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PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL: THE CASE OF A PUBLIC ENTITY IN PORTUGAL

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Abstract

In the past, the attempt by organizations to establish a system for evaluating their employees has shown some inconsistency. This arose, essentially, due to the lack of objectivity at the time of classification, a process that always involves strong subjectivity. In the current paradigm, more and more organizations need to implement performance evaluation models based on strategic competencies, to fulfill established objectives to cement the creation of an organization's value.
In most companies and organizations, the performance appraisal process is a tool used annually, serving only to monitor the performance of employees. If a company or organization wants to go beyond the control function, it must see the performance evaluation process as a component of performance management throughout the year. This should create conditions so that the activities carried out by the employees and the results of these, effectively contribute to achieving the organization's objectives. For the same author, it is a process that seeks to identify, observe, measure, and develop the performance of individuals, having as focus the agreement with the objectives of the organization. The purpose of performance appraisal is to obtain better results in the organizations or teams and individuals within the organization, understanding and management performance within an agreement, the structure of planned goals, standards, and competence requirements.
Keywords: *Performance appraisal, evaluation, human resources, organization, management*

Introduction

Despite the great relevance of individual performance and the widespread use of job performance as an outcome measure, relatively little effort has been devoted to clarifying the concept of performance (Collings, 2017). Davila (2017) and Davila and Elvira (2018) suggested that performance is a multidimensional construct, whose measurement varies according to a variety of factors. Iacovini (1993) and Ensslin et al (2015) argued that performance should be defined as the result of work because employees are linked to the organization's strategic objectives, customer satisfaction and financial contributions. A more comprehensive view of performance is achieved if performance is defined as including both behaviors and outcomes.

Performance is always associated with managing results and measuring performance. The performance management and measurement process involve steps that need to be recognized and supported. Kivak (2018) and Machado et al (2014) understand that performance management is a systematic process to improve performance, strengthening the performance of individuals and teams. This is a conceptual, organizational, and operational definition that has proven useful in performance measurement research. Similarly, McAdam (2005) argued that performance management is a broad set of activities aimed at improving employee performance. The core of performance management is the development of people with competence and commitment, who work towards achieving meaningful shared goals within an organization that supports and encourages performance. For Netke (2013), Politt (2006) and Rego et al, (2015), the purpose of performance management is to obtain better results from an entire organization or team and individuals within it, understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards, and competency requirements.

Management is mainly concerned with improving the value creation process, that is, increasing productivity and the quality of the relationship between the organization, from the perspective of inputs/resources, outputs/deliveries, and results achieved.

Human capital is an inexhaustible capital, a priority for an entity that creates value, ensures and carries out the strategic mission, which is survival in the competitive global market. Choosing an innovative form of development requires improving the mechanism for training and using human capital, in all its components: accounting, analysis, motivation, control, etc.

Human resource management (HRM) is a very broad concept; it is related to the way people act and how individuals are structured to guide and manage human behavior in the organizational environment and can make the difference between companies that know how to choose the right people to carry out the organization's tasks (Brewster et al, 2016). That is, they have the skills and competences necessary to achieve the goals and are committed to their work. HRM aims to coordinate internal behavior, increase and strengthen human capital through the training and development of skills and capabilities, to meet the strategic objectives of organizations. In the strategic management model, people are defined as the most important asset in organizations.

An organization is a set of interconnected and interdependent elements, with specific objectives. It is made up of people, systems and processes that interact with each other, leading to an exponential value creation synergy.

Human Resource Management

For Bilhim (2007) human resource management is basically concerned with the articulation and adaptation between the people who work in the organization and their strategic needs, ensuring the full use of available human resources.

