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# FACTORS MITIGATING EFFECTIVE PERFOMANCE MANAGEMENT IN PARASTATALS OPERATING IN MASVINGO URBAN DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

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**ABSTRACT**

The study sought to explore and analyze factors mitigating effective performance management in parastatals operating within the confines of Masvingo urban. It attempted to establish whether performance management; a key strategy of human resource management, with its strong underpinnings on performance appraisal, training and development, is achieving its intended purposes. The study being a survey research comprised of a cross –sectional design in relation to which data were collected by questionnaires and structured interviews on more than one case and at a single point in time and which were then examined to detect patterns of association. Purposive sampling was done to ensure representation of both management and employees in the selected parastatals. A total of thirty questionnaires were sent to management while another sixty were sent to employees. Structured interviews were carried out with a further twelve members from management and twenty four from the shop floor across the parastatals. A pilot study was carried out at one of the parastatals which did not form part of the sample. Data from both interviews and questionnaires were analyzed by categorizing them into emerging themes for presentation and discussion. The study found out that rater bias, inadequate funding to meet employee training needs, misconceptions about the purposes of appraising performance among employees ,the valence of performance related rewards ,improper objectives , sporadic feedback and ineffective managerial counseling were the main factors mitigating the effectiveness of performance management systems in parastatals. The researchers recommend that top

management should avail funding to meet employee training needs and that line managers be trained on how to effectively manage employee performance.

**Key words:** Rater, Appraisal, Performance, Management, Parastatal.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Performance management was adopted in government parastatals with the same spirit that saw its adoption in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Module Two developed by the Manpower Planning and Development Agency of the Public Service Commission identified that, among others, the following were major weaknesses of the Zimbabwe public service;

- Public servants were criticized for not being result oriented. They were blamed for focusing on processes rather than on products.
- They were also blamed for poor attitude to work, lack of performance management culture and for duplicating services.
- Public servants were alleged to be arrogant, insensitive, poor communicators and being prone to favoritism.
- They were criticized for low motivation and for turning a blind eye to the principles of merit and procedural fairness in appointments and promotions.
- The public service was also accused of being secretive and lacking in transparency

In order to address these shortcomings, performance management had to be adopted in both public institutions and parastatals as a correctional tool to bring about the desired changes.

Armstrong and Baron, (1998) define performance management as a strategic and integrated approach to increasing the effectiveness of organizations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors. The concept of, performance management, first used by Beer and Ruh (1976), has been the most significant development in the sphere of human resource management (HRM) in recent times, (Kohli and Deb 2008).They proceed to assert that it was not recognized as a distinctive approach until the mid-eighties, growing to reach the opinion that a more continuous and integrated approach was needed to manage and reward performance. This meant a shift from ' an almost exclusive emphasis on reward driven systems, based on individual performance related pay and quantifiable objectives, towards more rounded systems of performance management with a stronger developmental focus', (Bach 2005).

Performance management therefore helps organizations manage consistent performance in a manner which holds employees and managers accountable for supporting organizational objectives and strategy, successfully fulfilling assigned job responsibilities, and accomplishing individual performance goals, (Kohli and Deb 2008). Its value is hinged upon the systematic integration of individual employee contributions to the overall performance of the organization. Trends in performance management are moving towards increased ownership of the process with employees being assigned greater responsibility for establishing their own performance goals and for obtaining feedback on their performance, (Bach 2005).

While some performance management systems are development driven others are reward driven. Houldsworth, (2003) reported that seventy seven percent of British organizations link performance assessments with pay and it is becoming evident that many organizations are trying to achieve both developmental and reward outcomes. She also contrasts systems driven by either performance development or performance measurement , finding that the real experience of developmental performance management is that it is motivational, encourages time spent with the line manager, encourages two-way communication and is an opportunity to align roles and training with business needs (Torrington et al 2008). They proceed to observe that where there is a measurement focus, performance management is seen as judgmental ,a chance to assess and get rid of employees, emphasizes control and getting more out of staff, raises false expectations and is a way to manage the salaries bill.

Kohli and Deb (2005) summarize the philosophy behind performance management into six core strategies, viz:

- Clarify job responsibilities and clearly state agreed-upon goals (or performance expectations/performance standards/performance criteria).

