

An Action Research Study on Employees' Perceptions on Performance Appraisal System in Relation to Employee Morale and Employee Goal Achievement of Chan Hein Group of Company

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Abstract:- The main purpose of the study is to investigate the extent of Performance Appraisal System aligned with Employee's attitude and performance of Chan Hein Group of Company. To be more specific, the study examined the Performance Appraisal System of Chan Hein Group of Company and to seek out Employee's Perception on Performance Appraisal System, and how those related to Employee Morale and Employee Goal Achievement through intervention of HRM Functions.

Descriptive methods and linear regression analysis model are used in this research. In order to achieve the research goals, both primary data and secondary data are recorded. Primary data is collected by survey questionnaire through 50 samples which were selected by using stratified selection method and the researcher conducted in depth interviews with seven interviewees which included two human resource and admin managers and five of other department managers. Secondary data is collected from company reports, research papers, text books, and internet websites. The survey questionnaires were recorded with operational level of management staffs from Chan Hein Group of Company and the main findings/results of the survey on the key variables, i.e. the employee perception on Performance Appraisal System is proved statistically significant impact to both Employee's Morale and Employee's Goal Achievement after the intervention of HRM Functions.

Keywords:- Performance Appraisal System, Employee Morale, Employee Goal Achievement, Human Resources Management Functions

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is dynamic and evolving with the changes and developments in the business and the technology around which business operates. In like manner, organizations and the workforce are also dynamically affected where enlightened companies now recognize that their employees expect the work environment as conducive and interactive with open dialogue and communication between employers and employees.

Managers believed that "putting the right people in the right position" is very critical for the success of an organization. In addition, deployment of "right people on the right position" requires Managers to be fair and equitable in conducting performance appraisals because this can enhance the employee and the organizational performance. Managers conducted Performance appraisal (PA) with written policies that include timelines, types of performance ratings, and clearly defined processes. Mondy and Noe (2005) defined PA as "a process of identifying, observing, measuring and developing employee performance in the organization." Performance Appraisal (PA) is conducted through Human Resource management functions to set the reward to reinforce the behavior of influential performers. In addition, PA identifies ineffective performers to achieve that are essential to the effectiveness of Human Resource Management functions.

In summary, PA is vital with the ultimate goal to improve performance valuable and relevant for Human Resource functions such as planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, career planning and deployment, compensation programs, internal employee relations, and organizational effectiveness.

On the other hand, employees depend on appraisals for increases in compensation, pay promotions, or other employee rewards such as incentives, bonuses, dismissal, punishment, Etc.

Invariably, According to Decenzo and Robbins (1999) that the human resource system can become more effective by having a valid and accurate appraisal system used for rating performances of employees. One of the concrete links between the employee's perception of the organization's performance appraisal system and the organization's performance appraisal are essential. Performance Appraisal System can affect everyone within a company and the company as a whole. It is therefore imperative for managers to make an effort to be as objective and fair as possible. Employees want to be recognized and rewarded for their accomplishments and need continuous performance feedback. If employee performance is missing the mark, they can make appropriate changes. In today's competitive business world, organizations can only compete with their rivals or competitors by innovating in managing human resources. Organizations can be innovative by managing their human resources well.

As more global companies expand their international operations, companies become more mindful. As a result, they get more exposed to various approaches in various experiences in the diversity of cultures, customs, and practices in each country.

Based on a preliminary interview with the managers of Chan Hein Group that most employees are aware of performance appraisal and perceived negatively, except for a small number of outstanding contributors who are incredibly confident and secure in their capabilities. A similarly small number of poor performers are indifferent or feel they can beat any appraisal process. The researcher thought such concerns might be born out of fear of unfairness as being rightly or wrongly evaluated in their performance raters. The employees' fear is not without basis; as a matter of fact, the perceived biases come from the experience with the rater's subjectivity. The rater may not measure the performance on the actual behaviors demonstrated and the results achieved during the rating period but instead use various subjective biases to rate performance. It is a critical issue worth addressing in the implementation of a performance appraisal system.

This concern with the future and lifetime employment by many mid-level and low-level managers and operative employees is valid. Moreover, it may have a direct bearing on their view of any performance system.