Currently, one of the main concerns of managers is the impossibility of identifying employees capable of assuming leadership positions in the future (Bergamini, 1980, Collings, 2017). The role of Strategic Human Resources Management within a current organization is characterized by the strategic directive function, which has played a positive role in the main business decisions in recent years, arising from the mission and objectives of the organization and actively contributing to the achievement of its overall results. This confers, for the first time, a role of partner in the organization in the definition and implementation of strategic goals at the level of top management (Tavares et al, 2000, 52).

Human Resource Management (HRM) does not only deal with issues of recruitment and selection of employees, but has a crucial influence on the strategic positioning of the organization, ensuring the best adaptation of human resources (HR) to the organizational culture, integrating the vision, mission and values of the organization, which guarantees the existence of an effective performance appraisal process, a career management system and adequate management of remuneration policies, among others. In this way, an effective performance appraisal system provides managers with a greater degree of confidence when making decisions (Brewster, 2016, Collings, 2017).

In the area of management, HRM is the area responsible for establishing policies, procedures and exploring theories that allow the organization to better coordinate its employees and maximize their potential, always with the aim of achieving organizational success (Fachada, 2012). HRM focuses on the development, training, and motivation of its HR, determining remuneration methods, practices of attraction and retention of HR, which seek to achieve high levels of performance (Kivak, 2018). All this is achieved using recruitment techniques, interviews and hiring of new HR, development and training programs and improvement of labor relations (Kivak, 2018). In most companies and organizations, the performance appraisal process is an annual tool used only to monitor employee performance.

Caetano (2008), Brewster et al (2016) argued that performance management can be understood as the process that seeks to identify, observe, measure, and develop the performance of individuals, with the main objective of harmonizing this process with the organization's goals.

HRM has a set of functional areas that contribute to achieving the success of an organization's strategic objectives (Fernandes, 2016), in which the so-called Performance Management (PM) system occupies a central place (Câmara et al, 2016). In this sense, PM deals with the entire organizational process, through which pre-established goals are defined, according to the organizational strategy (Abbad et al, 1996), through activities such as (Felgueiras and Proença, 2013):

a) Definition of organizational, departmental, team and individual objectives.
b) Implementation of a performance appraisal system.
c) Design of clearing systems.
d) Training and development strategies.
e) Feedback, communication, and coaching.
f) Career planning.

From this it can be inferred that through PM, there is a constant concern to align the actions and activities of individuals with the values and objectives of the organization.

Green Human Resource Management

For Carollo and Guerci (2018), some scholars have linked human resource management to environmental management, calling it "green human resource management" or "environmental human resource management" (Renwick et al., 2013, Ehnert, 2009). This aspect of human resource management linked to environmental issues, leads scholars to develop specific procedures for the implementation of green human resource management practices. For example, Milliman and Clair (1996) proposed four steps for an environmental assessment in the HRM model:

(1) Provide an environmental view as a guide.
(2) Train employees to share their environmental vision and goals.
(3) Evaluate the environmental performance of employees; and
(4) Recognize employees' environmental activities using reward programs.

Similarly, Daily and Huang (2001) suggested a conceptual framework for involving elements of human resources in the environmental management system. The proposed model included (1) senior executive support, (2) training, (3) power, and (4) rewards as key components of environmental HR. Top management communicate the environmental policy, plan, and other relevant information to employees. Employee training helps them to understand new environmental practices and enables them to get involved in environmental activities. In addition, rewards can encourage employees to be environmentally responsible (Renwick et al, 2013).

Therefore, green human resource management refers to the development of ecological skills in the recruitment, selection, training, and development of green leadership. This green management aims to motivate employees by evaluating and rewarding their green performance. It also aims to encourage human resources to be involved in environmental issues, generating a friendly organizational culture.

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal was already practiced before World War II, especially in the US Army, mainly for promotion purposes (Wood and Marshall 1993). The development of performance appraisal as a management tool was associated with the idea of greater control (Mul-

vaney, 2017), especially in public entities, after the financial crisis of the 70s and 80s. In the 1990s, performance appraisal systems became widespread in the public sector in developed countries, mainly to improve efficiency.

