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Research paper

The Impact of Performance Appraisal on Employee Job Performance in Public Sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship of performance appraisal and fairness of performance appraisal with employee job performance to get empirical findings of such relationship in higher education institutions of Pakistan. This study is comprised of a survey based questionnaire. The data was collected from 150 respondents of public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa via self-administered questionnaire. A sum of 300 questionnaires was distributed among the faculty members of the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan out of which 150 were returned back so the response rate is 50%. Results of this study showed that there was significant and positive relationship between performance appraisal, fairness and employee job performance in public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. In other words, it means that if performance appraisal of the universities is fair enough, accurate then employee will be satisfied and get motivated to enhance their performance in particular and organizational performance in general. Such research has utilized large sample size and has not been done before, to the best of researcher's knowledge. This study has significance for the policy makers of higher education and universities and researchers can also get benefit of it in future.

Keywords: *Performance appraisal; Employee job performance; Fairness.*

1. Introduction

Employee job performance is defined as those actions which can be evaluated and assessed are termed as performance[1]. Performance appraisal has progressively become part of a more strategic approach to integrating human resource activities and business policies through which organization strive to evaluate employees and improve their competence and enhance performance [2]. Fairness is considered to be the most important aspect of performance appraisal system [3]. Performance appraisal success is linked with the response of employees regarding fairness and satisfaction [4]. Performance appraisal system can only be more operative and effective when it is backed by valid and accurate performance rating of the employees [2]. Unfortunately effective performance appraisal system is scarce in different organizations. [5] argues that performance appraisal is a tool of assessing the behaviour of employees in the work place. It helps to determine and overcome the issues faced by the employees. According to [6] performance appraisal is a process by which job performance of an employee is measured usually in terms of behaviours and attitudes with the help of a rater/ supervisor. [6] confirmed that job performance assist institutions, industries and nations to accomplish sustainable competitive gain. According to [7] performance appraisal is a continuous method which is employed to identify, evaluate and improve employee performance in the organization. This process encompasses different practices such as recognition of employee's strengths and weaknesses, career development and satisfaction [8, 9]. In the same tune [10] notices that an organization without an appropriate and reliable performance appraisal will experience failure and expectation of poor performance from its employees. According to [11] employee's performance appraisal will significantly contribute towards the achieving of university objectives. Thus the university employee performance measurements will be aligned with the universities objectives. [12] identified that there is very nominal study on the relationship of performance appraisal and employee job performance in public sector universities of Pakistan. Inaccurate performance appraisal results into discrimination and dissatisfaction among employees on various levels of performance reduce the usage of appraisal in making different decisions regarding promotions and incentives (Blume et al., 2009). The current performance appraisal system provides a depict picture that Annual Confidential Report (ACR) used in public sector universities are made on the rater's discretionary decision about the employee performance [13]. This report creates biases, inaccuracy and negative impact and needs more emphasis on objectivity, validity and reliability [13]. In the last, this study will test the effect of performance appraisal and fairness on employee job performance in public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan in connection to validate the findings of the previous researchers.