- Communicate regularly by giving and receiving feedback throughout the year on performance, goals, directions, and changing expectations.
- Counsel to improve performance problems and /or develop employee performance.
- Compare performance to agreed-upon goals periodically and evaluate results.
- Cultivate continuous learning, employee growth, and development.
- Celebrate exemplary performance.

  Performance management therefore preaches a more proactive approach to HRM, a conducive work culture and a management thrust that is value- based.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Performance discrepancies between the actual and expected outcomes have been the main reason why performance appraisal was introduced in Zimbabwean parastatals. Literature from the public media and human resource departments in parastatals indicate that the program has not been successful since its inception. A number of causal factors, amongst which are its failure to link meaningful rewards to performance, have been cited. It is against this background that the researchers felt the need for a thorough analysis into the factors mitigating effective performance management in the parastatals.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Aim**

This study is aimed at exploring factors mitigating the effective implementation of performance management systems in parastatals based in Masvingo urban with a view to inform top management on strategies to resuscitate the efficacy of this management tool to enhance effective job delivery .

**Objectives**

The following study objectives guide discussions in this study:

- To examine and document factors that mitigate the effective implementation of performance management in parastatals.

- To examine the implications of these factors on the effective implementation of the process.
- To generate recommendations to top management regarding effective monitoring of the performance management system in their respective organizations.

## THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Storey, (2005) as quoted by Kohli and Deb (2008) defines performance management as including the whole process of agreeing goals and objectives (which may vary in their degree of specificity), providing feedback, offering coaching and advice and motivating staff to perform at a high level. Performance appraisal however is only one part, albeit the key component of a more systematic process of performance management .The objective of performance management is to try and integrate human resource policies and business strategies within a broader organizational context. This objective, coupled with a plethora of problems that dogged performance appraisal, saw a shift of emphasis from performance appraisal to performance management.

Generally, performance management is premised on the view that performance is more than ability and motivation. Goals, despite enabling employees understand what is expected of them, also help provide motivation. The Goal Setting Theory developed by Locke in 1968 and further developed by Locke and Latham in 1990 forms the basis of performance management. Research to date suggests that for goals to be motivating, they must be sufficiently specific, challenging but not impossible and yet set participatively (Torrington et al 2008). Employees often examine whether their current level of performance is sufficient to achieve the goals or not. If they find that their goals will not be achieved by their current behaviour, they will either modify their behaviour, or choose more realizable goals, (Kohli and Deb 2008). They insist that, if managers translate organizational goals for employees as being worthwhile for employees to accept and pursue, they can harness a source of motivation to perform, and direct it for securing strategic outcomes. Lawler (1995) posits that when setting goals, objective performance measures have been shown to be better motivators than subjective measures, as employees assign them higher credibility and typically accept their validity.

The other theoretical base for performance management is the expectancy theory which states that individuals will be motivated to act provided they expect to be able to achieve the goals set, believe that achieving the goals will lead to other rewards and believe that the rewards on offer are valued,(Vroom,1964) . Performance therefore becomes a product of individual competencies, efforts, and motivation to excel. The higher the effort-performance-reward linkages, higher shall be the attractiveness of the process to perform better and better ( Kohli and Deb 2008). They proceed to maintain that the two aforementioned theories predict that goal setting can motivate and improve employee performance if:

- Significant rewards can be given and tied to performance.
- Employees are informed as to how rewards are given.
- Managers are willing to explain and support the reward system.
- Rewards can vary depending on performance.
- Performance can be objectively and inclusively measured.
- Meaningful performance appraisal sessions can take place.
- High levels of trust exist between managers and employees.

More so, an understanding of this study is better informed through the conceptual underpinnings of management by objectives (MBO). MBO predates human resource management and derives from a period when strategic thinking and the integration of organizational objectives were being emphasized by management writers (Price, 2001). The concept of MBO developed by Drucker (1954) as cited by Armstrong and Baron, (1998), is "a process whereby the superior and subordinate jointly identify its [organization] common goals, define each individual's major areas of responsibility in terms of results expected of him/ her and use these measures as guides for operating the unit and assessing the contributions of each of its members" (Bhatia 2010:248,249). The technique seeks to establish individual performance objectives which are tangible, measurable and verifiable while such objectives are derived or cascaded from organizational goals; (Price 2001).

