# Investigation of Employees` Appraisal and Performance in Nigeria Civil Service

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**ABSTRACT**
The study aims to explore the determinants of employees` performance in Nigeria's civil service specifically exploring the impact of employees` appraisal, management standards and training on employees` performance while exploring the mediating impact of employees` engagement. A sample of 200 is selected from different ministries through convenient sampling. Primary data is collected, distributing questionnaires to each employee. Descriptive and correlation data analysis is adopted. It was found that employees' appraisal, management standards and training are significant factors for employees` performance, having a significant impact on employee engagement that ultimately leads towards employees` performance. Institutions/Ministries should focus on employees' appraisal, management standards and training to enhance their engagement towards work, hence improving their performance.
**Keywords**: Employees` performance, employees` appraisal, management standards, training.

## I.    INTRODUCTION

Maximizing the performance of organizations is the main issue for an organization (Bob cardy, 1997). Good organisational performance refers to the employee's performance. Satisfactory performance of employees does not happen automatically. Managerial standards, Knowledge and Skill, Commitment and Performance appraisals affect employee performance. But we are focusing on performance appraisal. The history of performance appraisal is quite brief. Its roots can be traced in the early 20th century to Taylor's pioneering time and motion studies. The performance appraisal system started in practised mainly in the 1940s and with the help of this system, merit rating was used for the first time near the Second World War as a method of justifying an employee's wages (Lillian & Sitati,2011).

However performance appraisal is a very important process but it is deemed to be the "weak point" of managing human force (Pulakios, 2009). Therefore performance appraisal is important to manage employees' work effectively. (Armstrong, 2001) tells performance as behaviour – how an organization's teams and individuals get work done. (Mooney, 2009) suggested that performance is not only related to results but it also relates to activities and behaviours of employees that they adopted to achieve their given goals. (Dessler, 2005) define performance appraisal as "comparing the employee's present and past performance to his/her performance standards". (Grubb,2007) says performance appraisal is a procedure to evaluate how individual personnel are performing and how they can improve their performance and contribute to overall organizational performance.

While focusing on performance appraisal as a motivational tool, studies in this field strongly suggest that performance appraisal systems can be used to enhance motivation (Chen & Eldridge, 2010; Appelbaum et al., 2011). However, the link between performance appraisal and employee motivation has often been studied in a traditional or general manner and hence the relationship tends to be blurred in nature. The traditional use of performance appraisal has for instance been criticized for the reward of "win-lose" results as opposed to "win-win" results in which the system promotes supportive and cooperative behaviour (Rowland & Hall, 2012).

In addition, the use of a formal system of performance appraisal is costly for the organization, so identifying an adequate supervisor is important if the organization wants to obtain returns from its investment in the implementation of the process. All in all, the quality and effectiveness of a system of appraisal depend largely on the skill of the person performing the assessment, so the choice of an appropriate supervisor should be a major concern for

organizations implementing a formal system of evaluation (Nurse, 2005).

The research seeks to establish the link that exists between performance appraisal and employee motivation. However, the specific objectives are to:

i. analyze the types of performance appraisal and motivation and employees' effectiveness in the Nigeria Civil Service Commission.
ii. define employees' satisfaction, measure it and examine how it would be beneficial to the growth of the Nigeria Civil Service Commission.
iii. examine and explore the link between performance appraisal and motivation in the Nigeria Civil Service Commission

## II.    LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees` appraisal is among the critical factors that contribute significantly to organizational success. Learning organizations play important role in enhancing employee performance by providing training and development for their employees (Gitongu et al, 2016).

Moreover, management standards to evaluate employee performance also play a critical role in improving employee performance as they provide the picture of actual performance and its alignment with the benchmarks. If discrepancies are found, then these standards help bring the outputs again towards their required levels (Mackay et al, 2004).

