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EFFECTIVENESS OF 360-DEGREE APPRAISAL APPROACH AMONG EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT
Having an effective performance appraisal approach in place trigger improved performance for employees as well as overall university performance. The effectiveness of performance appraisal approaches among employees in public universities in Kenya is not clear hence the need to examine the effectiveness of 360-degree feedback among employees of public universities in Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish the effectiveness of 360 Degree performance appraisal approach among employees of public universities in Kenya. Correlational research design with cross-sectional approach was adopted and stratified random sampling was used in the study. Target population was 991 employees from selected public universities in Kenya. A sample size of 302 was determined by proportional allocation method. Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Reliability of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach alpha coefficient where the alpha coefficient was (a = 0.863). Data analysis involved use of chi square analysis and SPSS analysis software for inferential statistics and descriptive statistics. Data was presented using tables, charts, graphs, mean, standard deviation. The study established that Pearson Chi-Square results for 360-degree appraisal approach and its effectiveness among employees was ($\chi 2$= 320.338, $p < 0.05$). The study recommends that 360-degree feedback appraisal be adopted by universities since it enables employees realize their potential and creates job confidence as well as improve on communications between supervisor and employees. The study may benefit the management of public universities, especially the human resource department by getting information on the effectiveness of performance appraisal approaches in the universities. Policy makers like Commission for University Education (CUE) may also benefit resulting in improved service delivery and productivity
KEYWORDS: *Performance Appraisals Approaches, Performance appraisal system, Performance appraisals, 360-degree feedback*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Performance appraisal is an important tool for making administrative decisions like promotion, rewards. It is also used for developmental decisions to improve employee competences, (Getahun, 2018). Furthermore, the process serves to motivate the employees to work better and achieve the goals when it is fairly done and is objective. Scholars also opine that performance appraisal make employees to own their work and this improve their job performance and overall organizational performance. More so it leads to achievement of various objectives in the human resource department which includes succession planning, discipline and dismissal.

Management of performance in U.S. education sector was based on traditional approach and was budget oriented. Reports given through IPEDS-Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System were used to draw conclusions about the status of Education in different sectors including universities. A number of universities had adopted modern methods of appraisal including the 360-degree appraisal system which enable development of employees based on evaluation report, (Gordon & Fischer, 2018).

According to Segbenya (2019), in a study on effect of performance appraisal practices on employee performance in university education in Ghana. Findings showed that traditional approaches were used in Ghana universities which include ranking method, paired comparison and grading and checklists. He found that the appraisal systems were not effective because supervisors and managers were the only ones who had powers to evaluate employees. Judgments were therefore subject to errors like subjectivity bias and prejudice. Employees were not satisfied with these methods

mainly because feedback was not given.360 feedback appraisal approach was recommended by employees they were not aware of the type of appraisal system that existed in the university. Suggestion made were those new methods of appraisal be adopted by the universities in Ghana, because they could overcome the weaknesses of the old methods. According to Kodi and Kumar (2020), currently the performance appraisal has been designed to involve employees to set goals and objectives. The appraiser and appraisee worked together and there were transparency in the process. Another development was that the Ghana Education Service (GES) coordinates all activities on performance appraisals in the university.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Performance appraisal approaches are detectors which enable universities to improve employee performance and overall university performance. However, the performance appraisal approaches in place seem to exist only for formality and do not serve the purpose of improving employee performance. In the recent studies the employee performance and general performance of public universities in Kenya has not progressed towards attainment of mandate. Therefore, it is necessary to review the compliance of policies and requirements in the universities in areas of appraising employee performance. The Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research Analysis -KIPPRA research report showed that there was better employee performance and general performance in private universities than public universities. Furthermore, the quality of research in private universities was better than the research in public universities. In order to enhance employee performance in public universities, effective performance appraisal approaches should be implemented to evaluate performance of employees based on key performance indicators. Hence the need to examine effectiveness of 360-degree appraisal approach among employees of selected public universities in Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The 360-degree performance appraisal, also known as 360-degree feedback or multi-rater feedback, it refers to appraisal where employers evaluate employee performance from more than one source in the organization, for example from the peers, customers, self-appraisal, supervisor, and the manager instead of only one-on-one feedback from a direct manager.

Hussain, Zahid, Sheeraz and Sarfraz, (2021) did a study in Asia on impact of 360-degree appraisal on employee performance in a bank. The study used primary data collected using questionnaire, sample size of 100 respondents who were the staff of the bank were involved. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. Findings show that 360-degree feedback appraisal develop employee competences thus improving employee productivity. Feedback was given on time and was used for placement on training and development this could enhance employee job performance through motivation. Furthermore, the appraisal approach was integrated with organizational goals, supported by organizational culture and implemented based on legal requirements.

