



Performance Management and Employee Productivity: An Overview

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Abstract: *This study was carried out on performance management and employee productivity: An overview. It has remained the desire of every organization to ensure that they don't only survive but also gain competitive advantage. Gaining competitive advantage is indeed, a function of many factors, which must be taken so seriously by the organization. The productivity of the employee at every point in time is very essential, however, it is largely dependent on how the performance management tool is appreciated and handled. The current study identified some of the performance dimensions that play key role in influencing employee productivity. These dimensions includes feedback- which upholds the need for regular update of the information about those things that the employee need to know about his job and the work environment; appraisal- which upholds that the employee performance be evaluated on a regular basis to ascertain gap were necessary and take corrective measures. Conclusion was drawn and the following recommendation among others were made. (i) While the productivity of the employee is key to the influencing of the overall performance of the organization, employee feedback is like a catalyst that can quickly shape and redirect the effort of the employee to the actual performance that is critical to improving his/her productivity and the attainment of organization goal. Hence, feedback should be provided as regular as possible*

Keywords: *Performance management, employee productivity, compensation, feedback, appraisal.*

1.1 Background of the study

Businesses and organizations are generally established to achieve predetermined goals and objectives, which largely center on satisfying customers' needs and eventually making profit. However, attaining these established goals and objectives have been questioned by many different factors, including how performance is managed and the actual productivity of the employee. The rapid changes in the business arena occasioned by technological improvement, increased customers awareness, numerous and intense number of competition among others have shaped businesses generally and placed a lot of demand on the employee whose productivity remains hallmark to attaining the goals of any organization, hence, the need for performance management. Performance management (PM) focuses on managing the individual, group and work environment for the purpose of achieving set organizational goals (Esu & Inyang, 2009; Fletcher, 2001). Most of the businesses (both large and small scale business) that existed

are no more in existence, means that something is wrong somewhere especially in the absence of performance management which was determined to contribute to the high rate of business failures in Nigeria (Ellis & Chinedu, 2011; Esu & Inyang, 2009). Therefore, the need for performance management cannot be undermined and also, cannot be over-emphasized. Managing every phase of the performance chain, remains key to the productivity of the employee which in turn also, have direct bearing on the organization. As noted by Amir, (2012) and Sharif, (2002), Performance Management came into effect as a human resource management reform to address and redress concerns organisations had about performance.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The success of any organization whether large or small is usually, a function of many factors and one of such crucial factor is performance management. Despite how important this tool is to the attainment of the goals of any organization, many organization leaders doesn't embrace it and even those that do, on one hand, does it ignorantly and on the other hand allow emotions and relationships to be a key influencer of the entire process, thereby bringing about little or no result and as such, reason even not to engage in it anymore. According to Esu (2009), the failure of businesses are attributed to ineffective and inefficient performance management. Furthermore, every activity initiation and implementation is largely associated with its required skills and knowledge-base. Lack of the requisite skill-set and an accurate and reliable performance management system, have equally truncated the effort of some of the organisations that have attempted to implement performance management. As noted by Waal (2007) the overall lack of management skills and expertise often makes it not viable to develop complex structures such as sophisticated performance management systems. Also, Balogun (2002) stated that, the lack of precise definition and no consensus on an appropriate strategy for initiating and sustaining performance management is a factor that sometimes militates against the unity of purpose required to make performance management initiatives work. Additionally, following the high dominance of emotions, relationships and nepotism that has characterized the performance management system, favoritism becomes an integral part, in which, certain sections are compromised, as certain are overlooked, thereby bringing about negative consequences on the entire performance management activity.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

The general aim of this study is to examine the relationship between performance management and employee productivity. Specifically, the objective of this study is to ascertain

- i. The effect of feedback on employee productivity
- ii. The relationship between appraisal and employee productivity. And
- iii. The influence of compensation on employee productivity

