

Performance Management in Bangladeshi Schools: Head Teachers' Perception

Iffat Naomee

Lecturer IER, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Abstract: Performance Management is a very important task for the management of an educational institution. However, this concept is not yet widely acknowledged by most of the educational institutions of Bangladesh. This small-scale qualitative study thus focused on performance management in Bangladeshi schools. The main objective of this study was to explore head teachers' perception about performance management, their roles in performance management and the challenges that they face while managing performance. Six secondary school head teachers were selected through convenient sampling and were interviewed using semi-structured interview guide. The findings revealed that the head teachers' concept about performance management is not very clear and they mostly measure teachers' performance on the basis of students' scores in the examinations. Results also showed that head teachers sometimes fail to provide effective feedback on teachers' performance which in turn hampers the teachers' productivity. This study recommends that head teachers themselves need proper training on performance management and there should be a proper guideline on performance management in every educational institution. The researcher believes that this study along with its findings will help improve the overall performance of the schools as well as the individual performance of the teachers and the head teachers.

Keywords: Performance Management, School head teachers, Secondary Schools, Bangladesh

Introduction

Performance management is a complex, difficult and time-consuming process which facilitates people management by bringing together a lot of components [1]. It is a continuous process which implies that improving employees' performance and helping them to develop is the main purpose of the management [2]. This is true in the field of education as well. Performance management is a crucial concept for the success of an educational institution and understanding performance management clearly could help educators in different aspects [3]. Effective performance management is an integral part of supporting the drive to improve educational outcomes. That is why performance management should be given much importance in the context of education.

Performance management as a concept has been there since the 1980s [4]. However, it is quite a new concept in the field of education [5]. Performance management improves school performance by facilitating, monitoring and providing feedbacks to teachers individual and group work. It focuses on increasing teachers' and leaders' efficiency so that the school as well as the teachers and the students can benefit [6].

However, in Bangladesh the term performance management is still unknown to many. There is no proper performance management framework in the educational context of Bangladesh. Head teachers' concept of performance management is not very clear either. Moreover, the performance of the schools of Bangladesh is very poor in regards to international standards. Performance management is thus essential in the school context of Bangladesh. This study therefore focuses on the perception of the head teachers about performance management, their roles and the challenges they face.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to-

1. Explore the perception of the school head teachers of Bangladeshi schools about performance management.
2. Identify the role of the head teachers in performance management of the teachers.
3. Point out the challenges the head teachers face while managing performance of the teachers.

Review of Related Literature

Performance Management and Performance Appraisal

Performance management is a process of effective management of individuals and teams within an organisation in order to maximise performance [7]. Though performance management and performance appraisal have been used as synonymous in different literature [8][9][10][11][12], there is a fine line between these two. Performance appraisal measures the past performance of the employees in order to determine pay rise or performance bonus. It is an annual event. New performance goals are set in this event which might not have any relation to the previous performance of the employees [13][14]. On the other hand, performance management has a broader scope and performance appraisal can be seen as a small component or a tool of performance management [15]. Performance management include, providing continuous feedback, mentoring and coaching, collaboration of leaders and employees in reviewing performance in order to set goals and social and motivational aspects [9][11][16][17]. However, the major difference between performance management and performance appraisal is that performance appraisal focuses on rating past performance whereas performance management focuses on improving future performance [12].

Importance of Performance Management

Performance management is very important for an educational organisation. It facilitates achievement of organisational goals, aligns employees' performance goals with organisational goals, ensures employees understanding of expected performance, improves employees' performance, develops performance culture in the organisation and reinforces links between performance and pay [10][18][19][20][21][22][23].

Teachers' performance management is a continuous process of ensuring teachers' professional development through providing career guidance and recognizing performance along with achieving goals of the schools by identifying, evaluating and developing teachers' work performance [24].

Literature suggests three main purposes of performance management- ensuring accountability of the teachers, motivating the teachers for work and identifying the potential of the teachers for professional development [5][24][25][26].

Improving Performance Management

Performance management in educational institutions is generally the responsibility of school head teachers. School heads provide-

- Equal opportunity, encouragement and constructive criticism
- Sensitivity to manage unsatisfactory performance and conflicts
- Open discussions, idea sharing, suggestions and reviewing opportunities [27]

Factors influencing Performance Management

There are different factors that can influence performance management. Some researchers identified economic, social organisational and labor factors that influence performance management in Mexico and India [28]. On the other hand, a researcher also identified internal and external factors which influence performance management in an organisation where internal factors include, leadership and management, resources, performance-oriented culture, employee engagement and maturity of performance management system [29].

