

# Research on Issues Related to the Professional Competency and Performance Appraisal

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**Abstract:** To investigate the relationship between the performance appraisal (PA) and the motivation of teachers in professional competency. This paper makes qualitative study on the influence of performance appraisal system on the professional competency of teachers and the way of performance appraisal system(PA) stimulating professional competency of teachers. The main factors affecting the professional competency of teachers are the relationship between teachers' professional competency and performance appraisal(PA) system, school culture & atmosphere, the cultivation of professional quality for teachers and effective factors for motivation of teachers. This paper discusses and analyzes the issues related to teachers' professional competency and performance appraisal, which are to be balanced in the relationship between them, and working enthusiasm of teachers is mobilized to promote the sustainable development of the school.

## Introduction

Over the past years, management and appraisal in performance are the key characteristics of enterprises, which have made significant contributions to the improvement of competitive advantages and high performance of enterprises, and are thus widely used. In teaching field, discussion and performance appraisal are regarded as one of the approaches in demonstrating schoolteachers competency. Performance management reveals the fact that the school is committed to effectively cultivating all teachers to ensure that headway will be made in the satisfaction level for job, high-end expertise and for working staffs elected in school atmosphere. By studying the characteristics of performance appraisal, this paper analyzes the influence of performance appraisal on teachers' professional competency and motivation, and provides feasible suggestions for the motivation of professional competency of teachers.

## 1. Current Situation of Teachers' Professional Competency and Performance Appraisal

### 1.1 Performance Assessment and Reward System for Teachers

Performance assessment for teachers is mainly conducted from the aspects of knowledge, skills in teaching and attitude toward work. In general, the performance appraisal system is categorized into three parts:

Appraisal of the master degree of knowledge level for teachers and abilities in research. The school pays attention to improving teachers' research ability. On the one hand, teachers are organized to take unified examinations for students to test their knowledge level. A score of 95% or more than 95% of the total score means that they are qualified to tutor students. On the other hand, in order to improve teachers' research ability in education and science, teachers are encouraged to conduct research on the subject. In addition, the school organizes seminars in teaching for varied subjects and invites teachers for participation to share and discuss the new knowledge learned in the course.

First, appraisal for teaching skills, which is mainly reflected in the examination for students and competition ability. Schools evaluate teachers by ranking the scores of student, and then convert the ranking results into scores in the performance-related form to ensure that merit pay is not randomly

assigned. Second, we encourage teachers to participate in local or even competitions in teaching at the national level for examination of their performance in knowledge and teaching skills. The awards they received were directly related to the scores they received from the appraisal form. Finally, students' satisfaction with the performance in teaching activities is also an important indicator, which is the result of appraisal.

Second, appraisal of work attitude are conducted by students, teaching staffs, and the committee in academics and senior managerial personnel. It is an important concept in teaching management to cultivate professional ethics of teachers. We are required to establish a significant system for values among teachers. In public schools in China, which were financed by the governmental institutions, teachers do not receive 30 percent merit pay and all their income is determined by their professional titles. As a result, with stable jobs and fixed salaries, there may be an atmosphere characterized with idleness, so the teaching staffs may not want to work with enthusiasm as they were already well protected by the governments.

### **1.2 Financial Incentives for Teachers' Professional Competency**

The remuneration of teachers in some school can be divided into two aspects: basic salary & merit pay, which the former accounts for 70% of teachers' total salary, and performance-based salary accounts for 30% of teachers' total salary. Basic pay is allocated by the government, while merit pay is allocated by the enterprise in charge of running the school.

Merit pay is used to motivate teachers to do extra work, which is earned by performance above average level. 30% of the salary is related to the result of performance appraisal, which means that if teachers need the 30% of the salary of performance appraisal, they should be assessed with the factors in the performance appraisal system. Therefore, salary of teaching staffs varies. The basic salary proved not to be considerably paid but just for a decent life. But, providing that one teacher rank stop in the performance appraisal, additional 10 to 20 percent of salary will be earned compared with other teachers. The motivation to get more money is cultivated through knowledge, teaching skills and work attitude to motivate them to improve their professional competency.

In addition to the 30% merit pay, the monetary income of teachers is bonus. There are many competitions among students across the country each year, and the money received serves not only an appraisal factor during the performance evaluation, but also is conducive to assist teachers earn additional money. This is the motivation for teachers to delve into the professional field and improve their knowledge level.

There are also some teachers who think that 30 percent of merit pay fails to be the main motivators for the job, and the percentage of merit pay is not at high level, meaning that they can give way to 30 percent of salary, as they suppose that it makes no big differences even if they are only capable to have 70 percent of the basic salary. Currently, some teachers think that merit pay has little influence on the job performance, because the teachers are guaranteed a decent life with 70% of the basic salary, so they are reluctant to improve the professional competency just for this extra reward.

### **1.3 Non - Monetary Motivation for Professional Competency of Teachers**

It is impossible to motivate employees solely on compensation. It is true that salary plays an significant role in our work, but none of the organization can offer staffs with unlimited pay. As a result, against the current economic scenario, the requirements satisfying teachers can be provided by us. It deserves people's attention on whether there are other ways to affect teachers' professional competency.

Firstly, the non-monetary incentive factors affecting the professional competency of teachers are the sense of self-actualization. Teachers can be motivated as long as they truly see the future of their careers. Self-actualization is achieved through the consent and respect of students, colleagues and even the society. As a teacher, his value is reflected in his students. Besides, it is important to receive respect and recognition from students.