With the advent of New Public Management (NPM), public sector organizations have undergone significant changes that have emphasized individual performance, making it easier to fire or discipline those who do not meet the required standards (Pollitt, 2006). Workers are increasingly compared to each other and evaluated for their performance based on the achievement of previously established goals. The literature suggests (Hood, 2005; Brewster et al., 2016; Ensslin et al, 2015) that NPM contemplates explicit performance standards, competition, results orientation (often quantified) and material, and financial incentives, as in the example of performance-related pay.

The introduction of individual performance appraisal in the public sector has often led to controversial results (Wood & Marshall, 1993; McAdam et al., 2005). Several factors were proposed to explain these problems. Burgess et al. (2017) suggested that the problems arising from the implementation derive from the deficient technical design of systems that rely heavily on the experience of the private sector. Others point to an irreconcilable divergence between NPM-driven performance appraisal and the public sector, due to the difficulty of measuring performance in contexts where outcomes are often impossible to define or attribute to a public organization or individual (Abbad et al., 2006, Bilhim, 2013, Fachada, 2012). Some research suggests low support and acceptance among public sector workers, reflecting perceptions of injustice (Caetano, 2008, Bilhim, 2012, Wenzel et al., 2019).

Individual performance assessment is conceptually and directly linked to motivation research. Through individual performance appraisal, employees' motivation can be increased by providing them with training, job rotation, recognition, etc., instead of providing them with incentives that increase work efforts. Performance appraisal focuses on the future rather than the past, discusses ways to improve, and makes recommendations for achieving future goals.

Nowadays, much is heard about intellectual and professional performance. The professional to meet the demands and expectations of the job market, must have the skills of an entrepreneur, creativity, leadership, negotiator, teamwork, and proactivity. However, all these qualities and skills need to be translated into results for the professional to be effective in their roles, which means that he (or she) must perform well.

Organizations are made up of people and depend on each other to achieve their goals and personal needs; for example, family support. On the other hand, the company also needs motivated and determined people to achieve the proposed objectives. To achieve the goals, it is necessary to provide structures and tools so that employees can achieve their individual goals and feel motivated to support companies to achieve their goals.

Performance appraisal is a dynamic concept, because an employee is always evaluated, whether in a direct or indirect appraisal. It is a means by which problems are identified for the control of the team, it reflects the integration of an employee in the organization or in the existing functions or, simply, a lack of use of the employee in the current functions, because this shows a higher level of potential.

Thus, according to the types of problems identified, performance appraisal can collaborate in the determination and development of an appropriate human resources policy, to meet the needs of the organization (Chiavenato, 2008).

Performance appraisal is the entire set of instruments that allow measuring an individual's performance in a fair and rigorous way (Mulvaney, 2017). These instruments may differ depending on the management style adopted. According to Rego et al (2015), there are certain fundamental conditions for the effectiveness of performance management (PM) systems, namely:

- Relevance – the dimensions established for PM in a given job must be really important for its performance.
- Sensitivity – ability to distinguish between good and bad performance.
- Reliability – the evaluator's subjectivities and the influence of factors that are external or that do not directly depend on the person being evaluated must be avoided.
- Acceptability – a very important criterion because if employees do not accept the system, its procedures and criteria, they end up distrustful and consider it unfair.
- Practicability – it must be possible to consider it useful and practical.
- Trust – essential in the relationship between all stakeholders in the process; their absence will always raise reservations and boycotts.

Mações (2014, p. 553) defines PM as "an interaction between the appraiser and the appraisee, in which the work developed over the period is analyzed and discussed by both parties", seeking to identify the positive and negative aspects, as well as how to find ways to improve performance, always ensuring that the person being evaluated knows what the organization expects of him (Mulvaney, 2017).

