

Understanding performance management, performance appraisal and performance measurement

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Abstract: This paper is aimed at disentangling performance management, performance appraisal and performance measurement as often misconstrued by management, human resource management and other related disciplines researchers across the globe. Secondary source of data such as journal and textbooks in human resource management were utilized in this paper. The paper also highlights the underline significance of the three nomenclatures in the organisation. Thus, performance management, measurement and appraisal should be treated separately to avoid misrepresentation or duplicates of concepts within the research arena. The paper also x-rays various performance appraisal techniques such as graphic rating scale method, alternation ranking method, paired comparison method, forced distribution method, critical incident method, narrative forms method, field review method, behavioural anchored rating scales, management by objectives, 360-degree feedback, balanced scorecard, computerized and web-based performance method. The implication of this paper is that In addition, managers and business practitioners that sought to choose performance appraisal technique that is appropriate to evaluate subordinates performance will find this paper useful.

Keywords: Performance, performance management, performance appraisal, performance measurement.

Introduction

Management as a theory jungle portends the fact that nomenclature and concepts used in management disciplines have similarities which if not properly examined cannot be perceived to be the same while they are not (Koontz, 1961). In Koontz's argument, since the emergence of management as a discipline, there has

been jungle warfare amongst scholars due to similarities in concepts and methodologies. Thus, the knowledge of performance management especially in the fields of management, human resource management and industrial psychology remain entangled. In line with the above, performance management is a concept that had bedeviled so many researchers over the years due to its closeness to performance appraisal and performance measurement. However, performance management contribution to organisational success cannot be relegated. Armstrong (2009) submitted that performance management is essential to organisational success in three areas. Firstly, it aligned individual objectives with that of the organization and it encourages employees' to uphold corporate core values. Secondly, performance management propels corporate managers or human resource practitioners expectations to be enshrined, followed in terms of the responsibilities as well as accountabilities. Thirdly, it provides opportunities for individuals to identify their own goals and develop their skills and competencies. Other scholars like Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2004) argued that the purpose of performance management is divided into three perspectives: the strategic, administrative and developmental purpose. They went further to elucidate that the strategic part of performance management is that it assists the organization achieve its business objectives. For the administrative purpose, they assert that performance management enables organizations to furnish adequate information for the running of the firm quite apart from decision making with respect to workers salary, compensation and rewards. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2004) accentuated that; the developmental aspect of performance is that it serves as a basis for developing employee's knowledge and skills. Other researchers have also supported Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2004) argument. Cleveland and Murphy (1989) in

Aguinis, (2005) submitted that performance management systems can serve the following purposes: strategic, administrative, information, developmental, organisational maintenance, and documentation.

In another contribution, Zvavahera (2014) contended that the aim of performance management is to improve service delivery through effective and efficient application of resources. As a binocular, Medlin (2013) stressed that performance management gives direction to the employees through guidance from management. Performance management facilitates management alignment and buy-in by bringing all levels of management into operational planning process and giving employees a chance to help shape the plan (Aguilar, 2003). It focuses on ways to motivate employees to improve their performance (DeNisi and Pritchard, 2006).

Apart from the above significance, performance management is very important for the employer and the employee. From the management perspective, performance management assists them to showcase how employees participate and contribute their commitment towards achieving organizational goals. For instance, a well organised performance management system will assist the organization to comprehend when its employees will be retiring from active service and who replaces who in the various departments. Performance management also accord organizations to embark on the assessment of employee training needs; plan their development through mentoring or coaching and grant them the choice for implementing the results of the outcome. On the subordinate perspective, performance management makes it possible for transparency to prevail at the workplace; encourages high performance and competitiveness amongst employees.

Mustafa (2013) contended that performance management is essential for the improvement of employee morale, retention of top performers, increased

profitability, recruitment of talented people all the time, proper training plan for them according to their jobs as well as the right job for right person. Rishipal and Manish, (2013) in their contribution added that performance management works towards facilitating and improving the performance of the employees by building a conducive work environment and providing maximum opportunities and resources to the employees for participating in organizational planning, decision making, executing and result producing process. United State Department of Health and Human Services (2011) elucidated that the overall goal of performance management is to ensure that an organization and its subsystems (processes, departments, teams, etc.), are optimally working together to achieve the results desired by the organization.

From the foregoing arguments it appears that performance management when implemented effectively enables decision-makers to distinguish employees' that are knowledgeable and creative in their respective departments. Performance management brings about employee retention. This is because without effective performance management, knowledgeable and innovative employees will not be spotted out from others. Employees' that solve knotty problems are discovered when organizations are faced with difficult challenges. However, if performance management is not carried out based on certain dimensions or criteria, such employees' may not be recognized and thus will result to turnover.

