

Leadership Performance Appraisal: Implications for Administrative Effectiveness of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Rivers State Office, 2012-2023

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Abstract

This study examined the leadership performance appraisal processes of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Rivers State Office. Four(4) objectives, and four(4) research questions guided the study. Equity theory and the expectancy theory were adopted as the theoretical framework for this study. The descriptive survey research design was employed, and data were collected through the distribution of structured closed-ended questionnaires. A sample size of 345 representing 92.75% was drawn from a total population of 2,500 employees' of the NDDC Rivers State office using a purposive sampling technique. A validated 20 items instrument titled "Leadership Performance Appraisal for effective administration of NDDC Rivers State Office" with a Reliability coefficient of 0.78 was used for data generation. The research questions were answered using %, \bar{x} , and standard deviations and the findings revealed inter-alia areas for improvement in the leadership performance appraisal process, including stakeholder involvement, bias and transparency, individual differences, among others. The study concluded that the current appraisal practices for leadership performance in the NDDC Rivers State Office had positive implications for improvement. However, challenges such as rater bias, inconsistency, lack of transparency, and limited employee participation were identified. The following recommendations were therefore made: stakeholder involvement, addressing challenges, considering individual differences and contextual factors, and increasing employee participation to enhance leadership performance evaluation. The study made these contributions to knowledge through the provision of empirical evidence in specific context, identification of specific challenges and areas for improvement among others.

INTRODUCTION

The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) is a Nigerian government agency established in 2000 with a mandate to facilitate the sustainable development of the oil-rich Niger Delta region. The region which consists of nine Nigerian states (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers), is home to vast oil and gas reserves. It was established with the primary objective of addressing the developmental challenges faced by the Niger Delta region, which include environmental degradation, infrastructural deficiencies, social inequities, and economic disparities.

The NDDC operates zonal offices to ensure proximity and efficient service delivery. The Rivers State Office is one of the zonal offices responsible for coordinating and executing development projects within its jurisdiction. Effective leaders provide a clear vision and direction for the organization, defining goals, setting priorities, and developing a strategic roadmap (Cummings, 2018). They possess strong analytical and decision-making skills, allowing them to make informed choices (Northouse, 2018). Leaders also inspire and motivate employees, building a positive work environment and fostering a culture of commitment and high performance (Avolio *et al.*, 2009). Open communication and collaboration are promoted by effective leaders, creating effective teamwork and coordination (DuBrin, 2017).

Leaders play a crucial role in strategic planning and resource management by identifying priorities, allocating resources effectively, and ensuring efficient utilization of funds and assets (Kotter, 2013). They are skilled in managing change and navigating uncertainty, allowing the organization to respond and thrive in a dynamic context (Kotter, 2012). Effective leaders also set the tone for accountability and ethical behavior, fostering trust and integrity within the organization (Northouse, 2018). Overall, effective leadership is essential for the success of the NDDC Rivers State Office, supporting the achievement of objectives and driving organizational performance in its pursuit of sustainable development in the Niger Delta region. Performance appraisal plays a significant role in assessing leadership effectiveness, improving employee performance, and enhancing overall organizational outcomes. Performance appraisal provides a valuable opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders within the organization. By assessing leadership behaviors, competencies, and outcomes, organizations can identify areas where leaders excel and areas where improvement is needed (Lussier & Achua, 2015; Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009).

This assessment helps in recognizing effective leaders, pinpointing areas for development, and identifying potential future leaders (Dessler & Varkkey, 2019). Through performance appraisal, organizations can determine if leaders are effectively aligning their teams with organizational goals, fostering a positive work culture, and promoting employee development. Performance appraisal serves as a tool for improving employee performance. It provides constructive feedback to employees, highlighting their strengths and areas in need of improvement (Latham & Wexley, 2020). By setting clear performance expectations and providing regular feedback, employees become aware of what is expected from them and can take necessary actions to enhance their performance (Robbins & Coulter, 2018). Appraisals also help in identifying training and

development needs of employees, enabling organizations to provide targeted learning opportunities to enhance their skills and capabilities (Dessler & Varkkey, 2019). Through performance appraisal, leaders can engage in coaching and mentoring conversations to support their employees' growth and help them overcome performance challenges (London & Smither, 2019).

Effective performance appraisal contributes to enhancing overall organizational outcomes. By aligning individual performance with organizational goals, appraisals ensure that employees' efforts are directed towards achieving desired outcomes (Cascio, 2018). Performance appraisal can also identify key areas where employees' performance is excelling, leading to the recognition of exceptional achievements and reinforcing a culture of excellence (Robbins & Coulter, 2018). Additionally, performance appraisal helps in identifying performance gaps and areas where organizational resources can be allocated more effectively to optimize productivity (Latham & Wexley, 2020). Ultimately, by improving employee performance and aligning it with organizational objectives, performance appraisal contributes to the overall success and competitiveness of the organization. A well-designed performance appraisal system can bring several potential benefits to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). These benefits include improved leadership effectiveness by assessing leaders' behaviors, competencies, and outcomes, enabling the identification of areas for improvement and development. This assessment ensures that leaders align their teams with organizational goals, foster a positive work culture, and promote employee development. The system also enhances employee performance by providing clear performance expectations, regular feedback, and identifying training and development needs, allowing targeted learning opportunities. Through coaching and mentoring conversations facilitated by the appraisal system, leaders support employees' growth and help them overcome performance challenges. Additionally, the appraisal system aligns individual employee performance with the organization's goals, recognizing exceptional achievements, and identifying performance gaps to optimize productivity.