Approaches to Enhance Performance

Different organisations apply different strategies to enhance personal and professional performance of the staffs. Some of the common strategies are, motivating the staffs by providing continuous feedback and stimulus [21][30], regular monitoring and evaluating staff's performance [30] and developing personal learning approaches for the staffs [31]. According to researchers, performance management includes three major elements: measurement, incorporation and use [32]. All these elements should be implemented properly to enhance performance.

Methodology

This small-scale research study tended to analyse and understand the perception of the participants. Thus, qualitative research methods were applied to this research as qualitative research deals with understanding how a person sees, understands and experiences things [33]. Six secondary school head teachers from Dhaka city area have been selected using convenient sampling

strategies as samples. This sampling strategy was applied in this research because it was accessible and most convenient [33]. Semi-structured interview was conducted for data collection and an interview guide has been prepared for interviewing the head teachers. Semi-structured interview was selected as data collection tool as it is flexible and gives the participants opportunities to discuss their own issues rather than what the researcher anticipates [34]. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The analysis process was adapted from Braun and Clarke's work on thematic analysis. [33][35].

Ethical Considerations

Some major ethical issues have been considered regarding this study. Firstly, no name or means of identification has been used in this study to maintain privacy and confidentiality of the participants. Secondly, the participants have been given an information and consent sheet including their role and right in the study and verbal consent have been recorded from them. Finally, others work included in the study have been referenced properly in order to avoid plagiarism.

Limitations

As with all research studies, this study had some limitations. Firstly, this study cannot be generalized as the sample size was small and the research was qualitative in nature. Secondly, most of the literature used in this study is from international sources as very little research related literature on performance management in the context of Bangladesh was found.

Findings and Discussion

Roles and Responsibilities of the Head Teachers

After analysing the data, it has been found that there are various roles and responsibilities of a school head teacher of Bangladesh. These roles can be divided into three major categories- leadership roles, managerial roles and special roles. These roles include, monitoring and supervising individuals, managing conflict, representing own organisation, being informed and informing others, get the work done by staffs, motivating, awarding and evaluating students and staffs, planning, organising, directing, coordinating and resourcing staffs, solving problems, taking risks, maintaining and improving school quality, reforming school and coping with change. This finding is similar to what Begum & Hossain (1998) and Malek, Begum & Islam (2009) described [36][37]. However, none of the respondents mentioned providing continuous feedback to the teachers and managing teachers' performance as their role and responsibility as a head teacher.

Perception of Performance Management

The findings show that the concept of performance management is not very clear to the head teachers. For most of them, performance management barely means, monitoring teachers' punctuality, regularity and dedication towards school rules and regulations. Only one head teacher explained that he considers monitoring teachers' classroom performance, providing feedbacks on them and arranging regular teachers' meeting to discuss individual teachers' problems and possible solutions as performance management. From this finding it can be said that head teachers need proper understanding of the concept of performance management first to manage performance effectively.

Measurement of Performance

"Measuring performance is systematically collecting data by observing and registering performance related issues for some performance related purpose" [32]. However, the analysis shows that the head teachers of Bangladeshi schools' measures performance on the basis of the teachers' ability to improve students' grades. Performance is measured on the basis of the students' results and how quickly the teachers can finish assigned tasks. A teacher is considered a high-quality one depending on their educational qualifications and work experiences. A teacher who is well qualified and has a more work experience than others is considered as a better performer. This concept of performance in my views is preventing the teachers from performing well and focusing on their performance as a teacher.

Role in Improving Performance of the Staff

All the head teachers opined that they monitor teachers' punctuality, regularity and classroom performance regularly to ensure quality performance of the teachers. They also monitor and evaluate teachers' performance on a yearly basis as obligated by the Government policy for the schools. Only one head teacher provides regular feedback to the teachers and call for regular staff meetings to discuss about the teachers' problems and possible solutions. That same head teacher said that he assigns a junior teacher

who is having problems to a senior teacher so that the senior teacher can mentor the junior one for performing well. However, other head teachers do not bother about this issue. This can be considered as one of the major problems related to performance management in the schools of Bangladesh.

