



Research Paper

Performance Appraisal and Service Delivery of Employees of Selected Ministries in Enugu State (2011-2020)

Professor Agbodike F C & Ugwu onyeka martins

Department Of Public Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe Univerity Awka Anambra State

ABSTRACT

The title of the research work is "Performance Appraisal and Service Delivery of Employees: A Survey of Selected Ministries in Enugu State Civil Service" The need for the research work arose due to the comparatively less attention that has been given to the nature of performance appraisal practices in the Nigeria civil service and specifically in Enugu State Civil Service, despite its imperative impact on employee's productivity. This study therefore sought to examine the effect of performance appraisal on service delivery of employees in Enugu State Civil Service. The study made use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The population of the study is 2,079, while the sample size is 335. The simple random sampling techniques was applied to select the sample for the study while the data collected were presented and analyzed with frequency, percentage, and chi-square [χ^2] analysis. It was discovered that there are challenges facing performance appraisal in the selected ministries. Based on these findings, the study recommended that there should be a clear standard that define each trait in the appraisal system, the appraisal system should be devoid of bias, and there is need to hold the appraisers to objectivity in reporting the appraisal results of employees. It also recommended that the performance appraisal system should be free from unnecessary leniency in which virtually all the employees get high rating, there should be an effective mechanism for checking bias, impartiality and unnecessary leniency that characterize performance appraisal in Enugu State Civil Service, among other things. The study concluded that if the Enugu State Civil Service uses performance appraisal strategically and relate it with human resource activities and policies it can improve the competencies, motivation, capabilities, and performance of its employees

Received 01 November, 2021; Revised: 12 November, 2021; Accepted 14 November, 2021 © The author(s) 2021. Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. INTRODUCTION

When people work in an organization, it is expected that, there should be a way of measuring or evaluating their jobs in order to know whether they are actually performing the job for which they were hired and paid. (Obikeze, S.O, Obiemeka & Abonyi Nick 2005). It is because of the above assertion, that the concept of performance appraisal was introduced in organizations. Performance appraisal is the process of systematically evaluating each employee's job related strengths, development needs and progress towards meeting goals and determining ways to improve the employee's job performance (Hellriegel and Slocum 1996). Performance appraisal has increasingly become part of a strategic approach to integrating human resource activities through which organizations seek to assess employees and develop their competences, enhance performance and distribute rewards (Wanjala & Kimutai 2015). Performance Appraisal is one of the most important functions of Human Resource managers; it is concerned with identifying, measuring, influencing and developing job performance of employees in the organization in relation to the set norms and standards for a particular period of time in order to achieve various purpose.

Employees are required to generate a total commitment to desired standards of job performance and improved job performance for sustaining profitable growth for the organization and long-term value creation for their customer (Singh, 2010). This involves getting optimum use of the available knowledge, skills and abilities in the workforce to optimize employee productivity and give an organization a competitive advantage. The purpose of performance appraisal is to assess employee's performance as objectively as possible. The results of the performance appraisal are used in setting the direction for the individual performance development by bringing out both performance strengths and weaknesses and subsequently developing action plan to facilitate the desired development (Rao, 2005). The role of performance appraisal has gone beyond a tool for assessing

employees to one that is used to reinforce the desired behaviour and competent performance of the employees. Performance appraisal is the single most powerful instrument for mobilizing employees in a sophisticated and well managed organization in order to achieve strategic goals (Singh 2010).

Appraisals focus on activities (e.g. sales calls) result turnover, interpersonal and collaborative attributes and other associated factors. Generally, appraisal looks at the employee's contribution to the achievement of corporate objectives (in the past) and potentials for future contributions (MUO& MUO, 2018). A well designed performance appraisal system should develop criteria for successful performance, give performance feedback and enable a more equitable reward system. Performance criteria form the basis of evaluating the employees' performance and their contribution towards the organization goal. It consists of the desired outputs expected of employees. Performance criteria should be aligned with goals, relevant to given roles, specific and measurable, under employees control and understood and accepted by participants (Dattner, 2010). Since performance appraisal involves evaluation of employee performance, some employees may be scared of the act of evaluation. Two possible explanations for this is the absent of rewards for properly completed process.

The output of every organization depends on how well and how much the performance of an employee is appraised and evaluated. Productivity can therefore be defined as "quality or volume of the major product or services that an organization provides" in short, productivity is what comes out of production. Unfortunately, the numbers of organization using an effective performance appraisal policy are limited, especially in the public sector. Performance appraisal is key in human resource management function which is viewed as a subset of performance management. Rao (2005) argues that performance appraisal is a method of evaluating the behavior of employees in their work. Although it has many benefits for the organization. Nurse, (2005) states that performance appraisal have the equal probability of having a bad influence on the organization as well as on employee if not properly and effectively carried out. Performance appraisal has also been described as the process of evaluating the performance and qualification of the employees in terms of the requirements of the job for which they are employed. In every organization, the performance of the employees is important in achieving organizational goals. The success of every organization can therefore be partly attributed to management of performance appraisal exercises.

