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Problems Associated with the Management of Performance Appraisals in Universities: The Case of Ghanaian Public Sector Universities

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ABSTRACT

The use of performance appraisal, a preserve of the private sector organisations, has now become wide spread and has grown to include previously untouched organisations and occupational hierarchies such as secretarial and administrative staff in both the public and private sectors. However, very little has been reported in the literature concerning the perceptions and experiences of the universities in developing countries relating to performance appraisals. This study therefore sought to explore performance appraisal systems in the Ghanaian public sector universities to consider the perceptions and experiences of the administrative staff about the problems associated with the performance appraisal systems of the universities.

The study adopted an exploratory, descriptive and evaluative triangulation case study approach and generated data through semi-structured interviews and self-completing questionnaires from 401 university employees in Ghana from four of the six public sector universities. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, graphs and content analysis were used to analyse the data.

The results indicate that generally the perceptions of the administrative staff concerning the effectiveness of the present performance appraisal systems of the universities were skewed towards dissatisfaction because they lacked essential

characteristics of an effective performance appraisal system. These include lack of clearly formulated and defined policies and objectives, performance measures, effective staff participation and training and development that could make them effective. The study concludes that there is a need for the universities to recognise their employees as valued resources and treat them as a source of competitive advantage which have to be strategically managed to achieve improved employee performance and development as well as the effectiveness of the universities.

Introduction

Human resource (HR) is the organisation's most crucial resource whose behaviours, talents and aspirations affect the other resources that the organisation uses, the organisational efficiency and its effectiveness (Holbrook Jr, 2002; Murphy and Cleveland, 1995). To this end, performance appraisal has occupied the attention of human resource management (HRM), organisational behaviour and industrial psychology researchers for some time now. This is because the performances of the individuals within the organisations improve with

definite goals and feedback on their performance complemented by an adequate reward system (Lawrence, 1986).

Performance Appraisal which is variously termed performance review, annual appraisal, performance evaluation, employee evaluation and merit evaluation (Sanguine 2003) is an ongoing process of evaluation and management of both the behaviours and outcomes of employees in the workplace (Gobbler, 2002), the collection and analysis of data on the overall capabilities and potentials of individual worker in an attempt to make decision in tune with a purpose (Bratton and Gold, 1999). It is an observation and measurement of employee performance against pre-determined job related standards, for purposes delineated by the organisation (Schuler and Jackson, 1987) Essentially, performance appraisal is about measuring, monitoring and enhancing the performance of employees as a contributor to the overall organisational performance (Agyenim-Boateng, 2006). It is not "a stand alone process but an approach to creating a shared vision of the purposes and aims of the organisation, helping each individual employee to understand and share the workload to achieve those aims" (Martinez and Martineau, 2001:1). To achieve this, there is the need for precise determination of activities to be accomplished by the employees.

Such activities need to target the accomplishment of organisational effectiveness as well as an agreement between the employee and the employer on what to do and how to do it. Performance appraisal is therefore a systematic and coordinated assessment of employees' current and past performance relative to their performance standards. It involves identifying, measuring and developing human performance in the organisation. The process involves setting work standards, assessing the employees' actual work performance relative to these standards and providing feedback to employees with the view to motivating them to eliminate performance deficiencies or to continue to perform above par. Thus, an effective performance appraisal system (PAS) needs to measure current performance levels and contain mechanisms for reinforcing strengths, identifying weaknesses, and feeding the information back to the employees and organisation in an attempt to improve present and future individual and organisational effectiveness.