Drawing from the above, this paper establishes the gaps between performance management, performance appraisal and performance measurement to enable researchers in management, human resource management, industrial psychology and other related disciplines to be acquainted with differences and similarities between the concepts.

Performance management

Performance management emanated from management by objectives propounded by Peter Drucker (1954). Performance management is viewed as a continuous process of improving individuals, team and organisational performance (Bussim, 2012). Performance management is a process where executives, managers and supervisors work together to combine employee performances with organizational goals (Ivancevich, 2001). Performance management is a uniquely goal-oriented and continuous way to appraise and manage subordinate performance (Dessler, 2013). For Armstrong (2009), it is a systematic process of improving enterprise performance by developing the performance of individual and teams. Performance management is a continuous process of identifying, measuring and developing performance in organisations by linking each individual's performance and objectives to the organisation's overall mission and goals (Aguinis, 2005). Collings and Wood (2009) asserted that it is a process that enables employees to perform their roles to the best of their abilities with the aim of achieving or exceeding established targets and standards that are directly linked with the organization's objectives. Glendinning (2007) and Aguinis (2007) contended that it is a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning their performance with the organizations goals. In another view, Weiss and Hartle (1997) argued that it is a process for establishing a shared understanding about what is to be achieved and how it is to be achieved, and an approach to managing individual that increases the probability of achieving success. Human resource management scholars Nel, Werner, Du Plessis, Ngalo, Poisat, Sono, Van Hoek and Botha (2011) viewed performance management as a process of

creating a work environment or setting in which individual are encouraged perform to the best of their abilities for the achievement of shared goals.

Fernandez (2005) in his own opinion argued that performance management is an integrated system which involve institutional design, work planning, assessments, and feedback designed with a view to maximizing performance at the individual and team levels in motivating and developing staff. Performance management is the system through which organization set work goals, determine performance standards, assign and evaluate employee's work, provide performance feedback to employees, determine training and development needs and distribute rewards to employees (Briscoe and Claus, 2008). Performance management is a communication between a manager and an employee arrive together at an understanding of what work is to be accomplished, how it will be accomplished, how work is progressing toward desired results (Mustafa, 2013). For Rishipal and Manish (2013), performance management is a collective effort by individual employees, departmental units and organizational management as a whole. Beardwell and Holden (2001) argue that performance management is an integrated and continuous process that develops, communicates and enables the future direction, core competences and values of the institution and helps to create a horizon of understanding. Nkwane (2012) argued that performance management is more concerned about the attainment of institutional goals and improving service delivery while performance appraisal is more concerned about the assessment of the individual's past and current performance with the purpose of evaluating his / her performance and developing developmental plans. Contributing to these differences, Collings and Wood (2009) elucidates that performance appraisal is associated with individual performance, whereas performance management looks at individual, team, and organizational performance.

Performance appraisal

This concept is often used interchangeably with performance evaluation (Nel *et al.* 2011). Dictionary of human resources and personnel management (2006) viewed performance appraisal as an assessment of the quality of a person's work in a job. However, in order to disentangle performance management from performance appraisal Collings and Wood (2009) accentuates that performance appraisals are concerned with individual performance, whereas performance management looks at individual, team, and organizational performance. Armstrong (2009) also distinguished these two concepts as thus; performance appraisal is the formal assessment and rating of individuals by their managers at, usually, an annual review meeting; whereas performance management is a continuous and much wider, more comprehensive and more natural process of management that clarifies mutual expectations, emphasizes the support role of managers who are expected to act as coaches rather than judges, and focuses on the future. Gilley, Gilley, Quatro and Dixon (2009) elucidated that performance appraisal is the process by which an organization assesses the job-related performance and development of its employees. They also argued that it involves two steps; first is rating performance against company-set standards, and secondly, providing feedback as to quality of work performed (Gilley, Gilley, Quatro and Dixon, 2009). Based on the above, Dessler (2013) deviated and argued that performance appraisal involves three steps; first it involves setting work standards; secondly, assessing the employee's actual performance relative to those standards (this usually involves some rating form); and lastly, providing feedback to the workers with the aim of assisting them to eliminate performance deviations or continue performing above standards.