The leadership performance appraisal process in the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Rivers State Office faces various challenges, and issues. These include the absence of standardized criteria for evaluation, leading to subjective and inconsistent assessments. The lack of training for appraisers hampers their ability to provide accurate feedback. Insufficient employee involvement hinders the fairness and accuracy of appraisals. Another challenge lies in the disconnect between appraisal feedback and subsequent development initiatives. Inadequate implementation of action plans and follow-up mechanisms reduces accountability and diminishes the effectiveness of the appraisal process.

The aim of the study is to analyze the current state of leadership performance appraisal within the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Rivers State Office and evaluate its implications for effective administration from 2012-2023. The specific objective of the research is to identify and understand the gaps, challenges, and issues related to leadership performance appraisal in the NDDC within the specified timeframe. By conducting this study, valuable insights can be gained into the existing practices and processes of leadership performance appraisal in the NDDC Rivers State Office.

Statement of the Problem

There may be several challenges, or issues related to leadership performance appraisal in the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) or similar organizations within the Rivers State Office. One of such challenges is the absence of standardized criteria for assessing leadership performance, leading to subjective and inconsistent evaluations, potential biases, and disparities in recognition and development of staff of the NDDC. Another gap is the lack of proper training for appraisers who conduct leadership performance appraisals, hindering their ability to provide accurate and constructive feedback and impeding the growth and development of leaders. Inadequate employee involvement is also a potential challenge. Meaningful, participation of employees who work closely with the assessed leaders is crucial in enhancing the accuracy and fairness of the appraisal process. A common challenge is the disconnect between performance appraisal feedback and subsequent development initiatives. By conducting this study, leadership performance appraisal in the NDDC Rivers State Office. This research provides a comprehensive analysis of the identified gaps and challenges.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the leadership performance appraisal within the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Rivers State Office and evaluate its implications for effective administration from 2012-2023.

Specifically, the objectives are to;

- i. identify the challenges of leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Rivers State Office.
- ii. evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership training provided to enhance performance in the Rivers State Office.
- iii. examine the level of employees' involvement in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the Rivers State Office.

Research Questions

The following research questions in line with the objectives guided the study.

- i. What are the challenges in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Rivers State Office?
- ii. What is the extent to which leadership appraisers' training enhances effective organisational performance in NDDC Rivers State Office?
- iii. To what extent do employees participate in the leadership performance appraisal processes for enhanced performance of the NDDC Rivers State Office?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

In this study, two theories were adopted as a theoretical foundation which are; the equity theory developed by John Stacey Adams and the expectancy theory developed by Vroom.

Equity Theory

The Equity Theory, developed by John Stacey Adams, suggests that job satisfaction is based on a person's perception of fairness. Applying this theory to a company's performance appraisal involves considering the employees' evaluation of their contribution to their job and the rewards and compensation associated with their success (Luecke, 2006). Employees who receive high income and rewards are generally more motivated to perform well in their jobs. In the 1960s, John Stacey Adams, a behavioral psychologist, developed the equity theory to highlight the relationship between worker motivation and fairness. People inherently value fair treatment, and successful entrepreneurs recognize this and structure their workplaces accordingly. Other theories, such as Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy theory and Victor Vroom's expectancy theory, complement the understanding of these needs and motivations (Tara, 2016).

The equity theory emphasizes the importance of maintaining a fair and objective approach to employee management. It suggests that employees feel motivated when they perceive that rewards, recognition, and compensation are administered fairly and transparently through unbiased performance assessments. Conversely, biased treatment can have the opposite effect on motivation. The theory also asserts that people use subjective judgment to compare outcomes and inputs with others in order to determine fairness (Adams, 1963).

Applying the theory to this study explored how the perception of fairness in the performance appraisal process impacts leadership motivation and performance within the NDDC Rivers State Office. More so, the study applies the equity theory to examine how leaders' evaluation and recognition are balanced with their contributions to their roles. It assessed whether higher levels of recognition and rewards correspond to greater motivation and performance among leaders. Additionally, the study investigated how perceived inequities in the appraisal process can affect leaders' satisfaction, engagement, and willingness to exert effort in their roles.

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory, as proposed by Vroom (1964), suggests that an individual's motivation to take action is influenced by their belief that a particular action will lead to a desired outcome, as well as their personal preference for that outcome. This theory highlights the importance of expectancy, which refers to the perceived likelihood that a specific action will result in a desired reward. Consequently, when individuals have specific goals, they consider various behaviors that can help them achieve those goals. If they believe that certain behaviors are more effective than others, they are more likely to prefer and engage in those specific behaviors.

In the context of a governmental organization, employees may be motivated to put in more effort if they anticipate receiving better rewards. However, they may lack the necessary skills and

training to believe that their additional efforts will actually lead to improved performance. To address this, the management can establish a clear connection between efforts and performance. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that similar performance is consistently rewarded. The reward policy should be fair and transparent, as inconsistency or the inclusion of other factors beyond performance can undermine motivation and perceived fairness. Therefore, it is essential for management to regularly evaluate appraisal techniques and develop policies that reinforce a just and equitable performance-reward relationship. (Vroom, 1964).

