

Original Article

Evaluating the impact of performance appraisal on doctor's task and contextual performance: A view of public sector hospitals in Karachi, Pakistan.

Munaza Bibi  & Rafique Ahmed Khan 

Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Karachi- Pakistan.

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Corresponding Author Email:

munazabibi.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

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Abstract

Background: Performance appraisal is an essential function implemented by the healthcare organization to gauge an individual's performance while delivering quality care. The present study aimed to evaluate the interrelationship between appraisal and the doctor's task performance measures.

Methodology: A causal study was conducted on a sample of 270 doctors working at Dr. Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital and Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) in Karachi, using a deductive approach. An adapted questionnaire was used to examine the specified variables concerning appraisal, task and contextual performance. The collected data was examined using Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) and SPSS version 20.0.

Results: There was a significant impact of performance appraisal on doctor's task performance and contextual performance as indicated by the study results. A moderate significant relationship was observed between performance appraisal and doctor's task performance ($r = 0.383$; $p < 0.01$), while a strong significant relationship was detected between performance appraisal and doctor's contextual performance ($r = 0.874$; $p < 0.01$).

Conclusion: It is concluded that the implemented performance appraisal practices influence doctor's task performance and contextual performance.

Keywords

Doctor's Task Performance, Doctor's Contextual Performance, Performance Appraisal.



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Introduction

The concept of the performance assessment began in the 19th century to measure the performance of military professionals¹. In the parallel vein, performance appraisal is seen as an excellent tool to keep the employee performance at the standardized position by specifying their strengths and weaknesses². The most sensitive among all is the health care sector, where patients expect commitment in terms of standard quality care from doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, and clerical staff³. It is evident that these healthcare providers have to work under an enormous amount of pressure and cater to each individual patient with the same efficiency. Like any other profession, a performance appraisal is a leading tool to gauge the performance level of doctors in the healthcare setting^{4,5}. It increases the likelihood of safe and quality patient care⁶.

Task performance is defined as the work performed by an individual in the form of relevance, quantity, and quality of goods and services generated, confined to a particular job⁷. On the other side, contextual performance is delineated as behaviour displayed by employees beyond job description⁸. Henceforth, contextual performance helps in improvising the organizational environment via helping and cooperating with others⁹.

Performance appraisal plays an imperative contribution in improving individual performance through a formal assessment to specify the incentives, hiring process, and human resources development based on their performance^{10, 11}. Consistently, performance appraisal outcomes have been principally employed to make more administrative decisions, like increments in pay levels annually on one side and determining their developmental needs to complete the assigned task¹², which fallouts in organizational success and failure¹³. So, the performance of assumed duties by an individual is specified as employee performance¹⁴, which could help in fostering the attainment of organizational goals. Hence, organizations need competent employees to handle the assigned tasks effectually¹⁵.

Furthermore, biasness in the appraisal process might lead to induce conflicts among employees, henceforward, reduce their satisfaction¹⁶, which affects the in-role (task) performance¹⁷ and voluntary (positive) behaviour as well¹⁸. Also, the bias from the supervisor's side could affect employees' task performance if he or she exhibits the same task¹⁹. In contrast, appraising an individual's performance brings changes in the contextual performance as well²⁰. Concerning performance appraisal and doctor's task and contextual performance, few studies are conducted from the standpoint of public sector hospitals in this regard^{21, 22}.

This study was conducted to assess the interrelationship between performance appraisal and doctor's task performance measures in two of the well-known healthcare settings of Karachi, Pakistan. The task performance was determined in terms of the capability of doctors to deliver quality services to the patients. In contrast, contextual performance referred to the cooperative and organizational skills of the doctors in managing high-pressure situations.

Methodology

A causal study was conducted using a deductive approach over a sample of 270 doctors recruited via the purposive sampling technique. The doctors were employed at two of the known healthcare settings of Karachi, i.e., Dr. Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital and Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC). The adapted questionnaire was used for data collection, inclusive of specified variables serving the purpose of our study. From the performance evaluation scale²³, five items were used for measuring task performance i.e. (1) I use to maintain high work standards at the hospital, (2) I am capable to manage assignments without supervision, (3) I am passionate to do my work on time, (4) I use to complete my assignments, (5) My colleagues are certain that I am good at performing work. While ten items for the contextual performance were used such as I used to help my co-workers such as nurses and paramedical staff when needed. I love to handle extra responsibilities. I actively participate in group

discussions etc. While for performance appraisal, five items from the appraisal scale were used for assessment such as doctors performance is assessed on completion of tasks. Doctors receive feedback from employees as well as peers to identify their strengths and weak areas. Doctors perform self-evaluation to rate themselves. Supervisors are enquired to rate doctors based on observation. Doctors shared their goals; which are accompanying organizational goals²⁴.

