

Examining the Essence of Performance Appraisal to Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale

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To cite this article:

Abdul-Razak Abubakari, Dasana Salifu Wumbei. Examining the Essence of Performance Appraisal to Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale. *Journal of Business and Economic Development*. Vol. 2, No. 3, 2017, pp. 161-169. doi: 10.11648/j.jbed.20170203.14

Received: February 6, 2017; **Accepted:** February 27, 2017; **Published:** March 22, 2017

Abstract: This study examined the essence of performance appraisal to Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale Metropolis. A quantitative approach was adopted and both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used in analysis of data. The research sought to examine the essence of PA to Zoomlion Ghana Limited, a waste management company in Tamale Metropolis. Also, challenges associated with the PA system were also research on. A sample of 100 respondents were research on and a questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. It was found that PA results is a means of determining the employees' remuneration; discover employees' strength and weaknesses; achieve relevant feedback for monitoring. The PA systems challenges were identified as; appraise bias towards appraises; transfer of sentiments by the appraisers; variations in appraises results; and appraisers becoming too generous or too critical. The company can use meetings, regular for a as means of communicating the essence of PA in the organization. Appraisers also need be made to undergo refresher courses to enhance their capacities and also get them imbued with best practices in PA.

Keywords: Employees, Performance, Appraisal, Performance Appraisal

1. Background Information

All goal oriented organizations adopt several measures to ensure the realization of their goals. Some agencies may design strategic plans and set out key goals to be realized over specific time periods. Realizing the goals would require investment into a lot of resources including labour. In order that workforce work to deliver the desired work outcomes, several measures are put in place to elicit the required performance from them. Performance appraisal is one of such measures that firms adopt to monitor and evaluate the performance of employees in line with the standards set for the organizations concerned. According to [1] performance management in the broadest sense is a managerial process that links corporate objectives, performance standards and evaluation. To this end, researchers and practitioners have tried to devise means in order to increase employee productivity and reduce turnover, without adding a significant increase in cost [1].

To [2], performance appraisal is one of the oldest and most ubiquitous practices of management and it includes all

systematic procedures in organizations to assess the performance of employees. [3] established that fairness in the Performance Appraisal process have positive relation with appraisal satisfaction and motivation to improve performance.

Recent studies have also linked PA to employees' performance enhancement ([4]; [5]). Zoomlion Ghana Limited had also introduced Performance Appraisal system to derive the benefits associated with the system. The company however undertakes Performance Appraisal for employees who are due for promotion and therefore do not apply the Performance Appraisal comprehensively as expected. Apart from this, no research has been conducted to examine the gains the company realizes from the Performance Appraisal system in place. It is against this background that this research is conducted to examine the essence of performance appraisal on the performance of employees of Zoomlion Ghana Ltd in Tamale metropolis.

2. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the essence of performance appraisal on the performance of

Zoomlion Ghana Limited employees in Tamale. Specifically, the following objectives are research.

- i. To examine the essence of performance appraisal to Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale
- ii. To determine the challenges associated with the implementation of Zoomlion Ghana Limited performance appraisal in Tamale.

3. Scope and Significance of the Study

The research is specifically on the essence of performance appraisal in Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale. The company has employees of diverse professional backgrounds and job requirements. With over 2000 employees, is feasible a research is conducted on the Performance Appraisal and its effects on employees' performance as findings from the study would be a basis to replicate the Performance Appraisal practices to the sub-districts offices of the company. Also, challenges associated with Performance Appraisal system may be identified and the company will then strategize on addressing them to enhance performance of employees of the company.

4. Methodology

A quantitative approach was adopted in the study and basically a descriptive research was conducted on the employees of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale. Frequency tables and charts have been used to present the data on the study. A sample of 100 respondents was drawn from the employees and the respondents were purposively chosen. Since the total number of personnel of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale is known, (3000), the following formula (Yamane's formula) was used to determine the sample size.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(\alpha)^2}$$

Where n represent the actual sample size, N representing target population, 1 is constant in the formula, α (0.1) stands for the margin of error.

$$n = \frac{3000}{1 + 3000 (0.1)^2}$$

$$n = 99.667/100$$

Basically frequency distribution and specifically means and standard deviation were employed in the analysis and a two (2) tails 't' test was used to determine the level of significance of the essence Performance Appraisal system to the company researched

5. Literature Review

What is Performance Appraisal and the Essence of Performance Appraisal?

