HOW TECHNOLOGIC INSTRUMENTS CAN BE ADAPTED TO INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN PUBLIC SECTOR?

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Abstract

Nowadays each processes, from business life to manufacture, have been transforming swiftly and innovations have been determining the direction of evaluation. Public institutions also must consider to technology in order to be able to provide more qualified and efficient public services in such an atmosphere. It requires to interiorise to technology at the producing, providing, controling and other phases of public services. The idea of individual performance evaluation of public employees, too, which is one the most popular issues of public sector, definetely will give more effective results when it includes technological processes. In this study, a set of main suggestions regarding how individual performance evaluation systems will be able to used easier and more functional by means of "simple technological touch-ups" in public sector are shared and the importance of being able to merge as mentioned two processes in human resources management is pointed out.

Key Words: Individual Performance Evaluation System, Technology, Public Sector, Human Resources Management.

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TEKNOLOJIK ENSTRUMANLAR BIREYSEL PERFORMANS DEGERLENDIRME SISTEMLERINE NASIL ADAPTE EDILEBILIR?

Öz

Günümüzde iş yaşamından üretime kadar tüm süreçler çok hızlı bir şekilde değişmekte ve değişimin yönünü yenilikler belirlemektedir. Böyle bir atmosferde kamu kurumları da daha nitelikli ve etkin kamu hizmetleri sunabilmek için teknolojiyi göz ardı etmemek zorundadır. Bu da her bir kamu hizmetinin üretiminde, sunumunda, takibinde ve diğer aşamalarında teknolojinin içselleştirilmesini gerektirmektedir. Son dönemde kamu kesiminin en popüler konuları arasında yer alan kamu calışanlarının performanslarının değerlendirilmesi meselesi de teknolojiyle bağlantılı bir şekilde ele alındığında mutlaka daha etkili sonuçlar verecektir. Bu çalışmada bireysel performans değerlendirme sistemlerinin "basit teknolojik hamleler" aracılığıyla kamu kesiminde nasıl daha kolay ve işlevsel bir şekilde kullanılabileceğine dair bir takım temel öneriler paylaşılmakta ve söz konusu iki alanı birleştirebilmenin insan kaynakları yönetimindeki önemine dikkat çekilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bireysel Performans Değerlendirme Sistemi, Teknoloji, Kamu Kesimi, İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi.

INTRODUCTION

Public sector and public organizaitons need to several control and assessment mechanism in order to increase civil servants' satisfaction, performance, productivity and organizational effectiveness. Since it is obviously known that providing more qualified public services through increasing public employees' productivity will create satisfactory and beneficial results both citizens and public institutions in addition to public managers. At this point, performance evaluation systems (PES) come into prominence as a key instrument (Tozlu, 2015: 266). Currently, literature has a lot of scientific studies indicating a positive and perpetual relationship between performance and job satisfaction (Garbers and Konradt, 2014: 119, Özaydın and Özdemir, 2014: 276)

On the other hand, technology is one of the most important realities of modern-day. Even citizens needs digital institutions and e-services in daily life anymore and there is a spectacular concept concernig this situation: "placeless public services"(Pollitt, 2013: 196-197). While e-government have not lost its significance yet, a new concept have also started to shadow out itself: "m-

government" and undoubtedly it will also make significant contributions to the association of technology and public sector (Arslan: 2012: 6-7). Technology is a kind of science increasing functionality of all implementations and processes moreover it can decrease costs, ease business cycle, and give more flexibility both public employees and managers. Since especially information and communication technologies (ICT) have started to remove time and space discrepancies in our day (Başa, 2012: 225). Consequently, a well-designed and functional individual PES should benefit from technology (or ICT) as much as possible. That means every phases or components of an individual PES should be connected with technological systems and tools.

This article is related to relationship between technology and individual PES as a part of human resources management. At first part, technology and public sector have been discussed and explained within this context. Public sector has been described over its main components and several facilitator fetaures of technology has been emphasized for working cycle. At the second part, the phases of individual PES in desiging and implementing process have been explained. Some main components of an individual PES have been classified in three main titles and elaborated. After then, it has been tried to show that how can be merged technology and PES in required stages and implementations. The collaboration of technology and PES will raise flexibility, functionality, speed and practicability of the system and article focuses on this idea.