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2. Literature Review

2.1. Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is known to be the most important human resource practices [4]. Performance appraisal is utilizing by different business and industries [14]. But researcher like Prowse & Prowse, (2009) revealed his findings that 90% of the United States of America and United Kingdom are implementing performance appraisal as a tool to influence employee performance and behaviour. A research has carried out by a researcher [10] and noted that without a valid and suitable performance appraisal system every organization will face failure and poor employee performance. Performance appraisal is used to evaluate the employee performance and assist the institutions in succeeding towards set goals and targets [15]. Performance appraisal is carried out for ensuring excellence and improvement in employee performance [16]. Notwithstanding, if the appraisal has not used appropriately or the employees perceived that it is biased and subjective then definitely decline can be occur in employee performance and organizational performance [17]. Performance appraisal is a method to assess the employee performance and incur improvement in job performance and organizational performance [18]. A research has done by [19] and explores some criticism on performance appraisal concerning biases of rater's such as rating errors, subjectivity and favouritism. In the same context, another study has been done by [20] and shows some obstructing factors of performance appraisal in Pakistani universities are rater's low level of motivation and no focus on employee job performance. [21] postulated that performance appraisal is a formal technique that usually takes place once or semi-annually a year, comprises of performance dimensions and standards that are used for the assessment process of employees with the assent of organization. Various researchers [22] opined that those employees who are satisfied from their performance ratings and overall performance appraisal can be seen more supportive and high performer and diligent for getting organizational targets and goals. While, dissatisfied employees is found to be less co-operative, inefficient and low performer [22]. The philosophy of performance appraisal has been changed for the last so many years; the previous concept about performance appraisal was that it is a method for determining employee behaviour and his success [23]. But now it is established dynamically that performance appraisal is used for employee motivation and subsequent performance [23]. Fairness is considered to be the most significant one for observing the effectiveness of performance appraisal [24]. The success of any performance appraisal system can only be accrued if employees perceived that the system is fair enough and accurate and according to their expectations [25]. The performance appraisal system creates negative impact and attitudes among employees if its fairness is not in line with the satisfaction, development and rewards [20]. A conclusive empirical research is needed to investigate the subjective biases in the current performance appraisal system and determine procedures of improvement, fairness and effectiveness[13]. Effective performance appraisal performs a key part in assessment of professionals particularly in academic institutions; it outlines the institutions as a whole success or failure [26].

2.2. Employee Job Performance

Performance may be defined as those actions which can be examined and able to assess are called as performance [27]. In the same tune, [14] explains performance that it is not only linked to the activities but it also comprises of judgment and assessments procedures.[28] continued that performance standards has been improved as how to measure and assess employee's performance and he also suggests that a planned and systematic approach will be applied to evaluate employee's performance accurately. There are some issues and problems that are associated with job performance i.e. subjectivity in assessments reduces employee's satisfaction and recognition of performance appraisal and knowledge and skills related to job performance are also ignored [28]. Employees with high job performance will get more satisfaction then those who have low performance at all [29]. Employee's performance is a vital part of every organization to help out low performers for attaining organizational productivity and efficiency [30]. [31] proposed that the success and survival of every organization is reliant on employee output and directly on performance. [32] identified some issues like feelings of employees about job work place and fair ratings are the fundamental problems that rater/manager needs to be focused.

2.3. Relationship of Performance Appraisal and Employee Job Performance

Studies have been carried out so far on the association of employee job performance and other variables i.e. [30] have done research on training and development and employee job performance. Likewise, [1] studied the relationship of job satisfaction and employee job performance. Nominal study can be seen so far to find out the relationship between performance appraisal and employee job performance in the Asian context particularly in Pakistan [33]. Moreover, the past literature on this subject has revealed that efforts has made to determine its observational facets and very little attention has been given to the effectiveness of performance appraisal and its impact on employee performance [34]. Performance appraisal has been researched extensively in different organizations and also its effect on employee performance [34]. Performance appraisal practices are linked with employee performance but this relationship needs to be studied in university teachers of Pakistan [33]. A researcher [35] advocated that various organizations utilized performance appraisal system for developing their employee job performance. According to [18] the performance appraisal system explores the gap of performance and found possible solution for that gap or issue concerned. It is evident that fair and accurate performance appraisal is one which focuses on performance behavoiur of employees and not on his personal traits [36].Performance appraisal faces different challenges regarding subjectivity and commonly problems creates with subjective evaluation of employees rather than objective measurements [37].

Various researchers [4, 38, 39] have identified that there is positive relationship between performance appraisal and employee job performance. A positive association has been identified by [40] between performance appraisal and employee job performance. Several researchers urge that there is positive relationship between performance appraisal and organizational performance [41, 42].