Nonetheless, Atakpa, Ocheni and Nwankwo (2013) argued that performance appraisal is the process of evaluating the performance and qualifications of the employees in terms of the requirements of the job for which they are employed, for the purpose of administration including placement. Dessler (2013) opined that performance appraisal refers to a process of evaluating an employee's current and/or past performance relative to his or her performance standards. Performance appraisal is reviewing past performance, rewarding past performance, goal setting for future performance and employee development (Sapra, 2012). Alo (1999) defines performance appraisal as a process involving deliberate stock taking of the success, which an individual or organization has achieved in performing assigned tasks or meeting set goals over a period of time. Collings and Wood (2009) added that performance appraisal is a crucial element of the performance management process, involving a formal review of individual performance. Differentiating performance management from performance appraisal, Boxall, Purcell and Wright (2007) argued that performance management is an ongoing process, while performance appraisal is carried out at discrete time intervals. In addition, Dessler (2013) argued that performance management implies continuous, daily, or weekly interactions and feedback to ensure continuous improvement; goal oriented and continuously reevaluating and (if need be) modifying how the employee and team get their work done. In furtherance, they argued that performance management systems increasingly employs information technology to help managers automatically track employee performance while performance appraisal systems usually rely on paper forms, or perhaps online or computerized appraisal forms (Dessler, 2013).

Performance appraisal techniques

There are several techniques that can be used to appraise or evaluate subordinates' performance. These include graphic rating scale, alternation ranking method, paired comparison method, forced distribution method, critical incident method, narrative form method, behaviorally anchored rating scales, management by objectives, computerized and web-based performance method and electronic performance monitoring method (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009; Collings and Wood, 2009; Dessler, 2013; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright, 2016). Below is the discussion of techniques for appraising performance in the workplace.

Graphic Rating Scale Method: In this method, a set of performance indicators such as subordinate's depth of knowledge, quantity and quality of work, cooperation, attendance, leadership quality, emotional stability and initiative can be rated in a graphical representation (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Performance raters at times use numbers such as 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to denote points for high or low; excellent or poor; good or bad.

Alternation Ranking Method: This refers to ranking subordinates' performance according to their traits such as from good to bad; easygoing or aggressive; introvert or extrovert; customer friendly or customer hostile.

Paired Comparison Method: In this technique, the appraiser evaluates one subordinate's performance against the performance of another or others (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). The paired comparison method helps the appraiser make the ranking method more precise in terms of quantity of work, quality of work, and then pair and compare every subordinate with every other subordinate (Dessler, 2013).

Forced Distribution Method: Forced distribution appraisal techniques refer to when an evaluator rate a certain proportion of subordinates performance using different categories (Collings and Wood, 2009). For instance, the organization might establish the following percentages and categories: Exceptional - 5%; Exceeds standards - 25%; Meets standards - 55%; Room for improvement - 10%; Not acceptable - 5% (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright, 2016).

Critical Incident Method: This method focuses on the evaluator's attention on the behaviours that are keys making the difference between executing a job effectively and executing it ineffectively (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). In other words, the appraiser put down criteria that describe what the subordinate did that is known to be effective or ineffective (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Dessler (2013) added that in the critical incident method, the supervisor or manager keeps a log of positive and negative examples (critical incidents) of a subordinate's work-related behaviour.

Narrative Forms Method: In this technique, the appraiser write a narrative describing subordinates strengths, weaknesses, past performance, potential and suggestions for improvement (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Narrative form technique helps the employee understand where his or her performance was good or bad, and how to improve that performance (Dessler, 2013).

Field Review Method: In this technique, the rater or evaluator appraises or evaluates the subordinate's based on his/her past records of performance as well as other relevant information such as lateness to work or absenteeism (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright, 2016).

Behavioural Anchored Rating Scales: This is a combination of critical incident and graphic rating scale techniques. The appraiser rates subordinates based on items along

a continuum, but the points are examples of actual behaviour on the given job rather than general descriptions or traits (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009).

Management by objectives: Ugwu (2009) argued that management by objective is concerned with participative set goals that are tangible, verifiable and measurable. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2016) contended that the three major components of management by objectives are goals must be specific, difficult, and objective; managers and their employees work together to set the goals; and the manager gives objective feedback through the rating period to monitor progress toward the goals.

360-degree feedback: This technique involves getting feedback from multiple sources, including peers, supervisors and colleagues (Collings and Wood, 2009). 360-degree feedback 'can provide a unique opportunity for individuals to make an objective comparison of their self-assessment with the assessments of their peers, managers and customers and other interested parties involved in the process' (Chase and Fuchs, 2008). In this technique, an employee or subordinate can be appraised by the manager, supervisor, team leader, customer or anyone that usually come in direct contact with the employee that the organisation is known.

Balanced scorecard: The balanced scorecard was propounded by Kaplan and Norton (1992). It is a strategic planning as well performance management system used to align business activities with organization's vision and strategy, improve internal and external communications, as well as monitor organizational performance against strategic goals (Collings and Wood, 2009). The three areas of evaluation are financial measures which are customer perspective, internal business process perspective and; learning and growth perspective. Internal business measures should involve metrics which allow managers to know how well their business is running (Collings and

Wood, 2009). Learning and growth measures are linked to individual and company self-improvement through incorporating employee training and development and changes in organizational culture (Collings and Wood, 2009). The customer perspective includes the need to incorporate indicators of customer satisfaction.