There are a variety of reasons why organisations introduce performance appraisal and this sometimes creates conflict as to what the objectives of performance appraisal are. However, the most usual rationalisation and justification for performance appraisal is to improve individual employees'

performance in the organisation (Bratton and Gold, 1999) in an attempt to improve the overall organisational performance and effectiveness. Under such a broad purpose come a number of varied purposes. Among other things, performance appraisal marches the achievements of the employees with the expected results in order for management to make a decision on such matters as promotion, salary reviews and conditions of service, job redesign, redeployment and reposting. The data also help in self-assessment and personnel management research. The process is a vehicle for validating and refining organisational actions such as employee selection, training, reward and other management practices. In addition, the data are used for succession planning and employee development or to institute discipline or discharge procedures (Billikopf, 2003). Performance Appraisal therefore assesses the work accomplished in relation to the goals and objectives of the organisation to determine whether the activities accomplished have in any way contributed to the organisational success. The data acquired therefore, help to improve individual performance in the organisation with the view to improving the organisational performance and effectiveness (Martinez and Martineau, 2001; Bratton and Gold, 1999).

Performance appraisal which hitherto used to be the preserve of the private sector, has become widespread and an important cornerstone of HRM practice that is capable of channelling the energies of employees towards the achievement of organisational efficiency and effectiveness (Masterson and Taylor, 1996; Lee,

(1996). It has now been extended to new work settings like education and health sectors and is a central element in the concept of performance management (Redman et al., 2000; Fletcher, 1997). It has grown to include previously untouched organisations and occupational hierarchy such as secretarial and administrative employees in both the public and private sectors. New forms of performance appraisal systems (PAS) such as competency based, upward appraisal, 360 degree and team appraisals have also been introduced recently.

Employees of the public sector universities (academic and administrative) like other employees in the public sector expect to be appraised and not to be evaluated (Analoui and Fell, 2002). However, very little seem to be known about performance appraisal in the public sector, including the universities, and about the people who are appraised there in the literature. The empirical evidence on how employees in the public sector universities in general and university administrative employees in developing countries in particular, respond to the processes involved in performance appraisal in

the universities has remained scarce and sparse (Analoui and Fell, 2002; Redman et al., 2000). This study, therefore, was an exploration into the role and effectiveness of PAS, an aspect of Human Resource Management (HRM), in universities with special emphasis on the Ghanaian public sector universities. In other words, the present study sought to generate empirical data to analyse and assess the role and effectiveness of the PAS in the Ghanaian public sector universities.

Method

The study adopted an exploratory, descriptive and evaluative case study approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative methods of social science research (Blaikie, 2003, Yin, 1989). The empirical data was obtained through the use of self-completing questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide from 401 university employees, who were both purposively and randomly selected.

The questionnaires were used to gather data from the junior and senior administrative employees (Staff) and the front line managers (FLMs) such as Assistant Registrars and Senior Assistant Registrars while the semi-structured interview-guides were used to gather data from the senior management personnel in the universities (see Table 1). The questionnaires were personally distributed in all the universities by the researcher and four trained research assistants while the interviews were conducted by the researcher. The senior management personnel and the front line managers were included in the study in order to cross check their views with the senior and junior administrative employees (Staff) of the universities who were the main respondents for the study.

Table 1

The Sample for the Study

Universities[1]	Staff	FLM	Senior Mangement
UCC	119	14	3
KNUST	99	10	3
UEW	75	13	3
UG	49	11	2
Sub Total	342	48	11
Grand Total	**342+48+11=401**		

Source: Field Data

[1] Four public sector universities in Ghana were involved in the study. These were University of Ghana, Legon (UG); University of Education, Winneba (UEW); University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast (UCC); and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (KNUST).

The results indicated that generally the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities had not been effective because they faced a number of systemic and implementational problems. This article discusses some of the major problems facing the effective implementation and effectiveness of the PAS in the Ghanaians public sector universities.

Results

The results of the study indicated that the public sector universities had policies that guided the implementation and management of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities and these were known to the administrative employees of the universities. Almost 60 percent (59.1%) of the respondents affirmed that they were aware that the universities had policies guiding the implementation of their PAS. Similarly, a high percentage of the FLM (75%) confirmed that they were aware that the universities had performance appraisal policies (PAPr) in place for the management of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities (see Table 2).

