Appraising Annual Job Evaluation for staff of St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Job evaluation in organizations forms part of human resource management and development. It provides favorable conditions for various employee and organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and performance, among others. The study examined the annual job evaluation programs at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem, Ghana, to establish its effect on employees’ satisfaction. The objective of the research was to evaluate the annual job evaluation exercises conducted at St Elizabeth. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers undertook a field survey in order to review existing literature about job evaluation. The researchers adopted a cross-sectional case study design. As a result, they used questionnaires to collect the necessary data to inform the objectives of the study. Qualitative research method was used with positivist philosophy model. The research established that there were positive and negative feelings about the annual job evaluation by workers. The positive aspects of the job evaluation included the titles corresponding to the functions and tasks of the job, aligning specific functions to particular jobs, and proper placement on salary structure, among others. Some of the negative issues noticed were lack of coordination with supervisor and opportunity to utilize one’s skills. The study recommends a more effective job evaluation and assessment for organizational success.

Introduction

The phenomenon of job evaluation and its impact on employees has been highly debated in the global scene Casad, et al. [1,2]. This is because many organizations across the globe have discovered the relevance of having an evaluation of some sort during their long-term plans to have productive employees using the limited resources that organizations have. Job evaluation has been defined as a “system that formally compares the dissimilar jobs and links these to pay” Armstrong [3]. The main benefit of job evaluation is targeted at strategic and long-term reward to both the organization and its employees Armstrong [3]. A study by Casad[1]*suggested that job evaluation holds some potential for solving problems of discrimination. The social orientation perspectives on job evaluation have pointed towards analysis of power relationships within an organization as a way of explaining, one of which is employee job satisfaction*. Although not always true, a job evaluation is considered successful if an improvement in the production of the organization is realized Parker [4]. The challenge in job evaluation however has been that, measures as well as tools used in carrying out job evaluation exercise do not necessarily measure a worker’s productivity.

In a well-structured organization, there is a need to have well defined job descriptions which commensurate proposed salary levels. This according to Hamidifar (2015), ensures that not only are all employees covered in the exercise, but they can be easily identified as to what categories they belong. Hence, one major outcome of job evaluation that affects employee satisfaction is the ranking of jobs and categorization of staff. This normally means that, staff are from the onset, clearly aware of where they rightly belong in the organization and that their duties and functions are well catered for both presently and in the future. With job
description, it helps to ensure that jobs can be well evaluated and possibly assess the performance of staff. Equity theory (Adams & Freedman, 1976) proposes that, people may feel distress if they contribute either larger or smaller shares of their incomes to the public good than the average contribution of others, and that people will behave in a way to avoid this distress. People are motivated by both their pecuniary payoff and their relative payoff standing. Through application of equity theory, managers can examine why and how they should communicate with their employees the value of scientific management and why it is relevant (Blanco et al, 2011). Equity theory also directs managers how they should use communication to address employees’ feelings of unfairness as well as confronting employees’ feelings of inequity in a modern business environment.

In summary, equity theory, therefore, handles the perception of equitability and in-equitability focusing on two sides: the input and the outcome. This then means that an employee compares his or her job’s inputs with an outcome ratio and will act to correct the inequity if there is a perception of inequality. Many times, inequities can lead to an increase in absenteeism and even resignation from an organization (Bell & Martin, 2012). It is against this backdrop that the study intends to assess the annual job evaluation exercise that is conducted for staff at St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem, Ghana.

St Elizabeth Hospital

St Elizabeth Hospital is a secondary level hospital in Hwidiem, a district capital of Asutifi District of Ahafo Region, Ghana. The hospital serves over 56,000 inhabitants of the Asitifi Districts and beyond. It is a Catholic Hospital manage by Our Lady of Apostle (OLA) sisters. The hospital has always been commended by the Ministry of Health for the interventions it is doing in the district and beyond when it comes to healthcare delivery in a rural setting. The hospital also has a unique strategy of attracting health workers. It is imperative to look at some of its human resource practices to advice policy hence, looking at their job evaluation practices and reaction of the staff.