There are ten (10) member countries in the ASEAN who pledge commitment to implement the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as a single regional common market and production base. In 2015, it has a population of more than 640 million and as a Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy in 2025 for a population of more than 648 million in the South East Asian nations. This includes countries namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar, Brunei, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

Thus, AEC integration will boost equitable growth with fast emerging markets and developing economies through enhanced regional cooperation. Moreover, it is further envisioned that this integration will initiate substantial structural change, offering better jobs and improving job quality, building up skills and promoting productivity with new policy recommendations for regional investment to achieve even greater financial integration in ASEAN (ASEAN, 2025, A Blueprint for Growth ASEAN Economic Community 2025: Progress and Key Achievements, ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta).

The world is witnessing a monumental shift in its Centre of economic gravity, a global economic rebalancing towards Asia, which is expected to account for over 50 percent of the global GDP by 2040. Even today, the continent accounts for almost 50 per cent of global investment. It is estimated that the region could drive up to 50 per cent of global consumption growth in the years ahead. In the next decade alone, close to one billion new middle-class consumers will emerge in Asia. This growing economic trend will be advanced even faster by the forming of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) on November 15, the newly signed agreement between ASEAN and five nations, which includes China, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

Myanmar has implemented a number of significant reforms in the economic, political, and social spheres aimed at creating new opportunities for investors. There has been progress, but there are also challenges to be overcome, barriers and obstacles to be removed. The government is confident that the current and other reforms will prove fruitful in attracting increased foreign investment and will help us overcome the challenges. Myanmar welcomes investors as partners in its endeavor as the country pursues the vision outlined in the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan for a more prosperous, peaceful, and democratic Myanmar. It is committed to seeing foreign investment thrive and prosper. While the influx of foreign investment is on the rise, the future of Chan Hein Company is perilous indeed.

Myanmar has been trying to stimulate industrial investment and production by encouraging private-sector participation in the industry sector. Industrial development is a priority goal and it is important to the whole development process. The industrial sector in Myanmar is still constituted of industries dealing with the basic processing of raw materials. There are many features in Myanmar society and economy favorable to the industrial development. Apart from these, there are few other industries that are engaged in the manufacture of other products.

HRM functions are usually conducted by managers' written policies that included time lines, types of performance ratings and clearly defined processes. **Managers must be fair and equity in conducting performance appraisal system because it can enhance the employee morale and can achieve the organizational goal.** For organizations involved in which involves high

costs and high risk of investment. Mondy, Noe and Premeaus (2002) define performance appraisal system (PAS) as “a system of review and evaluation of an individual’s and team’s job performance.” (p. 279). It is considered the vital potential mechanism for organizational growth. They advanced the advocacy to HR Managers to consider this system as comprehensive and continuous process rather than as “an event that occurs once a year.” PAS is a must to assess through HRM functions and ensure performance at par and goals for productivity are achieved by the organization. There are many construction companies in Myanmar, Chan Hein Company is the famous one among them.

There are seven departments in the company and their operation in terms of roles and functions are described as follows drawn from the archives of records, observations and interview with the various department heads: (Company archives).

No	Departments	Total Employees
1	Administration	13
2	Procurement and logistics	9
3	Finance and Accounting	12
4	Marketing	10
5	Engineering	70
6	Production	85
7	Human Resource	15
Total		214

Table 1:- Total Employees in Yangon Head Office of the Company
Source: Survey Data, 2019

Chan Hein Company is currently practicing the PAS in their organization. If the employees have met or exceeded the objective, the appraisal will be favorable. The main advantage of this PAS is to let employee knows what is expected and a supervisor focuses on results rather than more subjective criteria. HRM Functions are aimed to individual improvement such as personal development, work satisfaction, involvement in the organization. Organization is also aimed to improve the mutual goals of the employees, growth and development and increase harmony and enhance morale and effectiveness.

➤ *The Research Problem or Purpose of the Study*

Based on the current situation and the SWOTAR analysis, Chan Hein Group of Company is under threat, and pressures to improve its weakness (listed below) in order to increase employee morale and achieve employee goals beyond expectations are considered.

