

Impact of Performance Appraisal System on Employee Motivation at Karachi Port Trust (KPT)

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to gauge the impact of Performance Appraisal (PA) system on Employee Motivation at Karachi Port Trust (KPT). Performance appraisal is one of the important HRM tools used to assess the performance of employees and accordingly take steps for their professional and personal development. For this study, four components of performance appraisal, including goal setting, feedback, learning & development, rewards & incentives were chosen to examine their influence on employee motivation. The research is explanatory in nature and deductive approach was adopted. Quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire survey method from 254 employees working in different departments of KPT. The same were evaluated through Correlation and Regression statistical tools. Findings of the study reveal that the existing PA is quite effective in raising the motivational level of the employees. Especially, the rewards & incentives and learning & development are the two very strong elements of PA which help in keeping morale of the employees at a high level, whereas goal setting also plays a vital role in increasing the motivation of workers. However, feedback is not contributing in employee motivation. Perhaps managers do not pay much attention to this aspect and do not provide a constructive feedback to the employees due to some communication gap. This study is expected to help the management of KPT in understanding the importance of PA system and also to know the weaknesses within the organization which may help to incorporate appropriate remedial measures. Other organizations may also benefit from findings of this study for enhancement of their PA system.

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1. Introduction

The study under view was conducted to examine the impact of Performance Appraisal system on the overall motivation of the employees at Karachi Port Trust (KPT) organization. Performance appraisal is an important management practice that is conducted to assess skill-set, ability and commitment level of employees in any organization (Grint, 2007; Tripathi, 2001). In the last few decades, performance appraisal has been mainly studied as a component of 'HR packages' in the research of Strategic HRM (Ngo et al., 2008; Bjorkman & Fun, 2002). Recently, performance appraisal has been marked as an essential part of human resource development as it helps in making significant administrative decisions regarding promotions, compensations, transfers, termination, learning & development. PA can also serve as a motivational tool as it is used for assessment interviews, counseling, and participation in goal setting and work scheduling (Rao, 2009).

Motivation, which is one of a highly studied perception, has been contended with different thoughts by different scholars and practitioners. According to Mullins (2005), motivation is a steering power to achieve some objective. Robbins and Judge (2014) describe motivation as the process that constitutes an individual's strength, direction and continuation of efforts toward achieving an organizational goal. There is a broadly accepted opinion that motivation can generate a positive working environment whereas lack of motivation or individual's negative insight can adversely affect overall performance of the organization. Therefore, credit of high work performance can be given to motivation. Motivation issues, among other things, are inspired by performance appraisal. Some scholars like Herzberg (1987); Mullins (2005); Thomas and Bretz (1994) claim that employee motivation is dependent on the Managers' conduct and attitude toward the employees. If performance appraisals are perceived by employees as unfair, their advantages can reduce

rather than boosting employee motivation. Thus, biased evaluation can result in demotivation and low productivity. This study would answer the obvious question 'to what degree employees perceive that existing PA system of KPT is useful for their career growth and job satisfaction?' Since no previous research is available on this topic in KPT, this paper shall fill this gap and help the management in ascertaining effectiveness of their existing PA system and take necessary measures to further improve the employee motivation through PAS. Performance appraisal has a great association with an employee motivation. To achieve the best performance, it is necessary for any organization to induce a better motivation in the mind and soul of employees through efficient PAS. It has been noticed that without a clear purpose of effective PAS, employees are not motivated at all and thus there is no organizational success (Bartol & Martin, 1998; Jabeen, 2011). Various researches conducted recently on the subject have found that there is a certain and meaningful relationship between performance appraisal and motivation (Jabeen, 2011; Berehanu, 2014; Malik & Aslam, 2013; Selvarajan & Cloninger, 2012; Salau et al., 2014). In recent era, maintaining a suitable level of employees' motivation, loyalty and retention is a common problem being faced by many of the organizations in Pakistan. Inapt application of PAS is one of the main causes of this challenge. Karachi Port Trust is also facing similar challenges related to PA system. Although a well-defined PAS is enforced at the organization but still the management finds it difficult to keep the moral of workforce high. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of PAS on employee motivation at KPT. The study attempts to achieve following objectives:

- To examine the relationship between PAS and motivation of employees.
- To evaluate employees' perception of the appraisal system at KPT.
- To investigate impact of PAS on employees' motivation.
- To find out and recommend different ways to improve prevailing PAS.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Significance of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is the foundation for performance appraisal system and performance management. According to Pulakos (2004), performance appraisal is a consistent evaluation and systematic supervision of employee's work which forms a base for a successful performance management system of an organization. Performance appraisal is a potent tool in standardizing, filtering and benefiting the output of an employee. Performance appraisal is the core task of an effective human resource management and translates the management concerns in employees' growth and development (Rasch, 2004). In broader way, performance appraisal can be described as the organized, periodic and continuous review of employee's work through observation, documentation and measurement & development of achievable goals/tasks with a background motive to improve overall efficiency of an organization (Salau et al., 2014). According to Maund (2001), appraisal gives a clear perception of established relation between managers and employees. He also highlighted that performance appraisal is a very effective method to pinpoint the weak areas of an employee and also to identify training requirement for the individual. Unjust practices used in performance appraisals generate job dissatisfaction and de-motivation. A Performance appraisal system should be impartial and must provide correct and reliable data (Karimi et al., 2011). Mohrman et al. (1989) specified under mentioned significant advantages of performance appraisal:

- Boost employee's motivation to work efficiently.
- Inculcate self-esteem in workers.
- Provide new foresight to employees and superiors.
- Clarify and describe job functions and responsibilities.
- Establish better communication between appraisal participants.
- Allocate rewards on an unbiased and justified basis.
- Define organizational objectives/goals at all levels.
- Improve organizational workforce forecasting.

- Estimate, validate and help in implementation of training schedules.

2.2 Components of Performance Appraisal System

All effective performance appraisal systems contain elements such as supervisor and employee working together to ascertain goals, performance targets clearly described, feedback given to the concerned, learning and development opportunities ascertained and finally connecting appraisal to rewards and incentives (Rankin & Kleiner, 1988). According to Selvarajan et al., (2012), main components of a performance appraisal process include, goal setting, feedback, learning and development, rewards and incentives, which are discussed in ensuing paragraphs.

2.2.1 Goal Setting

Performance goals are short-term objectives set for particular duties or tasks in an employee's present job position. According to DuBrin (2012), employee goals are linked to the overall organizational goals or specific departmental goals. These goals help employees to understand what is expected out of them while performing their assignments. Goal setting is a vital component of performance appraisal process. It is the duty of managers/superiors to clearly narrate individual goals/tasks to the employees, in order to help them to achieve those in an efficient way. Sauers and Bass (1990) proclaim that goal setting has been extensively studied over the past three decades. The significance of goal setting is appropriately described by Mills (2002) as "representing a way of keeping score" and that "by assisting employees setting their personal goals, managers are putting them on the track towards attaining the organization goals."

2.2.2 Feedback

Many researchers have mentioned about the impact of manager's feedback on motivation of the employees. According to Malhotra et al. (2007), feedback; 'includes the recognition and admiration acknowledged by superior

for good performance. Armstrong (2001), states that feedback is a vital inherent instrument of motivation. It is pertinent to mention that precise feedback given at right time intensifies employee motivation as compared to general feedback. It permits the employees to concentrate on avenues requiring development. The purpose of feedback is to apprise the employee that how well he/she performs. In an effectual performance appraisal system, consistent evaluation or review of performance is necessary (Roberts, 2003).

2.2.3 Learning and Development

As claimed by Barr (1993), there is a positive relationship between learning & development and performance appraisal. Performance appraisal portrays a clear picture about employee's strengths and gray areas. Training and development leads to high employee motivation and growth. Herman Aguinis and Kurt Kraiger (2009) mentioned that there is ample evidence that training activities have a positive effect on the performance of individuals and teams. Sackett and Mullen, (1993) claimed that the aim of learning and development is to help organization to achieve projected organizational goals.

2.2.4 Rewards and Incentives

Many organizations consider rewards as a source of inspiring peculiar attitudes amongst employees. Particularly, in order to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently, rewards are projected to motivate employees. Malhotra et al. (2007), observed that irrespective of the type of organization, organizational rewards play a significant role in fostering higher commitment among employees that further leads to greater motivation and superior performance. The sole aim of providing suitable rewards to employees is to keep them motivated and provoke certain behaviors among them which are considered quite helpful for improved performance while preventing other behaviors which they recognize as harmful to organizational growth and development.