For Sousa et al (2006) specific goals of PM can be grouped into four broad areas:
- Achieve the organization's strategic goals, where individual goals come directly from the main organizational goals.
- Promote innovation and adaptation to organizational changes.
- Overcoming average performances, changing behaviors, on the way to excellence.
- Improve internal communication.

Performance Appraisal Models

Performance appraisal is a meritocracy tool that seeks to recognize and differentiate an organization's employees. Therefore, it is possible to identify the strengths, as well as the points that employees should seek to improve and achieve, through a development plan, so that the company can train them so that they do not become expendable.

There are several ways to classify performance, and each company, depending on the intended objective, must find the model that best suits its needs (Bergamini, 1980; Abbad et al, 1996). In the following points, we will analyze the models most used by companies in evaluating the performance of their employees.

Graphic Scale Model

This method is the easiest and most traditional; the evaluation is carried out by filling in a form in columns, in which the values in rows, skills, attitudes and behaviors that must be analyzed and verified are placed in the first column. Variables such as punctuality, relationship with colleagues and technical skills are included in this space. From the columns, a scale of increase or decrease values is created, which evaluates the level at which the classified employee falls, usually the numbers on this scale range from 1 to 5, representing (very bad, bad, regular, good, or excellent) or even (satisfied, indifferent, or dissatisfied). The objective of this model is to facilitate the evaluation of employees, ending up being the most used and least effective.

Model of Forced Choice

This evaluation model consists of structuring a form with a list of questions that are not directly related to each other. These are grouped into four articles: (a) Easily irritated; (b) Do not delay the delivery of tasks; (c) Are always late; (d) Do not possess the technical knowledge.

The leader or evaluator must then choose two of the elements and select the one that most applies and the one that least applies to the performance of the person being evaluated and which is closest to the reality of their work. For Gil (2001), it can be presented in several ways, but the most common is to present, for each employee, two positive and two negative expressions. In the employee analysis, the evaluator selects the one that most and least applies to his performance. Thus, the forced choice method requires more attention from the evaluator because the questions are correctly understood and must have accurate and reliable data.

For this reason, the process also requires more care from those who prepare the form and create the questions that must be included in it. It is important for the HR leader to assess whether the questions in this questionnaire are in fact strategic and whether they can define the employee.

Field Research Method

It is a method based on interviews by a performance appraisal specialist with the appraiser, through which the performance of his subordinates is evaluated. The causes, sources and reasons for this performance are evaluated, observing data and facts. In this form of evaluation, the specialist goes to each respective area to interview the manager about the performance of the employees. In this form of PM there is support for the evaluator. However, in this method there are negative factors that are the operational costs that it entails, for having to work with expert advice, little participation of the evaluated and for being a slow and time-consuming evaluation process.

Self-Assessment Method

This method is one in which the individual evaluates himself, which can be done through reports, graphic scales, or descriptive phrases. It is only valid if the employee has a high degree of professional maturity and will describe what he actually looks like and does while performing his role in the company. After the employee has been evaluated, your leader or superior will read and discuss what can be done to improve the employee's performance.

Through self-assessment, it is possible to identify when and how the assessed professional is able to analyze their behavior and results. When an employee recognizes their strengths and weaknesses that need improvement, it's easier to get a promotion or pay raise.

Competency-Based Assessment Method

Competency-based assessment is a process through which evidence of performance and knowledge of the person being assessed is extracted, considering their professional skills. This kind of evaluation goes beyond what is called employee performance. It considers three factors known as CHA.

C - Knowledge: cognitive skills, "knowing something".
**H** - Ability: psychomotor domain, "knowing how to do it".
A - Attitude: motivating factor, "wanting to do".

Therefore, in this evaluation method, the questionnaire must consider the technical and behavioral skills of the employee. The appraiser and the appraisee must consider the employee's professional and behavioral issues. The latter answers the questionnaire as a self-assessment, pointing out the skills he already has, those that are under development and those that still need to be developed. Then, the supervisor, together with the evaluated employee, gives his/her opinion on the employee's responses and, together, they will develop an action plan to improve what is necessary.