Challenges in Managing Performance

Saravanga (2011) found ten challenges in performance management. Those are lack of integration, lack of leadership support, failure of implementation, challenge in designing, incompetency, lack of rewards, communication challenges, inspiration challenges, lack of monitoring and lack of evaluation [38].

Analysis show that the main challenge in managing performance for the head teachers of Bangladesh is that they do not actually know that they need to manage performance of the teachers. They do not reflect on teachers' performance much. This is a crucial problem in performance management in most of the schools of Bangladesh. Other challenges include lack of support, monitoring and evaluation barriers, lack of motivation of the head teachers to manage teachers' performance and communication gap between the teachers and the school authority. These findings are similar to the findings of Saravanga.

Measuring Progress

The head teachers of Bangladesh generally measure progress through achievement scores. The more the achievement score of the students are, the more successful a school is. Thus, their idea of quality maintenance and quality improvement revolves around the idea of getting more and more students to pass and score high in the examinations. For this reason, they focus more on quantity and not on quality. That is why teachers' performance management is not an issue to the head teachers of Bangladesh. This is true in the case of all six participating head teachers.

Overall development of the School

Overall development of the school, to the head teachers, mean development of school physical facilities, new and improved technological support and good result in terms of achievement scores. Teachers' performance or teachers' professional development has totally been neglected while considering overall development of the schools. Only one head teacher illustrated that he sends his teachers for various trainings which will help them foster professional development. He also monitors and supervises the teachers regularly in order to ensure their progress in different aspects of professional life.

Recommendation

The findings of the study sketch some recommendations. Those are-

The head teachers need to be facilitated and trained properly in order to manage teachers' performance well. Higher authority should take into consideration that the head teachers themselves should at first be prepared for performance management.

Mentoring service should be introduced in each and every school of Bangladesh in order to ensure quality improvement of the teachers. New and inexperienced teachers should be assigned with a senior teacher so that they can be mentored.

Classroom observation should be introduced in every school to ensure quality performance of the teachers inside the classroom. There should be at least one observation each month.

Effective performance planning is needed in order to ensure quality performance of the teachers. It has been found that performance standards in the schools are unclear which causes the inefficiency of the teachers. The head teachers should take proper initiatives to plan and implement proper performance standards for the teachers.

At the beginning of each year, there should be a set goal for the teachers to attain at the end of the year. The goal should be aligned with the overall vision of the school and should base on previous year's performance of the teachers.

Continuous constructive feedback should be provided to the teachers about their performance as Furnham (2004) argued; feedback would have little effect on behaviour unless it is constructive [10].

Collaboration of different schools in the same area can be developed and facilitated in order to make the schools co-operate in issues like staff development and performance improvement. Schools can use the concept of shared staffs to improve the quality of education.

There should be a written policy for school performance management which will set out how performance management in the school will be implemented. The policy should set priorities and objectives keeping room for personal development of the staff as well as school development and should be revised every year.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, it can be said that the perception of the head teachers about performance management in Bangladeshi schools are not very clear. Thus, their performance as a performance manager is very poor and they face a lot of challenges regarding performance management. However, the literature shows that performance management is inevitable for the overall progress of the schools. Therefore, school authorities along with the Government of Bangladesh should take proper steps to plan and implement performance management strategies in schools for the professional development of the teachers as well as the overall development of the schools.

