Analysis of Performance Appraisal System of Bangladesh Civil Service and Scope of Its Improvement

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Abstract: *As a development tool, the performance appraisal is the primary source of information and feedback for employees. It can motivate employee performance, improve productivity, facilitate employee growth and development, and identify current and future training needs. Effective appraisal can significantly contribute to the satisfaction and motivation of employees, if they are used correctly. Recent development in performance appraisal technologies, the replacement of subjectivity in the evaluation process with objectivity anchored in job related behavior and explicit goal statement. Subjective approach method lends themselves to favoritism, inefficiency, and conflict in the management. They permit race, sex, age, friendship, and other non-job factors to subvert the valuation process. The name ACR itself has inherent characteristics to hide the performance report to the concern person. This name itself is not transparent and clear; it creates ambiguity about what is to ber evaluated.*

Performance appraisal should not be treated merely as a subject of academic discourse on personnel administration, it should rather be designated as a tool of ensuring accountability keeping in view the total improvement of organizationnl performance. It should be considered as a developmental tool, not a tool a creating fear in the mind of the appraisees. Assessment should be based on objective, honest monitoring and recording of the incumbent's job performance throughout the year.

In Bangladesh, the performance appraisal of civil servants is done with a format known as Annual Confidential Report (ACR), which is used annually to assess the performance. It is commonly used to appraise performance of all the civil servants irrespective of cadre. The components of the present ACR format are:

Part-I   Annual medical check-up report/overview;

Part-I1   Basic background information and job description of officers reported upon (ORU);

Part-I11   Thirteen personal traits to be evaluated by 1-4 marks rating scale;

Part-IV   Twelve work-performance variables to be assessed in the same scale;

Part-V   A structured written report called pen picture;

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Part-VI   Recommendations about aptitude, reputation, training needs and eligibility for promotion;

Part-VII   Countersigning Officers' (CSO) remarks on the assessment of the Report Initiating Officer (RIO); total marks on overall evaluation and general remarks, if any;

Part-VIII The controlling Ministry's date of receipt recording the causes of abnormal delay, and other actions, if any. A set of guidelines about submitting, writing, count'er-signing and sending to the ministry.

Existing appraisal format analysis: Identifying the drawbacks:

Performance appraisal system now in Bangladesh Civil Service, is not the appropriate reflection of individual performance. Because of its confidentiality, lack of clarity probably it has already lost its main stream of performance evaluation. According to a survey on the functioning of public administration in Bangladesh conducted by the UNDP in 1993, 72% of the officers surveyed have indicated that ACR process has lost its validity. It is believed, as long as the deficiencies of the present appraisal system persist, the accountability of civil servants cannot be truly achieved and the effectiveness and credibility of the officers cannot be ensured.

As we know that Performance appraisal should not be an isolated, once-a-year event. Appraisal is a continuous, on-going process of review; it should be part of the supervisor's regular on-going work in the office. In other words, performance appraisal should be a major element in the job description of officers at all levels. Assessment should be based on data and the source of data should be extracted through honest monitoring and recording of the incumbent's job performance throughout the year.

Analysis of present ACR: Part III and part IV

This 2 part consists of 25 parameters of performance measurement traits on personal quality and performance measurements. About the meaning of those 25 variables there is very little uniformity of understanding among the supervisors. Existing ACR form evaluate performance of the ORU more on pei-sonal traits than job performances.

Part III contains following traits :

2.1-- **Discipline**	2. 8-- Dependability
2.2-- *Judgment & limitations sense*	2.9- Responsibility
2.3- *Intelligence*	2.10- **Work interest**
2.4-- *Energy & initiative*	2.11- *Initiative to carryout and imple*
2.5- *Personality*	*ent superior's order*
2.6- *Cooperation*	2.12- **Security alertness**
2.7- **Timeliness**	2.13-- Public relations

Among these 13 traits **discipline, timeliness, Work interest, security alertness,** these **4** traits are similar type of meaning because if someone is disciplined he/she will have the time sense as well as will keep secure everything under him/her and There is no point to keep 4 similar types of traits for it; only discipline parameter will serve the other 3 traits.