2.4. Relationship of Fairness and Employee Job Performance

Fairness of performance appraisal system has a significant impact on employee attitude, behaviour and performance [43]. If employees observe unfairness, inequity and dissatisfaction then any performance appraisal system will be doomed failed [24]. In Pakistan, there is still unstudied aspects that can disregard the effectiveness of performance appraisal like fairness [44]. According to [45] if rate r o r supervisor does fair, unbiased and accurate evaluation of an employee performance it causes a substantial effect on fairness perceptions. A researcher [46] argued that a sound performance appraisal system will be subjected to failure if rater and particularly employees did not extend their support, acceptance and satisfaction to it. If employee's perception is not in accordance with the system fairness ultimately their performance will be reduce rather than develop. According to [47] fairness is the bench mark of performance appraisal through which employee's actual job performance has been evaluated accurately. [48] has identified significant and positive relationship between fairness and employee job

performance. Based on the above literature and previous studies the following hypotheses will be formulated.
Hypothesis 1: Performance appraisal is positively and significantly related to employee job performance.
Hypothesis 2: Fairness is positively and significantly related to employee job performance.

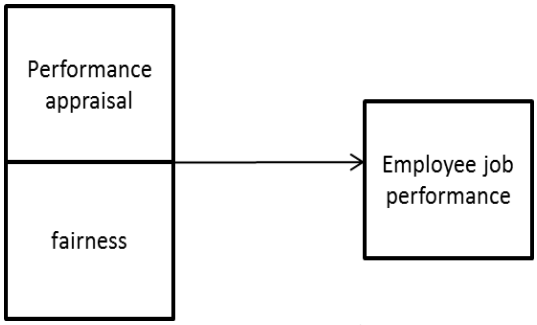


Fig. 1: Research Frame work of the study.

3. Methodology/Materials

3.1. Research Design

This study utilizes survey research in order to evaluate thoughts and opinions of participants via survey based questionnaire. The survey research design was used and established on reference of [49] that survey is quite easy to administer and can be developed in less time and cost.

3.2. Sampling Method

Simple random sampling method was used to select one forty respondents (faculty members) from a sum of three hundred and six employees. A total number of 300 questionnaires were send to the faculty members of public sector universities Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, out of which 150 filled questionnaires were returned back observing the response rate as 50%.

3.3. Measures

The items used in the study were:

3.3.1. Performance Appraisal System Scale

This scale was employed to measure performance appraisal. This scale was developed and adopted by [50].It is a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). The performance appraisal scale comprises of (5) items with reliability alpha coefficient of 0.93.

3.3.2. Employee Job Performance Scale

This scale was used to evaluate employee's perceived levels of performance. This scale was developed and validated by [28]. It is a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). It consisted of (5) items and the authors testified Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.83.

3.3.3. Fairness of Performance Appraisal Scale

In this study a five-point Likert scale was used ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). Scale of six (06) items was used with an alpha coefficient of 0.813 which has been taken from the [45] study.

4. Results and Findings

The main purpose of this study was to identify the impact of performance appraisal and fairness of performance appraisal on employee job performance in the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The data was analyzed by using both correlation and regression analysis.

Table 1: Correlation of performance appraisal, fairness and employee job performance

		Performance appraisal	Fairness	Employee job Performance
Performance appraisal	Pearson Correlation	1	.816**	.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	306	306	306
fairness	Pearson Correlation	.816**	1	.605**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	306	306	306
Employee job performance	Pearson Correlation	.643**	.605**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	306	306	306
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Correlation analysis was done in order to operationalize the hypothesis. The correlation coefficient between employee job performance and performance appraisal is 0.643, which reveals a strong positive relationship between the two variables (Refer Table 1). While the correlation coefficient between fairness and employee job performance 0.816 which also indicates that there is strong positive association between fairness and employee job performance.

Table 2: Model summary of performance appraisal and employee job performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.658[a]	.433	.429	.63482
Predictors: (Constant), performance appraisal, fairness of performance appraisal				

The value of R2 shows that the independent variables are demonstrating the dependent variable up to 43%. The R2 value is (0.433) which means that 43% change happen in dependent variable (employee job performance) due to independent variables (performance appraisal and fairness). There are also some other determinants which contribute to the enhancement in employee job performance but as a whole the model is significant (Refer Table 2).