I. TECHNOLOGY AND PUBLIC SECTOR

A. Main Components of Public Sector

"Public sector" refers a huge mechanism which provides a set of public services to citizens via its own structures, rules, human resources and budget by national, regional, provincial or local governments, in general words. Within this context, as for public administration concerns to improve management and public service process (Henry, 2007). Public sector and private sector have a set of dissimilarities addition to some similarities. For instance, public sector has more unflexible hiring or employment procedures, more complex goal structure or more bodacious bureaucracy and hierarchy (Tozlu, 2014: 75) compared to private sector. Having public agencies, employees and special interior rules, spending taxes, providing

public services, being responsible to citizens, purposing to get quality and productivity together are some of notable differences of public sector processes. Public sector have to provide a set of some public services to its citizens, inherently. To be able to achieve that it has to belong public organizations and public employees. As it can be understood clearly citizens are one of the most important part of public sector continuum. They pay their taxes and expect some services from government and other state-based bodies. Lastly, productivity of public sector and quality of services are other important issues in terms of understanding sui generis conditions of public sector.

It is possible to say that public services can be accepted as the reason of being for public sector.

In general, public service can be identified as "satisfaction of a common and general requirement by public organizations or some private actors which is controlled by government (Akçagündüz, 2013: 127 from Çal,2009: 12). There are a lot of services such as education, health, defense or justice but priorities and necessitites of those services can alter subject to ideology, financial situation, and political conditions of countries. However they are one of the most prominent components and realities of public sector because they always have to be existing more or less. Citizens expects some works, benefits, responsibilities and services from the government. It is possible to say that there is a confidential contract between citizens and government regarding to public services. Herein, using actively technology will improve service process and thus public services can be conveyed much more people.

Public organizations are other important part of public sector process. Countries provide their public services at the government (national) level, regional level or local level so there should be several structures, establishments or mechanisms in public sector for service cycle. All these structures involve a set of elements such as physical conditions or human resources. Within a basic perspective; if public institutions are well-designed and well-organized then service process will be easier and more qualified. Actually they should be able to do that because they have responsibilities, which are related to citizens'/taxpayers' expectations and requirements, too (Karwan And Markland, 2006:348).

Public employees are human resources that is required to be able to serve to people. They can be employee, manager or other roles in the labor life but all of them

functions as a bridge between citizens and government or other official establishments. Human resources, in public or private sector, should be assessed as an investment area due to their key functions in public sector. (Tozlu and Kurtipek, 2015) Therefore to satisfy and motivate them within an evaluation system is also a dimension of human resources process. Forasmuch as the relationship between human resources and performance stands out by force of strategic perspective in human resources management (Slavic et al., 2014: 45). It should not be forgotten that the power of human resources mechanism in an organization influences effectiveness (Wahyudi and Park, 2014: 104). If public workers are qualified, talented, and functional they can carry out their duties easily and they can satify citizens with their satisfactory outcomes. If an organization has much more technologic implementations and tools then its employees can work effectively so technologic conditions are expected to be able to effect organizations and public employees' activities.

As taxpayers, citizens are further part of this process and they would like to learn what is the situation in public sector (Rainey, 2006: 86). All public organizations and public employees have several responsibilities toward citizens because of this relationship. Citizens not only can reach public services eaiser but also they can assess performance of organization and share their concerns and comments via ICT sytems. Therefore, citizen-based management pespectives have become much more important subject to new ICTs, increment of citizens' expectations, and having more qualified employees, too (Arslan, 2012: 6).

The last issue is productivity and quality of public sector and services. The level of success of public organizations, managers or civil servants can be measured and determined according to their productivity. Technology presents several implementations and opportunities in order to be able to measure and evaluate activities of public organizations and employees. Citizens can evaluate public services and employees or qualification of their activities thanks to several "e" processes such as e-participation or computer based citizen satisfaction measurementss etc. (Karkın, 2012: 57-58). Briefly, public sector can be liked a machine and it has some essential parts such as public services, organizations, employees, citizens, productivity, and quality issues. If one of these components does not work well it can cause several problems in terms of government, managers or citizens as tax payers.

B. Technology as a Facilitator

Information Technology (IT) is important for organizations because it can make a strong connection between users (citizens) and organizatonal activities. IT is an effort trying to manage to computer-based information systems so it is interested using computers and obtaning healthy information concerning to working cycle (Laudon and Laudon, 2009).

Certainly, technology contributes and improves to the activities of public organizaions. Investing on this area will also rationalize internal relations and communication between superiors and subordinates. Organizations, especially managers and human resources departments, should use properly that kind of an advantage. Technology usage provides many advantages to public employees, too. It enables more flexible work processes and relations in work place. For instance, workers can work in their home by using e-mail or many meetings can be organized thanks to a tele-conferance system even though all member of meeting is being in different locations. Undoubtedly such a flexibility will bring time and cost saving for both sides, i.e. public managers and employees. Technology gives more secure working place in other words a perfect control mechanism can be created by means of technological implementations so employees' every job-related works can be checked, measured and evaluated systematically. As a result, the connection of IT (or in general, technology) and public sector involves significant points in relation to alteration and transformation in management (Reddick, 2011: 4). Technology does not only improve public services and their quality but also ease transformation of public sector in paralel with citizens' current requirements so it is a necessary and inevitable tool for having a modern perspective in public management.

