

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM OF
GHANA POST COMPANY LIMITED, TAMALE METROPOLIS**

JOHN AYEBILLA ATINTANDE

2013

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM OF
GHANA POST COMPANY LIMITED, TAMALE METROPOLIS**

BY

JOHN ATINTANDE AYEBILLA

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES OF THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF
CAPE COAST, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

MAY, 2013

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name: John Ayebilla Atintande

Signature:..... Date:.....

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Francis Enu-Kwesi

Signature:..... Date:.....

ABSTRACT

The study identified that several challenges may hinder the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems and thus aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system operating within the Ghana Post Company Limited. This was pursued through examining the nature of the performance appraisal system of the company, assessing the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system, and discussing how appraisal results influence staff performance.

A descriptive design was adopted to study 48 appraisees and eight appraisers. Questionnaires were used to collect data from appraisees and interview guides were used to collect data from appraisers. Statistical tools used to analyse the data collected included descriptive tools such as means, medians, frequencies, percentages and Mann-Whitney U test.

The study found that the appraisal system was formal and guided by documented and lucid policies and also adequately involved senior and junior staff. In addition, the system effectively provided feedback for most senior and junior staff and the system helped improve employee skills, improve understanding of job expectations, clarify roles of teams and resolve misunderstanding on the job duties. The study recommended management to continue involving junior and senior staff and provide feedback. Management is also advised to effectively resolve challenges including time constraints, clarifying the assessment criteria to employees, and provide adequate cooperation to staff during appraisal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My profound gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. Francis Enu-Kwesi of the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast for having devoted his time to structure the topic and taken the pain to read thoroughly through the study and finally made the necessary corrections and suggestion in it. May the good Lord shower his blessings on him. I also wish to register my indebtedness to Mr. Aboche, the Human Resource Manager and Musah, the parcel officer respectively of Ghana Post-Company Limited, Tamale Metropolis for assisting me with vital information and the administration of the questionnaire as well as the collection of completed questionnaires.

My special thanks go to Mr. Mohammed of Zabzugu Internet Café, Tamale for typing this research script. I wish to extend my profound appreciation to all and sundry who in diverse ways have contributed to making this study a success. May the good Lord richly bless them all. Linda Atintande, my beloved wife deserves commendation for her love and patience. I share the success chalked with my loving children Esperance Akulsum Atintande, Shadrach Amalsum Atintande and Theophilus Keltibah Atintande.

DEDICATION

To my dear sister and her husband Mr. and Mrs. Golz.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the study	1
Statement of the problem	5
Objectives of the study	6
Research questions	6
Scope of the study	7
Significance of the study	7
Organisation of the study	8

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	9
Introduction	9
Theories underlying the study	9
The concept of performance appraisal	11
Purpose of performance appraisal	13
Types of performance appraisal	15
Processes of performance appraisal	18
Methods of appraisal	20
Evaluating performance appraisal systems	26
Challenges of appraisal	30
Conceptual framework for performance appraisal	33
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	35
Introduction	35
Study organisation	35
Study design	37
Population and sampling	38

Instrument design	39
Pre- testing	40
Ethical issues	41
Fieldwork	41
Field challenges	42
Data management and analysis	42
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	43
Introduction	43
Demographic characteristics of staff	43
Nature of appraisal system of Ghana Post Company Limited	49
Effectiveness of the performance appraisal system	64
Influence of appraisal results on staff performance	71
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND	
RECOMMENDATIONS	76
Introduction	76
Summary	76

Conclusions	78
Recommendations	79
Suggestions for further research	80
REFERENCES	81
APPENDICES	91
1 Questionnaire for the appraised	91
2 Interview guide for appraisers	97

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Sex distribution by departments	44
2 Staff by educational qualification	46
3 Age description	47
4 Tenure for junior and senior staff	49
5 Policy issues assessment	50
6 Staff involvement in objective setting	53
7 Staff involvement in induction	55
8 Knowledge of performance expectations	56
9 Source of information on performance expectations	57
10 Frequency of appraisal assessment	58
11 Personnel conducting appraisals	59
12 Types of appraisals	61
13 Appraisal processes	63
14 Feedback assessment	68
15 Challenges to the appraisal system	70
16 Effects of appraisal system on employee performance	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Evaluation of performance appraisal system	33
2	Organisational structure of Ghana Post Company Limited	36
3	Enthusiasm of appraisers	65
4	Assessment of objective achievement	66
5	Congruence between results and purpose of appraisals	69

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The need to increase productivity is crucial to the survival and growth of all organisations. The quality of human resource, with reference to their attitudes, skills, and performance, within organisations has been identified as a major determinant of achieving productivity objectives and goals (Lohman, 2005). Boyd (2008) adds that one way of determining the effects and contribution of behaviour, attitudes, talents, and skills of human resource to organisational performance is through performance appraisals.

Performance appraisals would therefore comprise a system of defining performance goals, performance evaluation methods, and performance feedback channels, which are complemented by adequate reward systems (Bratton & Gold, 1999). Mishra (2003) observes that an appraisal system refers to interrelated actions of reviewing job performance, work behaviours, and assessing progress towards pre-determined performance targets. It also involves a discussion of identified employee performance gaps to inform training and development needs.

According to Griffin (2006), performance appraisals are relevant to organisational performance in the sense that they are necessary for validating selection devices or assessing the impact of training programmes. Appraisals also aid in administrative decisions related to pay increment, promotions, review of

organisational targets, and in providing feedback for future training and development programmes.

The relevance of performance appraisals to organisational performance has led to the proliferation of performance appraisal systems in private and industrial sectors, and has grown rapidly to public sector organisations (Massey, 1996). For example, survey reports in the USA reveal that the practice of performance appraisal in most companies increased from 89 percent to 94 percent in the mid – 1970s. Similar surveys in the UK by the Institute of Personnel and Development show an over whelming increase in the coverage of performance appraisal in many organisations (Armstrong, 2003).

An important aspect of performance appraisal that has encouraged many organisations in the UK, USA as well as other parts of the world is that appraisal can be done upwardly. Companies such as Federal Express, Standard Chartered Bank, and AMEX introduced upward appraisal to allow employees to rate their managers' performance via, in most cases an anonymous questionnaire (Mathew & Redman, 1995). This process helps to overcome employees' worries about providing honest but unfavourable feedback on managerial performance.

Massey (1996) cautions that agencies would be required to appraise their performance appraisal systems to determine their effectiveness in addressing organisational performance concerns. U.S Office of Personnel Management (1999) therefore maintains that appraisal systems can be evaluated from two broad perspectives. The first corresponds to whether appraisal systems are in compliance with the regulatory and programme requirements of the organisation.

The second perspective from which appraisal systems can be evaluated relates to determining the effectiveness of the programmes.

Determining compliance of appraisal programmes to organisational regulatory framework will relate to exploring whether appraisals were done on time, whether the right personnel were appraised, whether employee performance plans were issued timely and whether programme reviews were conducted (Halachmi, 2002). It will also involve determining whether management devotes appropriate resources and gives priority to the effective maintenance and operation of performance appraisal programmes. Martinez (2003) recommends the collection of compliance information on the basis that, if the programme is not being run as it was designed to be run, it will have little chance of accomplishing the reasons for its implementation.

USOPM (1999) notes specific criteria by which the effectiveness of appraisal systems can be evaluated. The first constituent is to determine whether the objectives of the appraisal programmes are being met. Second, is to determine whether employees and managers are satisfied with the equity, utility, and accuracy of the appraisal programme. Next is to determine whether the benefits of the programme outweigh the costs. Other criteria may relate to whether an improvement in employee, unit, or organisational performance, and whether the desired change in employees' or managers' attitudes have been achieved.

According to Schraeder, Becton and Portis (2007), performance appraisal evaluation is expected to benefit the organisation by establishing the possible discrepancies between the actual and expected performance of the system. As part

of the benefits, the evaluation process serves as feedback to the appraisal system and assists with the productivity of employee performance. Based on such optimism, several organisations engage in appraisal system evaluations.

The development of the postal service took off in 1854 as part of the policy of the colonial administration. In 1995, the Ghana Postal Service was established under the Ghana Postal Service Corporation Act 505 to provide services by operating a postal system in Ghana in accordance with the laws and international obligations of Ghana. The corporation was later changed to Ghana Post Company Limited in 1998 to compete with the fast growing communication industries in Ghana as well as other parts of the world. Ghana Post Company Limited realising these challenges had to set its vision and mission statements (Ghana Post Company, 2000).

The vision of Ghana Post Company Limited is to be one of the best postal organisations in Africa, relying on a well motivated workforce, using appropriate technology with the view to providing maximum satisfaction to the customer. The mission of Ghana Post Company Limited is to provide prompt, efficient, reliable and secure communication and financial services and products to foreign and domestic customers on a profitable basis.

Ghana Post Company Limited (2000) maintains that performance appraisal is the main managerial tool adopted by Ghana Post Company to determine the level of performance of the workforce and to make certain vital administration and developmental decisions on employees such as training, promotion and career planning. Ghana Post Company Limited proposed an

effective and reliable performance appraisal system to be able to achieve the stated mission and vision statements. An appraisal system which the company termed as Performance Development System was set up. This appraisal system is currently in operation on the workforce of the company with the aim of achieving its mission and vision statement.

Statement of the problem

Performance appraisal appears to be one human resource activity that most organisations are committed to its practice (Simmons & Martin, 2002). It is now more widespread than at any time in its history and organisational resources consumed by its practice are enormous (Roberts, 2003). Despite this, its critics grow both in number and in the ferocity of their attacks. Its implementation has also caused much confusion in some large organisations including Ghanaian companies.

Both management and employees continue to perceive this activity as distasteful. Superior officers find it cumbersome and are therefore unwilling to undertake them unless compelled. Subordinates on the other hand have always had cause to challenge appraisal results and some even see the whole exercise as needless because management does not utilise appraisal results to ensure its effectiveness in the organisation (Figari, 1994).

The system of performance appraisal within GPLC is expected to ultimately lead improved employee performance (GPCL, 2000), however, several studies (Figari, 1994; Martinez, 2003) assert that several factors may inhibit the effectiveness of appraisals and the attainment of appraisal objectives. It is the

above state of affairs that has prompted the researcher to conduct an evaluation into the formal appraisal system in Ghana Post Company Limited. It is therefore pertinent to find answers to whether the current appraisal system of GPCL is being practiced as required, and if the system is as effective as speculated.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the current performance appraisal system operating within the Ghana Post Company Limited. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the nature of the performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company Limited;
2. Assess the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system;
3. Discuss how appraisal results influence staff performance; and
4. Recommend ways in which performance appraisal can be improved upon.

Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the performance appraisal system in Ghana Post Company Limited?
2. How effective is the current performance appraisal system in Ghana Post Company Limited?
3. How have appraisal results influenced staff performance?

Scope of the study

This research was designed to relate to the performance appraisal system operating in Ghana Post Company Limited. The study covered issues pertaining to the performance appraisal practices within the company, the effectiveness of these practices in achieving appraisal objectives and how appraisal results influence staff performance in the company. The survey on these issues covered both senior and junior staff of the Tamale branch of Ghana Post Company Limited. This was to address and to differentiate between the views of junior and senior staff on performance appraisal systems of the company.

Significance of the study

Despite its long history, performance appraisal is the most dependable human resource management activity (Dessler, 2002). The study is intended to help employees to have a strong desire to seek feedback regarding their performance and to know how well they are doing against set standards and whether they are meeting organisational expectations and work requirements. The study also brings to the fore, the inherent strengths and weaknesses of the current system of performance appraisal and its effects on workers performance, thereby serving as an input to managerial decision on staff assessment. In addition, the study makes significant contributions to the field of human resources management.

Organisation of the study

The study is divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter which is chapter one explains the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, research questions, scope and significance of the study and the organisation of the study. Chapter two contains a review of the relevant literature on performance appraisal system. Chapter three presents the methodology by discussing the research design, the population, sample population, research instrument to be adopted, pre-testing, data collection techniques and data analysis. Chapter four comprises the analysis of the effectiveness of the current appraisal system in Ghana Post, while Chapter five which is the concluding chapter, presents the summary, conclusions and necessary recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

According to Dellinger (2005), literature review describes how the research is related to prior researches in the proposed field of study. It also shows the originality and relevance of the research problem and the preparedness to complete the study. In view of these, this chapter discusses the theories that underlay performance evaluation. The chapter also reviews concepts related to performance appraisal and evaluation methodologies. A conceptual framework, which unifies the theories and concepts is discussed and diagrammatically presented.

Theories underlying the study

The study adapts to Kolmogorov's (1933) staff performance probability theory and the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) to explain the rationale for appraisals. The Kolmogorov's (1933) staff performance probability theory seeks to establish the need for staff performance appraisal and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory attempts to explain the effects of staff performance appraisal on staff performance.

Diverse interactions that occur in organisations are designed towards the achievement of specific goals and objectives (Chambers, 2005). There are therefore certain targets that employees within the organisation are expected to

achieve whether individually or as a group. In many cases, Hoyle (2006) notes that attempts are made by management to encourage employees in their job performance through training, motivational packages, and diverse reward systems. However, it is not always the case that employees will achieve targets if given such incentives.

These theories therefore seek to explain that appraisals are necessary given that there is the probability that expected performance targets may not always be attained. There will therefore be the need for organisations to appraise performance and evaluation techniques to determine reasons for performance gaps and to fulfil those gaps to increase the probability of meeting performance targets.

According to Kolmogorov (1933), the chance for a phenomenon to occur takes place in a probability space. The probability space postulates that the probability for an event to occur is a set of chances within other sets of chances. Secondly, the chance for an event to occur can be assigned real numbers, such that the actual probability can be mathematically calculated and the chances for the event to occur can be altered.

While efforts, such as training, are being made to improve employee performance, the probable chances are that employee may not perform lesser as expected or at par with expectations (Steel & Broady-Preston, 2002). In other cases employees may perform more than what was expected. Appraisals are therefore needed to examine the reasons for one of these probable outcomes

resulting and to inform measures for either encouraging higher performance or sustaining high performance (Boyd, 2008; Schraeder et al., 2007).