The application of the expectancy theory to the topic of "Leadership Performance Appraisal: Implication for the Effective Administration of NDDC Rivers State Office 2012-2023" provided valuable insights into how leaders' motivation and performance can be influenced by their expectations of rewards and outcomes. This study examined the leaders' beliefs about the relationship between their efforts, performance, and the outcomes of the appraisal process impact their motivation levels. If leaders believe that their additional efforts in their roles will lead to positive outcomes in the performance appraisal, such as recognition or career advancement, they are more likely to be motivated to exert greater effort in their leadership roles. Additionally, the expectancy theory sheds light on the importance of aligning the appraisal process with the desired outcomes for leaders.

Performance Appraisal

The focus of the performance appraisal is measuring and improving the actual performance of the employee and also the future potential of the employee. Its aim is to measure what an employee does. Shelley (1999) considered performance appraisal as a systematic way of reviewing and assessing the performance of an employee during a given period of time and planning for his future. Performance appraisal (PA) is a formal system of review and evaluation of individual or team task performance. A critical point in the definition is the word formal, because in actuality, managers should be reviewing an individual's performance on a continuing basis. Although evaluation of team performance is critical when teams exist in an organization, the focus of PA in most firms remains on the individual employee. Regardless of the emphasis, an effective appraisal system evaluates accomplishments and initiates plans for development goals and objectives. Performance appraisal is a process in performance management function. Longenecker defined that performance appraisal influences one's career and corporate capacity. In performance appraisal, the employee is appraised by her/his knowledge, skill, and ability in performing the assigned tasks.

The performance appraisal also evaluates the employee's commitment and communication skill. Performance appraisal makes a significant contribution to the development of a working culture including ethical, equitable and performance oriented. Moreover, the performance appraisal process must be appropriate and suitable, and the superior has to demonstrate an effort to reduce potential biases that always happen in appraising workers' performance. Even though, there is a freedom and flexibility in the manner, in which leaders can implement and manage performance appraisal. In the same context Kluger developed Feedback Intervention Theory (FIT).

For Tarigan, *et al.* (2023), argued that "in the realm of organizational management, performance appraisals function as a cornerstone, enabling the evaluation of employee performance,

identification of strengths and areas for development, and provision of constructive feedback”. These assessments profoundly influence an array of organizational outcomes, including employee engagement, motivation, job satisfaction, and, ultimately, overall productivity. Acknowledging the weight of performance appraisals, researchers have embarked on diverse avenues to unravel strategies for optimizing their efficacy and augmenting their impact on both individual and organizational performance (Iqbal *et al.*, 2015; Ikramullah *et al.*, 2016; Kharub *et al.*, 2023).

Armstrong and Taylor (2014) described performance appraisal as a standard of practices that outline the kind of occupation and regulate the engagement relation in order to induce and maintain the appropriate worker, according to its demand.

The Traditional Performance Appraisal Model

Performance appraisal can be traced back to Ancient China, where it was believed that the workers' performance should be assessed periodically. The earliest documented systematic performance appraisal took place in 1883 by the US government, which implemented a rank-based appraisal system to evaluate federal employees based on their job performance and service to the government. In the early 20th century, performance appraisal became popular in the private sector, and managers began developing various appraisal methods to evaluate employee performance. The first modern performance appraisal model was introduced by Frederick Taylor in 1911, where he proposed that employees should be evaluated based on their output.

Starting from the 1930s, education and research in personnel management and industrial relations led to the creation of new appraisal methods, including the critical incidents technique, which emphasizes employees' exceptional performance or behavior. By the 1960s, there was a shift from traditional methods of performance appraisal to more objective and comprehensive assessments, including Management by Objectives (MBO). In the 1980s and 1990s, performance appraisal was linked to strategic human resource management practices, which contributed to the development of 360-degree feedback and Competency-based assessments. Today, performance appraisal continues to evolve, with greater attention being placed on employee engagement, talent development, and continuous performance improvement.

Nexus between Leadership Theories and Performance Appraisal

Some ways to analyze the various leadership theories and how they relate to performance appraisal: Transformational leadership, Situational leadership, Servant leadership, Authentic leadership:

Overall, leadership theories can inform performance appraisal systems by highlighting the importance of communication, feedback, coaching, and alignment with organizational objectives. By incorporating various leadership theories, businesses can develop performance appraisal systems that encourage employee development, growth, and success, as well as promote a positive organizational culture and high performance outcomes.

Performance Appraisal Systems in the Public Sector

An appraisal system is a formal process used to assess the performance of employees and provide feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, ((McFarland, 2010, p. 4).) In the public sector, appraisal systems are typically used to measure both individual and organizational performance. Appraisal systems can be used to identify areas for improvement, recognize high performers, and motivate employees. The purpose is to provide feedback to employees on their performance, and to make sure that the organization is achieving its goals and objectives. Appraisal systems also help to identify areas where employees need additional training or support. Additionally, they can be used to make decisions about promotions, bonuses, and other rewards. One important aspect of appraisal systems in the public sector is the need for fairness and objectivity. Appraisal systems need to be designed in a way that is fair to all employees, regardless of their position or background. Additionally, the appraisal process should be objective, and should not be influenced by personal bias or favoritism. One important aspect of appraisal systems in the public sector is the need for fairness and objectivity. Appraisal systems need to be designed in a way that is fair to all employees, regardless of their position or background.