Performance appraisal is one of the basic tools that make workers to be very effective and active at work. It is further concerned with identifying, measuring, influencing and developing job performance of employees in relation to the set norms and standards for a particular period of time in order to achieve various purposes (Cole, 2002). Employees are required to exhibit total commitment to desired standards of job performance and improved job performance for sustaining the success of the given organization and long-term value creation for the customers or beneficiaries (Singh, 2010). This involves attaining optimum use of the available knowledge, skills and abilities in the workforce to optimize employee productivity and give an organization a competitive advantage. In Nigeria, most of the performance appraisal exercise programs are not well designed and focused. Most organizations tend to view appraisal exercise as a punitive measure. This makes it loses its objective and focus. Performance appraisal no longer seeks to actualize its objective of correcting abnormalities which in turn increase productivity and jettison all hindrances that tend to hinder productivity. The poor service delivery in the public sector is a serious problem facing public at large. In this regard performance appraisal can be a reliable tool to boost organizational productivity. It is against this background that this research work will empirically focus on the evaluation of the effect of performance appraisal on the service delivery of employees on selected government ministries in Enugu state. The selected ministries for this research are the Ministry of Labor and Productivity, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Ministry of Social Development Enugu state.

1.3 Objectives of the study.

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the Effect of performance Appraisal on the service delivery of employees. The specific objective is:

1. To determine the challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service.

Research question.

The researcher developed the following research question to guide the study.

1. What are the perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service?

Hypothesis.

The study was guided by the following alternate hypothesis.

There are challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of the staff of the four selected ministries from Enugu state civil service. The sample consisted of 335 staff of the ministries selected through simple random sampling technique. A self – developed questionnaire titled ‘perceived challenges of performance appraisal in Enugu state ministries were used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to validity by two experts, one in the department of business administration and the other in the department of public administration all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Nigeria.

Comments and recommendations of the experts were effected in the final construction of the instrument by the researchers which was used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test and retest method. The collected data were analyzed with mean ratings and standard deviation, decision rule was based on 4-points numerical values on the response categories of: Very high extent-4points, High extent-3 points, Low extent-2points, Very low extent 1point-A criterion mean of 2.50 was adopted- This means that any item with a weighted mean value of 2.50 and above was considered high while any mean below 2.50 was considered low

III. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher presents and analyses the data collected from the respondents. Out of 335 questionnaires distributed, 301 were dully filled and returned. Therefore the data was analyzed and presented based on the 301 questionnaires that were returned.

Research question: What are the perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service

Table 4.9: Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	N	X	SD	DEC
1	Lack of immediate feedback hinders effective performance appraisal	301	3.51	0.67	High
2.	Bias among the appraisers are responsible for low service delivery	301	3.38	0.73	High
3.	Fear of reprisal for adverse report on subordinate staff could set back the objective of an appraisal	301	3.31	0.84	High
4.	Unnecessary leniency in which virtually all the employees are rated high	301	3.21	0.89	High
5.	Primordial relations underscore appraisal in Enugu state civil service	301	3.24	0.83	High
6.	Propensity of appraisers to rate employees at the middle of the rating scale	301	3.35	0.77	High
	Cluster Mean	301	3.35	0.42	High

Table above presents the mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the **perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service**. The table shows that the mean responses of the staff ranged from 3.21 to 3.38. All the items had mean values greater than 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The clusters mean scores on the **perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service** were 3.35.

Based on the fact that the cluster mean scores were above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents indicate that the listed items 1-6 are the **perceived challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service**.

Test of Hypothesis

In this section, we present hypothesis testing that has earlier been mentioned in chapter one. The hypotheses were tested for statistical significance or otherwise so that we can reject or accept each observed hypothesis.

Hypothesis:

Hi: There are challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service.

Table 1: Chi-Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.649	9	.029 .019

Likelihood Ratio	12.271	9	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.629	1	.038
N of Valid Cases	3018		

Table 2: Chi-Square Test Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.022			.030
	Cramer's V	.013			.030
	Contingency Coefficient	.021			.030
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.511	.057	.171	.043
Ordinal by Ordinal					.024
	Spearman Correlation	.619	.064	.932	
N of Valid Cases		3018			

From the table, the value of Pearson chi-square is computed as 10.70 with a degree of freedom. However, comparing them with critical value of chi-square at 9 degree of freedom and 5% level of significance, it is clear that the computed value of 18.65 is greater than the critical value at 9 degree of freedom with 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

The implication of this is that there are challenges of performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu state civil service.