Problem Statement

Job evaluations are meant to determine what positions and job responsibilities are similar for purposes of pay, promotions, lateral moves, transfers, assignments and assigned work among other internal parity issues. However, the problem is when employees perceive the workplace as unfair, inequitable, and that the employer does not give equal opportunities for employees. Employees view job evaluation exercise for determining pay and promotional opportunities as not fair. This has left organizations with employees that are not sure about their future after such exercise. Ahmed [5], Armstrong [3] recommended the need to have all employees understand their true performance and actual rewards if any, so that each of them can do a self-assessment as to whether they were motivated to do well or not. In so doing, the organization and the employees could be almost on the same level of understanding. In this regard, the scholar advised that, care must be taken to guard against biased appraisals that would make an employee appear to be very productive and rightfully rewarded when the opposite might be the truth on the ground. Ahmed [5] had the same conclusion in which the suggestion that employees could be happy without appropriate remunerations was rejected. The study therefore intends to fill these gaps by assessing the means that there are more factors affecting employees’ job satisfaction than just good pay.

It is on this premise that this study assesses the effect of annual job evaluation on the employee in St Elizabeth Hospital Hwidiem.

Research Objectives

The main purpose of the study is to appraise the annual job evaluation exercise on employee job satisfaction at St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate annual job evaluation practices at the hospital.
2. To establish the effect of the job evaluation on employee job satisfaction at hospital.
3. To identify the challenges of annual job evaluation at the hospital.

Research Questions

The research work seeks to find solutions to the following questions:

1. What is the job evaluation practices or programs at St. Elizabeth Hospital?
2. What is the perceived effect of the annual job evaluation on employee job satisfaction at hospital?
3. Are there any challenges on the annual job evaluation at the hospital?

Significance of the Study

First, the study would add to the understanding of job evaluation and how it relates to employee job satisfaction. This would be beneficial to both the private and public organizations. Also, results of the study would set examples on what practices are best suited to the organization in order to help motivate the employees without scaring them relating to job scale-down or reduction in their numbers. Besides, the study provided recommendations that may be used as a policy by the Management of St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem, as well as other stakeholder organizations to improve on equitable remunerations. Besides, the information obtained from the study could be a rich source of critique and enhancement to the knowledge base of studies on job evaluation and employee job satisfaction in the future.
Scope and Limitations of the Study

The concentration of the study is on job evaluation and how it affects employee job performance. The study was conducted at the St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem, Ghana.

Theoretical Framework

In today’s business environment, the application of more contemporary theories of motivation have been brought to light. Theories such as John Stacy Adams’ Equity theory and Victor Vroom’s Expectancy theory have substantial relevance in understanding motivation in today’s complex work environment. It is in this light that the main theories underpinning the study were equity theory and expectancy theory.

Equity Theory of Motivation

First propagated by Adams (1965), equity theory focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners who are the employee and the employer. Equity theory is a process theory concerned with how to motivate people. It is based on the fact that; people always want to see what in what they are doing and seek for good compensation. In other words, no one wants to work for free or even be paid for not working. The theory proposes that individuals who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded will experience distress, and that this distress leads to efforts to restore equity within the relationship. Equity theory focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners. Mawoli and Badandako (2011) point out that, one way of measuring equity is through comparing the ratios of contributions and benefits of each person within the relationship. One of the most talked-of issues in equity theory is measurability in which organizations struggle to put clear policies as to how every aspect of the organizational output can be measured. In other words, there is the need to have several options on measurement of the organization employee output in a manner that would be acceptable from one employee to another in different period of time.

In terms of reward, the equity theory tries to point to many factors that could contribute to acceptability of the kind of rewards given based on the method of measurement applied by the organization (Elma, 2013). To achieve the level of satisfaction that would make an employee motivated to participate fully in the organization activities without supervision, there is always the need to set the environment of the workplace fittingly for each group of employees. Equity theory points out that the various groupings of employees would be more confident if they work in an environment that gives them the freedom to fully express their skills and work with enthusiasm without the feeling of being spied upon by either employee of superior ranks or categories Ahmed [5]. Greenberg and Cohen (2014) question the simplicity of equity theory since many psychological variables that can be attributed to people, cannot be fully factored into any evaluation unless the rights of people are infringed upon. The scholar also adds that equity theory assumes so much mechanical thinking similar to systems theory in which every input can be fully measured against an equivalent output. This implies that what one feels as equitable might be completely different from their neighbor even in the same working environment.