Performance appraisal according to [6] is a formal appraisal of non-managerial workers and workers at least once a year

and it is reported that this monitoring of employees is associated with shorter-tenure workers or workers who have greater influence over productivity. To [7] performance measures are part of a management control system designed to monitor performance, provide accountability and as a means of implementing and adjusting strategy. In sync with the above, [8] contends that performance appraisal is a systematic, periodic and an impartial rating of an employee's excellence in matters pertaining to his present job and his potential for a better job. [9] alludes that employee appraisal concerns with the process of valuing a person's worth to an organization with a view to increasing employees' performance and organizational improvement. From the forgoing, one may realize that performance appraisal is a control measure adopted by organisations to ensure that the desired work outcomes are realized from employees towards the attainment of the corporate goals.

5.1. Essence of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is one of the most important human resource management functions ([10]; [11]; [12]) and an effective performance appraisal and management system is an integral part of organisation's human resource management effectiveness [13]. Managers generally rely on performance measures to provide information to employees on achieving their individual goals and to the organization as a whole with respect to strategic objectives. Thus, performance appraisal goes with a lot of benefits to the stakeholders involved in the appraisal process.

Foremost, as a control measure, performance appraisal affords organisations to set out appropriate standards of performance against which work outcomes of employees will be measured. To this end, [14] posit that the first effect in the evaluation process of Performance Appraisal as setting up performance standards which will be used as a foundation to compare the actual performance of employees in organisations. Therefore, it goes without saying that no effective performance appraisal system would be meaningful without expected performance standards set for employees to observe. Besides setting the standards, organisations need to communicate the standards to all the employees who will be appraised overtime [15]. That communicating the performance appraisal standards will help the employees to understand the scope of their roles based on the job description that will make them realize precisely what is expected from them as stakeholders of the organization. [15].

When performance standards are set, employees' actual performance or work done should be compared to the standards set. [16] contends that through the performance appraisal assessment, the results of the work done by the employees during the specified period of time need to be published without any further delay so as to set the parameters for the determination of the actual performance of the employees in the organization. Related to the above, [17] put it that performance appraisals are typically used for administrative purposes or both administrative and developmental purposes. As actual performance of appraisal

outcomes are got, employees are given specific, frequent and timely feedback [18].

Some scholars have established that employees acceptance of performance appraisal results increases if performance appraisal systems are perceived to be more accurate ([19]; [20]; [21]). Thus employees will end up to accept performance appraisal results when in their view they perceive the performance appraisal process to be accurate and through that, they will be more positive towards performance appraisal [22]. [23] attest to the above as they allude that accurate appraisals will have stronger motivational effect to improve future performance. Apart from accuracy of results, performance appraisal elicit work interest of employees and trust in the performance appraisal system. The employees' perception of fairness is another important measure of appraisal effectiveness that is related to appraisal outcomes ([24]; [25]). Performance appraisal fairness is of three dimensions: distributive, procedural and interactional fairness [26]. They enhance satisfaction and performance.

Performance appraisal outcomes or results is used to guide management decision in different areas of interest. One important aspect of management decisions where performance appraisal is useful in wages and salary administration ([27]; [28]). Also [27]; allude performance appraisal results is a major source of information and feedback for corporate entities concerning the determination of employees' performance which is very essential to employees training and development decisions to be made. [29] also assert that employees job performance appraisal is vital for organizational performance.

5.2. Challenges of Performance Appraisal

Despite the enormous benefits associated with performance appraisal, it is fraught with some concerns. One fundamental challenge of performance appraisal is the concern of who does the appraisal and how many people do the appraisal. According to [30] the traditional performance appraisals are performed by the employee's immediate supervisor who is often the only source of employee performance appraisal. A number of scholars have it that when appraisals are conducted only by supervisors, they can be subject to biasing influences ([11]; [31]) and to them it can lead to employees to perceive that appraisals are unfair. Therefore, employees who receive ratings from more than one supervision are more likely to accept such rating as fair when compared to ratings received from a single source. Multiple source rating ensure better procedural and distributive fairness [32].

Another challenge likely to be associated with performance appraisal results is variations in reporting standards. Appraisers may either be over generous or too critical in their assessment [33]. [34] assert that some of the appraisers are expected to take the line of least resistance and appraise employees high, whereas others, believe in executing exact assessment and dwelling more specifically on the weaknesses of the appraisee and therefore making the assessment excessively rigorous. [35] concluded that other

imperfections in the execution of the appraisal programme can be destructive.

