

## ENHANCING NIGERIAN TEACHERS' PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH EFFECTIVE PERSONNEL APPRAISAL SYSTEM

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### **Abstract**

*This paper discusses the issue of personnel appraisal technique as a means of attaining effective teachers' productivity in Nigerian secondary schools. The concept of personnel appraisal, types of personnel appraisal, and processes of personnel appraisal and importance of personnel appraisal to productivity are explained. Some shortcomings of the traditional appraisal system called Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER) are highlighted. The paper recommends possible ways in which the personnel appraisal system/methods can enhance teacher's productivity, which includes the introduction of 360 degree appraisal system. A template of 360 degree appraisal form was also designed to suit school situation and involvement of the appraisers in the process of the development of appraisal form was also recommended.*

### **Introduction**

The concept of productivity of teachers involves the interplay of various elements in the workplace in the school while the inputs may be related to miscellaneous resources (labour, materials, and capital). The output is the outcome of the whole process in terms of student's achievement. The issue of productivity and how to raise the level of productivity of the citizen of a country and particularly labour is important and should be of utmost concern to employers of labour both in the public and private sectors of the economy. No wonder every organization both in public and private sectors of employment focuses attention in productivity, and the add and drop syndrome in banks (sack the high employ the young ones) may be an attempt to increase productivity of the banking sector.

Therefore it is now very important for all employers to have a way of measuring the productivity of the employees. Although, education sector happened to be the highest employer of labour in Nigeria, a sector of the economy where government is allocating a huge budget yearly needs to be thoroughly appraised.

There are three categories of personnel that determine educational achievement; these are the teachers, the learners and the educational administrators. Of all these three, teachers appear to be the chief determinant of educational attainment. It was based on this that the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education stated that "no quality of education can rise above the quality of the teacher". P.39

In Nigeria, the concern for improving quality of work life does not appear to be widespread, especially in the teaching profession. This has resulted in poor performance of students in external examinations. This situation has often been the core of the frequent teachers' strike actions that occur in all tiers of education, from primary to secondary and even at the tertiary levels. It is not uncommon to read about low salaries, irregular promotions and non-payment of some benefits as part of the reasons while these lecturers go on strike.

Promotion is one of the ways of motivating workers. A promoted teacher will have one level of his needs being met. Other researchers such as Nwachukwu (1998) have revealed that workers can only put in their best if their needs are satisfied. Promotion is one of the ways whereby employer can create good-will and enthusiasm among employees to free them from worries that might interfere with their efforts on the job and make the work enjoyable.

To achieve a high productivity, all efforts must be made to ensure that the teachers are secured, retained and developed. These can only be achieved through an effective personnel management practice. According to Cole (1996), personnel management practices include human resources planning, recruitment, selection, socialization, training and development, staff appraisal, compensation and staff welfare.

### **Productivity**

Generally, productivity to any sector would mean increase in output. In the education sector especially for teachers productivity, one would mean better performance from teachers leading to school leavers or graduates who are morally, spiritually, physically and mentally able to fit into the society as well as the labour market (Babalola, 2009). Many Nigerians are anxious about the low level of productivity in all sectors. (FRN, 2004). It has been a major concern in the education sector, Knowledge Encyclopaedia according to Babalola (2009) identifies factors affecting productivity as

- efficiency of management and workforce
- hours worked
- investment level
- degree of industrialization.

Human capital theory believed that good education can raise productivity. Human capital such as personal ability, formal and informal education and training, research and experience, etc. while Combs (2002) believes that labour can be more productive if there is increase in physical capital such as equipment, infrastructures, structures, human capital such as health and skills of human beings and knowledge capital such as stock of accumulated knowledge, research and experience.

From Sweetman's assertion quoted by Babalola (2009) that the difference between the productivity of the past and present generation of workers is attributable to the difference in academic achievement which produces high skills and in recent times high technology.

In order to have productive worker, Babalola (2009) has suggested that Nigerian education should be conscious about productivity in terms of administration, admission, instruction, examination, supervision and graduation. Labour force has a way of sieving potential workers in such a way that those with high ability will eventually enter the high productivity sector of the economy. Qualitative education is capable of screening low-ability people from high-academic achievement. The usefulness of education and training in developing productive worker cannot be over-emphasised.