It is also possible that employees will not feel on the same wavelength as their employers. The biggest question that scholars ask is how inputs can ever be related to the outputs uniformly across an organization. Arifin [6] observes that, a fair balance by management on the definition of inputs and outputs is the key to effective application of the equity theory. In summary, the equity theory will seek to compare effort against reward in terms of the said input and output using relevant examples from the industry which have to be at least agreeable to the employees and employer alike.

Expectancy Theory of Motivation

Expectancy theory as proposed by Vroom (1964) has been extended by Lawler and Porter (1967: 1983) to state that satisfaction is as a result of good performance. In simple terms, the scholars are suggesting that the relationship between people’s behavior at work and their goals are not simplistic as described by most social scientists. It also means that the theory can explain very many diverse human motivational actions. However, the assumption that an available reward can increase an employee satisfaction is not always true citing an example of a promotion with a salary that also means increased working hours might in fact lead to dissatisfaction as opposed to satisfaction. Expectancy theory in summarized form, would therefore imply that motivation is at the back of every good performance since people will expect good returns every time they themselves put in good effort (Vroom, 1964; Time et al, 2013). The reasoning behind Vroom’s theory is that, every employee or worker aims to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. This means that management must discover what exactly an employee wants in terms of money, benefits, rewards, and promotions. In order to discover, the position of employees on all the fronts, value must be attached to each of the needs or expectations of an employee. This therefore calls for a job evaluation of some kind to find out some basis for justifying what to give to the employees.

It is also expected that the employees would only get what they want if on their part, management supplies or provides adequate training as well as assurance that the training would lead to a positive change in both working environment and hygienic factors like salary or wages Asensio-Cuesta, et al. [7-15]. It has been observed that the perception of employees, matters a lot since any hint by the employees that their effort is not easily rewarded would lead to some form of dissatisfaction. This could happen if after an evaluation exercise to determine the job structures of the organization, employees are not rewarded with their expected promotions and...
pay raises. Management needs to ensure that promises are fulfilled and that employees are satisfied with what measures have taken place in improving the working conditions. Vroom formula derives from these three; valence, expectancy and instrumentality as explained above. Job satisfaction can thus be predicted from this formula and the likelihood that one can stay in a job and can also be dependent upon expectancy theory Beardwel [2].

**Defining Concepts**

**Job Evaluation:** According to Werther and Davis (2009 p. 203), “job evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the worth of jobs and creating a link between job worth and salary”. Gupta and Chakraborty (2008 p.107) further clarified that, job evaluation is seen in terms of salary and other fringe benefits in accordance with the existing salary structure of the organization. Job Evaluation helps to determine wages and salary grades for all jobs. Companies that regularly conduct job analysis possess a much better knowledge of their strengths and limitations and can make timely corrective action to improve on any deficiencies in their skills and job behavior (Clifford, 2014). Brannick and Levine (2012 p.69) defined the “job analysis as an organized process whereby the nature of a job is discovered”. According to Sanchez and Levine (2000) erroneous practice of the job analysis may affect other Human Resource activities that are directly or indirectly related to it. Employees have expectations and which must be met by the employee so as to keep a motivated workforce to give out their best.

**Job Satisfaction:** According to Cole (2013), “employee job satisfaction is the driving force on which management can boast about their organization’s production. Satisfaction per se could be less related to any performance, both internally and externally”. This is because by nature, it is a perception in which person ‘A’ could be satisfied with particular goods and services that are completely similar to the goods or services dissatisfied by person ‘B’. It is also “possible that the two persons could be in the same locality or environment yet reacting very different over the same goods and services” (Thompson &Phua, 2012 p.306). Employees could be satisfied but fail to have job satisfaction in cases where they have the remuneration, but their jobs are not satisfying (Cole, 2002). Determining employee job satisfaction requires adequate knowledge on the turnover of the organization which could be both appropriate turnover and unwanted turnover. Appropriate turnover could be for example normal retirements and deaths as well as employees seeking new challenges on the same or various fields of specialization (Dessler, 2008). Armstrong and Taylor (2014 p.102) defines “job satisfaction as the attitudes and feelings people have about their work. They went further to indicate that Positive and favorable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction.

The opposite is the Negative and unfavorable attitudes towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction”. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2014), the levels of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by the intrinsic motivating factors, the quality of supervision and the success or failure.

