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Performance Appraisal System of Public Technical Universities of Malaysia- A Study

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Abstract--- *Appraisal of employee performance is vital for technical universities. The Performance Appraisal System (PAS) is useful for periodical evaluation of job performance. Different factors are attributing to Performance Appraisal System of such universities. Factors like importance of PAS, Appraisal Process, Performance Planning, Documentation, Feedback, Reward and Performance Standards have significant impact on PAS. It is statistically evidence of perceptual variation about Performance Appraisal System among the respondents. More awareness and understanding of the importance of appraisal system shall be helpful for employees as well as the technical universities of Malaysia. Firstly, the essentiality of Performance Appraisal System for Technical Universities has been discussed in introduction. The literature pertaining to appraisal system is being reviewed in second part. Thirdly, methodology followed in this study has been mentioned. Fourthly, results and their analysis are discussed. Finally, concluding aspect of this article has been reflected.*

Keywords--- *Performance Appraisal System, Technical University, Academics.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Human Resource is considered as a vital factor organization. Their development in different spheres of competencies attribute greatly to organizational success. Dedication, determination, diligence, role congruence, work involvement etc. are expected from the employees of organization. The technical universities impart education to develop future technically sound architects. In this light, the employees of such universities which include academic and administrative staff have great role to play in developing the students. The performance of the staff need an assessment is generally conducted by Performance Appraisal System (PAS). And the factors responsible for effectiveness of such system are addressed in this study. The perceptual variation about such appraisal system has also been explored. The factors like developmental measures, developing HR Systems align with organizational goals are responsible for attaining performance (Oberoi and Rajgarial, 2013; Mughal, Farheen, F. Akram and S. Ali, 2014). It is manager's effort which is attributing to effectiveness of performance appraisal (Sogra et al., 2009) and poor employee's rating affect performance of individual employees & departmental performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance on job is periodically evaluated which is essential for organization of all sectors. Performance evaluation is by and large subjective in nature (P.H. Waghodekar, 2017). Performance appraisal is practiced in universities and other academic institutes. And performance of staff which includes teaching and non-teaching

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employees gets evaluated. The essence of self-appraisal based on duties and responsibilities should be given emphasis. The term 'merit rating' was used in 18th century. Different terminologies like 'Annual Confidential Report' in administration, 'Performance Appraisal Development System' have been used for employee performance appraisal. The results of performance appraisal provides inputs for employee development and enlightens employees' worth in organization. A faculty member's job has generally four components viz; Academic, Research and Consultancy, Administration and Extension. Performance Appraisal score is attained by an employee is considered as base for employee reward (Pay for Performance). The faculty members are vital in Academics. The effective, efficient and economical way of maintaining productivity of human resources is facilitated by Performance Appraisal System (PAS). The role of faculty member as facilitator, integrator, leader, entrepreneur, strategic planner or trainer; makes difficulty to design performance appraisal format. Academic Performance Indicator (API) score is considered for faculty recruitment. In Public Universities of Malaysia, faculty members are expected to achieve the targets relating to academic and administrative role. Performance appraisal is essential for employees' career growth, organizational development, motivation and employee engagement (Waghodekar, 2017; Panda, 2010, Krishnaveni, 2008). There is importance of Performance Appraisal System in Academics. Healthy feedback, understanding of self-appraisal and unbiased assessment by superior authorities strengthens more to attain the purpose of PAS. Low motivation for evaluation, lack of participation in appraisal, lack of training for evaluating performance and obsolete appraisal methods have been emphasized as the areas of concern in PAS (H.D. Aslam, 2011).

