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**PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM IN A GARMENT MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISE, TIRUPUR**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Performance appraisal has increasingly become part of a more strategic approach to integrating HR activities and business policies and may now be seen as a generic term covering a variety of activities through which organizations seek to assess employees and develop their competence, enhance performance and distribute rewards. The present study was carried out to evaluate whether performance appraisal is effectively implemented in a garments manufacturing enterprise in Tirupur of Tamilnadu. The study relies on information available at the study organization and through discussion among key personnel of performance appraisal system. The research reveals that the study organization is performing well in certain areas of performance appraisal system such as creating individual goal, training to evaluators/superiors, opportunity for self review and individual development. However, the study organization seems to be weak in certain aspects like no uniform evaluation, bias in appraisal, lack of proper orientation, tying performance appraisal with salary and promotion. Based on the findings, the paper has suggested measures to improvise the performance appraisal system of the study organization.*

**KEYWORDS**

Human Resource, Performance Appraisal.

**INTRODUCTION**

There is a great degree of awareness taking place in the management world about the potential use of performance appraisal. It can play crucial role in developing capabilities, creating an open culture, strengthening the superior-subordinate relationship, developing process skills and paving the way for recognizing the usage. The role of performance appraisal in managerial and organizational effectiveness is being recognized. In India, appraisal systems are beginning to be recognized as an equally potential tool for development. In the future, there is likely to be more and more experimentations with new appraisal systems that contribute towards improving in quality of work life as well as to the development of human resource. This subject has wide aspects because of its multi-complex and unique variables which warrants more exploration. A review of literature shows that the studies on performance appraisal with reference to medium scale unit and garment industry are rather scanty. Towards this end, the present study is carried out.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The performance appraisal is a technique that has been credited with improving performance (Bagozzi, 1980) and building both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is a subject of research for over 70 years (Landy and Farr, 1980). Performance appraisal is potentially one way in which those efforts can be aligned with the aims of an organization, employees can be motivated and their performance managed. Success of an organization largely depends on how effectively employees perform their jobs (Heneman 111 and Schwab, 1982). Employee PA monitors how far and how well employees perform their jobs. PA identifies, measures and develops job performance of employees in an organization and therefore it is a planning technique of employee performance and a controlling technique of employee performance as well). Uday Pareek and Rao (1998) reviewed performance appraisal system at L & T in detail in 1997 in the view of introduction of total quality management in the company. It continues to identify developmental needs and to design training programmes. The objective setting is more focused on the process to achieve results. Job rotation, customer satisfaction and continuous improvements have also been incorporated in the system to devote it to the TQM Philosophy of the company. Performance appraisal is among the most important human resource (HR) practices (Boswell and Boudreau, 2002). Venkataramana Rao (2005) carried out a study in the hi-tech public sector unit. The study covers 50 executives about the existing performance appraisal system. The study revealed that the team of high-spirited, enthusiastic, competent personnel is to be identified through the proper assessment of individual; a good performance appraisal system will highlight the performance level of the individual and his potential for advancement; to obtain the high-spirited competitive individuals, they should know their current level of performance, the area of drawbacks where they need to be trained and should be motivated and groomed to the needs of the company. Recently, scholars have begun to argue that employee emotions and perceptions are important in determining the efficacy of performance appraisal systems.

**IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study covers performance appraisal system followed in a garment manufacturing unit. The findings of the study would help the study unit to revisit its policy with regard to the performance appraisal of its employees. The findings of the study may also be useful to similar organizations working in similar set up. It would also add to the existing knowledge in the field of performance appraisal in management discipline.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are to understand the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) followed in the organization and to examine the strengths and weaknesses of existing Performance Appraisal and suggest modifications/measures if any.

**METHODOLOGY**

The present study is based on primary data collected on selected aspects of "Performance Appraisal System" from the employees of the garments unit selected for the study. The study is based on the secondary information available in the organization and interviews held with personnel in charge of performance appraisal in the organization. The unit selected for the present study is situated in Tirupur of Tamilnadu state which manufactures knit wear. This unit was purposely selected for the study because it has been in the garment industry since 1991 producing and exporting quality garments. The unit is medium in size and considered as representative of most units in Tirupur. At present it employs 350 workers of both gender (Male 224 and Female 126). The employees are grouped into four grades, viz., Grade A, Grade B, Grade C, Grade D. Grade A employees include Managers, Grade B employees includes Accountant and Human Resource Assistance, Grade C employees are Clerk and Junior Merchandiser and Grade D employees includes Tailor, Store Keeper and Store Helper. The field study was conducted during 2010. So, the data collected for the present study represent the conditions prevailed during the period.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL (PA) PRACTICES IN THE STUDY ORGANIZATION**

The study organization evaluates the worker's performance each and every year. The objectives of Performance Appraisal are

- To help in the development of employee;
- To determine training and development needs;
- To review performance for the purpose of revising salary.

