

Faculties' Performance Appraisal at Financially Autonomous Universities in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Performance appraisal is the process of evaluating employee contributions to the organization over a period of time. For public universities, faculties' performance appraisal is not a simple matter because this activity involves many other important human resource management tasks. Feedback from performance appraisal will help faculties see how well they are doing when compared to the standards set by the university. In order to have a good performance evaluation system, it also depends a lot on the application, testing and adjustment to suit the actual situation at each school. On the basis of a survey of 345 faculties currently working at financially autonomous public universities in Vietnam, the article focused on understanding and exploiting the faculties' feelings about their performance appraisal, which universities were applying. From there, the article pointed out appropriate recommendations to further improve the faculties' performance appraisal.

Keywords: Performance appraisal, faculties, public universities, financial autonomy, Vietnam

INTRODUCTION

Performance appraisal is one of the important activities that affect the performance evaluation of employees. Performance appraisal affecting the salary, bonus, promotion... of employees. Performance appraisal is a process by which a manager evaluates and provides feedback on an employee's job performance. The results of this performance appraisal are one

of the important bases for salary increases and promotions. Besides, performance appraisal is also very important to help employees improve their performance.

Today, universities and faculty are required to take more responsibility for student outcomes (Naugle, Naugle, & Naugle, 2000)^[1]. As the most important resource in schools, faculties play an important role in raising educational standards. Performance monitoring and evaluation is central to the continual improvement of instructional effectiveness in a school. It is essential to know the strengths of the instructors and what aspects of their practice can be further developed. From this perspective, performance appraisal is an important step in efforts to improve teaching and learning effectiveness and raise educational standards. Shymansky (1978)^[2] has argued that many factors contribute to faculty performance, but it is the faculty itself that is recognized as having the greatest influence on the success of the program.

In Vietnam, for public higher education institutions, performance appraisal is also the foundation or basis for the Board of Directors or the School Council to make decisions or other strategic policies, in which the School Council will set the remuneration policy for faculties. Fair remuneration will be created, if the basis for determining remuneration is the faculties' actual performance. In addition, the Board of Directors/School Council will make human resource policies for faculties. The

faculties' position is considered appropriate if the performance of faculties is one of the bases to do that... In particular, the financially autonomous public universities have developed their own performance evaluation policies. Basically, the performance evaluation criteria are based on the activities undertaken by the faculty, including teaching, scientific research, and community service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers considered performance to be a multidimensional concept. In essence, performance is followed by an approach to results achieved. This means the actions of doing work that lead to results such as number of contracts or sales, accumulated knowledge, software product or number of products assembled (Roe, 1999)^[3].

Applied in higher education, the performance of faculties is determined based on actions in the teaching process, how the faculties complete the assigned work (Duze, 2012)^[4]. Faculties' performance allows to measure how resources are being used to achieve work goals. According to Gibbs (2002)^[5], high-achieving faculties must have the capacity to persevere, be flexible and creative in new teaching methods and be ready in the event of failure.

In fact, the performance of the faculty is a key factor in maintaining the quality of education. When the activities of the faculties are well maintained, the results of the educational process are guaranteed to be of high quality. For this condition becomes the truth, it is necessary to continuously evaluate faculty performance to obtain the most current information on the status of faculty performance, with the expectation that declining faculty performance will soon be resolved and be able to provide the correct remedial solution (Retnowati et al., 2021) [6].

Performance appraisal is the systematic evaluation of each individual. It is a human resource management tool used for all

holistic development of employees and organizations. Performance is measured based on factors such as knowledge, work, quality and quantity of output, initiative, leadership, supervision, reliability, cooperation, judgment, flexibility activity and health... In a broader sense, performance appraisal can be done by employees, subordinates, colleagues and managers. Rao (1996)^[7] argues that performance appraisal is to ensure that people at all levels perform the tasks desired by the manager. Lawrence (1996) said that performance appraisal is a management technique for determining an individual's contributions to the organization. Werther and Davis (1989) [9] stated that performance appraisal is a process by which an organization evaluates the performance of an individual's job, in which they also proposed that key factors determine the quality of the job. The dimensions of performance appraisal are employee performance and employee performance metrics.