Matrix 9 Box to develop talent

The Matrix 9 Box is a visual tool that serves as the basis for creating a meritocracy model in companies. Based on it, it is possible to make better evaluations and make important decisions regarding employees. This matrix helps to develop the capacity of team members, considering aspects of competence, behavior, results, and skills. As it is a simple and practical tool, the results are relevant for any type of company, as shown in the figure below.

Matrix 9 Box
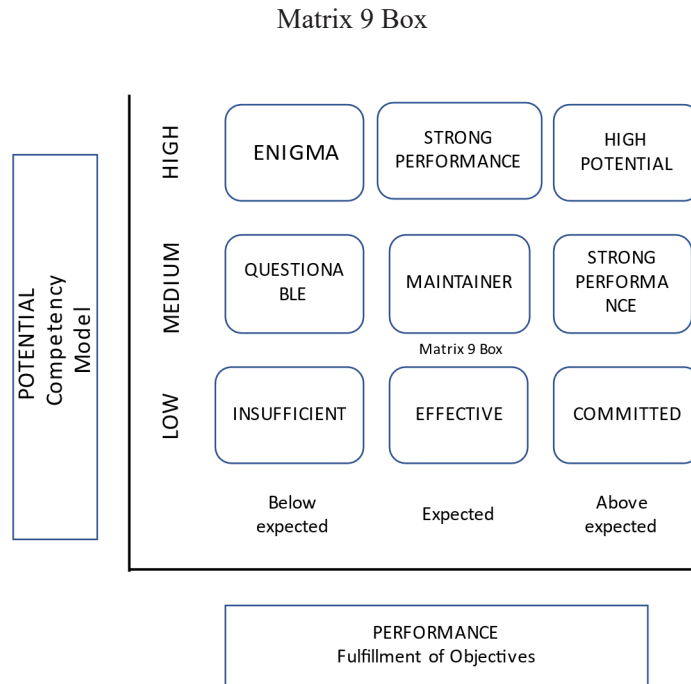
Source: Adapted from STRATWs One (2019)

Goals and Results

This performance appraisal method has a quantitative approach. Here, the results achieved by the employee in a given period are considered. The objective is to identify whether the evaluated person was able to respond to the company's expectations. As it is based on numbers, this assessment is safer and more assertive.

Examples of factors to consider:
- Absenteeism.
- Sales conversion.
- Clients' satisfaction.
- Retention.

Evaluation by goals and results can also be applied to the team as a whole, to find out who are the most and least productive employees.

Model of Participatory Evaluation by Objectives (PEBO)

This evaluation model has a quantitative approach when considering the results achieved by the employee in a given period and by goals achieved. The objective is to identify whether the person being evaluated can meet the expectations of the organization, the degree of contribution and the organizational efforts of the employee.

Modern methods emerged in response to the limitations of traditional methods and seek employee participation and performance. For Chiavenato (2008), the PEBO method is democratic, participatory, engaging and motivating. It consists of six phases: formulation of agreed goals, personal commitment to achieving those goals, negotiation on the allocation of resources and means to achieve the goals, performance, monitoring of results and comparison with formulated goals, intensive feedback, and joint and continuous evaluation.

360º evaluation method

The 360º evaluation method is considered one of the most complete. This is because all employees involved in the work routine are invited to participate in the process.

Leaders, team members, the employee himself, as well as customers and suppliers, participate in the assessment. At the end of the process, a comparison is made between the evaluators' considerations and those of the evaluated ones that generate extremely valuable feedback.

This 360º evaluation model is a richer and more reliable evaluation method, which brings results over time. It can increase the reliability of the evaluation system for employees and leaders, allow the emergence of goals consistent with the parameters of the organization, minimize the aspects of evaluation errors, as well as reduce employee dissatisfaction and uncertainty.

