



Performance Appraisal Techniques And Their Effects On Organizational Growth

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Abstract

Employee performance appraisal is a focal aspect of human resources management. It analyzes employees' performance and ensures that employees perform at the desired level to achieve organizational objectives. This paper examined issues of performance appraisal and their effects on organizational growth in. The paper adopted a qualitative research method. It depended on secondary data from scholarly journals and equity and goal setting theory as a framework of analysis. The study observed that performance appraisal does not only promote organizational performance but provides potency in determining employee capacity, skills acquisition, and experience for organizational growth. The paper concluded that organizations which tend to be effective are positively engaged in continuous appraisal of employee performance in order to correct deviance and enhance better performance in the organization. The study recommended that the management of organizations should create an enabling environment and opportunities for self-appraisal or self-evaluation. The management of organizations should ensure that the number of workers being evaluated by a rater should not be too large, so that he can have enough time to do a thorough job on each person.

Keywords : Performance Appraisal and Organizational Growth

INTRODUCTION

It suffices to state that the success and growth of any organization has a hinge on various factors upon which the very first is the human factor. So, an organization's utmost asset is the human resource; and an improvement in the performance of an organization ensues when its employees are competent and also perform at most favourable levels (Bernardin & Wiatrowski,





2013). It is no wonder why organizations strive to train and develop employees for optimal performance in executing their tasks and responsibilities aimed at achieving set organizational goals. However, in keeping track of success and growth emerging from this organizational effort, performance appraisal techniques becomes crucial and vital.

Performance appraisal is seen as one of the most frequently used management tools because of its administrative purposes in the areas of promotions, salaries and bonuses; which are used for employees' evaluation so as to achieve motivational and organizational planning purposes. Undoubtedly, the intensive effort of the human resource management unit in carrying out performance appraisal is very germane in checking the strengths and weaknesses of their employees (Zafrullah, Abdul & Irfanullah, 2017). It enables the employers or management to improve productivity, profitability, commitment and competitiveness in the organization. This is achieved through employees training and also developing essential programs which are conducted to ensure that each task description is executed efficiently so as to improve the performance level of the organization. Indisputably, performance appraisal shows how an organization can improve performance since management can set goals for their employees and this help manager to evaluate their subordinates' effectiveness. However, management can take actions relating to employees recruitment, appointment, promotions, demotions, training, compensation, job design, transfers, and termination (Asamoah, 2012). Importantly, the present business situation in Nigeria is saturated by competition, aggravation, and constant change that affects consumers' needs which is imperative for the survival and growth of any organization.

Pertinently, performance appraisal in organization growth cannot be underrated because of its usefulness in showing how competitiveness, strength and weakness of employees are being constantly checked in order to prepare them to participate favourably in the organization especially in the global markets. Therefore performance appraisal is necessary since it helps the employees to manage their work effectively. It also maximizes organization growth and effectiveness which range from staff development, productivity and profitability. Notwithstanding that performance appraisal is an inevitable process but lack of or absence of a well-structured system of appraisal can create serious motivational, ethical and legal problems (Asamoah, 2012). These problems include; lack of employee engagement, biased performance ratings, low employee self-esteem, wasted time effort and money, damaged relationships, increased legal risk and unclear reward systems. Consequently, contemporary markets and organizations should unremittingly improve performance through cost reduction, incessantly renewing innovation and total quality improvement (Baylis, Gray & Wirtz, 2016).





Incontrovertibly, the most difficult task of management is to manage human resources efficiently in order to get maximum performance from their employees.

It has been alleged that performance appraisal system in some firms or organizations are still suffering from some defects such as lack of employee participation in organizational goals setting and in adequate feedback mechanism concerning performance appraisal. These challenges have resulted to lack of clear goals and objectives which adversely affect the employees and management. Apparently, absence of clear goals make performance appraisal have more serious consequences in the organizational growth in terms of employee dissatisfaction, reduction in productivity and employees low commitment among others (Maley, 2013).