Usually, assessment is one of the activities used in schools, mainly focusing on learners and teachers (Joshua et al., 2006)^[10]. Assessments can provide insight into how faculties perform as classroom instructors, thereby seeing students' progress and their achievement in knowledge and skills. and desired capacity. Stronge (2006)^[11] asserted that a conceptually sound and properly implemented assessment system for faculties is an important component of an effective university. No matter how well designed an educational program may be, it is only effective when there are people who implement and support it. Despite the fact that faculties' performance appraisal is fundamental to the school's success, this part of the staffing process is often overlooked.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The scale of faculties' performance appraisal is widely used in research related to the work motivation of faculties. The author measures faculties' performance

appraisal by assessing the perception at various levels in aspects such as evaluation process, time and evaluation method. This scale has been used in the study of Colquitt et al. (2005)^[12], Ali and Ahmad (2009)^[13], Nguyen Thuy Dung (2015)^[14]... Through preliminary survey for faculties as well as conducting qualitative surveys, the authors has added the indicator “Criteria for

faculties’ performance appraisal is appropriate” and used a 5-point Likert scale to collect information to measure faculties’ performance appraisal. The survey was distributed to 345 faculties currently working at financially autonomous public universities in Vietnam. The sample structure of the survey is shown in the table below:

Table 1. Survey sample structure

	Quantity (person)	Ratio (%)
Total	345	100
I. Sex		
- Male	132	61.7
- Female	213	38.3
II. Career titles		
- Senior lecturer	21	6.1
- Main lecturer	101	29.3
- Lecture	223	64.6
III. Working years		
- From 15 years or more	43	12.5
- From 10 years to less than 15 years	131	38
- From 5 years to less than 10 years	122	35.4
- Less than 5 years	49	14.2

RESULT

The collected data is used to analyze and evaluate the faculties' feelings about the appraisal and recognition of the leader's performance. The analysis results show that the coefficient of Cronbach’s alpha of the variable "Faculties’ performance appraisal" is higher than 0.7. Variable correlation coefficient – the sum of the components is

greater than 0.3. The coefficients of Cronbach’s alpha of these components are all large 0.6. Therefore, the component variables of all have high reliability, so they will be used for analysis in the next steps. With a survey sample of 345 faculties, comments on faculties’ performance appraisal are shown in the table below.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variable “Faculties’ performance appraisal”

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Medium	Standard deviation
My colleagues and I are recognized for our contributions to work (DG1)	345	1	5	3.17	.963
The performance appraisal at my school is the right person, the right job (DG2)	345	1	5	3.20	.907
My school's recognition process is objective (DG3)	345	1	5	3.23	.842
The recognition process at my school is consistent for everyone (DG4)	345	1	5	3.06	.854
Faculties are clearly explained about the performance criteria (DG5)	345	1	5	3.10	.824
The process of appraisal and recognizing the achievements of faculties in my school is in accordance with ethical standards (DG6)	345	1	5	3.11	.887
The criteria for evaluating the performance of Faculties are adequate and appropriate (DG7)	345	1	5	3.10	.846
Overall, faculties’ performance appraisal at my school is fair (DG8)	345	1	5	3.43	1.054

The survey results in the table above show that the faculties have a consensus and high appreciation for the idea "In general, the faculties’ performance appraisal at my school is fair" with 3.43 points. The opinion “My school's recognition process is objective” was also evaluated with a score of 3.23. This was followed by the observation “The performance appraisal at

my school is the right person, the right job” with 3.20 points. The comments " My colleagues and I are recognized for our contributions to work" were rated at an average score of 3.17. The comments “The process of appraisal and recognizing the performance of faculties in my school is in accordance with ethical standards”; “Faculties are clearly explained about the

performance criteria” and “The criteria for evaluating the performance of Faculties are adequate and appropriate” with the average score of 3.11, 3.10 and 3.10 respectively. The lowest rating with a score of 3.06 is the opinion “The recognition process at my

school is consistent for everyone” with 3.06 points.