**Methodology**

**Research Design:** The study used descriptive design in which the subject of study was observed or studied without any influence. This is the most appropriate since according to Kothari (2008), descriptive designs are best suited to situations where the respondents require total freedom to participate. It is also appropriate since respondents showed the characteristics of the study objectives while still at their place of work from where they made those responses.

**Population:** The target population for the study comprises the 303 permanent employees of St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem. In the view of Kothari (2008), a target population is a set of subjects that have similar characteristics and can be used as true representative of the whole population.

**Sampling:** The study used stratified sampling by selecting staff proportionately from various cadre comprising top management, middle and entry management employees. Through proportionate selection as recommended by Cooper and Schindler (2009), a total of 30 percent of the population, that is, 91 staff, were selected for sampling. This involved getting the proportionate sample of each category that would lead to more than 10 percent total sample.

**Data Collection:** Data was collected using questionnaire as data collection instrument. The instrument was a structured questionnaire using Likert-type scale since this is a study based on perception. The method of collection was through drop-and-pick in which the researcher left the respondents with questionnaires and collected them at a later date at their convenience.

**Data Analysis and Presentation:** Data from the questionnaires was analysed through descriptive statistics. Descriptive analysis involves frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The relationship between job evaluation and job satisfaction was established through a linear regression.

### Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

#### Biodata of Respondents

**Table 1:** Biodata of respondents.

| Gender | Male (66%) | Female (34%) |
|--------|------------|--------------|
| Age    | 20-29 years (34%) | 30-39 years (42%) | 40-49 years (24%) |
| Level of education | Secondary/Voc/ Tech/Commercial (8%) | Tertiary (Diploma/Bachelors) (62%) | Tertiary (PG Dip, Masters, Doctorate (30%) |
| Years of experience | 0-5 years (60%) | 6-9 years (24%) | 0-15 (16%) |
| Position held | Junior staff (54%) | Middle level (36%) | Top managers (10%) |

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3.94 4.47 4.13 3.77 3.59 0.450
Standard Deviation

The years of service of the respondents

0.845 4.49 0.732 0.443 4.23 0.702
48

In this study, it was revealed that 66% out of the
respondents agreed that flexibility in scheduling work hours
(mean=3.94, standard deviation=0.254). In the same vein, the
participants moderately agreed with the hours worked each week
on a 5-point Likert scale to ascertain their degree of
agreement or disagreement. For analytic purposes, descriptive
statistics of mean and standard deviation were generated using the
statistical package for social sciences (SPSS V21). In this analysis,
the mean values of 3-4 were classified as moderate agreement
while 4-5 was classified as strong agreement. Values below 3 were
interpreted as disagreements. A mean score of 4.23 and a standard
deviation of 0.537 shows that the respondents strongly agreed with
the assertion that, there is the existence of job evaluation practices
at Hospital(Table 2). With regards to correspondence of titles and
task, the mean and standard deviations scores of 4.47 and 0.732,
respectively, showed that, job evaluation ensured that the titles
 correspond to the functions and task of the job. The respondents
moderately agreed (mean=3.77, standard deviation=0.741) with
the statement that, the distribution of staff in hospital matches
with workload. Similarly, they moderately agreed that (mean=3.59,
standard deviation= 0.443) Job evaluation ensured that Staff
Upward mobility in hospital follows career paths. In furtherance of
that, similar indicated that job evaluation ensured jobs at hospital
are aligned to specific functions.

| Table 2: Job Evaluation Practices/Programs. |
|--------------------------------------------|
| There is the existence of Job evaluation practices at the Hospital | 4.23 | 0.537 |
| Job evaluation ensured that the titles correspond to the functions and task of the job | 4.47 | 0.732 |
| Job evaluation found out that the distribution of staff in the Hospital matches with workload | 3.77 | 0.741 |
| Job evaluation ensured that Staff Upward mobility in the Hospital follows career paths | 3.59 | 0.443 |
| Job evaluation ensured Jobs at the Hospital are aligned to specific functions | 3.94 | 0.845 |
| Job evaluation revealed that reporting system is in accordance with the grades and tasks performed | 4.13 | 0.450 |
| Job evaluation constructed grading of salary structures that corresponds to the task and functions of the jobs | 4.49 | 0.702 |

Note: Source: Fieldwork, 2020.