One of the major objectives of MBO, like any other performance appraisal method, is the measurement and judgment of employee performance so that rewards can be decided on the basis of that performance. Once the employee's job and performance criteria are defined, frequent review meetings between the superior and the subordinate are necessary to help assess progress, reinforce strengths and stem out weaknesses and constraints. Price, (2001) quotes Liz Hughes, executive director of Office Team, as saying that while it is important for managers to provide ongoing feedback, they should not wait until the formal review to recognize excellent work or raise concerns about weak performance. And in order for the reviews to be meaningful, she proffers the following five tips:

- Managers should have and adhere to a standard review schedule while more frequent review meetings should be considered for new or less experienced employees.
- There is need to always consult experts on the existence of policies for discussing compensation, documenting the meetings and for following up.
- Managers should meet privately with each employee for the review and should be very fair and consistent.
- Employee participation should be encouraged through asking them to prepare a list of accomplishments, obstacles and goals. The list needs to be reviewed before the meeting and then used as basis for discussion.
- Management should develop an action plan that would enable even the best employee to improve in some way.

It implies that without an in-built rater-ratee mechanism for feedback, the whole purpose of appraisal is defeated and doomed from the start. A joint employee-manager review therefore not only ensures information sharing but keeps the manager up to date on employee progress while the employee needs to be kept up to date on organizational changes that have an impact on the agreed objectives (Torrington et al 2008). It is, however, important that this paper embraces Dessler (2011:308)'s assessment of the whole concept of performance management when he says that "appraising performance is both a difficult and an essential supervisory skill." This seems to suggest that despite performance appraisal being an important organizational goal-oriented task; it is not foolproof, as it is littered with problems of its own. Harris (2009, posits that the issue of judging employee performance is suspect since there are possibilities for an appraiser to respond to malice or prejudice when making assessments. Although appraisals can never be free of a subjective element, problems that arise are remedial by effective training and clear communication of the objectives and importance of the appraisal process ( Bach, 2005).

This shows that performance appraisals, though noble, are fraught with controversies pertaining to; their intended purposes, issues of subjectivity when making judgments, short term versus long term orientation, being reward or development- driven among other challenges. Harris (2009) is quite insightful by admitting that the problem with performance appraisal is not only that there are too many stakeholders who want it to do contradictory things but also that some might see performance management as a way of creating a false consciousness among staff, which blinds employees to the ways in which they are being manipulated and exploited.

However while the main purpose of performance appraisal has continued to oscillate between a concern with short-term performance as exemplified by MBO and a more developmental orientation, human resource specialists do welcome increased use of appraisal because the establishment of an appraisal system represents the systematic collection of information about employees which provides the bedrock of all HR practice (Bach 2005). It is with these theoretical and conceptual underpinnings that this study sought to unravel the factors that mitigate effective performance management in parastatals operating in Masvingo urban district.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

### Population and sample

In carrying out this study, the population comprised of all managerial and non managerial employees in the eight parastatals operating in Masvingo urban district. The total population comprised of four hundred employees. Of these, sixty held managerial positions while the rest were non managerial. Such a trend could be explained by the fact that since Masvingo is the provincial capital, a good number of those in management are headquartered there. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that both managerial and non managerial employees across the parastatal divide receive a fair representation. Questionnaires were administered to thirty managerial and sixty non managerial employees, while structured interviews were carried out on twelve managerial and twenty four non managerial employees.

**Research design and data collection procedure**

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. Research design triangulation helps increase the validity and reliability of results by reducing chances of systematic bias. The study being a survey research comprised of a cross –sectional design in relation to which data were collected by questionnaires and structured interviews on more than one case and at a single point in time and which were then examined to detect patterns of association. Purposive sampling was done to ensure representation of both management and employees in the selected parastatals. Data was collected through hand delivered questionnaires, and structured interviews were targeted at both managerial and non managerial employees.