Supervisors and employees generally have ambivalent attitudes, at best, toward performance appraisal (Cederblom & Pemerl, 2002). Although most would recognize the perceived benefit, in principle, of documenting, communicating, and setting goals in areas of performance, many are also frustrated concerning the actual benefit received from performance appraisal in their organizations. The benefits and rewards of performance appraisal appear to be often overstated (Longenecker & Nykodym, 1996). Nickols (2007) suggests that "the typical performance appraisal system devours staggering amounts of time and energy, depresses and demotivates people, destroys trust and teamwork and, adding insult to injury, it delivers little demonstrable value at great cost"

The findings of several studies addressing the challenges of performance appraisal and the consequences of performance appraisal that are not done well are summarized below. Oberg (1972) mentions several pitfalls that are common to performance appraisal systems:

i. They demand too much from supervisors,

ii. Standards and ratings vary widely and sometimes unfairly,
iii. Personal values and bias can replace organizational standards,
iv. Employees may not know how they are rated due to lack of communication,
v. The validity of ratings is reduced by supervisory resistance to give the ratings - particularly negative ratings,
vi. Negative feedback can demotivate employees.

### 2.1  HR Practices for a Successful and Effective Performance Appraisal

The key to the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process is to have easy-to-use and effective performance appraisal systems. Here are five tips.

**Defined Purpose**: The purpose of the appraisal should be mentioned on the first page of the appraisal form. It should also be a part of the appraisal message and sent to employees via email.

**Employee Involvement**: It is important to involve employees in self-review. Not only does this make them feel valued, but it also allows them to reflect on their accomplishments and faults.

**Well-Defined Workflows**: Appraisal workflows must be well-defined. To suit unique needs, the employee accepts or rejects the appraisal

**Self-Appraisal**: Employees feel valued when self-appraisal is included. This procedure ensures that appraisals are not conducted without the approval and confirmation of the employee. Furthermore, it ensures the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process. Employees realize they have more influence over their appraisal once such a process is in place, which boosts their self-confidence.

**Web-based Appraisal Process:** Use cloud-based appraisal software to conduct performance evaluations. For both employees and supervisors, the web-based approach makes the entire appraisal process easier and faster. It helps you save time, money, and effort. The online performance appraisal system helps to establish a foundation by allowing all stakeholders to complete the review process promptly.

**Ongoing Evaluations**: The effectiveness of performance appraisal can be measured by frequent performance reviews that provide real-time feedback to employees. Ongoing performance conversations improve overall individual performance as well as bring rewarding benefits to the team.

**Constructive, Meaningful Feedback**: Genuine praise or criticism, and holistic and meaningful feedback leads to a highly motivated team. After

the appraisal process, let employees have a copy of the appraisal for their reference. Also let them know how it impacted their salary, compensation and career. As a result, they will make sure that their performance appraisal scores are higher the next time.

### 2.2. How can you increase the effectiveness of performance appraisal?
A performance appraisal that focuses on the overall development of employee skills and performance is considered to be the most effective approach.

- Setup clear employee goals and periodically measure employee performance against those goals. Furthermore, make it a practice to monitor employee achievements regularly. In this way, managers would be able to identify the challenges faced by employees in achieving goals.
- Provide constructive feedback to help employees improve their performance. Then help them to identify their strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement.
- Suggest suitable training courses for employees to develop skills. As a result, learning and development programs help to boost the career growth of professionals. Implement the above tips and you will increase the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process.

### 2.3. Performance Feedback
Performance feedback is an information exchange and conflict resolution process between the employee and supervisor. This consists of both positive feedback on what the employee is doing right as well as feedback on what requires improvement. Managers and supervisors will need to be comfortable with working with the whole range of workplace factors that influence employee performance. While the supervisor gives his/her feedback and requirements, the employee enables to give his her feedback regarding his/her requirements. Although this process is formal, it could be managed informally by gaining closer relations between the two sides (Chandrasekar, 2011)

### 2.4. Workplace Incentives
The organization determines what motivates its employees and sets up formal and informal structures for rewarding employees for behaving in the way required. Rewards may consist of a mix of internal rewards, such as challenging assignments, and external rewards, such as higher

compensation and peer recognition (Chandrasekar, 2011).