2.3 Employee Motivation

According to Miller (2006), satisfying association with the fellows, substantial salary and benefits, good working environment, learning and development chances, skill and knowledge improvements or other distinct benefits can be related with the heightened employee motivation. Heskett et al. (1994), explained that more motivated workers, allow a sequence of vibrant actions which conclude in an improved organization performance. Low turnover and low absenteeism take place when employees are at ease (Maloney & McFillen, 1986). One of the major facets of Human Resource Management is determining the employee's motivation level (Emmerik, Schreurs, Cuyper, & Peters, 2012). According to Lockley (2012), recommending learning and development programs that practically play a vital role in personal and professional growth of workers is another efficient employee motivation strategy. Simultaneously, Lockley (2012) advises that in order for motivational facets of learning and development initiatives to be raised, preferably they need to be developed and executed by a third party with appropriate skill and knowledge. Wylie (2004) suggests organizations to focus on different intangible motivational tools to generate enthusiasm amongst the employees, for example celebrations of important occasions with the participation of entire team. Aguinis et al. (2013) declared that financial rewards can be a very potent factor of employee motivation and accomplishment which, in turn, can produce vital revenues in terms of firm-level performance.

2.4 Influence of Performance Appraisal on Employee Motivation

Performance appraisal system is normally recognized as a significant element for increasing employee motivation. It is usually considered as one of the most important HRM functions. An efficient performance appraisal and management system is a vital part of HRM efficacy (Brown et al., 2010). Researchers have observed that performance appraisal system and motivation have great collaboration to each other. In other words motivation is considerably affected by impartiality of performance appraisal system. Many

research papers explained the significance of performance appraisal system in numerous ways to improve organizational functioning generally through boosting employee motivation and job satisfaction. Selvarajan et al. (2012), says that when employees see how well they are performing and comprehend what performance goals they can attain in future, they are likely to be motivated to enhance their output.

Locke and Latham's (2002), observed in psychological brain science research; Quantifiable and demanding goals regulate employees and organizations objectives, stimulating more raised levels of encouragement and thus increase worker's motivation. When goals are associated to employee's job or designation, it increases employee's motivation level. It has been noted that the number of studies which examines the impacts of performance evaluation systems on workers motivation, had increased within most recent ten years.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

On the basis of research variables explored during the literature review, following theoretical framework was developed:

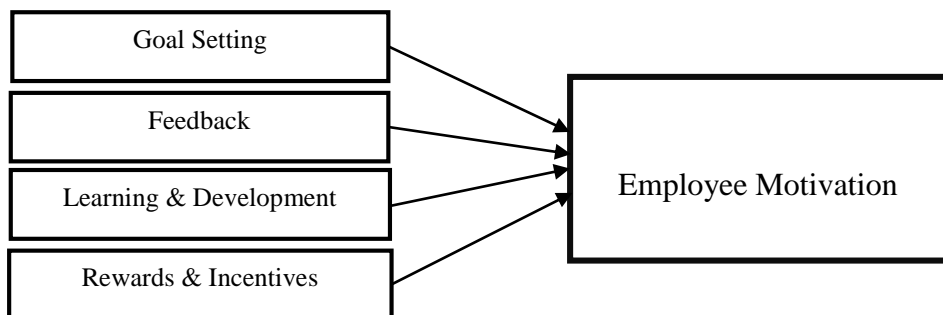


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

2.6 Research Hypotheses

Based on research variables, following hypotheses have been developed:

H1: There is a positive impact of goal setting on motivation of employees.

H2: There is a positive impact of feedback on motivation of employees.

H3: There is a positive impact of learning and development on motivation of employees.

H4: There is a positive impact of rewards and incentives on motivation of employees.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Nature of Research

This study is explanatory and descriptive in nature. Deductive approach was adopted whereby hypotheses were developed followed by collection of data. Quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire (Likert scale 1-5) which is preferred for this type of research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Quantitative analysis is a better way to test hypotheses and examine relationship between the variables (Polit & Hungler, 2013).