Weakness as;

- lack of skills at managerial levels and staff are untrained
- has no prior experience of doing business
- employees are seldom receiving commands
- employees are resistant to the idea of having to come up with their own ideas, and they are reluctant to make decision themselves even when dealing with sensitive customers
- not having a clear and unambiguous motivation system such as intrinsic and extrinsic reward systems and incentives such as salary increases and alert that that a drop-off in managers’ motivation to move satisfaction and poor performance

Linking some or all above issues/weakness with managers’ observation, the researcher can link employee morale with the definition of by and large in human resources terms, employee morale is defined to include job satisfaction, outlook and feelings of well-being an employee has within the workplace or environment It has been proven that it does have a direct effect on productivity, it as one of the cornerstones of business. This definition includes the emotions, attitude, satisfaction, and overall outlook of employees during their time in a workplace environment.

Part of effective productivity is thought to be directly related to the morale of the employees. The employees that are happy and positive at work are said to have positive or high employee morale. The companies that maintain employees who are dissatisfied and negative about their work environment are said to have negative or low employee morale (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/employee-morale.html>).

Thus, how employee perceives Performance Appraisal System (PAS) to respond to these weaknesses are also considered in this research.

The main objective of this study is conducting Action Research to investigate the extent of employee perception on the scope, relevance, appropriateness and alignment of the Performance Appraisal System with Employee Morale and Employee Goal Achievement of Chan Hein Group of Company.

➤ *Research Objectives of the Study*

Specifically, the study seeks to;

1. To examine the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) of Chan Hein Company in eight factors or areas: Providing feedback, explaining rating decisions, Seeking appeals, Accuracy of ratings, Concern over ratings, Treatment by Appraisers, Reactions to PA, Reactions to Supervisors
2. To identify OD Intervention to improve Employee Perception on PAS
3. To determine the relationship between Employees Perception on PAS and Employee Morale
4. To determine the relationship between Employees Perception on PAS and Employee Goal Achievement

➤ *Research Questions*

1. What is the scope, relevance, appropriateness and alignment of Performance Appraisal System of Chan Hein Company?
2. What is the relationship between Employee Perception on PAS and Employee Morale?
3. What is the relationship between Employee Perception on PAS and Employee Goal Achievement?

➤ *Research Hypotheses*

- H1o: The Employees Perception on PAS has no statistically significant difference before ODI and after ODI
 H1a: The Employees Perception on PAS has statistically significant difference before ODI and after ODI
 H2o: The Employees Perception on PAS has no statistically significant impact on Employee Morale between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI
 H2a: The Employees Perception on PAS has statistically significant impact on Employee Morale between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI
 H3o: The Employee Perception on PAS has no statistically significant impact on Employee Goal Achievement between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI
 H3a: The Employee Perception on PAS has statistically significant impact on Employee Goal Achievement between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI

This study mainly focuses on the examination of performance appraisal system (PAS) of Chan Hein Company and more importantly on the perception of employees of HRM practices in order to achieve the research goals, both primary data and secondary data are generated and recorded. A survey and interview questionnaires are developed for the sampled respondents of management and staff. Although there are 214 employees in Yangon Region Head Office of Chan Hein Company, only 50 respondents were selected purposely for this study. The data is collected through survey using predominantly positive statement. This study is done during 2019.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This presents the discourse on the literature topics and themes on Human Resource Management (HRM), its function as a major component of the organization, the definitions, processes and related topics of Performance Appraisal (PA), the effectiveness of Performance Appraisal System (PAS), the processes in the conduct of performance appraisal and type of performance appraisal period, standard of performance appraisal and performance appraisal method. The discourse is to build on the topic of choice in this research, the theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study.

Robert and Jackson (2002:1) defined the HRM function as one “to perform the role of designing and applying the formal system in an organization to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talent to accomplish organizational goals”. From another view, Wendel French (1990:8) further expanded the scope of HRM role and functions to reflect the increasing scope that encompasses

conceptual and operational issues as philosophy, policies, procedures and practices as these are related to the management of the people within an organization. On this advocacy, this view therefore suggests HRM is a “strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization’s most valued assets, the people working there who individually and collectively contributes to the achievement of the objectives.” The policies and practices involved in carrying out the people or human resource aspects of a management position, including recruiting, screening, training, rewarding, appraising, compensating, and maintaining such human resources are spelled out by Dressler Gary (2003:1).