**Data analysis**

Data from both interviews and questionnaires were categorized into emerging themes for presentation and discussion. Data collected was presented using simple tables. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. In this category, percentiles were mainly used to analyze data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) application.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

**Age-Sex of Respondents**

The research drew respondents from all sexes with males being the modal sex in both managerial and non managerial categories (65 % as compared to 35 %).Their ages ranged from below 20 years to 60 years. All respondents were in the productive range. Table 1 below summarizes the age-sex profile of respondents:

**Table 1: Age-Sex of Respondents**

| Age group | Males | Females |
|---|---|---|
| 20 and below | 3 | 5 |
| 21-30 | 15 | 12 |
| 31-40 | 30 | 15 |
| 41-50 | 24 | 7 |
| 51-60 | 10 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 82 | 44 |

Source: Survey 2012

## Educational Qualifications

Respondents of varying educational backgrounds were drawn. Of these, 15% had 'O' level certificates while 20% had gone up to 'A' level. The bulk of our respondents, amounting to 50%, were holders of either a professional certificate or diploma. Only 15% were degreed and a majority of these were in managerial positions. It portrays a qualified staff compliment that has a potential to perform optimally, if effective performance management systems are put in place.

## MITIGATING FACTORS

Overwhelming evidence from interviewees and respondents reflected discontentment in the manner in which performance management was done, with the majority feeling that it was an imposed system that had failed to serve its purpose. The generally shared view for the whole process of performance management as summed up by one employee was that it was "a misunderstood managerial tool riddled with subjectivity and very often used vindictively by line managers ". Management on the other hand, considered it to be a worthwhile exercise short circuited by lack of funding. Several mitigating factors were cited to authenticate these positions, and these have been broken down into thematic arguments as given below:

**Formulation of Objectives**

Eighty five percent (85%) of the respondents confirmed that corporate goals are cascaded down to the unit, team and individual levels. In 95% of the parastatals, it was the duty of some national or regional committee comprising of human resource personnel and some top management that decides on objectives for the various departments and units in the organization. Sixty percent of the respondents also admitted that targets or goals for departments, units or individuals are often communicated very late into the year due to red tape .In most of the parastatals employees in various units or sections were free to add to the preset objectives in consultation with their line managers, a thing that is rarely done. Fifty percent of the respondents confirmed that some of the objectives were not task specific, especially for those jobs requiring expertise and often manned by very few individuals like Information Technology personnel. Apart from that, most managers complained that performance management had increased their work load and had become a necessary evil of work that has to be minimized.

**Lack of Training**

The majority of employees and managers who joined these parastatals after the introduction of performance management bemoaned the dearth of workshops to induct them on the appraisal system. Appraisees pointed out that since joining these parastatals several years back, they had not been properly inducted to embrace the performance management process. *"Information on how to complete appraisal forms is gathered from peers who have been in service for long. Both management and us consider it as a form filling process that is requisite if one is to get a performance bonus at the end of the year. What we need are induction workshops to train new staff and refresher courses for the old guard,"* summed up one employee who had been employed for six years in one of the parastatals. This observation portrays the whole performance management process as a bureaucratic farce with minimal value addition in as far as enhancing performance at the work place is concerned.

Both management and employees blamed this development on the unavailability of funds to conduct workshops. Interviewees commented that lack of supportive organizational and administrative contexts for performance management negates efforts towards increasing productivity and quality in service delivery. To most appraisees, performance management has been reduced to a mere ritual characterized by a lot of posturing.

Thirty percent (30%) of the interviewees concurred that their immediate supervisors were not competent enough to coach them on how to develop their skills, while seventy percent of the managers confirmed that they were not bold enough to give candid feedback to subordinates for fear of reprisals. A majority of those in management admitted that they did shudder at playing god during review sessions and often rate leniently towards year end to make sure all appraisees get entitled to a bonus .Forty percent of the employees confirmed that performance appraisals were used vindictively by management to 'fine tune' trouble makers and that the appraiser's rating was the final in situations were appraisees rate themselves first.

**The Performance Gap**

Carrel et al (1995) posit that, one of the reasons for performance appraisal is to bridge the gap between actual and desired performance, better known as the performance gap. Some respondents claim that work plans, reviews and ratings were often done the same time, towards year end, a time when reports will be expected from higher offices. This nullifies the efficacy of an otherwise noble process. Sixty eight (68%) percent of appraisers did admit that they held no discussions with subordinates on training needs identification. The section, upon which the whole system hinges, is at times left undone or as one respondent puts it;

*"We just write what comes to mind, since every section has to be filled."*

Respondents admitted that since it was the duty of head office to determine training in critical areas and that since funding was an issue, it was sheer waste of time discussing employee training needs.