1.4 Significance of the study

Research studies have generally revolutionized and shaped the way and manner in which practitioners and researchers engages in carrying out their activities. This have been achieved through the contribution to knowledge and recommending things that were ordinarily taken for granted initially. Consequently, the current study is significant because,

- i. It contribute to the general body of knowledge
- ii. It will serve as reference to students and researchers who will venture into this field of researcher
- iii. It will provide a more convincing platform for those business owners who never appreciated the principles of performance management to do so
- iv. It will provide that needed challenge for managers and business owners to strive to acquire and attain the required skill to design and implement a sophisticated and robust performance management system
- v. It will serve as yardstick for government to institute policies on the need for performance management, as a tool for better employee productivity and continuous existence of public corporations

2.1 Review of related Literatures

2.2 Theoretical review

This study is based on two theories. The open system theory and the equity theory

2.2.1 Open System theory

Ordinarily, the concept of a system was originally used to describe, living things as associated with the natural sciences discipline. However, the use of the concept has widened to embrace many other things, that even structures can be said to have the attributes of a system and as such be regarded as a system. A system can be seen as a unit with sub-units that are connected to function as a whole. Organizations are system and as a system, it equally imply that it is made up of different components that are inter-related. Lemonides (2007) described organizations as entities that are holistic and goal driven with collaborative and interdependent subsystems. The subsystems consist of entities such as leadership, employees, departments, projects, production and services processes, and teams (McNamara, 2011). Church (1994) used open systems theory to reveal how communication impacted organizations on a macro, rather than micro level. This therefore imply that each component of the organization directly or indirectly are linked and whatever affects each, will probably affect the other. open systems theory has served as a solid framework that numerous researchers have relied on for decades to better understand how organizations function and how to improve organization operations on a human level because “organizational settings dominate our lives” (Boyed, 2015). Ridley and Mendoza (1993) described open systems theory as an effective method for analyzing and assessing the entire organization, versus merely considering isolated sections of an entity, hence, Brown (2015), concluded that Systems theory also suggested that both internal and external factors constantly disrupt the system; it is constantly changing. Therefore, the system view of the organization is very crucial. Because, until the impact of each of the units on the entire system is ascertained, the performance of such unit may not be optimally appreciated. It is very much possible for a component of a system to appear to be doing and functioning very well (that is to appear productive), however, with little impact on the entire system.

2.2.2 Expectancy Theory

This theory is credited to Vroom (1964). This theory is generally referred to as motivation theory. This theory center so much on perception, which in turn, greatly affect an individual or group under consideration. In a simple term, the theory states that the effort to be exerted in optimally carrying out a task, is a function of the expectation of the person or group under consideration. According to Banjoko, (2002) Vroom's expectancy theory was an attempt to describe how an individual's motivation to achieve a particular goal or performance target can be explained in terms of what outcome would become beneficial to the individual as a result of achieving that goal and what value is placed on that outcome. Idemobi (2010), noted that the Expectancy Theory is a process theory developed, which basically concentrates on the outcomes.

2.3 Performance management

Performance is a concept that have been used from many different perspectives including homes, social affiliations, government institutions and private establishments. In this context however, the concept of performance will be restricted to the workplace and organizational environment. Ewurum (2006) stated that performance occupies a strategic place in the organizational scheme of things, insisting that both sides of the internal and external environment have a stake in performance for obvious reasons. While Boni and Holzl (2010) noted that organizational performance remains a central theme in contemporary literature. To perform means to carryout, to execute and to implement. Obviously, there is no singular best approach to the definition of performance, from the global context. Hence scholars have viewed it from varying perspectives. Therefore, performance can be seen as a deliberate activity carried out by an individual, group or organization for the attainment of a purpose. Aguinis (2005) stated that there are two important facets of performance which are task and contextual. Task performance or work performance refers to the specific activities required by one's job. Meanwhile contextual performance refers to the activities require to be a good member of the organization or as a citizen. Both task and contextual performance are needed for organizational success and both should be included in a performance management. Performance on its own, may not really attain the best desired result until the element of management is enshrined in it, hence the concept of performance management. In terms of definition, there has been so much interest by researchers in this field, providing meaning to the concept. According to Fowler (1990) performance management is the organization of work to achieve the best possible results. According to Storey and Sission (2003) performance management involves an interlocking set of policies and practices which have as their focus, the enhanced achievement of organizational objectives through a concentration on individual performance. Therefore, the essential nature of performance management can be seen clearly, as it encompasses every aspect of the organizational system, ranging from the very top management to the lower echelon of the organization. The interlock between individual employees and the organization does not necessarily suggest that their goal will always be in line and that the effort of the employee will always be for the general wellbeing of the organization. According to Katz and Kahn (1978), assuming that organizational and individual goals and purposes align is unreasonable. For instance, nowadays researchers and practitioners tend to assume that employees' individual performances lead to intended organizational performance if individuals' goals are in line with organizational goals (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017). This assumptions in many