Further to this, the appraisal process should be objective, and should not be influenced by personal bias or favoritism. Another important consideration is the need for transparency. Additionally, there should be opportunities for employees to appeal the results of their appraisal if they feel that the process was not fair or objective. Appraisal systems should be aligned with the organization's overall strategy and goals. One key element of connecting appraisal systems to strategy is identifying and measuring key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs are specific, measurable indicators that track progress towards achieving the organization's goals. For example, an organization might have KPIs related to customer satisfaction, revenue growth, and employee retention. The final aspect of appraisal systems that I want to cover is continuous improvement.

In the context of Nigeria, there are some specific considerations for performance appraisal systems. One key issue is the challenge of managing a diverse workforce. Nigeria has a large number of ethnic groups, and it's important for appraisal systems to be sensitive to cultural differences. Additionally, there are challenges related to the availability of training and development opportunities, and the limited infrastructure and technology available in some areas, Ajayi (2019). One challenge specific to Nigeria is the prevalence of corruption. This can impact the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems, as it can lead to favoritism and a lack of objectivity. Additionally, the lack of transparency in government can make it difficult to implement effective appraisal systems.

Another issue is the impact of nepotism and tribalism on performance appraisal systems. In Nigeria, many people are hired or promoted based on their personal connections rather than their qualifications or performance, Oke (2018). For example, systems that rely more on direct observation and feedback from managers, rather than complex rating scales, could be more effective. Additionally, the use of technology, such as mobile apps, could help to address the lack of infrastructure in some areas. In Nigeria, there have been calls for greater accountability, transparency, and efficiency in government institutions. Performance appraisal systems can play a role in supporting these reforms, by ensuring that employees are held accountable for their performance and that systems are implemented in a transparent and fair manner.

The Relationship between Performance Appraisal and Effective Administration

Performance appraisal plays a critical role in effective administration. Here are some ways in which performance appraisal is related to effective administration:

- i. **Setting clear expectations:** Performance appraisal is an essential tool to set clear expectations for employees. By establishing clear criteria and expectations, employees know what is required of them, and the goals for their role. With this guidance and direction, employees are motivated to meet or exceed these expectations, resulting in improved performance outcomes.
- ii. **Identifying strengths and areas for improvement:** Effective administration uses performance appraisals to identify employee strengths and areas for improvement. This information helps determine employee training and development needs and aligns the organization's objectives, identifying ways to leverage employee strengths.
- iii. **Monitoring performance:** Performance appraisals allow for ongoing performance monitoring and help detect performance issues early. Regular assessments, feedback, and coaching can address these issues, enhancing accountability, and resulting in positive corrective performance outcomes.
- iv. **Identifying potential for promotion:** Performance appraisals can be critical in identifying potential employees for promotion. Identifying high-performing employees and providing them with more extensive job responsibilities help employees develop their skills and provide a sense of career progression, resulting in a more productive and motivated workforce.
- v. **Highlighting employee achievements:** Performance appraisals provide an opportunity to recognize employee achievements and contributions. Acknowledging employees who go above and beyond their duties promotes a positive workplace culture and increases employee motivation while also encouraging others to work towards meeting or exceeding expectations.

Performance appraisal is a critical component of effective administration. It helps determine employee training and development, assess progress towards objectives, identify areas for improvement, and monitor performance. Additionally, performance appraisals help identify high-performing employees for promotion and Recognition for their exceptional work. By leveraging effective performance appraisal systems, businesses can enhance their employee's productivity, enable career growth, and foster a positive workplace culture.

Empirical Review

Brefo-Manuh, (2017). Evaluating The Relationship Between Performance Appraisal and Organizational Effectiveness In Ghana: The study results indicated that performance appraisal system positively and significantly predicted organisational effectiveness. Additionally, the results showed that performance appraisal system also has a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness in the private sector but insignificant positive effect in the public sector. The study concluded that organisations should attach significant attention to the way and manner their performance appraisal systems are designed and managed in order to enhance the overall effectiveness of their organisations.

For instance, the study by Akinbowale *et al.* (2013) endeavoured to find out how Guaranty Bank's performance appraisal policy influences employee performance using a quantitative research design and one hundred and fifty structured questionnaires distributed by the researcher. Collected responses were descriptively analysed with the aid of the SPSS. The analytical results obtained showed that participation by an employee during performance appraisal is high leading to improved job satisfaction and employee performance. It was also found that there was cordial manager subordinate interaction which consequently bolstered employee performance. Thus, they recommended that there is need for a unified principle useful in enhancing the current performance appraisal policy should be instituted.

Okeke, *et al.* (2019) assessed how performance management influences employee productivity in some firms in South-East Nigeria using a survey research design and questionnaire. Using simple percentages and multiple regression analysis, results revealed that 360-degree feedback appraisal significantly influences employee productivity; performance evaluation significantly influences employee productivity; self-assessment had an insignificant effect on employee productivity while performance review significantly influences the productivity of employees. Consequently, it was concluded that the productivity of an employee is strongly influenced by performance management among Nigerian banks. It was recommended that organizations should emphasize 360-degree feedback appraisal; performance evaluation and self-assessment systems to improve employee productivity.

Daniel and Ibrahim (2019) on whether performance appraisal methods (feedback and the management-by-objectives methods) enhanced employee productivity influenced employee productivity using a survey design aided by the use of a self-designed questionnaire. Findings revealed showed that a significant relationship exists between employee productivity and performance appraisal management. In addition, a strong association was reported between feedback and employee productivity. Managers were advised to take performance appraisal seriously if they are bent on achieving their strategic goals.

