

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND EMPLOYEES' PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY PLC IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

This study analyzed the influence of performance appraisal on employee's productivity in Nigeria telecommunication industry (MTN) in Awka, Anambra, Nigeria. A descriptive research survey design was adopted for this research. The total population size for this study was 63 while total enumeration method was used to derive the sample taking into cognizance the manageable size of the population. Data were generated using questionnaires administered to the respondents. The data collected was analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics and Pearson correlated coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between performance appraisal and employee's productivity in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka. However, this study recommended among others that telecommunication management should continuously monitor and ensure that prevailing performance appraisal system and ethical conduct and behaviour of the organization is an enabler that supports employee productivity and feedback receptivity relevant for organizational success.

Introduction

As a distinct and formal management procedure used in evaluating work performance, Performance appraisal is the regular review of an employee's job performance and overall contribution to a company and also every attempt aimed at improving knowledge and workplace ethics to make workers perform better. This involves a process whereby a selected supervisor in the organization reviews the task of the subordinate and the work preference of the subordinate is examined and discussed, with the view of identifying the weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and development. A Performance appraisal system is a good instrument that can be used to improve the quality of an organizations work force performance of which is seen

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as an important aspect of human resource management and a control mechanism in the organization. Performance appraisal process is an important aspect that should be considered in an organization because it gives the organization the chance to give feedback to his/her employees on their work as well as to justify promotion, salary increase, bonus, free vacation, punishment, higher position in the office. The human instinct to judge can create serious motivation, ethical and legal problems in the workplace. Without a well-structured appraisal system, there are chances of unlawful and unfair judgment. Performance appraisal system began as a simple method of income justification. Appraisal was used to decide whether or not the salary or wages of the workers were justified and it was firmly linked to material outcomes, if the employee's performance was found to be less ideal a cut in pay would follow but if the performance exceed supervisor expectation a pay rise was in order and sometimes a little compensation. Basically, the reason for conducting an appraisal is to improve the performance of the workforce (DeNisi et al., 2017). A lot of organizations have adopted performance appraisal as a process that improves business performance (Daonis, 2012).

Performance appraisal is practiced in various organizations around the world like China, USA, India and even in Nigeria. One of the major trends in modern industry is the prosperity of the service industry, which requires better human resource management. Performance appraisal is critical for developing employees and making decisions regarding training, promotion and ultimately, organization success. Several appraisal factors such as goal attainment, innovation, productivity and good quality of work needs to be considered as they can have significant impact on the outcome of the appraisal process. This process typically involves setting performance standards, collecting and analyzing information on individual employee performance, providing feedback and addressing poor performance if necessary. Performance appraisal is one of Human Resource Management Practices (HRMP) that has been well researched in both developed and developing countries and it has equally been identified as a strong motivator (sajuyigbe & ademola, 2017).

Performance appraisal is considered as important human resource function because performance appraisal results are used for managerial decision making and for variety of other purposes including administrative decisions, employee development and personnel research (Muhammad & Surayya, 2013). Anso (2014) confirmed that performance evaluation has developed into a tool for fostering organizational growth and professional development in a similar vein. Employee's productivity is one which will not only benefit the organization but the employee as well. Employees should be committed towards set targeted desired standards of job performance and they should improve job performance for long-term sustaining profitable growth. 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 premise of performance appraisal is to assess employee performance as unbiased 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. A well-planned performance appraisal system ought to create criteria for successful performance, give performance feedback and empower a fairer reward system. Aside from this, if performance appraisal system is perceived to be unfair by employees can give rise to unhealthy work environment, unsatisfied and grievance in employees among others which might directly affects both employee and organization performance (Barkha Gupta & Swarna Parmar, 2018).

In the world of globalization, there are a lot of cut - throat competitions in the market, especially in the Telecommunication industry. The advent of deregulation of Telecommunication sector in Nigeria has brought competition to the industry. MTN, Nigeria is one of Global Systems Mobile Communication (GSM) operators that have the largest coverage and known for a large number of subscribers and effective service delivery. The

company maintains a leading position in Nigeria as an infrastructure provider to other telecom operators and corporate customers of the country. However, the increasing number of subscribers on daily basis can make the job stressful for employees due to pressure from management which can result to low productivity. The success of the MTN, Nigeria in term of quality of network services, dependable and consistent in solving customers' complaints and ability to provide variety of value-added services depends on the caliber of its employees. The organization's failure to address the stress imposed on employees through unrealistic targets, coupled with a lack of necessary training and development programs, results in diminished productivity. Additionally, neglecting the health and well-being of employees contributes to reduced productivity, this may manifest in increased sick leave and a higher rate of employee turnover.