II. THE PHASES OF INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYTEM

There are several main steps in desinging individual PES and if following these phases most probably will be beneficial and logical for institutions (Tozlu, 2014: 18).

A. Preliminary Preparation

There should be a set of preparation phases which serve as transition operations. First of all, it is required to constitute a working group designing individual PES. This group could comprise of only institution's own employees but to count in other people such as human resources experts or other relevants in the group is also possible. Working group should make some analyses in order to obtain employees' thoughts, concerns and/or comments with regard to individual PES (Hatry, 1999:256). This also enables to make a perception management to managers which is really a vital advantage for them. Likewise, employees may have different ideas about individual PES because the idea of measuring and evaluating by managers or other people can enchafe some of them while the rest of may support this implementation in order to increase competition and quality.

Other bounden works in the the phase of preliminary preparation are to identify organization, its works, the structure of human resources, distribution of tasks, and workloads of personel or units. All these require to make organizational analyse, work analyses, and job descriptions. Thus to improve a measurement and assessment system will be easier and more rational after these dataset. That will provide important and required information to managers or human resources department so they can assess all process rationally (Cornetta et al. 2008: 365).

B. Preparation Phase

Preperation phase is maybe most vital part of constitution process because criterions, standards, evaluators, method and period of evaluation should be determined on this phase. All these components can be determined rationally and logically thanks to working group's activities which has been mentioned at the former phase. Performance criterions enable to measure employees' job related activities but they should have rather objective characteristics in a modern evaluation system and then managers or evaluators are be able to focus only

employees' work performance. There are a wide range of evaluation methods so every organization can decide to implement any method which is more convenient for their structure, mindset, and expectations. However, generally assessment methods, which have several and different evaluators, have been preferred because of their modernity and functionality. Evaluation period depends on organizations' own structure, intensity, and expectations, too. The period is a timewise issue so it should be determined in harmony with timings of all other works. Evaluation period can be monthly, quarterly, annualy or another time cycle. When it comes to who will be evaluators then it can be said that the answer of this question has a strong relationship with evaluation method. Since evaluation method generally indicates who are evaluators but a lot of modern individual PES recommend different stakeholders as evaluators such as colleagues, experts, citizens, customers while classic or old fashioned methods refer only managers (Vaughan, 2003:371).

C. Implementation Phase

This phase is regarding relationship between assessment results and organizational or individual decisions. Since, employees measured and evaluated by a system want to know what are the results, rewards, benefits, acquisitions or sanctions. Individual PES does not only pursue to increase performance, productivity, and effectiveness but also try to motivate employees. It is a prominent motivation mechanism if it is used rightly and properly (OECD, 2008: 50). If the outputs of an individual PES would not associated with human resources activities such as promotions, payments, educations, trainings, disciplinary punishment or rotations on duties and workplaces; the system will become meaningless and unfunctionless for ratees (Levine, 2010: 41; OECD, 2012: 50). These outputs will also ease to managers' some of administrative processes such as budgeting, evaluating, motivating or re-organazing (Greener, 2013: 202). Therefore individual PES requires having serious and well-organized human resources department, which is very important for organizations, that's why those departments absolutely must benefit all technologic developments and tools when they work.

On the other hand, the implementation phase emphasizes an information cycle between raters and ratees from beginning to end. Especially public employees should be incorporated into system designing processes. They should be informed in relation to every decisions, alterations or another important strides about system

and public managers or human resources demartments should know employees' comments because they are vital feedbacks for safety of system.

III.   MERGING TECHNOLOGY WITH COMPONENTS OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Every individual PES is a mechanism which has several parts, components, and phases. It is possible to most of these pieces can be supported and linked to technological operations. Already the advancements in the ICT and increasing importance of human resource management have been constituting a new area; electronic human resource management (Wahyudi and Park, 2014: 83). Within the context of that kind of a technology-based perspective to expect a set of "technological touch-ups" about designing and implementing of individual assessment systems will be logical.

In this part, some implementations –advisory- are shared in order to emphasize that individual PES can also benefit from ICT and make itself more functional.

Working group: This group will organize all designing process so they can contact with each other in 7/24 and they should reach employees or managers of public organization whenever they want. Therefore an *e-mail system* and any implementations like *Drop Box* will be useful in order to enable such conditions. Thus, technology will increase accesibility and capacity of working group.