Furthermore, this finding is corroborated by table 4.12.2 above where the symmetric measures were also computed to support the analysis. From the table, it can be seen that the Cramer's V value is significant at 0.03 which is less than 5% level of significance. Similarly, the contingency coefficient is also significant at 0.03 just like the Cramer's V. Both Pearson's R and Spearman's R are significant at 5% with the values of 0.043 and 0.024 respectively.

Challenges of performance appraisal

Supervisors and employees generally have ambivalent attitudes, at best, towards performance appraisal (Obikezie et al., 2005). Although most would recognize the perceived benefit, in principle, of documenting, communicating and setting goals in areas of performance, many are also frustrated concerning the actual benefit received from performance appraisal in their organizations. The benefits and rewards of performance appraisal appear to be often overstated. Muo (2018) suggests that the typical performance appraisal system devours staggering amounts of time and energy, depresses and demotivates people, destroys trust and teamwork and, adding insult to injury, it delivers little demonstrable value at great cost. The findings of several studies addressing the challenges of performance appraisal and the consequences of performance appraisal that is not done well are summarized below.

According to Singh (2010) mentioned several pitfalls that are common to performance appraisal system (1) they demand too much from supervisors, (2) standards and ratings vary widely and sometime unfairly, (3) personal values and bias can replace organizational standards, (4) employees may not know how they are rated due to lack of effective communication, (5) the validity of ratings is reduced by supervisory resistance to give the ratings particularly negative ratings, (6) negative feedback can demotivate employees and (7) they interfere with the more constructive coaching relationship that should exist between superiors and their employees.

Performance appraisal which is seen as a way of providing review and evaluation of an individual job performance has its own negative and positive effect on the employee's productivity in an organization. This system acts as a motivator to the employee to improve their productivity. When the goals of the employee are clarified, his performance challenges identified, the effect is to motivate the employee to achieve organizational goals.

Creating a comprehensive plan for employee development and giving an employee achievement to strive for, will inspire a higher level of efficiency. It is seen as a career development tool for the manager and employee. The manager can help guide the employee on the path to corporate advancement, and the employee gets a clearer understanding of what is expected of her in her daily duties.

The duty of the employee is based on guidance from management. Appraisal is when a manager and employee review the job descriptions and compare the employee's performance with expectations. This gives the employee a feeling of clarity and understanding that will help him better perform his duties.

According to Rudman (2003), performance appraisal policy is a critical factor in an organization in enhancing the performance of the employee. There is a strong connection between how firms manage their employees and the organizational results they achieve.

Cook & Crossman (2004) highlight that employee whose performance is under review often become defensive. Whenever employee performance is rated as less than the best or as less than the level at which employee personally perceives his/her contribution, the manager is viewed as being biased. Disagreement about the contribution and performance ratings can create a conflict ridden situation that festers for months.

According to Mayhew (1985), company use performance appraisals to measure employee job performance and to determine salary and wages increases. Nevertheless, performance appraisal also brings news that causes fret over job security, status, eligibility for promotion and possible bias or unfair ratings. It also shows the strength and weaknesses of employee on their job.

The use of reward has been an essential factor in any company's ability to meet its goals. In every establishment or organization, especially in the public sector, it becomes imperative to have the goal and objectives clearly stated meaning that employer has to give detailed description of each person's role. Schraeder, Becton & Portis, (2007), communicate their role to them in a concise manner. If a company is just developing its appraisal system without a baseline performance to reward accordingly, there is likely to be a problem from the side of the employee which will in turn affect the goal of the organization in general. Appraisals are often developed mostly in the public sectors to reward or recognize employee(s) for a job well done. This kind of motivation for high performers also serves as a challenge for the low performers.

The present scenario across the world is drastically changing, in this situation the changes are taking place very rapidly. The condition is very risky and uncertain. Over and above stiff competition is being faced in the market worldwide, every firm is putting its best efforts to perform the work better and before other. Efforts are put to increase the quality, quantity, decrease the time taken and cost involved, this improves the efficiency. To know whether their efficiency is high or low, it is through productivity measurement. Efficiency is the ability to perform the tasks with available resources which are man, material, money and information. With the help of productivity measurement the remedial and improvement actions can be planned by the management so that their working ability stay in tune with the need of the time to fulfill the objectives.

IV. CONCLUSION

The basic purpose of an appraisal system should be to improve the employee performance that will lead to organizational success and high productivity. The system must be deeply observed and recognize that employees are the most important resource. The system should first of all contribute to the motivation of employees; this ideology will require a continuous effort in, coaching, counseling, and flat communications between the employees and supervisors. The findings of this study seem to suggest that the civil service is interested in improving their performance through the performance appraisal systems. The Enugu State Civil Service should seek to enhance the employee's motivation so that they can be satisfied towards the appraisal system.