The foregoing discussion suggests that appraisals or evaluations involve comparing actual performance to expected targets. Expectations of appraisers and appraisees therefore play important roles in the evaluation process. In appraising evaluation systems, programme designers would expect the appraisal programme to yield certain results (Mishra, 2003). These expected targets would then become the benchmarks with which actual results of the programme are compared.

Abadzi (2006) maintains that the results of an evaluation programme will be influenced by three major elements. First, is the expectation of the programme designers, whether too high or too low. Second, is the expected benefits that are being sought from the evaluation, and third is the value placed on evaluation exercise within the organisation, which Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory refers to as expectancy, instrumentality, and valence.

The concept of performance appraisal

Lawrie (1990) reports that performance appraisal (PA) systems began as simple methods of income justification, where appraisals were used to decide whether or not the salary or wage of an individual employee was justified. Coates (1994) however, maintains that the most basic purpose of performance appraisal has evolved to providing information to employees about their job and the amount of effort and behaviour expected from them.

According to Torrington and Hall (1998), to appraise is to determine the worth, value, quality, and usefulness of staff working within an organisation. Performance appraisal is thus, an observation and measurement of employee performance against pre-determined job related standards, for purposes delineated by the organisation (Sayers, 1999). Agyenim-Boateng (2006) notes that performance appraisal is a structured formal interaction between a subordinate and supervisor. This usually takes the form of a periodic interview in which the work performance of the subordinate is examined and discussed. The ultimate purpose is to identify weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development (Archer North & Association, 2011).

According to Dawra (2001), appraisals are characterised by the need for precise determination of activities to be accomplished by the employee. Such activities must be targeted towards the accomplishment of organisational objectives and there must be agreement between the employee and the employer on what to do and how to do it. Noe (2005) confirms that appraisals are characterised by the measurement of specific areas of an employee's performance. This implies that the various criteria, which serve as indicators of performance by an employee should be considered and assessed during appraisal. Performance appraisals are therefore purposeful activities, which are carried out with an objective in mind.

Dawra (2001) maintains that the observation of the employees is important to appraisals and that it is usually performed by a supervisor. Bernardin (2003) explains that personality observation is for the identification of innate qualities

which are necessary for the performance of an employee's tasks. Agyenim-Boateng (2006) therefore notes that appraisals should not consider what the employee does alone, but should encompass measuring, monitoring and enhancing the performance of employees as a contributor to the overall organisational performance.

From the discussion above some issues emerging include the fact that performance appraisal involves comparison of an employee's performance with performance standards. The performance standards describe what the employee is expected to do in terms of behaviour and results. Performance appraisal must be systematically done and should be related to the individual's performance on the job. It must also provide information that will enable the individual to improve his/her performance on the job and to help him develop his potential for the benefit of the organisation. It can therefore be deduced that, the central focus of every performance appraisal system is what the employee has done in the past within a specific time period and whether or not what an employee has done measures up to the required standards.

Purpose of performance appraisal

According to Spencer (2004), performance appraisal (PA) systems aim to develop individuals, improve organisational performance, and develop the basis for building a baseline for planning for the future. Generally, the purpose of performance appraisal systems includes creation of a shared vision of the organisation's objectives (Noe, 2005). According to Stufflebeam and Shinkfield

(2007), this is expressed through a mission statement communicated to all employees, setting of individual performance targets relating to the operating unit's target within the overall organisation, formal review of progress towards these targets, and/or the identification of training needs.

Specifically, Phillips (1997) maintains that performance appraisals aim to identify possible performance gaps. These gaps are the shortfall that occurs when performance does not meet the standard set by the organisation as acceptable. The main aim of the feedback system is to inform the employee about the quality of his or her performance. However, the information flow is not exclusively one way, appraisers also receive feedback from the employee about job problems.

According to Coleman (2002), the purpose of appraisals can be looked at from the perspectives of the main stakeholders, who are the employees of the organisation. From the employees' viewpoint, the purposes of appraisal are to instruct, review performance, improve employee performance, and reward employees for good performance (Armstrong, 2006).

Appraisals are also aimed at offering a chance for supervisors and subordinates to have time out for a one-on-one discussion of important work issues that might not otherwise be addressed. Almost universally, where performance appraisal is conducted properly, both supervisors and subordinates have reported the experience as beneficial and positive (Agyenim-Boateng, 2006). Appraisals therefore offer an opportunity to focus on work activities and goals, identify and correct existing problems, and encourage better future performance (Archer North & Associates, 2011).

Types of performance appraisal

Performance appraisal focuses on the evaluation of traits, behaviour and results (Jones, George & Hill, 2000). The types of performance appraisals therefore conform to trait-based, behaviour-based, and results-based appraisals. According to Stone (2000), traits appraisal is used when managers want to assess subordinates on personal characteristics that are relevant to job performance, such as skills, abilities or personality. For example, a social worker may be evaluated for his empathy and communication skills, whilst a postal worker may also be evaluated for his / her customer relation and sorting skills.

Swist (2002) maintains that trait rating evaluation system may list personal characteristics, such as ability to get along with people, leadership, analytical competence, industry, judgment, and initiative. Swist explains that the list may also include such work related characteristics as job knowledge, ability to carry through on assignments, production or cost results, or success in seeing that plans and instructions are carried out.

One practical problem of the trait approach is related to its subjective nature. According to Fullard (2006), trait evaluation cannot be objective, thus serious and fair minded managers do not wish to utilise their obviously subjective judgment on a matter as important as performance. Fullard emphasises that employees who receive less than the top rating almost invariably feel that they have been dealt with unfairly.

Another problem is that the basic assumption of trait appraisals is open to question (Martinez, 2003). Mishra (2003) emphasises that the connection between

performance and possession of specific traits is doubtful. What is evaluated tends to be separated from manager's actual operation. Trait appraisal substitutes someone's opinion of an individual for what that individual really does. Spencer (2004) notes that because the trait approach is unreliable and invalid, it is highly questionable as to whether it is able to offer any useful information about employee performance and development. Furthermore, because of its reliance on erroneous assumptions, the trait method is likely to be de-motivating to employees and create tension between employees and managers.

Dessler (2000) criticises trait criteria as nebulous. Raters are dealing with a blunt tool, and subordinates are likely to be vague about what qualities they are being rated on. In the hands of most practitioners, Dessler states that it is a crude device, and since raters are aware of this, they are reluctant to use it in a manner that would damage the careers of their subordinates. According to Vicky (2002), one of the principal purposes of appraisal is to provide a basis upon which to discuss performance and to plan for improvement. However, Vicky also maintains that trait evaluations provide few tangible things to discuss, little on which participants can agree as fact, and therefore little mutual understanding of what is required to obtain improvement.

Behaviour appraisal enjoins managers to assess how workers perform their jobs, that is, the actual actions and behaviours that workers exhibit on the job (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004). Behaviour appraisals have the advantage of providing employees with clear information about what they are doing right and wrong and how they can improve their performance (Terrence & Joyce, 2004).

Terrence and Joyce further assert that performance feedback from behaviour appraisal is more likely to lead to performance improvement.

According to Moon, Lee, Jeong, Lee, Park and Lim (2007), the approaches tend to use specific quantitative and qualitative performance factors to evaluate staff. One approach is the conventional rating scale. These scales use words or phrases to describe the degree to which certain behaviours or characteristics are displayed. In cases where there are no appropriate behaviours or characteristics within job descriptions, Jing, Cheng and Chen (2007) note that supervisors work with staff to determine what behaviours and characteristics would be most useful in an appraisal setting.

According to Winston and Creamer (1999), another way of approaching this type of appraisal is the behaviourally anchored scale. In this approach, broad categories of practice are identified, ideally through collaborations between supervisors and staff. Winston and Creamer emphasise that specific job behaviours are then linked to the categories. Measures of staff member behaviour are rated on a scale in relation to specific behaviour items. Behaviour-based appraisal may also be approached through behavioural frequency scale. Under this approach, desired behaviours are described and the staff member is evaluated on how often those behaviours occur (Simmons, 2002).

A weighted checklist may also be used in behaviour-based appraisal. This method provides a list of performance related statements that are weighted. Staff members are judged on a scale indicating the degree to which the statement accurately describes performance (Yee & Chen, 2009). A final approach to

behaviour-based appraisal is the forced-choice method. Here, a list of performance related statements about job performance are evaluated on how well they discriminate among staff and how important they are to unit or institutional performance. Discrimination and desirability statements are placed on a grid in clusters that differ on discrimination, but are closely related in desirability. Discrimination and desirability are multiplied to yield a total scale score.

With results-based appraisal managers appraise performance in terms of results or the outcomes of work behaviour. This tends to be more objective instead of subjective (Langdon & Gilliland, 1998). Spencer (2004) notes that on the positive side, results-based appraisals produce short and long-term results in the context of original performance and organisational objectives, are generally perceived as fair, tend to generate high levels of commitment to the organisation, and they encourage a high level of participation and are thus defensible (Werner & Latham, 2006). On the negative side, Ryan and Cousins (2009) is of the opinion that they can be overly results oriented, especially in educational organisations, and they may be inflexible. If supervisors determine that the advantages outweigh disadvantages, results-focused approaches may be incorporated.

Processes of performance appraisal

Performance appraisal processes refers to all procedures that are used to evaluate employees against standards of personal qualities and work profile (Dessler, 2000). The appraisal process therefore constitutes the methodology or

the manner in which the performance of employees is evaluated. It is the procedure that an organisation has outlined to be followed by managers or superiors to ascertain the level of performance of the employees (Cole, 2004).

A systematic approach to performance appraisal commences with the completion of an appropriate appraisal form (Byars & Rue, 2004). The process would involve formal interaction between a subordinated and a supervisor, that usually takes the form of periodic interview (annual or semi-annual) in which the work performance of the subordinate is systematically examined and discussed, with a view to identify weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development (Chambers, 2005).

Tamkin and Yarnall (2002) note that appraisal process makes both the superior and the subordinate aware of the direction for which the performance of an employee should follow and the means for correcting performance defects. When the process is clearly defined and laid out, and objectively followed by the superior, it makes the subordinates confident in it. This brings about a healthy organisational climate and promotes good and cordial superior-subordinate relationship (Wexley & Latham, 2002).

In some cases, the performance appraisal processes are structured and formally sanctioned while in other cases they are an informal and essential part of daily activities. According to Taylor (2003), the process should commence with setting performance standard should serve as a benchmark against which performance is measured and the standard should relate to the desired results of each job. Fullard (2006) adds that formal performance appraisal should be based

on the completed appraisal form and end in the construction of a development plan, how they will be evaluated, and how their evaluation will be based on their success in achieving their goal.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be inferred that performance appraisal involves at least two parties. That is the appraiser who does the appraisal and the appraisee whose performance is being evaluated. The appraiser should project job descriptions clearly, help the appraisee set his/her goals and targets and analyse results objectively (Derek & Hall, 2000). It is necessary for the appraiser to offer coaching and guidance to the appraisee whenever required and reward good results. The appraisee should be very clear about what he is doing and why.

Performance measures must be easy to use, reliable and must report on the behaviours that determine performance. Performance measure should be objective with indications of job performance which can be verified by others. Actual performance may be better than expected and sometimes it may go off the track. Whatever be the consequences, there is a way to communicate and discuss the final outcome. Corrective action is of two types; one puts out the fires immediately, the other strikes at the root of the problem permanently.

Methods of appraisal

Different methods are used to appraise the performance of employees. Methods of performance appraisal can be grouped into two main categories. These are the informal and formal performance appraisal (Cole, 2004). Informal

appraisal is adhoc in nature and involves the day-to-day assessment of an employee by his superior in the ordinary course of work (Taylor, 2003; Stone, 2000). On the other hand, formal appraisal is a planned event which is usually discussed between the superior and subordinate with definite terms of reference or work context and content (Yee & Chen, 2009). Yee and Chen add that performance appraisal can take a variety of methods depending on what is being measured, who is doing the measurement, how the measurement is being done and the purpose for the measurement.

One widely used type of performance appraisal is the system of evaluating performance against the setting and accomplishing of objectives (Holcomb, 1993). Holcomb further maintains that once a programme of evaluating by objectives, which are achievable is operating, appraisal may become a fairly easy task. Supervisors determine how well objectives have been set and how well have employees performed against them (Rudman, 2003). Appraisal by objectives must be a way of planning as well as a key to organising, staffing, leading, and controlling. When performance appraisal is done this way, the appraisal takes into consideration whether or not employees have established adequate but reasonably attainable objectives and how they have performed against them within a specified period of time (Abadzi, 2006).

Another method involves managers writing an essay about what they consider to be an overall assessment of an employee's performance. This is known as the essay method (Breadwell & Holden, 1993). Byars and Rue (2004) explain that it is a method in which the rater prepares a written statement describing an

individual's strengths, weaknesses and past performance. In most cases, instructions are provided on which specific areas to cover such as quantity and quality of work, job knowledge and ability to get along with others. The manager may also be asked to rate the employee using a list of terms, such as above average, fair, or poor (Ryan & Cousins, 2009).

Lombardi (2001) maintains that essay method has the advantage of touching on most important issues in an objective manner since there is minimum restriction. Lombardi however, argues that it is subject to the rater's writing abilities and skills, and that nothing obligates the manager to justify anything within his/her assessment.

Traits ratings may also be adopted for performance appraisals. At the centre of this method is a list of personality traits to which the appraiser must assign a numerical rating or a descriptive rating of adjectives (Rudman, 2003). Traits may include items such as cooperation, competence, initiative, and leadership. According to Rudman, the list may also include work related aspects such as job knowledge, ability to follow assignments, production or cost results, and success in seeing that plans are being carried out as expected.

Rating attributes are necessary for the performance of certain jobs. Management could therefore identify these traits and use them as the basis for appraisal. Thus, employees who exhibit higher levels of such attributes could be adjudged as performing well on the job (Anderson, 1993). In Mani's (2002) view, this approach however, assumes that one can define and rate traits objectively, but in practice, traits are too broadly defined and so are the criteria for evaluating

each trait. Ratings of attributes such as judgment and creativity are at the manager's discretion. Their reliability is therefore questionable.