The theoretical framework of this study is embedded in the core HRM Functions namely recruitment/selection, deployment/job rotation, maintenance, compensation, career training and development. At the heart of which is the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) as a key to determine the level of Performance of Employees that contributes to organization goals. How HRM does carry out the PAS in practice would affect the perception of employees of the PAS and whether this perception influences Goal Achievement as well as Employee Morale in their work engagement. By conducting employee’s performance appraisal system management of a company an easily understand action to be taken as needed for employees regarding training and development, promotion scheme, rewarding and punishment. Developing an effective performance appraisal system has continued to be a high priority for human resource management. Employee engagement can be critically important to competitiveness in the contemporary business environment. The Conceptual Framework is based on the theoretical evidence that crystallized the research questions and the research methodology, research design, and instruments respectively.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

The research theoretical framework is developed for this study is shown on figure 1.

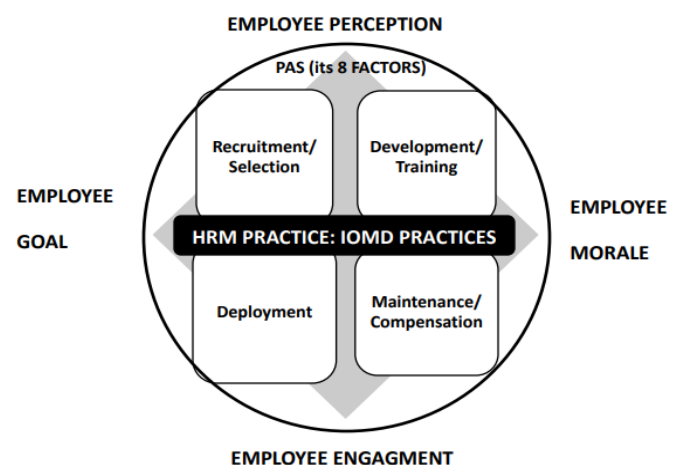


Fig 1:- Theoretical Framework of the Research (HRM Practices: IOMD Practices)

The employee’s perception of effectiveness on performance appraisal system to be conducted in Chan Hein Group of Company is intended to develop and build employee’s morale and goal achievement and so that it would not result to ineffectiveness, disagreement with low level of management staff and effort. In the performance of the four clusters of HRM functions, at the core of these functions is the need for performance appraisal system. Monitoring and feedback on the performance of employees can utilize the PAS to generate information on employee performance for reflection and decision-making purposes. The study uses organization performance by involving HR in planning, recruitment hiring development, training

development and carrier planning approaches of employee’s perception on performance appraisals to employee’s morale and goal achievement. It is argued in this research that the effectiveness of performance of HRM functions in terms of the implementation of the Performance Appraisal System bears some impact on employee perception of employee morale and employee goal achievement.

➤ *Conceptual Framework*

Based on the main purpose of the study as well as the research objectives, the conceptual framework of the study considers the following as independent and dependent variables are shown on figure 2 as follows:

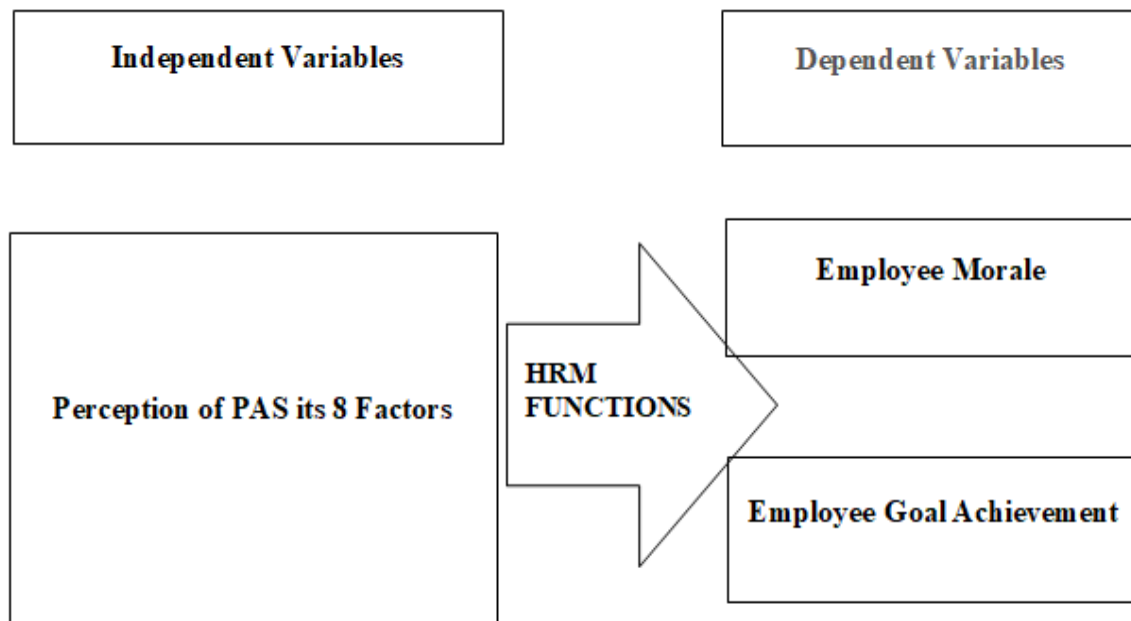


Fig 2

The OD Intervention will be focus by applying HRM functions; Recruiting, Selection Process, Development, Deployment, Maintenance and Compensation could be fit the local context and perception. The conceptual framework of this study is on the relationship of the employee perception on the Performance Appraisal System and how this perception relates to two important dimensions of performance at the a] “feeling level” in employee morale and b] “performance” level or goal achievement. The question comes to mind on whether employee perception on how well or how badly PAS is practiced in the organization does influence the way employee feel towards work and the company as well as on their achievement of goals.

The Conceptual Framework illustrates how employee’s perception of effectiveness on Performance Appraisal System (PAS) related to Employee Morale and Employee Goal Achievement. The Conceptual Framework

as developed based on the theoretical evidence by connecting the research questions to guide the research process and the research methodology, research design, and instruments to be used for data collection.

The independent variables of employee’s perception comprise with performance appraisals system. The questionnaire surveys of quantitative inquiry decided the initial impact of independent variables of the employee’s perception of effectiveness on performance appraisal system. It is to inquire how the employees perceive of performance, satisfaction and efforts of followers; the measurement of all variables of independence variables which show all are improving or not. The measurement and evaluation results of the outcomes of dependent variables reflect the employees morale and employees goal achievement.

