

ANALYSIS OF THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH: A CASE STUDY OF LUSAKA DISTRICT

Conference ID: CFP/921/2018

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ABSTRACT

In 1997, the Government of Zambia introduced the Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS) which was an integral part of the Performance Management Package (PMP) with the principal objective of introducing a culture of work planning and target setting in Government Ministries and other Spending Agencies. The main objective of this study was to analyze the effectiveness of the APAS in improving performance in selected hospitals in Lusaka district of Ministry of Health of Zambia.

In undertaking this study, a cross sectional, non-experimental design was used. A mixture of stratified random and clustered sampling was used to draw a sample of 50 respondents from the four (4) hospitals in the Ministry of Health of Lusaka District of Zambia. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel Computer Software Package.

In taking up this research I encountered some challenge in terms of collecting data especially from

Nurses who wanted to be bought air time for them to access internet in order for them to answer the online questionnaire. It was also a challenge to collect data from the four selected hospitals because I needed to remind them every day to check on their internet.

This study revealed that the APAS was skewed to only two of the personnel decisions and those were confirmations and substantive promotions. Despite, the APAS being consistent in confirmation and

substantive promotions, it was equally discovered that the APAS was not comprehensively used, because, in some cases there were no job descriptions and work plans. The APAS was not effectively used to identify the high performers who could be promoted

After collecting data, this study discovered that APAS was ineffective in appraising performance among Civil Servants in the four selected hospitals of Ministry of Health. The findings of this study correlated with the findings of Kamfwa (2016) who was evaluating the effectiveness of Performance

Management Package (PMP) in the Public Service. Kamfwa revealed that the APAS was not consistently used in appraising performance.

His study corroborated with the finding of this study. The APAS cannot be regarded as being effective because it has not produced successful results for which it was intended.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACR Annual Confidential Report

APAS Annual Performance Appraisal System

CIPP Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Process Evaluation and Product Evaluation

PMP Performance Management Package

UTH University Teaching Hospital

PSMD Public Service Management Division

SPSS Statistical Package for Social Science

Introduction

Measuring performance has continued to expand over the past twenty (20) years and has been the order of the day in today's public sector. This is because the focus on performance, not only has an impact on the typical functions of management and components like Human Resource Management, finance, strategy and many more, but also makes a difference in the nature of policy and management systems in the public sector (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008).

Prior to the introduction of the Performance Management Package (PMP), assessment of individual performance was through the Annual Confidential Report (ACR). The Zambian government had been using the ACR passed on from the British Colonial Administration, as the only tool for assessing performance in the public service. The ACR was not objective as it was based on the supervisors' personal observations and perceptions about an individual.

This appraisal tool was not based on work planning

and targets setting and, therefore, it had no baselines for performance delivery. The ACR was later found to be one sided because the Appraisee did not have access and input in the whole process since the manager or supervisors had to do the whole process without the input and contribution of the one being appraised.

There is a continued need for reviewing and updating the appraisal systems to conform to organizational changes and the current management practices which has not been the case at the Ministry of Health and the other ministries in general.

Scope of the Problem

This study was conducted in Lusaka. The study focused on the four selected hospitals namely University Teaching Hospital (UTH), Chilenje level one (1) Hospital, Chawama level one (1) Hospital and Chipata level one (1) Hospital in the Lusaka District. The study included respondents from the above mentioned hospitals.

General Objective

The general objective of the study was to analyze the effectiveness of the APAS in improving performance in the above selected hospitals of the Ministry of Health in Lusaka District.