Another method is by management by objectives (MBO). In this method, the emphasis is on tangible and measurable goals. The key result areas (KRA) and the means to attain maximum results are concentrated upon. According to Wright, Noe, Hollenbeck and Gerhart (2004), MBO deals with professional and high calibre employees. It involves the participation of all employees in determining what should be done and how it should be done (Werner & Desimone, 2006). Management by objective is therefore a system in which people at each level of the organisation set goals in a process that flows from top to bottom, so that employees at all levels are contributing to the organisation's overall goals (Yee & Chen, 2009). These goals become the standards for evaluating each employee's performance.

The principle behind this approach is to compare expected performance with actual performance. This approach is devised as a method of incorporating performance planning into performance appraisal (Fletcher, 2001). In essence, the manager, or manager and employee decide which goals must be achieved by the employee. According to Noe (2005), the goals are connected to a time schedule, specific, measurable, and become the measure of the employee's performance. Noe maintains that the goals are established at the beginning of the appraisal period and measured at the end of the appraisal period. The superior lets his/her team know the KRAs and the results expected at the end of the year. The work is

also delegated, and the authority responsibility relationship is defined (Lohman, 2005).

According to Groeschl (2003), MBO can be successful when the objectives set are clear, concise and unambiguous. They should also be measurable, attainable and challenging. Moreover, both employee and manager should regularly discuss and review the objectives and action plan as and when the need arises (Byars & Rue, 2004).

The 360 degree feedback is also known as multi-source feedback, multi-rater assessment, upward appraisal, co-worker feedback, multi-perspective rating, and multi-cycle feedback (Fletcher & William, 1985). Rudman (2003) explains that the process involves a questionnaire being sent to supervisors, peers, line managers or subordinates and customers who are asked to rate the employee's performance on a variety of performance dimensions or competence. Rudman emphasises that the emphasis is on feedback, employee development, and its subject who are usually in management positions. The 360 degree appraisal is chiefly oriented to target manager's development and often takes place in the context of management development or leadership courses (Conger, 2003).

When an organisation encourages the 360 degree appraisal feedback, it is in effect showing a preference to increase employees' participation, on all organisational levels, in organisational procedures and processes and thereby empowering its employees (Groeschl, 2003). Noe (2005) adds that various stakeholders, such as the employee's immediate superior, other superiors who are in contact with the employee on a daily basis, and the employee's subordinates,

provide data on the employee's performance. The employee's working and working style are analysed and involve the whole circle of individuals with whom the employee interacts for work.

In Cowling and Lundy's (1996) view, 360 degree feedback is fairer and more accurate as it offers a more rounded assessment of the individuals, and brings about a culture of change whereby individuals become ready to seek, give, and accept feedback in a constructive manner. This helps to enhance communication and openness (Fletcher, 2001). The main conflict of this is when the employee feels that the people evaluating are not qualified to give an opinion mainly because they have not been able to observe their performance (Arnold, 2003).

Annual confidential reports may also be used as an appraisal method (Jones, 2000). This is a report prepared by the employee's supervisor in which the subordinate's strengths and weaknesses of performance in the past year are highlighted. According to Jones, the inherent flaw here is that the feedback on the report prepared is not provided to the employee for whom this has been written because every report is kept confidential.

Cole (2002) adds that critical incidents approach may also be adopted for appraisals. In this method, the supervisors study and analyse the subordinate's best and worst incidents of behaviour in the past year. Cole notes that it focuses the evaluator's attention on those behaviours that are essential to making the difference between executing a job effectively and executing it ineffectively. However, Agyenim-Boateng (2011) notes that managers subjectively choose their

evaluation criteria, and the subjectivity of this method denies employees reliable feedback about their performance. The lack of objectivity and assessment of relevant performance criteria may hinder an employee's ability to improve job performance, and further hinders the organisation's potential to optimize employee capacity, consequently impeding overall organisational improvement.

Evaluating performance appraisal systems

According to Halachmi (1992), evaluating performance appraisal systems are a two step procedure. Halachmi notes that the first step entails assessment of the compliance of the appraisal system to organisational requirements, while the second step addresses the effectiveness of the systems in achieving those requirements and targets. These can be done by asking a series of questions that relate to compliance and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

In order to evaluate the compliance of the appraisal system to the organisational requirements, evaluators must attempt to determine if the organisation is in compliance with regulatory, system, and programme requirements (Simmons, 2002). The essential questions that must be asked has to relate to whether appraisals were done on time, whether the right appraisees were targeted, and whether employee performance plans were issued on time (Potter, 2006). Moreover, questions about the progress review that is whether it was conducted and if so, whether it was conducted appropriately need to be answered. According to Louw (2012), it must also be known whether management devoted appropriate resources and give priority to the effective maintenance and operation of the performance appraisal programme.

As an initial step, Halachmi (1992) notes that compliance information is important to collect. However, this step is important for the reason that if a programme is not being run as it was designed to be run it will have little chance of accomplishing the reasons for its implementation. According to Martinez (2003), compliance information should not be the only programme issue evaluated. The effectiveness of the programme must also be questioned. This is an attempt by management to find out whether the right things are being done and to determine the effect or the results of the appraisal programme.

The possible criteria for determining the results of an appraisal programme are discussed by extensively by Armstrong (2000, 2006). First, evaluators need to determine whether the stated objectives of the appraisal programme being met. If there are no stated objectives, Mathew and Redman (2003) suggest that it should be determined whether there were unwritten expectations and if those expectations are being met. They also maintain that evaluators can gather information specific to the goals and report results in terms of goal achievement by focusing on programme goals and objectives. Examples of stated programme goals could include such things as improving organisational performance, encouraging teamwork, or improving communication about expectations between supervisors and employees (Rudman, 2003).

Basing evaluation questions on goals or expectation through surveys, interviews, and focus groups can help identify progress of evaluation programmes toward organisational goals (Lawrie, 1990). If there are no stated or unwritten

goals for the programme, the regulatory requirements of performance management can be the basis for developing evaluation questions (Boyd, 2008).

In determining the effectiveness of the evaluation programme, evaluators must also determine whether employees and managers satisfied with the equity, utility, and accuracy of the programme (Lohman, 2005). Griffin (2006) explains that the perceptions of managers and employees are important to the success and effectiveness of a programme. Similarly, employees need to feel that they get enough feedback on their performance and that their elements and standards are current and fair. According to Griffin, the design of an appraisal programme may appear to have all the right components, on paper. However, the perceptions of the users will be essential to whether the programme operates successfully.

Bratton and Gold (1999) maintain that determining the effectiveness of appraisal systems will also involve weighing the costs of the programme against the benefits. Costs could include the cost of developing the programme, as well as the cost of using it. According to them, examples of measurable costs are the costs of developing and using an automated appraisal process or the amount of time taken to develop employee performance plans. The amount of time taken by raters, ratees, reviewers, and other users to appraise performance may also be included in measuring costs. According to Chamber's (2005) logic, costs must be compared against the benefits. A method that costs little may also produce little, while a method that costs much in terms of development and usage time may provide significant benefits, such as improved performance, clarified expectations, or higher satisfaction rates (Fletcher, 2001; Fullard, 2006).

Lombardi (2003) maintains that answering whether there has been an improvement in employee, unit, or organisational performance may also lead to understanding how effective the appraisal system is. Goyal (2007) however, argues that it may be difficult, if not impossible, to attribute the results of organisational performance to an employee appraisal programme since an appraisal programme is only one of many systems and processes that affect organisational outcomes. Goyal also notes that it may be much easier, however to relate appraisal programme effectiveness to improvements in employee and unit performance, but organisational performance should be considered.

According to Anderson (1993), appraisal programmes can be used as tools to support agency initiatives, such as focusing on results, improving customer service, and developing teamwork. Anderson states that these initiatives often require a change in organisational culture and employee attitudes to be successful. Determining that there have been desired attitude and behaviour changes may be an indication that the appraisal programme has had some effect (Graffin & Ebert, 2002). However, Graffin and Ebert argue that it would be difficult to attribute attitude changes solely to the appraisal programme.

Wexley and Latham (2002) suggest that statistics on the distribution of performance ratings should be gathered and analysed. This will help to detect signs of different treatment in the results of performance appraisal processes. Uneven ratings distributions might raise questions of fairness when compared by race, national origin, sex, and by occupational groups and grade. Werner and Desimone (2006) add that performance-based adverse actions taken against

certain groups of employees more often than others should also be analysed. They suggest that if different treatment is found, designers should attempt to determine if appraisal design features are causing the lack of balance in the ratings or if there is a larger problem in the organisation that is surfacing through the appraisal process.

Challenges of appraisal

The tendency for supervisors to give employees approximately the same rating on all issues is the most challenging issue in appraisals. Anderson (1993) identifies several effects, including the central tendency, crony effect, and doppelganger effect that make appraisal results less useful in making administrative decisions. Louw (2012) identifies this as the halo effect and establishes that the rating- scale technique is particularly susceptible to the halo effect. These effects can be manifested in several ways.

Ryan and Cousins (2009) assert that one way in which the central tendency effect can be manifested is in group appraisals. According to them, this occurs when a project being managed by a group is evaluated. It could happen that few employees contributed most efforts to making the project successful. The efforts of the few people thus, overshadow the underperformance of the many. The review may not detail individual efforts and the result may be misleading that the group, including every individual therein, has been productive in the project (Ryan & Cousins, 2009; Vicky, 2002; Winston & Creamer, 1999).

Rudman (2003) is of the view that interpersonal relations otherwise known as bias, is another problem affecting performance appraisal. Rudman also notes that this has to do with how a supervisor feels about each of the individuals working for them whether they personally like or dislike them, has a tremendous effect upon his rating of their performance. According to Groeschl (2003), this is especially operative in those situations where objective measures of performance are either not available or difficult to develop.

The effectiveness of an appraisal scheme, in Armstrong's (1996) analysis, also depends on the quality and reliability of the assessment process. Reliability and validity of appraisals reduce when management undertaking performance appraisal deliberately distorts and manipulates appraisal results for political purpose (Byars & Rue, 2001). In such situations possible conflict between the appraisers and appraised can be created, especially when appraisers become aware of unfair manipulation of results (Byars & Rue, 2004). This limits the value of appraisals and may even render the appraisal system dysfunctional in the improvement of employee performance (Coleman & Chambers, 2005).

Rogers (2000) notes that many PA system fail because they are introduced without adequate training programmes to educate the stakeholders on the process and the objectives of the performance appraisal systems. Managers are therefore not able to differentiate between appraisals done for administrative purposes and those done for developmental reasons (Halachmi, 2002). The problem of not knowing exactly what to measure therefore arises. Ryan and Cousins (2009) add that other performance systems also fail because they are 'assessment led' and

depend on quantitative evaluation rather than 'development led' which emphasis on qualitative assessment

Inadequate preparation of appraisers is seen to create challenges for appraisal systems and processes (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004). Potter (2006) reports that appraisals are unnatural act for managers, with the result that, if they are not trained properly, it is rather done poorly. In Stufflebeam and Shinkfield's (2007) view, performance appraisal system is a political process, and that few ratings are determined without some opinionated consideration. They also note that appraisers use bureaucratic processes to their own advantage to manage people effectively, to avoid unnecessary conflict between them and their subordinates. It is therefore evidenced that the development of staff are ignored in performance appraisal (Ryan & Cousins, 2009).

The challenges make employees wary of performance appraisal. Perhaps the most common fear is that of rater subjectivity. Introducing subjectivity, bias and favouritism are real problems that create opposition to most performance appraisal systems (Carrel et al., 2000). Boswell et al. (2000) follow with the argument that appraisers are often discredited by being subject to political manipulation. Being conducted by humans, performance appraisal is frequently subject to a number of errors and weaknesses (Fletcher, 2001; Langdon & Gilliland, 1998). According to Fletcher, managers may also have conflicting roles as the judge and a helper. These conflicts may prevent the performance appraisal process from attaining its full usefulness to the organisation and many even result

in negative behaviour among employees ultimately affecting the organisation's performance.

Conceptual framework for performance appraisal

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) shows that appraisal systems are composed of different components. They may include stakeholders, who are appraisers and appraisees, the objectives of the appraisal, and the processes involved in the system. Processes in the system may include the processes of defining the purpose of appraisal, the methods used in appraisal, the implementation procedure, and the evaluation processes involved. It may also include the selection of appraisers and the determination of targeted appraisers.

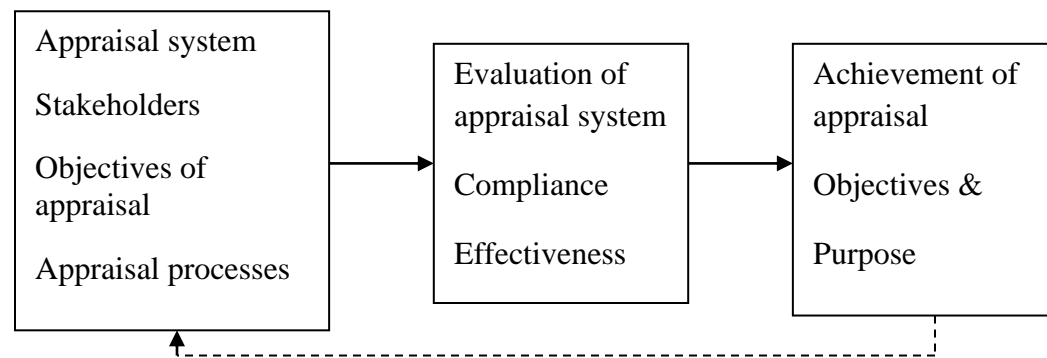


Figure 1: Evaluation of performance appraisal system

Source: Author's construct, 2011

The effectiveness of the appraisal system may be evaluated after the initial system has been implemented. This will have to deal with determining whether the targets and aims for instituting the appraisal programme have been achieved.

It will also be in the effort to determine what issues facilitated the achievement of targets and which ones may have led to failure to achieve targets. The feedback (indicated with broken lines) from this evaluation may be channelled into re-designing future appraisal programmes to enhance their effectiveness.

The evaluation of the appraisal system takes place at two stages. The first is before the system takes off and the second is after the appraisal system has been effected in order to determine whether the objectives of the appraisal were achieved. It is also to determine whether expected benefits of the appraisal system were obtained. In order to do this, the compliance of the appraisal system with organisational requirements and principles are reviewed. This happens before the appraisal system is instituted to be certain that the right thing will be done.