This study is expected to contribute to the knowledge of the personnel unit in the areas of performance appraisal and employees productivity in Enugu State Civil Service. If the Enugu State Civil Service use performance appraisal as a strategic appraisal and relate it with human resource activities and policies it can improve the competencies, motivation, capabilities and performance of its employees.

The study also discovered that there are challenges facing performance appraisal in the selected ministries in Enugu State Civil Service. The study identified lack of clear standard (descriptive phrases that define each trait), bias among appraisers (lack of objectivity), and fear of reprisal for adverse report on subordinate staff are some of the challenges facing performance appraisal in the selected ministries. It also discovered unnecessary leniency in which virtually all the employees get high rating, primordial relations underscore appraisal in Enugu State Civil Service, and propensity of appraisers to rate workers at the middle of the rating scale.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The performance appraisal is one of the most important human resource management practices as it yields critical decision integral to various human resource action and outcomes.

This study explored the relationship between performance appraisal and service delivery of workers in the selected ministries in Enugu State Civil Service. It is undisputable fact that having a high performing workforce is essential for growth, development and survival of any economy. It is important to recognize that a high engaged workforce can increase innovation, productivity, and bottom-line performance, while reducing costs related to hiring and retention in highly competitive talent markets. In view of the findings of this study, the researcher therefore recommends that-

- There should be a clear standard that define each trait in the appraisal system.

- The appraisal system should be devoid of bias. There is need to hold the appraisers to objectivity in reporting the appraisal results of workers.
- The performance appraisal system should be free from unnecessary leniency in which virtually all the employees get high rating.
- There should be an effective mechanism for checking bias, impartiality and unnecessary leniency that characterize performance appraisal in Enugu State Civil Service.
- Any changes made to ratings of employees during the performance appraisal process should be communicated clearly and early to all concerned. This would go a long way to prevent conflict situations and create a healthy atmosphere for team work in civil service.
- The researcher also recommends that top management and directors of ministries who conduct the performance appraisal need to be equipped with methods of motivating employees through the performance appraisal policy. It is necessary to point that motivation is an important element to employee performance.
- Furthermore, performance appraisal policy creates a learning experience that motivates employees to develop themselves and improve on their performance, therefore managers and directors should educate workers properly as regards performance appraisal process and the intents, so that workers will not see it as a punitive measure.
- Employees with good performance appraisal result should be rewarded accordingly so as to install confidence in the appraisal system.
- The management should send the employees to training, seminar, workshop and programs based on their job roles and their performance appraisal report irrespective of their cadre or status.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Becton, M. & Portis, R.G. (2007). *Providing Comprehensive System Design and Performance*. Books Limited Company.
- [2]. Cole, G.A. (2002). *Personnel and Human Resources Management*. London: Thomson Learning Books Limited.
- [3]. Cook, J., Crossman, A. (2004). Satisfaction with Performance Appraisal Systems: *Journal of Management Psychology*. 19 (15), 526-541
- [4]. Dattner (2010). *366 Days of Insight and Motivation for Getting the Rights things Done*, 1st edition, New York: Harper Business.
- [5]. Hellriegel, D. & Slocum, T.W. (1996). *Management (7thed.)*. Cincinnati Ohio: South Western College Publishing.
- [6]. Mayhew, C. (1985). Performance Appraisal and Management: The Developing Research Agenda. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 74(4)473-487.
- [7]. Muo M.C. & Muo I.K, (2018). *Organizational Behaviour: a Nigerian Perspective*. Ogun State: Leksilicon Publishing Company Limited.
- [8]. Nurse, L. (2005). Performance Appraisal, Employee Development and Organizational Justice: Exploring the Linkages. *International Journal of Human Resources Management* 16(7)38-49.
- [9]. Obikeze, S., Obiajulu, Obi Emeka & Abonyi (2005), *Personnel Management*: Onitsha: Book Point Limited.
- [10]. Rao, P.S. (2005). *Employee Performance Management. Policies and Practices in Multi- National Enterprises*, London: Kogan Books Limited.
- [11]. Rudman, R. (2003). *Human Resource Management in New Zealand*, Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand Limited.
- [12]. Singh, T. (2010). *Appraising Employee Performance in a Downsized Organization*. Lain Mangham: Trackers Publications Limited.
- [13]. Wanjala, M.W. & Kimutai, G. (2015). Influence of Performance Appraisal on Employee Performance in Commercial Banks in Trans Nzoia County- Kenya. *International Business Journal of Management* 5(4)56-89.
- [14]. Yamani, T. (1964) *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis, Third Edition*, New York: Harper and Row Publishing Company Limited.