In addition, notwithstanding that effective strategies have been developed to curtail shortcomings of the defects of performance appraisal but most organizations in the Nigeria today are still faced with all these challenges. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to examine the performance appraisal techniques and their effects on organizational growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview of Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is one of the cornerstones of management control systems. Appraisals may be used for both administrative and developmental purposes, assigning tasks, granting bonuses, and making promotions, identifying employee strengths and weaknesses and assessing training needs (Abbas & Cross, 2019). A structured and coordinated relationship between a subordinate and supervisor that takes the form of an annual or semi-annual interview in which the employee's job performance is thoroughly analyzed and addressed with the intent of identifying strengths and weaknesses, as well as challenges and opportunities for skill growth and improvement (Igbojekwe & Ugo-Okoro, 2015).

According to Sajuyigbe (2017), performance appraisal systems are used by various businesses to reward their workers in the form of bonuses, promotions, and pay raises. This method entails activities such as recognizing employees' accomplishments, providing daily reviews, and providing opportunities for career advancement.

Performance appraisal is a formal and organized interaction between a subordinate and supervisor that takes the form of an annual or semi-annual interview in which the employee's work performance is thoroughly examined and discussed with the goal of identifying strengths and weaknesses, as well as threats and opportunities for skill development and improvement (Igbojekwe & Ugo-Okoro, 2015).





Individual appraisal plan features are likely to be influenced by the firm's organizational background as well as the employees' specific job characteristics. Additionally, higherlevel organizational considerations (e.g., organizational structure) will moderate the relationship between an individual employee's qualities (e.g., hierarchy position) and the appraisal plan's characteristics (James, 2016).

Employee job performance is described as those behavior that can be measured and assessed by others. Employee performance appraisal, according to Lansburry (1988), is "the method of recognizing, assessing, and improving an employee's job performance in the organization such that organizational goals and objectives are efficiently accomplished while, at the same time, benefiting employees in terms of acknowledgement, obtaining input, and providing career guidance" (Solomon, Oravee & Hangeio, 2017)

Historical Development of Performance Appraisal

According to Karabat, Calis and Karabat, (2013) cited in Tobiloba(2021), since 1900, the concept of performance evaluation has included an individual's attitude, actions, mental understanding of features, and capabilities. However, the continuous measurement of variables that are identical to each other for many years (roughly a century) has caused problems. As a consequence of this scenario, the performance assessment requirements were modified. The relationship between individual performance and professional goals was defined standards on behavior scales in the 1960s, towards the end of the 1950s. The 1970s to the present-day exponents under the control of the evaluation systems of evaluation criteria developed for the multi-faceted.

While the earliest examples of organizations appraising employee performance in a systematic and formal institutions delivering public services in the United States are from the beginning of the 1900s, Murphy and Cleveland argue that the first formal performance appraisal procedure recognized in America is conducted by evaluating the soldiers recruited in 1813.

In 1922, Patterson presented the general psychological world with a system known as the Graphic Rating Scale. Rather than make strictly qualitative decisions, this scale offered a measure on which to rate a trait or factor. However, the challenge of identifying performance standards was shown, and performance management has been troubled by the issue ever since. According to Tekalegn (2016) cited in Tobiloba(2021), evaluators' favorite performance appraisal methods (interpersonal comparison and graphics evaluation) yield dubious results on topics like reliability, validity, and identifying discrepancies on issues. Smith and Kendall, on the other hand, created the —Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales|| in 1963, which was the first





method to focus on habits. These scales have been recognized as a tool adopted by evaluators because they are psychometrically adequate (reliable, valid, simple to use, and able to distinguish). In addition to that, Solomon, Oravee and Hangeior (2017) have discussed problems in developing valid and reliable measures for the performance appraisal systems.

Performance Appraisal Techniques

According to John, Nnenna, Kenneth and Solomon (2021), there are divergent performance appraisal techniques adopted by organizations as a yardstick to measuring employees productive output. These techniques are as follows:

Management by Objectives (MBO) Appraisal Technique

According to Nnenna, John, Kenneth and Solomon (2021), MBO as a concept was popularized by Peter Drucker, who noted that objectives perform a critical role in all areas whereas performance and results have direct impacts on the survival of the firm or organization (Armstrong, 2009). Huang, Durcikova, Lai & Lin (2011) posited that it stresses the importance and value of employee involvement since employees often demand for feedback which is hardly given to them by the management. Consequently, this makes it difficult to realize the relative value of their performance compared to their peers. Idowu (2017) stated that a typical MBO appraisal system consists of several steps. They include; the establishment of clear objectives for the employee; the development of an action plan detailing the way in which the objectives are to be achieved; and the implementation of the developed action plan by the employee. Wachiuri (2017) maintained that most appraisal methods consist of five steps. Firstly, organization's management determining or revising objectives across the board for the organization. Secondly, translation of goals to the employees or workforce. Thirdly, stimulating the participation of the employees by encouraging them to set goals in accordance with the organizational goals. Fourthly, monitoring the progress of the process. In addition, the objectives set must be measurable and timely which make it possible to monitor its progress. Finally, the progress is evaluated during which direct feedback is given based on the level of achievement.

360 Degree Method of Appraisal

Recently, 360 degree performance appraisal method has gained significant popularity in both small and large-sized firms (Lepsinger & Lucia, 2009). 360-degree feedback is an assessment system where management teams solicit for information about their employees





based on employee behaviours, employee performance, responses from subordinates, peers, and supervisors. It involves self-evaluation by the employer which enhance the employees to develop work skills and behaviors (Espinilla, de Andrés, Martinez & Martinez, 2013). Furthermore, the process also includes the employee's opinion about him/herself in a multisource, multi-rater and full-circle appraisal system (Grund & Przemeck, 2012). Idowu (2017) identifies four key assessments indicators that constitute a 360 degree appraisal system. They are; self-assessment, immediate supervisor assessment, subordinates assessment and also peer assessment. Interestingly, the fundamental principle behind the use of 360 degree performance appraisal method is that a significant amount of performance data about a given employee can be gathered when multi-sources are used and it gives more accurate and more reflective of their performance (Sahoo & Mishra, 2012). On a similar note, the 360 degree appraisal systems allows for gathering of information about an employee or individual from different degree and angles.

Goal Setting Method of Appraisal

Goals are anticipated future events that motivate the behavior of an employee or individual. An employee expects that some certain specific behaviors should lead to desired outcomes. For instance, higher pay, promotion, acceptance by peers, or support of boss. He/she uses the goal as an internal standard against which to compare, regulate, and maintain his/her behavior (Meacham, 2004). Goal theory posits that employees record higher levels of motivation when they are presented with explicit goals (Idowu, 2017). In addition, goal settings are embedded in performance appraisal to give direction to organization if effectively designed and practiced. However, for difficult goals, getting employees to commit to goal attainment may be problematic. Higher performance levels usually result when people are more committed compared with when people are not committed to goal attainment (Miles, 2012). Furthermore, setting standards influence positively in enhancing employees' satisfaction and work accomplishment. Miles (2012) maintained that people are motivated to behave differently when they notice that there is a discrepancy between their expected performance standard and their actual performance. Therefore, managers should endeavor to set goals that will be attainable and achievable by their employees.

Performance Appraisal Techniques and Effects

In providing the effects of performance appraisal techniques as it contributes to organizational growth, one needs to note that effects or impacts per se, is a two sided coin-





could be negative or positive. Thus, the effects of performance appraisal techniques, according to Tobiloba(2021) are both negative and positive.

Positive Effects of Performance Appraisal Techniques

The provision of positive effects of performance appraisal techniques towards organizational growth intertwine with the principles of performance appraisal(Marvins, Rosemary and Kwado, 2016). According to Marvins et al.,(2016), research has unearthed three substantiated psychological principles upon which performance appraisal rests. These are;

- i. The provision of feedback.
- li. Clear and attainable goals and
- lii.The involvement of staff in the setting of tasks and goals

These principles have wider relevance and they go further than mere improvements in an individual's culture by contributing to broader goals of creating satisfaction of workers in the organisation. Another important principle in performance appraisal is that both the appraiser and the appraised should have clear ethical principles such as trust and openness. The appraiser should make an honest appraisal such as appraising on the basis of sufficient and relevant information, and also both written and oral appraisals must be consistent. Under no circumstances should there be inconsistency in what a sectional head says about a subordinate and what they write about them.