Specific Objectives

- i. To establish if APAS is used to determine the rewards /sanctions of employees.
- ii. To find out if APAS identifies who should be promoted

Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it generated some knowledge and understanding about the APAS in work planning, target setting and making vital personnel decisions based on the performance reviews of employees in the Civil Service. The findings of this study may be used by policy makers to reformulate performance appraisals in the

country, as the study provided important information on what exists in the appraisal process. It will also contribute to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of performance appraisals. This study would bring to light employees understanding and appreciation of the performance appraisal system and the relevance of an objective, systematic and effective performance

Theoretical Review

This study was informed by the theoretical review governing *Management Evaluation Model*, with a clear reflection on performance appraisals. According to Payne et al (1994), the basic idea of the management evaluation approach is that the evaluator's job is to provide information to management to help them in making decisions about programmes, products and others. The evaluator's job is to serve managers or whoever the key decision makers are for that programme. Ogula (2002) quoted by Mkandawire (2012) also adds that "the rationale of the management-oriented evaluation approach is that evaluation data are an essential component of good decision making". Therefore, this study is going to employ the context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation CIPP Model as proposed by Stufflebeam.

Stufflebeam (1971) describes evaluation according to the CIPP model as a "process of explaining, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decisions alternatives". The CIPP evaluation model is therefore a Comprehensive review for guiding evaluation of programs, projects, personnel, products, institutions and systems.

CIPP Management Model according to Stufflebeam
Context evaluation – this serves planning decisions by identifying unmet needs, and unused opportunities. It helps in examining and describing the context of the programme under evaluation, conducting needs and goals assessment, determining the objectives of the programme, and

determines where the proposed objectives will be sufficiently responsive to the identified needs.

Input evaluation – this serves structuring decisions by projecting and analyzing alternative procedural designs. It has to do with activities such as a description of the program inputs and resources, a comparison of how the programme might perform compared to the other programmes, an evaluation of the proposed design of the programme and examination of what alternative strategies and procedures for the programme should be considered and recommended.

Process evaluation – this serve implementing decisions by monitoring project or programme operations. It has to do with examining how the programme is being implemented, monitoring how the programme is performing, auditing the programme to make it follow the required legal and ethical guidelines, and identifying defects in the procedural design or the implementation of the programme. Evaluators typically provide this kind of feedback to the programme personnel because it can be helpful in making process evaluation decisions such as decision about how to modify or improve the programme.

Product evaluation – this serves recycling decisions by determining the degree to which the objectives have been achieved and by determining the causes of the obtained results. It has to do with determining and examining the general and specific outcomes of the programme such as those which require using impact or outcome assessment techniques, measuring anticipated outcomes, attempting to identify unanticipated outcomes, conducting a retrospective benefits/cost assessment and conducting a cost effectiveness, (ibid).

Methodology

Research Design

In undertaking this study, a cross sectional, non-experimental design was used. Thus, the researcher

had no control over the variables and merely reported the findings of the factors under investigations. A survey approach was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS) in the four (4) selected hospitals of Lusaka district of Ministry of Health. The researcher used a case study approach that was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS) in the four (4) Hospitals of Lusaka District of Ministry of Health. Triangulation was used to generate quantitative and qualitative data; the methods used were chosen as they were to bring out the relevant information needed for the explanation of the phenomena of interest.

Sample size and distribution

A sample of 50 respondents was used for this study. These are selected based on the proposition from Bartlet et al (2001) that if the population is within the range of 1000 to 1500, a sample of 100 is ideal. Hence the Sample of 50 in this study was ideal.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Hospitals	Doctors	Bio-Scientist	Nurses	Admin/Support staff	Total
UTH	5	4	4	4	17
Chilenge level 1	5	2	2	2	11
Chawama Level 1	5	2	2	2	11
Chipata Level 1	5	2	2	2	11
Total	20	10	10	10	50

Source: Author field data, 2018

Data Collection Instruments

Data was collected using a questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions to collect quantitative information from the 50 respondents in the four (4) selected Hospitals of Lusaka District.

Data analysis techniques

The Monkey survey system was used to collect data through questionnaires, the data from the questionnaires were entered in excel and transported to Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS), were it was analysed descriptively.

Ethical consideration

The researcher endeavored to seek respondents consent before administering the questionnaire and assured them of confidentiality of results or the discussion. The results were presented in aggregated form to ensure confidentiality.