The feelings about the faculties’ performance appraisal also differ according to the characteristics of each survey object. This result is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Survey results of perceptions about the faculties’ performance appraisal

Object		The average value	Standard deviation
Sex	Male	3.18	.6802
	Female	3.17	.7564
Working years	Over 15 years	3.1	.6857
	From 10 years to less than 15 years	3.23	.7402
	From 5 years to less than 10 years	3.13	.6951
	Less than 5 years	3.19	.8493
Career titles	Senior lecturer	3.02	.6613
	Main lecturer	3.23	.7279
	Lecturer	3.16	.7425

Thus, with the results in Table 3, the survey subjects are different according to their seniority and professional title, so there is a difference in the faculties’ performance appraisal. There was not much difference in the faculty's rating by gender. Specifically: According to gender, male and female faculties have quite similar opinions on the faculties’ performance appraisal with approximately equal average scores, 3.18 and 3.17 respectively. Meanwhile, different working seniority also has differences in assessment. Faculties with 10 years to less than 15 years of experience have the highest score. The lowest score is for faculties with more than 15 years of experience with 3.1 points. For the professional title, the main lecturer has the highest rating with an average score of 3.23, while the senior lecturer title has the lowest rating with 3.02 points.

The above results show that the faculties’ performance appraisal need to consider each different object. The performance evaluation criteria need to be more consistent, more comprehensive and especially to accurately and fully measure the contribution of each target group. This is one of the issues that university leaders need to pay attention to in order to design a more effective system of evaluating faculty’s performance.

DISCUSSION

Creating fairness in the faculties’ performance appraisal is necessary for all organizations, including public universities. The fairness here is shown as being objective, clear, right person in the right job and in accordance with ethical standards. To do that, university should conduct faculty evaluations monthly, quarterly and for each academic year, develop a consistent set of evaluation criteria, and introduce certain principles in the faculties’ performance appraisal. In addition, this set of criteria has a clear distinction between objects such as faculties or service staff. Regarding assessment methods, universities need to have an appropriate, objective, multi-sided assessment method such as collecting opinions from direct leaders, colleagues, and faculties... After that, upper management will make the final assessment of the lecturer's performance. The results of this evaluation must be combined with the recognition of the leadership in the form of rewards or criticisms in a timely manner. This will encourage the working spirit of the faculties, create a comfortable and secure mentality when the results of their work are evaluated fairly and recognized appropriately.

In addition, setting annual goals for faculties is essential to increase their motivation. In terms of improving professional qualifications, in addition to the faculties

themselves needing to cultivate their own practical knowledge to enrich the lessons, the completion of the degree is also extremely important. Each faculty needs to have a clear specific plan for improving his or her own level. It is necessary to set specific milestones for faculties so that they can achieve certain qualifications and meet standards in undergraduate and postgraduate training. Avoid letting faculties have the inertia and be satisfied with their current level. More attention should be paid to honoring and commending excellent faculties. In addition, universities need to further promote the role of emulation and commendation. Carrying out this work seriously and reasonably, has a real impact on the material and spiritual interests of faculties. There are clear rewards and penalties and the reward levels must be discriminatory and commensurate with the beneficiaries. These results will be the basis for universities to implement staff planning and appointment most effectively.

Using the results of faculties' performance appraisal in many other activities such as salary policy, bonus, remuneration, promotion, appointment, etc. Based on the results of the performance evaluation, the faculties will be selected to be introduced to the School Emulation and Commendation Council for the whole school's opinion on the awarding of titles such as Outstanding Teaching Officer (teaching officer with the highest score in the school's assessment, Typical Researcher (teaching officer with the highest volume of scientific research). Universities need to attach a certificate of merit from the Principal and a reward for visiting, learning international or domestic experiences.

In the face of the requirements of education reform and the current situation, the policy of salary, allowance, and honor policy for faculties need to be renewed and perfected. This is not only an urgent requirement for the successful implementation of the fundamental and comprehensive reform of Vietnamese education, but also one of the prerequisites for the development of the

teaching staff, contributing to the improvement of the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

In higher education institutions, faculties play a pivotal role in all activities, goals and development strategies of the school. An educational institution having faculties with full professional competence and professional qualities, who always complete their work and assigned tasks will make a great contribution to the development of universities. Therefore, the faculties' performance appraisal is particularly important for the long-term development plans and orientations of higher education institutions. Through conducting research and surveying the fact that 345 faculties are working at self-financed public universities, the article has also raised the status of the faculties' performance appraisal at higher education institutions. Since then, the authors have also made recommendations and solutions to overcome limitations in performance evaluation at financially autonomous public universities in Vietnam.

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