Now *Intelligence, Personality, judgment & limitations sense, Energy & initiative, cooperation,* - these *5* traits will not give any specific information about ORU(offices Reported Upon) and the assessment will vary from person to person, one will get good assessment than other from different person. For same performance so these 5 traits can be deleted from assessment. Only - discipline, Public relations, Responsibility, *Initiative to carryout and implement superior's order,* Dependability these *5* traits can be kept

Part IV also contains follows attributes:

3.1- Professional knowledge	**3.5- Relation with the colleagues**
3.2- Quality of Work	3.8- Desire ness to train sub ordinates
3.3- Quantity of work	3.9- written Expression ability
3.4- Supervision & coordination	3.10- Speaking Expression ability
3.6- Decision taking Ability	3.11- Initiative in ACR writing
3.7- Decisions execution ability	**3.12- Responsibility**

Relation with the colleagues, Responsibility: These **2** parameters is duplication with the previous part and will vary in evaluation by RIO (Report Initiating office) for similar performance. As a result

absolute evaluation will be distorted, some quantitative parameter can be replaced. **Quantity of work** can be replaced by specific traits or tools.

But other 9 parameters will be justified if quantitative measurement criteria are introduced like desire ness of train subordinate can be measured by the no. (#) of officer trained (local /foreign) under the RIO in a particular year or under his/her period.

Quantity of work can be measured by counting the number of case/file/(letter/application) disposal rate in a particular time. Written and speaking expression can be measured by the IELTS grade every year up to (DS/JS)

Initiative in ACR writing can be evaluated by observing timely sending ACR to the proper authority submitted by ORU and also can be verified by checking the incumbents PDS (to execute this ACR submission report has to be sent to PACC by CR wing).

Professional knowledge, Supervision & coordination, Decision taking and execution ability- these are qualitative parameters which can be evaluated by the personal observation.by RIO.

Part V

This is about a pen picture of the ORU. An officer is graded as per part III & IV. There remains little to write in pen picture. Moreover as the pen picture does not carry any marks and any required additional information, it looks like it is kept there for holding back the ORU then advancement.

PART VI

Part VI is recommendation column. When an officer is appraised with high grading, the implied meaning is he or she is eligible for promotion and vice versa. It is really not required to know from the RIO whether the ORU is fit for promotion or not as the marking speaks about it.

Recently I have studied and anlysed on ACR and took some expert opinion from various level of civil servants from secretary to senior assistant secretary level on this issue through questionnaire and

personal observation. From that 'study the following findings came out:

Present ACR system is inappropriate and ineffective means of appraising performance of an officer. It is observed that delay in writing ACR occurs due to RIO and CSO (countersigning officer). And also medical report (MR) causes unnecessary delay in the assessment. On the other hand MR, in true sense may not reflect the actual health status of ORU, because arranged report submission is possible for ACR. Most of the respondents believe that proper work plan will be the appropriate tools for performance evaluation. Assessment of performance depending on memory may not bring the exact reflection of individuals performance rather incorporation of some quantitative bench marking tools will be the realistic approach for employee evaluation.

Self-evaluation, projection of everyday work plan, frequent monitoring by supervisor and reward and punishment system will improve existing system of performance evaluation. In this regard the present format needs to be revised/modified by incorporation of some specific and measurable parameters such as:

- IT knowledge
- English Language performance
- Personnel administration abilities,
- Project management knowledge

What should be the appraising process:

1. The Appraisal Process can be:

Establish performance standards with employees
↓
Mutually set measurable goals
↓
Measure actual performance
↓
Compare actual performance with standards
↓
Discuss the appraisal.with the employee
↓
If necessary, initiate corrective action

2. Appraisal Methods should have Following approaches:

- Absolute standards
- Relative standards
- Objectives

Appraising absolute standards

- An employee's performance is measured against established standards.

- Appraisal is independent of any other employee.

- *Checklist* Appraisal: Appraiser checks off behaviors that apply to the employee;

- Odjective Rating Scale *Appraisal:* Appraiser rates employee on a number of job-related factors.

Relative standards

- Employees are appraised by comparing their performance to the performance of other employees.

- Group Order Ranking: Employees are placed in a classification reflecting their relative performance, such as "top one-fifth."

Management by Objectives (MBO)

Includes mutual objective setting and appraisal based on the attainment of the specific objectives-

- Goal specificity .
- Participative decision making
- An explicit time period
- Performance feedback

Creating Effective Performance Appraisal Systems

Provide Ongoing Feedback:

- Expectations and disappointments should be shared with employees on a frequent basis.

