Performance Appraisal And Human Resources Motivation: Challenges And Prospects

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Abstract
There is a growing body of evidence supporting the relationship between performance appraisal systems and employee motivation in an organisation. However, it is not clear why this relationship exists. This paper argues that to provide a convincing explanation of this association, we need to improve our theoretical and analytical framework in the three key areas. There are the nature of human resources, the nature of organizational performance appraisal system and the relationship of both in enhancing human resources motivation and improved productivity. The study adopts a descriptive research design. Data are obtained primarily from secondary sources; government gazettes, news bulletins, past studies, etc. Review of existing literature will help in assessing research gap, challenges and possible prospects on the subject matter discuss.

Keywords: *Performance Appraisal, Human Resources, Motivation and Performance*

Background to the study

An appraisal is the analysis of the performance of an individual, which usually includes assessment of the individual's current and past work performance. It is a developmental tool used for all round development of the employee and the organisation. The performance is measured against such factors as job knowledge, quality and quantity of output, initiative, leadership abilities, supervision, dependability, co-operation, judgment, versatility and health. Burns and Bush (2002) said assessment should be confined to past as well as potential performance also. Also, it is focused on behaviors as a part of assessment because behaviors do affect job results.

Otherwise referred to as performance "review" or "evaluation", a performance "appraisal" is an important part of human resources (HR) framework within an organisation (Fletcher, 2008). In management techniques, it is considered as an indispensable tool for assessing employee performance. Its importance in the organisational process cannot be over stressed. It helps to identify and overcome the problems faced by the employees on his/her work (Mackey and Johnson, 2000). Although it has many benefits for the organisation, Nurse (2005) disclosed that performance appraisal have the equal probability of having a bad impact on the organisation as well as on employee performance. According to Mackey and Johnson (2000), where performance appraisal improves the work performance and employee satisfaction, it can also demotivate employees and leaves a bad impression on the good employees. Most employees do not approve of continuous performance appraisal and also consider it as a burdensome activity (Anderson, 2002).

However, Kuvaas (2006) admitted that performance appraisal and employee appraisal is a method by which the job performance of an employee is evaluated (generally in terms of quality, quantity, cost and time) typically by the immediate line manager or supervisor. It becomes a part of the process of guiding and managing career development in both private and public sectors. It involves the task of obtaining, analyzing and recording information about the relative worth of an employee to the organisation. Mani (2002) states that performance appraisal is an analysis of an employee's recent successes and failures, personal strengths and weaknesses and suitability for promotion or further training.

Mani (2002) acknowledged that a performance appraisal system is a good instrument that can be used to improve the quality of an organisation's work force performance of which it is considered as an important aspect in human resources management and as part of the control process in administration (Kavussi, 1999). In order for an organisation to achieve its objectives, planning of the appraisal process is an important subject that should be undertaken to enable it achieves the objectives of workforce development. This includes improvements, promotions and assignments in managerial positions, persuasion and punishment, salary increase, personnel's performance feedback and determining their educational needs (Mani, 2002).

Equally, performance appraisals are crucial for career and succession development. Appraisals are designed for workforce inspiration, position and conduct improvement, converse directorial aims, along with nurturing optimistic associations between supervision

and workforce. Clearly, the primary objective of a performance appraisal programme is to ensure the maximum utilization of employee's skills, knowledge, and interests. This results in a more motivated workforce, which, in turn, positively impacts productivity and increases an organisation's competitive edge. In addition, employer-employee relations are enhanced, resulting in less strife for managers

No doubt therefore, the success and otherwise of an organisation can be evaluated using an effective performance appraisal system. It ought to be treated as a regular exercise than a prescribed once-a-year review which is often operational in most organisations. The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges and prospects of performance appraisal on human resource motivation.

Statement of the problem
Appraisal performance is one of the most important and yet one of the most difficult tasks that manager's face. It is very difficult to evaluate a person's performance and even more difficult to convey that judgment to him or her. As a result, performance appraisals are criticized with criticisms ranging from their being an enormous waste of time to their having a destructive impact on the relationship between managers and their subordinates. This therefore raises the concern on to improve the process and support it with human resources motivation.

Objective of the study
The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of performance appraisal on human resources motivation in an organisation.