cases are usually not true. From the individual's point of view PM system is important to clarify job responsibilities, expectations and priorities; to provide feedback and coaching; and to enable systematic dialogue about longer-term career aspirations and personal development (Bakacsi, et al. 1999). Therefore, there must be a deliberate effort to establish a link that will foster a cordial performance effect between that of the individual and that of the organization. As stated by Éva (2019) the relevance of PM systems and practices is that they aim to establish a link between individual performance improvement and firm performance improvement. Performance Management is a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization (Aguinis & Pierce, 2008). Hence to get the best of performance management, it must be an activity that is carried out on a regular basis. Poister (2003) also asserted that performance management is used to enhance employees' productivity through managing their performance.

2.3.1 Performance appraisal and employee productivity

Performance appraisal remain an essential element of the performance management and an activity that its outcome, will greatly affect the performance of the employee and in turn, the total performance of the organization. As noted by Lambert (2009), performance appraisal is a completely integrated system involving periodic planned discussions between the manager and employee's total performance against predetermined goals, having the manager to coach and counsel the staff in areas requiring correctives actions, to improve overall performance for the benefit of both employees and the total organization. The determination of how well an employee is doing in an organization remain under the purview of performance appraisal. It is an activity that is required to be carried out on a regular basis to ensure that things are usually in place and the employee doing what is expected, having the required skills and knowledge. Stanton and Burshirk (2004), holds the view that performance appraisal should serve as a basis for the employee's self-development and as a basis for sound company programme for the guidance and development of personnel. As things continue to change which equally expect that the employees change in similar direction, it will take an effective performance appraisal to ascertain if the employee has the required capability to fit into the trends that are unfolding. One important function of performance appraisals is to encourage and guide improved employee performance (Latham & Wexley, 1994). However, the perception and conviction of the employee that the appraisal process was compromised, will definitely diminish morale. For instance, Latham & Mann (2006) note that, If performance appraisals are perceived as unfair, however, they can diminish rather than enhance employee attitudes and performance

2.3.2 Feedback and employee productivity

Feedback is a concept that many organizations and managers have taken for granted over the years. It is information of previous behavior which helps the recipient to improve or adjust current performance (Daniels, 2000 cited in Palmer, Johnson & Johnson, 2015); and feedback is information given to recipient after their behavior (Mayer, et. al, 2013). Furthermore, Morrison & Bies (1991) defined the feedback as a way to inform the employees about what they need to self-assess and how to improve their performance. Feedback can be seen as one of the most prevalent intervention in the field of organizational behavior management and is a highly popular invention in the domain of applied behavior analysis (Marthouret & Sigvardsson, 2016). However, the importance of the concept cannot be overemphasized, as it cut across