The performance of professional employees is poor not only due to working environment factors but also due to a lack of human resource management aspects such as recognition of employees who performs well, poor working condition, absence of a performance appraisal system and poor feedback on performance outcome. Therefore significant changes in promotions, compensation and benefits help in keeping employees satisfied and in turn increase productivity.

### 2.5. Training
Training requirements amplify with the advancement in the industry as well as the global markets. Training improves employee performance through developing a sense of teamwork among employees as well as contributing positively towards their knowledge and information about their job (Gruman and Saks, 2011).
Training providing information about innovation aid more to the employees' knowledge and helps improve employees' performance aligning with the changing requirements of the organization, industry and market. Training influences employee performance in a positive manner, thus organizations are more focused on employees' training and development to improve their performance and gain a competitive advantage in the market (Ellinger et al, 2003).

### 2.6. Employee Engagement
Employees' engagement incorporates the willingness of individuals to completely invest their selves into an organizational role. It is found that when employees contend with their jobs as well as organizations, they are motivated to contribute to the organization at their maximum level. They provide their complete efforts to attain the organizational goals. Such engagement of employees helps them improve their performance in the organization (Saks, 2006).

## III. METHODOLOGY
A survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consists of 546 civil servants

### 3.1. Method of Data Collection
A sample of 200 is selected from different ministries through convenient sampling. Primary data is collected; Data is collected through this questionnaire to each employee, and Descriptive and correlation data analysis is adopted. They were

asked different questions about employee satisfaction, management standards, training, employee engagement and employee performance. The following questions are asked through the questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale indicating 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree:

**3.2. Method of Data Analysis**
To test the significant effect and the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables,

# IV.    DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

**SECTION A**
**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

| 1 | Age | 20<30 | 30<40 | 40<50 | 50<60 | 60 & above |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 17 | 67 | 94 | 22 | |
| 2 | Gender | male | Female | | | |
| | | 94 | 106 | | | |
| 3 | Length of service in the institution: | <10 | 10<19 | 20<29 | 30 and above | |
| | | 79 | 87 | 34 | | |
| 4 | Educational level | Levels 2- 6 | Levels 7-9 | Levels 11-14 | Levels 15 & above | |
| | | 47 | 87 | 66 | | |

**SECTION B**
**This section seeks to measure the employees` appraisal practices in your institution.**

| S/N | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | How often are employees appraised in your institution? | Annually | Semi-Annually | Quarterly | |
| | | 200 | 0 | 0 | |
| 6 | Performance appraisal process in your organization is satisfactory? | Yes | No | | |
| | | 159 | 41 | | |
| 7 | The performance appraisal goals set for you are realistic, achievable and measurable | Yes | No | | |
| | | 178 | 22 | | |
| 8 | Performance appraisal goals are communicated to you at the start of the appraisal | Yes | No | | |
| | | 175 | 25 | | |

**SECTION C**
**This section seeks to measure the effectiveness of appraisal practice in your institution.**

| S/N | items | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Poor | Bad |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | How effective is the performance appraisal in your organization? | 0 | 16 | 158 | 26 | 0 |
| 10 | How do you grade your | 0 | 26 | 169 | 5 | 0 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | performance before appraisal? | | | | | |
| 11 | How do you grade your performance after appraisal? | 17 | 175 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | How do you grade your colleague's performance before appraisal? | 3 | 162 | 25 | 10 | 0 |
| 13 | How do you grade your colleague's performance after appraisal? | 26 | 170 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | How do you grade your colleague's attentiveness at work before appraisal? | 23 | 83 | 94 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | How do you grade your colleague's attentiveness at work after appraisal? | 38 | 147 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| 16 | What do you say about your team's pro-activeness when given a task before appraisal? | 14 | 137 | 49 | 0 | 0 |
| 17 | What do you say about your team's pro-activeness when given a task after appraisal? | 26 | 139 | 35 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | How do you grade your team's level of task/job completion after appraisal when compared to before appraisal? | 30 | 154 | 16 | 0 | 0 |

