

Performance Management System – A Critical Analysis of Select Telecom Organisations in India

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ABSTRACT

Growth and development, congruence, efficacy and lucrativeness are some of the mutual goals to be achieved by both the individual and the organization in today's business world of thoroughpaced competition. The success of an appraisal system would, therefore, depend on how far it is able to meet the organizational as well as individual needs. Organizations exist to attain certain goals and objectives through an integrated effort and some form of control and coordination is needed to facilitate the attainment of such goals, thus control devices in the form of performance appraisal are used to accomplish their professed objectives. The present research paper emphasises on the performance appraisal as a multifunctional tool in telecom organisations of Jammu & Kashmir, India, focussing on the linkages of performance appraisal with the administrative and developmental decisions like remuneration, training and development, grievance redressal, promotions, demotions, layoffs and the like. The respondents in this research study are appraisees at the three managerial levels-higher, middle and lower in three private telecom companies and one government owned enterprise, providing a comparison between all the four sample study organisations. The prime focus of this study is based on the appraisees' perception towards the significance of the administrative and developmental functions of performance appraisal which positively or negatively affect an employee's position and career growth within the organisation.

Key Words: *Performance Appraisal (PA), employee perception, administrative & developmental decisions, remuneration, grievance redressal, training & development transfers, promotions.*

INTRODUCTION

Performance appraisal is a pre eminent Human Resource Development (HRD) mechanism designed and practised for the all round development and growth of the employees and to evaluate whether the human resources at different levels perform their assigned jobs the way their organizations want them to perform. Performance Appraisal System (PAS) if implemented well can take the organizations on a fast development track and productivity through committed, motivated and competent people, improving employee growth and productivity. It provides a rich insight into the employees perception about their organisations and also enables the employees to be rated as per the performance standards set within the organisations, yet not always does the implementation part of PA synchronise with what the policy has been formulated, leaving an implementation gap in the entire process. This calls for an introspection of the discrepancy that is created within the organisations and must be fulfilled in order to adapt PA as a mechanism to attain organisational excellence. The significance is often laid on the effectiveness of the

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administrative and developmental decisions linked in performance assessment, in order to attain a holistic mechanism for the job evaluation with the focus on organisational effectiveness.

Performance feedback as a result of performance appraisal is aimed at recognizing good performance and rewarding it and at the same time identifying poor performance and affecting the behaviour of the poor performers in such a way so as to improve their performance by proper facilitation/training & development and counselling in order to meet the organisational requirements. The invaluable data that is collected from the performance appraisal of employees is used in taking various administrative and developmental decisions within organisations, which is the prime resource for further improvements in the entire appraisal process. Unless the employees apprehend the linkages of their performance appraisals to the administrative and developmental decisions taken within organisations, which affects their remuneration, promotions, transfers, job responsibilities, training & development further, the entire process of performance appraisal is rendered deficient.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Employee assessment is one of the fundamental jobs of HRD. Employees need to have their work reviewed so that they may be acknowledged and rewarded when appropriate (*Gibbons & Kleiner, 1994,*). In simple terms, PA may be understood as the evaluation of an individual's performance in a systematic way, the performance being measured against such factors of knowledge, quality and quantity of output, initiative, leadership abilities, supervision, dependability, co operation, judgement, versatility, health and the like. Performance appraisal should not be confined to past performance alone, but potentials of the employee for future performance must also be assayed. The literature on PA has been characterised as falling within the six classifications (*Cumings & Schwab, 1973*). These streams are identifiable, which differ in their focus. These include (1) a number of argumentative, frequently philosophical pieces focussing on the general value of the appraisal process as a man power development technique, the perspective that is also focused upon in this research paper (*Mc Gregor, 1957, Kelly, 1958; Dailey, 1961; Kindall & Gatzka, 1963,*), (2) there are several opinion pieces, a few of which refer to empirical data (*General Electric Studies by Mayer and French, 1965*) arguing for the separation in spirit, time and method of actual appraisal, salary administration and developmental processes emphasising the significance of both administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal; (3) there are a few published studies which focus on specific appraisal processes like organisational climate, goal setting, interview, feedback processes, participation and appraiser and appraisee reactions to various issues involving processes, appraisal methods and outcomes of appraisals (*Bruke & Wilcox, 1969; Mayer & French, 1965; Sloan & Jhonson et al., 1968 Mufeed 2009&2012, Mufeed & Jenifur, 2015, Jenifur, 2016*), (4) several organisational counting type studies exist which report the frequency with which different varieties of appraisal systems are used by industrial organisations. The