Ajibola *et al.* (2019) studied how performance appraisal influence determines employee work engagement in Nigerian manufacturing firms using descriptive research design. Pearson Products Moment Correlation analysis was used to interpret questionnaire data. It was found that a positively significant relationship exists between employee engagement and performance appraisal. Hence, they submitted that manufacturing firms in Nigeria do have traditional appraisal

practices. Therefore, they were advised to embrace continuous performance appraisal to improve the level of employee engagement among their workforce.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted the 2,500 workers that were drawn from the Board, Top management and staff of the Commission and comprising the 12 departments of the Rivers State office. The sample size for this study was drawn three hundred and twenty (320) managerial and non-managerial staff of the NDDC which represents 92.7% of the population drawn using purposive sampling technique. The research instrument used in this study was questionnaire titled “Leadership Performance Appraisal for Effective Administration of NDDC Rivers State office (LPAEA)” developed by the researchers. Section A of the instrument deals on the Demographic bio-data (information of the respondents while Section B presents questionnaire items constructed based on the variables of the study. The instrument was validated by three senior lecturers of the Faculty of Social Sciences and the reliability of the instrument was established at 0.78 using test re-test method. 320 copies of questionnaire were distributed to respondents. The questionnaires were completely filled and returned for data analysis. It was on this premise that a criterion Mean score of 2.5 was calculated to judge the mean responses of the respondents. %, Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions.

Data Analysis

Research Question: What are the challenges in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Port Harcourt Zone?

Table 1: The % Mean (\bar{X}) Ratings and Standard Deviation of Challenges in the Leadership Performance Appraisal Process within the NDDC Rivers State Office

Questionnaires Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Total	Remark
	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)				
	4	3	2	1				
1. The leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office faces challenges related to rater bias and subjectivity.	68 (21.25%)	137 (42.81%)	64 (20.00%)	51 (15.94%)	2.69	0.98	320 (100%)	Agree
2. There is a lack of consistency in applying evaluation	70 (21.88%)	140 (43.75%)	55 (17.19%)	55 (17.19%)	2.70	0.99	320 (100%)	Agree

criteria and standards during the leadership performance appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office.

3. The process for assigning performance ratings within the NDDC Rivers State Office lacks transparency and explanation to leaders.	95 (33.44%)	107 (29.69)	75 (23.44%)	43 (13.44%)	2.79	1.01	320 (100%)	Agree
4. The leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office does not effectively capture and address individual differences or contextual factors.	32 (10%)	82 (25.63%)	133 (41.56%)	73 (22.81%)	2.23	0.95	320 (100%)	Disagree
5. There is a lack of accountability and consequences for inadequate performance evaluations within the leadership performance appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office.	11 (3.43%)	88 (27.5%)	112 (35%)	109 (34.06%)	2.00	0.87	320 (100%)	Disagree

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

Data in Table 1 provided the mean ratings of the challenges faced in the leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office. The responses were collected using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

The leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office faces challenges related to rater bias and subjectivity. Participants agreed, with 21.25% strongly agreeing (SA) and 42.81% agreeing (A). The mean score is 2.69, suggesting agreement on the existence of challenges related to rater bias and subjectivity.

There is a lack of consistency in applying evaluation criteria and standards during the leadership performance appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office. Participants agreed, with 21.88% strongly agreeing, 43.75% agreeing, 17.19% disagreeing (D), and 17.19% strongly disagreeing (SD). The mean score is 2.70, indicating agreement on the lack of consistency in applying evaluation criteria and standards.

The process for assigning performance ratings within the NDDC Rivers State Office lacks transparency and explanation to leaders. Participants agreed, with 33.44% strongly agreeing, 29.69% agreeing, 23.44% disagreeing, and 13.44% strongly disagreeing. The mean score is 2.79, suggesting agreement on the lack of transparency and explanation in assigning performance ratings.

The leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office does not effectively capture and address individual differences or contextual factors. Participants disagreed, with 10% strongly disagreeing, 25.63% disagreeing, 41.56% agreeing, and 22.81% strongly agreeing. The mean score is 2.23, indicating disagreement on the effectiveness of capturing and addressing individual differences or contextual factors.

There is a lack of accountability and consequences for inadequate performance evaluations within the leadership performance appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office. Participants disagreed, with 3.43% strongly disagreeing, 27.5% disagreeing, 35% agreeing, and 34.06% strongly agreeing. The mean score is 2.00, suggesting disagreement on the lack of accountability and consequences for inadequate performance evaluations.

Overall, the data indicates agreement among participants regarding several challenges in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Rivers State Office. This includes issues related to rater bias and subjectivity, lack of consistency in applying evaluation criteria, lack of transparency in performance rating assignment, and inadequate capturing of individual differences or contextual factors. However, there is disagreement on the presence of accountability and consequences for inadequate performance evaluations. The mean scores for all items range from 2.00 to 2.79, suggesting agreement or disagreement on the different challenges.

The standard deviations (STD) range from 0.87 to 1.01, indicating some variability in the responses, but not to a significant extent.

Based on the participants' responses, the data suggests the existence of several challenges in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Rivers State Office. These challenges should be considered and addressed to improve the effectiveness and fairness of the appraisal processes.

Research Question 2. What is the extent to which leadership appraisers' training enhance effective organisational performance in NDDC Port Harcourt Zone?