both work environment and life, generally. In the real life of human being, all the situations are sometime characterized by the actions which happen in routine where the individuals are able to perform different tasks and they receive feedback about their performance and abilities, (Eberlin et al, 2009). It is very necessary that employees' feedback should be positively entertained (Farooq & Khan, 2011, otherwise (Laurie, 1996) transparent reality is that unavailability of feedback from low or even high level employees would not let them know uneasiness of each other. Feedback is basic source of educating human in the sense of removing barriers they face in propagating their activities towards the targets they are given in their working environment (Watts, 2007). Furthermore, the collection of results from feedback helps the management or supervisor to construct a training program which should be comprised of those factors of training which can assist in removing negative outcomes obtained through feedback, while impressive training can support to great extent in making the way clear to the achievement of best shape of outcomes (Ellis et al, 2005). While feedback is important, ensuring that feedback, covers all the aspect it's supposed to cover and involve all the stakeholders it is meant for, is even more important. This can be referred to as 360 degree feedback. The feedback includes a wide range of sources from formal rules to personal thoughts and feelings (Hanser & Muchinsky 1978). Pulakos and O'Leary (2011) illustrated that ongoing informal feedback exchanges between managers and employees can enhance the effectiveness of performance management (e.g. communicating clear work expectations, setting short-term objectives and deadlines, and providing continual guidance). The concept of 360 degree feedback, though it can be very much critical but, prepares every level employee to remove the ambiguities of its routine activities and polish their skills by making them productive for achievement of their goals (Luthans. K. W, 2002). Feedback from employees at all level covering every perspective is informative to the management in particular and to the organization at large, while on the other end it allows employees to know about how much they are deviating from their assigned goals, thereby drawing consciousness to taking corrective measures. This will generally makes them focus more, thereby paving way for better goal attainment. Kathiravan et. al, (2006) expressed their views that feedback is a source of improvement of quality of products and strengthen the performance of the workforce. Hence, feedback remain critical to improved productivity. By seeking feedback, employees can obtain information to improve their task performance (Butler, 1993), reduce their uncertainty (Ashford, 1986), and "learn the ropes" of a new job (Morrison, 1993). According to Baker et. al, (2013) The value of organizational feedback culture on feedback outcomes is crucial. Hence, Timothy and Clinton (2005) expressed that marginal increase in production has been achieved through feedback and its proper response.

Furthermore, Feedback and goal setting have become integrated management tools because they are thought to serve both informational and motivational functions that enhance an employee's work performance (Mamula et. al, 2020). When feedback is received, the receiver is fully aware that he or she gets it from the perspective of the person who gives it to him or her and therefore, there is no reason to defend or justify him or herself (Mamula et. al, 2020).

Companies interested in development of leadership need to assess willingness on part of their employees to change and include them in their development programs, applying tools which diagnose their strengths and weaknesses, strengthen their communication skills, and release the potential for perceiving a broader picture and a step ahead, all aimed at promoting company achievements (Sci, 2018; Goleman, et. al, 2001).

2.3.3 Compensation and employee productivity

The existence of any organization is a function of such organization having workforce who can actually provide value to the customers of the organization, who actually pay for the existence of the organization. However, for the workforce of any organization to provide value for customers, the workforce must first be valued by the organization-owners and the management of the organization. One way the workforce can be valued is through what they get from the organization, in terms of salaries and other benefits for their time, contribution and expertise. These collection of things received by the employee or workforce, is what is known as compensation. Compensation is a broad concept that encompasses a lot of benefits associated with working for an organization. It could be in the form of salaries/wages, medical, holiday, training and development of the employee, educational training of the immediate family of the employee etc. In whichever form it comes from the organization to the employee, it is regarded as compensation. Compensation is very important to the influencing of the productivity of any employee, this is because, it can also serve as motivation. Take for instance, an employee whose full/partial responsibility of medical bills of his entire immediate family is taken by his organization. This imply that this burden has being lifted off him, and while he is happy about this, he will equally be prepared to be more committed to discharging his duties and this will bring about improvement in his productivity.

