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STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND PRODUCTIVITY IN PORT HARCOURT CITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research is aimed at examining the relationship between staff performance appraisal and staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State, within the period of 2015-2020. The study reviewed the concepts of staff performance appraisal, and staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. We used both primary and secondary data to achieve the objectives of the study. The Primary data were generated from research questionnaire items, and presented in a tabular frequency, with simple percentage used as the tool of analysis. The secondary data were generated from books, journals, editorials, etc, on the subject matter, and content analysis used as the tool of analysis for the secondary data. The study finding proves that there is a significant relationship between staff performance appraisal and staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. Also, the study noted that staff performance appraisal has significant effects on staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. Upon the above, the research made recommends, among which is that there should be regular staff performance appraisal as a strategy to enhance staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State.

Keywords: Staff productivity, performance, appraisal, Local Government Council, Port Harcourt.

Introduction

Organizations all over the world aim at driving its organizational objectives to success and increasing its productivity for effective competitive advantage over others. To achieve this height, it calls for skilled and committed staff to drive the performance goal of the organizations. When staff members perform optimally, it helps organization maintain lead over others and when they perform less, it affects the capacity of such organization. With this focus, it becomes appropriate for organization to appraise the performance of their staff as it

relates to set out standards. This is because when staff are appraised it helps them focus on the job and bring out their best and competence at work.
Performance appraisal is a review of staff performance as it regards to the task given to them to perform within the organization at a particular timeframe. It is therefore an important mechanism used by human resource managers in any organization to monitor the level of productivity of the staff working within the organization. Cederblom(1982) posits that performance appraisal is a system which can be adopted in a bid to improve the quality of performance of an organization work force. This means that performance appraisal helps the organization, including local governments such as Port Harcourt City Local Government Council to monitor the output of their staff which in turn increases productivity of the staff. Appraisal is not only used to evaluate the performance of staff, but can as well be used to achieve organizational improvement and viability.

The main objective of staff performance appraisal is to help organization improve productivity of the available staff members in such organization. Mullins (1999) posits that performance appraisal helps organization get feedback on how well staff members are performing. This is because it avails staff the required knowledge and the result of the work that is expected of them. More so, Mullins (1999) substantiated the necessity of an effective appraisal process, which helps to identify staff strength and weakness, as well as the required rate of input by the staff to maximize productivity for the good of the organization.

As a human resource management activity, staff performance appraisal is required to ascertain the productivity level of both the staff and organization at large, as well as the job description expected of staff (Hangeior&Zayum, 2017).Organizations carry out periodic staff performance appraisal, as this will help evaluate the performance of their staff when measured against the job requirements (Meyer, 2001). When appraising the performance of staff, organizations must first make staff members know what is expected of them and the yardsticks by which their performance and results will be measured. This informs Fletcher (2004) to state that performance appraisal method to be used in appraising the staff should be easily understood by both appraisers and the staff who are to be appraised. Absent or irregular staff performance appraisal in organizations, including local governments could result in irregularity and poor performance of the staff as well as the organization; hence, the need for staff performance appraisal in organizations including Port Harcourt City Local Government Council.

In Port Harcourt City Local Government Council, staff performance appraisal becomes inevitable, due to the prevailing productivity challenges and staff irregularities, as noted in staff absence from duty, poor service delivery, and staff inability to meet their task on daily basis. These results point to the perceived poor service delivery in the area, and calls for periodic staff performance appraisal to ascertain the level of each staff's productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. The timeframe of this study is 2010-2020 in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. The variables under study are the concepts of staff performance appraisal, and staff productivity. For the purpose of this study, staff herein refers to the established employees of the Port Harcourt City Local Government Council, and emphasis is based on the evaluation of their productivity for the overall performance of Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. The study is to further consider the activities of the management of the council in staff appraisal activities. To that effect, the focus of this study is

to examine the effects of staff performance appraisal on productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State.