Table 3: Model summary of performance appraisal and employee job performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	93.208	2	46.604	115.644	.000[b]
	Residual	122.107	303	.403		
	Total	215.315	305			
a. Dependent Variable: employee job performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), performance appraisal, fairness of performance appraisal						

The F statistic 115.644 shows strong relationship between variables, though the significance level is at its optimal having value 0.000 (Refer Table 3), which leads to accept the hypotheses:
H1 Performance appraisal has a positive impact on employee job performance and
H2 Fairness of performance appraisal has a positive impact on employee job performance.

Table 4: Coefficients of performance appraisal with employee job performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.490	.238		2.061	.040
	Fairness	.523	.087	.449	5.995	.000
	Performance appraisal	.275	.086	.238	3.181	.002
a. Dependent Variable: employee job performance						

The beta (β) value = .449 for fairness of performance variables which stated that one increase in independent variable (fairness of performance appraisal) will enhance the dependent variable (employee job performance) up to 0.5 units as per table 4. While the beta (β) value for the other independent variable (performance appraisal) is .238 which expressed that one increase in performance appraisal will increase the dependent variable (employee job performance) up to 0.3 units according to table 4.

The results of this study shows that if performance appraisal is fair enough and accurate in accordance with performance ratings and employees perceived it be fair and accurate then employees will be motivated and satisfied and in turn their performance will be improved in particular and organizational performance in general.

To examine the findings of this research, these results are in line with the previous findings of the different researchers [51-53] owing that performance appraisal has positively and significantly affects employee job performance. And these findings also confirmed the previous results of [48] that fairness of performance appraisal has positively and significantly related to employee job performance. This research is based on the procedural justice theory of [54] which demonstrate that if the employees feel that performance appraisal is fair enough and accurate in decision making regarding fairness in ratings, outcomes distribution and avoid subjective biases then they will be highly motivated and satisfied from the performance appraisal system and in return they will strive to perform better individually and increase organizational performance as a whole. Such procedural fairness in assigning performance ratings on the basis of actual performance also creates some motivational force which retains employees satisfied and in turn employees positively respond in enhancing their own and organizational performance.

Such theory suits this research in such a way that if performance appraisal decisions and performance ratings is based on fairness and accuracy then employees will perceive it positive and get motivated to perform at high level in individual capacity and increase organizational performance and productivity as well.

5. Recommendations

The performance appraisal system should be managed and planned in a manner that it is related with fairness, improvement and incentives so that faculty members/employees consider it vital. Incentives, fairness and improvement practices have a deep impact on employee's performance in Pakistani universities. The higher education commission needs to focus on competitive packages and development plans for the university employees particularly faculty members in order to enhance their performance. Improvement and development practices not only support employees to grow in organizational hierarchy but also assist them in professional career development. If, ineffective and unfair performance appraisal system prevail within the universities then it is hard to find desired output from the employees.

6. Implications of the Study

This research is expected to contribute to the knowledge of human resource management in the area of performance appraisal system. This research can also give benefit to other universities of Pakistan (both public and private) for enhancing their employee's performance through performance appraisal system. So, employee performance has a notable function in enhancing institutional profitability. The higher education commission of Pakistan can also take advantage of this study in order to implement the performance appraisal system in overall universities of Pakistan. Finally, the study will assist other researchers who might want to start study in the area of performance appraisal and employee's performance.

7. Conclusion

The primary purpose of performance appraisal system should be to improve the employee performance that will result towards the organizational success. The system must first of all identify that employees are the most important human resource. This concept will need a consistent effort in, coaching, counselling and just uniform interactions between the employees and supervisors/rater's. Another core aim of this research was to establish the relationship between performance appraisal and fairness with employee job performance in Public Sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The reason for these results is that in most of the public sector universities in Pakistan there is no proper mechanism of faculty member's performance evaluation [33]. The performance appraisal system used in different organization of Pakistan is known as Annual Confidential Report which lacks employee learning and improvement strategy [23]. In public sector universities it is based on traditional ACR system of performance held once in a year and even in private sector if there is any performance appraisal system prevails that has no effect on employee's performance [33]. Previous researchers also confirmed these results that performance appraisal and fairness have a strong significant and positive impact on employee job performance.

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