Summary

The chapter discussed Kolmogorov's (1933) staff performance probability theory and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory to rationalise staff performance and performance appraisal evaluation. These were discussed in line with the main concepts of the study as a conceptual framework underlying the study discussions and analysis. The next chapter presents the methods used for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research methodology is a way to find out the result of a given problem on a specific matter or problem that is also referred as research problem (Goddard & Melville, 2004). According to the Industrial Research Institute (2010), the methodology provides grounds for verification and replication of the study. This chapter therefore deals with the methodological approach used for the study. It elaborates on the study design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, as well as the methods and instruments of data collection. The pre-test, methods and instruments for data collection, and data analysis techniques are also discussed in this chapter.

Study organisation

The Ghana Post Company is owned and operated by the Government under the Ministry of Communications. Its vision is to become a dynamic business oriented organisation, serving the needs of customers and other stakeholders (Ghana Post Company, 2000). In order to achieve this, the company is guided by the mission to provide prompt, efficient, reliable and secure communication, financial agency and allied services to domestic and foreign customers for profit with passion. Besides postal products, the company offers financial services, such as money transfer through Western Union, cash posts for domestic money transfer, MoneyGram and coinstar.

Ghana Post Company has a hierarchy of Staff presented diagrammatically in Figure 2. This management team is headed by the Managing Director. Other functions of the team include budget approvals, legal documentations, designing of products and services, international negotiations, partnerships and licensing.

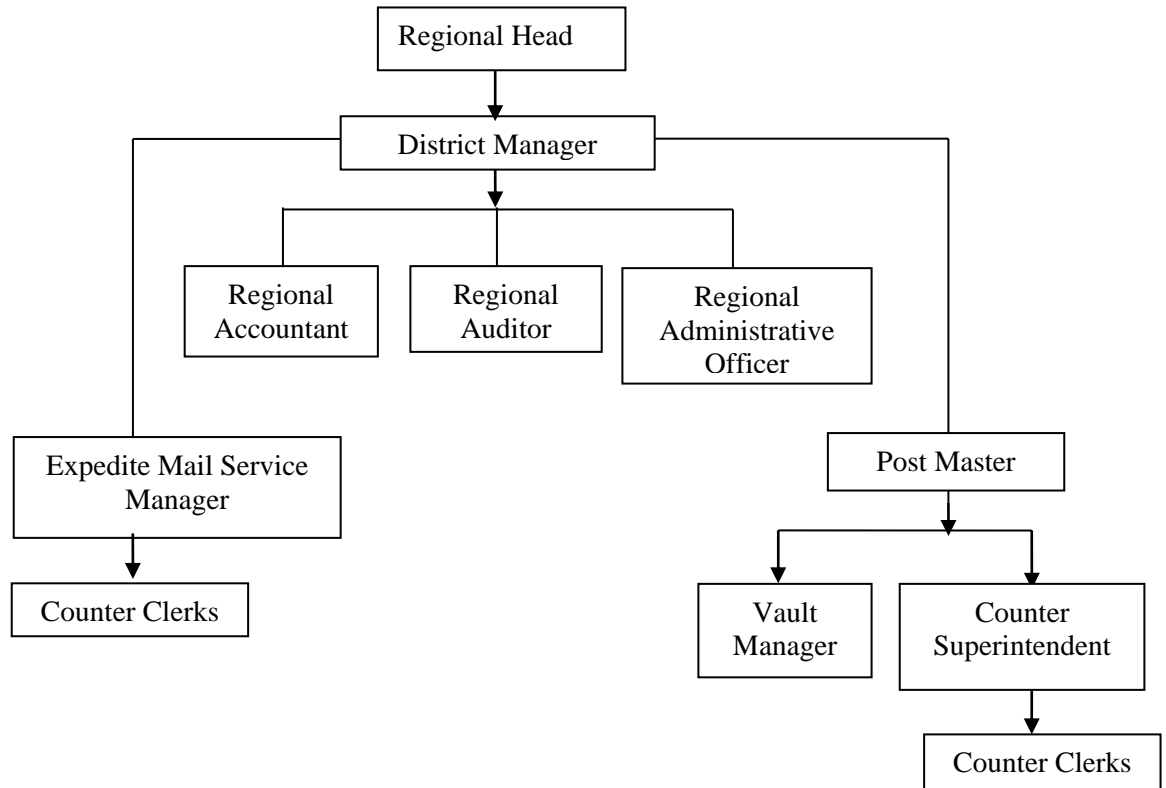


Figure 2: Organisational structure of Ghana Post Company Limited

Source: GPCL, 2000

Figure 2 depicts the organisational structure of Ghana Post Company Limited in the Tamale Metropolis. At the Apex of the structure is the Regional Head who supervises the activities of the company in the region and prepares

regional directors returns to the headquarters. He also attends regional heads meetings at the headquarters on behalf of the region.

The District Manager reports directly to the Regional Head. He is in charge of the preparation and supervision of the weekly, quarterly and annual returns of the company in the region. Personnel who report directly to the District Manager are the Regional Accountant, Regional Auditor and the Regional Administrative Officer. They perform regular accounting, auditing and administration duties on behalf of the company in the region. Also directly under the supervision of the District Manager, is the EMS Manager who is in charge of Counter Clerks who are in charge of the sales of the company's products. The responsibility of the Vault Manager is to update value books of the company. He is also in charge of the Counter Superintendent (CS) who issues stamps and supervises the sales of the stamps by the Counter Clerks.

The company is also run on departmental basis. These include the human resource department, postal service department, EMS department, marketing department, security department, audit department, accounting department and transport department. These departments are headed by various departmental heads appointed by the Regional Head.

Study design

The study is a descriptive survey and it is non-interventional. Descriptive research, according to Leary (1995), is about assessing a situation as it is found on the ground without any manipulation in the area where the studies were

conducted. Sarantakos (1998) adds that descriptive research aims at describing social systems, relations or social events and providing background information about the issue in question and also to stimulate explanations. Descriptive design is adopted for the study because, the study seeks to describe the existing practices of performance evaluation systems as well as the appraisal procedures used to determine the effectiveness and success of the system. The study does not seek to introduce interventions to perceived challenges in appraisal systems, but to report them as they pertain. The study also aims to employ quantitative analysis of data, thus a descriptive survey would be suitable for the study.

Population and sampling

The target population for this research is all the staff of Ghana Post Company Limited in the Tamale Metropolis of the Northern Region. The target population here is 54 made up of staff with different levels of educational background varying from junior level to senior level officers. The population comprised 23 senior staff and 31 junior members. The whole population was used because it is small enough and enabled the researcher to undertake an in-depth study into the current appraisal system through the responses from all staff.

Data collection

The study solicited primary and secondary data, which comprised both quantitative and qualitative data. Primary data was sought from employees of GPCL on the practices and processes of performance evaluation programmes

within the company. Policy issues and employee involvement in planning of appraisal systems were solicited. Employees' perception of the effectiveness of methods within evaluation systems and compliance of appraisal systems to organisational requirements was also solicited. These were solicited as responses to self-administered questionnaires. Secondary data included bio-demographic on staff in job manuals, approaches in appraisal systems, and staff performance records from annual reports.

Instrument design

The instruments used were basically questionnaires and interview guides that were designed under the guidance and supervision of my supervisor. The researcher used questionnaires because majority of the respondents are literates. This instrument provided the information that was needed and at the same time was acceptable to the respondents. A major advantage of this instrument was that it allowed the respondents to give reliable information since their privacy and right to anonymity was guaranteed. Thought was also given as to how responses were to be analysed at the designed stage and not after the entire questionnaires were returned. The researcher, as much as possible tried to administer questionnaires personally to reduce the rate of errors and also to ensure high response rate. One set of questions were developed and distributed to both junior and senior staff members.

The questionnaires were divided into four sections. Section A covered the personal data of GPCL employees. This solicited data on demographic and

occupational characteristics of employees. Section B sought data on the nature of performance appraisal system of GPCL. The data covered the processes of performance evaluation systems as well as the extent of staff involvement in initial planning and policy reviews concerning staff evaluation programmes. It also captured the extent of compliance of performance appraisal systems to organisational requirements.

The survey sought to evaluate the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems from the perspective of employees. This was captured in Section C of the instrument. It also touched on the effectiveness of the scheme and finds out whether feedbacks are given to appraisees. The challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems were covered in Section D.

Interview guides were used to solicit data from appraisers. This guided in-depth interviews on the processes of the appraisal system, the methods used, effectiveness of the system and the challenges involved. This was used to triangulate the responses from questionnaires and also to provide some explanations for responses given.

Pre- testing

The questionnaires were pre- tested prior to final distribution. The rationale was to check for validity of the instruments. It also ensured that the instruments were accurate and understandable to the respondents. Pre- testing revealed and helped to solve problems such as phrasing, sequencing and ambiguity. Some staff of the Tamale Main Post Office were used for the pre-testing.

Ethical issues

The research sought a letter of introduction from the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. This was sent to the management of the Ghana Post Company in Tamale in order to gain their consent and to acquire permission to conduct the study. This enabled the researcher to gain the needed support or co-operation from the management of the company. The researcher made sure to explain the purpose of the study to all participants and only included them in the study based on their informed consent. The researchers were assured of their confidentiality.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork was conducted from 6th to 24th February, 2012. The self-administered questionnaires were sent to the 54 employees in the different branches of the company within the Tamale Metropolis. The employees were encouraged to complete the questionnaires within a week. The researcher paid subsequent visits after the initial delivery of the questionnaires. During these visits, completed questionnaires were collected while discussions were held to help employees with some difficulties to understand issues raised in the questionnaire. This was repeated until all the answered questionnaires were collected from the employees.

Interviews were conducted within the same period of the questionnaire administration. They involved the appraisers of the company who were identified

by branch managers. The appraisers were interviewed on the processes, effectiveness, and challenges of the appraisal system of the Ghana Post Company.

Field challenges

A major challenge was getting sufficient number of the questionnaires completed and returned within the time scheduled. In addition, some of the received questionnaires had unanswered questions. Such questionnaires were returned to the respondents and the researcher offered some assistance to the respondents to answer those questions. There were also some non-responses and non-co-operation from appraisees.

Data management and analysis

The questionnaires collected were coded and subsequently entered into the statistical analysis software called the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 17 for the analysis to be done. The data were statistically analysed to make issues clear and give quick visual impressions on certain issues. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Data presentation formats used included frequency tables, percentages and graphs.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study in relation to evaluating the performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company, within the Tamale Metropolis. The results of statistical significance and practical implications are presented and discussed in relation to the specific objectives. The study targeted all employees from the various departments within all the branches of Ghana Post in Tamale Metropolis. A total of 54 questionnaires were to distributed to the staff of the four branches of Ghana Post in the metropolis, but 48 were completed and returned. This represented a response ratio of 92.3 percent. Eight line managers who were also the appraisers were included in evaluating the performance appraisal system of the company. The first section of the analysis dwelt on the demographic characteristics of respondents, while the subsequent sections focused on the specific objectives of the study.

Demographic characteristics of staff

The study sought to provide background information of respondents by examining their gender distribution, as well as their age, educational and occupational characteristics. These variables were also studied in order to provide a basis for differentiating between responses, since aggregated responses may exclude some pertinent isolated concerns.

The study covered a total of 35 males and 13 females. Given the fact that males formed about 73 percent of respondents indicated that most of the responses on evaluating the appraisal system of the company were male inclined. Thus, the responses were more representative of male opinion.

Table 1: Sex distribution by departments

Department	Sex					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Human resource	9	25.7	3	23.1	12	25.0
Security	1	2.9	0	0.0	1	2.1
Postal	11	31.4	6	46.2	17	35.4
Audit	1	2.9	1	7.7	2	4.2
EMS	4	11.4	2	15.4	6	12.5
Accounts	3	8.6	0	0.0	3	6.2
Transport	4	11.4	0	0.0	4	8.3
GES	2	5.7	1	7.7	3	6.2
Total	35	100.0	13	100.0	48	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2011

The study also showed that respondents from eight departments, namely Human Resource, Security, Postal, Audit, EMS, Accounts, Transport, and GES, within the various branches of the company were covered. However, a greater section (35.4%) of staff was from the Postal Department. Next to this were staff

from the Human Resource Department (25.0%), while the Audit Department recorded the least staff strength of two (4.2%). The study also showed that, with the exception of the Audit Department, males dominated all other departments in the company.

The results further indicated that a total of 23 Senior Staff and 25 junior staff were covered by the study. Exactly half of respondents surveyed had a Diploma or HND in a particular discipline. Both junior staff (52.2%) and senior staff (48.0%) were concentrated in the category of respondents who had a Diploma or an HND as their highest level educational attainment. Following this were respondents who had attained Bachelor's Degree (27.1%). However, there was more senior staff that had Bachelor's Degree (39.1%) than junior staff that had attained a Bachelor's Degree (16.0%).

A close examination of the results in Table 2 indicates that senior members were concentrated as Diploma and Bachelor Degree holders, while junior staff were more of Diploma and senior secondary certificate holders. It was therefore inferred that senior staff had slightly higher educational qualification than junior members. Educational qualification may therefore influence job placements in the company. Such a practice would support Holszchu's (2000) assertion that generally, employees with higher educational qualifications are found within high ranking staff within the organisational setup.

Table 2: Staff by educational qualification

Educational level	Senior staff		Junior staff		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
JHS	1(5.6)	0(0.0)	1(5.9)	0(0.0)	2(4.2)
SHS	1(5.6)	0(0.0)	5(29.4)	3(37.5)	9(18.8)
Diploma/HND	11(61.1)	1(20.0)	7(41.2)	5(62.5)	24(50.0)
First Degree	5(27.8)	4(80.0)	4(23.5)	0(0.0)	13(27.1)
Total	18(100.1*)	5(100.0)	17(100.0)	8(100.0)	48(100.1*)

Percentages are in parentheses; * Rounding error

Source: Field survey, 2012

It was also shown that a greater percentage of males (51.4%) were senior staff. Most males (61.1%) who were senior staff were Diploma holders, but most females (80.0%) who were senior staff were holders of Bachelor Degrees.

The examination of the demographic characteristics of staff also covered differentiating between the ages of senior and junior staff. This is because age has been found to influence perspectives on issues (Fletcher & William, 1985), and also cause variations in work performance (Garavan, 1997). Thus, the differences in ages may account for some differences in the evaluation of appraisal systems of the company.