The technical universities have been developed to provide technology enabled higher education in Malaysia. The Malaysian Technical University Network (MTUN) was formed in 2007. Its previous name was Technical University College Network, Malaysia. University education is important in Malaysia in order to face the fast paced changes and to thrive in the industrial revolution 4.0 era (R. Seri, 2018). University should change as per the changes in the digital world. There is demand for research in robotics, smart software, satellite systems etc. Adomako Sundra (2017) in the study comparing Performance Appraisal System (PAS) of Technical Universities in Ghana revealed the challenges, employee perception and effectiveness of PAS. The low level of perception about PAS has been one of the key areas of concern in performance appraisal. Majority of the respondents stated the inability of the appraisal system to measure what is was intended for. PAS is vital for global competition and also for working towards organizational goals. Such system is also useful for providing feedback to employees and to identify suitability of employee for promotion (Lawrie, 2004). Institutional success and policies are determined by performance appraisal (Kressler, 2003). The quality of institutional outcomes depends on the individual and collective performance of staff. A systematic appraisal of staff is useful for development of educational institutions (Pulakos, 2003). A well instituted PAS is helpful to boost performance of employees as well as to enhance organizational development (Keelaway, 2007). The process of evaluating employee performance and assessing further developmental needs for employees is performance appraisal (Hesy and Noon (2008). Such appraisal should be done based on standards. There should neither be positive nor negative sentiments attached to staff in assessing their performance. Assessing employee performance is of great use in acknowledging the laudable performance of staff and in identifying their weakness (Partington and Stainton, 2003). Performance appraisal as an ongoing process has been explained by

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Drewitt (2013). Such process should be systematic and well designed and implemented properly. The performance appraisal goals should lead in identifying the purpose and achievement of objectives, implications, efficiency and effectiveness of organization. Further carrer planning for staff is assessed by performance appraisal (Parsa, 2004). The correlations of performance appraisal and employment outcome viz; bonus, promotion, pay, demotion, quit etc. has been revealed by Fisk (2016).

According to Winston and Creamer (1997), performance appraisal should not be confined to completing a standard review form. The paper exercise in appraisal has little to do with employee development. Rather such appraisal should be considered as a continuous process for developing employees. Lack of high confidence in appraisal system and low perception about appraisal system by employees are the key problems rendering appraisal system as ineffective (A.Sundra, 2017).

Study has shown that employees' perception has no influence on their performance in the hotel industry (Makori, 2014). Employees have negative perception about PAS as it is influenced by subjectivity (Newel, 2000). The linkage of effectiveness of appraisal system and clearity, objectivity, high integrity and development of performance goals have been revealed by Piggot-Irvine (2003). An effective PAS should fulfil the objective, fair and facilitate the upward mobility of employees (Wanjala & Kimutia, 2015).

There are many challenges with regard to Performance Appraisal System. Some of them are feedback system, linking employee's engagement behaviour as persistence, ability to be proactive, role expansion and adaptability (Armstrong, 2012), employees' trust and justice in the system (Julnes, 2008), free and fairness in appraisal, biasness creeping into appraisal system (Tobin and Pettingell, 2008), lack of requisite skills by appraisers to assess their staff (Sparrow, 2012), subjectivity in the performance evaluation, setting performance standards (Greiner and Sakdapolark, 2013), user and friendly character of appraisal instrument (Bridger, 2014) have been revealed in different studies.

III. METHODOLOGY

The present research is a descriptive and analytical one in which both primary and secondary source of data have been used. The scale developed by R. Krishnaveni (2008) has been used in this study. The validity and reliability tests have been conducted. Factor analysis and ANOVA tests have been conducted in order to determine the significant association of different variables as formulated and indicated in the hypothesis. The perceptual variation of respondents about the Performance Appraisal System has been determined. Four technical universities of Malaysia viz, UMP, UTeM, UTHM, UniMap have been visited and one hundred participants from each university have been collected following simple random sampling method. It is followed by their analysis as required by the study.

A research instrument comprising 30 items having option to select any one from five point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) was administered to 400 respondents. The response of the participants pertaining to the factors and the latent items attributing to Performance Appraisal System (PAS) has been analyzed. A pilot study was conducted and necessary changes in the draft instrument were incorporated.

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IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Analysis of Survey Results