Negative Effects of Performance Appraisal

Sajuyigbe (2017) notes that for a number of decades, performance appraisals have been the most admired, criticized and debated management practices. According to Bekele, et al. (2014), The practice of performance appraisal has been criticized due to supervisors' lack of skills and knowledge, subjectivity, favoritism, and bias, lack of continuous documentation, and failure to provide timely feedback. Employees have a negative impression of the performance appraisal system, and they are dissatisfied with how performance appraisal practices are implemented (Sajuyigne, 2017). Vroom (1990) also confirms that Managers are concerned about the appraisal process, especially the interview. The author notes that managers tend to have a normal dislike for criticizing a subordinate, and often mistrust the employee performance appraisal system instrument. Studies also identify five various types of problems in performance appraisal which can be; an unfair perception of performance appraisal system, the use of inconsistent criteria that may lead to negative attitude towards the appraisal system, unskilled appraisers who lack





communication skills and consequently are not able to conduct an effective performance feedback, lack of tools aimed at improving the performance appraisal system and finally the lack of the senior management support (Kampkotter, 2014; Muhammad & Suraya, 2013).

Bottlenecks to Effective Performance Appraisal in Organization Growth

Studies show considerable bottlenecks to effective performance appraisal in organization growth (Obisi, 2011; Obi, 2002). Performance appraisal create conflict between supervisors and subordinates, and leads to dysfunctional behaviors (Lawler, 1994). If the performance assessment system is not properly designed or not properly executed, employees will be afraid of appraisal. Managers have displayed a dislike to attitude to the time, paperwork, difficult choice, and discomfort that often accompany the appraisal process. Going through the process affects managers' high-priority workload and the experience may be distasteful when appraised employee, perform poorly (Arugu & Chigozie, 2020).

Asadu et al. (2020) states that another challenge bedeviling effective performance appraisal is the issue of objectivity. In the rating scale method, normally measured factors such as attitude, personality, and appearance are subjective factors that are difficult to measure. This happen when managers let individual differences influence their assessment. These range from favoritism, stereotyping, and hostility. In this case, exceptionally high or low assessment is given to only specific employees based on the appraiser's inclination toward the employee. Gender, race, age, and friendship are instances of personal bias that shroud the appraisal process.

Krattenmaker (2009) added that inaccuracy in the appraisal system also constitutes a challenge to appraisal systems. An employee may erroneously be rated near the average or middle of the scale. The attitude of the evaluator is to play safe. This safe-playing attitude arises from reservation and apprehension expressed by evaluators. This practice may be emboldened by some rating scale systems that expect the evaluator to explain in writing for extremely high or low assessment. With such a system, the appraiser may shun probable disapproval or controversy by rotating around the average score. The evaluator use a such expressions such as satisfactory or average to depict the performance of workers. When a manager award an underachiever or overachiever an average rating, it hinders the opportunity for career advancement (Krattenmaker, 2009).

Asadu et al. (2020) posits that a manager's perception of an employee might affect the appraisal process. This happens when the manager's evaluation is influenced by previously held beliefs. Summer (2008) added that leniency or severity on the part of raters make appraisals subjective; and this obliterates the purpose of performance appraisal. Leniency entails giving





unmerited high rating to a worker. This is common when performance criteria are highly subjective and the appraiser is anticipated to review the evaluation result with an employee (Obi, 2002). The issue of political patronage acclaimed to be one of the yardsticks in public service recruitment process in Nigeria poses a challenge to effective performance appraisal. In public organizations, professionalism requires basic skills, training, and experience and when these variables are jeopardized during the recruitment process, managers are faced with the problem of managing and appraising unqualified personnel in the service, since such an individual was engaged based on political patronage Arowolo (2012).

Theoretical Framework

The following were the theoretical undertone of this study

Goal-Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory was proposed by Edwin Locke in the year 1968. According to this theory, goal-setting is essentially linked to task performance. It states that specific and challenging goals, as well as appropriate feedback, results in increased and improved task performance. This theory suggests that the individual goals established by an employee play an important role in inspiring him or her to achieve higher levels of performance. This is due to the employees' continued pursuit of their objectives. If these objectives are not met, they must either improve their performance or modify the objectives to make them more realistic. (Salaman, 2005).