**Section D**
**This section seeks to measure the effectiveness of your institution's exchange programme concerning performance appraisal.**

| 19 | Does your organization take you through training/workshops? | Yes | No | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 135 | 65 | | |
| 20 | How often your institution does organize training/workshop programmes? | Bi-annually | Annually | Semi-Annually | Quarterly |
| | | 0 | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 | What are the themes of the recent training/workshops organized by your institution? | | | | |

**Section E**
**This section seeks to measure the effectiveness of motivation concerning performance appraisal**

| 22 | Do you get compensated/rewarded/awarded/motivated for a job well done? | Yes | No | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 146 | 54 | | |

| 21 | If yes, how often does your institution organizes the programme? | Annually | Semi-Annually | Quarterly | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 126 | 0 | 0 | |
| 22 | In what form do you get compensated/rewarded/awarded/motivated? | Monetary Award | Promotion | Souvenir | Others |
| | | | 147 | 16 | 37 |
| 23 | In what form does your institution scold staff that is found below the given standard? | Query | Suspension | Dismissal/Sack | All of the above |
| | | 68 | 0 | 0 | 132 |

# V. DATA ANALYSIS



## INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS ABOUT THE STATED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There is enough data evidence that suggests that there exists a strong positive relationship between how often employees are appraised and their level of satisfaction in the performance appraisal process.

Though there exists a strong positive correlation between how often employees are appraised and the level of satisfaction in the performance appraisal process, there is enough data evidence that suggests negative relationships between the frequencies of employee appraisal and employee performance.

Also, there exists a perfect positive relationship between motivation or compensation for a job well done and achieving, measuring and realization of the set performance appraisal goals, the data evidence suggests a strong negative correlation between motivation/compensation for a job well done and the effectiveness of performance appraisal.

Figure 1: Graphical representation of the satisfaction level of the performance appraisal process in your organization



Figure 2: Graphical representation of the satisfaction level of the performance appraisal process in your organization

Figure 3: Graphical representation of the satisfaction level of the performance appraisal process in your organization

The following percentages of respondents gave a **YES** response to the question: "Performance appraisal process in your organization is satisfactory?"; the performance appraisal goals set for you are realistic, achievable and measurable; and performance appraisal goals are communicated to you at the start of the appraisal, 79%, 89% and 87% respectively.

It is worth noting that 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent excellent, very good, good, poor and bad respectively.
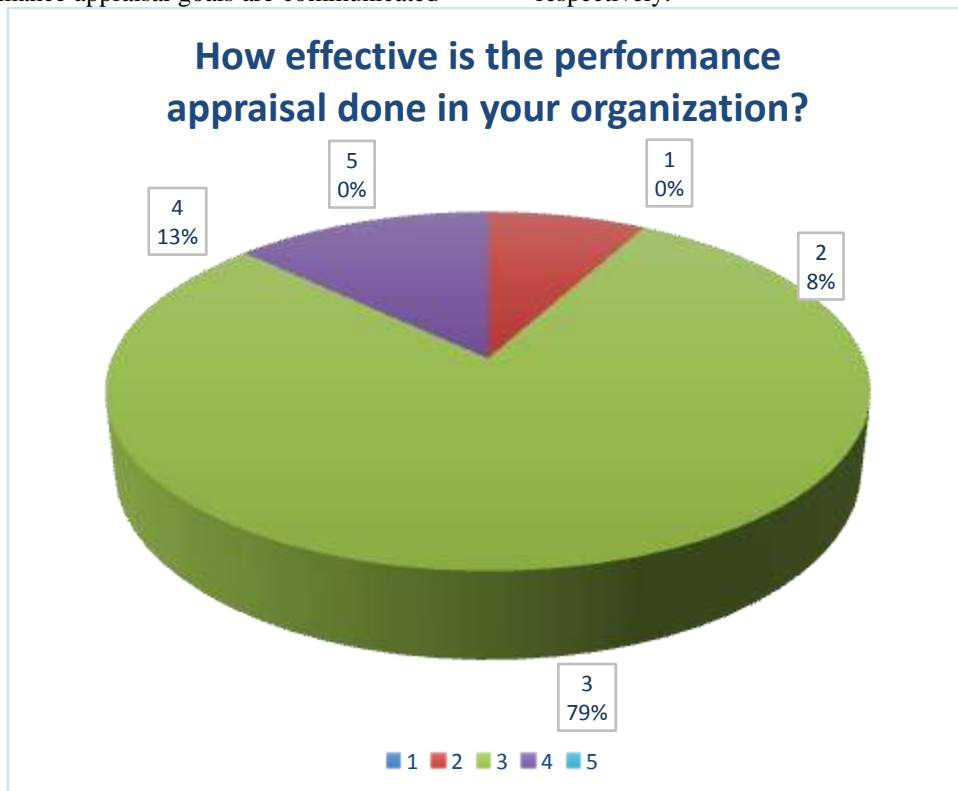