Zondo, (2018) did a study in south Africa on effect 360-degree feedback appraisal on labour productivity in a manufacturing firm. The study used was quantitative in nature, used secondary data collected from quarterly results in the firm. The results were analysed using ordinary least squares. The serial correlation was at 1.32 at 5% significance level. Results obtained showed that the appraisal method contributed a lot to training and development of employees as well as succession planning. It also enabled employees in the company to participate actively in a conducive environment that encourage collaboration. The recommendation was that the firm should develop policies to link the appraisal approach to employee performance for maximum output. The appraisal approach could enable employees to have the right skills and competences hence enable employees to be more productive.

Mwinzi and Kagiri, (2018) did a study on effects of performance appraisal methods on employee performance in commission on revenue collection in Kenya. The study used a descriptive design and census sampling. The respondents were 70 staff of the commission; primary data was collected using structured questionnaire. Data analysis was done using ANOVA and multiple regression show that there was variation between 360-degree feedback and employee performance at 77.8%. This showed that it contributed a lot to employee performance and 360-degree appraisal was effective as the results showed that a unit increase in 360-degree feedback could lead to unit increase in employee performance by 0.778 units. It was a large success to the commission and has been adopted well in the organization and also enabled the employees of the commission to realize their potential and improve their performance. It could also point out areas of weakness and strength to enable them grow and be competent. Feedback

was given to the employees on time and was used for developmental decisions in the commission. Furthermore, feedback received from peers, supervisor, subordinates and customers enabled employees to improve their performance and fostered cooperation among employees in the organization. The recommendation from the study was that the appraisal methods used to evaluate employees should be selected appropriately and implemented following the due procedure.

Mungiti and Kanyanjua, (2017) conducted a study on effect of performance appraisal practices on employee performance in Kenya, Case study of Savannah Cement Limited. The study adopted a descriptive research design and used stratified and simple random sampling technique. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire. Sample size of 98 respondents was used, data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and regression analysis was done. The study found that the performance appraisal process was done following the due procedure. Targets were set for all the staff to ensure the process achieved its objective in evaluating individual employee's performance. 360-degree performance appraisal was widely used and was effective in helping employees realize their potential. Regression analysis done showed that a significant unit increase at 0.338 could lead to unit increase in employee performance. Also, p values were above 0.05. Feedback obtained was used for developmental purposes. 360-degree appraisal fostered teamwork and collaboration among employees. This improved employee productivity and overall organization performance. The recommendation included; subordinates be involved more often during performance appraisal so that managers get feedback from their juniors about their performance. Also, there was need to adopt well performance appraisal process and properly implement it.

Wachiuri, (2018) did a study on effect of 360 degree and organizational performance in KPMG in Kenya. It was a descriptive study; sample size of 50 respondents was used. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire. Data analysis involved inferential and descriptive statistics. Findings show that that 360-appraisal method was effective in improving employee performance through motivating them. It led to achievement of set goals; this was because the 360-degree appraisal was objective. This was possible through identifying training needs of employees; feedback was given that could enable them achieve organizational goal. Regression analysis between the two variables shows that 89.4% of variations in employee performance was contributed by variation from the ratings from the appraisal method. This was a great success to the organization contributed through performance appraisal process.

Njuguna and Maende, (2017) conducted a study on effect of performance appraisal system on employee performance in commercial banks in Nairobi, Kenya. The study used descriptive design and stratified random sampling design. Primary data was collected using questionnaire. The scholar established that 360-degree feedback, Personal ranking and appraisal system were used on a regular basis to appraise employees. Managers and team leaders provided constructive feedback as required. There were opportunities for training seminars and workshops for its employees and any performance appraisal appeals were handled immediately. 360-degree performance appraisal approach created job confidence amongst the employees and enabled them realize their potential. A greater finding was that performance appraisals approach was greatly effective in improving employee performance in commercial banks in Kenya at 74% variation in employee performance. The study recommended the continued use and advancement of performance appraisals by the banks. Also, banks should embrace management styles for team building, skills and motivation. The performance appraisal system must be monitored and evaluated. Finally, employees should know their job roles and goals of organization through proper communication by management.

Mbugua, (2021) did a study on effect of performance appraisal practices on employee performance in clearing and forwarding firms in Mombasa County. The study used primary data that was collected by means of a structured questionnaire. Simple random sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 38 human resource managers in the firm. The research design was cross-sectional design. The Findings showed that 360-degree performance appraisal approach contributes a lot to developmental needs of employees based on appraisal reports. It also boosted their employee performance. The recommendations were management had to monitor and evaluate the system and ensure that employees are involved in the process for the system to be effective. Furthermore, the feedback be given constructively. Appeals be handled immediately and find ways of reducing it. She further recommended that there should be an appraisal committee for accuracy of reports.