The ages of staff were tested for normality and the results showed a mean of 36.15, a median of 36.50 and a mode of 38.00. For this distribution, a skewness statistic of 0.218 was given. According to Pallant (2005), the theoretical skewness

statistic for normality is a value of 0.000, which indicates that the mean, median, and mode, calculated for the distribution has the same statistical value. However, given the fact that a skewness of 0.000 may not always be achievable, a value of ± 0.5 is often statistically accepted as normality. In the case of the number of the ages of staff of Ghana Post Company, the distribution was normal.

Independent sample t-test was used to differentiate between the ages of senior and junior staff, as shown in Table 3. The means were used to represent the averages of years for junior and senior staff. The average age for all staff was approximately 36.15 years. However, the average age for senior staff was 40.13, but 32.17 for junior staff. This indicated that on the average senior staff are about eight years older than junior staff. A t- statistic of 6.564 and a p-value of 0.025 showed that the observed difference in ages of senior and junior staff was statistically significant at an alpha of 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that senior staff were significantly older than junior staff.

Table 3: Age description

Staff category	Frequency	Mean (yrs)	Median (yrs)	Mode (yrs)	Skewness
Senior	23	40.13	40.00	35	0.235
Junior	23	32.17	35.00	38	-0.420
Total	46	36.15	36.5	38	0.218

t = 6.564; df = 44; p-value = 0.025

Source: Field survey, 2012

Junior and Senior staff were differentiated on the basis of the number of years served in the company. This was conducted on the basis that the number of years served may have an influence on their evaluation of appraisal systems. Employees who have served longer and have been through several appraisals of the company may have a different view from employees who have had lesser experience with the appraisal system (Wiese & Buckley, 1998).

The distribution of the number of years served was subjected to a test of normality. The results showed a mean of 7.89, a median of 6.00, a mode 4.00, and a skewness statistic of 1.756. This indicated that the number of years served by staff was not normally distributed. Upon Pallant's (2005) recommendation, the medians were used as the representative average and the Mann-Whitney U Test, which is the non-parametric alternative of independent sample t-test was used for comparison.

The results showed that the average number of years served for Senior staff was nine years, but most of them had served for eight years. On the other hand, the average tenure for junior staff was four years and most of them had served for four years. This indicated that Senior staff had served twice as long as Junior staff in the company. This was confirmed by the mean rank for senior staff (33.23), which was a little more than twice as much as the mean rank for Junior staff (15.88). The results showed a Mann-Whitney U test statistic of 72.00 and z-statistic of -4.350 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicated that the observed differences in the number of years served for Senior and Junior staff was statistically significant at an alpha of 0.05.

Table 4: Tenure for junior and senior staff

	Frequency	Mean	Median	Mode	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Senior	22	11.00	9.00	8.00	33.23	731.00
Junior	25	5.16	4.00	4.00	15.88	391.00
Total	47	7.89	6.00	4.00		

Mann-Whitney U = 72.00; z = -4.350; p-value = 0.000

Source: Field survey, 2012

Senior staff have therefore generally served longer at the company than Junior staff. The results suggest that senior staff had longer tenure than junior staff. This may cause variations in the responses for senior and junior staff, regarding evaluating the effectiveness of appraisal system of the company. Deriving from Wiese and Buckley's (1998) assertion, senior staff would therefore have a more comprehensive overview of the appraisal system and its performance over a longer period of time than junior staff.

Nature of appraisal system of Ghana Post Company Limited

The performance appraisal system of the company was described in order to provide a deeper insight to the conditions within which the system is set. This included an examination of the policy issues of the system, the processes involved, and differentiating the responses by departments, staff category. Frequency tables and cross-tabulations were used for the purpose of these descriptions. Given that there were some non-responses, the total number of

respondents for the results did not always add up to 48, which was the total sample size.

The policy issues of the appraisal system were first examined as presented in Table 5. The results showed that 41.7 of staff agreed and 37.5 percent of staff strongly agreed that the performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company was guided by documented policies. This showed that efforts had been made by the company to document all policies regarding the performance appraisal system for staff.

Table 5: Policy issues assessment

Response	PA is guided by		PA conforms to
	documented policies	PA polices lucid	organisational standards
Non-response	1(2.1)	0(0.0)	1(2.1)
Undecided	2(4.2)	1(2.1)	2(4.2)
Strongly agree	18(37.5)	16(33.3)	14(29.2)
Agree	20(41.7)	19(39.6)	22(45.8)
Disagree	5(10.4)	6(12.5)	9(18.8)
Strongly disagree	2(4.2)	6(12.5)	0(0.0)
Total	48(100.1*)	48(100.0)	48(100.1*)

Percentages are in parentheses; *Rounding error

Source: Field survey, 2012

The findings are in line with Lawrie's (1990) recommendation that there must be specific appraisal goals and objectives which must be documented and made accessible to all staff. The implication for the study is that the evaluation of the

system will be based on authentic knowledge of the system's targets, requirements and practices.

The results further showed that 39.6 percent of staff agreed and 33.3 percent of employees strongly agreed that performance appraisal policies are lucid or easily understandable. This suggests that employees are generally conversant with the appraisal policies and would therefore be in a better position to evaluate the system based on the policy requirements. In Baker's (1988) and Bohlander and Snell's (2001) analysis, a lucid appraisal policy often facilitates the achievement of appraisal targets. It also gives employees the impetus to perform in accordance with the requirements of the appraisal system, and offers a base for knowledgeable evaluation of the system.

According to Phillips (1997), performance appraisals aim to identify possible performance shortfalls. In order to do this, Sayers (1999) and Dessler (2000) maintain that performance appraisal must be related to performance delineated by the organisation. The ability of performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company to identify performance gaps was examined through exploring whether the system conforms to performance standards as laid down by management.

The results, also presented in Table 5, showed that 45.8 percent of staff agreed and 29.2 percent of staff strongly agreed that the performance appraisal system of the company conformed to performance standards laid down by the company. The study therefore infers that the performance appraisal system of the

company has the potential to identify performance shortfalls of staff and make provisions effect improvement of employee performance.

Derek and Hall (2000) write that performance appraisals should comprehensively involve both appraisers and appraisees. Staff should however, not be limited to being appraised but involved in the setting of achievable targets, reviews of appraisal goals and objectives, the appraisal process, and in providing feedback for improved performance. According to Cole (2002), the adequate involvement of staff has direct implications for the effectiveness of the appraisal system. The study therefore sought to describe staff involvement in the appraisal system of Ghana Post Company.

The study showed that a total of 53.2 percent of 47 respondents either agreed (29.8%) or strongly agreed (23.4%) that they were involved in the setting of performance appraisal goals and objectives (Table 6). However, a disaggregated analysis showed that the majority (78.3%) of senior staff agreed or strongly agreed that they were involved in the setting of performance appraisal goals and objectives, while 29.1 percent of junior staff noted that they were involved in the setting of appraisal goals and objectives. This indicated an unequal involvement of staff in the setting of performance appraisal targets. The implication is that appraisal targets may be incompatible with the job description and the abilities of those who are not involved in setting targets. In such a situation, there could be some ineffectiveness of the system to achieve its targets.

Table 6: Staff involvement in objective setting

Response	Staff Category		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Undecided	0(0.0)	1(4.2)	1(2.1)
Strongly agree	6(26.1)	5(20.8)	11(23.4)
Agree	12(52.2)	2(8.3)	14(29.8)
Disagree	3(13.0)	12(50.0)	15(31.9)
Strongly disagree	2(8.7)	4(16.7)	6(12.8)
Total	23(100)	24(100.0)	47 (100)

Percentages are in parentheses

Source: Field survey, 2012

The responses of appraisers indicated that they were actively involved in setting the objectives and targets of the appraisal exercise. From the interviews, it was shown that appraisers' involvement was mandatory by each department, based on the criteria that they were the line managers of their respective departments. The response of an appraiser was captured in the following quote:

I am involved in the appraisal process as the appraiser of my departmental staff. As a requirement I am a member of a board that decides on the appraisal objectives.

Another appraiser indicated that employees, especially junior staff, from the various departments were not directly involved in setting appraisal objectives because they channel their concerns through their managers to the review board.

This assertion was confirmed by another appraiser in the quote:

Other staff (appraisees) are expected to channel their inputs through their line managers, who are members of the review board. The board makes sure to set achievable performance targets for staff of all departments.

The responses therefore indicated that appraisers are sourced internally from the company's departments. The responses also indicate that all appraisers are involved in deciding on appraisal targets, while appraisees' involvement in objective setting occurs indirectly through their line managers. The implication could be that the views of appraisees can be underrepresented in objective setting.

According to Cole (2001), staff involvement in the appraisal process could also include involving both appraisers and appraisees in induction process. The purpose is to heighten staffs' awareness of the purpose, requirements, targets, and processes involved in the appraisal. The study therefore explored the possibility that appraisal systems of Ghana Post Company includes staff induction and if there is, whether staff are equally involved.

The applicable sample size was 46 due to one non-response each for senior staff and junior staff. The results, presented in Table 7, depicted that the majority (60.8%) of staff agreed that they were taken through an induction exercise in preparation for the appraisal programmes. A section (39.1%), on the other hand, indicated that they had not been taken through such induction exercise. The disaggregated results showed that in comparison to junior staff, a greater percentage (73.9%) of senior staff were oriented for appraisals, while 47.8 percent of junior staff indicated that they were taken through an induction for performance appraisal.

Table 7: Staff involvement in induction

Response	Staff Category		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Strongly agree	8(34.8)	6(26.1)	14(30.4)
Agree	9(39.1)	5(21.7)	14(30.4)
Disagree	5(21.7)	3(13.0)	8(17.4)
Strongly disagree	1(4.3)	9(39.1)	10(21.7)
Total	23(99.9*)	23(99.9*)	46 (99.9*)

Percentages are in parentheses; * Rounding error

Source: Field survey, 2012

From the interviews with the appraisers it was deduced that it was mandatory for all appraisers to be part of the induction programmes. The response of an appraiser was captured as follows:

We (appraisers) are required to be part of the one-day induction programme. We are introduced to the appraisal targets, schedule, materials, and ethics.

The findings show that appraisers are most adequately integrated into the induction process. This is followed by the senior staff, while junior staff are the most poorly integrated into the induction process. The implication is that junior staff are more likely to have the least knowledge of their performance requirements and are less likely to achieve performance targets during appraisals.

The purpose of induction is to assist staff to understand the fundamental requirements of the appraisal and to be aware of targets set as well as how to

achieve them (Owusu, 2000). In this respect, the study examined the extent to which staff had knowledge of what was required of them during appraisals. All senior staff indicated that they knew what was expected of them during appraisals. On the other hand, 43.5 percent of junior staff strongly agreed or agreed that they knew what was expected of them (Table 8). These findings may be partly explained by earlier findings that most senior staff are inducted for the appraisal while most junior staff are not inducted for the appraisal. The findings thus, affirm Owusu's (2000) assertion that induction to appraisals improves appraisees' understanding and awareness of targets and performance requirements.

Table 8: Knowledge of performance expectations

Response	Staff Category		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Strongly agree	16(72.7)*	6(26.1)	22(48.9)
Agree	6(27.3)	4(17.4)	10(22.2)
Disagree	0(0.0)	2(8.7)	2(4.4)
Strongly disagree	0(0.0)	11(47.8)	11(24.4)
Total	22(100)	23(100.0)	45(99.9*)

Percentages are in parentheses; *Rounding error

Source: Field survey, 2012

In the case of appraisers, it was found that all appraisers indicated that they knew what was expected of them during the appraisal programme. In the response of one appraiser it was indicated that appraisers were introduced to the

performance targets of the programme, the duration of the programme, the materials to be used, the scoring system, and the types of assessments that would be used. The findings agree with the notion that gaining adequate knowledge of responsibilities during inductions was therefore essential for appraisers to perform their tasks well and also for the effectiveness of the process (Dessler, 2002).

The study also delved into how employees get knowledge of their performance requirements. The results, as indicated in multiple responses in Table 9, showed that the commonest means by which appraisees get to know of their expectations is by reading the goals set in the documented policy (32.5%). Other means were through reviews of job description and duties, and discussions on the expected performance outcomes and behaviour for which appraisers will be held accountable.

Table 9: Source of information on performance expectations

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Reviews of job description and duties	22	27.5
The policy goals	26	32.5
Discussions on expected performance outcomes	19	23.8
Discussions on behaviour to be held accountable for	13	16.2
Total	80*	100.0

*multiple response; n= 48

Source: Field survey, 2012

The results are similar to Cole’s (2001, 2002) findings that employees would find alternative means of knowing expectations or job related duties when the official modes of doing so are not functional. This is because employees expect that by performing well on their jobs, their appraisal reports will be favourable and they might receive some recognition for their performance, through for example promotions.

The study also examined the frequency of appraisals by differentiating, between senior and junior staff. Based on the results, all of the sampled senior agreed or strongly agreed to the assertion that their performance was appraised, while 76 percent of the junior staff also agreed or strongly disagreed that their performance was regularly appraised (Table 10).

Table 10: Frequency of appraisal assessment

Response	Staff Category		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Strongly agree	11(47.8)	12(48.0)	23(47.9)
Agree	12(52.2)	7(28.0)	19(39.6)
Disagree	0(0.0)	1(4.0)	1(2.1)
Strongly disagree	0(0.0)	10(20.0)	5(10.4)
Total	23(100)	25(100.0)	48 (100)

Percentages are in parentheses

Source: Field survey, 2012

This suggested that performance appraisal in the company was more focused a little more on senior staff. In Chatterjee's (1999) recommendation, the performance of all staff irrespective of position and job specification must be appraised, given that achieving the organisational goal is a collaborative effort of all staff.

Redman and Wilkinson (2001) note that several approaches may be adopted to assess performance of staff. This may include assessment by the immediate boss, peer review, self appraisal, and assessment by subordinates. In describing the nature of appraisals in the company, the study sought to examine the approaches used by the company to assess the staff performance and found based on multiple responses that most (72.0%) employees were assessed by their immediate boss, as indicated in Table 11. This was probably because all the appraisers were line managers of the various departments. Next to this was peer reviews and then self ratings.