Figure 4: Graphical representation of the effectiveness of performance appraisal done in your organization
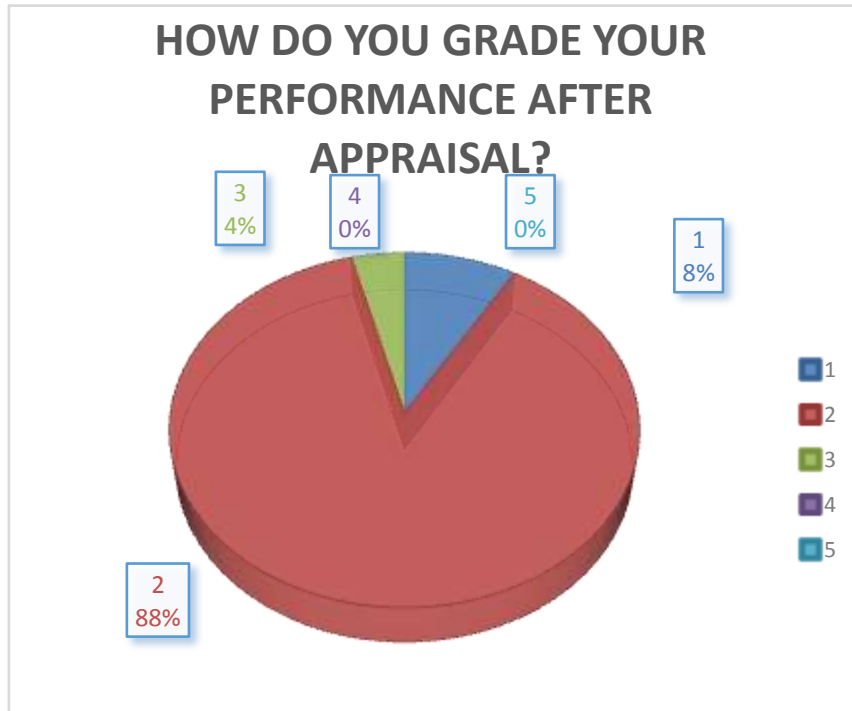79% of the population accepted that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good.

Figure 5: Graphical representation of how you grade your performance after appraisal?

With 79% of the population accepting that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good, 88% of the population said their performance after the appraisal is very good.
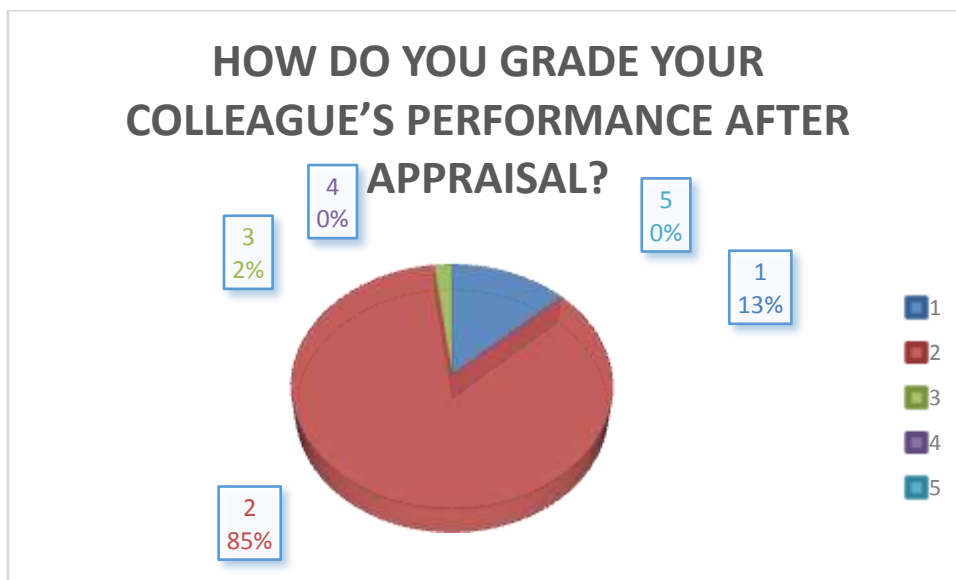