Following is the description of performance appraisal process followed in the organization.

- a) Resource Planning and preparing documents/ records

**ORGANIZATION LEVEL**

- Brief evaluation of organization
- Synopsis of nature of business
- Vision statement
- Mission statement
- Locational strength
- Appraisal policies and process of the organization

**PARTICIPANT LEVEL**

- Profile of the participant
- Job description and major key result areas
- Educational qualification/ experience
- Salary structure
- Brief history of performance
- Strengths and weaknesses as evaluated by the company
- Team strength
- Group discussion with the participants

**MANAGEMENT LEVEL**

- Profile of Top management
  - Functional responsibilities
  - Synopsis on experience
- b) Conducting one to one discussion with the participants related to their key result areas, their career plans and goals, attitude towards the company and its working etc.,
  - c) An employee information form is given to the participants in which they are asked to fill their present job profile, interest in other field also. They are asked to rate their own strengths and weaknesses.
  - d) Conducting written test on performance which is followed by Group Discussion / Presentation and Interview.
  - e) Discussing results with the management as well as participants.

The written test in performance appraisal in the study organization is basically designed with the following 4 groups.

Group A: This is divided into 2 parts related to job and work description and awareness on the organization and its products.

Group B: This is divided into 3 parts- first part relates to logical reasoning and mathematical ability. Second part is related to English language and general awareness. Third part is related to behavioural competency.

Group C: This comprises of questions related to stress management, role plays, team-building etc.

Group D: Presentation/ GD / Interview

The organization uses two techniques to evaluate the employee's performance, viz., Self review and Superior review

Self Review: The questionnaire administered (among the employees) provides for every employee to review his/her own strengths and weaknesses.

Superior Review: Superiors review the subordinates, directly based on their observations.

**ANALYSIS OF PAS IN THE STUDY UNIT**

In this section, the PAS followed by the organization of each grade employees is analysed in detail. The table provides details with regard to the techniques, purpose and result of PA relating to respective grades.

**TABLE 1: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM IN THE STUDY ORGANIZATION**

Grade	Tools and Techniques	Purpose	Result
A	Grading Method Management by Objectives (MBO)	Evaluating the personnel's strength and weakness Setting individual Goal and Improving the individual performance	Strengths are known to the organization. Helps to reduce weakness by taking measures
B	Grading Method Critical Incident Method	Evaluating the personnel's strength and weakness Promotion, Training Increase the Salary	Identify Individual traits Career Development and Promotion become easier
C	Grading Method Confidential Report Method	Evaluating the personnel's strength and weakness Training, Increase the Salary	Improvement in 2007 appraisal as compared to 2006 appraisal
D	Grading Method Confidential Report Method	Evaluating the personnel's strength and weakness Training Increase the Salary	Improvement in 2010 appraisal as compared to 2009 appraisal

Grade A: For Grade A employees the techniques, grading method and MBO are used. The purpose is to evaluate individual strength and weakness and to create individual goals and improve individual performance. The purpose has, to some extent, served in the organization. It has helped to ascertain their employee's strengths and to take measures to reduce their weaknesses.

Grade B: Grading method and critical incident method are used. The purposes are reasonably served.

Grade C: Grading method and confidential report method are used. Improvements are found in 2010 PA as compared to 2009 performance appraisal.



Grade D: The same methods and same purpose and same results as in the case of Grade C are applicable to Grade D too.

#### PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM OF THE STUDY ORGANIZATION: A SUM UP OF EVALUATION

##### STRENGTHS

- ✓ Creating Individual goal by motivating the workers;
- ✓ Creating leadership quality;
- ✓ Training is provided to the superior to evaluate the performance of employee; and,
- ✓ Evaluating strengths and weaknesses of all the employees.

##### WEAKNESSES

- Evaluation procedure is not uniform across various groups of employees
- Appraising of the workers by the superior may go wrong some times due to subjectivity which may affect the employee's promotion and salary; and
- No proper orientation on performance appraisal to employees
- Most of the low grade workers do not understand and use of PAS to improve their performance

##### CONCLUSION

The study reveals through evaluation that there are certain strengths in the performance appraisal system in the study organization such as creating individual goal, leadership quality, training given to evaluators/ superiors and opportunity to analyze strengths and weaknesses. But there are certain weaknesses in the system like, no uniform evaluation, bias in appraisal by superiors and no proper orientation on PA to employees. Another weakness identified is with regard to tools and techniques used. The organization uses grading method to all grades, (A,B,C and D); Along with this, it adopts MBO to A Grade only, critical incident method to B grade only, and confidential report method to 'C' and 'D' grade. These weaknesses call for looking back into its PAS of the organization and taking initiatives of orientation to workers, bringing uniformity in evaluation and inclusion of more and advanced techniques like 360 Degree feedback and Assessment Center and Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS in the PAS).

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