and Professional Autonomy

A fundamental aspect of higher education is academic freedom, i.e., the ability of academicians to pursue research, teach, and publish without undue administrative oversight. Criticisms related to New Public Management (NPM) and academic capitalism suggest that FPMS represents an erosion of academic freedom by requiring faculty to conform their research agenda's and teaching methodologies according to prescribed guidelines while evaluating scholarship based upon quantifiable market-based metrics (Ball, 2016; Macfarlane, 2016). In private institutions where faculty members are at-will employees and do not possess tenure protection, the effects of such restrictions can be particularly pernicious: faculty members may suppress controversial research topics or refrain from employing critical pedagogy due to fear of receiving low student evaluations. Ultimately, the lack of intellectual diversity resulting from the suppression of dissenting opinions undermines the concept of academic excellence as the fearless pursuit of knowledge.

In terms of what we have already discussed about the nature of faculty, their beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, there is a range of ways in which faculty will negatively react to perceived unfairness, burden and/or professional value conflict within FPMS (Kallio et al., 2020; Decramer et al., 2015). The negative reactions may take several forms such as cynicism, disengagement and outright resistance. These negative reactions result in a variety of psychological costs including greater stress, burnout and reduced organizational commitment, which ultimately negatively affect faculty performance and innovation. In addition to these general negative reactions, there are additional psychological costs associated with performance management in higher education. For example, studies have shown that in universities, a major unintended consequence of performance management is the reduction of faculty members' intrinsic motivation to perform at their best (Decramer et al., 2015; Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018). This is especially true when extrinsic rewards diminish the intrinsic desire of faculty members to engage in intellectual work. In private PHEIs, the negative effects of performance management on faculty motivation may be further exacerbated due to the heavy teaching load, low levels of job security and limited opportunities for faculty participation in governance decisions. As a result, faculty

resistance and demotivation may lead to a vicious cycle where performance management fails to motivate the faculty it seeks to support.

Private Sector-Specific Issues

There are several sector-specific issues related to private HEIs (PHEIs) that contribute to the challenges identified above. First, the large number of adjunct/contingent and part-time faculty in PHEIs results in a disproportionate number of faculty operating under informal or no formal FPMS framework (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Furthermore, this group of faculty are primarily evaluated based upon student satisfaction ratings alone and receive little or no developmental feedback. Consequently, this dual-system approach has created a stratified academic body in which excellence is unevenly supported depending on whether you are a full-time permanent faculty member versus a part-time or adjunct faculty member. Second, although the use of a student-as-customer model provides some benefits relative to student responsiveness, the model also tends to focus on satisfying students rather than providing rigorous educational experiences. Therefore, the emphasis in performance evaluations placed on providing good customer service rather than academic rigor can lead to poor-quality academic programs. Third, many private HEIs in developing countries lack sufficient research infrastructure and resources to develop talented faculty and achieve the ambitious KPIs that they establish for themselves. As a result, private HEI faculty in these types of environments tend to feel frustrated with their performance evaluation systems because they cannot possibly achieve the outcomes expected of them. Fourth, given that private institutions typically do not have robust faculties to negotiate collectively with administrators regarding policies, procedures and practices related to performance evaluations, private institution administrations frequently develop and implement performance evaluation systems without input from faculty. Consequently, performance evaluation systems developed in this manner are likely to be procedurally unjust and reduce motivation among faculty. Fifth, the absence of strong faculty senates and/or collective bargaining agreements among private institution faculties means that performance evaluation systems implemented at private institutions are often designed solely by administration. Therefore, these systems are less likely to provide the procedural justice needed to facilitate positive faculty responses to performance evaluation systems.

Discussion: An Integrated Framework

The evidence reviewed suggests that FPMS is not a single tool with uniform impacts on academic excellence. Rather, its potential to advance academic excellence depends on a combination of design characteristics, implementation processes and contextual factors. Therefore, this section develops an integrated framework based on these findings and outlines theoretical and practical implications. Design Features of Evaluation System. The content and format of FPMS will significantly influence the ability of FPMS to promote academic excellence. In particular, those evaluation systems that offer a balanced assessment of both quantitative measures and subjective judgments made by professionals involved in assessing faculty performance; allow for multiple lines of evidence (e.g., peer assessments, self-assessment reports, data collected through surveys and other instruments); provide both formative (developmental) and summative (evaluation) uses; and permit goals to be established collaboratively by faculty and administration are more likely to produce excellent academic achievement. Locke and Latham (2019), Decramer et al. (2015) demonstrate that goals established using SMART methods (i.e., Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) increase motivation to achieve established objectives. Moreover, establishing mutually agreed-upon goals among department heads and faculty members increases motivation and decreases cynicism toward performance evaluation systems (Decramer et al., 2015).Implementation Processes and Fairness Perceptions. Regardless of the type of performance evaluation system utilized by an organization, fairness perceptions are essential. Specifically, fair processes require that faculty participate in the establishment of performance criteria and regular review of criteria; the collection process be transparent; criteria be consistently applied throughout the organization; and communication during performance appraisals be constructive and respectful (Sharma & Jyoti, 2019; Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). Given that hierarchical decision making is commonly practiced in private HEIs (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015), these organizations must develop structures that enable faculty voices to be heard if they wish to avoid creating resistance among faculty members and increasing legitimacy for their performance evaluation systems.Academic Leadership/Culture. University department chairs/deans serve as important "sense makers" by translating institutional expectations for academic performance into language that resonates with individual faculty members (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018). By emphasizing developmentally focused goals; recognizing individual faculty achievements in a genuine fashion; and protecting faculty from excessive bureaucratic burdens associated with performance evaluation systems, university leadership can decrease the adverse effects of performance evaluation systems on their faculty members (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018). Ultimately, developing a culture that emphasizes professionalism in academics; building trust; and valuing collegial relationships rather than adopting a pure business model that emphasizes hierarchy and control will provide an environment in which FPMS can operate successfully. For instance, when PHEIs identify themselves as being mission-driven (e.g., faith-based or liberal arts-oriented) and relate their performance evaluation systems to their stated missions rather than strictly to marketplace metrics; PHEIs can increase faculty engagement and authenticity in pursuing academic excellence.