### **What is Personnel Appraisal?**

Personnel appraisal is one of the personnel management practices. All organizations, whether big or small have set goals to achieve. To do this, both the human material and financial resources in the organization are used to achieve the set goal. It is also clear that each employee in the organization pursue the set goal at different pace. Therefore, there is always the need to evaluate individuals in terms of their performance.

According to Abiri (2006), evaluation is the act, process or outcome of assessing or appraising something and expressing an opinion on its quality, quantity or worth. The outcome of such appraisal or judgment is usually expressed in various degrees of such a qualitative terms as big or small, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, useful or useless, etc.

Personnel appraisal is therefore defined as the process by which personnel are assessed by employers for efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of the assigned role in order to achieve the goals of the enterprises (Peretomade, 1991). It is a way of ascertaining that workers are properly utilized by managers in achieving the corporate

objectives. Oyedeji (1998) described evaluation as the effective assessment of activities of individual in the organization, most cases subordinate. In the same vein, Ivancevich and Glueck (1983) who are human resources managers said that evaluation of personnel or personnel auditing is a systematic formal experience designed to measure the cost and benefits of the total personnel programme and to compare its efficiency and effectiveness with the organizational past performance.

However, for an employer to promote an employee there must be a means of productivity measurement that will allow for proper assessment of employees contribution to the attainment of organizational goals. This is done through personnel appraisal.

### **Types of Personnel Appraisal**

According to Cole (1999), there are two categories of personnel appraisal, namely informal and formal. Informal appraisal means a process of providing feedback to the employees continually so as to enable the employees know how well they are performing their job. It is a daily or weekly assessment of the employee. It is an excellent way to encourage desirable performance and discourage undesirable performance in the employee. Informal appraisal is an ad hoc one and it can be determined by intuitive feelings.

Formal Appraisal is an assessment of employees performance in a systematic and planned order. It is more rational and orderly than informal appraisal. It is not as frequent as informal appraisal. It occurs either quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

### **Importance of Personnel Appraisal to Teachers' Productivity**

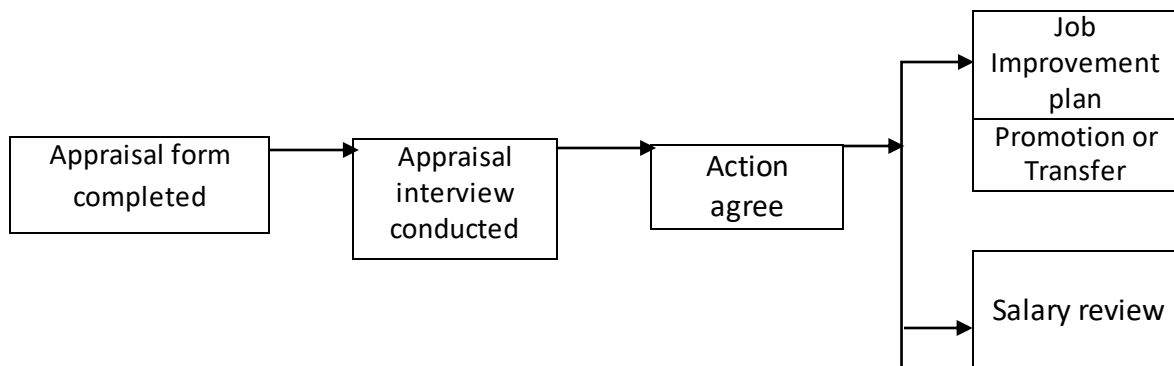
For any economy to develop, there has to be ways of measuring workers' performance. According to Cole (1999), reasons for carrying out staff appraisal include:

1. To boost the performance of the teachers.
2. Take decisions on teacher's promotion, transfer, salary increment, dismissal, etc.
3. To provide feedback for the nation on the state of the educational goals (schools) achievement.
4. To identify teachers current level of job performance.
5. To identify teachers' strength and weakness.
6. To motivate individual teachers.
7. To identify training and development needs of teachers,
8. To meet the internal and external demands for documentation individual performances
9. To remove barriers to job success.
10. To assess past performance and develop future work.