Reference

1. CIPD (2013). Performance Management: An Overview. Retrieved from: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/performance-management-overview.aspx> Coens, T. and Jenkins, M. (2002). Abolishing Performance Appraisals: Why they backfire and what to do instead. California: Berrett Koehler.
2. Harper, S. C. (1986). Adding Purpose to Performance Reviews. *Training and Development Journal*, 40, 53-55.
3. George, P. S. (1987). Performance Management in Education. *Educational Leadership*, 44 (7), 32-39.
4. CIPD (2009). Performance Management in Action. Retrieved from: http://www.cipd.co.uk/nr/rdonlyres/ac5b3f1d-ca83-4cb2-ad97-9b2333411133/0/performance_management_in_action.pdf
5. Haynes, G., Wragg, T., Wragg, C. and Chamberlin, R. (2003). Performance Management for Teachers: Headteachers' Perspectives. *School Leadership and Management*, 23 (1), 75-89.
6. Welsh Government (2012). Performance Management for Teachers. Retrieved from: <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/docs/learningwales/publications/120510performteachen.pdf>
7. Armstrong M. and Baron, A. (2004). *Managing Performance: Performance Management in Action*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
8. Tahvanainen, M. (2000). Expatriate performance management: The case of Nokia Telecommunications. *Human Resource Management*, 39, 267-275.
9. Fletcher, C. (2001). Performance appraisal and management: The developing research agenda. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 74, 473.
10. Furnham, A. (2004). Performance Management Systems. *European Business Journal*, 32, 161-178.
11. Hartog, D. N., Boselie, P. and Paauwe, J. (2004). Performance Management: A Model and Research Agenda. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 53, 556-569.
12. Rao, T. V. (2008). Lessons from Experience: A New Look at Performance Management Systems. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 33, 1-15.
13. Townley, B. (1991). Appraisal into UK Universities. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 1 (2), 27-44.
14. Townley, B. (1993). Performance Appraisal and the Emergence of Management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 30 (2), 221-238.
15. Coleman, T. (2009). Recommendations for Implementing Performance Management Systems in Organisations. University of Wollongong. Retrieved from: <http://www.evanscorp.com.au/Papers/PerformanceManagement.pdf>
16. Roberts, G. E. (1998). Perspectives on Enduring and Emerging Issues in Performance Appraisal. *Public Personnel Management*, 27, 301-320.
17. Latham, G. P., Almost, J., Mann, S. and Moore, C. (2005). New Developments in Performance Management. *Organizational Dynamics*, 34, 77-87.
18. Glendinning, P. M. (2002). Performance Management: Pariah or Messiah. *Public Personnel Management*, 31, 161-178.
19. Neary, D. B. (2002). Creating a Company-wide, on-line, Performance Management System: A case study at TRW Inc. *Human Resource Management*, 41, 491-498.
20. Graham, J. (2004). Developing a Performance-Based Culture. *Journal for Quality & Participation*, 27, 4-8.

21. Buchner, T. W. (2007). Performance Management Theory: A look from the Performer's Perspective with Implications for HRD. *Human Resource Development International*, 10, 59-73.
22. Helm, C., Holladay, C. L. and Tortorella, F. R. (2007). The Performance Management System: Applying and Evaluating a Pay-for Performance Initiative. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 52, 49-62.
23. Marr, B. (2008). *Managing and Delivering Performance*. Oxford: Elsevier.
24. EMB (2003). *Teacher Performance Management*. Retrieved from: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/sbm/sbm-forms-references/staff-appraisal-system/TPMguide.pdf>
25. Down, B., Chadbourne, R. and Hogan, C. (2000). How are Teachers Managing Performance Management? *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 28 (3), 213-223.
26. Sarrico, C. S., Rosa, M. J. and Manatos, M. J. (2012). School Performance Management Practices and School Achievement. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 61 (3), 272-289.
27. Cardiff University. (2011). *Leadership- Managing Performance*. Walsh, Prifysgol Cymru.
28. Varma, A., Budhwar, P. S. and DeNisi, A. (2007). *Performance Management System: A Global Perspective*. New York: Taylor and Francis Group.
29. Sole, F. (2009). A Management Model and Factors Driving Performance in Public Organizations. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 13 (4), 3-7.
30. Steers, R. M., Mowday, R. T. and Shapiro, D. L. (2004). The Future of Work Motivation Theory. *Academy of Management Review*, 29, 379-387.
31. Dorsett, D. (2006). Four Learning Approaches to Enhancing Employee Productivity. *Handbook of Business Strategy*, 7(1), 273-277.
32. Bouckaert, G. and Halligan, J. (2008). *Managing Performance: International Comparisons*. Abingdon: Routledge.
33. Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
34. Rubin, H. J. and Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
35. Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77-101.
36. Begum, H. A., and Hossain, A. (1998). *Educational Policy and Leadership in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Chatro-bondhu Publication.
37. Malek, A., Begum, M., and Islam, F. (2009). *Education Science and Education in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Bangladesh University Grant Commission.
38. Saravanga, D. M. (2011). *Integrated Performance Management Systems*. PhD. Thesis. Regenesys Business School.

Cite this Article: Iffat Naomee (2020). Performance Management in Bangladeshi Schools: Head Teachers' Perception. International Journal of Current Science Research and Review, 3(11), 149-154