However, the data showed that the policies had not been effectively communicated to both the employees and their supervisors. For example, 62.3 percent of the employees and 41.6 percent of their supervisors who were aware of the policies stated that the policies had not been communicated to them neither had they been educated on the policies.

The data showed that the respondents lacked knowledge of the objectives of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities. At the operational (Staff) and supervisory (FLMs) levels, majority of the respondents were not aware of what the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities sought to achieve.

Table 2

Respondents' Awareness of Performance Appraisal Policies and Procedures

Awareness of policy	Staff (N= 342)		FLM (N= 48)	
	No	%	No	%
Aware	201	59.1	36	75
Not Aware	141	41.3	12	25
Total	342	100	48	100

Source: Field Data

As many as 77.8 percent of the staff and 64.6 percent of their supervisors were not aware of what constituted the objectives of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities.

The results showed that the supervisors used a variety of processes in assessing the performances of the administrative employees of the Ghanaian public sector universities (see Table 3). While as many as 17.5 percent of the employees did not know how their performances were assessed, 49.5 percent of them stated that their performances were assessed by their supervisors who only filled in the performance appraisal forms (PAFs) and requested the staff to sign a portion to indicate their consent of the assessment. Close to 23 percent (22.6%) of the employees claimed that they filled in the Part I of the PAFs while their supervisors treated the rest as confidential reports. This situation was confirmed by the supervisors. For example, 29.2 percent of the supervisors stated that the performances of the employees were assessed by supervisors filling in the PAFs and requesting the employees to sign portions to indicate their consent, while 17.6 percent stated that the employees were requested to fill in Part I of the PAFs and supervisors treated the rest as confidential document. Only 2.1 percent of the employees and 8.3 percent of the supervisors stated that the performances of the employees were assessed through performance interviews.

Table 3
Process of the Universities' Performance Appraisal Systems

Process	Staff (N= 342)		FLM (N= 48)	
	No.	%	No	%
Supervisors fill in PAFs for staff to consent	168	49.9	14	29.2
Staff fill in Part I of the PAFs while the rest are treated as confidential report	77	22.6	7	14.6
Interview between supervisors and staff	7	2.1	4	8.3
PAFs treated as confidential filled in by only supervisors	30	8.9	-	-
Not Known	60	17.5	23	47.9
Total	342	100	48	100

Source: Field Data

The results also indicated that the staff of the Ghanaian public sector universities were assessed by a variety of assessors who were all in supervisory positions. The performances of 65.2 percent of the staff of the universities were assessed by the heads of department, 20.8 percent by their immediate supervisors who were either Principal[1] or Chief[2] Administrative Assistants while the Faculty Officers[3] assessed the performances of only 2.3 percent of the staff (see Table 4).

The results showed that both the employees and their supervisors had not been given enough training to ensure the effective management of the performance appraisal process. The results at the operational level (Staff) showed that only 22.2 percent had been trained in the management of the performance appraisal process of the universities while as many as 77.8 percent had not had any form of training in the management of performance appraisal. At the supervisory level, the results were similar to that of the operational level. Only 22.9 percent of the supervisors had been trained in the management of performance appraisal process.

Table 4
Sources of Performance Information in the Universities (N= 342).

Appraisers	No.	%
Heads of Department	223	65.2
Deans	10	2.9
Immediate Supervisors	71	20.8
Faculty Officers	8	2.3
Not Known	30	8.8
Total	342	100

Source: Field Data

(Footnotes)
[1] This is the penultimate senior rank among the universities' senior staff
[2] This is the most senior rank among the universities' senior staff
[3] These are the Assistant Registrars who are in charge of the Academic Faculties.

The results further revealed that the administrative employees of the universities did receive some form of performance feedback on their performances. At the operational level, 57.9 percent had received both formal and informal feedback on their performances. Out of this number, 27.5 percent received formal feedback from their Human Resource Divisions while 48.3 percent received informal feedback from their supervisors. The data also demonstrated that the formal feedback was received once a year while the informal feedback ranged from daily basis, once a month to any time a performance mistake was made.