Figure 6: Graphical representation of how you grade your colleague's performance after appraisal?

Following 79% of the population accepts that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good, and 85% of the population said their colleague's performance after the appraisal is very good.
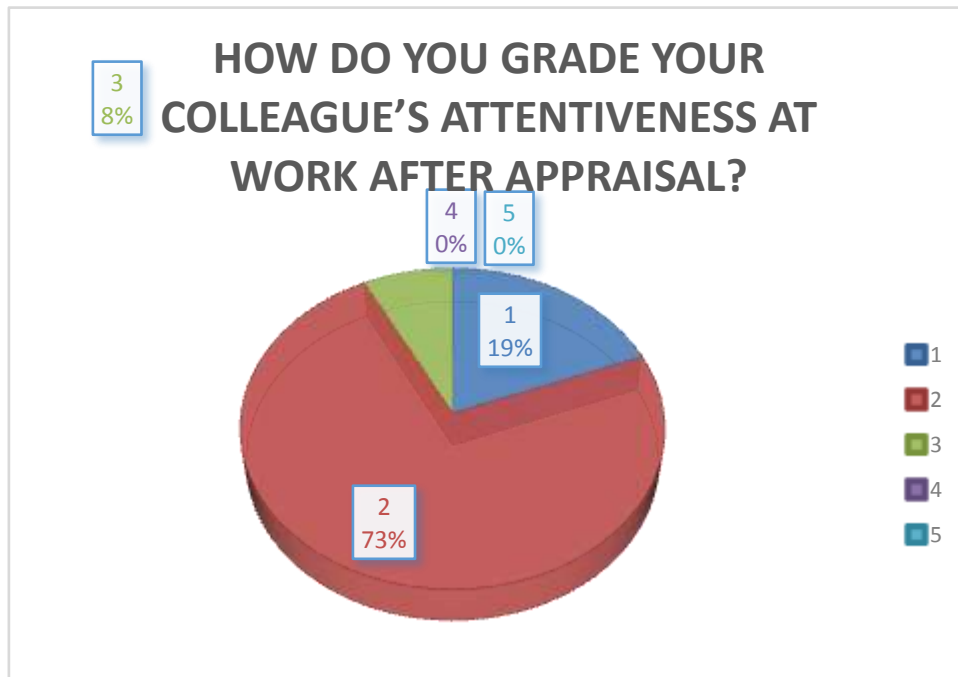
Figure 7: Graphical representation of how you grade your colleague's attentiveness to work after appraisal?