Leader's Performance Assessment

Like employees, leaders also need to be evaluated. The leader is responsible for leading the team towards success. When their performance is poor, the tendency is for this to be reflected in the team members. Hence, he, too, must undergo an evaluation process and acquire feedback on his performance. In this case, the evaluation of employees and their superiors can provide an overview of their performance. In this way, the leader and his team will be able to better understand if they are on the right track and which aspects can be improved.

Research Methodology

The methodology used for the elaboration of this study is the deductive method used by the bibliographic and documental research (Silva, et al. 2005). The bibliographic-documentary research applied in this article is based on the theoretical study of the main authors on the subject, both national and foreign.

In connection with the methodology presented above, a descriptive case study will also be carried out, concerning a public sector entity, as observed by Vieira et al (2009). This kind of case study has material to describe techniques and practices followed by managers. The data were obtained from the activity report of this public organization, via the entity's website on the Internet. It is an exploratory research, because it aims to know the evaluation method applied in an organization.

Performance appraisal in the Public Sector - SIADAP

The performance appraisal models implemented in the public sector are based on a management by objectives methodology, developed by Peter Drucker after the Second World War, in opposition to the Taylorist model and the Weberian model, dominant until then. The emphasis will be on "doing the work most relevant to the organization's goals well" rather than "doing the work well" (Drucker, 1954). In this way, the organization begins to focus on the measurement and control of results, seeks to adapt individual performance to organizational goals and provide constant feedback (Araújo, 2007; Bilhim 2000, 2012, 2013). Its implementation in

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organizations generally and consensually consists of four stages: definition of objectives, action planning, self-control, and periodic reviews (Caetano, 1996).

The implementation of a performance appraisal system requires an organizational culture oriented towards results and merit, fundamentally geared towards the global success of the organization.

SIADAP – Integrated System of Performance appraisal in Public Administration, is a performance evaluation process designed to evaluate public sector bodies and institutions, unlike the performance evaluation systems mentioned above, which are more applied to private entities. This is part of the reform process based on the objectives of "quality and excellence"; "leadership and responsibility" and "merit and qualification".

SIADAP has the following essential objectives:
- Promote the quality of Public Administration services and bodies.
- Mobilize employees around the essential mission of the service, guiding their activity according to clear objectives and transparent evaluation criteria.
- Recognize merit.
- Enhance teamwork.
- Promote communication between hierarchies.
- Identify training needs.

This system was designed with well-defined and specified parameters, being different from the performance appraisals applied to private entities, since it provides a permanently forced distribution in the evaluations. In other words, there are defined quotas that are distributed to workers, that is, "relevant", "adequate" and "inadequate" classification levels, instead of the previous classification system, in which the leniency error was evident, in which all civil servants had favorable ratings.

SIADAP assumes that assessments are distributed by quotas. Thus, article 75 of Law 66-B/2007, of December 28, under the heading "Performance differentiation" establishes the following:

"1-Without prejudice to the provisions of subparagraph a) of article 27, performance differentiation is guaranteed by setting a maximum percentage of 25% for the final qualitative assessments of relevant performance and, among these, 5% of the total of workers for recognition of outstanding performance. 2-The percentages provided for in the previous number focus on the number of workers provided for in paragraphs 2 to 7 of article 42, with approximation by excess, when necessary, and must, as a rule, be distributed proportionally across all careers".

However, according to the same Law, the solution of the percentage limit was considered legally indispensable, due to imperatives of balance, given the prevailing culture in certain sectors of Public Administration, and bearing in mind the system of foreseen effects that is recognized in the performance appraisal.

It is expressed in qualitative mentions in the following terms (Table 1):

Table 1
Types of Classification

Performance	Classification
Relevant Performance	Corresponds to a final assessment of 4 to 5
Adequate Performance	Corresponds to a final assessment of 2 to 3,999
Inadequate Performance	Corresponds to an assessment between 1 and 1,999

In the final evaluation, the recognition of excellence occurs at the initiative of the evaluated or the evaluator, duly substantiated, and will be the object of appreciation of the Evaluation

Coordinating Council and subject of publication in the service.