American Management Association (AMA) and the National Industrial Conference Board (NICB) publish occasional reports of such type, (5) These include non experimental, single case studies describing the effects of specific appraisal systems in specific organisations and are few in number (*Hersery, 1962*), (6) those which focus on rating scales and formats, rating methods, sources of assessment and psychometric evaluation of various systems of appraising as applied to PA (*Buel, 1962; Barrett, 1964; Booker & Miller, 1966 and Basjett & Meyer, 1968*). Out of these classification categories (1) and (2) from administrative and developmental perspective are superior to the other categories, which also lay a platform for the present study.

The developmental and evaluative uses of PA are incompatible as indicated by previous research and theory (*Bernardin & Beatty, 1984; De-Nisi et al., 1984; Longenecker et al., 1987, 2014; Murphy et al., 1984; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995; Williams et al., 1985; Zedeck & Cascio 1982*). Separation of assessment based on salary administration from employee appraisals has also been recommended by researchers, while simultaneously suggesting that, if these two PA uses are connected, the employees can't receive accurate feedback pertaining their strengths and developmental needs (*Harvey, 1995; McNerney, 1995*). It is believed that, this conflict also obviates the present process from meeting its ends and utility to the organization, possibly even bestowing negatively to individual demeanours and organizational performance. Factually when evaluation and development are taken within one PA process against when they are assorted, meagre knowledge is available about if the employees react or show varied behaviours.

It is impragmatic to conceive separation of development and evaluation as both are interdependent. Nonetheless, it is pertinent from existing research, that the uses are accentuated variedly throughout organizations and unlikely colligate to organizational features, notwithstanding, developmental PA use staunchly correlates with evaluative PA use (*Cleveland et al., 1989, Mufeed & Jenifur 2017*).

The combined effects of development and evaluation have proved that PA could be used for both of these. A contravene survives whenever PA is used for dynamic uses which has been tested by various studies. The study carried out at General Electric company in 1965 is perhaps the first and most often cited research on varied uses of PA. It was revealed by interviews with employees and their supervisors that the organizations which bank on a comprehensive annual PA to avail workers with valuable feedback and consequently ameliorate job performance would do better with the work-planning-and recapitulation method (WP&R). More performance and salary oriented dialogues, no compendious discernment or valuations, and an enhanced vehemence on mutual goal planning and problem solving is included in WR&R approach. There is dispute in the orthodox approach to PA introduced by the perspective of such research, and by segregating PA uses like

removal of salary discussions from development, researchers opined that organizations may be well served.

Prince and Lawler (1986) principally riveted on the consequences of salary discussions, concluding that such discussions did not impact the outcome of PA process negatively. However if the salary discourse was the focus of the PA event or not, a comprehensive test of the effects of separation in PA uses would involve removal of all the aspects of PA of an appraising nature which lacked in their approach.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been set for the present study, in the light of the domain for research identified so far;

- to study the linkages of performance appraisal with the administrative and developmental decisions in the sample select organisations,
- to discover the strength and direction of link between the two sets of data comparatively from the sample select organisations,
- to find out the deficiencies if any, and suggest the ways for improvement in the performance appraisal, linking performance appraisal to the administrative and developmental decisions within the sample select organisations.

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis has been laid down for the present research study:

Ha: There is a significant relationship between the sample select organisations under study on the basis of administrative and developmental decisions.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

The present research study is based in J&K, India, on four telecom organisations, BSNL, Vodafone, IDEA and Airtel which have been selected using purposive sampling. Further, the study is based on appraisees at managerial ranks only, which have been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling, from all the three levels of managerial hierarchy. Out of 404 managers in total, sample size of 228 was considered, out of which 176 minimum response rate was ensured (Vodafone: 22, Airtel: 21, IDEA: 18 and BSNL: 115). A closed ended questionnaire (based on ranking order) was used in this research study based on similar research studies Mufeed (2011), Pareek (2002) and Mehta (1994) and the administrative and developmental decisions were rated by the appraisees from each organisation, which were ranked, using Spearman's Coefficient of Correlation the value of Rho and p value was also determined. Further, interviews were conducted with the managers from all the four organisations in order to assess their perceptions about the significance of administrative and developmental decisions linked in their respective

organisations to PAS. Further, performance appraisals in all these organisations under study are done annually.