AMOS was used to examine the impact of performance appraisal on a doctor's task and contextual performance. The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS version 20.0,

where mean and standard deviation were used for data presentation. Correlation analysis was carried out to assess the interrelationship of the studied variables. The instrument reliability was checked through Cronbach's alpha. A p -value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant, and $p < 0.01$ was considered highly significant.

Results

Around 60% of the enrolled doctors were males. The mean performance appraisal, task performance and contextual performance are displayed in table 1.

Table 1: Performance appraisal, task and contextual performance.

Variables	Mean \pm SD
Performance Appraisal	4.25 \pm 0.70
Doctors Task Performance	4.14 \pm 0.71
Doctors Contextual Performance	4.34 \pm 0.66

As per the correlation analysis, a moderately significant correlation has been found between performance appraisal and doctors' task performance ($r=0.383$; $p<0.01$). Simultaneously, a strong significant relationship was observed between performance appraisal and doctor's contextual performance ($r=0.874$; $p<0.01$).

Table 2: Correlation analysis between performance measures.

	Performance Appraisal	Doctors Task Performance	Doctors Contextual Performance
Performance Appraisal	1.000		
Doctors Task Performance	0.383***	1.000	
Doctors Contextual Performance	0.874***	0.194***	1.000

*** $p<0.01$ is considered highly significant

As per the value of standardized coefficients of the framed hypotheses including performance appraisal (PA) influence the doctor's task performance (DTP) and doctor's contextual performance (DCP). It has been confirmed that performance appraisal affects the doctor's task and contextual performance in the public sector hospitals as the p -value is < 0.05 .

Table 3: Coefficients value for Structural Path.

Hypotheses	Standardized Regression Coefficients	Std. Error	p-value
H1: PA \rightarrow DTP	.388	.057	***
H2: PA \rightarrow DCP	.823	.028	***

The Cronbach's alphas were calculated for evaluating the reliability of the research instrument used to assess the performance measures. The Cronbach's α for the performance appraisal, task performance and contextual performance were 0.819, 0.763 and 0.882, respectively.

Discussion

Performance appraisal is a crucial practice used to identify the weak and strong aspects concerning the employee's performance. In the healthcare organizations, it ensures a smooth and healthy working environment²⁵. This practice helps the individuals know whether they are meeting the organizational expectation or need to improvise their task performance abilities²⁶. The present study has confirmed that performance appraisal is equally essential for the healthcare sector as any other working sector. It plays a substantial role in improving the performance of doctors. The outcomes of the present study specify that performance appraisal has a significant impact on a doctor's task performance (Table 2). These findings agree with a similar study, in which it is shown that performance appraisal led to improved and timely completion of tasks assigned¹².

Furthermore, effective implementation of performance appraisal improves the doctor's contextual performance in cooperating with other co-workers²⁷. We found a strong significant correlation between contextual performance and appraisal ($r=0.874$; $p<0.01$). A similar study states that timely execution of performance appraisal brings positive changes in contextual performance among employees²⁰. While in contrast, a study suggested that the performance appraisal has no significant impact on the positive attitude among physicians²⁸. The employee's perception concerning appraisal and performance interrelation has also been studied; their perception is in agreement that performance appraisal results in a higher level of performance at work²⁹. Doctors demonstrated a higher level of performance in terms of task and contextual facet as they perceive the whole process as a positive reinforcement for providing quality services.

Moreover, feedback must be based on performance criteria. It shapes the individual behaviour either positively or negatively depending on how it is supposed by the key players such as employees. The supervisors and subordinates have been regarded as key players in accepting and believing that the appraisal system is fair, improving overall outcomes³⁰. Henceforward, it is the hospital's responsibility to ensure the timely appraising of doctor's performance based on criteria. This helps in preventing the sense of injustice among the employees^{16,31,32}. Conflicts among the health care professional profoundly affect the quality of services delivered to the patients. Researchers shared the similar view that unfairness perception among employees can detrimentally affect the task performance¹⁷ and cooperating behaviour¹⁸. Besides, it is essential to document the process of appraisal systems in hospitals to prevent biases. It is viewed as an issue that prevails in the public sector regarding an absence of documentation and biasness during the appraisal process³³⁻³⁵.

This study provides insights into the most important establishment practice that involves performance appraisal, specifically in the healthcare sector. Despite several strengths, the present study described employee (doctors) participation while none of the employer's (supervisors) involvement measures were included. Since it is a two-way process, the effect of the supervisor's or employer's input within the employee's job context needs to be studied. Furthermore, this research was conducted in only two healthcare settings; the research must be replicated in several other healthcare facilities to have better and extended outcomes.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the performance appraisal has a significant impact on doctor's task performance and contextual performance in public sector hospitals of Karachi, Pakistan. Hence, doctors' timely appraisal can improve their performance in delivering quality services to the patients. While performance appraisal also improves the contextual performance of doctors, positively

affecting their cooperative skills while engaging with other co-workers like nurses and paramedical staff.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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