### Process of Personnel Appraisal

In all organizations, the process of personnel performance appraisal used to commence by completion of an appraisal form, after which an interview will be organized between the employer and the officer being reported on. In the course of interview, both the boss and the subordinate will reach an agreement on the employee's job description and level of performance. It is the result of this interview that will generate actions to be taken, either the job improvement plan for future, promotion to high level of operation or transfer or salary review. This process is illustrated by Cole (1999) in the diagram below:

#### The Appraisal Process



**Source:** Adopted from Cole (1999), Personnel Management (4 ed)

### Measurement of Staff Performance

There is no standard way of measuring staff performance. Each organization determines what method(s) of staff auditing to be adopted. This is because organizational and personal values vary and that is why each organization must design its own form of appraisal.

To appraise employee is not easy. There is the need to gather information about the appraisee, verify the information gathered before taking a decision, analyzing the information, interpreting the information collected and give a feedback of the employee to the appropriate quarter.

At the tertiary level of education, it is easier because academic staff promotion is based on the quantity and the quality of their published research work, which gave birth to the slogan "Publish or Perish". But it is not so with teachers in primary and secondary levels of education. Their promotion is automatic. Once a staff has stayed for the normal time on a level, which is three years, after which everybody is moved automatically too the next rank.

Although there is routine filling of the Annual Performance Evaluation Report form by the teachers that the head of department or the principal would naturally rate highly for productivity, this is without due consideration for hard work. In order to make staff performance appraisal effective and efficient, the appraiser should bear the following in mind, before commencing the appraisal process.

- (i) The purpose of the appraisal (achievement/goals).
- (ii) The person to appraise (Ability).
- (iii) The environment for appraisal (available resources).

Whatever method adopted, a standard form is needed where the superior officer will rank certain qualities of the subordinate.

According to Cole (1999), there are key elements that appraisal form must contain in order to make it effective to attain the set goals in education.

These are:

- (i) The focus of the appraisal i.e. job of the person.
- (ii) The performance criteria selected.
- (iii) The performance ratings used.

Rotimi (2000) on performance appraisal form noted that an appraisal is not an annual ritual but a continuous process. It is not an end but a means to an end. Rotimi (2000) went further, to enumerate the aims of performance appraisal as to

- Identify areas of good performance.
- Identify performance problems.
- Reveal and bridge competence gap.
- Agree on a plan of action that will lead to improved performance.

Any Appraisal form according to Rotimi, must contain section 1 general information like name of appraisee, department, job title, years on present job, period covered, etc. Section 2 training and development such as training needs, development needs, analysis and suggested training programmes. Section 3 is the overall performance ranging from 90-100 excellent, 80-89 very good, 70-79 as good, and scaled to below 40 as poor. Section 4 and the last are comments by the employee and the appraiser with their signature.

### **Criticisms against Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER)**

The Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER) form that is being used in secondary schools to measure the teachers' productivity was found not to be adequate. Ameen (2000) wrote that to measure the productivity of teachers, a new type of performance appraisal form is needed. This is because most principals/heads of departments are always afraid to be objective about the teachers being reported on. They considered the rating to be too administratively challenging and emotional, while some of the principals used the issue

of appraisal to handle matter of indiscipline, in the sense that a hard working teacher, who is just not in the good book of the head teacher on personal issue may be marked down as a result of this.

The staff appraisal being done by the principal is hurriedly filled. This may hinder an accurate report of the staff by the appraiser since the latter may not have any close associate with the person he is reporting on prior to that day and the first impression, he developed about the teacher will influence the rating, not minding whatever good things he is engaged in.

In the school system just like any other organization, bias and prejudice often accompany the rating of staff for productivity. Such biases may include political, ethnics, quota system, religion, gender discrimination, federal character among others.

Inadequate instrument of personnel appraisal form is also a problem especially in the secondary schools where teachers are used for other jobs apart from teaching. Some are food masters, game masters, house masters, examination masters and some other adhoc jobs that are tasking and time consuming. The present APER form does not have provision for such rating, so as to create additional scores for the teachers involved in any of these jobs.

Another area that is not catered for in the APER form is the issue of higher qualification. This does not encourage self-improvement on the job because teachers in the secondary schools are not being considered for promotion due to additional qualification acquired. Consequently, there is no job motivation whereas motivation is one of the things being achieved with an effective appraisal. So the absence of motivation may affect the productivity of teachers, which may also lead to high rate of teachers' cross carpeting to greener pasture.