Analyses processes: Some studies regarding organizational structures and employees' comments, concerns, and expectations on the individual PES should be carried out as mentioned above. Probably this phase will require many questionaires which can be carried out easily and systematically via a program such as *Google Drive*. Such a kind of preferance will also ease analyse operations because transferring data obtained by means of Google Drive or another similar program to *Microsoft Excel* and statistical program such as *SPSS or STATA* is very easy. All these raw data can be processed thanks to these programs and several graphs, tables can be prepared in relation to organization and personnel. Moreover, a set of important correlations explaining relationship between some situations or features, which is about system, and employees' ideas, can be observed so those critical information will enlighten creating, designing, re-organizing, and implementing of PES. On the other hand, public organizations may have a broad

range of stakeholders including private sector companies, non-profit organizations, academicians, experts, union respresentatives, (if necesssary) citizens etc. (Alford and O'Flynn, 2012: 3). Therefore, working group also can make a contact with all different stakeholders for learning their suggestions about PES via questionnaires, e-mailings, teleconferances etc. As a result, all these interactive processes will give many chances in order to correct and improve to system.

Promotions and Raising Consciousness Platforms: Every innovation needs to promotion so this is also an awareness raising policy. Therefore *a website* can be designed in order to promote what is individual PES and to mention last developments or news on designing works in addition to implementation steps . Furthermore it will be fine if website includes a *discussion forum* and *frequently asked questions* in order to gather interested stakeholders.

Updating Works: After constituting a performance evaluation model to implement it via a *computer based system and software* will be better. Thus, all result will be able to listed on the computer and required uptadings belonging to performance criterions, standards or other components, will be made easily. A computer based individual PES will provide several advantages related to transparency, security, usability, updating, time or cost saving, too.

Measuring: Maybe not all performance ciriterions but many of them can be associated with a technologic operation. For instance, entrance and exit hours can be followed/controlled via a *turnstile system* which provides several information about working hours, and so managers can check all these information.

Different Located Evaluators: Many modern evaluation methods include different raters as mentioned above and sometimes each of them can being at different places. However some *televoice systems* can gather them for a meeting thus –if necessary- they can share flexibly their verbal assessments even in their home.

Rating Operations: When evaluators have personal *passwords* to login software evaluation system only they will be able to use system and make their gradings thanks to this safe operation. On the other hand every employee/ratee also may have a password in order to login and see their ratings or comments.

Evaluating Period: It is possible to set an *automatic system* that can be opened and work during only the evaluation periods. This system also can automatically send some *reminder/warning messages* to raters and ratees in relation to important dates in the evaluation process.

CONCLUSION

Individual PES ensures required information and data to institutions for an efficient management; helps human resources departments and managers interested in their decisions, which are related to human resources activities; accords individual and organizational aims and goals etc. (Robson, 2005: 138). A well designed PES also can be used as satisfaction mechanism by means of its components on several rewards or human resources activities. On the other hand, satisfied employees probably don't consider to leave of employment thus public budget also will be able to relieve employment expenditures (Ijigu, 2015:1).

Technology is one of the most preferred investing area in modern world because it renews perpetually and always eases labor life as a facilitator. Especially, information and knowledge technologies and other technological implementations in public service processes have become prominent with some financial problems because of the lack of measurement and evaluation for public employees and institutions in last decades (Greener, 2013: 185). The advancement of ICT has been altering the way of workboth in business and government on human resources management acitivities, work flows, communication, administration and other many areas (Wahyudi and Park, 2014: 84). Countries, which can benefit prominently from ICT in their public sector, have developed compare to others so participating actively in technology area can be mentioned as a vital issue for countries (Başa, 2012: 243). It is expected to access to public services easily, diminish on the red tape, to get cheaper and faster services, transparecy at the management, get a citizen-oriented management perspective will be obtained thanks to e-government or other technologic ways on the management (Sevinç and Şahin, 2013:210). On the other hand, public organizations spend citizens' taxes and public employees earn their money thanks to these taxes. Therefore effectiveness of governmental structures and citizens' productivity issues have become more important for mutual satisfaction. Technology can be used as a tool in order to achieve this, too and it is also valid for performance measurement and evaluation. Desinging an individual PES has a set of phases which can be associated with technology as mentioned. Human fact has come into prominence in all sides of life including management field in today's information community (Özaydın and Özdemir, 2014: 252). Accordingly, human resources department should be

interested in technology issues because probably they will be first owners of creating a performance system in any organization. They can receive support both technology experts and performance experts. To gain a success in productivity and effectiveness issues, technology should be adapted all processes and components of public sector and evaluation system.

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