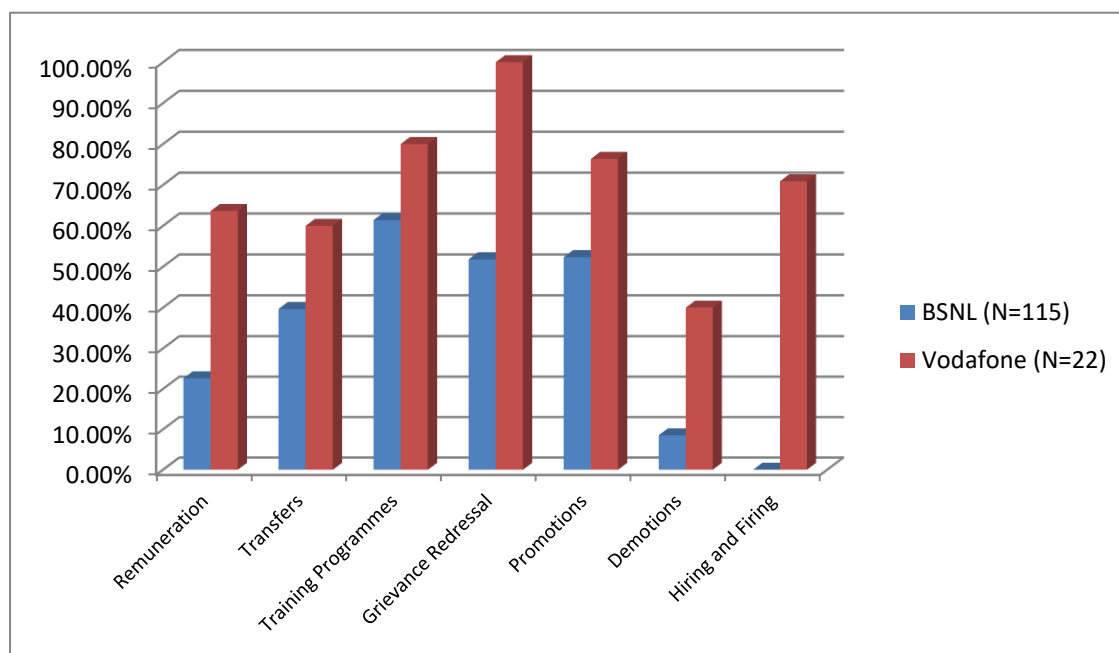
Moreover, the tables 1.1 to 1.6 rank the responses of the appraisees in BSNL, Vodafone, IDEA and Airtel in comparison to each other. These represent the six tables for administrative and developmental decisions in the respective organizations commonly associated as a PA practice. For each the ranks have been calculated, rank differences and the squared difference has also been calculated in order to ascertain the spearman's rank correlation values and run a significance test to calculate the p value (the level of significance is 0.05%). The tables reveal the ranking correlation of the four sample organisations on the basis of administrative/developmental decisions which include remuneration, transfers, training programmes, grievance redressal, promotions, demotions, hiring and firing. Figures 2.1 to 2.6 exhibit graphical representations of rank order of appraisees on comparative basis with respect to administrative and developmental decisions.

Table 1.1: Rank order of appraisees between BSNL and Vodafone with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/Developmental Decisions	BSNL (N=115)			Vodafone (N=22)			Rank Difference	Difference
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	130	22.60%	5	70	63.63%	5	0	0
2.	Transfers	228	39.65%	4	66	60%	6	-2	4
3.	Training programmes	353	61.39%	1	88	80%	2	1	1
4.	Grievance redressal	298	51.82%	3	110	100%	1	2	4
5.	Promotions	301	52.34%	2	84	76.36%	3	-1	1
6.	Demotions	49	8.52%	6	44	40.00%	7	1	1
7.	Hiring and firing	0	0	7	78	70.90%	4	3	9

Rho = 0.643, p-value =0.118

Fig. 2.1: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between BSNL and Vodafone with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