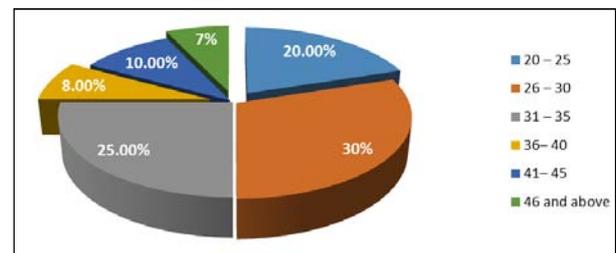
Manager's political influences and manipulations can influence the use of performance appraisal results for administrative decisions such as determination of salary and promotions of appraisees ([11], [31]). In this case appraisal may be perceived as unfair and unjust by employees.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1. Socio-demographic Profile of the Respondents

Figure 1 shows that 20% were aged between 20 to 25 years, while majority of the respondents representing 30% were between the ages of 26 to 30, and also 25% of the respondents' age fell within the age group of 31 to 35, whereas 8% had their ages within 36 to 40 age groups.

Also 10% and 7% of the respondents had their ages of between 41 to 45 years and 46 and above category respectively. This shows that most of the respondents were the youth. This is very significant because the 2010 population and housing census in Ghana shows that, 46.6% of Ghanaians had their ages within 15 to 64 years which represent the highest percentage of people interviewed during the study. Of the 100 respondents 57% were male and 43% being female and this shows that the company has a very good representation of both sexes on its employment list.



Source: Field Work, 2016.

Figure 1. Age Distribution of Respondents.

The results on the educational qualification attained by the respondents revealed that about 35% representing 70 of the respondents had no formal education, 25% (50 respondents) had attained basic education in the area. Those with senior secondary education represented 20% (40 respondents). It is also observed that, 15% or 30 respondents of the sample selected had had technical/vocational qualification. Also about 5% of the respondents had tertiary education comprising HND and University Degrees.

Table 1. Educational Qualification of Respondents.

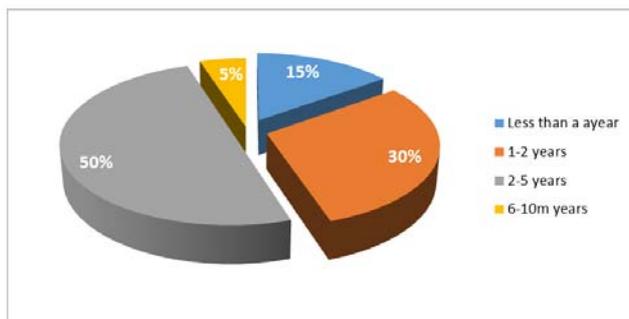
Respondents Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage
No Formal Education	35	35
Basic Education	25	25
Senior Secondary Education	20	20
Technical/Vocational course	15	15
Tertiary	05	05
Total	100	100

Source: Field Work, 2016.

Those with no formal education were employees engaged as cleaners of different categories. Besides, others of basic educational qualification were engaged as drivers and supervisors. The HND graduates were in the middle-level management positions. The last category of respondents with University Degrees was in the management positions.

In terms of job placement of respondents, 35% of the respondents were cleaners, while 25% were waste/collectors and 15% were drivers in the transport unit and those involved in fumigation represented 10% of the respondents. Those in management position represent 10% of the study sample.

As it is observed in Figure 2, 15% of the respondents had worked with Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale for less a year. About 30% of the respondents have worked with the company for a period ranging 1 to 2 years. Majority of the respondents (50%) had stayed in the Metropolis for a period of 2 to 5 years while 5% working with the company for 6 to 10 years. As 50% of the respondents had between 2 to 5 years' experience with the company. It is well-placed to research on these employees on the essence of performance appraisal to the company.



Source: Field Work, 2016.

Figure 2. Duration of Staff with Zoomlion.

6.2. The Effects of Zoomlion Employees' Performance Appraisal on their Performance

The research question pertaining to the effects of Zoomlion employees' performance appraisal on their performance was also asked to solicit responses from the respondents for purposes of clarity. Other variables that assisted in the discussions included importance of employee performance appraisal, how crucial performance appraisal is to employees' future development as well as the role played by appraisers in the performance appraisal process.