Following the 79% of the respondent that accepted that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good, 73% of the population said their colleague's attentiveness to work after the appraisal is very good.
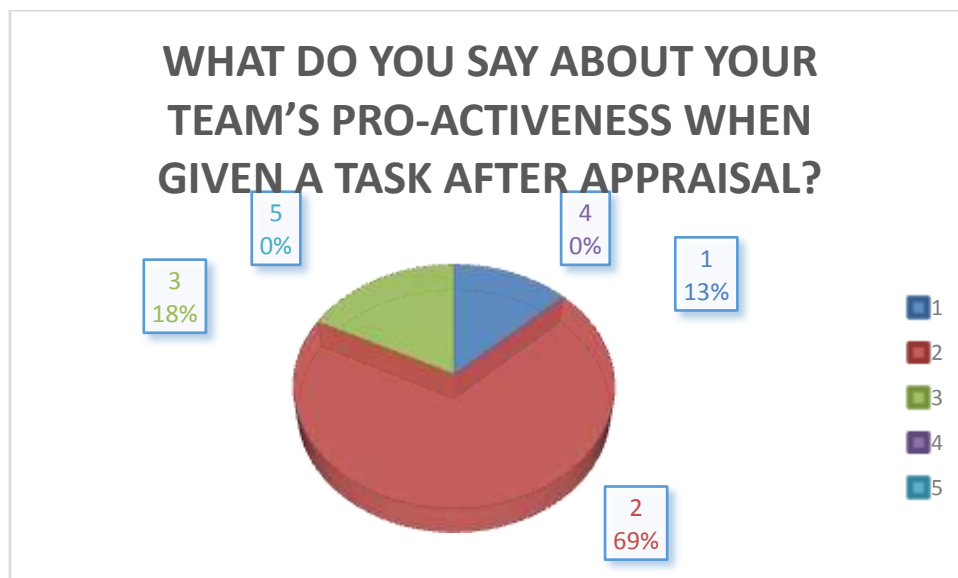


Figure 8: Graphical representation of what you say about your team's pro-activeness when given a task after appraisal?

In line with 79% of the population accepting that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good, 65% of the population said their team's pro-activeness when given a task after the appraisal is very good.
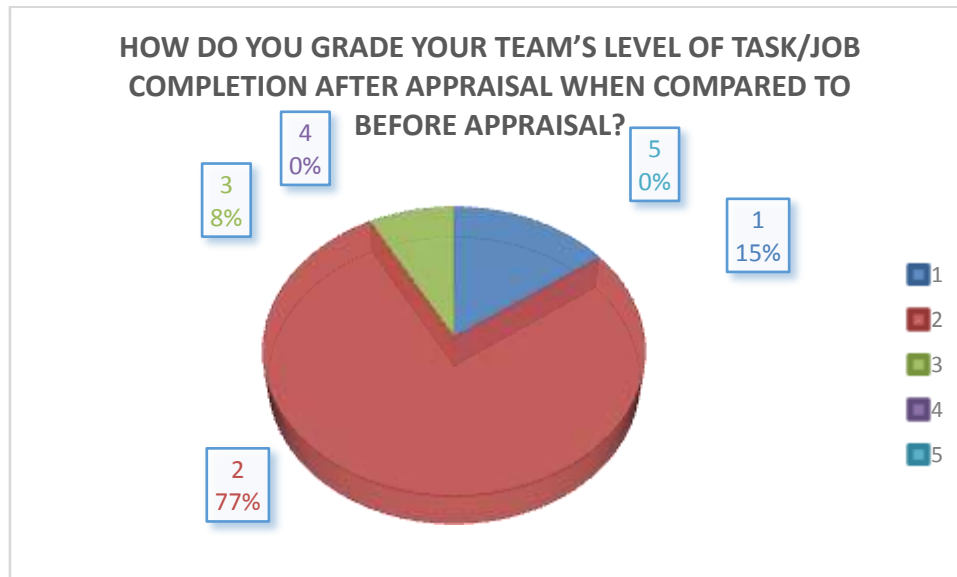
Figure 9: Graphical representation of how you grade your team's level of task/job completion after appraisal when compared to before appraisal.

Following 79% of the population accepts that the performance appraisal done in their organization is good, 77% of the population said their team's level of task/job completion after appraisal when compared to before appraisal is very good.

## VI.    CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Theconcepts of performance appraisal regarding employee performance and employees from various organizations perceive performance appraisal differently.  There is conclusive evidence that performance appraisal is significant for employee performance.  However, some inadequacies in performance appraisals are related to the organization structure context while others are associated with the processes.

The study recommends the need to examine the relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance by incorporating both organizational structures and processes with a focus on increasing employees' commitment and performance. The supervisors should discuss attainable goals with the employees and there should be regular reviews.  Timely feedback should be discussed with the individual employees.  Those that achieve their targets should be recognized to raise their satisfaction and poor performers should be reproached. The gaps realized should be sealed through training and development.

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