3.2 Sample size and Sampling technique

Target population of this study was 5000 employees belonging to various departments of Karachi Port Trust. A sample size of 355 respondents was approached for data collection. Convenience sampling technique was adopted for easy availability of respondents. Out of 355 copies of questionnaire distributed to employees, only 254 were found completely filled; response rate was 71%.

3.3 Statistical tools

Statistical tools used for the study included Pearson's correlation and Regression analysis. These tools helped in authentic evaluation of the

quantitative data and testing of hypotheses (Creswell, 2013). For this purpose a statistics software 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)' version 22, was used.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Test of Reliability

The reliability test estimates the value of Cronbach's Alpha (α). The outcome of reliability test is shown in table 4.2:

Table 1: Outcome of Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Result
Employee Motivation	0.915	7	Very Good
Goal Setting	0.877	8	Very Good
Feedback	0.877	7	Very Good
Learning & Development	0.897	7	Very Good
Rewards & Incentives	0.892	6	Very Good

The values of Cronbach's Alpha in table 1 are more than .7, which indicates internal consistency among the variables (Morse, et al., 2002).

4.2 Demographic Analysis

Out of a total of 254 respondents, 138 were males who formed 54.3 % of total strength and there were 116 females who formed 45.7 %. With regard to age, 43 (16.9%) respondents belonged to below 25 years of age group, 120 (47.2%) belonged to age group between 26-40 years and 91 (35.8%) were from above 40 years of age group. As far as education level is concerned, 42 (16.5%) were undergraduates, 96 (37.8%) were graduates and 116 (45.7%) were masters & above. Regarding their position in KPT, 87 (34.3%) belonged to Officers/Managerial cadre, 142 (55.9%) were staff/employees and 25(9.8%) were working on contract. According to experience, 110 (43.3%) were having less than 10 years job experience, 102 (40.2%) were having job experience between 11-20 years and 42(16.5%) were with 21 years & above experience.

4.3 Pearson's Correlation Test

The Pearson's correlation test is generally used to gauge the strength and pattern of relationship between variables through a certain scale or value (Hardoon et al., 2003). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) indicates that how far away all data points are from the line of best fit. The value ' r ' has a range from +1.0 to -1.0. A value greater than 0 shows a positive relationship and a value less than 0 shows the negative relationship.

Table 2: Correlations

		GS	FB	L& D	R&I	EM
GS	Pearson Correlation	1	.788**	.722**	.621**	.627**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N		254	254	254	254
FB	Pearson Correlation		1	.780**	.702**	.655**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.000
	N			254	254	254
L&D	Pearson Correlation			1	.802**	.774**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.000
	N				254	254
R&I	Pearson Correlation				1	.829**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.000
	N					254
EM	Pearson Correlation					1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The value of Pearson's correlation (r) for 'goal setting' is .627 and p value is .000; it indicates a positive and significant relationship. The value of r for 'Feedback' is .655 and p value is .000; it shows a positive and significant relationship. For 'learning and development', the value of r is .774 and value of p is .000; it indicates a strong positive relationship which is significant as well. For the fourth variable 'rewards and incentives', value of r is .829 whereas p

value is .000; it also shows a strong positive and significant relationship between the variables.

4.4 Regression Test

This Regression analysis covers model summary, ANOVA table and coefficients table to indicate the variance of the model. The details of analysis and its explanation are given as under:

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.852 ^a	0.725	0.721	0.55093
a. Predictors: (Constant), Goal Setting, Feedback, Learning & Development, Rewards & Incentives				

In the above table, the value of R is 0.852 which indicates a positive and good level of forecast. The value of R Square is 0.725 which indicates that 72.5% of the dependent variable (Employee Motivation) can be explained by the four independent variables. The value of adjusted R Square is 0.721 and the Std. error of the estimate is 0.55093. These values also shows favorable trend of the study.