As evidenced by the empirical research, many studies have been carried out on the influence of performance appraisal on employee performance, effect of performance review and employee's productivity, some studies focused on the effects of performance appraisal on employee's productivity, others Performance appraisal and its relationship with employee's performance, Impact of Performance Appraisal System on Employee Performance in Nigeria

Furthermore, the literature primarily concentrates on the influence of performance appraisal thereby create variable gap, also, the prior studies were carried out in different part of the country and none was conducted in Anambra state. The present study thereby carried out the study to close the variable and area gaps thereby sought to assess the influence of performance appraisal on employee's productivity in telecommunication company MTN Awka Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the influence of feedback receptivity on employee's productivity
2. Ascertain the extent to which ethical behavior influences employee's productivity.

Literature Review

Performance appraisal

A performance appraisal is said to be a system that can be used for improvement, in terms of organization's work force performance. It is also said to be an important part in human resource management and an aspect of the administrative control process. it is important to plan an appraisal process which is to help achieve the said objectives like for example, development of work force, improvement, salary increase, employee's performance feedback, educational needs determination, etc. (Mwema et al., 2014) . Performance appraisal is a process where employees' job performance is assessed and evaluated. It often involves setting goals, providing feedback, and discussing development opportunities. Several studies highlight the importance of performance appraisal in shaping employees' behavior and contributing to organizational success.

An employee is a person employed in an establishment to do any work for payment. He or She is hired for a wage, fee, and salary to perform work for the employer. Employee productivity is an assessment of how efficient a worker or a group of workers are. It is said that to be the driving force of any company's profitability and growth (Sheehan, 2017). Employee productivity refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees contribute to the organization's goals. It encompasses factors such as task completion, quality of work, and the ability to meet deadlines. Productivity is a key indicator of an organization's overall performance and success.

The dynamic telecommunication industry, exemplified by companies such as MTN, demands a meticulous examination of performance appraisal systems to ensure employee productivity aligns with organizational objectives. This conceptual review aims to scrutinize the effectiveness of MTN's current performance appraisal system, analyze the relationship between performance appraisal and employee productivity, and identify areas for improvement within the organizational context.

Employee's productivity

According to Maund (2001), appraisal is a key component of performance management of employees. When effective, the appraisal process reinforces the individual's sense of personal worth and assists in developing his/her aspirations. Bekele et al., (2014) affirm that performance appraisal has positive and significant relationship with employee's performance. Cumming (1972) writes that the overall objective of performance appraisal is to improve the efficiency of an enterprise by attempting to mobilize the best possible efforts from individuals employed in it. Such appraisals achieve these four objectives including salary reviews, development and training of individuals, planning job rotation and assisting in promotions.

In the recent years, the word productivity has gained popularity in the business world. The problem of scarcity has a deep-rooted impact on the economies of each and every business unit. Almost all organizations, either reactively or proactively, have become serious regarding their productivity. Moreover, in today's world of cut-throat competition, every organization is striving hard to have an upper edge over their competitors. The organizations have realized that enhancing their productivity goes a long way in success of their business operations and thus productivity has become a matter of great concern amongst them. Productivity is an average measure of the efficiency of production. Productivity is a ratio of production output to what is required to produce it (inputs of capital, labor, land, energy, materials, etc.). The measure of productivity is defined as a total output per one unit of a total input. Although it looks simple from the face of it, productivity is a big challenge to organizations especially when the product is in the form of a service (Amaeshi Uzoma Francis, Ugwu Kelechi Enyinna & Duru Nnedinma, 2021). Productivity is defined as the efficient and effective use of resources with minimum waste and effort to achieve an outcome. As such, employees' attitude is closely related to their productive output. According to Katz (2018), employee attitude describes the actions of employees towards their objectives and goals. He proposed that an attitude is the predisposition of the individual to assess a particular object favourably or unfavourably. Crano and Prislin (2016) averred that attitudes are the evaluative judgments that integrate and synchronize cognitive/affective reactions. An attitude could be seen as a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through adequate experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the employees' response to all objects and situations with which they are interlinked (Thezasvini, Karthikeyan & Manikandan, 2018). After every performance review, it is expected that information on the rater's evaluative judgement of an employee's performance is communicated to the employee. Moraa and Datche (2019), define feedback as the machinery put in place by an organization to communicate information of employee's past performance based on the appraisal to the employee.