2.4 Employee productivity

Sheriff, Alibaba, and Aliyu (2012) gave an understanding to the concept of employee productivity that implies the level or degree of output achieved from a defined input, it is rather more serious as it has been found that it forms the core of achievement of corporate goals and objectives, production, market, and sustainability of organizations

2.4.1 Training

It has remained a main stream activity for every organization to endeavor to enhance the skills and abilities of their staff in order to adequately prepare them for the accomplishment of task assigned to them. To achieve the above, set in the concept of training. Training is usually a deliberate activity that must be given the require resources and policy in order to attain its purpose. And therefore, a useful tool for the enhancement of both employee and organization productivity. According to Farooq & Khan (2011) training has been the main factor for influencing the employees' skills, abilities and attitude individually or in groups or in the shape of teams that have never been able to handle their tasks by their own until and unless they provide healthy support to each other while working on their targets. Extensive training and high motivation is required for those with low qualification and that is truly necessary to make them able to work with other highly qualified people (Becci, 2006).

So, team members should develop the environment where they can bring down the short comings of weak members by consistently contributing to their weak performance (Lisa et al, 2010). Improving employees' self-efficacy at work will also assist in pushing their performance to an improved and effective level and increasing their momentum on their own behalf (Svenja, 2007). Training targets the removal of weak and negative aspects in organizational results and

tends towards the improvement of traditional practices which are adding very little in approaching to the defined targets (Kathiravan, Devadason and Zakkeer, 2006). Organizations around the world who are working with the notion of continuous progress in their employees work and performance, they should arrange such programs for those who can polish the employees' abilities and can develop their competencies which are required at the workplace, (Jie and Roger, 2005). Training not only mentally develops the employee but also prepare them to make better their health in order to be with active mind and more productive thought for the organization (David, 2006)

3.1 Conclusion and recommendation

3.1.1 Conclusion

Performance management (PM) has come to play an indispensable role in helping organizations to reach their goals of productivity (Stevens & Joyce, 2000). In the past, research on PM has not had the impact it could have on the practice, mainly because it has focused on the quantitative criterion, that refers to the validity and reliability of the measurement tools, while researchers paid less attention to the qualitative criterion, that refers to the individual justice perceptions of these tools and practices, that affect employees' attitudes and behavior in the workplace (Farndale et al., 2011). Hence performance management, remain a necessity to the enhancement of employee productivity.

Furthermore, to awaken and shape the effort of the employee to the right direction in enhance improved productivity, feedback becomes crucial. Feedback is a tool used to improve employee performance. Efficient feedback facilitates growth and enables people to align what the organization needs with what energizes them (Mamula, 2020). Some decades ago, when the importance of feedback was really not appreciated and taken seriously for granted by many, the performance of employees and consequently, that of the organization was greatly affected. This was because, to a very large extent, feedback exercise, is a yearly activity and as such, many of the things that ordinarily could have been corrected are left till the close of business for the year. Organizations are increasing the amount and frequency of the performance feedback they provide to their employees (Ewenstein et al. 2016; Cappelli and Tavis, 2016; 2018). This surge is based on the generalized belief that supplying workers with ongoing feedback can boost their performance. Accordingly, companies are replacing their traditional performance appraisal practices, in which they give performance feedback once per year, with ongoing feedback systems (Awaysheh et al, 2022). Hence, in the contemporary, ongoing feedback practice has become the culture of many organizations and consequently, changing the performance of the employees, with a resultant positive effect on the productivity of the organization at large.

3.1.2 Recommendations

This study has examined performance management and employee productivity, while effort was equally made to look at some of the tools through which these concepts can be explained or measured. Consequently, the following recommendations are made.

- i. While the productivity of the employee is key to the influencing of the overall performance of the organization, employee feedback is like a catalyst that can quickly shape and redirect the effort of the employee to the actual performance that is critical

- to improving his/her productivity and the attainment of organization goal. Hence, feedback should be provided as regular as possible
- ii. There should be up to date training to equip the employee with the requisite abilities and skills required to carry out assigned responsibilities.
 - iii. Deliberate effort should be made to ensure that employee compensation is commensurate with their input-output factor, as this will equally serve as motivation.

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