In terms of the effects of the evaluation, the employee with excellent performance in 3 consecutive years is entitled to 5 days of vacation or corresponding remuneration, plus a sabbatical period with a maximum duration of 3 months to carry out a study, internship in a foreign public administration body or international organization, internship in another public service, non-governmental organization or non-governmental business entity or business entity, frequency of training actions suitable for professional development. Relevant performance in 3 consecutive years entitles employee to 3 days of vacation or corresponding remuneration.

Case Study

The institution from which we will present the data, which we will call entity X, is a public body endowed with administrative and financial autonomy in the area of education, which in 2019 had 395 workers at its service, as can be seen in the map below (Table 2).

Table 2
Effective 2019/2018

	Number of Human Resources		Variation	
	2019	2018	No.	%
Effective	393	399	-6	-1.50%
Absences for more than 6 months	2	5	-3	-60%
Total jobs occupied	395	404	-9	-2.23%

Source: Social Balance 2019, entity X

If we look at the categories, the situation is as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3
Employees 2019/2018 by type of category

	2019					2018			
	CTFP undet. time	Term CTFP	Mobility	Total		CTFP undet. time	Term CTFP	Mobility	Total
Operational Assistant	287	2	1	290	Operational Assistant	290		1	291
Tecnical assistent	46			46	Tecnical assistent	49			49
Others	54	1	2	57	Others	57		2	59
Total	387	3	3	393	Total	396		3	399

Source: Social Balance 2019, entity X
Note: CTFP is Employment contract in public functions for an indefinite period.

According to the same source, with regard to gender, workers are mostly women (65%) and the rest are men (35%). Regarding performance appraisal, given that it is an entity that provides services to students globally, operational assistants carry out tasks to which the "competence-based assessment" applies, as the skills that the employee possesses and those that are required are considered need to be improved. In this context, the involvement of the leadership and of the evaluated future in the whole process is considered relevant, from the definition of the competences needed by the organization to the identification of individual competences. In this way, everyone's involvement in the process is guaranteed, and the supervisor, together with the employee, can develop an action plan to improve what is necessary.

In the category of assistant coach, the assessment of "adequate" dominates, while the quota of "relevant" was filled by Senior Technicians. In the classification awarded in 2019, referring to the year 2018, an employee who created an innovative process in the area of information technologies was assigned an "excellent" rating.

This is the result of the evaluation of the performance of the employees of this public entity in the years under analysis, and it should be noted that many of them are not satisfied with the classification obtained, especially since their future career progression is highly dependent on this evaluation. This is in line with research done by other authors previously, who reached similar conclusions.

Conclusions and Implications

From what has been exposed, it can be concluded that performance appraisal systems show several benefits for public organizations, since they contribute to improving productivity and the quality of services provided.

A review of the literature on people management and its subsystems, with an emphasis on skills mapping and the development of a performance appraisal model, reinforces the relevance of these actions in the organizational context.

The importance of performance appraisal as a people management tool is highlighted. A performance appraisal system must be able to follow and monitor, throughout the evaluation period, both the evaluated and the evaluators.

In the public sector, performance appraisal must involve the adoption of differentiated methods of performance appraisal, which include common and other specific criteria, related to the characteristics of the various public bodies. It is considered to be advantageous to obtain the contribution and commitment of the different actors in the different stages of the performance appraisal process.

Based on the results and assumptions of the literature, this article is relevant insofar as it highlights the importance of talented and competent individuals in organizations and the way in which they can contribute to the improvement of the management process. Furthermore, the study developed shows a real case of evaluation of Public Administration workers in Portugal, therefore a topic that raises sometimes divergent understandings and that increasingly must be investigated and disseminated. The implications of this research should be of interest to both management and policymakers.

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