6.2.1. Effect of PA on Employees' Performance

Data on Table 2 reveals, significant part of the respondents 24% strongly agreed and 43% agreed thereby confirming that performance appraisal really has effects on employees' performance at Zoomlion Ghana limited. It was however observed that, 15% of the respondents were uncertain on the effects of PA.

Table 2. Effect of PA on Employees' Performance.

Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agreed	24	24%
Agreed	43	43%
Uncertain	15	15%
Strongly disagreed	12	12%
Disagreed	06	06%
Total	100	100%
Mean		2.0700
Chi-Square		68.600 ^a
Std. deviation		.98734

Source: Field Work, 2016.

Simply, the study points to the fact that, PA has effects on employees' performance. This result corroborate with several authors namely ([14], [15], [16], [36]) and so forth. In the case of [14], they held the opinion that, PA has always led to establishing performance standards for employees. [15] on the hand believed PA assists employees understand the scope of their roles based on the job description leading to employees realizing what precisely is expected of them. According to [16], there is careful selection of the suitable methods of measurement through the evaluation process. [36] reiterate the fact that, PA helps in the administration of wages and salaries based on the performance feedback which helps in discovering individual employee's strengths and weaknesses in the work situation.

6.2.2. The Importance of PA to the Management of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale

Table 3 presents data on the importance of PA to the management of Zoomlion. It is shown that 70% of the respondents agreed PA helps in the determination of employee remuneration. The data further indicates that, 80% of the respondents stated the fact that, PA also helps in discovering employees' strengths and weaknesses, whereas 77% of the respondents said the achievement of the relevant feedback as the importance of PA to the management of Zoomlion. Furthermore, 70% of the respondents agreed PA as a monitoring tool for both management and employee. This is of course an important intervention for both employee and the management of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale. Based on these, one may deduce the importance of PA to Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale to include: the determination of employee remuneration; discovering employees' strengths and weaknesses; as well as provision of relevant feedback.

The findings in this section relates to the assertions made by [14], [15] and [16]. To [14], PA helps in setting up of the standards which will be used as the foundation to compare the actual performance of employees in organizations. To [15], PA facilitates the communication of the evaluation standards to all the employees of organisations. As [16] put it, PA entails a continuous process, resulting in serious monitoring exercise throughout the year.

Table 3. The Importance of PA to the management of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale.

Variable/Response	Strongly Disagreed	Agreed	Uncertain	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed
Determination of employee Remuneration	29	41	5	15	10
Discovering employee’s strengths and weaknesses	48	32	2	10	08
Achieving the relevant feedback monitoring tool for both management and employee	57	20	0	10	13
Monitoring tool for both management and employee	44	26	10	15	05
Mean	2.4000				
Chi-square	20.000 ^a				
Std. Deviation	1.16342				

Source: Field Work, 2016.

6.2.3. Performance Appraisal and Employees’ Future Development

On how crucial performance appraisal is to employees’ future development, four variables namely informed decision making, tool for performance measurement, assessment of employee individual performance and judgment on employees’ state of affairs were identified. This is validated

the study as shown on Table 4. All the indicators has P-values less than 1.96 which was the tabular value for the analysis. Thus it is significant to conclude that performance appraisal ensure: informed management decision making; is a tool for performance measurement and assessment; a means of judgement for employees’ state of affairs.

Table 4. Performance Appraisal and Employees’ Future Development.

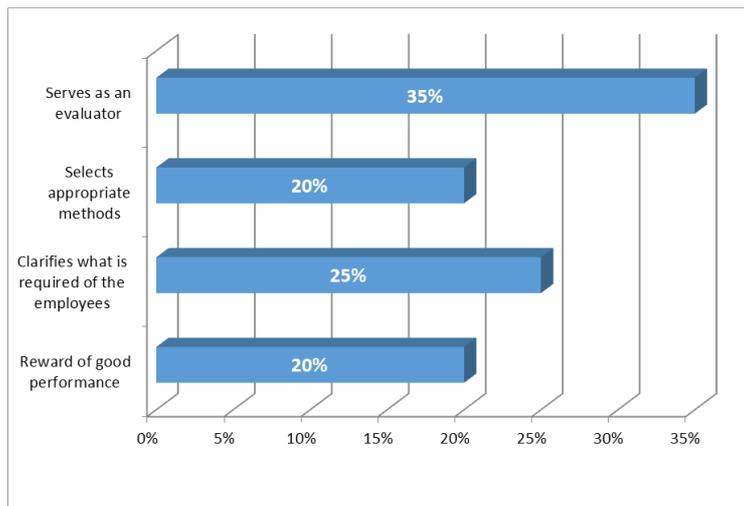
One-Sample Test						
Variables	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Informed decision making	2.0772	99	.000	1.90000	1.7228	21.270
Tool for performance measurement	29.517	99	.000	2.35000	2.1920	2.5080
Assessment of performance	18.750	99	.000	2.12000	1.8957	2.3443
Judgment for employees’ state of affairs	21.270	99	.000	1.90000	1.7228	2.0772