Table 11: Personnel conducting appraisals

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Immediate boss	46	72.0
Peers	8	12.7
Subordinates	2	3.2
Self	7	11.1
Total	63*	100.0

*Multiple responses, n = 48

Source: Field survey, 2012

According to appraisers interviewed, the different methods were applied simultaneously to authenticate the appraisal results made by line managers. Some responses of appraisers were captured as follows:

We (appraisers) have been instructed to use other methods to verify our assessment of employee performance because sometimes we have to use our judgement in scoring. The scoring system has some shortfalls and must be improved.

Another appraiser reported that:

Mostly, the feedback we (appraisers) get from peer ratings are congruent with our (appraisers) assessment, but the self ratings usually suggest that other peers and appraisers underscore employees.

From the interviews, it was deduced that employee self ratings were generally higher than other forms of assessments employed by the system. This confirms Massey's (1996) study, which found that employees often appreciate their work better than others do. Self assessments are often less objective and more representative of the actual personal value that employees place on their jobs.

The study also sought to describe the contents of assessments that were adopted by the appraisal system of the company. Appraisers described that the procedure involved assessment of skills, and the quantum and quality of work done in a formal setting. The response of one appraiser was recorded as follows:

Mostly the scoring sheets cover issues on the skills of the employees, how much work that the employee does, and the quality of that work. These are the areas that mostly need improvement.

Another appraiser added that:

It is only the information collected during appraisal that is used for assessment. And the assessment is only based on what is provided in the assessment sheets.

The multiple response results showed that the common views about the appraisal, which were held by appraisees were similar to the responses of appraisers. Based on 36.2 percent of appraisees' responses, the appraisal was based on the assessment of quantity and quality of work done, while 23.4 percent was based on skills assessment (Table 12). About 13.3 percent of responses also indicated that the appraisals were formal.

Table 12: Types of appraisals

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Skills assessment	22	23.4
Assessment of personal traits	10	10.6
Assessment of social relations	20	21.3
Based on quality and quantity of work	34	36.2
Formal	6	13.3
Informal	2	2.1
Total	94*	100.0

*Multiple responses, n = 48

Source: Field survey, 2012

These were the views common to appraisees and appraisers. Other views held by appraisees included the thought that the appraisal involved the assessment of

personal traits (10.6%), social relations (21.3%), and that the final assessment also involve informal assessment (2.1%) at the worksite.

The latter views by appraisees indicated that appraisees may be focusing on building good work relations and improving personal traits, which are not targets of the final performance assessment. These parallel views held by appraisees may be explained by the fact that they are not adequately inducted into the appraisal system.

The format of appraisals was sought from respondents. According to appraisers, they were required to present the final report to appraisees for discussion, especially of shortfalls in performance and find means of resolving those problems. This was to offer some form of feedback to appraisees and also devise means of improving employee performance. An appraiser responded thus:

We (appraisers) are supposed to present the final report to all the employees who were assessed for them to consent by signing that the reports are fair and representative of their performance. We encounter disagreements but after discussing the performance with employees, they often agree to sign.

Another appraiser added that they are not often able to complete discussions with all the appraised because of the time it takes to complete all the sessions.

Appraisees gave further insights into the format of appraisals as indicated in Table 13. Based on 36.5 percent of responses, appraisees fill part of an appraisal form and their appraisers complete it confidentially. Other responses

(17.5%) noted that appraisers conduct interview sessions with them as the appraiser fills an appraisal form.

Table 13: Appraisal processes

Response	Frequency	Percent
The director/boss of my department does the assessment and asks me to consent to it by signing a portion on the form	17	27.0
I fill the first part of the form and give it to the Director who treats the rest as confidential	23	36.5
My director/boss conducts an interview session with me as he fills the form	11	17.5
I do not see the appraisal form at all	1	1.6
I do not see what my director/boss writes, I only sign a portion on the form	5	7.9
I am appraised orally	6	9.5
Total	63*	100.0

*multiple response; n = 48

Source: Field survey, 2012

Yet others (1.6%) indicated that they do not see the appraisal form in its entirety, while other (7.9%) responses asserted that they only fill a portion, but have no knowledge of what they consent to as they do not see what the appraiser writes about them. Oral appraisal was also mentioned in 9.5 percent of responses.

The findings suggest that the appraisal takes the form of dual participation of filling an appraisal form, in which appraisees and their appraisers are required to consent to the contents of the form. This is a common approach to appraisals as emphasised by Massey (1996). However, some appraisees expressed that they do not get to fill their portions, or consent to contents that they do not get to review. Appraisers also confirmed that they sometimes do not properly undertake the appraisal due to its time-consuming nature.

Effectiveness of the performance appraisal system

According to Wiese and Buckley (1998), the ultimate aim of appraisal systems is to effectively determine performance gaps and suggest means of rectifying those performance shortfalls. Thus, it is essential to assess the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems in achieving these goals. The study therefore assessed the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company from the perspective s of appraisers and appraisees.

The effectiveness of the appraisal system will partly depend on the efforts of appraisers and appraisers (Garavan, 1997). The enthusiasm of appraisers in the appraisals was examined from the perspective of appraisees. Respondents were asked if they often had to remind their appraisers, who also happened to be their immediate bosses, to fill appraisal forms. According to the results, most (51.1%) of the appraisees disagreed that they had to remind their bosses to sign appraisal forms. Yet about 36.1 percent of respondents indicated they often had to remind their bosses to fill the appraisal forms, as indicated in Figure 3. The results

indicated that most appraisers were mindful of the appraisal process and did not have to rely on the enthusiasm of appraisees to perform their duties with respect to the appraisal process. In this situation the appraisal system can be upheld by the persons in charge.

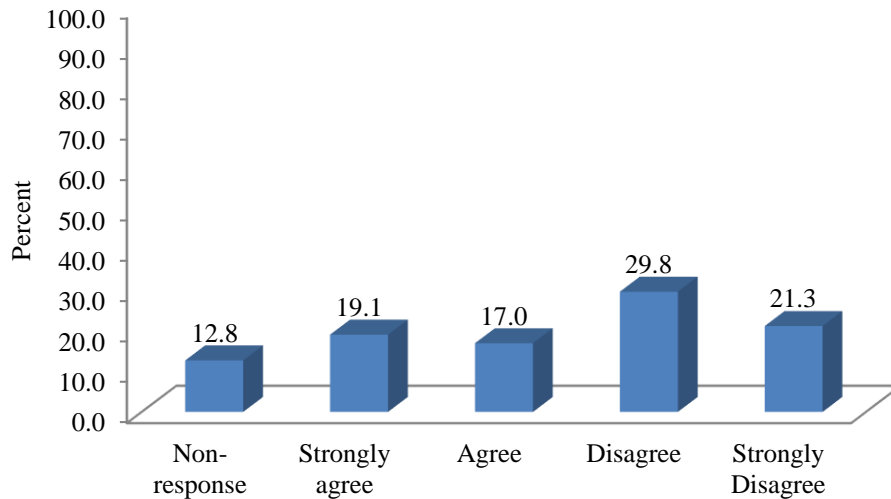


Figure 3: Enthusiasm of appraisers

Source: Field survey, 2012

One measure of examining the effectiveness of appraisal systems was to assess the achievement of appraisal objectives. This assessment was conducted from the perspective of appraisees and appraisers. It was found that 60.4 percent of appraisees disagreed that the objectives of the programme are always achieved. The disaggregated results showed that 19.1 percent strongly agreed while 17 percent agreed that objectives of the appraisal are always met. This indicated that, from the perspective of appraisees, the appraisal system was not adequately effective in achieving its targets.

According to Cole (2001), this could have serious negative implications for the appraisal system. It could also have an effect on employee performance for the achievement of organisational goals. Without meeting the objectives of the appraisal, there could be wrong diagnosis of performance gaps, which may lead to the misappropriation of funds to correct gaps that are not pertinent to improving performance of employees and achieving organisational goals.

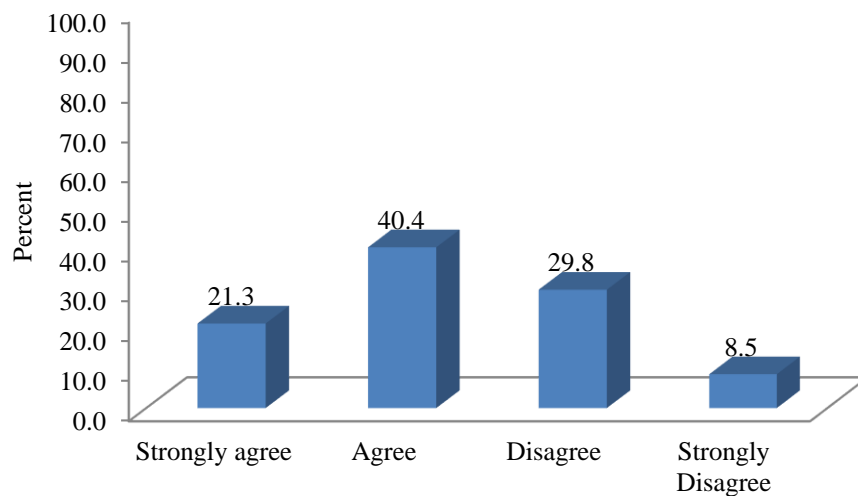


Figure 4: Assessment of objective achievement

Source: Field survey, 2012

The general idea among appraisers, which was captured in interviews was that the appraisal objectives are spread over a number of targets, some of which are met, but others are not achieved. The response of one appraiser was captured in the following quote:

Often we are able to cover all the required assessments. Sometimes there are clear indications of underperformance, but in some cases, the indicators for performance may not cover what was observed in

the employees' performance. In such cases we use our own judgement and experience.

Another appraiser added that:

What we don't often achieve is the time factor. Mostly, the appraisal process is time consuming and it stretches over the allocated time period for the assessment and feedback from reports.

Garavan (1997) notes that effective channels for feedback are necessary in the appraisal system. Feedback is what completes the appraisal process. It gets appraisal results to employees, and also gets the status of employee performance to the appraiser. Thus, the study examined the effectiveness of feedback in the appraisal system of the Ghana Post Company, as a surrogate variable to effectiveness of the entire system. According to the majority of both senior (68.1%) and junior staff (64.0%), they always received feedback on their performance after appraisals, as shown in Table 14. The rest consented that they do not receive feedback from their appraisers after the appraisal process.

These depict that while most workers in the company may receive feedback on their performance assessments, a section of employees remained that did not get such feedback and are less likely to know what improvements are needed in their line of job. Based on studies that assert that achieving organisational goals is a collaborative effort of all employees (Dessler, 2000, 2002), the findings suggest that providing feedback to only a section of employees will have negative connotations for the achievement of organisational goals.

Table 14: Feedback assessment

Response	Staff Category		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Strongly agree	12(54.5)*	5(20.0)	17(36.2)
Agree	3(13.6)	11(44.0)	14(29.8)
Disagree	4(18.2)	5(20.0)	9(19.1)
Strongly disagree	3(13.6)	4(16.0)	7(14.9)
Total	22(100)	25(100.0)	47(100)

*percentages are in parentheses

Source: Field survey, 2012

A more effective feedback system would be one that provides all employees with their performance assessment and finds means of improvement where necessary. According to the appraisers, time constraints sometimes deter the provision of feedback to all employees on their performance. In such cases, the senior staff is given preference since their job is to manage the performance of the junior staff.

Another means that the study adopted to assess the effectiveness of the appraisals is to explore whether the appraisals are used for the intended purpose. From this assessment it was revealed that about 70 percent of respondents agreed that appraisal results were used for the intended purpose (Figure 5).

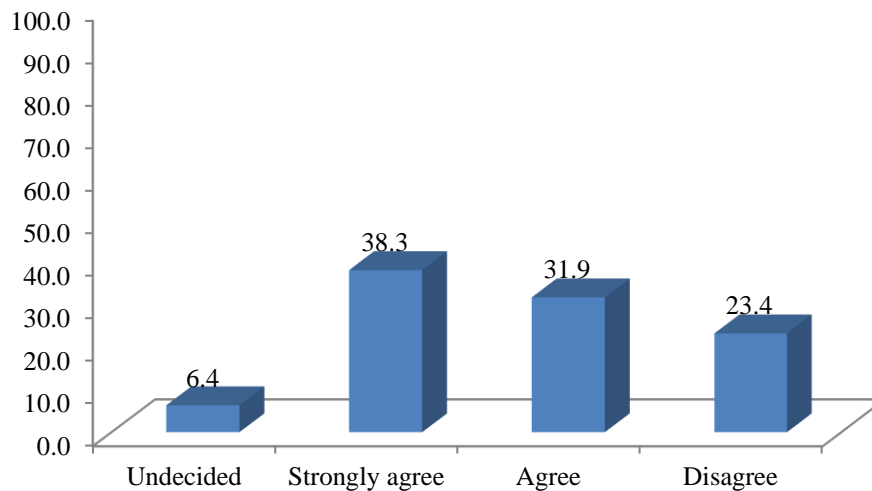


Figure 5: Congruence between results and purpose of appraisals

Source: Field survey, 2012

Appraisers provided further insight by noting that the intended purposes of appraisals in the company was to first identify performance gaps and second to assist employees to improve performance. One appraiser noted that:

We (the company) do this (appraisal programme) in order to identify areas where employees are not performing up to standards and also to help them improve on their work. These are the things we use the appraisals for.

The stated purposes confirm several studies (Cole, 2002; Dessler, 2002; Garavan, 1997) which maintain that the purpose of employee appraisal is to identify employment performance gaps and to rectify those gaps. Given the fact that appraisals are asserted to be focused on their intended purpose, it can be concluded that the appraisals have the appropriate focus and this gives the programmes the opportunity to achieve their targets.

Several challenges may also confront the appraisal system and thus, work against its effectiveness. The challenges confronting the appraisal system were therefore examined by the study. It was revealed that 41.7 percent of respondents did not find any challenges with the programme, but 58.3 percent of respondents identified some challenges that were setting back the effectiveness of the appraisal system. Table 15 shows the detailed responses based on 28 respondents who found challenges. The most commonly identified challenge was that of time. Twenty-five percent of employees noted that the time for the appraisal was too short to make an objective judgement of employee performance. Others (21.6%) were also concerned that the assessments were not fair, while some (10.7%) other employees had concerns about poor feedback from appraisals.