Statement of the problem

Staff performance appraisal is a very key aspect of human resource management in every organization, and specifically in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. Meyer (2001) stated that there is an increasing use of appraisal tool by different organizations in a bid to gather feedback from the staff who work in such organizations. Appraisal provides a good opportunity for management of Port Harcourt City Local Government Council to formally take note of staff inputs, achievements, and /or failure in the council, which will serve as a guide to establish link between staff productivity and reward.. This will help in clarifying goals and expectations, and also creates an environment for open communication, as well as positive feedback in the council. However, it appears the staff performance appraisal system in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council is suffering some defects, as there appears to be inadequate staff performance appraisal in the council for some time, thereby leading to inability of the management of Port Harcourt City Local Government Council to ascertain the productivity level of the staff and service delivery capacity of the council. This problem informs the course for this study on staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Upon the issues raised above, the study presents the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State**?**
2. What are the effects of staff performance appraisal on staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State**?**

Research Objectives

1. To ascertain the relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State**?**
2. To examine the effects of staff performance appraisal on productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State.?

Conceptual Discourse

Staff Performance Appraisal

The human capital of the organization are the active and skilled staff who perform the various functions assigned to them in various departments of the organization Today, organizations carry out systematic checks on the performance level of their staff who work for them. This is where staff performance appraisal is necessary and helps to ascertain the level of productivity of the staff at every point in time. In determining the current productivity level of staff, appraisal prepares the ground for future training of such staff so as to get them work optimally. Cook and Crossman (2004) argues that staff appraisal is explained as the procedure of measuring staff performance for the purpose of determining whether such staff is meeting up standards and also for the purpose of decision making. Simply put, staff appraisal is the systematic way of measuring staff productivity as against such factors as job knowledge, quality and quantity of output and cooperation, which are all needed for the organization to increase productivity.

Obi (2016) sees staff performance appraisal as the evaluation done on the job performance of a staff over a specific period of time. It is like a report card that gives the productivity level of the staff, and how management evaluates the staff performance within the stipulated period of time. Staff performance appraisal methods vary from one organization to another, including local governments in Nigeria. This is because every organization has their standard for judging the productivity level of their staff. This is in line with the view of Onah (2015), which states that every organization whether big or small has a formal and informal ways of appraising the staff productivity level within such organization. The varying systems and processes are applicable in many organizations. But the main target of any staff appraisal process is to estimate the job performance of each staff towards the achievement of organizational objectives. Performance appraisal is also carried out for the purpose of promotion and transfer to new job tasks and positions within an organization (Eldman, 2009).

Mayer (1999) states that staff performance appraisal involves setting strategic objective, establishing team goals, developing a plan for performance. Performance appraisal is seen as a systematic process which involves the management and monitoring of the activities that takes place within the organization over a period of time. Staff performance appraisal isa periodic evaluation of the productivity level of an individual measured against set out standards (Yong, 1996). The process involves meticulous observation and evaluation of the productivity and performance level of staff members in the workplace in relation to set out standards. Staff performance appraisal involves the gathering of information as it concerns the performance level of a staff which is used to judge his or her productivity level in the organization, as to determine the strength of such a staff. Furthermore, staff performance appraisal helps staff to develop good time management through proper planning and setting of deadlines for themselves and also helps the management to gather feedback concerning decisions taken in the organization.

Thus, a detailed staff performance appraisal connects the organization and the staff together which makes the staff to understand their job description so as to perform optimally in the organization. Performance appraisal and productivity of a staff are used sometimes to determine the suitability for promotion, training and placement into higher position of authority of such a staff. Wells (2001) stated that for staff to be productive, the performance appraisal process must contain three basic steps, namely evaluation and job analysis, appraisal interview, and post-appraisal interview. Staff appraisal helps to identify areas of inefficiency that may require assistance so as to increase staff and organizational productivity at all levels. Mwema and Gachunga (2014) argues that organizations establish performance appraisal techniques to help identify staff training needs, meet staff performance targets, offer staff opportunity to improve their output, and improve organizational productivity. Staff appraisal helps organizations to put standards and procedure to job description in every organization. This paper therefore is of the view that organization need to conduct staff performance appraisal on regular basis, and such process should be participatory for effective productivity.

Staff Productivity

The concept of productivity has different meaning from different perspectives based on its usage in different fields of study. Productivity can be seen as the quantity of work that is achieved within a stipulated time by various factors of production. These factors could

include, but not limited to technology, capital, land and labour/human resource. It is used to measure inputs and outputs within any organization at a particular point in time. Rathnam (1990) sees productivity as the process of changing inputs such as raw materials into values which comes as output. For productivity to occur, there must be transformation of ordinary resources into high value, which will help the organization to have competitive advantage over other organizations. Productivity also occurs when equal amount of output is generated using fewer inputs (ILO, 2005).