Source: Field Work, 2016

6.2.4. The Role of Appraisers in the Performance Appraisal Process

As observed in Figure 3, 20% of the respondents described the employee performance appraisers as those who reward good performance, 25% of the respondents held the view that, performance appraisers clarify what is required of the employees to ensure improvement in their performance. Other respondents representing 20% appraisers select appropriate

methods of determining rating scale of employees while 35% of the respondents said appraisers serve as evaluators of individual employee productivity in the organization. This assertion therefore finds expression in [29] disposition as they emphasized that, the evaluation of employees’ job performance is an essential human resource practice and of vital importance to organizational performance.



Source: Field Work, 2016.

Figure 3. The Role of Appraisers in the Performance Appraisal Process.

6.3. The Challenges Associated with the Implementation of Zoomlion's Performance Appraisal in Tamale

This research sought to determine the challenges associated with the performance appraisal system of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale.

6.3.1. Encountering Difficulty During Employee Performance Appraisal

Data on Table 5 indicates 67% agree to the assertion that, employee performance appraisal goes with some challenges. Thus, 24% of the respondents strongly agreed and 43% agreed that there are a number of challenges during employee performance appraisal.

Despite the fact that 67% of the employees answered in the affirmative to the above question, some of the respondents representing 10% (strongly disagree) and 8% (strongly) provided an opposing answer to this particular question. Thus, the PA system is fraught with challenges.

Table 5. Encountering Difficulty during Employee Performance Appraisal.

Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agreed	24	24%
Agreed	43	43%
Uncertain	15	15%
Strongly disagreed	10	12%
Disagreed	06	06%
Total	100	100%
Mean	2.0700	
Chi-Square	68.600 ^a	
Std. deviation	.98734	

Source: Field Work, 2016.

6.3.2. The Types of Challenges Affecting the Proper Evaluation of Employee Performance

A number of factors that significantly impede objective

Table 6. Challenges Affecting the Proper Evaluation of Employee Performance.

Variables Deviation	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.	Variance
Appraiser biases towards employees	100	1.00	4.00	2.1200	1.1366	1.278
Transfer of sentiments by appraiser	100	1.00	4.00	2.3400	1.4866	1.658
Variations in reporting PA standards	100	1.00	4.00	1.9200	1.3766	1.648
Appraiser becoming generous or too critical in their assessment	100	1.00	4.00	2.4600	1.9466	1.428
Valid N (listwise)	100					

Source: Field Work, 2016.

Furthermore, the results testified that, appraisers may be generous or too critical in their assessment. When the researcher enquired further, the reasons given was attributed to the poor human relations of some of the senior staff with their subordinates. Other respondents could not hide their envy for those in management position which they described as the elite in the organization. Related to this particular finding is the assertion of [39] which revealed that, certain appraisers may be generous or too critical in their assessment. Therefore, employee perception of fairness is a measure of the effectiveness of the appraisal that is related to the appraisal outcomes ([24]; [25]).

performance of appraisal have been identified for discussion as follows. In the first place, there is the possibility of the appraiser becoming biased towards a particular employee during performance appraisal. [37] revelation directly links to the biases which in the opinion of Meyer et al. are the basic errors that undermine the effectiveness of employee performance appraisal. This explanation creates a peculiar error on the tendency to appraise high or low on all factors due to the impression of the appraiser. According to them, if an employee tends to be conscientious in his/her approach, the appraiser might become biased toward that individual to the extent that he will appraise such appraisees positively on many desirable attributes.

Another challenge is that, aggressive appraisers are more likely to transfer their sentiments on PA process. This will undoubtedly affect the effective implementation of employee performance appraisal. [38] Argument relates to this particular finding. [38] state that, aggressive appraiser may evaluate others based on their own aggressive tendencies. This probably may result in evaluators appraising other employees the same way that the evaluators perceive themselves.

