



RESEARCH ARTICLE

EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATION ON PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS AND ITS EFFECT ON
WORK ATTITUDE; THE CASE OF KENYA SEED COMPANY LTD

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ABSTRACT

Performance appraisal is a means of evaluating employees' current past performance standards set by the organization. The purpose of the study was to establish the employees participation on performance appraisal process and its effect on work attitude in Kenya seed Company Limited. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the 71 employees. The data collected from the field was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results were then presented in tables, pie charts and bar graphs. On overall, the study found out that the purpose of employee participation in performance appraisal process at Kenya seed is embraced by the management but a lot need to be done since a number of respondents were not sure. It was recommended that the management should continue embracing involvement of employees in performance appraisal process and employees to get more information on why they are being involved.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Performance appraisal is a means of evaluating employees' current past performance standards set by the organization. Appraisal involves the setting of standards, and assessing the employees' past and current performance in relative to these standards. Cole (2002). Performance appraisals also involve the provision of feedback on employees' actual work performance in relation to the standard set. Dessler (2003) states that Performance appraisal Permits for continuous communication between the supervisor and an employee about job performance, as a result this provides appropriate information to the management which can lead to appropriate managerial action for the improvement of the organizational standards. He further suggests that, In most organizations that appraise staff, performance appraisals provide some valuable information to a number of important human resource issues such as: deciding promotions, determining transfers, making terminations, identifying training needs, identifying skill and competency deficits, providing employee feedback and determining reward allocations. Through Performance appraisal organizations can validate and refine organizational actions such as selection, promotion and provide feedback to employees with the intention of improving future performance.

Various methods used to appraise employees include; Essay, Graphic rating scale, forced choice distribution, Management by objectives (MBO), rating and assessment centres and behaviorally anchored rating scales, Graphic rating scale is used to assess employees on quality and quantity of work

done. In cases of suspicion of rater bias, then graphic scale and essay approaches are combined which helps each appraiser to appreciate the standard similarities. In forced – choice technique employees are rated and better employees, are those with higher scores while the poor get low scores. Management by objectives (MBO) involves employees helping in setting their own work standards and targets. To rank people working under different supervisors or departments, Alternation ranking and paired ranking techniques are used. In assessment centres, individuals from different departments are brought together to spend days working on individual and group assignments similar to the ones they will handle if they are promoted Armstrong (2002). Perception varies from person to person and thus we may assign different meanings to what we perceive. The perception of performance appraisal by employees of organization is important, as employees are the driving force behind any successful productivity. The appraiser and appraisee should view performance similarly, so as to lead to increased acceptance of appraisal Nzuve(2007). According to Nzuve (2007) people's behavior is based on their perception of the reality. If staff perception of what is expected of them is consistent with the actual expectations of the organization, then the result is effective performance. The Authors further notes that if staff perception is distorted or in accurate picture of reality, then the outcome will be inappropriate behavior and ineffective performance. If employees perceive low level of justice, favoritism, nepotism they will change their behavior contrary to what is beneficial to the organization.

Objectives of Study

The general purpose of the study was to find out the effect of

performance appraisal process on employees work attitude. The specific objective was to

- To determine participation of employees in the process of performance appraisal

Research Question

This paper focused on addressing the following research question

- How are the employees allowed to participate in the formulation of performance appraisal process in the company?

Conceptual Framework

According to Kombo and Tromp (2009), a concept is an abstract or general idea inferred or derived from specific instances. Unlike a theory, a concept does not need discussion to be understood (Smyth, 2004). A conceptual framework is a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of enquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). A conceptual framework for the this study showed how employees participated in performance appraisal process and how it affected work attitude; a case of Kenya seed company ltd which was shown in Figure 1 below which conceptualizes that employee participation in performance appraisal affected work attitude ascertained through efficiency.