Train Appraisers:

- Untrained appraisers who do poor appraisals can demoralize employees and increase legal liabilities

Recommendations towards an Alternative Performance Appraisal Report

Considering the present needs and the findings from the survey it is recommended that we need to develop a need base performance appraisal system. To that end the following: reform can be made:

1. The name ACR should be replaced by APAR - Annual Performance Appraisal Report.

2. The supervisor and the supervisee will sit together and prepare the work Plan. Through collaborative and interactive process, they will take feedback and review monthly and also take necessary measure for improvement.

3. Medical test part should be deleted from the existing format. As it does not reflect the actual health status, however, medical status may be maintained separately.

4. Positive remarks have to be communicated to the incumbent by quarterly/half yearly/yearly.

5. Bio data part (part II) can be reformed by keeping some very specific portion on the top sheet as incumbent's information.

6. Part III and IV can be redesigned by deleting overlapping points and adding some quantitative items.

7. Incorporation of IT knowledge, English language skill (speaking and writing), administrative quality and project management ability in pen picture part.

Conclusion

Performance Review is an ongoing process that contributes to positive communication, mutual respect, improved employee performance, individual growth, and career development. This ongoing performance appraisal process involves communication about goals/duties, performance review standards, and

expectations. Continuous   improvement through performance reviews with a focus on internal and external customer service.

To help employees improve and develop their performance. Employees are aware of what is expected of them, receive timely feedback about their performance, and receive recognition in a fair manner.

To ensure the justice on assessment of the civil servants performance and to motivate them for enhancement of efficiency we need to incorporate need based traits for appropriate assessment at regular intervals

The proposed format can be as:

Work Plan and guidelines [To be filled jointly by RIO & ORU]

1). File disposal as per existing "secretariat instruction manual" time frame 90% and above- outstanding- give appreciation letter by RIO and note down in the pen picture part 80%-89%-very good 70%-79%-good 60%-69%- not satisfactory-need to improve (giving 3 warning). If not improved -bad remarks will be written by CSO in pen picture part.

2). Performance Appraisal Reports (PAR) need to be submitted by January 10 (by ORU) and filled up by February 10 (by RIO)   .

Failure of any party by 2 months will affect "responsibility" in the personality trait part.

Failure of more than 2 months - adverse comments will be written in the pen picture part by CSO and notify the incumbent.

3). Monthly/quarterly/yearly objective setting, feed back taken from the subordinate and comparing with the standard and providing necessary instruction for improvement by every RIO

Performance Appraisal Report (PAR)

Part-1

Name.………………. ....…………………Designation...………

Date/Year of joining: In cadre service.………….... In present posting ...…….

Period under RIO (at least 3 months).……......….From.…………..To.….......

Period under CSO:
From.……………..To.………

Last degree..…………………..

Signed by: ORU

Date………..…..

Part-2

Personal traits appraisal: (Each trait carry maximum 5 marks)-Qualitative

		5	4	3	2	1
	Outstanding-very good-satisfactory-notsatisfactory very poor					
i)	Discipline					
ii)	Public relations					
iii)	Initiative to carryout and implement superior's order,					
iv)	Responsibility					
v)	Personal behavior					
vi)	Dependability					
vii)	Proper dress sense					

Part3

Performance traits appraisal (Qualitative)

		5 Outstanding	4 very good	. 3 satisfactory	2 not satisfactory	1 very poor
i)	Professional knowledge					
ii)	Decision taking & executing ability					
iii)	Supervision & co-ordination					
iv)	Quality of Work					
v)	Deslre-ness to **train** sub ordinates					
vi)	Administrative quality / project Mgt Knowledge					

Part-4

Performance Traits appraisal (Quantitative) 5-1

		5 (90-100%)	4 (80-90%)	3 (70 - 80%)	2 (60-70%)	1 (50-60%)
i)	Attendance on time:					
ii)	Quantity of file disposal					
iii)	Achievement with respect to Work plan					
iv)	English knowledge (IELTS result)	>=7.0	>=6.0	>=5.50	>=5.0	>=4.00
v)	IT Knowledge: (each carry 1 mark)					

IT includes **"MS-Word"**, **"Excel, PowerPoint"**, **"Internet browsing,** & **"com typing (Beg & Eng)"**

Signed by RIO

Date..................

Part-5

Pen-picture: (10 marks) - by CSO

I)   Good / bad remarks:

ii) PAR submission: delayed by **2** months or less/ more than 2 months

iii) Monthly performance reports (average)

iv) Extra ordinary performance

Signed by CSO

Date...................

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