Research Findings

Below are the research findings of the effectiveness of the APAS in appraising performance of Civil Servants in selected hospitals of Lusaka District in the Ministry of Health that were sampled. In accordance with the understanding established in the conceptual review of management evaluation model, effectiveness was evaluated according to the degree to which the purpose of the organization was achieved.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand whether the APAS was effective in appraising performance as set out in the objective of Performance Management Package (PMP).

A total of 100 respondents participated in this study. This was looking at some selected background characteristics of respondents that were likely to influence their responses and views. Below were the findings of the respondents: -

Is APAS used to determine the rewards/sanctions of employees?

Figure 1: Shows the Distribution of Respondents percentages who think that the APAS is effectively used to decide on their rewards (n-50)

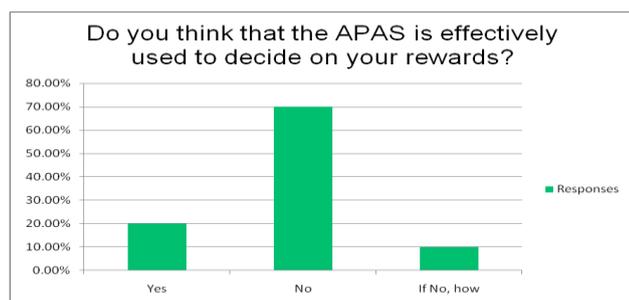


Figure 1. Source: Author field data, 2018

Figure 1, above, shows the frequency and percentage of respondents who indicated whether the APAS was used to decide on their rewards. 20% of the respondents agreed that the APAS was used to decide on their rewards, 35 respondents accounting for 70% disagreed that the APAS was not used to determine the rewards. 5 respondents accounting for 10% did not know if APAS was effectively used to decide on their rewards.

Most of the respondents had a lot of misgiving about the APAS being used as a tool to decide on the rewards. 35 respondents who accounted for 70% felt that the Incremental Performance Appraisal had not been consistently used by PSMD to award increment in salary notches to those employees whose performance had been outstanding. From this it was concluded that the answer is NO. to the above question, APAS is not effectively used to decide on employees' rewards.

Does APAS identify who should be promoted?

Figure 2: Shows the Distribution of Respondents percentages who thought whether APAS identifies who should be promoted in the Ministry of Health (n=50)

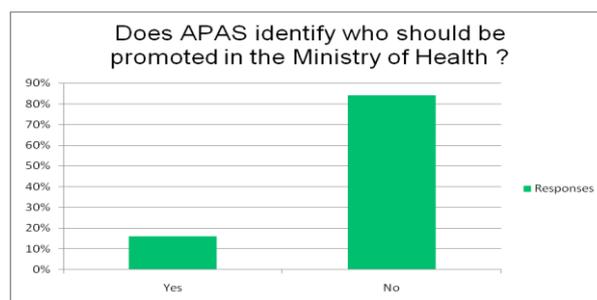


Figure2. Source: Author field data, 2018

Figure 2, shows that 8 respondents accounting for 18% agreed that APAS identified who should be promoted in the Ministry of Health, while 42 accounting for 84% disagreed that APAS does not identify who should be promoted. From the information above it clearly shows that APAS is not effectively used, and this has made people to lose confidence in it, but filling the APAS form just for formality when they even know that it will not yield any tangible results. The 84% attributed to this fact lack of seriousness by PSMD who are the initiators or end users of APAS.

Acknowledgment

I wish to thank most sincerely all my research supervisors and other lecturers who helped me with their educative comments and advice. I sincerely thank Mrs. Susan Goma for the knowledge and guiding me throughout the research period, and also extend my sincere thanks to Dr. John C. Mupala for encouraging me to achieve my dreams. I acknowledge the support of Mr. Sycorax Tiyese Njobvu for imparting me with knowledge.

I also extend my thanks to my supervisors at work Dr. Mudenda V., Dr. Shibemba A, Dr. Mantina H, and Mr. Kantenga T, for their wavering support and I will always remain indented to you. To my friends and colleagues, I say thank you, especially Ms. Prisca Mbewe who covered me all the times that I was attending residential school. To my special friend Sister Anita Kasanga without her support this study could not have been possible, thank you Sister Anita.

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