Method and source of data
The study adopts a descriptive research design. Data are obtained primarily from secondary sources; government gazettes, news bulletins, past studies, etc. Review of existing literature will help in assessing research gap, challenges and possible prospects on the subject matter discuss.

Literature Review
The subject of performance appraisal, human resources and employee motivation has attracted scholarly attention over time. This section examines some basic literature. It will identify basic issues, current challenges and prospects that are significant in improving organisational performance.

Performance appraisal and human resources management
According to Bratton (1998 cited in Rudman, 2003), human resources management (HRM) is defined as 'a strategic approach to managing employment relations, which emphasises that leveraging people's capabilities is critical to achieving competitive advantage. The concept and practice has grown in importance from the traditional view of the personnel department, whose role was primarily seen as that of hiring and firing employees to a much broader role. HRM includes the recruitment of employees, the development of policies relating to human resources, and the management and development of employees. It also follows that HRM is not carried out exclusively by the human resource (HR) department. Line managers are involved in managing the human resources in their departments.

In modern usage, 'human resources' and 'human capital' reflect the increasing recognition of the strategic importance of employees. The terms actually refer to the traits that people bring to the workplace, such as knowledge, intelligence, enthusiasm, an ability to learn, and so on. Employees are seen less and less as an expensive necessity, and more and more as a strategic resource that may provide an organisation with competitive advantage. The problem with human resources is that they require more management than other factors of production. Humans are complex, emotional creatures, and it can be challenging to ensure that they behave in the right way, remain motivated and give their best to the employer. William James, the 19th century American sociologist, once remarked that most people only use 15% of their combined intelligence, skills and aptitudes in their employment (Nurse, 2005). Whether this still remains the case or not, it is clearly a challenge to get employees to contribute more of their abilities in the workplace.

Given that human resources are a strategic capability, many human resource practitioners talk about 'strategic human resource management' (Mani, 2002). This means aligning the human resource management of organisations with the organisations' strategy. The human resources management process should support the corporate strategy by:
a)   ensuring that the organisation has the right number of qualified employees
b)   employees have the right skills and knowledge to perform efficiently and effectively
c)   employees exhibit the appropriate behaviours consistent with the organisation's culture and values.
d)   employees meet the organisation's motivational needs (Mani, 2002).

One way to assess the performance of human resources in an organisation is by performance appraisal. According to Moses, Stephen & Basil (2014) performance appraisal has been defined as the process of evaluating the performance and qualifications of the employees in terms of the requirements of the job for which they are performance and qualifications of the employees in terms of the requirements of the job for which they are employed, for the purpose of administration including placement. Selection and other action, which require preferential treatment among members of a group as distinguished from actions in respect of their current performance as well as their potential for future development.

In recent years, there has been a drive towards linking the appraisal of employees to the strategic objectives of an organisation (Rudman, 2003). The idea is that the organisation sets its own goals and performance measures. These goals are then translated into goals for managers and employees. Measurable targets are identified and set for employees, and their performance against the targets will be used as part of their appraisal. Appraisal is, therefore, seen as part of management control. By measuring the performance of employees against targets, management is seen to be proactively managing the performance of employees and therefore improving the performance of the organisation. While such an approach may appear rational, in practice it is very unpopular with employees, who do not like to feel they are being controlled (Nurse, 2005).

According to Mackey and Johnson (2000), where the performance appraisal improves the work performance and employee satisfaction, it can also demotivate employees and leaves a bad impression on the good employees. Most of the employees do not approve of continuous performance appraisal and also consider it as a burdensome activity (Anderson, 2002). According to Kuvaas (2006) and Rudman (2003), a performance appraisal and employee appraisal is a method by which the job performance of an employee is evaluated (generally in terms of quality, quantity, cost and time) typically by the immediate line manager or supervisor. A performance appraisal is a part of the process of guiding and managing career development in both private and public sectors. It involves the task of obtaining, analyzing and recording information about the relative worth of an employee to the organisation.

Mani (2002) stated that performance appraisal is an analysis of an employee's recent successes and failures, personal strengths and weaknesses and suitability for promotion or further training for the information it provides is highly useful in making decisions regarding various personnel aspects such as promotion and merit increases. Performance measures also link information gathering and decision making processes which provide a basis for judging the effectiveness of personnel sub-divisions such as recruiting, selection, training and compensation.