Feedback receptivity refers to the willingness and ability of employees to accept, understand, and act upon the feedback provided to them through performance appraisal processes. It involves being open to constructive criticism, acknowledging areas for improvement, and actively seeking ways to enhance one's performance. Feedback receptively fosters a culture of continuous learning. Employees who are receptive to feedback use it as a valuable tool for skill enhancement and professional growth. Positive and constructive feedback serves as a motivator. When employees feel acknowledged for their achievements and receive guidance on improvement areas, it fuels motivation and engagement, contributing to overall productivity.

Ethical behavior within an organization is a critical factor that significantly influences employees' productivity. Ethical behavior refers to actions and decisions aligned with moral principles and values. In the workplace, it involves treating colleagues, superiors, and subordinates with fairness, honesty, and integrity. Ethical behavior encompasses adherence to organizational policies, respecting diversity, and maintaining transparency. Ethical conduct establishes trust, fostering positive morale among employees. Ethical lapses, such as subjective judgments, unclear performance criteria or unbalanced feedback, favoritism may undermine the fairness of the

appraisal process, leading to demotivation and decreased productivity. Failure to promptly address ethical violations discovered during performance appraisal can result in a negative perception, affecting morale and productivity. Providing training on ethical conduct for managers involved in the appraisal process, Encouraging open communication and addressing any ethical concerns promptly are some of the solutions that can be considered.

Performance Appraisal and Employee Productivity

The relationship between performance appraisal and employee productivity has been extensively studied in academic literature. Performance appraisal serves as a crucial tool for evaluating and enhancing employee performance, which in turn impacts overall productivity. Performance appraisal provides a structured framework for providing feedback to employees on their performance. Aguinis (2009); DeNisi and Kluger (2000) specify that feedback on performance is a determining segment of all management of performance systems. Feedbacks allows employees to understand their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to better goal setting and performance enhancement (DeNisi & Pritchard, 2006). Performance appraisal identifies employees' developmental needs and training requirements. Providing opportunities for skill development and career advancement through performance appraisal can results in more competent and motivated employees, leading to increased productivity (Boswell & Boudreau, 2000). Performance appraisal aligns individual employee goals with organizational objectives. When employees understand how their performance contributes to organizational success, they are more likely to exert effort toward achieving those goals, leading to enhanced productivity (Levy & Williams, 2004).

Empirical Review

Toki, Padonu and Tairu (2023) determined the impact of performance appraisal and appropriate reward on employees' performance. The study used questionnaire to obtain information from the sampled respondents. The formulated hypotheses were tested using regression analysis tools. The result established that the significance of a well-structured appraisal system cannot be overemphasized in an organization. Oghenevwegba and Elo-oghene (2022) examined the impact of performance appraisal system (PAS) on employee performance (EMP) in Nigeria telecommunication industry: A study of MTN Nigeria Plc in Asaba, Delta State. This study was analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics and correlation matrix while the hypotheses of the study were tested with multiple regression analysis via SPSS version 23. The study revealed that EPS, CPE, MAPEBES, DARGF and ICA have a positive significant relationship with EMP. Odeleye (2021) ascertained the impact of performance appraisal on employee's performance in Telecommunication sector. Both descriptive and survey research design were employed by the study. Questionnaires were used to generate data and analyzed through the use of frequency table, and Hypotheses was tested with the aid of Person Correlation Coefficient using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 to establish the relationship between the variables. Results revealed that established that performance appraisal errors have negative significant impact on employee's performance among the staff of MTN, Nigeria. Results also showed that inability to provide on time feedback is a challenge to performance appraisal system in MTN, Nigeria. Amaeshi, Ugwu and Duru (2021) studied the performance appraisal of employee's productivity in selected banks in Port Harcourt. The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between performance appraisal and employee productivity. Descriptive research method was employed; the survey study approach was adopted. The data were collected through structured questionnaire. The chi-square analytical tool of SPSS version 20.00 was used to test the hypotheses. From the analysis, the study finds out that the dimensions of performance appraisal significant influence and enhances employee productivity in the selected manufacturing firms. Enekwe, Eziedo and Agu (2019) determined the effect of Performance appraisal on Employee productivity in Nigerian banking sector

