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Evaluation Criteria for Performance Appraisal of faculty Members

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Abstract

“Evaluation criteria for performance appraisal of faculty members” is an interdisciplinary study situated in between the concern for the quality of the education process and efficient human resources management. These two needs (quality in education and efficiency in the management of human resources) can be addressed through the introduction of a system of performance appraisal for faculty members. The purpose of the present study is to create a valid and objective tool of evaluating and appraising faculty members.

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1. Introduction

Performance appraisal has become a term used for a variety of activities through which organizations seek to assess employees and develop their competence, improve performance, and allocate rewards (Fletcher, 2001). The literature is abundant in studies regarding performance appraisal, performance review, performance evaluation, performance assessment, performance measurement, employee evaluation, personnel review, staff assessment, service rating, etc. (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Most of them, however, refer to the for profit organizations. The high-paced evolution of science and technology, the implementation of new technologies and the globalization of competitive market enhance the need for evaluation of the personnel inside organizations (Bogathy, 2007).

Grote (2002) identified the following purposes of performance appraisal: Providing feedback to employees about their performance, facilitating decisions concerning pay increases, promotions, layoffs; encouraging performance improvement; setting and measuring goals; determining individual and organizational training and development

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needs; confirming that good hiring decisions are being made; provide legal support for personnel decisions; improving overall organizational performance. Within the educational system, another need joins the aforementioned ones: the ethical need to bring the education to a higher level of performance.

Generally speaking, performance appraisal serves two basic purposes: the first is evaluative (or administrative) as the term “appraisal” implies, and the second is developmental (Rynes, Gerhart, & Parks, 2005)

The budgets for institutions of higher education have high labor content and their budgets are primarily devoted to personnel expenses (Johnsrud, 2002). Their success significantly relies upon superior faculty, administrators, and staff. Nevertheless, colleges and universities are not known for their consideration of human resource issues as they pertain to the quality of work life on campus for their employees.

The purpose of the present study is to create a valid and objective tool of evaluating and appraising faculty members. The tool offers to accurately and exhaustively evaluate the performance appraisal of faculty members, so that the attained results are relevant to both the subject of the evaluation, highlighting the areas that need improving and the students, who are the final recipients of the education process.

As a secondary objective, the present study aims to find and evaluate differences between the perception of the students and the perception of the professors in understanding the performance of faculty members. For this present study, the method of qualitative analysis was used.

2. Performance rating method

To identify the criteria for performance appraisal of faculty members, the behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS) will be used. This instrument allows an objective evaluation, it can be easily handled by unexperienced evaluators (such as students) and it can effortlessly differentiate between a good faculty member and a less than satisfactory one (Wiersma, U.J., Berg, P.T van den, Latham, G.P., 1992).

The evaluation tool was elaborated according to the steps recommended in the literature (Pitariu, 2000):

Step I: A group of subject matter experts – faculty and students - was requested to write a set of factors (dimensions) that allows assessment of a faculty as specialist. The generated dimensions were put together, the redundant ones were eliminated and the list was debated once more with the request to create explanatory definitions for each of the dimensions. The procedure was repeated with two groups of subject matter experts in order to increase objectivity.

Step II: The list of dimensions, along with their definitions was attributed to a group of 30 specialists (faculty members and students) with the indication to provide one or two examples that described a behavior of high, medium and inferior professional performance for each dimensions. After the examples were collected, they were synthesized in a list; the redundant and monotonous examples were removed.

Step III: A list of the dimensions and their definitions and another list of examples of behaviors were given to a new group of experts (30 individuals). The items on the list were arranged randomly. The task of this group was to assign each behavioral example to the category or dimension it belongs to. Only the items (examples) with a re-allocation success rate of 67% were kept.

Step IV: The kept items were grouped according to dimensions and a leaflet was put together. The leaflet contained a page of instructions followed by as many pages as dimensions identified. Each dimension and its definition are located in the upper side of the page, followed by the items, written down in a random order. A group of approximately 20 experts and evaluators (professors and students) was asked to individually grade each item, on a scale from one to nine. It is a balancing action and one of rating behavioral anchors. Out of the final list of items, the median and the standard deviation were calculated. The items chosen for the final scale possess the following qualities: they have medial values that cover almost entirely the length of the scale and they have a small standard deviation.

3. Participants

The group of subject matter experts consisted of faculty members and students. The motivation behind selecting students to be a part of the experts is that they are the recipients of the educational process and thus, they are important in evaluating the performance of faculty members.

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