Market Imperatives/Academic Values. There is an ongoing debate between market forces that drive the adoption of FPMS in PHEIs and core values held by academicians such as autonomy; curiosity; and critical thinking (Naidoo, 2016). It is possible for institutions to reconcile this debate without abandoning accountability requirements by developing hybrid models of accountability that integrate external pressures with internal commitments. Hybrid models would combine marketplace derived KPIs with KPIs developed by academic communities (e.g., peer assessments of research quality; alumni assessments of learning transformations); and ensure that institutional reward structures do not punish long-term/high risk scholarly endeavors in preference for short-term/safe production (Marginson, 2016). While the literature provides some evidence that there is an association between faculty performance management systems (FPMS) and academic excellence, it is still unclear what constitutes such a relationship. To understand how FPMS affects academic excellence, we must look at two different sets of variables: the

characteristics of FPMS itself and how they interact with one another.Specifically, this paper identifies five key features of FPMS systems that have been associated with positive relationships with academic excellence:

(1) Holism: A holistic FPMS would cover all aspects of academic work (teaching, research, service).(2) Balance: An effective FPMS would strike a balance between using formative assessments (to support continuous development), and summative assessments (for evaluation purposes).(3) Justice: A fair FPMS would allow for faculty input and feedback, and be consistent in processes and outcome measures.(4) Supportive Environment: A well-supported FPMS environment would provide faculty with access to developmental resources, and leaders who enable faculty to achieve their potential.(5) Institutional Alignment: An effective FPMS would align with the overall mission of the institution and with the values of academia. If none of these criteria are met, then FPMS may become an empty ritual where faculty members waste hours trying to manipulate metrics instead of developing and improving their scholarship.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As shown throughout this article, Faculty Performance Management Systems (FPMS) in Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) exist in a contested domain. That is to say that while FPMS can facilitate or hinder Academic Excellence, the ability to realize its full potential depends on the thoughtful design and fair implementation of FPMS, as well as the supportive nature of the academic culture within which it exists. If FPMS is reduced to a solely top-down, metrics-based system driven by market pressures, then it can result in decoupling, gaming, demotivation and/or restrictions on academic freedom. Ultimately, it can undermine the very academic excellence that it aims to measure. This review contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it combines disparate literatures from multiple disciplines to create a multi-dimensional framework for assessing the impact of FPMS on teaching, research, student success and reputation. Second, it demonstrates how goal acceptance, expectancy, justice perceptions and cultural alignment function as mediators/moderators of divergent outcomes. Third, it illustrates the unique vulnerabilities of the PHEI context (i.e. precarious employment status; customer-centricity; poor faculty governance) that increase the likelihood of negative outcomes from poorly constructed or implemented performance management systems. On the basis of the review's integration of existing literature, the following recommendations were made for administrators/policymakers operating in PHEIs.

- Consider adopting a Balanced Scorecard type assessment strategy that includes both qualitative peer evaluations/learning outcomes data/self-assessment and quantitative data to provide a broader perspective on academic performance.
- Decouple formative development from evaluative decision-making to create a safe space for real growth; consider using a separate development appraisal and administrative review.
- Involve representative groups of faculty in designing/piloting/revising the FPMS to improve procedural justice and promote faculty buy-in.
- Invest in training and supporting leadership within departments so that department chairs can engage in performance discussions that motivate rather than demote; also so that department chairs can use data collected via the system to argue for resources for their departments.

Authors Contribution

N.A.O.O: Contributed to conceptualization, investigation, data collection and analysis, reviewing and editing of the manuscript

K.K.Y: Contributed to the writing of the original draft, editing and reviewing processes

J.M.O: Conceptualization and methodology formulation

E.K.T: Contributed to proof-reading

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