Bhatti and Qureshi (2007) argued that productivity is a measure of output which covers both efficiency and effectiveness of organizational staff. In determining the performance level of any staff, their level of productivity is what guarantees their performance. This paper sees productivity as the ratio of output or production level of the staff who work in any organization. It is the relationship that can be seen between the quantity of inputs and outputs from a clearly detailed job process. For organizations to succeed in this competitive age of business, staff productivity most correspond with the inputted resources. This is because no organization wants to run into deficit, as this will place them on an unfavorable position.

Furthermore, Sila (2014) states that productivity is the general measurement of the productivity ratio of the efficiency of any staff. This is weighed when the staff is able to transform inputs that are raw materials into finished products or services. More precisely, productivity is a measure that indicates how well essential resources are used to achieve specified objectives in terms of quantity and quality within a given time frame. Hence, productivity ratio indicates how well organizations are performing with regards to set out standards or output level. Thus, we can say that when an organization is increasing its output on relation to its raw material input, such organization is productive.

Staff productivity is the rate to which the staff within the organization contributes to the growth of the organization and how they help organization achieve set out objectives (Greenberg, 1996). It covers all efforts put together by the available staff in any organization, which helps the organization maintain competitive advantage over others. Staff productivity can generally be seen as the quantity and quality of output, efficiency, availability of staff at work and cooperativeness (Bernardin, 2007). Staff productivity could be simply understood as the related activities expected of a worker and how well those activities were executed.

To Mathias and John (2003), staff productivity is that which determines the quality and quantity of work done, putting into consideration the cost of the resources used for a particular job. For staff to be judged as active and being contributory to the growth of the organization, the standard measurement is their level of productivity as measured by the available resources. Staff productivity is a key to build organizational performance. This is because no organization can survive with an inefficient and ineffective staff base. Furthermore, McNamara (2003) stated that productivity is that which is expected of any staff as output. This is because results can only be seen as the productivity level or service delivery level of the staff.

Okere (2011) states that the productivity level of staff contributes to the growth of any organization as it shows the efficiency and effectiveness of any organization. The efficiency of any organization is determined by the level of staff productivity in such organization. This

can be seen in the ratio of output in relation to input of such staff. For organization to meet their goals and outsmart others, there is need for an effective productive staff base which can assist to explore available resource and increase productivity (Jabeen, 2011). Indeed, staff productivity is critical, and determines the performance rate of the organizations, including local governments in Rivers State. Staff productivity is used as the measure of rating performance in area of service delivery in the Rivers State local governments, including Port Harcourt City Local Government Council.

Effects of Staff Performance Appraisal on Productivity

When staff members are recruited into any organization, the next concern of every good manager would be to know how well the staff can perform so as to help the organization increase its productivity. Staff performance appraisal is a technique adopted in the management of the individual staff productivity in any organization. It helps in the identification of the performance level of the staff, the present position of job performance helps organization to improve on a broad dimension. Staff appraisal is a vital instrument which can be used to improve the productivity level of an organization staff and it is considered as one of the practices of the human resource management department within the organization (Baruch, 1996). Therefore, we can say that staff appraisal is not end in itself, but a means to an end. This is because the process is not judgmental, but corrective process which avails both employers and staff the opportunity to make corrections and apply such corrections which can help increase productivity within the organization. It helps place job allocation on the basis of competence and also helps in planning development strategies of members of the organization.

To Ekwochi (2014), staff appraisal helps them to know staff job description and the organizational objectives to be achieved. It also helps the staff to know the standard of performance expected of him or her which will in turn help them appraise their personal performance. When appraisals take place, the staff members become more aware of their weakness and strength, and then work on it, to improve productivity. This establishes the relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity. The effects of staff performance appraisal can never be over emphasized, as the staff performance appraisal determines allocation of resources in the work place, the wages and other payments to staff, and help staff gather feedback on their performance. Appraisal systems are therefore important for effective management and for staff productivity (Agbo, 2002). Organizations carry out staff appraisal because of the positive effects it has on the performance of the staff and the entire organization. Some of such reasons as stated by Grifin (1997) is that staff performance appraisal helps in the organization management in staff selection process, making good decisions, for promotion purposes, job placement, and feedbacks mechanism. Onah (2015) states that staff appraisal helps to identify the staff current level on the job and also brings out the strength and weakness of such staff. When staff members are appraised, they know their job description and current level of performance on the job, whether high or low; and this prompts the staff improvement for productivity in the organization. More so, organizations who engage in staff appraisal are likely to plan properly for the future as well as identify potential productivity level within the organization.