The data showed that the universities used their performance appraisal results (PAR) in three main decision areas to ensure the effective management of their human resources at the operational level. These were i) rewards; ii) employee rotation and transfers; and iii) Training and career development. More than half of the respondents (56%) reported that the universities used their PAR in deciding on the employees that should be promoted, given salary increase or other forms of rewards. About 16 percent (15.5%) confirmed that the universities used their PAR in taking decisions concerning training and development needs of the employees and universities while 4.6 percent stated that the PAR were used in transferring and rotating employees within the universities (see Table 5).

Table 5

Means of Applying the Universities' Performance Appraisal Results (N= 342)

Have you received any training in performance appraisal management?	No.	%
Promotion decisions	71	20.7
Remuneration Decisions	101	29.7
Staff Motivation and other rewards Decisions	16	4.6
Training and Career Development Decisions	27	7.9
No Idea	74	21.6
Total	342	100

Source: Field Data

Discussion

Lack of Communication of policies to employees

The study has revealed that all the Ghanaian public sector universities had annual employee PAS in place. These PAS of the universities were said to be guided by formal policies and procedures. The PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities were first introduced in the 1970s as Annual Confidential Reports (ACR) in which the employees were denied access to the results. The secrecy surrounding the annual confidential reports led to many abuses such as favouritism and victimisation. This resulted in loss of credibility of the ACR (Ghana Civil Service, 1991). As a result of the Ghana Civil Service Reform Programme in the 1990s (CSRP: 1987-1992), all the public organisations including the universities and the Ghana Civil Service replaced their ACR with a 'Semi-Open' annual PAS.

The results of the study however, clearly showed that even though a large proportion of the respondents were aware of the existence of the policies on PAS of the universities, their knowledge was very limited as the universities had failed to effectively communicate their policiesto the employees and their supervisors. In bureaucratic institutions, especially in the developing countries, information flow is a major problem. Employees may have knowledge about the existence of policies which may concern them and their work but may hardly be fully educated on those issues as indicated by the data. For example, in the study, it was realised that a high percentage of the employees (59.1) and their supervisors (75%) were aware of the policies on performance appraisals policies but only a few (21.8%) had ever seen or been educated on the policies. This was not limited only to employees and their supervisors. Some management personnel who were supposed to be the custodians of the policies had very limited knowledge of the policies. For example, one interviewee stated:

'*I have been looking for the policy ever since I assumed this position. I have not seen the document, but it has not been taken seriously by the Heads of Department who are expected to assess the performance of their employees*'.

This finding is similar to what Analoui and Fell (2002) found concerning the PAS of the administrative staff of University of Bradford. In that study, the researchers found that even though the respondents had knowledge of a draft performance policy for the PAS of the University,

their knowledge was limited as no one could state what was in the policy document. This is an indication that universities in general and universities in Ghana in particular, have not taken the appraisal of their administrative employees very seriously as they have done in the case of their academic employees.

Lack of awareness of the objectives of the Performance appraisal systems

Compounding the problem of lack of communication of the policies is the problem of lack of awareness of the objectives of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities among the personnel of the universities. The documentary evidence revealed that the stated objectives of the PAS of the universities were: a) To find out whether the employees were performing as expected; b) to set targets for the ensuing year; c) to determine which employee merited salary increase, promotion or re-assignment; and d) to identify training and development needs of the universities and their employees. However, the results indicated that generally, both the employees and their supervisors did not recognise these as the objectives of the PAS of the universities as a large proportion of the respondents (77.5% of the employees and 54.6 percent of the

supervisors) were not aware of the objectives of the PAS of the universities

This was also not limited only to the employees and their supervisors. Almost all the interviewees displayed lack of awareness of the objectives of the PAS as the following responses indicate:

"Most employees have positive perceptions about the PAS because they are management's tools for measuring who should merit pay increase and promotion". They aim at *"assessing past results which is used for salary increases and indirectly for promotion, however, from the way the system is managed, I am not sure whether the employees and heads of department are aware of these objectives"*.