using Eco Bank of Nigeria Abakaliki Branch, Ebonyi State. The SPSS version 20 software statistical package was used to run the Panel ordinary least square (OLS) for the study. The multiple regression models were applied in determining the extent of the effect of independent variable (performance appraisal) on dependent variable (employee productivity) of banking sector under investigation. The finding revealed that a percentage increase of performance appraisal design and method (PADM), performance appraisal process (PAP) and performance-based reward (PBR) will lead to an increase on the employee productivity. Arwa, Zaid, and Monira (2019) evaluated how employees' work performance was affected by performance reviews at banks in the southern region of Jordan. The necessary information was gathered for this study's conduct using a closed-ended structured questionnaire. The survey was adapted and incorporated from other previous studies. The 260 returned surveys were then examined using clever PLS, a tool specifically designed for confirmatory factor analysis, route analysis, and structural equation modelling. It is sometimes referred to as software for causal modelling or study of covariance. An examination of correlation and descriptive statistics were done. Simotwo (2018) ascertained the effects of performance appraisal system on employee's performance of national police service Kenya. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. Analysis was done quantitatively and qualitatively by use of descriptive statistics. The qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and findings presented in prose form. This study concluded that Performance appraisal system is the only tangible metric way by which an organization can know the level of performance of its diverse employees. Trsit (2018) ascertained the effect of performance appraisal practice on employee performance of Goal Ethiopia. The research is designed in explanatory way and qualitative as well as quantitative data was collected as a primary and secondary data resource. The data collected were analyzed using explanatory and inferential statistics. The research was analyzed using t-test, correlation and regression analysis by SPSS version 20.0 data analysis software. The results showed that all the factors, rater accuracy being the stronger and major influencer one, are significant in ensuring the effectiveness of employee performance. Sajuyigbe, and Ademola (2017) ascertained the effect of performance appraisal system on employee's performance in Telecommunication sector. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select two hundred and sixty (260) respondents from the total population of one thousand three hundred (1,300) employees of MTN, Nigeria. Data were sourced through a structured questionnaire and personal interview. Analysis of data was performed with the aid of Mean, Standard Deviation and Linear Regression. Results revealed that the level of performance appraisal awareness is high among the staff of MTN, Nigeria. Results also established that performance appraisal system has significant impact on employee's performance. Results also revealed that inability to provide on time feedback is a challenge to performance appraisal system in MTN, Nigeria. Jocelyn, Seruya and Douglas (2013) examined the effects of performance appraisal on employee productivity of Mumias Sugar Company limited. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of performance appraisal (PA) on employee productivity in Mumias Sugar Company Limited. The study was guided by a case study design. The study targeted a total of 877 Union sable employees, 422supervisory level employees, 182 middle level management and 9 top level management. Simple random sampling was used to select 149 employees. The research instruments used for data collection were the questionnaires and interview schedules. Descriptive analysis and inferential statistic i.e. regression analysis and t-test were used. Results indicated that there was a positive and significant effect between performance appraisal and employee efficiency in Mumias Sugar Company Limited, $p < 0.5$.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study; the reason for adopting descriptive survey research design was because the study intended to collect data directly from respondents.

The population of the study consisted of top-level management, middle level management and lower-level management employees of two MTN Awka offices in Anambra State, Nigeria with a total number of 63 staffs. Hence, from this selected two MTN branches in Awka, the staffs would serve as our respondents for the study. The study used total enumeration method as sampling method to select the entire elements of the population since the element of population is within manageable size.

Method of data collection

Data was collected through the use of questionnaire. Using a questionnaire to capture respondents' responses, the primary data was gathered. The responders were given questionnaires to complete on their own with thorough supervision in order to determine the link between the independent and dependent variables; this hypothesis is evaluated using Pearson correlation coefficient via SPSS version 20.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Results

Data Presentation

Out of sixty-three (63) copies of questionnaire administered, sixty (60) were completed and returned, this represents 95%.

Table 1: Summary of the Responses

Feedback receptivity	SA	A	UN	D	SD
Employees feel competent and values in their work	15	31	0	14	0
It contributes to a positive work environment	19	25	1	15	0
Reduces potential criticism and emphasize it's role as a constructive tool for improvement	12	30	0	16	2
Ethical behavior					
Fosters a culture of trust and respect	18	37	0	5	0
Prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace	17	31	1	11	0
Improves employees job satisfaction and productivity resulting in company growth	23	28	0	9	0
Employees productivity					
Increase efficiency and productivity	20	29	1	8	2
Creates room for identifying weakness and strength, there by facilitating continuous improvement	21	23	0	16	0
Enhances career development and success	16	25	0	7	2