Table 2: The % Mean (\bar{X}) Ratings and Standard Deviation of Training provided to Appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office in enabling them to provide Accurate and Constructive Feedback for Leadership Development

Questionnaires Items	SA f(%) 4	A f(%) 3	D f(%) 2	SD f(%) 1	Mean	STD	Total	Remark
6. The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office adequately covers the process and guidelines for evaluating leadership performance.	138 (43.12%)	99 (30.94%)	48 (15%)	35 (10.94%)	3.06	1.01	320 (100%)	Agree
7. The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office helps them understand the specific competencies and behaviors desired for effective leadership.	85 (26.56%)	156 (48.75%)	49 (15.31%)	30 (9.37%)	2.93	0.89	320 (100%)	Agree
8. The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office includes guidance on how to provide clear and actionable feedback to leaders.	111 (34.69%)	98 (30.63%)	65 (20.31%)	46 (14.37%)	2.86	1.05	320 (100%)	Agree
9. The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office prepares them to handle challenging conversations and difficult feedback discussions.	115 (35.94%)	94 (29.38%)	72 (22.50%)	39 (12.19%)	2.89	1.03	320 (100%)	Agree

10. The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office significantly contributes to their ability to support leadership development through accurate and constructive feedback.	114 (35.62%)	104 (32.50%)	55 (17.19%)	47 (14.69%)	2.89	1.05	320 (100%)	Agree
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Source: Field Survey, (2023).

Data in Table 2 provided the mean ratings of the training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office, focusing on their ability to provide accurate and constructive feedback for leadership development. The responses were collected using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office adequately covers the process and guidelines for evaluating leadership performance. Participants agreed, with 43.12% strongly agreeing (SA), 30.94% agreeing (A), 15% disagreeing (D), and 10.94% strongly disagreeing (SD). The mean score is 3.06, indicating agreement that the training adequately covers the evaluation process and guidelines.

The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office helps them understand the specific competencies and behaviors desired for effective leadership. Participants agreed, with 26.56% strongly agreeing, 48.75% agreeing, 15.31% disagreeing, and 9.37% strongly disagreeing. The mean score is 2.93, suggesting agreement on the effectiveness of the training in developing a clear understanding of desired leadership competencies and behaviors.

The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office includes guidance on how to provide clear and actionable feedback to leaders. Participants agreed, with 34.69% strongly agreeing, 30.63% agreeing, 20.31% disagreeing, and 14.37% strongly disagreeing. The mean score is 2.86, indicating agreement on the provision of guidance for clear and actionable feedback.

The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office prepares them to handle challenging conversations and difficult feedback discussions. Participants agreed, with 35.94% strongly agreeing, 29.38% agreeing, 22.50% disagreeing, and 12.19% strongly disagreeing. The mean score is 2.89, suggesting agreement on the effectiveness of the training in preparing appraisers for challenging conversations and difficult feedback discussions.

The training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office significantly contributes to their ability to support leadership development through accurate and constructive feedback. Participants agreed, with 35.62% strongly agreeing, 32.50% agreeing, 17.19% disagreeing, and 14.69% strongly disagreeing. The mean score is 2.89, indicating agreement on the significant contribution of the training to supporting leadership development through feedback.

The data indicates agreement among participants regarding the extent to which leadership appraisers' training enhances effective organizational performance in the NDDC Rivers State Office. The training is seen as adequately covering the evaluation process and guidelines, helping appraisers understand desired competencies and behaviors, providing guidance on clear and actionable feedback, preparing appraisers for challenging conversations, and significantly contributing to supporting leadership development. The mean scores for all items range from 2.86 to 3.06, suggesting agreement on the effectiveness of the training.

The standard deviations (STD) range from 0.89 to 1.05, indicating some variability in the responses, but not to a significant extent.

Based on the participants' responses, the data suggests that the training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office is perceived as effective in enabling them to provide accurate and constructive feedback for leadership development. The training covers the necessary processes and guidelines, enhances understanding of desired competencies and behaviors, provides guidance for clear feedback, prepares appraisers for challenging conversations, and significantly contributes to supporting leadership development.

Research Question 3. To what extent do employees participate in the leadership performance appraisal processes for enhanced performance of the NDDC Rivers State Office?

Table 3: The % Mean (\bar{X}) Ratings and Standard Deviation of the Extent to which Employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office Participate in the Leadership Performance Appraisal Processes to enhance Comprehensive, Fairness and Accuracy of Performance Evaluations

Questionnaires Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	STD	Total	Remark
	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)				
	4	3	2	1				
11. Employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office have the opportunity to provide feedback on their leaders' performance during the appraisal process.	38 (11.88%)	77 (24.06%)	121 (37.81%)	84 (26.25%)	2.22	0.97	320 (100%)	Low extent
12. The input and feedback provided by employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office are taken into account when	111 (34.69%)	85 (26.56%)	69 (21.56%)	55 (17.19%)	2.79	0.78	320 (100%)	High extent

evaluating leadership performance.

13. Employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office adequately informed about the appraisal process and how they can contribute to evaluating their leaders.	74 (23.12%)	131 (40.94%)	77 (24.06%)	38 (11.88%)	2.75	0.94	320 (100%)	High extent
14. The participation of employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office enhances the comprehensiveness of performance evaluations by providing diverse perspectives.	98 (28.75%)	108 (33.75%)	88 (27.50%)	26 (8.13%)	2.87	2.94	320 (100%)	High extent
15. Employees' involvement in the appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office increases perceived fairness and accuracy of performance evaluations.	135 (42.19%)	99 (30.94%)	44 (13.75%)	42 (13.13%)	3.02	1.04	320 (100)	High extent

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

Data in Table 3 provided the mean ratings of the extent to which employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office participate in the leadership performance appraisal processes to enhance comprehensive, fairness, and accuracy of performance evaluations. The responses were collected using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Very Low Extent) to 4 (Very High Extent).

Employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office have the opportunity to provide feedback on their leaders' performance during the appraisal process. Participants rated the extent to be at a low level, with 11.88% indicating very high extent (VHE), 24.06% high extent (HE), 37.81% low extent (LE), and 26.25% very low extent (VLE). The mean score is 2.22, suggesting a low extent of employee participation in providing feedback on leaders' performance.

The input and feedback provided by employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office are taken into account when evaluating leadership performance. Participants rated the extent as high, with 34.69% indicating VHE, 26.56% HE, 21.56% LE, and 17.19% VLE. The mean score is 2.79,

indicating a high extent of considering employee input and feedback in evaluating leadership performance.

Employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office are adequately informed about the appraisal process and how they can contribute to evaluating their leaders. Participants rated the extent as high, with 23.12% indicating VHE, 40.94% HE, 24.06% LE, and 11.88% VLE. The mean score is 2.75, suggesting a high extent of informing employees about the appraisal process and their role in evaluating leaders.

The participation of employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office enhances the comprehensiveness of performance evaluations by providing diverse perspectives. Participants rated the extent as high, with 28.75% indicating VHE, 33.75% HE, 27.50% LE, and 8.13% VLE. The mean score is 2.87, indicating a high extent of employee participation contributing to comprehensive performance evaluations.

20. Employees' involvement in the appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office increases the perceived fairness and accuracy of performance evaluations. Participants rated the extent as high, with 42.19% indicating VHE, 30.94% HE, 13.75% LE, and 13.13% VLE. The mean score is 3.02, suggesting a high extent of employee involvement leading to perceived fairness and accuracy of evaluations.

Overall, the data indicates varying extents of employee participation in the leadership performance appraisal processes within the NDDC Rivers State Office. While there is a low extent of employees providing feedback on leaders' performance, there is a high extent of considering employee input and feedback in evaluating leadership performance. Employees are also adequately informed about the appraisal process and their role, and their participation enhances the comprehensiveness, fairness, and accuracy of performance evaluations. The mean scores for all items range from 2.22 to 3.02, indicating different extents of employee participation.

The standard deviations (STD) range from 0.78 to 1.04, indicating some variability in the responses, but not to a significant extent.

Based on the participants' responses, the data suggests that employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office have opportunities to participate in the leadership performance appraisal processes, although the extent varies across different aspects. Enhancing employee participation can further contribute to comprehensive evaluations, fairness, and accuracy of performance evaluations. Efforts should be made to increase employee feedback provision, ensure continued consideration of employee input, and maintain adequate communication on the appraisal process and its benefits for enhanced performance.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings of the 5 questions related to the challenges in the leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office, it was analyzed as follows:

1. Respondents largely agree (64.06%) that the leadership performance appraisal process faces challenges related to rater bias and subjectivity. This aligns with studies that emphasize the importance of mitigating bias and ensuring objectivity in performance appraisal, such as Brefo-Manuh (2017) which highlights the need for organizations to pay attention to the design and management of their performance appraisal systems.
2. The majority of respondents (65.63%) agree which suggests a lack of consistency in applying evaluation criteria and standards during the leadership performance appraisal in the NDDC Rivers State Office. This links to the findings of Okeke *et al.* (2019) which emphasizes the importance of a unified principle to enhance the current performance appraisal policy.
3. A significant proportion of respondents (59.38%) agree that the process for assigning performance ratings lacks transparency and explanation to leaders. This finding echoes the importance of transparent communication in the performance evaluation process, as mentioned in studies such as Sajuyigbe (2017) which stresses the need for an objective appraisal process and periodic feedback.
4. The majority of respondents (64.19%) either disagree or strongly disagree that the leadership performance appraisal effectively captures and addresses individual differences or contextual factors. This aligns with studies that emphasize the need to consider individual differences and contextual factors in performance appraisal, such as Zayum (2017) which highlights the influence of appraisal techniques like Management by Objectives (MBO) and 360-degree feedback on employee productivity.
5. Respondents largely disagree (68.06%) that there is a lack of accountability and consequences for inadequate performance evaluations within the leadership performance appraisal process. This highlights the importance of establishing accountability and consequences, as emphasized in studies like Ajibola *et al.* (2019) which emphasize the positive relationship between performance appraisal and employee work engagement.

Overall, the findings suggest that there are significant challenges in the leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office, including rater bias, inconsistency in criteria application, lack of transparency, inadequate consideration of individual differences and contextual factors, and a perceived lack of accountability. These challenges align with the empirical reviews and highlight the need for improvements in the appraisal process to ensure fairness, objectivity, consistency, transparency, and appropriate consideration of individual and contextual factors.

Based on the findings of the 5 questions related to the effectiveness of the training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office for providing accurate and constructive feedback for leadership development, it can be analyzed as follows:

1. The majority of respondents (74.06%) either strongly agrees or agrees that the training provided adequately covers the process and guidelines for evaluating leadership performance. This finding aligns with studies such as Odunayo *et al.* (2014) which emphasize the importance of providing appraisers with clear guidelines and instructions to ensure consistency and fairness in the appraisal process.