Another interviewee responded by asking:

"Who but the Human Resource people knows anything about the PAS? Looking at how the forms are filled, people only fill in the forms as an obligation".

With the exception of the interviewees of UEW, all the interviewees expressed different views about what

a) Setting targets for the employees for the coming year; b) Documenting the agreed objectives, and c) Acting as a source for building up training needs of the university.

They agreed that broadly the PAS of the university had two objectives to:

i) *Enable the university achieve her broad objectives, and ii) Enable employees have job satisfaction and develop their careers.*

Thus, the results indicated that the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities lacked clearly defined standards against which employees' performances were assessed which had been communicated to the personnel (Wilson, 2002; Swan, 1991).

The use of variety of processes

A variety of processes were used in the assessment of the performances of the administrative employees of the universities. The official appraisal process of the universities is a two-way process. By the calendar of the universities, the PAFs leave the Human Resource Divisions at the beginning of the appraisal period (usually October) to the Departments and return to the Human Resource Divisions after the PAFs had been completed (December ending). At the departments, the PAFs are distributed to employees (in some universities) to fill in Part I (usually providing factual demographic information such as name and present grade) and returned the PAFs to their immediate supervisors. Arrangements are then made for performance appraisal interviews (PAIs) for open and frank discussion of the performances of the employees and completion of PAIs forms. After the completion, the employees sign a portion on the PAFs to indicate that they had taken part in the discussions, seen the reports of the supervisors and either agreed or disagreed with the report. A copy of the report is then sent to the Human Resource Divisions for further action (usually salary increase, transfer or caution) while a copy is kept on the personal files of the employees at the departments/sections/units. Thus, the performance appraisal process (PAPr) centres on PAIs between supervisors and the employees.

The study however revealed that in practice, only a handful of the appraisers followed the official process (2.1%) of assessing employees through PAIs. The majority of appraisers (72%) either filled in the PAFs and requested employees to sign their portions or

requested the employees to fill in Part I of the PAFs and treated the rest as confidential reports or treated the appraisals as strictly confidential reports (7.1%). It is observed that employees were either satisfied with this trend of affairs or were 'coerced' into accepting it. For example, when asked whether there had been situations where some employees had challenged their assessments or the manner in which they were assessed, interviewees seemed argued of following:

"That rarely happens, for the employees either have confidence in their heads of department or decided not to challenge the PAR because normally no specific actions followed the assessment"; or *"Employees only complain when the negative remarks adversely affected their promotions and salary increases. I think they normally do not complain because nothing good comes out of their complaints. Management's best action in such circumstances would be to transfer the employees to new departments or sections"*

Thus, employees accepted the situation either because they saw the process only as a political process with no performance value or to protect their positions in the departments or the universities. This is similar to sentiments expressed by the employees of the Ghana Cooperative Bank about their PAS. In a study by Amoah and Nartey (1998) the Bank's employees generally perceived their PAS as one of 'jokes' and a 'ritual of no performance significance' (Amoah and Nartey, 1998: 18) hence they did not attach the much needed seriousness to completing and submitting the forms. In many instances, the employees refused to fill in the forms as nothing worthwhile came out of earlier ones submitted to management. Indeed, the study found that the PAS of the Bank had lost its credibility in the eyes of majority of the employees. This suggests that even though the PAPr of the Ghanaian public sector universities were being used perhaps, as a management tool for control of employees (Bratton and Gold, 1999) thus, suggesting that management was in control of the performances of the employees, the PAS might have lost their credibility in the eyes of majority of the employees of the universities. It is interesting to note that some of the respondents from the Divisions of Human Resource which were supposed to be the implementers of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities were themselves not assessed through the officially laid down procedures. It is therefore assumed that the Human Resource Divisions would lack the moral courage to encourage others to follow the laid down procedure.