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3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Correlational research design with cross-sectional approach was adopted in this study and was suitable for the research because it relied on gathering data from a single point in time and allowed minimum interaction between the researcher and respondents. It also describes the data then analyze to identify any trends without influencing the subjects.

This study was conducted in the selected public universities in the South Rift Region, Kenya which fall under Kericho County and Narok County. The universities are: University of Kabianga in Kericho County and Maasai Mara University in Narok County.

Target population refers to the group of individuals under study. In this study the target population was 991employees in the two public universities that comprise of 508 employees from University of Kabianga and 483 employees from Maasai Mara University. These employees were from the following categories; Academic Departments (Schools and Faculties), Human Resource Department, Finance and Procurement Department, Directorate of Quality Assurance and Support Staff.

The stratified random sampling procedure was used, it involved first dividing the population into the subgroups, or strata, of departments. In this study the departments which made the strata were; Academic Departments (Schools and Faculties), Directorate of Quality Assurance, Human Resource Department, Finance, Procurement and Support Staff. Each department was randomly sampled to create a representative sample of university employees in the various departments. The advantage of stratified random sampling is that it ensures that the sample is representative of the entire population. Since the sample is taken from each department, the results are more likely to be accurate and generalizable to the university as a whole. Stratified random sampling reduces bias by ensuring that each of the strata is equally represented in the sample.

The closed ended questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the employees of both universities in each department based on sample size to represent the population of the study. Questionnaire was suitable for this research because it gives consistent results and maintains uniformity. It also provides objective view of the research topic and information can be inferred.

4.0 FINDINGS

The study sought to examine the effectiveness of 360-degree appraisal approach among employees of selected public universities in Kenya. Respondents were asked to rate that best response using five likert scale where 1 was Very Effective, 2 was Effective, 3 was Somewhat Effective 4, was Ineffective and 5 was Very Ineffective. A mean of between 0.0 and 2.5 meant effective while a mean of between 2.6 and 5.0 meant ineffective. The responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Effectiveness of 360 Degree Feedback Appraisal Approach

Effectiveness of 360 Degree Feedback	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective	Mean	STD
Feedback report is used for development plans and are effective	90 (30.9%)	136 (46.7%)	38 (13.1%)	18 (6.2%)	9 (3.1%)	2.0378	.98363
360-degree feedback appraisal is effective on enabling employees realize their potential	86 (29.6%)	115 (39.5%)	57 (19.6%)	21 (7.2%)	8 (2.7%)	2.1289	1.01429
360-degree feedback is effective in	76 (26.1%)	110 (37.8%)	54 (18.6%)	37 (12.7%)	8 (2.7%)	2.2667	1.07751

creating job confidence							
360-degree appraisal is effective on improving communications between supervisor and employees	82 (28.2%)	122 (41.9%)	57 (19.6%)	24 (8.2%)	4 (1.4%)	2.1211	.96242

The findings according to Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents who were 136 (46.7%) noted that feedback report given after appraisal was used for development plans were effective. 90 (30.9%) noted that feedback report used for development plans were very effective. The respondents who were 38 (13.1%) noted that feedback report used for development plans were somewhat effective, 18 (6.2%) respondents noted that it was ineffective while 9 (3.1%) respondents noted that feedback report used for development plans were very ineffective. Majority of the respondents who were 115 (39.5%) noted that 360-degree feedback appraisal was effective in enabling employees realize their potential, respondents who were 86 (29.6%)noted that 360-degree feedback appraisal was very effective in enabling employees realize their potential, respondents who were 57 (19.6%) noted that 360-degree feedback appraisal was somewhat effective in enabling employees realize their potential, respondents who were 21 (7.2%) noted that 360-degree feedback appraisal was ineffective in enabling employees realize their potential while 8 (2.7%) respondents noted that 360-degree feedback appraisal was very ineffective in enabling employees realize their potential.

Majority of respondents who were 110 (37.8%) noted that 360-degree feedback was effective in creating job confidence, respondents who were 76 (26.1%) noted that 360-degree feedback was very effective in creating job confidence, respondents who were 54 (18.6%) noted that noted that 360-degree feedback was somewhat effective in creating job confidence, 37 (12.7%) respondents noted that noted that 360-degree feedback was ineffective in creating job confidence and 8 (2.7%) respondents wonted that noted that 360-degree feedback was very ineffective in creating job confidence.