A good performance appraisal system in a public sector organisation like the federal or state civil service should be able to achieve the following:
1.   Enable each officer to increase his/her output or productivity;
2.   Assist an officer to understand his strength and weakness and on the basis of these propose remedies;
3.   Provide an officer better understanding of the ways in which he/she fits into the service and makes him a more effective worker in a team and one who other superior officers will respect and like to work with;
4.   Enable the subordinate's performance to be thoroughly analyzed;
5.   Facilitate the process of just and equitable reward and compensation (Udoji, 1974).

The result of performance appraisal should serve as the basis for regular evaluation and motivation of the performance of the members of an organisation. Whether an individual is judged to be competent, effective or ineffective, promotable or unpromotable, it is based upon the information generated by the performance appraisal system (Rarick, 2011).

Components of Performance Appraisals
According to Moses, Stephen & Basil (2013) some of the basic components of an effective performance appraisal system are as follows,

1.   Target Setting: A crucial component of personnel performance appraisal is target setting. Targets provide direction or focus. A target is a measure of work set a subordinate officer to achieve within a stipulated time and given the necessary resources. The process in getting this through is characterized as target setting. There are usually two types of targets, viz., goal and resources targets. The goal target is about performance expressed specifically in the quality of work, the quality and the time spam for their achievement. The resource

target comprises the necessary materials for achievement with consideration of all possible constraints and obstacles (Carroll & Schneider, 1982). Conventionally, it is canvassed that targets must be specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART). To these, we may add such other characteristics as: acceptable by the task performance; acceptable to organisation (e.g. Boss, department);

2.   Capable of being self-monitored; assessable if not measurable; achievable in stages with self-monitoring; can be altered or amended as circumstances change; should generate interest (stimulation motivation); Relevant to current organisational needs. Target setting involves a wide range of systematic activities aimed at translating organisation's goals into individual performance target.

3.   Job Description: This is a statement of the general purpose of the job, providing an outline of the duties and responsibilities involved. For staff appraisal to be objective, individual jobholders should have job descriptions written in terms of tangible and specific expectations (Rasch, 2004). The ingredients of job description are as follows:

a)   Job title; Department (in which the jobholder work);
b)   Function of job (why does the job exit);
c)   Responsible to (job title of boss);
d)   Responsible for (job title of subordinate);
e)   Tasks (possibly between routine and occasional);
f)   Hours of work;
g)   Working conditions (if they materially affect the job) (Moses, Stephen & Basil, 2013).

Even where targets have been objectively set, lack of necessary resources for implementation has often frustrated the efforts. Resources range from money to vehicles, stationery, etc (Scott and Einstein, 2001). Many promotion exercises were known to have been stalled by lack of stationery. It is important to further examine measurement techniques used in assessing human resources performance in the organisation.

Measurement of human resources performance
According to Rarick (2011), when measuring the performance of employees for the purpose of appraisal, three different approaches can be used:
1.   Measurement of inputs
2.   Behaviour in performance
3.   Measurement of results and outcomes.

1.   Measurement of inputs

Measurement of inputs means attempting to assess the traits of an individual. Traits are those skills, knowledge and attitudes that the employee possesses. Assessment aims to identify whether the staff member has the competencies (or traits) for a job, perhaps with reference to a competency framework. Attributes such as leadership, commitment, ability to work within a team and loyalty are traits that are typically desired. Where assessment is performed by the line manager, the subjectivity of the exercise may well lead to real or perceived bias in the assessment. As a result of this, many organisations now use professionally designed psychometric tests.

Psychometric testing aims to 'measure' the abilities and personal skills of an individual. An example of ability would be the number of words per minute that the individual can type on a keyboard. Personal skills focus on areas such as emotional stability of the individual, whether the individual is introvert or extrovert, and how flexible the employee is. Some organisations hold 'moderation meetings' for bigger teams. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that the various managers involved in assessing the different members of staff within a team are doing so consistently.

2.   Behaviour in performance

This type of appraisal looks at the behaviour of the employee during work, and at how the employee applies his or her skills. Both quantitative and qualitative data is collected on a continuous basis relating to how the employee displays the expected behaviour for the position for example, 'gives praise where it is due to others on the team' might be one of the behaviours looked for.