Sources of performance information

Related to the above is the problem of relying on supervisors as the only source of performance information. New sources of performance appraisal information such as peer appraisal, self-appraisal and 360 degree appraisal are yet to gain roots in most developing countries including Ghana, especially within the public sector. In all the universities, the immediate supervisors (Deans, Heads of Departments or Faculty Officers) acted as the sources of performance information. In other words, there was only one source of performance information, the supervisor. Even though this is observed to be a good HRM practice as the immediate supervisors are best placed to assess the performances of their employees, the system has a number of defects especially in situations where the reports were classified as confidential to the appraisees and were not countersigned by any senior officer. The situation is also flawed as there were no opportunities for the employees to appeal against their appraisal results. In these situations, the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector

universities were likely to suffer from Halo Effect[1], the Doppelganger effect[2], rater leniency or strictness[3], Crony Effect[4] (Willison, 2002; Rotunda and Sacketh, 1999;

Amoah and Nartey, 1998; Smither, 1988; Wexley and Yuki, 1977; Dorman, 1961; Guilford, 1954). Even though these are 'ordinary' problems of performance appraisal, they are likely to be made complex considering the kind of social network that exist in Ghana. By their adherence to the dictates of kinship system, the average appraiser in the developing countries, especially Ghana, would be inclined to 'temper justice with mercy' when it comes to assessing people who hail from the same clan/tribe or have good relationships with them.

Lack of training for stakeholders

The Ghanaian public sector universities also lacked any serious training programmes that were based on or influenced by their PAR. In addition, there were no systematic training programme in place to train the personnel in both general management and management of the PAPr of the universities. Even though the employees agreed that training in performance appraisal had positive

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[5] where an employee's strengths in one area are spread to other areas
[6] where all the rating reflects the similarity of character or behaviour of the appraiser and the appraisee
[7] where all employees are rated either high or low
[8] where the closeness of the relationship between appraiser and appraisee distorts the assessment of all the other criteria).

effects on their work performance (36.6%), knowledge of work (41.0%), management skills (12.7%) and improvement in their appraisal skills (10.0%), they had not been exposed to any meaningful training in performance appraisal procedures.

The Ghanaian public sector universities did not see training as a continuous process that should concern the employees throughout their careers, something that applies to everyone whether a generalist administrator, a technical, a professional officer, junior or very senior officer. They also did not see training as being an integral part of the total administrative system of the universities aimed at making the universities more effective (Reilly, 1979). Training programmes are most effective when they follow a systematic process. The training programmes for performance appraisal of the stakeholders therefore, could follow a systematic process that begins with an explanation of the philosophies, policies and objectives of the PAS of the universities, mechanisms of the rating system, the frequency of the appraisal, parties involved in the PAPr, standards to be assessed, benefits to the stakeholders, and others. Appraisers have to be made aware of the problems and weaknesses of the PAS in order to avoid them. The Ghanaian public sector universities

need to focus their training on eliminating the subjectivity errors such as halo effects and reccency which are often made by appraisers (Willison, 2002). The training sessions should not only be a period of providing information to the employees and management personnel but also a process of skill acquisition. Participants need to be encouraged to practise, for example, how to fill in the PAFs, keep a log of observed behaviours and conduct the appraisal interviews. The issue of training the appraisers is very important as appraisers' training has generally been shown to be effective in reducing rating errors, especially if they are extensive and allow for practice (Landy and Farr, 1980). The Ghanaian public sector universities may need to take their training in performance appraisal programmes seriously if the PAPr are not to be seen as a set of rituals that have not much performance effect.

Linking the appraisal to rewards.

The results indicated that the universities linked their PAR with their reward systems. Even though the universities hardly analysed their PAR, the appraisal results influenced decisions of management on the promotions and salary increases. The respondents believed that the Ghanaian public sector universities mostly used their PAR in deciding on

employees that should be promoted or given salary increase (80%). This view was also apparent from the interview data. From the interviews it was realised that:

"*Most employees have positive perceptions about the PAS because they see them as management's tool for measuring who should merit pay increase and promotion*".