Second, another motivator is the opportunity for schools to improve teachers' knowledge and cultivate their teaching skills. Learning in the campus is carried out with exchanges among

experienced teaching staffs and those lacking adequate professional knowledge in teaching. Regular academic exchange meetings should be held, which requires new recruited teaching staffs to listen to the public lectures made by sophisticated teachers, while new recruited teaching staffs are required to have lessons for others with the purpose to get feedback and opinions to improve teaching level. Learning outside the campus refers to the further training out teachers with high performance at higher education agencies. These two learning and training modes can activate teachers' learning motivation. Because only those who have better performance can have the opportunity to receive training in colleges and universities.

In addition, the atmosphere and the spirit demonstrated by all the teaching staffs can stimulate teachers' working attitude. Teachers are motivated by the cohesion inside of the school. Schools with strong corporate culture can inspire teachers to improve their comprehensive abilities by virtue of their own charm.

#### **1.4 Negative Motivation of Teachers**

The negative motivation brought by the performance management reward system to teachers' professional competency is significantly displayed in teachers' failure to adapt to the stringent appraisal and huge work pressure, let alone the improvement of their own professional competency. A small number of new teachers resigned in a short period of time under great pressure. High working pressure and high requirements are one of the most important reasons for the relatively high turnover rate of employees.

## **2. Teachers' Professional Competency and Performance Appraisal Strategies**

### **2.1 Set up Performance Targets to Stimulate Teachers' Potential**

The link between performance appraisal and employee motivation is a means to improve employee performance by ensuring proper recognition and reward for efforts made by them, so as to motivate employees through visible or invisible rewards.

The conceptual basis of performance management lies in the idea that performance is not just for capability and motivation, and that clear goals is key to making employees aware of expected goals and priorities. The goal itself is seen as providing motivation. In other words, the goals determine theory predication, that is, employees will be better motivated if the goals generated by the performance management system are clear, specific, rather than vague, ordinary and easily to be achieved. As a result, performance appraisal links project management and incentives by formulating specific or goals with focus on the property of the goals that fit the project management procedures. Schools should integrate the theory of performance management with their own actual situation and set performance targets to stimulate teachers' potential.

In addition to the goal-formulation theory of motivation, the expectation theory can be considered in the improvement of teachers' professional competency. The psychology of teachers should be captured to motivate teachers to improve their skills and get what they anticipated. They should be convinced that the completion of the goals can bring them other benefits. By assessing performance of employees, they intend to judge their behaviors in work and then choose the task that they believe can bring the favorable benefits and results to the maximum extent. If there is an expected and clear link between their efforts and the return, motivation plays an important role in achieving the role of goal motivation.

### **2.2 Optimization of the School Administration**

Schools should optimize the management mechanism and give full play to the role of performance management in stimulating outstanding teaching staffs, and put forward that performance management serves as "a management tool that allows the use of salary system to motivate employees (management executives and professionals) to achieve goals". With evaluation systems, some project management systems will be developed by incentives, while parts will be pushed forward by development. But, the motivation of performance management system is not just

for the use of compensation system to accomplish a benefits-driven function. Motivation can be defined as extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation can be a kind of structure that any activity should have in order to achieve achievements. Intrinsic motivation is interpreted as "an activity performed for internal satisfaction, not for some separable result". To certain extent, the performance-driven reward system can be used to realize external incentive, but the development-driven system is more possibly to be related to internal incentive. Therefore, performance management for schools is not only a mechanism to realize external motivation of teachers, but also it should be conducted to investigate the future development of teachers for motivation of teachers through their internal interests.

First of all, schools should establish the performance appraisal and the reward system for teachers with sufficient market research to stimulate the passion of teachers to the greatest extent. Secondly, we should strengthen the publicity of teachers' professional quality, so that every teacher takes the responsibility of the people's gardener as his own to constantly improve their professional quality, and shoulder the responsibility as the people's teacher. Thirdly, schools should make efforts to carry forward the spirit and culture of the school, which are penetrated into teachers' daily behaviors so as to drive teachers to study together and thus improving their comprehensive quality. At the same time, the performance management system may also have some negative influence to people, which will increase the psychological pressure of staffs. That is, the purpose of performance appraisal may have possibly negative influence to certain extent. Positive education should be given to employees and teachers should be encouraged to improve their psychological quality and professional competency.

### **2.3 Strengthen the Overall Strategy in Cultivating Teachers' Professional Competency**

It can be seen from the research on performance management that the use of salary system to motivate school staff, managers and professionals is beneficial to achieve the appropriate goals set by the government, which fails to signify that the development of professional competency of teachers can contradict the goals that the government expects schools to achieve. Schools in the new socialist era should keep pace with the times and use their performance system to attract teachers to participate in operation of schools, and thus the commitments and professional spirit can be formed to strike a balance between government expectations and teachers' professional competency, and education can be vigorously developed.

### **Conclusion**

The most effective incentive factor in school salary system is not monetary incentive, but non-monetary incentive. As a group with strong professional ethics, teachers pursue high level of academic achievements rather than just be dependent on the satisfaction of money and basic demands which, however, required to be met initially before they can move on to the next stage. Therefore, as a hint to the performance appraisal system, organizations should constantly develop a way to combine the two objectives and spare no effort to strike a balance among them, as they cannot be separated from each other, but also remember that non-financial motivation is particularly important in employee motivation.

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