Respondents who were 122 (41.9%) noted that 360-degree appraisal was effective on improving communications between supervisor and employees, 82 (28.2%) respondents noted that 360-degree appraisal was very effective on improving communications between supervisor and employees, respondents who were 57 (19.6%) noted that 360-degree appraisal was somewhat effective on improving communications between supervisor and employees, respondents who were 24 (8.2%) noted that 360-degree appraisal was ineffective on improving communications between supervisor and employees while 4 (1.4%) respondents noted that 360-degree appraisal was very ineffective on improving communications between supervisor and employees.

The findings implied that feedback report used for development plans were effective for it had a mean of 2.0378 and a standard deviation of 0.98363. The feedback report given were accurate and were helpful in bringing out the skills required for achievement of their targets. This agrees with Mbugua, (2021) study on effect of performance appraisal practices on employee performance in clearing and forwarding firms in Mombasa County who found that 360-degree performance appraisal approach contributes a lot to developmental needs of employees based on appraisal reports. This shows that 360-degree feedback is effective in giving reports on employee development plans. This ensures skill gaps are addressed hence increase employee productivity which also lead to improved performance.

The findings showed that 360-degree feedback appraisal was effective on enabling employees realize their potential for it had a mean of 2.1289 and a standard deviation of 1.01429. This concurs with Njuguna and Maende, (2017) study on effect of performance appraisal system on employee performance in commercial banks in Nairobi, Kenya who established that 360-degree performance appraisal approach created job confidence amongst the employees and enabled them realize their potential. The findings reveals that 360-degree feedback appraisal is effective in ensuring that employee realize their potential.

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The findings showed that 360-degree feedback was effective in creating job confidence for it had a mean of 2.2667 and a standard deviation of 1.07751. The findings agree with Hussain, Zahid, Sheeraz and Sarfraz, (2021) study on impact of 360-degree appraisal on employee performance in Asian bank who found that 360-degree feedback appraisal develop employee competences thus improving employee productivity. Since feedback was given on time and was used for placement on training and development this could enhance employee job performance through motivation. This implies that 360-degree feedback is effective in increasing job confidence among employee of an organization.
The findings revealed that 360-degree appraisal was effective in improving communications between supervisor and employees for it had a mean of 2.1211 and a standard deviation of 0.96242. The findings are consistent with Mwinzi and Kagiri, (2018) study on effects of performance appraisal methods on employee performance in commission on revenue collection in Kenya who established that the feedback received from peers, supervisor, subordinates and customers enabled employees to improve their performance and fostered cooperation among employees in the organization. This reveals that 360 -degree appraisal is effective in improving communication between the employee and supervisors.

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

The study hypothesis was; **H_o1** 360-degree appraisal approach is not significantly effective among employees of selected public universities in Kenya. The chi-square test for independence was used to discover if there is a relationship between 360-degree appraisal and effectiveness among employees and the findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Case Processing Summary for Hypothesis One

	Cases					
	Valid		**Missing**		**Total**	
	N	**Percent**	**N**	**Percent**	**N**	**Percent**
Effectiveness * Appraisal360	291	100.0%	0	0.0%	291	100.0%

Table 2 reveals that the case processing summary, which reveals that all the respondents who were 291 which represent 100% were valid cases used for analysis.

Table 3
Chi-Square Tests for hypothesis One

	Value	**df**	**Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	320.338[a]	85	.000
Likelihood Ratio	234.293	85	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	25.705	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	291		

The results in Table 3 shows that the Pearson Chi-Square results was 320.338, and the p value at 0.000 which is less than 0.05 significance level. This shows that there was 360-degree appraisal approach is statistically significant and effective among employees of universities. The degrees of freedom (df) were 85 and the number of valid cases was 291. The study therefore rejects the null hypothesis since there was association between the variables.

Table 4
Symmetric Measures for Hypothesis One

		Value	**Asymptotic Standard Error[a]**	**Approximate T[b]**	**Approximate Significance**
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.049			.000
	Cramer's V	.469			.000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.487	.055	8.279	.000
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.062	.016	3.089	.002
N of Valid Cases		291			

Table 4 reveals that the value of Phi was 1.049 and value for Cramer's V was 0.469 and that both tests were significant implying that there was a strong association. This also shows that 360-degree feedback approach has a strong correlation to employees' performance in the university. Kanyanjua, (2017) study on effect of performance appraisal practices on employee performance in Kenya, Case study of Savannah Cement Limited where they established that

360-degree appraisal approach was significant thus it helps improve on employee productivity and overall organization performance.
The study makes the following conclusions;

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that that feedback report used for development plans are effective; 360-degree feedback appraisal is effective in enabling employees realize their potential and in creating job confidence as well as in improving communications between supervisor and employees.

The study recommends that 360-degree feedback appraisal be adopted by universities since it enables employees realize their potential and creates job confidence as well as improve on communications between supervisor and employees.

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