**The Performance –reward Relationship**

Fifty five percent of the respondents agreed that, though a reward element is attached to those scoring above a certain threshold, the rewards were of no valence. This could be a result of the size of the incremental or 'notch'. Appraisees in over eighty percent of the parastatals indicated that there was little motivation to perform exceptionally since most line managers would make sure that all employees are rated favorably in order for them to be entitled to a thirteenth cheque or a performance related salary increment.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Research findings were quite overwhelming. The whole process of performance management is now perceived as a necessary evil of work life that should be minimized rather than an important process that achieves key individual and organizational outcomes, (Pulakos 2004). While behavioural and results expectations cascaded from head office were generally tied to most parastatals' strategic direction ,most line managers would either discuss them with appraisees very late into the year or do such discussions together with the first review ,sometime around midyear . Pre-set objectives, however, can be a constraining factor in such a rapidly changing business context ,as they remind one of the trap of setting measurable targets, precisely because they are measurable and satisfy the system, rather than because they are most important to the organization( Torrington et al, 2008). Bohlander and Snell (2004), posit that before an appraisal is conducted, the standards by which performance is to be evaluated should be clearly defined and communicated to the employees. They proceed to assert that properly established performance standards help translate organizational goals and objectives into job requirements that convey acceptable and unacceptable levels of performance to employees .Short circuiting this first critical but mutual stage in the performance planning process relegates the whole cycle into a stage managed and futile process that even fails to objectively inform the forthcoming stages.

Research findings did confirm that objectives for specialized tasks like systems support personnel often manned by either a single employee or just a handful, were often too general with most line managers lacking the expertise to coach subordinates on how to develop their skills. This scenario could be reflective of either hurried performance planning from the top or lack of focus, either of which will cost organizations dearly in the long run. This resonates very well with Kohli and Deb's (2011) observation that while Indian companies tend to spend thirty percent time on planning and seventy percent on execution, their multinational counterparts usually spend seventy percent time on planning and the remainder on execution. In addition, research has shown that very difficult (but attainable) goals lead to more effective performance outcomes than moderately difficult goals, (Pulakos, 2004)

Lack of proper training on the part of line managers on which much of the monitoring and feedback has been devolved, and who in turn have large spans of control has relegated the whole process to a sheer waste of valuable working time and resources . This contrasts Carrel et al (1995)'s insistence that appraisers need training on the following topics; the purpose of performance appraisal, how to avoid rating biases, the ethics of appraisals, how to conduct effective interviews among others. The shift from performance appraisal to performance management brought much complexity to the system, central of which is the increased use of competency-based assessment which is quite difficult to use effectively .Quoting Strebler et al (2001),Bach(2005) posits that, behaviours such as ' leadership' are hard to define and this has led to considerable skepticism among managers about the value of competencies in judging performance, although they are more suited to identifying development needs.

Supervisors need to be familiar with basic appraisal techniques, understand and avoid problems that can cripple appraisals, and know how to conduct appraisals fairly (Dessler, 2004). However, most appraisers and appraisees in this study had no meaningful induction on the administration and significance of appraisals respectively. The other complication was that performance management in the organizations under study had to achieve dual purposes of decision making and employee development. Performance management used for decision making uses appraisal information as basis for promotion, pay increases, among others while that focusing on development uses such information to guide training, job experiences, mentoring and so on. These two objectives however are rarely supported by a single system (Pulakos, 2004). As a result, the process became politicized, reinforcing patronage rather than meritocracy. Since ratings have a bearing on pay, managers tend to use them for their own purposes. Some use them vindictively to settle scores with some subordinates .On the other hand, some managers may be reluctant to give candid feedback for fear of reprisal or damaging relationships with the very individuals they count on to get work done (Pulakos 2004). In most of the parastatals, a culture of entitlement that entrenches the notion of a bonus or associated performance –related salary adjustment once appraisals have been done has become so rooted among employees that it has become extremely difficult for management to do otherwise. However the most common response to problems of subjectivity and rater bias is to redouble training efforts to ensure that managers are trained in conducting appraisals, to recognize good and bad performance, and be aware of the sources of potential bias (Bach 2005).