Table 15: Challenges to the appraisal system

Challenge	Frequency	Percent
No feedback to appraise	3	10.7
Unfair assessment	6	21.6
Time too short	7	25.0
Unclear questions	4	14.3
Inadequate materials	4	14.3
Poor cooperation	4	14.3
Total	28	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

Influence of appraisal results on staff performance

According to Dessler (2000), one means by which the effectiveness of performance appraisal can be determined is the influence the appraisal has on staff performance. In essence, appraisals have objectives to achieve, and often using appraisal results to improve employee performance is a desirable outcome (Dessler, 2002). Using appraisals to attain the desired influence on employee performance is thus both an objective of appraisals and also a measure of the effectiveness of appraisals.

The study sought employees' opinions on the influence that performance appraisal has on various aspects of their job performance. These included their skill improvement, understanding of their job expectations, team playing roles, as well as the extent to which performance appraisals help reinforce organisational culture. Other issues discussed involved the influence of performance appraisal on personal and organisational planning, resolution of misunderstanding on job duties, identifying training needs, and clarifying roles of teams.

The results show that 85.1 percent of 47 employees strongly agreed or agreed that employee appraisals helped them to improve their skills (Table 16). This confirms Cole's (2002) assertion that the immediate aim of appraisal is often to improve the skills of employees, and the extent of achievement of that objective is often an indicator of the effectiveness level of the appraisal system. In the case of Ghana Post Company, employees' opinions suggest that the appraisal system is effective in improving their skills.

Table 16: Effects of appraisal system on employee performance

Influence	Response					Total
	Undecided	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Skills improvement	1(2.1)	24(51.1)	16(34.0)	4(8.5)	2(4.3)	47(100.0)
Better understanding of job expectations	0(0.0)	20(42.6)	20(42.6)	5(10.4)	2(4.3)	47(100.0)
Reinforce organisational culture	3(6.4)	19(39.6)	16(33.3)	6(12.5)	3(6.2)	47(100.0)
Clarify roles of teams	3(6.2)	20(41.7)	16(33.3)	5(10.4)	2(4.2)	46(100.0)
Resolution of misunderstanding on job duties	2(4.4)	11(24.4)	17(37.8)	6(13.8)	9(18.8)	45(100.0)
Justify personal & org. Planning	3(6.5)	12(26.1)	18(39.1)	10(21.7)	3(6.4)	46(100.0)
Identifying employee training needs	3(6.4)	23(48.9)	13(27.7)	7(14.9)	1(2.1)	47(100.0)
Foster teamwork	3(6.5)	12(26.1)	22(47.8)	5(10.9)	4(8.7)	46(100.0)
Encourage good work relations	2(4.3)	23(47.9)	13(27.1)	3(6.2)	5(10.4)	46(100.0)
Identification of strengths and weaknesses	2(4.3)	23(48.9)	16(33.3)	5(10.4)	1(2.1)	46(100.0)

Source: Field survey, 2012

The study also showed that 85.2 percent of 47 employees strongly agreed or agreed that performance appraisal helped them to better understand their job expectations. Spencer (2004) maintains that skills improvement and high performance is often antecedents of a good understanding of employees' job expectations. Given that the majority of appraisees supported the assertion that appraisal systems of Ghana Post Company Limited helped them to understand their job expectations better, the study inferred that the appraisals were effective in providing the necessary precursor to improved skills and high performance.

According to Coates (1994), employees are often required to work in teams, and often the clarity team roles as well as the work relations foster teamwork and high performance. Performance appraisals often involve an assessment of individual and team performance and the results are used to encourage proper teamwork (Chatterjee, 1999), thus the effectiveness of appraisals may be determined by their influence on teamwork (Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2000).

In the case of Tamale branch of the Ghana Post Company, three quarters (75%) of employees strongly agreed or agreed that performance appraisals helped to foster teamwork. The majority (75%) of employees also noted that performance appraisals were used by management to encourage good work relations, and 45 percent of employees agreed or strongly agreed that performance appraisal helped clarify the roles of teams. It was therefore inferred that performance appraisals of the company fostered teamwork and also encouraged good work relations.

According to Bohlander and Snell (2001), identifying employee needs is often the means by which performance gaps are noticed by management. Performance appraisal is therefore used as an approach used to detect the gap between expected or desired performance and actual staff performance. Hence, the effectiveness of performance appraisal may be embedded in its ability to identify specific employee needs and means by which those needs can be met (Arnold, 2003).

Based on this, the study explored the influence of performance appraisal of Ghana Post Company in identifying employee performance needs through employee opinion poll. It was found that 76.6 percent of 47 employees agreed or strongly agreed that performance appraisal of the company has the ability to identify employee training needs. The results therefore suggest that the appraisals of the company are effective in identifying the gaps between performance and expected performance.

In describing the methods used by the appraisal system, one appraiser noted that a score sheet is sometimes used to assess employee performance, where appraiser allocates percentage scores to employee performance. This was done for individual and teamwork. Gaps are identified when employees score low on specific areas.

The results depicted that appraisals influence employee performance in different ways. Some of these effects are noted in several studies on performance appraisals. For example, Garavan (1997) maintains that the identification of strengths and weaknesses for one major benefit of appraisals to employee

performance. According to the study, 82.2 percent of 46 employees noted that appraisals of the company effectively helped them to identify their strengths and weaknesses on the job. The joint effect of these influences would contribute to organisational performance. Cole (2002) also adds that the objective of appraisal has commonly been to improve the skills of employees. The fact that appraisals in Ghana Post Company leads to skills improvement along with other manifested improvements in employee performance suggest that the company needs to reinforce the system to continue to produce these desired results.

Summary

This chapter presented the results on evaluating the performance appraisal system of Ghana Post Company Limited within the Tamale Metropolis. The results were also discussed with reference to the theories underlying the study, reviewed literature and the conceptual framework of the study. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the discussions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of major findings of the study. It also presents the conclusions drawn from the study as well as recommendations derived from the conclusions of the study. The first section of the chapter summarises the entire study and also presents the key findings. This is followed by the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings. Suggestions for further studies are added in the end.

Summary

The study set out to evaluate the effectiveness of the current performance appraisal system operating within the Ghana Post Company Limited. A descriptive design was adopted to study the staff of the company, including appraisers and appraisees, on the appraisal system of the company. In total, 48 appraisees and eight appraisers were covered by the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data from appraisees and interview schedules were used to collect data from appraisers. Statistical tools used to analyse the data collected included descriptive tools such as means, medians, frequencies, and percentages. Mann-Whitney U test was also used to test for significant differences where applicable.

The study examined the nature of performance appraisal system of the company as the first objective and the following were found:

1. The system was guided by documented and lucid policies. It was also guided by organisational performance standards.
2. The majority (52.2%) of senior staff and appraisers were involved in the setting of appraisal objectives, but most (66.7%) junior staff were not involved in setting appraisal objectives.
3. The appraisal was more focused on senior staff than on junior staff.
4. The appraisal was formal in nature and conformed to skills assessment and the evaluation of quality and quantity of work done.
5. The appraisal mostly relied on the textual format of appraising employees.

The second objective was to assess the effectiveness of the appraisal system and the major findings were that:

1. Most (60.4%) respondents indicated that the objectives of the appraisals were not always achieved.
2. The system effectively provided feedback for most senior and junior staff.
3. Appraisers were not always able to cover all required assessment requirements.
4. It was mostly indicated that the appraisal results were used for the intended purposes. This was mostly to identify employees' performance gaps.

5. The common challenges affecting the effectiveness of the programme were inadequate time allocation for appraisals, poor clarity of assessment criteria, poor cooperation, and poor feedback.

The final objective of the study was to discuss the influence of appraisals on employee performance and the results were that:

1. The majority (85.1%) of employees indicated that performance appraisal of the company helped them to improve their skills.
2. Most (85.2%) appraisees supported the assertion that performance appraisal of Ghana Post Company helped them to improve their understanding of job expectations.
3. The system was also effective in fostering teamwork through good work relations and clarifying the roles of teams for higher performance.
4. Employees were also able to identify their strengths and weaknesses through the performance appraisals.

Conclusions

The appraisal system was guided by well documented and accessible policies. It was characterised by a formal assessment skills and quality of work. This assessment involved both senior and junior workers, and also extended to assessment of social relations at work and personal traits.

The appraisal system was effective in achieving its objectives. The system was effective in providing adequate feedback to staff, and it was also effective in

using the appraisal results for the intended purposes. The effectiveness of the system was constrained by factors including appraisees' perception that the assessment was sometime unfair, and that the appraisal period was too short to allow for an objective judgement of employee performance.

Positive effects of the appraisal system on employee performance were found. This included improving employee skills, helping to identify employee strengths and weaknesses, encouraging good work relations, and resolving misunderstanding on job duties.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn to help improve the appraisal system of the Ghana Post Company Limited. Appraisees are recommended to:

1. Advocate for adequate involvement of junior staff in the setting of objectives of appraisals. This could help reduce friction between appraisal objectives and employee expectation and also assist in improving progress towards achieving the objectives of the appraisals.
2. Advocate for effective resolution of challenges including time constraints, clarifying the assessment criteria to employees to control the notion that assessments are not fair in some cases, and providing adequate cooperation to staff during appraisals.

Appraisers are advised to:

1. Collaborate with appraisees in order to complete the form as required and within a time period that can enhance an effective review of performance. Better collaboration can help overcome delays and lackadaisical attitudes in filling appraisal forms and also motivate appraisees to get involved in the appraisal process.
2. Reinforce positive results and effects of appraisals on employee performance. This include reinforcing appraisals to foster good work relations, foster good teamwork and cooperation, and identifying and communicating employees' strengths and weaknesses to them.

Suggestions for further research

The study can be broadened to involve other branches of the company in order to get a more holistic understanding of the company's appraisal system. It can also be extended to other organisations other than Ghana Post Company in order to inform those firms of the effectiveness of their appraisal systems.

REFERENCES

- Abadzi, H. (2006). *Efficient learning for the poor*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Agyenim-Boateng, E. O. (2006). *An exploration into the management of performance appraisal systems: The case of Ghanaian Public Sector Universities*. An unpublished PhD thesis submitted to the University of Bradford, UK
- Agyenim-Boateng, E. O. (2011). Problems associated with the management of performance appraisals in University: The case of Ghanaian public sector universities. *Journal of Educational Management*, 5, 134-152.
- Anderson, G. C. (1993). *Managing performance appraisal system*. *Human resource management in action*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Archer North & Associates. (2011) *Performance appraisal: Common mistakes*. Retrieved on January 12, 2012 from <http://www.performance-appraisal.com/mistakes.htm>
- Armstrong, M. (2000). *A handbook of human resource management practice* (7th ed.). London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Armstrong, M. (2003). *A handbook of human resource management practice*. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *A handbook of human resource management practice* (10th ed.). London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Arnold, M. L. (2003). *Appraising staff performances: 360 degree's and beyond*. Paper presented at the American Camping Association Conference, Syracuse, New York.

- Atta-Fynn, E. (2001). *Improving performance of nursing tutors at the Nursing Training College – Korle Bu, through the use of appraisal system*. Cape Coast: UCC publishing house.
- Baker, J. (1988). *Causes of failure in performance appraisal and supervision, a guide to analysis and evaluation for human resource professional*. New York: Quorum Books.
- Bohlander, G., & Snell, S. (1999). *Managing human resource*. New York: Milkovich & Newman
- Bohlander, G & Snell, S. (2001). *Managing human resources*. USA: South-Western College Publishing Company.
- Bohlander, G., Snell, S., & Sherman, A. (2001). *Managing human resources* (12th edition). New York: South-Western College Publishing.
- Boswell, W. R., Olson-Buchanan, J. B., & LePine, M. A. (2004). Relations between stress and work outcomes: The role of felt challenge, job control, and psychological strain. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 64, 165–181.
- Boyd, N. M. (2008). *Encyclopedia of public administration and public policy* (2nd ed.). Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from <http://www.crcnetbase.com/doi/abs/10.1201/NOE1420052756.ch2>
- Bratton, J., & Gold, J. (1999). *Human resource management: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Avon: Bath Press.
- Breadwell, I., & Holden, L. (1995). *Human resource management: A contemporary perspective* London: Pitman Publishing.

- Byars, L.L., & Rue, L.W. (2001). *Human resource management (6th edition)*. Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill.
- Byars, L. L., & Rue, L. W. (2004). *Human resource management (7th edition)*. New York: McGraw Hill/Irwin.
- Carrell, M. R, Elbert, N. F., & Hatfield, R. D. (2000). *Human resource management: Strategies for managing a diverse and global workforce (6th edition)* USA: Dryden Press.
- Chatterjee, B. (1999). *Human resource management: A contemporary text*. London: Sterling Publishers Private limited.
- Coates, G. (1994). Performance appraisal as icon: Oscar-winning performance or dressing to impress? *International Journal of Human Resource Managment*, 5(1), 167-192.
- Cole, G. A. (1993). *Management; theory and practice (3rd ed.)*. London: DP publications limited.
- Cole, G. A. (2001). *Management theory and practice (6th ed.)*. London: TJ International.
- Cole, G. A. (2002). *Personnel and human resource management*. London: Biddles limited.
- Coleman, M. (2002). For every action there is an opposite and yet equal reaction. *The Society for Human Resource Management*, 5(4),12-13.

- Coleman, T., & Chambers, T. (2005). Serono case study: Global performance, evaluations and compensation. *Compensation and Benefits Review*, 37, 61-65.
- Cowling, A., & Lundy, O. (1996). *Strategic human resources management*. Australia: Thomson.
- Dawra, S. (2001). *Human resource development and personnel management* (1st ed.). New Delhi: Rudha Publications.
- Dellinger, A. B., & Leech, N. L. (2007). Toward a unified validation framework in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(4), 309-332.
- Dessler, D. (1988) *Personnel management* (4th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall International.
- Dessler, G. (2000). *Human resource management* (8th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Dessler, G. (2002). *Human resource management* (9th ed.). New York: Prentice Hall International.
- Figari, G. (1994). Evaluation of quality aspects of vocational training programmes. *European Center for Development and Vocational Training*, 18, 2-8.
- Fletcher, C. (2001). Performance appraisal and management: The developing research agenda. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology* 74(4), 473–487.