4.1 Demographic

The demographic profile of the respondents have been collected, collated and tabulated. The demographic parameters have been indicated in the Table 1. Response of four hundred participants has been collected. Equal number of respondents (100) has been collected from four technical universities. Age-wise distribution of respondents show that little above half of the respondents have age between 31 to 40 years. Gender-wise distribution of participants reveals that female respondents constitute little above three-fifth of the total respondents. Little less than one third of the respondents are undergraduates and little above one quarter of the respondents are doctorates. Little above one-third of the participants are having five to ten years of experience. Designation-wise, three-fifth of the responding participants belongs to non-academic activities. The respective per centage of the participants indicating different demographic profiles have been given in the tabular form along with indications which are self-explanatory.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Demographic Indicators	*Categories*	*Number*	*% age of Respondents*
Age	21- 30 years	106	26.50
	31- 40 years	212	53.00
	41- 50 years	61	15.25
	51- 60 years	21	5.25
	Total	400	100%
Gender	Male	149	37.25
	Female	251	62.75
	Total	400	100%
Qualification	Undergraduate	118	29.50
	Graduate	99	24.75
	Postgraduate Doctorate	76 107	19.00 26.75
	Total	400	100%
Experience	0-5 Years	147	36.75
	5-10 Years	141	35.25
	10-15 Years	82	20.50
	15-20 Years	30	7.50
	Total	400	100%
Designation	Academic	158	39.50
	Non-Academic	242	60.50
	Total	400	100%

Analysis of survey results

4.2 Factor Analysis for Extracting PAS Factors

Factor Analysis is used for data reduction. This technique is useful to determine inter-correlations among different factors in a study (Norusis, 1993). The number of factors responsible in representing a particular set of data is determined by factor analysis (Akadire & Olomolaive, 2012; Chan et al, 2004). The per centage and cumulative variance is indicated by pattern matrix. The Kaiser-Myer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Sphericity Test conducted in this study have attained significant results. It indicates appropriateness of the test (Kaiser, 1974). It is stated that any

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eigenvalue less than 1 is not appropriate for Factor Analysis. In this study, the researchers have used SPSS package in order to conduct Factor Analysis through Factor Extraction and Varimax Rotation. The Kaiser-Myer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Spericity (*P value = 0*) were significant. The KMO value is 0.758 (> 0.5) indicating the suitability of the sample data for the Factor Analysis.

The underlying factors have been identified by using principal components analysis. The requisite number of factors representing the set of data is determined through the total percentage of variance. In other words, total percentage of variance attributed by each factor has been examined. The principal factor extraction with a varimax rotation has been executed through the SPSS factor reduction for 30 items from 400 respondents. The total variance explained by each factor has been listed in the column under factor loading. The percentage of variance and the cumulative percentage of the variance for each factor have been indicated in a tabular form (Table 2). In total, eight factors have been extracted accounting for 70% of variance in responses. The first two factors accounted for 25% and 10% of variance. All the factor loadings have been greater than 0.5 It is confirmed from the figure that an eight factor model should be sufficient for this research.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	*Initial Eigenvalues*			*Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings*		
	Total	*% of Variance*	*Cumulative %*	*Total*	*% of Variance*	*Cumulative %*
1	7.686	25.619	25.619	4.285	14.285	14.285
2	3.020	10.066	35.685	4.247	14.157	28.442
3	2.823	9.410	45.094	2.669	8.896	37.338
4	1.991	6.637	51.731	2.281	7.603	44.941
5	1.853	6.176	57.907	2.275	7.583	52.524
6	1.368	4.559	62.467	2.033	6.777	59.301
7	1.310	4.366	66.833	1.789	5.963	65.264
8	1.059	3.529	70.362	1.530	5.099	70.362
9	.891	2.972	73.334			
10	.833	2.777	76.111			
11	.783	2.611	78.722			
12	.713	2.378	81.099			
13	.684	2.282	83.381			
14	.558	1.861	85.242			
15	.502	1.672	86.914			
16	.466	1.552	88.466			
17	.440	1.466	89.932			
18	.413	1.377	91.309			
19	.352	1.173	92.482			
20	.340	1.133	93.615			
21	.312	1.041	94.656			
22	.264	.880	95.536			
23	.245	.816	96.352			
24	.236	.788	97.140			
25	.219	.730	97.871			
26	.178	.594	98.465			
27	.139	.465	98.930			
28	.126	.419	99.349			
29	.105	.349	99.698			
30	.091	.302	100.000			

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Table 3: Factor Structure of Principal Factors Extraction and Varimax Rotation on Performance Appraisal System