However, the measurement of teachers' productivity through the use of APER form was condemned. Inadequacies of these method was confirmed by Olutade (1999) and Salami (1999) when they said that the performance evaluation form does not provide room for proper assessment of teachers. It was supported by Ameen (2000) who maintained that APER form was inadequate to rate teachers both in the main duties and ad hoc duties. Based on this, ft is imperative therefore to evolve a more values which are freely measurable standards rather than the present performance evaluation form that could be used successfully without intuition in the measurement of productivity of teachers.

### **A Model of 360 Degree Personnel Appraisal System**

It is good for each organization to develop a process and materials suitable for their organization. One of the newly designed performance appraisal model is 360 degree appraisal system. 360 degree appraisal is a powerful developmental method that differs from

the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER) form, which is only personality oriented. 360 degree appraisals entail the appraisee receiving feedback from other people apart from the up - line manager. These are people whose views are considered helpful and relevant to the appraisee's evaluation. They could be named or anonymous.

In the case of a school, apart from the principal or head of departments, feedback could be sought from students, laboratory attendants, messengers, cleaner, and typist or anyone who comes into contact with the appraisee and has opinions/views/reactions of and to the appraisees.

A 360 degree appraisal form must contain the following columns:

- **Key/capability column** (e.g. communication, planning, etc.)
- **Skill component/element** column (e.g. active listening)
- **Question number column** (for easy of analysis)
- **Specific feedback questions column** (relating to skill component e.g. does the person listen properly to people when they talk?)
- **Tick box or grade box column** (ideally a,b,c,d).

In the first column, the key skill or capability type, there could be key skills such as communication, planning, reporting, creativity, problem solving and human relation, foresight, ability to penetrate, self-drive, determination are all indices of productivity that could be measured in the skill component/element column, a number of elements ranging from one to six Could be generated per key skill, e.g. under communication as a key skill, skill elements such as listening, speaking, writing could be appraised. The third column which is question number is simply for numbering the questions to be raised, from 1 to any number.

The feedback question is the column, where questions will be raised in relation to the skill element. The question on listening as a skill element could be: does the man take care to listen and understand properly? The feedback score column has been graduated, 1-5 or a,b,c,d, e, etc.

### **Rules guiding the use of 360 Degree Appraisal system**

It must be participatory in making, that is, the development of the system must involve all stakeholders, the administrators, the teachers, the students and other non-academic staff. It must be applicable to the situations of the school. It requires the school to hold workshop to explain some helpful developmental benefits and experiences for all.



**A Model of 360 Degree Appraisal Form**

Appraisee Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Feedback Name \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Keys skills/ Capability	Skill capability element	Question Number	Feedback Questions	Feedback Score			
				A	B	C	D
COMMUNICATION	LISTENING	1	Does he listen carefully to people?				
	SPEAKING	2	Does he make clear contribution?				
	WRITING	3	Does he write legibly?				

Adopted from [www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com) on 30th June, 2009**Effective use of 360 Degree Personnel Appraisal for Teachers' Productivity**

Many methods used in measuring teachers' productivity show lack of understanding of how productivity should be measured. Odunuga and Ajila (2000) said that teachers' productivity have not been taken seriously in our schools, let alone finding an appropriate measuring instrument for it.

In order to make teachers contribute meaningfully to the attainment of educational goals, teachers' performance evaluation must be done effectively. To do this, the following are the suggested qualities that a good personnel appraisal should possess.

- The appraisal must cover all the aspects of teachers operation and attitudinal development that a well performance appraisal form should achieve.
- It must be done properly with clear explanation and agreed by the two parties.

- Appraisal must not discriminate against anyone on the ground of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion and disability.
- There should be good communication in the organization so as to make the whole process of appraisal more natural, quick and easy.
- There should be trust between the appraisee and appraiser.
- The appraiser should be trained in the skills for appraising.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made from this study:

Nigerian education should screen the entrants in such a way that more of those who have high aptitude are allowed to gain admission into higher institutions.

Examinations should be thorough devoid of all forms of examination practices that permit the people with lower aptitude entry into higher institutions.

360 degree personnel appraisal system is recommended as an option of the APER form. This will allow all skills and every aspect of the teacher to be appraised.

### **Conclusion**

It is no gainsaying that teachers are important to any educational achievement. Productive teachers will bring about high students' academic performance. Therefore, to attain any education goal in terms of students' high standard in academics, moral, social, physical achievements, the teachers must be properly appraised and adequately rewarded just like their counterparts in other sectors of the economy.

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