Computerized and Web-Based Performance Method: Employers makes use of computerized or Web-based performance appraisal systems to appraise their subordinates' performance (Dessler, 2013). Managers compile computerized notes on subordinates during the year, and then to merge these with ratings for each employee on several performance traits (Dessler, 2013).

Performance measurement

Smith, Mossialos and Papanicolas (2008) contended that performance measurement is aimed to monitor, evaluate and communicate the extent to which various aspects of the organisation meet their key objectives. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011) perceived performance measurement as a process by which an organization monitors important aspects of its programs, systems, and care processes. Performance measurement is a key driver of Plan = Do = Check = Act iterative cycle that W. Edwards Deming propounded (Serrat, 2010). Performance measurement is the selection and use of quantitative measures of capacities, processes, and outcomes to develop information about critical aspects of activities, including their effect on the public (Perrin, Durch and Skillman, 1999). Performance measurement is the regular collection and reporting of data to track work produced and results achieved (Virginia's Handbook on Planning and Performance, 1998). Performance measurement focuses on measuring what is occurring, but does not ask "why" or "how" it is occurring (Newcomer, 1997). U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services (2011) highlighted seven reasons why organizations measure performance as follows:

1. Distinguish what appears to be happening from what is really happening
2. Establish a baseline; i.e., measure before improvements are made
3. Make decisions based on solid evidence
4. Demonstrate that changes lead to improvements
5. Allow performance comparisons across sites
6. Monitor process changes to ensure improvements are sustained over time
7. Recognize improved performance

Behn (2003) cited in Serrat (2010) noted that firms measure their performance as a result of the followings:

- + Evaluate: How well is our organization performing?
- + Control: How can we ensure that our subordinates are doing the right thing?
- + Budget: On what programmes, individuals or projects should our enterprise spend money?
- + Stimulate: How can we motivate shop floor managers, middle managers, nonprofit/for-profit organisations as well as general public to enhance performance?
- + Promote: How can we persuade political actors, media, and general public that our organization is doing an excellent work?
- + Celebrate: What accomplishments are honourable for celebrating organisational success?
- + Learn: What are the things working or what are the things that are not working?

Enhance: What shall we do in another way to increase performance?

Theoretical framework

The underpinning baseline theories that underpin performance management are goal-setting theory by Locke and Latham (2006); Expectancy theory by Victor Vroom (1964) and Equity theory by Stacy Adams (1965). Goal-theory focuses on identifying the types of goals that are most effective in producing high levels of motivation and performance and explaining why goals have these effects (Jones and George, 2017). Expectancy theory states that employee level of expectancy determines whether he or she believes that a high level of effort results in a high level of performance (Jones and George, 2017). Equity theory argues that when equity exists, employees are stimulated to continue contributing their current levels of inputs to their organizations to receive their current levels of outcomes (Jones and George, 2017). Equity theory metamorphosed into what is known today as organisational justice which dimensions include distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice (Cropanzano, Slaughter and Bachiochi, 2005; Folger and Cropanzano, 1998; Colquitt, Greenberg and Zapata-Phelan, 2005). The three dimensions of organisational justice relates to performance management. For instance, procedural justice relates to the extent to which procedures are perceived to be fair and requires performance management procedures to be transparent and robust while distributive justice relates to the perceived fairness of the allocation of outcomes (Torrington, Hall, Atkinson and Taylor, 2017). This is relevant especially where performance management is associated with pay but is also relevant in relation to training, promotion and other similar outcomes of a performance management system (Torrington, Hall, Atkinson and Taylor, 2017). The third dimension of organisational justice is interactional justice which relates to the perceived quality of

interpersonal treatment received and relates to performance appraisal but also to other interactions such as coaching and feedback (Torrington, Hall, Atkinson and Taylor, 2017).

Conclusion

Based on the reviews of performance management, performance measurement and performance appraisal it is evident that they are not the same as researcher conceived. But it behold on the investigator or researcher and context in which the study is carried out. Performance can be managed by overseeing the extent to which employees or subordinates are doing their work. The process of ascertaining how well employees or subordinates are doing their jobs is performance measurement. On the other hand, performance appraisal is to ascertain whether an employee or subordinate achieve the goals of the organization at the right time. Thus, performance management, measurement and appraisal should be treated separately to avoid misrepresentation or duplicates of concepts within the research arena.

Drawing from the conclusion above, irrespective of the terminologies used to mean the same thing about performance management, performance measurement and performance appraisal; human resource management scholars and other behavioural science scholars should always show clarity when using each of the above concepts to enable readers and young scholars understand what they mean as well as when to apply them in the organisational context. In addition, managers and business practitioners that sought to choose performance appraisal technique that is appropriate to evaluate subordinates performance will find this paper useful.

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