Item number	*Factor Loading*	*% of Variance explained*	*Cumulative % of Variance explained*
Factor 1. Importance of Performance Appraisal System (PAS)			
22. Performance technology helps to make the appraisal activities easy.	0.776		
30. The self-appraisal system should be there in Performance appraisal system.	0.730		
16. Performance appraisal importance is known to the employees.	0.679		
17. Performance awareness is created so that employees can realize the importance of such appraisal system.	0.657		
15. Performance reviews and related meetings are given more importance like other organizational activities.	0.641		
8. Performance appraisal is done following a specific process.	0.617		
11. Performance achievements are equally rewarded.	0.565		
7. Performance review is helpful in improving me to contribute more to my job.	0.519	14.285	14.285
Factor 2. Performance Appraisal Process			
13. Performance reviews are quite encouraging.	0.801		
12. Performance appraisal system is motivating me to work more.	0.730		
29. The performance goal cascading workshops are periodically conducted to create awareness among the employees.	0.727		
28. The difficulties in achieving the target are mpathetically considered by the boss.	0.666		
23. Performance policy of our organization is easy to understand.	0.627		
24. Performance appraisal policy of our organization is simple.	0.614	14.157	28.442
Factor 3. Performance Planning			
1. Performance planning is done well in advance and before the beginning of the real work.	0.898		
2. Performance discussion is done at the beginning of the academic year.	0.830		
3. Performance targets are achievable for me.	0.672	8.896	37.338
Factor 4. Performance Documentation			
5. Performance goals are in line with the Government prescribed standards.	0.782		
10. Performance appraisal records and achievements are documented properly.	0.669	7.603	44.941
Factor 5. Performance Appraisal Feedback			
25. Performance policy of our organization has scope for changes.	0.789		
18. Performance appraisal system is followed as a ritualistic requirement.	0.688		
14. Performance feedback is helpful.	0.611	7.583	52.524
Factor 6. Performance Appraisal Changes			
26. The existing performance appraisal system needs changes.	0.725		
4. Performance goals are basically set by the boss.	0.670		
27. The biasness in performance Appraisal is an area of concern.	0.655		59.301
Factor 7. Performance Appraisal Reward			
20. Performance achievements are least linked with payments.	0.696	563	65.264
Factor 8. Performance Appraisal Standards			
19. Performance standards set are tough to achieve.	0.858	5.099	70.362

Source: Extracted Data Output

4.3 Meaning of Underlying Performance Appraisal System (PAS) Factors

4.3.1 Importance of PAS (Factor 1)

This factor consists of eight items which basically focuses on performance technology, self-appraisal system, importance of performance appraisal, system awareness, performance reviews, process, achievements and rewards performance.

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4.3.2 PAS Process (Factor 2)

Factor two comprises six items. All the items explain about activities relating to appraisal process. Encouraging reviews, appraisal impact on work, goal cascading workshops, empathetic consideration of difficulties, performance policy to understand, and simple appraisal guidelines constitute this factor.

4.3.3 Performance Planning (Factor 3)

There are three items which examine the factor pertaining to Performance Planning. Advance planning for performance, discussion with boss and performance targets to achieve items represent this factor.

4.3.4 Performance Documentation (Factor 4)

This factor is explained by two items viz; specifications of performance goals and maintenance of performance records.

4.3.5 Performance Appraisal Feedback (Factor 5)

This factor has three items viz; performance policy having scope for changes, ritualistic requirement of appraisal and feedback as helpful mechanism for performance.

4.3.6 Performance Appraisal Changes (Factor 6)

There are three items which constitute this factor. The items are existing appraisal system requiring changes, boss setting performance goals and appraisal biasness as an area of concern.

4.3.7 Performance Appraisal Reward (Factor 7)

The seventh factor consists of one item which refers to linkage of payments with performance achievements.

4.3.8 Performance Appraisal Standards (Factor 8)

This factor consists of one item indicating the toughness of performance standards. The variations attributed by respective factors have been indicated in the table 3.