Behavioural observation scales (BOS) are where specific actions are listed, and the appraisee is judged on how many times he performs that action. For example, how often does a supervisor provide constructive feedback to colleagues? An obvious problem with BARS and BOS is the subjectivity involved. BOS are designed to be slightly less subjective as they are based on the number of times behaviour is observed, which is more factual. Measurement of behaviour in performance generally is beneficial because not only is information about the employee's performance obtained, but more detailed understanding of the requirement of the job can be ascertained, and this can be used for defining standards in future.

3.   Measurement of results and outcomes

Under these types of appraisals, individuals are assessed on quantifiable outcomes for example, the amount of sales achieved by a salesman, the volume of production achieved, the number of customer complaints. Where competency frameworks are used, it may also be possible to measure the number of competencies achieved during a period. Frequently, targets may be set for individuals and their performance will be judged against these. In setting such targets, it is appropriate to consider the principles relating to the setting of standards from the Fitzgerald and Moon building blocks model. In particular, standards should be achievable, or staff will become demotivated; they should be controllable that is, staff should not be judged on targets that are outside of their control (Levinson, 2005).

Measurement of results and outcomes is usually easy to perform, but suffers from the problem that it does not take into account the differing external factors that may have occurred. It may also lead to measure fixation among staff, such as the famous example in the call centres, where the performance of call centre staff was measured based on the number of calls per day. It was quite common for call centre staff to keep this high by simply hanging up when presented with difficult customers.

Control mechanisms for employees
Ouchi, cited in Nurse (2005) developed a model for helping to determine what types of controls are most appropriate for employees in different situations:
1.   Personnel controls, also known as clan controls, are based on fostering a sense of solidarity in the people who work for an organisation. If personnel believe in the objectives that the organisation is trying to achieve, then they will be motivated to work towards those objectives and will not require detailed supervision or control. Personnel controls include recruitment of people with the right attitudes, training and job design. These are closely related to appraisal systems based on inputs.

2.   Behavioural controls involve observing the employee for example, the foreman on a production line watches the employees to ensure that the work is done as prescribed. Such controls are consistent with appraisal systems that focus on the behaviour of employees.

3.   Output or results controls that focus on measuring some aspect of work performed. Examples could include measuring the number of defective products. Appraisal systems based on results or outcomes are examples of output controls.

The type of control system that is appropriate depends on two variables   the ability to measure output, and the knowledge of the transformation process. Ouchi forms a matrix from these two that helps to determine what type of control system is most appropriate for a particular organisation:

Knowledge of the transformation process

		Perfect	Imperfect
Ability to measure output	High	Behavioural and or output controls	Output controls
	Low	Behavioural measurement	Personnel controls

Fletcher & Bailey (2003) maintained that knowledge of the transformation process is low in situations where there is no obvious way to do a task. Those performing the task may have to learn on the job, rather than be provided with a detailed instruction manual showing them how to do it. This may occur in project-based work, for example, where each project brings new tasks and challenges to the project team.

Dessler & Gary (2000) disclosed that in manufacturing industries, it is likely that it is easy to measure output, and knowledge of the transformation process is high the tasks have been performed many times before. So behavioural or output controls are appropriate, and appraisal will focus on the behaviour of employees or on results and outcomes. A situation where the knowledge of the transformation system is imperfect but measurement is easy might be a sales department. Management may not be aware of the exact processes involved by the sales team, and there may not be one 'right way' of making sales. However, measurement of sales is easy to do, so output controls may be used. The problem with this approach, however, is that it does not take into account external factors. It may be difficult to make sales in some markets, for example, and so appraising employees on results alone might be deemed unfair (Levinson, 2005).

The ability to measure output may be difficult in certain activities, such as research work. Where people work in teams, measuring the output of the individuals within the team may be difficult (Pickette, 2003). Some individuals may put in more effort than others, for example. If knowledge of the transformation process is also low, then the organisation may have to rely on personnel and clan controls. In such situations, the appraisal process may focus on traits.