The results also identified the likelihood of variations emerging in reporting PA standards. There is therefore a relation between the views of [33] and the results from the field. [33] identified the fact that, the variations in reporting standards is also likely to pose some challenges for both appraisers and appraisees. In this case, the reporting standards can even be out of place, if senior managers have an opportunity to confirm the markings, make further comments and sign the appraisal, thereby enabling them to compare reporting standards and to identify and counsel any managers who appear to be too generous or too harsh in their reporting.

6.4. Summary of the Findings

Most of the respondents (employees) especially, those in the cleaning and sweeping categories are without formal education, but reasonable number have basic education as their highest educational qualification. However, those in management positions had tertiary educational qualifications such as University Degrees. The study again reveals that majority of the employees were found to be working with the organization for the period ranging between 2 to 5 years. Most of the employees according to the study have ever been appraised.

The employees of Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale were aware of PA since most of the employee said they have ever been appraised to assess their performance. Relevant feedback is provided at all times by the PA system as part of effective HRM practices leading to employee improved performance.

It was observed that, PA sets out principles to compare the actual performance of employees, clarifies scope of employee roles, selects suitable methods and also serves as major source of information on the determination of employees' performance. The importance of the PA includes the determination of employee remuneration, discovering employee's strengths and weaknesses, achieving the relevant feedback and also used as a monitoring tool for both management and employee.

The results further indicate that, the role of the appraisers were: they reward for good performance; clarify what is required of the employees; select appropriate methods and serve as evaluators of the performance of the employees.

Appraiser biases towards employees, transfer of sentiments by appraiser, variations in reporting PA standards and the possibility of the appraiser becoming generous or too critical in their assessment were notable challenges. Also the variations in reporting PA standards according to the study are likely to cause errors capable of rendering the PA ineffective, inconsistencies in the PA system, distortions in PA results and vague performance standards.

7. Conclusion

Performance appraisal is an essential measure to enhance employees' performance in Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale. For the conduct of PA has led to the setting out of principles to compare the actual performance of employees, clarifying scope of employee roles, selecting suitable methods and also serves as major source of information on the determination of employees' performance, the company to make it a top priority. Relevant feedback is provided by the PA system as part of effective HRM practices leading to employee improved performance.

The company's PA system has also led to the determination of employee remuneration, discovering employee's strengths and weaknesses, achieving the relevant feedback and also used a monitoring tool for both management and employee. Meanwhile, the PA system has been characterized by challenges such as appraiser biases towards employees, transfer of sentiments by appraiser, variations in reporting PA standards and the possibility of the appraiser becoming generous or too critical in their assessment.

To maximize the benefits of PA, efforts should be made to bring the appraiser and appraisees into contact to discuss future target, organize orientation for both appraiser and appraisees PA data should be made available to all parties in the PA process and establishing strong relationship between a good performance appraisal system and productivity are the obvious ways by which the challenges facing the employee performance appraisal system could be

addressed.

8. Recommendations of the Study

In order to strengthen the effectiveness of employee performance appraisal for improved organizational performance, the following recommendations are essential for adoption by the management of Zoomlion Ghana limited:

Since some of the employees have never been appraised, efforts should be made to encourage supervisors who are often tasked as appraiser should regularly ensure that all employees are included in the appraisal process.

Also, supervisors in charge of the evaluation of the employees should be assisted to go for further studies and other refresher courses to equip them of the various processes of the PA system of the company.

Since majority of the employees do not have formal education, they are most cases poorly informed, hence the management of the company should have regular session for the illiterate employees for purposes of informing them on very relevant issues including PA system.

Given that, relevant feedback is provided by the PA system, the feedback should be studied and concerns raised in the feedback are incorporated into HRM practices so as to ensure improved employee performance.

To further improve on the determination of employee remuneration, the company should intensify their efforts on the PA so as to help discover employees' weaknesses as a panacea to improving on the strengths of the employees.

With regards to challenges such as appraiser biases towards employees and transfer of sentiments by appraiser, there should be arrangement between appraiser and appraisees to discuss future targets as well as organizing orientation for the supervisors and the employees.

Other recommendations such as making appraisal data available to all parties in the PA process and establishing strong relationship between good performance appraisal systems should be adopted with the aim of improving on the general performance of employees of the Zoomlion Ghana Limited in Tamale.

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