One of the numerous reasons that Cole (1997), identified as justifying the adoption of performance appraisal is the need to identify an individual's current level of performance and to enable employees improve their performance. This becomes more development than reward driven. This can only be achieved if the performance gap is properly diagnosed. However, the admission by a significant number of respondents that work plans, reviews and ratings were often done late into the year poses some challenge. It is not sufficient to review progress towards the end of the performance management process. Individuals must be provided with an opportunity to check their performance at regular intervals so that obstacles can be identified (Price2001). Pulakos (2004), opines that while providing periodic feedback about day -to-day accomplishments is very valuable, most managers avoid that because they do not know how to deliver it productively in ways that will minimize employee defensiveness .Despite checking on progress, such meetings enable the two parties decide on what other objectives should be added, changed or deleted. Torrington et al (2008), suggest that there may well be unforeseen barriers to the agreed performance which the manager needs to deal with, and sometimes the situation will demand that the expected performance needs to be revised .It is imperative that such ongoing reviews penciled towards midyear for most parastatals not only provides line management with the opportunity to confirm that the employee is on the right track but makes it possible for them to redirect where necessary. Kohli and Deb (2004) rightly observed that without performance counseling, it would not be inappropriate to say that appraisal is at best, a ritual.

Most respondents admitted that their training needs were not met due to overwhelmed training budgets and gross underfunding. Instead, the study confirmed that generalized training on issues addressing organization-wide agendas such as Health and Safety, First Aid, among others were common. As a result appraisee performance shortfalls remain unaddressed. Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1996), insist that employees must be given a realistic overview of their job performance.

While they should be positively informed about where their performance falls short, it is particularly important to correct the unsatisfactory part of the work performance through training and guidance. Since employee training needs are given little regard and are often times left unattended, the very bedrock upon which development driven appraisals are premised is but compromised. Strebler (2004), as cited by Harris (2009), notes that although dealing with poor performance is low on the agenda of many organizations, the failure to do so has a negative impact on the motivation of other staff and may contribute to higher labor turnover.

Performance management in these organizations is expected to do contradictory things that intend to appease differing stakeholder philosophies, a thing that is theoretically possible but not practical. In all the organizations under study, performance management was linked to some form of performance related rewards. Despite being erratic, a considerable number of employees considered the element of pay as being of no valence. Literature from the United States also raises a lot of concern about the legal ramifications of attaching pay to performance management systems. Pulakos's (2004) observation is true that ratings used for decision making (or reward-driven appraisals) tend to be lenient while those for development purposes are more reflective on both employee and development needs. As a result, Armstrong's (2010) advice that development and pay review meetings be held on separate dates becomes insightful if such double barreled systems are to be meaningful .More so, other forms of reward than money could even be more satisfying. Non monetary rewards such as recognition, promotion, and praise among others could be roped into the system in order to make it more holistic.

## CONCLUSION

Although adoption of performance management systems in parastatals was a noble move aimed at arresting employee inefficiencies in these bureaucratic institutions, both employees and management now regard the system as a necessary evil and as a mandatory form filling ritual. The system, which is compromised by its double barreled nature that attempts to address both reward and employee development needs is seriously short circuited at implementation .Line managers who happen to be the weakest link in the equation, not only lack ownership, but tend to use the system for their own purposes ,especially as it impacts on pay. Failure by top management to provide funding to address employee performance inefficiencies not only relegates the system to the dustbins of rote formalism but has been interpreted as lack of commitment by the implementers. While some employees saw no valence in the rewards attached to appraisals, in most of the parastatals, a culture of entitlement that entrenches the notion of a bonus or associated performance –related salary adjustment once appraisals have been done has become so rooted among employees that it has become extremely difficult for management to do otherwise.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above findings the researchers would like to suggest the following recommendations:

- Top management in the parastatals should consider reducing line managers' spans of control as well as thoroughly departmentalizing tasks to enable line managers to effectively supervise and coach subordinates.
- Line managers, in collaboration with Human resource departments, should collate information on employee performance gaps and make sure that such performance inefficiencies are met by way of funding either on- or off-the job training schemes.
- Top management in these parastatals should consider redoubling training efforts for both line and middle management to enhance their skills in conducting performance counseling as well as avoiding problems of rater bias.
- If top management seriously considers to ontinue with a double barreled performance management philosophy, then they should decouple i.e. hold development and pay review meetings on separate dates.
- Frequent performance reviews should be done to constantly redirect and monitor employee performance.
- The pre-setting of performance goals should be devolved to line management in order to increase their sense of ownership and discretion since some goals set for individuals may be dependent on a team or may need constant reviewing as a result of change processes.

- Non monetary rewards should also be tied to performance ratings while performance related rewards should be increased in order to give them valence.

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