Source: Filed survey, 2024

Data Analysis

The table below is the descriptive statistics that was computed to show the mean, median, standard deviation, minimum, maximum values, and Skewness-Kurtosis statistics, etc.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EPP	5	1.00	77.00	34.0000	33.07567
FDR	5	1.00	86.00	36.0000	35.57387
ETB	5	.00	96.00	36.0000	41.00610
Valid N (listwise)	5				

Interpretation

The descriptive statistics for the independent variables, feedback receptivity (FDR), and ethical behaviour (ETB) with the dependents variables; employee's productivity (EPP) was represented in table 3. The mean is used to establish a baseline. The maximum and minimum numbers, on the other hand, aid in the detection of data problems. The variation from the mean is represented by the standard deviation. It is a risk indicator; the

greater the standard deviation, the greater the risk. The standard deviation is a metric that expresses how much each item in a dataset deviates from the mean. It is the most reliable and extensively used metric. The standard deviations in the firms are 33.08, 35.57 and 41.01, for EPP, FDR, and ETB respectively.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H1: Feedback receptivity has no significant relationship on employee's productivity

Table 2: Correlations

		EPP	FDR
EPP	Pearson Correlation	1	.962**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	5	5
FDR	Pearson Correlation	.962**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	5	5

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

Indeed, from Table 2 above, correlation coefficient of 0.962 a positive correlation between feedback receptivity and employee's productivity. To get an idea of how much variance the two variables share, the coefficient of determination (R) is calculated. R is $0.962 \times 0.962 = 0.925$. It implies that feedback receptivity help to explain 93% of the variance in employee's productivity of in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka.

From the above result, the study discovers that the confidence level between feedback receptivity and employee's productivity is very high, and that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.01 levels. Since p-value 0.009 is less than 0.01, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between feedback receptivity and employee's productivity of in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka.

Hypothesis Two

H2: Ethical behavior has no significant relationship on employee's productivity

Table 3: Correlations

		EPP	ETB
EPP	Pearson Correlation	1	.987**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	5	5
ETB	Pearson Correlation	.987**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	5	5

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

Indeed, from Table 3 above, correlation coefficient of 0.987 a positive correlation between ethical behavior and employee's productivity. To get an idea of how much variance the two variables share, the coefficient of determination (R) is calculated. R is $0.987 \times 0.987 = 0.974$. It implies that ethical behavior help to explain 97% of the variance in employee's productivity of in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka.

From the above result, the study discovers that the confidence level between ethical behavior and employee's productivity is very high, and that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.01 levels. Since p-value 0.002 is less than 0.01, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between ethical behavior and employee's productivity of in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka.

Discussion of Findings

There is a significant relationship between feedback receptivity, ethical behavior and employee's productivity of in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka. The result is in line with Barkha and Parmar (2018) found that goals and objectives setting, performance rewards given to employees and performance appraisal feedback, the independent variables of performance appraisal influenced employee productivity. Otieno (2016) also, revealed that performance appraisal criteria, feedback and reward were all adapted to great extents by the Ministry of Agriculture, Homa Bay County as shown by their weighted mean of 3.65, 3.83 and 4.15 respectively. Nadeem, Naveed, Zeeshan, Yumna and Qurat-ul-ain (2013) revealed that there is positive relationship between performance appraisal and employee's performance. Egziabher (2018) showed that all the factors, rater accuracy being the stronger and major influencer one, are significant in ensuring the effectiveness of employee performance. Solomon and Oravee (2017) revealed that management by objectives and 360 degree feedback appraisal techniques enhanced employee productivity in PSIRS.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aims to analyze the influence of performance appraisal on employees in an organization with the ultimate goal of enhancing the quality and efficiency of their productivity in performance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. A sample of 60 valid questionnaires out of 63 respondents sampled was used for the study. Data were generated from the questionnaires administered from the respondents. Pearson correlated coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between performance appraisal and employee's productivity of MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka. The study also found that there is a significant relationship between employee feedback receptivity and ethical behaviour of MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka. This means that effective appraisal process enhance the individual's sense of personal worth and assists in developing his/her aspirations. The study therefore concludes that performance appraisal has significantly contributed to employee's productivity in MTN Telecommunication Company, Awka.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends thus;

1. The feedback appraisal techniques should also be encouraged to serve as pre-requisite for supervisors and employees to discuss organizational weaknesses, productivity standards and areas of improvement.
2. The management should monitor should continuously monitor and ensure that prevailing organizational ethical behaviour is an enabler for employee productivity.

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