➤ Action Research Framework

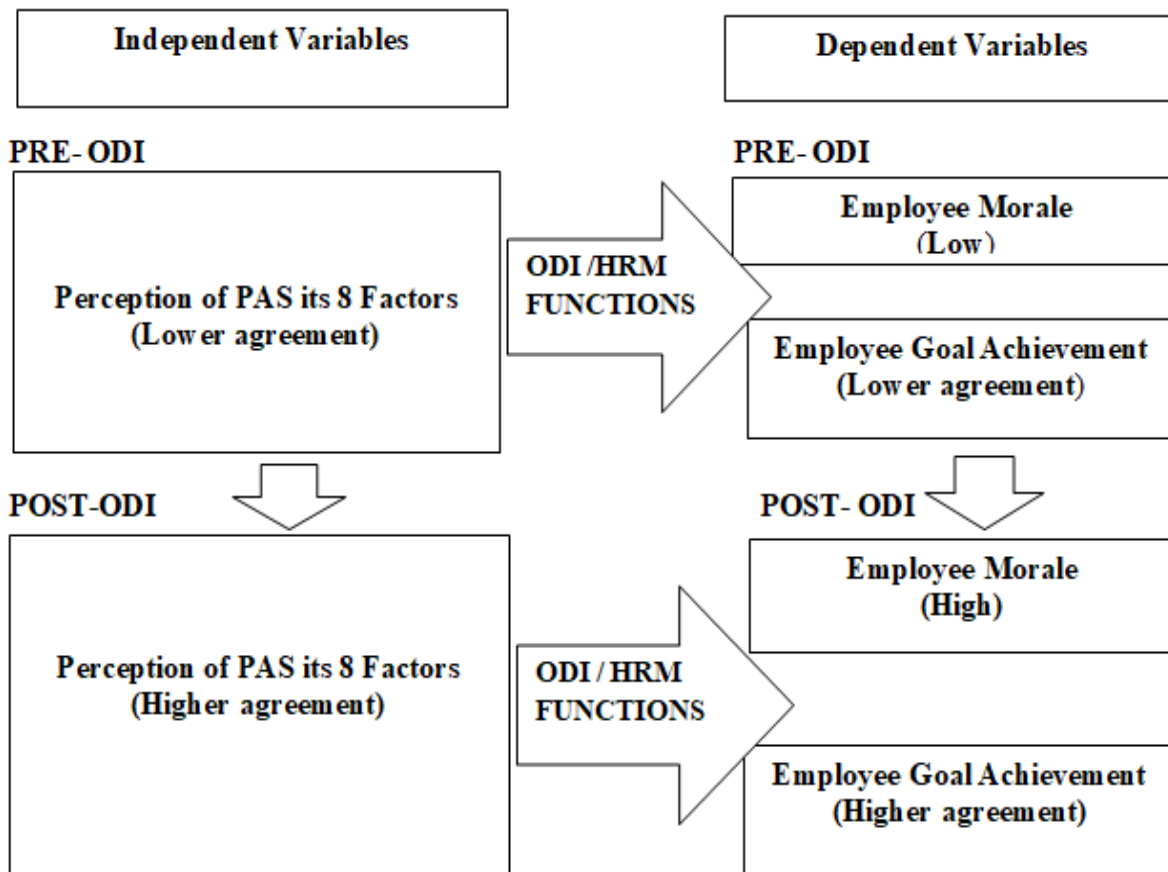


Fig 3:- Action Research Framework of the Study

HRM functions Interventions of PAS through job analysis, job description, tasks, objectives, goals must be clearly defined;

Identify KPIs,

- what are key performance indicators, who should participate to develop, when to make an announcement and training. Interventions on Observation (Part of HRM functions);
- What to observe (i.e. KPIs), which kind of instruments and methods (quantitative and qualitative) to guide observation (Assessment Table), when and how long, how often (Frequency), who should conduct observation (Multiple Appraisers)?

Interventions on Measuring (part of HRM practices);

- What to be measured (KPI), when to measure, how to calculate the measurement?

Interventions on Developing (Training, Coaching, Team Building, etc.)

- Feedback to stakeholders and provide trainings through HRM functions to improve competency of Employees.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive Research Methodology and Inferential Ratio Statistics Tests are used for the study to examine the relationship between employees’ perception on performance appraisal system of the Chan Hein Group of Company and the perception on employee morale and goal achievement. Primary data was collected by personal interviews with 50 respondents who included 2 HR and Admin managers and 5 other departmental managers and through the main instrument of a questionnaire. Company records, Management reports, literature search, various text books, publication, research papers, internet websites are used for this study as secondary sources. The data analysis was done using descriptive and correlation statistics, in order to address the research questions and hypotheses.

❖ *Research Analysis Methods*

➤ *Research Hypotheses*

Paired sample T test

H1o: The Employees Perception on PAS has no statistically significant difference before ODI and after ODI

H1a: The Employees Perception on PAS has statistically significant difference before ODI and after ODI

Employee Perception on the PAS paired sample T-Test between pre-ODI and post-ODI

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PreODI	3.3475	8	.15425	.05454
	PostODI	3.9663	8	.04868	.01721

Table 2:- Paired Samples Statistics
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	PreODI & PostODI	8	.267	.523

Table 3:- Paired Samples Correlations
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PreODI-PostODI	-.61875	.14885	.05263	-.74319	-.49431	-11.758	7	.000

Table 4:- Paired Samples Test
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Sample Paired T test for PAS its 8 factors. The null hypothesis has been rejected since there is statistically significant difference between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI.

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PreODI	3.3456	32	.19232	.03400
	PostODI	3.9650	32	.09116	.01611

Table 5:- Paired Samples Statistics
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	PreODI & PostODI	32	.130	.478

Table 6:- Paired Samples Correlations
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PreODI - PostODI	-.61937	.20183	.03568	-.69214	-.54661	-17.360	31	.000

Table 7:- Paired Samples Test
Source : Survery Data, 2019-2020

Sample Paired T test for PAS its 32 items. The null hypothesis has been rejected since there is statistically significant difference between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI.