It is therefore not for nothing that the employees regarded the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities as managements tool for distributing rewards and punishment to deserving employees. This gives an indication that the Ghanaian public sector universities used their PAS as a management tool for controlling employees (Bratton and Gold, 1999). Even though the universities PAR influenced the decisions of management on promotions and salary increases, the systems, like that of the Ghana Co-operative Bank, did not recognise 'an out of turn promotion' for situations of consistent and exceptional employee performance which could be a motivation for continuous improve performance (Amoah and Nartey, 1998).

Thus, the results of the PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities did not affect the human resource

development (HRD) programmes of the universities as they were not fully integrated into the HRD programmes of the universities. This conclusion is supported by the interview data. For example, in an answer to a question about how the PAR influenced the training programmes of the universities, the interviewees were unanimous that the universities did not organise training in performance appraisals for the employees neither did the PAR influenced the training programmes of the universities very much as the following responses indicate:

"*The university uses two types of training programmes: In house and Out of house. Concerning out of house training, in the past, employees were given the chance to choose the kind of training they wanted to undertake. Now, the Training Board through the heads of department/unit/section determines the critical training areas and requests interested employees to apply for sponsorship. About the in house training, it is global in nature. The Training and Development manager looks at the system and where complaints are coming from and decides on whom to train and on what subjects/topics". "The PAR are not used as the basis for training because no seriousness is attached to the system, no*

motivation to work. People could have been made to work if we have performance standards."

Conclusion

Theoretically, the problems of performance appraisal are supposed to be universal and limited to the intrinsic nature of the job in question, as revealed through the careful job analysis (Blunt and Popoola, 1985). For most part, the particularities of organisational life in the western world bear this expectation although, as Beveridge (1975) and Child (1980) make clear, they are, from appraisal point of view, rarely straight forward. In Africa and Ghana for that matter, however, ordinary problems of performance appraisal are exacerbated by a number of other considerations (Blunt and Popoola, 1985). All the problems listed above as hindering the successful implementation of PAS of the Ghanaian public sector universities as well as those in other organisations in developing countries could be summed up in the problem of 'particularism'. This is the problem of considering the relationships between the appraisers and the appraisees instead of basing the appraisals on what the employees have accomplished within the stated period of time. As the Ghanaian public sector universities used the supervisors as the only source of

performance information and in situations where the reports were not countersigned by other senior management personnel, it is possible that people who received good appraisal results were those who were closely related to the appraisers in terms of kinship or ethnicity or those who maintained good relationship with them. Thus, the actual job performance in terms of what the individual workers and the universities were expected to accomplish would scarcely be taken into account (Price, 1975).

It is observed that these and other problems associated with PAS in both the developed and developing countries are not insurmountable. First, supervisors and their employees need to know and understand the problems. They have to be made aware of these problems and how they affect their operations in the universities as well as how to avoid or minimise them. Second, the problems could be solved or reduced by selecting the right appraisal method (s) (Miller, 1985) as each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. For example, the ranking methods avoid the problem of central tendency but can cause ill feelings when performances of employees are in fact all 'high'. Rater training can also be an effective way of solving most of these problems. Even though training is not a panacea,

it can be used to reduce the problems of Halo Effect. Crony Effect. Doppelganger Effect as well as Veblen Effect. In addition, the raters can be trained to appreciate the reason(s) of the PAS, how to use critical incidents techniques in rating. how to do proper follow ups and behave during PAIs (Miller, 1985: Banrian, 1975; Hobbe, 1957).

Attempts at solving the problem could be summed up as:

'One way to achieve this is to design an appraisal scheme where the emphasis is on development, to use a 'safe' approach, which recognizes achievements and supports professional development and avoids the issue of accuracy and rating of performance' (Wilson (2002: 621).

In other words, there is the need for the Ghanaian public sector universities to develop and implement an effective PAS by selecting the right appraisal method (Miller, 1985) and instituting rater training to help solve the problems associated with the implementation and management of their PAS in order to derive the benefits associated with the use of PAS in the universities.

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