Finally, it was agreed upon that, job evaluation constructed
grading of salary structures that corresponds to the task and
functions of the jobs (mean=4.49, standard deviation=0.702).

Effect of the Annual Job Evaluation on Employee Job Satisfaction

The analyses employed the same approach as used in the
previous sections(Table 3). The mean and standard deviation of
the responses that were provided by the respondents were the
basis for analyzing the data. The analyses showed that employees
are moderately motivated with the hours worked each week
(mean=3.94, standard deviation=0.254). In the same vein, the
respondents agreed that flexibility in scheduling work hours
makes me more satisfied. The mean and standard deviation
scores are 4.21 and 0.479, respectively. A mean score of 4.88 and a
standard deviation of 0.753 revealed that the respondents strongly
agree with the assertion that “with my salary, am satisfied on the
job and that opportunities for promotion breeds satisfaction”. Respondents moderately asserted relationships with co-workers is
a key motivation as far as “am concerned as well as opportunity to
utilize skills and talents makes working at hospital heart-warming”.
Finally, the mean score and the standard deviation recorded
were 2.12 and 0.16 respectively and revealed that there is lack of
adequate opportunity for periodic changes in duties. Nevertheless,
the preceding discussion has demonstrated that there is an effect of
job evaluation on employee job satisfaction.
Table 3: Effect of the annual job evaluation on employee job satisfaction.

|                                                                 | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| I am motivated with the hours worked each week                   | 3.94 | 0.254              |
| Flexibility in scheduling work hours makes me more satisfied     | 4.21 | 0.479              |
| With my salary payment, am satisfied on the job                  | 3.58 | 0.356              |
| Opportunities for Promotion breeds satisfaction                  | 4.88 | 0.753              |
| Due to the benefits (Health insurance, life insurance, etc.), there is a strong sense of satisfaction. | 4.62 | 0.747              |
| Relationships with my co-workers is a key motivation as far as am concerned. | 3.80 | 0.40               |
| Opportunity to utilize skills and talents makes working at GREL heart-warming | 3.43 | 0.65               |
| There is lack of adequate opportunity for periodic changes in duties | 2.12 | 0.16               |

Note: Source: Fieldwork, 2020.

Similarly, Meisam Karami et al (2004) argue that job evaluation practices have been shown as an important determinant to develop perceived employee satisfaction. He affirms the assertion of Valmohammadi (2013) who also conducted an exploratory survey of 127 Iranian manufacturing firms. The results revealed that the implementation of job evaluation practices is positively and significantly related to employee satisfaction.

Challenges Confronting Job Evaluation at St Elizabeth Hospital, Hwidiem

The final section of this study addresses the challenges confronting job evaluation at St Elizabeth Hospital. The responses were interpreted through thematic analysis. It emerged that poor communication is one of the problems facing the job evaluation of the hospital. It emerged that the communication between the managers and staff, in the view of the respondents, is less effective. It was also identified that the vehicles in the hospital are inadequate as such; the transportation system of the hospital is not good. All in all, it emerged that the job evaluation is not well coordinated.

Conclusion

It was observed that job evaluation exercise had both positive and negative effects on the employees of St Elizabeth Hospital. The positive aspects or those that were favorable according to the employees include titles corresponding to the functions and tasks of the job, aligning specific functions to particular jobs, proper placement of salary structure that correspond to the tasks and functions of the job as well as deployment, according to the requirements and skills. On the job satisfaction, it was noticed that most staff of St Elizabeth Hospital were not satisfied since they rated most of the aspects of job satisfaction lowly. Such aspects were noted as lack of coordination with supervisor and opportunity to utilize one’s skills. However, on the positives that came out of the findings, it was observed that job evaluation led to some positive effects on the employees. These include education as well as opportunity to have variety of job responsibilities.

Recommendation

The study recommends that since fairness in job evaluation is an important predictor of employee satisfaction, fair evaluation practices should be adopted by the management in order to raise the satisfaction level of its employees. Again, the study recommends that St Elizabeth Hospital should put in place measures to employ independent evaluators who have adequate knowledge of job evaluation for staff to see the exercise as fair and thus, enhance their motivation. This will help employees to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and potential areas of improvement within the hospital.

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