Theoretical Framework

Management by Objective (MBO)

The study adopts management by objective as a framework in order to establish the link between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. Management by objective was propounded by Peter Drucker in 1954, and was later developed by scholars in the management field. Management by objectives (MBO) is a management technique designed to achieve organizational productivity and efficiency by eliciting commitment and performance from both staff and management. Odiorne (1965) cited in Ola (2001) sees MBO as a process which gives the superior and the subordinate the opportunity to jointly agree on organizations goals and objectives, and define each person's responsibility, while stating the expected results which will be used to measure such performances. Management by objectives gives the staff and the management opportunity to state their plans and standards which helps them to increase productivity. Management by objectives is often used as a tool for staff performance appraisals. The MBO process includes goal setting, planning, and evaluation. Goal setting starts at the top of the organization with the establishment of the organization's mission statement and strategic goals (Lindsey, 2005).

When applied to this study, we agree that management by objectives helps the staff and management identify goals and objectives, as well as explaining each responsibility with the measurement standards which will be used to determine the level of productivity by each staff in the organization. As staff members in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council are incorporate in the decision making process and the planning procedures within the council, they will feel involved and then understand the details of organizational goals and objectives. When the staffs have a better understanding of the standards and expectations of the council of which they are part of, they are propelled to increase productivity at all levels. This is because with their involvement in the planning and decision process in the organization, they understand that they have an objective to achieve which is to increase productivity. As they plan, both the staff and management synergizes in identifying potential challenges which can obstruct increase of productivity in the local government service, and then work out modalities to achieving them. Management by objective also provide the basis for appraising staff performance as to determine their productivity in the Port Harcourt City Local Government Council. This will enable the council achieve its objective on effective service delivery in the area. Hence, this paper agrees that MBO helps staff members of Port Harcourt City Local Government Council to understand that they have a period of time to achieve or accomplish the assigned task given to them, and therefore should make all efforts in accomplishing them and increasing the productivity level of the council. Thus, appraising the staff performance becomes necessary as to ascertain their level of productivity and general performance of the Port Harcourt City Local Government Council in River State.

Study Methodology

The study adopted survey method and purposive sampling technique respectively as the design and sampling technique for the study. Survey design helps in generating information with the aid of a questionnaire and it also helps the researcher to cover a large population during the study. Both Primary and secondary data were collected to achieve the objectives of the study.

The study raised eight (8) questionnaire items and administered 200 questionnaires to different workers who work in the eight departments namely: Administrative, works, finance, health, education, budgeting & planning, agriculture and procurement departments. A total of one hundred and seventy (170) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved successfully without error and used for the study. The generated data were analyzed using the Simple Percentage Method (100%) and presented on statistical tables. The table is divided into 3 sections. Section 1 contains the questionnaire distribution figure, section 2 and 3have 8questionnaire items each on the subject matter. The secondary data were collected from journals and other textbooks bothering on the subject matter, while content analysis was used to analyze the data.

Research setting

Port Harcourt City Local Government Council

Port Harcourt City Local Government is the capital city of Rivers State., which houses the Rivers State Government House and other prominent institutions. The Port Harcourt City Local Government is one of the twenty three (23) Local Government Areas in Rivers State. The local government area is part of the Rivers East Senatorial district consisting 20 electoral wards. The Executive arm of the local government council has the Mayor as the chairman, the Deputy Mayor, the Council Secretary, Chief of staff, supervisors of different departments and special advisers, Executive Assistant to the mayor, chief press secretary, chief protocol, the Chief Security officer and the Personal Assistants to the mayor as members. The legislative arm is structured thus: The Legislative Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Whip, Deputy Chief Whip, minority leader and other Councilors.

Port Harcourt City Local Government Council is headed by the Mayor of the council with other administrative staff who works in the different departments within the council. The current Mayor of Port Harcourt City Council, Hon Allwell Amadi, who was elected on 17th April, 2021 during the last local government elections in the state. The head of Local government administration assists the chairman to supervise the eight departments namely: Administration, Works, Finance, Health, Education, Budgeting & Planning, Agriculture, and Procurement Departments of the council.