- Fletcher, C., & William, R. (1985). *Personnel appraisal and career development*. London: Hutchinson.
- Fullard, F. (2006). A model to evaluate effectiveness of enterprise training programmes. *International Entrepreneurship Management Journal*, 3, 263– 276.
- Garavan, T. N. (1997). 360 degree feedback: Its role in employee development. *Journal of Management Development*, 16(2), 12 - 19.
- Ghana Post Company Limited. (2000). *Performance development system: A new paradigm*. Accra: Ghana.
- Goddard, W., & Melville, S. (2004). *Research methodology: An introduction*. Lansdowne: Juta and Company Ltd.
- Groeschl, S. (2003). Cultural implications for the appraisal process. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 10(1), 67 -79.
- Halachmi, A. (2002). Performance measurement and government productivity. *Work Study*, 51(2), 63 – 73.
- Holszchu,, M, A . (2000). *Complete employee handbook (1st edition)*. Rhode Island: Moyer Bell.
- Hoyle, A. R. (2006). Evaluation of training: A review of literature. *Public Administration Development*, 4, 275–282.
- Industrial Research Institute. (2010). *Research management*. Michigan: Industrial Research Institute.

- Ivancevich, J. M. (1998). *Principles of human resource management*. London: Routledge.
- Jing, R. C., Cheng, C. H., & Chen, L. S. (2007). A fuzzy-based military officer performance appraisal system. *Applied Soft Computing*, 7(3), 936-945.
- Jones, I. (2008). *The human factor: Inside the CIA's dysfunctional intelligence culture*. New York: Encounter Books.
- Jones, G.R., George, J.M., & Hill, C.W.L. (2000). *Contemporary management*. New York: Irwin and McGraw Hill.
- Kolmogorov, A. (1933). *Foundations of the theory of probability*. Berlin: Julius Springer.
- Langdon, J. C., & Gilliland, S. W. (1998). Creating performance management systems that promote perceptions of fairness. In J. W. Smither (Ed.), *Performance appraisals: A state of the art in practice* (pp. 209–243). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lawrie, J. (1990). Prepare for a performance appraisal. *Personnel Journal*, 69,132-136.
- Lohman, M. C. (2005). A survey of factors influencing the engagement of two professional groups in informal workplace learning activities. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 16(4), 501-527.
- Lombardi, D. N. (2001). *Handbook for the new health care manager* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey – Bass.
- Lombardi, V. (2001). *What it takes to be number one*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Louw, J. (2012). Programme evaluation: Can it improve human resource management practice? *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(3), 428.
- Martinez, L. M. (2003). Trade union responses to *human resource* management: Bringing the politics of the workplace back into the debate. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 9(1), 61-78.
- Massey, O. T. (1996). *Evaluating human resource development programs: A practical guide for public agencies*. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon.
- Mishra, R. K. (2003). *Management development and training: The Indian experience*. Paper presented in IASIA Conference on Public Administration: Challenges of Inequality and Exclusion, Miami, USA.
- Moon, C., Lee, J., Jeong, C., Lee, J., Park, S., & Lim, S. (2007). *An implementation case for the performance appraisal and promotion ranking*. Paper presented at the IEEE International Conference on System, Man and Cybernetics, October 7-10, Montreal - Canada.
- Noe, R. A. (2005). *Employee training and development* (3rd ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Owusu, K. (2000). *An evaluation of the employee performance appraisal of Ghana ports and harbour authority*. Accra: University of Ghana Press.
- Phillips, J. J. (1997). A rational approach to evaluating training programs including calculating ROI. *Journal of Lending and Credit Risk Management*, 79, 43-50.

- Potter, C. (2006). Psychology and the art of program evaluation. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 36(1), 82.
- Raymond , A. (1996). *Management of organisations*. New York: Irwin McGraw – Hill.
- Redman, T., & Mathews, B. P. (1995). Do corporate turkeys vote for Christmas? Managers' attitudes towards upward appraisal. *Personnel Review*, 24(7), 13–24.
- Rossi, P., Lipsey, M.W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rudman, R. (2003). *Employee performance appraisal planning and review: Making employee appraisals work*. Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin.
- Ryan, K., & Cousins, B. (2009). *Sage international handbook of educational evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sayers, G. (1999). *Industrial relations in Britain: Past trends and future developments*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Schraeder, M. Becton, J., & Portis, R. (2007). A critical examination of performance appraisals. *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, 20-25.
- Simmons, J. (2002). An expert witness perspective on performance appraisal in universities and colleges. *Employee Relations*, 24(1), 86 – 100.
- Simmons, B. A., & Martin, L. L. (2002). *International organizations and institutions: Handbook of international relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Singer, M.G. (1990). *Human resource management*. Boston, Massachusetts: KENT Publications Company.
- Spencer, J. D. (2004). Fundamentals of staff development. In N. Bhindi & C. Davies (Eds.), *Fundamentals of staff development resource book* (pp. 21-33). Armindale: University of New England.
- Steel, L., & Broady-Preston, J. (2002). Employees, customers, and internal marketing strategies in LIS. *Library Management*, 23, 384-393.
- Stone, R. J. (2000). *Human resource management* (3rd edition). John Wiley & Sons: Brisbane.
- Stufflebeam, D., & Shinkfield, A. (2007). *Evaluation theory, models & applications*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Swist, J. (2002). *Conducting a training needs assessment*. Retrieved on July 19, 2011, from <http://amxi.com/amxmi3O.htm>
- Tamkin, P., & Yarnall, J. (2002). *Kirkpatrick and beyond: A review of models of training evaluation*. Brighton: Institute of Employment Studies.
- Taylor, P. (2003). *How to design a training course*. London: Continuum.
- Terrence, H. M., & Joyce, M. (2004). *Performance appraisals*. Paper prepared for the ABA Labour and Employment Law Section under Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, San Fransico.
- Torrington, D. & Hall, L (1998). *Human resource management* (4th ed.) London: Prentice Hall.

- U.S Office of Personnel Management. (1999). *Strategic human resources management: Aligning with the mission*. Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from <http://www.opm.gov/studies/alignnet.pdf>
- Vicky, G. (2002). *Performance appraisals in loss control services*. Texas: Texas Association of Counties.
- Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York: John Wiley.
- Werner, J. M., & Desimone, R. L. (2006). *Human resource development* (5th edition). New York: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Wexley, K. N., & Latham, G. P. (2002). *Developing and training human resources in organisations* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Wiese, J., & Buckley, F. (1998). The evaluation of the performance appraisal process. *Journal of Management History*, 4(3), 3-17.
- Winston, R. B., Jr., & Creamer, D. G. (1999). The performance appraisal paradox: An essential but neglected student affairs staffing function. *NASPA Journal*, 36(4), 248-63.
- Wright, P. M., Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., & Gerhart, B. (2004). *Human resource management*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Yee, C. C., & Chen, Y. Y. (2009). Performance appraisal system using multifactorial evaluation model. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 53, 231-236.

APPENDIX 1:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE APPRAISED

This questionnaire has been designed to collect data to aid the researcher undertake a study on performance appraisal of employees of Ghana Post Company Limited in the Tamale Metropolis. It is purely an academic exercise and as such you are assured of utmost confidentiality in the responses that you provide.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Department
 - a. HRM
 - b. Security
 - c. Postal
 - d. Audit
 - e. EMS
 - f. Accounts
 - g. Marketing
 - h. Transport
 - i. Any other, specify.
2. Category of staff
 - a. Senior
 - b. Junior
3. Sex
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
4. Age
5. Number of years served
 - a. 1-5 years []
 - b. 6-10 years []
 - c. 11-15 []
 - d. 16-20 []
 - e. 21-25 []
 - f. 26-30 []
 - g. 30years and above []
6. Level of Education
 - a. Middle School/JHS
 - b. Secondary/SHS
 - c. Diploma/HND
 - d. First Degree
 - e. None
 - f. Others (Please Specify)

SECTION B: NATURE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL IN GHANA POST COMPANY

In the continuum of strongly agree to strongly disagreed, where Undecided = 0; Strongly agree =1; Agree =2; Disagree = 3; and Strongly disagree = 4. Please indicate the level of your agreement or otherwise with each of the statement

Statement	Agreement Level				
	0	1	2	3	4
7. Performance appraisal is regularly practiced in the company.					
8. Performance appraisal is practiced in my department.					

9. I am involved in setting goals and objectives of appraisals					
10. Performance appraisal is guided by documented policies					
11. I have access to and understand performance appraisal policies					
12. Performance appraisal systems are in agreement with organizational standards					
13. There is always an induction to appraisal objectives before the appraisal					
14. I know what is expected of me during appraisals					
15. Appraisals focus mainly on performance					
16. Appraisees always get feedback on their performance					

17. Who evaluates your performance? Tick all that apply. a. Immediate boss b. Peers c. Subordinates d. Self e. Other, specify
18. Which of the following describes the appraisal of your performance? Tick all that apply. a. Skills assessment b. Assessment of personal traits c. Assessment of social relations d. Based on the quantity and quality of work e. Formal f. Informal g. Other, specify
19. How is the appraisal conducted in your department?
- a) The director/boss of my department does the assessment and asks me to consent to it by signing a portion on the form []
- b) I fill the first part of the form and give it to the Director who treats the rest as confidential []
- c) My director/boss conducts an interview session with me as he fills the form []
- d) I do not see the appraisal form []
- e) I do not see what my director/boss writes, I only sign a portion on the form []
- f) I am appraised orally []
- g) Other (Please specify)
20. At what time of the year are targets set for you?
- a. Beginning b. Mid year c. End of year
21. At what time of the year is your performance being assessed?
- a. Beginning b. Mid year c. End of year
22. How frequent are appraisals conducted in your department?
- a. Daily b. Monthly c. Annually d. Quarterly e. Bi-annually
23. Do you know what your head of department/Director expects from you in relation to your work?
- a) Yes [] b) No []

24. How did you get to know what your head of department/Director expects from you in relation to your work? (Tick all that apply)
- a) Reviews job description and duties []
 - b) Sets clearly defined and measurable goals []
 - c) Discuss expected performance behaviour outcomes []
 - d) Discuss expected results to be held accountable for []
 - e) Other (Please specify)
25. Do you receive any performance feedback after your performance appraisal sessions?
- a) Yes []
 - b) No []
26. If yes, who normally provide you with the performance feedback?

C: EFFECTIVENESS OF APPRAISAL

27. Have you received any training on how performance appraisal is conducted? a. Yes b. No
28. If yes who trained you?
- a. Immediate supervisor
 - b. GM/HRM
 - c. A consultant
 - d. Regional Admin. Manager
 - e. Regional Head
 - f. Any other (specify)
29. How often do you receive training on P.A? a. Once a year [] b. Twice a year [] c. Thrice a year [] Others, Please specify []
30. Do understand the current PA scheme? a. Yes b. No
31. If no, what could be the cause?
- a. Because I was not trained on how it operates
 - b. It is too cumbersome
 - c. It requires too much of recordings
 - d. The targets are not easy to set
 - e. Others (specify)
32. Do you in designing the appraisal scheme include individual requirements of the jobs as well as particular talents and skills of the one who is currently at post? Yes [] Not sure [] No []
33. How serious is the appraisal scheme considered in Ghana Post?
- a. Very serious
 - b. Serious
 - c. Slightly serious
 - d. Not serious

In the continuum of strongly agree to strongly disagreed, where Undecided = 0; Strongly agree =1; Agree =2; Disagree = 3; and Strongly disagree = 4. Please indicate the level of your agreement or otherwise with each of the statement

Statement	Agreement Level				
	0	1	2	3	4
34. I often have to remind my boss before he/she completes my appraisal form					
35. Objectives of appraisal are always met					
36. Expectations are always met					
37. Appraisees are adequately prepared for the appraisal process					
38. Appraisers are adequately prepared for the appraisal process					
39. Appraisers have adequate knowledge of appraisal objectives					
40. Appraisers are fair and unbiased					
41. The results of appraisals are always used for the intended purpose					
42. Adequate feedback is always given on employee performance					

43. Performance Appraisal reports meet the deadline of management
- a. Strongly agree b. Agree
c. Undecided d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree
44. If you do not agree to 33 above, what causes the delay?
- a. Because it takes time to complete the form
b. Because the supervisors are always busy
c. The period given to assess and report is too short.
d. Because all staff will have to be assessed before the reports are submitted
45. How adequate are the materials and equipment to for the appraisal programmes?
- a. Adequate []
b. Inadequate []
c. Non available []
d. Others (specify)

46. How co-operative are your immediate supervisors to your suggestions after your appraisal programmes?
- They are co-operative []
 - They are not co-operative []
 - Others (specify)
47. What challenges are you often faced with during appraisals?
48. How can these challenges be resolved?

D: INFLUENCE OF APPRAISALS ON STAFF PERFORMANCE

In the continuum of strongly agree to strongly disagreed, where Undecided = 0; Strongly agree =1; Agree =2; Disagree = 3; and Strongly disagree = 4. Please indicate the level of your agreement or otherwise with each of the statement

Statement	Agreement Level				
	0	1	2	3	4
49. Appraisals have helped improve my skills and knowledge needed for my job					
50. Appraisals have helped me understand my job expectations better					
51. Appraisals have helped reinforce organizational culture and philosophies					
52. Appraisals have made the roles of employees in teams clearer					
53. Appraisals have helped resolve misunderstanding on performance and job duties					
54. Appraisals have helped justify personal and organizational succession plans					
55. Appraisals have helped in the identification of employee training needs					
56. Appraisals have helped improve organizational performance					
57. Appraisals have helped foster teamwork					
58. Appraisals have helped encourage good work-relations					
59. Appraisals have helped you to identify my strengths and weaknesses					

60. Appraisals have served as a motivational tool to sustain job interest					
61. Appraisals have reinforced/clarified appraise manager mutual understanding and relationship					
62. Overall, appraisals have helped improve employee performance					

Thank you

APPENDIX 2:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR APPRAISERS

This questionnaire has been designed to collect data to aid the researcher undertake a study on performance appraisal of employees of Ghana Post Company Limited in the Tamale Metropolis. It is purely an academic exercise and as such you are assured of utmost confidentiality in the responses that you provide.

1. Describe briefly, the processes involved in the appraisal system
2. Describe the methods of appraisals adopted by the system
3. Describe the feedback processes of the system
4. Describe the challenges involved in the programme