Table 4: Performance Appraisal System and Respondents from different Universities

University Name	*Mean*	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*F Value*	*Df*	*Sig.*
UMP	93.2100	100	13.65468			
UTem	95.3700	100	9.42451			
UTHM	98.4700	100	10.66047	4.531	3, 399	0.004
UniMap	97.4700	100	9.64151			
Total	96.1300	400	11.12058			

Table 5: Performance Appraisal System and Respondents from different Age Group

Age	*Mean*	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*F value*	*Df*	*Sig.*
21 to 30 Years	97.5000	106	10.55439			
31 to 40 Years	95.7783	212	10.44747			
41 to 50 Years	89.9672	61	10.64420	21.747	3, 399	0.000
51 to 60 Years	110.6667	21	6.47560			
Total	96.1300	400	11.12058			

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Table 6: Performance Appraisal System and Respondents having different Experience

Experience	*Mean*	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*F value*	*Df*	*Sig.*
Below 5 Years	98.6395	147	10.58362			
5 to 10 Years	93.2340	141	10.02186			
10 to 15 Years	94.7561	82	13.22601	6.745	3, 399	0.000
15 Years and Above	100.8276	30	7.56906			
Total	96.1300	400	11.12058			

Table 7: Performance Appraisal System and Respondents from different Departments

Department	*Mean*	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*F value*	*Df*	*Sig.*
Academic	98.6623	158	11.33366			
Administrative	93.9660	242	11.03137	3.649	1, 399	0.027
Total	96.1300	400	11.12058			

Table 8: Performance Appraisal System and Respondents having different Qualification

Qualification	*Mean*	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*F value*	*Df*	*Sig.*
Undergraduate	94.1271	118	10.21357			
Graduate	97.5960	99	11.34696			
Post Graduate	93.7632	76	11.80268	4.994	3, 399	0.002
Doctorate	98.6636	107	10.76064			
Total	96.1300	400	11.12058			

Source: Extracted Output from Primary Data

Perceptual variation is associated with demographic profile of the respondents is the hypothesis formulated in this study. The variations are statistically significant being evident from the respective '*p*' values for 95% confidence level. The perceptual value of respondents belonging to different universities varies. The highest value is perceived by UTHM. Respondents belonging to higher age group perceived their PAS better than other groups. The participants in the study having higher qualification (Doctorates), more experience and having association with academic activities have more perceptual PAS values than other groups (Table 4 to 8). Such PAS values accepts the hypothesis formulated hypotheses formulated in this study.

4.4 Suggestion

The eight factors being identified by factor analysis have to be strengthened further. More efforts being given on these factors shall bring better results of Performance Appraisal System.

The perceptual variations about Performance Appraisal System by responding participants should be minimized. The ANOVA result significantly reveals the variations among the participants being categorized based on age, experience, qualification, department, university.

The managers (appraisers) have great responsibility in attaining success of Performance Appraisal System. Their neutral performance assessment of their subordinate employees along with sincerity in appraisal shall take the existing Performance Appraisal System in right direction.

In general, the responding participants suggested for incorporating concrete self-appraisal component in the appraisal system. It is also suggested to reduce the paper works, delay in following administrative process, assigning more non-academic works to academicians, more durations spent in the meetings, ambiguities in academic and

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administrative responsibilities, non-recognition of certain assigned activities, allotting new work activities in the middle of the academic session to the academicians crate so much stress in the employees especially in the teaching staff category. Appropriate measures should be taken to make the teaching activities hassle free and effective. The planned activities at the beginning of the year being assigned to the employees should be followed without any major deviations.

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed the importance of Performance Appraisal System (PAS) for technical universities of Malaysia. Such appraisal system provides an indicative assessment base for employee contribution in order to achieve vision and strategic goals of technical universities. The investigation applying factor analysis found eight factors contributing to Performance Appraisal System.

The factors are: Importance of PAS, Performance Appraisal Process, Performance Planning, Performance Documentation, Performance Appraisal Feedback, Performance Appraisal Changes, Performance Appraisal Reward and Performance Appraisal Standards. There is a variation in the perception of respondents about different factors attributing to Performance Appraisal System. The association of such variation with demographic profile of the respondents is statistically significant. It is suggested to provide appropriate training measures to employees in the areas of setting performance targets, developing standard process, maintaining equilibrium in work allotment and over & above in overcoming obstacles for achieving performance. The contribution of faculty members and administrative staff in the field of Academics should be properly evaluated by Performance Appraisal System. Efforts should be given at the operational level to nullify the wastage of human contribution towards non-productive activities in organization and also in overcoming appraisal biasness. More studies on Performance Appraisal System and its impact on staff performance in technical universities are recommended. It is in order to ensure the vitality of such system in education sector.

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