Given that all businesses are goal centered, the need for the adoption of goal setting theory by managers to define how specific organizational goals can be achieved in the most effective and efficient manner cannot be overemphasized. Goal setting theory explains the mechanisms by which goals influence behaviour, and how the latter can be moderated by goal characteristics (difficulty and specificity), the level of commitment, the importance of the goal, and levels of self-efficacy, feedback, and task complexity (Locke & Latham, 1990). Thus, goal setting refers to the process of establishing clear and usable targets, or objectives, for learning (Moeller, Theiler & Wu, 2012). In modern business management, the basis of goal-setting is that when specific difficult goals are set, it engender higher performance than does merely urging individuals to do their best.

However, the above theory relates to the Study because as stated above, goal setting is not about the establishment of clear and crystal objectives for organizational growth but rather employees performance and disposition in achieving the goal counts more. Therefore, employees activities are usually shaped and guided by organizational goals upon which





performances are appraised in view of the structured organizational goals. In other words, goal setting is widely accepted by organizations as a way of maintaining and enhancing productive performances of employees in any organization.

Equity Theory

This theory was propounded by John Stacey Adams in 1965. Equity theory focuses on employees' perceptions of the fairness of their work inputs and outcomes.

The Assumptions of Equity Theory are based upon

i. The theory demonstrates that the individuals are concerned both with their own rewards and also with what others get in their comparison.

ii. Employees expect a fair and equitable return for their contribution to their jobs.

iii. Employees decide what their equitable return should be after comparing their inputs and outcomes with those of their colleagues.

iv. Employees who perceive themselves as being in an inequitable scenario will attempt to reduce the inequity either by distorting inputs and/or outcomes psychologically, by directly altering inputs and/or outputs, or by quitting the organization (Prachi, 2015; Good faith, John, Solomon & Kenneth, 2021).

According to this theory, employees' feelings of inequity can lead to the modification of how they work which can make the organization effective or ineffective. When an employee observes that he should be earning more, he will amend his work input that will be equal to the pay he receives or lay a complaint to the management for re-negotiation or leave the organization for better opportunities (Goodfaith et al., 2021). More so, the implication of equity theory to the present study on performance appraisal and organizational growth is that it helps management and employees to avoid underpayment and over payment, be sensitive to inequity perceptions, monitor regularly for inequity and ensures that sacrifices are distributed equally in organizations.

DISCUSSION

It is worth stating here that avalanche of studies have acknowledged the worrisome dwindling performance of organizations in Nigeria as a result of varied factors. These factors may include inadequate remuneration, unhealthy work environment, severe presence of dysfunctional conflict among members of the organization, lack of employee participation in decision making especially on issues that have direct impact on them as well as poor motivation. The perpetuation of all these issues in an organization impacts negatively on effectiveness of





workers as they make the workers feel insecure with the organization. Performance suffer when management deny workers access to participation in decision making; when workers suffer role conflict; when organizational human stock are discriminated against and when the organizational structure does not give room for proper communication and interaction among workers. This is because for an organization to maintain or improve its overall performance, it must improve the performance of the individual employees within the organization.

Again, Performance appraisal system sometimes has the reputation of creating tension between a supervisor and subordinate. However, sound and effective performance reviews share common components that make them positive experience and maximize the benefit of conducting and participating in them. Emphasizing the good and helping an employee on the road to improvement are important components of effective performance appraisals. Performance can be managed by focusing on employee attributes, behaviours, or results. In addition, we can measure performance in a relative way, making overall comparisons among individuals' performance. Finally, we can develop a performance measurement system that incorporates some variety of the preceding measures, as evidenced by the quality approach to measuring performance (Lotich, 2014). Singularly, these measures can serve an awesome instruments for not only a productive employees rather organizational growth in a grand style.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to understand the relationship between performance appraisal techniques and its effects on organizational growth. It could be concluded that performance appraisal system has significant influence on organizational growth. When management appraises the performance of its workers through various techniques the organization tends to be effective in business were they attain their predetermined goals and objectives, increased productivity and profitability, and as well promote resource allocation. Understanding performance appraisal techniques can help management of organizations better understand how to deal with performance issues among individual and group setting.

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