Table 4: ANOVA Summary

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	199.575	4	49.894	164.380	0.000 ^b
	Residual	75.578	249	0.304	-	-
	Total	275.153	253	-	-	-
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Motivation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Goal Setting, Feedback, Learning & Development, Rewards & Incentives						

Table 4 shows that the independent variables significantly predict the dependent variable as $F = 164.380$ at the significance level of 0.000 i.e. $p < 0.05$.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.108	0.152	-	0.711	0.478
	Goal Setting	0.143	0.071	0.114	2.022	0.044
	Feedback	-0.053	0.070	-0.048	-0.753	0.452
	Learning & Development	0.288	0.073	0.263	3.962	0.000
	Rewards & Incentives	0.594	0.058	0.581	10.231	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Motivation						

As per statistical results displayed in table 5, the value of Sig in the last column indicates significance and usefulness of the variables. In case of first variable i.e. Goal Setting, the p value is 0.044 which is less than 0.05; it means that this variable has a significant impact on employee motivation. The p value of second variable 'Feedback' is 0.452 which is greater than 0.05; hence this is not a significant variable and it does not create positive impact on employee motivation. The p value of third variable 'Learning & Development' is 0.000 which is less than 0.05; this variable is useful and it creates positive impact on employee motivation. The p value of fourth variable 'Rewards & Incentives' is also 0.000 which is less than 0.05, so this variable is useful and it also creates positive impact on employee motivation. It is concluded that at a confidence interval of 95%, all the independent variables, except 'Feedback', have significant impact on employee motivation.

5. Discussion

The coefficients analysis result of goal setting viz-a-viz employee motivation shows that its T value is 2.022 and p value is 0.044. This reveals that goal setting has significant positive impact on employee motivation. The results match with findings of the study by Talya Bauer and Berrin Erdogan, (2012). Setting goals for the workers motivates them especially when it is participative because it given them a direction to follow, energizes them and

inspires them not to stop until a goal is achieved. However, values of T (-0.753) and P (0.452) for Feedback indicate that impact of feedback on employee motivation is neither positive, nor it is significant; although past researches have proved that timely feedback leads to motivation and better productivity (Eloise Marthouret and Sofie Sigvardsson, 2016). There seems to be somewhat communication gap or lack of importance of this important variable at KPT. In case of 'training and development', value of T is 3.962 whereas p value is 0.000; hence, learning & development is a useful variable of performance appraisal and it creates positive impact on employee motivation. Results match with the research by Joan Tanner (2017) and Ohabunwa (2009). As far as 'rewards & incentives' is concerned, value of T is 10.231 whereas p value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05; it indicates that 'rewards & incentive' is a useful variable of performance appraisal and it creates a strong and positive impact on employee motivation.

Performance appraisal system is reflected as one of the most vital elements for raising motivation level of workers (Selvarajan & Cloninger, 2012). Various steps are involved in performance appraisal process including setting standards (goal setting) and measuring employee's output against those standards, documenting these observations, conveying results to the employee (feedback), and appreciating good performance (through rewards & incentives) while planning means of correcting weaknesses (learning & development) (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012).

6. Conclusion

Performance Appraisal (PA) is an important component of performance management system. For this study four components of PA i.e. goal setting, feedback, learning and development and rewards & incentives were examined to find out their impact on employee motivation. It has been concluded that out of four, three hypotheses have been accepted whereas hypothesis related to feedback has been rejected. It indicates that employees are not provided feedback about their progress i.e. about their strong and

weak areas. Consequently, employees are not likely to improve their skills through post-performance appraisal developmental interventions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of results, following recommendations are made for further improving PA system at KPT:

- Well defined standards related to individual goals and tasks need to be made for the employees which should be aligned with the organizational strategic objectives.
- Feedback is a weak area of PA at KPT; this should be strengthened by taking employees in loop and holding frequent performance review meetings. Feedback should not be perceived by the employees as a humiliation tool.
- A system of self-appraisal may be introduced in the organization to facilitate the managers and supervisors for better understanding of their workers. This is most likely to improve the working relationship between the management and employees.
- The career progression of employees should be more streamlined in order to further enhance employee motivation. Career counseling should be made essential part of appraisal system.

8. Areas for Future Study

The current research is limited to only one component of HRM practices i.e. Performance Appraisal system. Future researchers may examine impact of other HRM practices on employee motivation. A similar study may also be undertaken for Port Qasim organization. Moreover, a comparative study of Pakistani and foreign ports may also be undertaken in future.

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