Port Harcourt City Local Government Council has two groups of workers, namely the political workers, being the elected and appointed political office holders; and establish staff numbering one hundred and nineteen (1019) in different functional departments with the junior staff totaling six hundred and seventy four (674), accounting for 66% of the establish staff, and the senior staff totaling three hundred and forty five (345), accounting for 34% of the establish staff. The establish staff are the career staff, known as the civil employees of Port Harcourt City Local Government Service.The council carry out the basic functions of service delivery through the staff.

Data Presentation and discussion of findings

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

S/N	**Departments in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council**	**Number of Questionnaires Distributed.**	**Number of Questionnaires Retrieved without errors and were used**
1	Administration	25	20
2	Education	25	25
3	Health	25	21
4	Budget and planning	25	20
5	Procurement	25	20
6	Works	25	21
7	Agriculture	25	23
8	Finance	25	20
	Total	**200**	**170**

Source: Field work, 2020

From Table 1 above, the study sampled respondents from the 8 departments, and 25 copies of the questionnaires were evenly administered, totaling 200 copies. Although the total number of questionnaire retrieved varied; 20 copies were retrieved from administrative department, 25 from education, 21 from health, 20 from budget and planning, 20 from procurement, 21 works, 23 from agriculture and 20 from finance totaling 170 copies successfully retrieved and validly used for this study, while 30 were invalid.

Research Question 1:
What is the relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council**?**

Table 2: Relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council

S/N	**Relationship between Staff performance appraisal and productivity**	**Frequency of respondents**	**Percentage of responses**
1	Staff appraisal helps to analyze staff strength and weakness over time in relation with set out standards.	**60**	**35.3%**
2	Appraisal determines organization management ability to utilize available resources	**30**	**17.6%**
3	Staff appraisal increases staff motivation to work	**42**	**24.7%**
4	Staff appraisal helps organization set strategic goals	**38**	**22.4%**
		170	**100%**

Source: Field work, 2020

The table 2 above shows four (4) determinant factors concerning the relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council with each possessing a percentage of the respondents' responses on the subject matter, as stated below:

Staff appraisal helps to analyze staff strength and weakness over time in relation with set out standards as a variable accounts for 35.3% of the total respondents' responses on the matter, and proves to be one of the indices of relationship between staff performance appraisal and productivity in the local government council. Respondents' perceptions show that staff performance appraisal identifies the strength and weakness of the staff so as to perform better and increase productivity in the local government service. This is in line with the view of Yong (1996), which states that staff appraisal can be seen as a periodic evaluation of the output of a staff measured against certain expectations.

Appraisal determines organization management ability to utilize available resources as relationship variable has 17.6%of the total respondents' responses on the subject matter and proves to be one of the relationship variables in staff performance appraisal and productivity. The responses show that when the local government management carry out systematic staff performance appraisal, such appraisal contributes the productivity level of staff, and positions the management on how to use the available staff and other resources accordingly in the organization. The feedback from appraisal guides the management of the local government on next step to take on staff productivity.

Staff appraisal increases staff motivation to work has 24.7% of the total respondents' responses on above subject matter and proves that staff are motivated to do more when they are appraised. When staff are appraised, management identify their productivity level as either low or high, and the staff is encouraged to improve his/her productivity level to meet the desired task. For those with low productivity, they are moved to work harder so as not to be retrenched, and those with high productivity, they improve in anticipation for higher rewards. Therefore, staff appraisal has relationship with productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council.

Staff appraisal helps organization set strategic goals as a relationship accounts for 22.4% of the total respondents' responses on the subject matter in Port Harcourt City Local Government. Organizations want agile and skilful workforce that will help them achieve it strategic objectives and goals. Staff appraisal prompts the organization, including Port Harcourt City Local Government to identify and measure its staff productivity capacity, and therefore uses same to design strategic plans for today and future goal of the organization. Staff appraisal has a significant relationship with productivity, and influences the organization plan and strategies to achieve such plans on record time. Mayer (1999) corroborates with the above view, and states that staff appraisal is a systematic process which involves determining the strategic objectives, establishes team goals, plans to achieve the organizational objectives.