2. A significant proportion of respondents (75.31%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the training helps appraisers understand specific competencies and behaviors desired for effective leadership. This finding supports the recommendations of Daniel and Ibrahim (2019), which highlight the need for appraisers to have a thorough understanding of leadership expectations and competencies in order to accurately assess and provide feedback.

3. The majority of respondents (65.32%) either strongly agree or agree that the training includes guidance on how to provide clear and actionable feedback to leaders. This finding aligns with studies such as Akinbowale *et al.* (2013), which emphasize the importance of training appraisers in effective communication skills and providing feedback that is constructive and actionable.

4. A significant portion of respondents (65.32%) either strongly agree or agree that the training prepares appraisers to handle challenging conversations and difficult feedback discussions. This finding aligns with the recommendations of Sajuyigbe (2017), which emphasize the importance of providing appraisers with the necessary skills and tools to navigate difficult conversations and effectively deliver feedback.

5. The majority of respondents (68.12%) either strongly agree or agree that the training significantly contributes to appraisers' ability to support leadership development through accurate and constructive feedback. This finding supports the empirical reviews shared, which highlight the positive impact of training on the appraisers' ability to provide valuable feedback for leadership growth and improvement.

Overall, the findings suggest that the training provided to appraisers in the NDDC Rivers State Office is perceived to be effective in enabling them to provide accurate and constructive feedback for leadership development. The training adequately covers the process and guidelines, helps appraisers understand leadership competencies, provide guidance on feedback delivery, prepare appraisers for challenging conversations, and significantly contributes to supporting leadership development. These findings reinforce the importance of investing in comprehensive training programs for appraisers to ensure the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process and promote leadership growth and improvement within the organization.

Based on the findings of the 5 questions related to the extent of employee participation in the leadership performance appraisal process in the NDDC Rivers State Office, it can be analyzed as follows:

1. A majority of respondents (63.87%) either disagree or strongly disagree that employees in the NDDC Rivers State Office have the opportunity to provide feedback on their leaders' performance during the appraisal process. This finding contradicts the recommendations of Nkrumah and Rao (2016) that highlight the importance of employee feedback in enhancing the comprehensiveness and accuracy of performance evaluations.

2. The majority of respondents (61.25%) either strongly agree or agree that the input and feedback provided by employees are taken into account when evaluating leadership performance. This finding aligns with studies such as Okeke *et al.* (2019) which emphasize the importance of considering multiple perspectives in the appraisal process to ensure fairness and accuracy.

3. A significant proportion of respondents (64.06%) either strongly agree or agree that employees in the NDDC Port Harcourt Zone are adequately informed about the appraisal process and how they can contribute to evaluating their leaders. This finding supports the recommendations of Brefo-Manuh (2017) which emphasize the importance of clear communication and employee understanding of the appraisal process.

4. The majority of respondents (62.50%) either strongly agree or agree that employee participation enhances the comprehensiveness of performance evaluations by providing diverse perspectives. This finding aligns with studies such as Ajibola *et al.* (2019) which emphasize the need for incorporating diverse viewpoints in performance evaluations to ensure a well-rounded and comprehensive assessment.

5. A majority of respondents (73.13%) either strongly agree or agree that employees' involvement in the appraisal process increases the perceived fairness and accuracy of performance evaluations. This finding supports the empirical reviews shared, which highlight the positive impact of employee participation on the credibility and objectivity of the performance appraisal process.

Overall, the findings suggest that there may be limited opportunities for employees to provide feedback on leadership performance in the NDDC Rivers State Office. However, the input and feedback provided by employees are perceived to be taken into account during the appraisal process, and their involvement is seen as enhancing the comprehensiveness, fairness, and accuracy of performance evaluations. These findings highlight the need for organizations to enhance employee participation in the appraisal process by providing adequate feedback channels, clear communication, and opportunities for diverse perspectives to be considered, in order to promote fairness and accuracy in evaluating leadership performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the current appraisal practices for evaluating leadership performance within the NDDC Rivers State Office had positive implications for improvement. However, challenges such as rater bias, inconsistency in applying evaluation criteria, lack of transparency, inadequate consideration of individual differences and contextual factors, and limited employee participation were identified. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to enhance the leadership performance appraisal process within the NDDC Rivers State Office:

1. Increase stakeholders involvement: It is important to involve various stakeholders, including employees, in the leadership performance appraisal process. This can be achieved through mechanisms such as feedback sessions, focus groups, or surveys to gather input and perspectives from different stakeholders. By incorporating multiple viewpoints, the appraisal process will be more comprehensive and accurate.
2. Address bias and increase transparency: Steps should be taken by the NDDC Rivers State Office to mitigate rater bias and subjectivity in the leadership performance appraisal process. This can be achieved by providing clear guidelines and training to appraisers on how to assess performance

objectively and consistently. Additionally, transparency should be improved by clearly communicating the criteria and standards used for evaluation, as well as providing explanations for ratings and decisions.

3. Consider individual differences and contextual factors: It is important to consider individual differences and contextual factors in the leadership performance appraisal process. This can be achieved by incorporating different evaluation methods, such as 360-degree feedback or individual development plans, to assess performance from multiple angles and tailor feedback and development plans to individual needs. Additionally, it is important to take into account the specific challenges and demands of the NDDC Rivers State Office when evaluating leadership performance.

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