Performance appraisal and human resources motivation
Aslam (2011) defines motivation as the force that energizes, directs, and sustains behaviour. It is concerned with the strength and direction of behavior, and the factors that influence people to behave in certain ways. Mathis and Jackson (2008) view motivation as the desire within a person that causes that person to act in order to reach a goal. Robbin (2000), offered a specific work -related definition of motivation as the willingness to exert high levels of effort towards organisational goals, conditioned by the effort and ability to satisfy some individual need. Roy (2001) defined work motivation as a process of energizing employees to the work goals through a specific path.

The need for motivation at work is borne, mainly, out of its perceived impact on work performance. Cole (2002) enumerated factors such as employees' knowledge, skills, and nature of task, technology in use, management style and organisational climate, as being important determinants of employee performance. However, these factors working alone, according to Cole (2002), are not enough to bring out the best performance in a worker. For an employee to work in a particularly desirable way, and with a given amount of effort and enthusiasm, he needs to be motivated.

Werner (2012) underscored this by asserting that the most capable employees in an organisation will not perform well unless they are motivated. Hannagan (1995) also corroborated this by emphasizing that the key to effective work performance lies in an understanding of human motivation because, according to Linder (1998, cited in Mani, 2002), motivated employees are more productive and help the organisation to survive. Motivation signifies a worker yearning and obligation, which is marked as effort. Motivation creates a dominant component when going through the procedure of social knowledge. If the group does not hold the capability to motivate its workers, the information within the group is not basically used to a maximum (Nurse, 2005).

The linkage between performance appraisal, employee motivation and job performance has been established by several studies. The appraisal process may be linked to a reward scheme whereby employees or managers earn some incentives, such as promotion or financial incentives if targets are met. It is the reward system that support employees interest on the job.

Challenges of performance appraisal and human resources motivation
Aslam (2011) identified ambiguity in the appraisal process as one of the factors that resulted in poor motivation and acted as a key stumbling block in the delivery of expected performance by university teachers. Werner (2012) also noted that performance management practices address issues of employee motivation thereby ensuring that their capabilities are fully utilized.

In assessing employees, managers are required to make judgments about an employee's performance and capabilities. Such judgments are naturally subject to potential bias in favour of some and against others. There are many statistics showing how prejudice may affect the promotional prospects of some groups. In the UK, for example, 40% of the workforce is women, but only 30% of managers are women (Perez and Falcon, 2004).

Another difficulty is the effect that negative criticism can have on performance. A study carried out in the 1960s by Meyer, Kay and French investigated the impact of the appraisal process at a factory in the US (cited in Lazear, 2000). The study concluded that where members of staff are given criticism, they react defensively to the criticism and try to blame others for their shortcomings. They will also become demotivated (Linder, 1998). Interestingly, praise given during the process had little impact on performance.

One potential solution to the difficulties mentioned above in relation to appraisal is to be aware that, in addition to the formal appraisal process, employees receive continuous informal feedback from their managers on the job (Mello, 2010). Employees generally accept this informal feedback more readily, and it is more likely to lead to improvement in their performance. Placing more emphasis on this informal type of assessment, and less on the formal appraisal process, may improve the overall performance of employees.

Conclusion

What gets measured for effectiveness gets done effectively (De Vaus, 2002). Performance appraisal is significant in assessing organisational effectiveness. It forms the tool for decision making in terms of the need for human resources training, promotions, demotions and other forms of activities necessary to examine progress. According to Boswell & Benson (2000), integration of appraisal system with the overall human resources strategy is a critical enabler of not just the performance management processes, but the overall talent management system in an organisation. What organisations need to do is create performance management systems that are integrated with the other human resources management systems they have and the overall talent management strategy of the organisation.

Indeed, it is needful to go beyond just integrating it with the talent management practices of the organization. Appraisals should be integrated with the overall strategic plan of the organisation. There has always been, and research studies have shown that there continues to be, a strong correlation between the effectiveness of performance management systems and the degree to which they are driven by the business strategy of an organisation.

Recommendations

Base on this conclusion, the study recommends as follows,

1.   On regular basis, organisations should train both those who do appraisals as well as those who are appraised.

2.   Audits should be done of how well the appraisal activities are carried out, so that their effectiveness can be determined. Do they cover the right materials? Are they produced in a timely manner?

3.   There must be a significant way of motivating human resources that have been assessed and noted to have done credibly well in the organisation (Wilson and Western, 2001). This will increase interest, challenge others and ensure continuous improvement in performance.

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