➤ *Linear Regression (focus on r square value)*

H2o: Employees Perception on PAS has no impact on Employee Morale between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI

H2a: Employees Perception on PAS has impact on Employee Morale between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI

The critical value of the F distribution table of (8, 41) is 2.17, and calculated F ratio value is 6.31, at 0.05 significance level, since calculated F ratio value is greater than F critical value. Which means the H1o is rejected and H1a is accepted. PAS has impact on Effective Employee Morale.

➤ *Linear Regression*

H3o: Employee Perception on PAS has no impact on Employee Goal Achievement between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI

H3a: Employee Perception on PAS has impact on Employee Goal Achievement between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI

It can be verified that the critical value of F distribution table of (5, 44) is 2.43 at 0.05 significance level, and its F calculated value is 75.595, so it is Statistically significant. H2o is rejected, and H2a is accepted. PAS has impact on Effective Employee Goal Achievement.

➤ *Reliability*

Cronbach's Alpha of Performance Appraisal System (PAS) toward the Effective Employee Morale (EEM) and Effective Employee Goal Achievement (EEGA) were used to obtain high scores at rate as 0.918 for reliability of the Survey Questionnaires, indicating the acceptable level of reliability of the subscales (greater than 0.7).

➤ *Analysis of Qualitative Data*

Qualitative data was gathered from Pre-ODI interview conducted with 50 respondents. The following are summaries according to the HR manager and supervisor's points of view from Pre-ODI qualitative interviews. The overwhelming majority of the HR manager and supervisors before training intervention (Pre-ODI) mentioned that they focused their attention mostly on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures, on irregularities, and deviations from company standards and left their employee alone and absent when needed. More than 65% did not talk about our business' values, mission and vision of the organization and some even didn't recognize the mission and vision of the organization. More than 60% revealed no a sense of confidence in achieving their goals and found it hard to inspire others and seldom talked optimistically about the future.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

It is apparent that within the Chan Hein Company, appraisees' perception of PAS supports a positive relationship between fairness and satisfaction with the performance appraisal process. The higher appraisees rate the process as fair, the more satisfied they are with the performance appraisal system. The researcher tested the reliability of the 42 questionnaires of Performance Appraisal System (PAS), Employee Morale (EM), and Employee Goal Achievement (EGA) with Cronbach's alpha method, which has **high scores at the rate of 0.918 for reliability**. In addition, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha method to test the scale reliability of PAS, EM, and EGA questionnaires. Furthermore, uniformity of items contained in the scale (Churchill, 1979). This study focuses on the 32 items associated with the Effective Employee Morale and Effective Employee Goal Achievement described above (scale with five items, respectively).

The findings of statistically significant employee perception on PAS impact employee morale and Employee goal achievement, which supported HRM Functions (ODI), made positive changes to PAS. Although this is only a pilot study, the outcomes may indicate Chan Hein Company moving from a market-based position to a resource-based approach (Perez & Falcon, 2004). To this end, the employee is a significant stakeholder (Simmons & Lovegrove, 2002) in both the organizational and performance appraisal systems.

Aspects of both procedural and distributive (Erdogan, 2002) were high, although differences existed between those who had received training and those who had not. If performance appraisal in the Chan Hein Company is to be enhanced further, then the practical HRM functions should be applied to appraisers and appraisees.

The Companies have a crucial role in Myanmar's developing economy, with people providing a dependable source of competitive advantage (Barney, 1995). However, unfair treatment of employees can impact job performance (Vigoda, 2000) and affect employee satisfaction (Taylor et al., 1995), so satisfaction with performance appraisal systems related to Employee Morale and Employee Goal Achievement must remain high.

Top-level management should develop and change the organization's culture to display their capabilities and ask participants to imagine their vision for the organization in three to ten years by aligning their interests and ideas. At that point, they can redesign the organization based on their actual functions on the job application at their workplace setting. It is thus necessary for managers those who were selected to participate in the development program should quest for their expectation from the program and how they want to learn and share throughout the journey of Organization Development. Although the findings in this case study may be limited, there are significant achievements in many examples.

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