Research Question 2:
What are the effects of staff performance appraisal on staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council of Rivers State**?**

Table 3: Effects of staff appraisal on staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council

S/N	Effects of staff appraisal on staff productivity	Frequency of respondents	Percentage of responses
5	It allows both staff and management to share organizational goals during appraisal.	**20**	**11.7%**
6	Staff appraisal provides an opportunity to identify staff training needs therefore providing them the necessary training which can increase productivity	**56**	**32.9%**
7	Helps staff meet performance targets in the organization	**49**	**28.8%**
8	Helps staff build proper time management through planning and setting of deadlines	**45**	**26.6%**
		170	**100%**

Source: Field work, 2020

The table 3 above explains some of the effects of staff performance appraisal on staff productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council.

It allows staff and management to share organizational goals during appraisal and this accounts for 11.7% of total respondents' responses on the subject matter. When management and staff in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council interact during appraisal, they share ideas which will help improve productivity of both the staff and the council, leading to increase in productivity. This finding corresponds with the view of Lindsey (2005), who states that in most instances, organizational goals are mutually set by staff and their management with specific performance standards and determine how goal attainment will be measured. Also, Armstrong and Baron (1998) argue that the importance of conducting staff performance appraisal as a participatory process involving management and staff is critical to productivity of the organization.

Staff appraisal provides an opportunity to identify staff training needs. From the table 3 above, a total of 32.9% of the respondents affirmed the above view. Staff appraisal is a fact gathering process, which enables organization to identify the training needs of the staff, as to provide for them for effective productivity. In Port Harcourt City Local Government Council, respondents argued that when staff undergo appraisal, it helps the council to identify the needs of the staff working in the council. When they are trained, it helps them perform optimally and increase productivity in the council.

Helps staff meet performance targets in the organization. This perception of the respondents account for 28.8% of the total respondents' responses. Staff in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council affirmed that when they are appraised, it will help them meet the standards set for them by the council administration. This is because when they are appraised, they perform better. Thus, they agree that staff appraisal is needed in the council.

Helps staff build proper time management through planning and setting of deadlines. The above accounts for 26.6% of the total respondents' responses from table 3 above. Respondents

agreed that when staff are appraised, they learn how to manage their time and also set targets and plan on how to achieve them in due time. Lindsey (2005) stated that staff appraisal does not only take record of the performance level of staff within an organization, but it also helps staff to set targets as well as plan towards achieving such targets through proper time management. Therefore, the above confirms that staff appraisal has significant effects on productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council.

Conclusion

The essence of staff performance appraisal in every organization is to determine the staff strength and productivity level of the staff members, who work in such organization. Modern organizations and Port Harcourt City Local Government Council in particular are encouraged to take the practice of staff performance appraisal seriously in view of its merit as a tool for increasing productivity. The study noted that staff performance appraisal increases productivity in Port Harcourt City Local Government Council, and gives Port Harcourt City Local Government Council the opportunity to identify deficiencies in the performance of the staff. This is line with the position of Fletcher (2004) which states that staff appraisal helps organization to determine the weakness and strength of staff through a systematic process of record taking. Consequently, when these deficiencies are identified, it gives organization the opportunity of coming up with development programmes which will help correct such deficiencies so as to increase staff productivity within the organization.

Also, from the findings, the study concluded that Port Harcourt City Local Government Council should appraise their staff members on periodical bases, as this will help them achieve their targets and organization goals, learn time management and increase efficiency for performance, which will all lead to productivity within the council. When appraisal takes place, management learns how to make informed decisions about promotions and assignments based on applicable facts which will improve staff productivity.

Performance appraisal also helps every organization assign jobs to staff based on their capacity and performance level so as to improve productivity.

Recommendations

The study made some recommendations based on its findings. The recommendations are stated below:

- ✓ Port Harcourt City Local Government Council should carry out periodic appraisal of their staff. When staff members undergo periodic appraisal, it will give them sense of belonging and make them active within the council.
- ✓ Management from time to time should engage staff members in the decision making process of the council. This is in line with the Management by objectives principle. When the staff contributes in the formulation of policies and objectives in the organization, they become more aware of targets of the organization.
- ✓ For Port Harcourt City Local Government Council to achieve its goal, they must carry out staff appraisal so as to identify the deficiencies of the staff and then train them through necessary programmes that will help enhance their job performance.
- ✓ Staff appraisal should not be a judgmental review, but rather a friendly review of the strength and weakness of the staff members. When the staff see it as a friendly activity they will be willing to contribute to the growth of the council.

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