Literature Review

Employees Participation in Performance Appraisal Process and Its Effect on Work Attitude

Genuine performance appraisal participation is a process that can mitigate many of the dysfunctions of traditional performance appraisal systems as well as engender a more 'humane' and ethical human resource management decision making process (Roberts, 1992). Critics of performance appraisal present a number of compelling arguments against its use. Anecdotal, empirical and personal experience demonstrates a multitude of problems with appraisal systems practices. The main critics are that individual performance appraisal assumes a false degree of measurement accuracy, engenders dysfunctional employee conflict competition, assigns an inordinate amount of responsibilities for poor performance to individual employees while undervaluing employees importance of overall work process, underemphasizes the importance of workgroup, and is often used as a managerial "theory x" control device (Deming, 1986). Cleveland, Murphy and Williams (1998) note that performance appraisal of staff are an important and integral part of any organization as they aid organizations to improve and be sufficiently productive. However, Derven (1990) has expressed doubts about the reliability and validity of performance process. Derven, (1990) notes that the process of appraisal is inherently flawed that it may be impossible to perfect. Lawrie (1900) views staff performance appraisal as the most crucial aspect of the organization's life. Judge and Ferris (1993) agree with this view and add that performance

appraisal plays a critical role for decision making on human resources actions and outcomes. They add that performance appraisal is a pre-requisite for other human resource functions such as training, selection and motivation. Lawler (1995) suggests that whatever its practical flaws performance appraisal is the only process available to achieve fair, decent and consistent reward system adding that it is the core of management of an organization as it provides information regarding planning, control and development purposes.

According to Stalz (1966) the process of performance appraisal follows a set pattern, and starts with the establishment of performance standards. The author states that when designing the job and formulating a job description, performance standards are developed for the job. The set standards should be clear and objective enough to be understood and measured. Mamoria et al (2005), state that standards set should be discussed with the supervisors to establish the factors to be included, weights and points to be assigned to each factor, these then be indicated in the appraisal forms to be used in staff appraisal. The Mamoria et al (2005) further state that the second phase of appraisal process is to inform employees of the standards expected of them. Feedback is then sought to ensure that the information communicated to the employees has been received and understood in the intended way. This stage is followed by the measurement of performance. To determine what actual performance is, it is important to get information about it. The concern here is how to measure and what to measure; four sources provide information on how to measure actual performance. Personal observation, statistical reports, oral reports and written reports. This is followed by comparison of the actual performance and actual standards. Efforts are then made to note deviations between standard performance and actual performance. Mamoria et al (2005) state that appraisal results should be periodically discussed with a view to improve performance. The information an employee gets about his performance appraisal is very important in terms of self esteem and on his/her subsequent performance. Finally, the initiation of corrective action when necessary, can be of two types; immediately which deal with symptoms and the other is basic and delves into the courses. The diagram on the next page shows the performance process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive research design. The descriptive survey design was appropriate in this study since the data to be collected was both qualitative and quantitative. The target population for this research was drawn from Kenya Seed Company. The researcher intended to reach out to the 71 employees. The sample size was determined by use of Kombo and Tromp (2006) recommendation that a sample size of 10% to 30% is representative enough for the study population. Therefore, the sample size of employees was determined on the basis of 25% employees through proportionate sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents. A five point likert scale with opinions ranging from 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Not Sure, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree was used. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and explained using the mean and standard deviation.

Table 1 participation

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|-----|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Appraisals participate in designing performance appraisal System in Kenya seed | - | 23.6 | 49.1 | 10.9 | 16.4 |
| 1 My co-workers are cooperative and work well together | | 45.5 | 12.7 | 36.4 | 5.5 |
| 2. We are encouraged to make suggestions for improvements in our work | | 72.7 | 7.3 | 16.4 | 3.6 |
| 3. We are never informed about changes, even those that affect us personally | 3.6 | 30.9 | 21.8 | 43.6 | |
| 4. Consideration and attention are shown to me when I use good judgment and initiative | | 61.8 | 21.8 | 16.4 | |

Employee participation in PA process → Work Attitude

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Employee Participation on Performance Appraisal Process and Its Effect on Work Attitude

The findings were interpreted by regarding responses with mean as close: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral (not sure), 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree. The study findings are shown in Table 4.1 below. Majority of the appraisals were not involved in designing performance appraisal system in Kenya seed with their response at (49.1%), the participants agreed that their co-workers were cooperative and worked well together (45.5%), and are encouraged to make suggestions for improvements in their work (72.7%), though they are never informed about changes even those that affect them personally (43.6%). Lastly, the respondents at (61.8%) agreed that consideration and attention was shown to them when they used good judgement and initiative

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results from the data analysis and findings of the research one can safely conclude that the purpose of employee participation in performance appraisal process at Kenya seed is embraced by the management but a lot need to be done since a number of respondents were not sure.

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