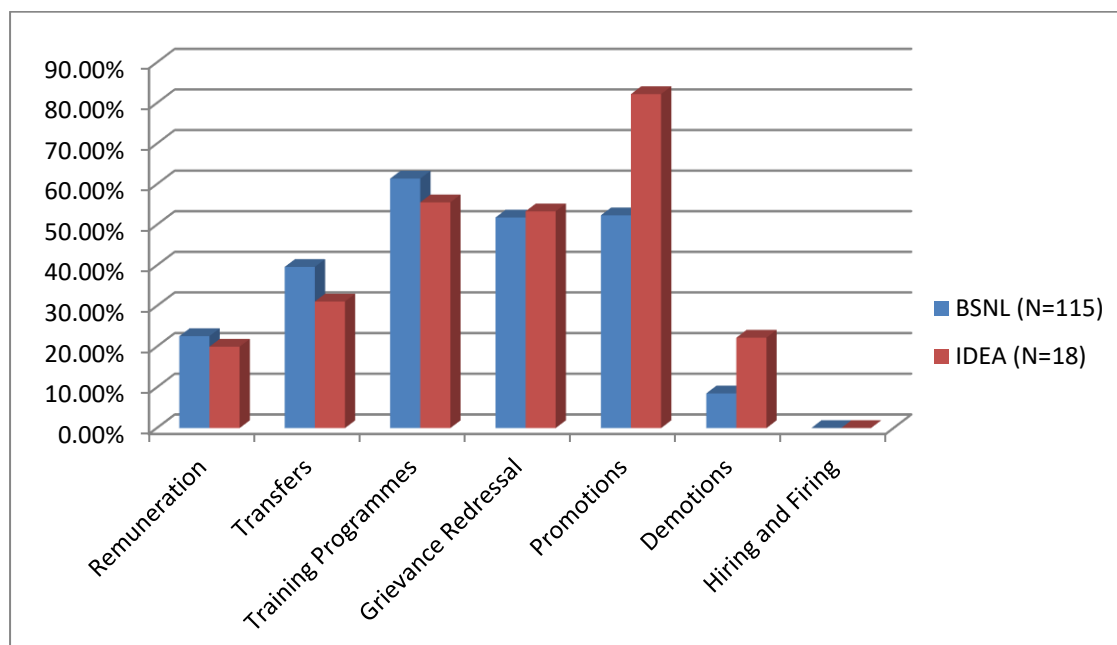
The first table 1.1, represents a comparative ranking of BSNL and Vodafone appraisees. It is apparent that appraisees from both the companies under study have rated training programmes highest (BSNL= 61.39% and Vodafone= 80%), which implies that PAS should be significantly used to determine the training and development needs of the managers so that they can again an edge in their skills. Overall the Spearman's rank correlation value is 0.643 which depicts a positive correlation, with p value greater than 0.05 (p value=0.118) hence the null hypothesis is accepted signifying that there is no significant difference between the sets of variables under discussion.

Table 1.2: Rank order of appraisees between BSNL and IDEA with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/ Developmental Decisions	BSNL (N=115)			IDEA (N=18)			Rank Difference	
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	130	22.60%	5	18	20%	6	-1	1
2.	Transfers	228	39.65%	4	28	31.11%	4	0	0
3.	Training programmes	353	61.39%	1	50	55.55%	2	-1	1
4.	Grievance redressal	298	51.82%	3	48	53.33%	3	0	0
5.	Promotions	301	52.34%	2	74	82.22%	1	-1	1
6.	Demotions	49	8.52%	6	20	22.22%	5	1	1
7.	Hiring and firing	0	0	7	0	0	7	0	0

Rho = 0.989, p-value = 0.003

Fig. 2.2: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between BSNL and IDEA with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



The second table 1.2, presents the ranking between BSNL and IDEA appraisees. It is pertinent to observe that since BSNL ranks training programmes as highest in ranking, IDEA appraisees rank promotions as the highest (82.22%). Promotions are an integral part of manager’s career and growth and PAS data can be useful in gathering valuable information as to who deserves promotion in the organization. The Spearman’s rank correlation value for table 1.2 = 0.989 (positive correlation) and p value is lesser than 0.05 (p value=0.003), hence the null hypothesis is rejected in this case in favour of alternate hypothesis, signifying that there is a significant difference in perception of managers between these two groups in discussion for administrative and development decisions.

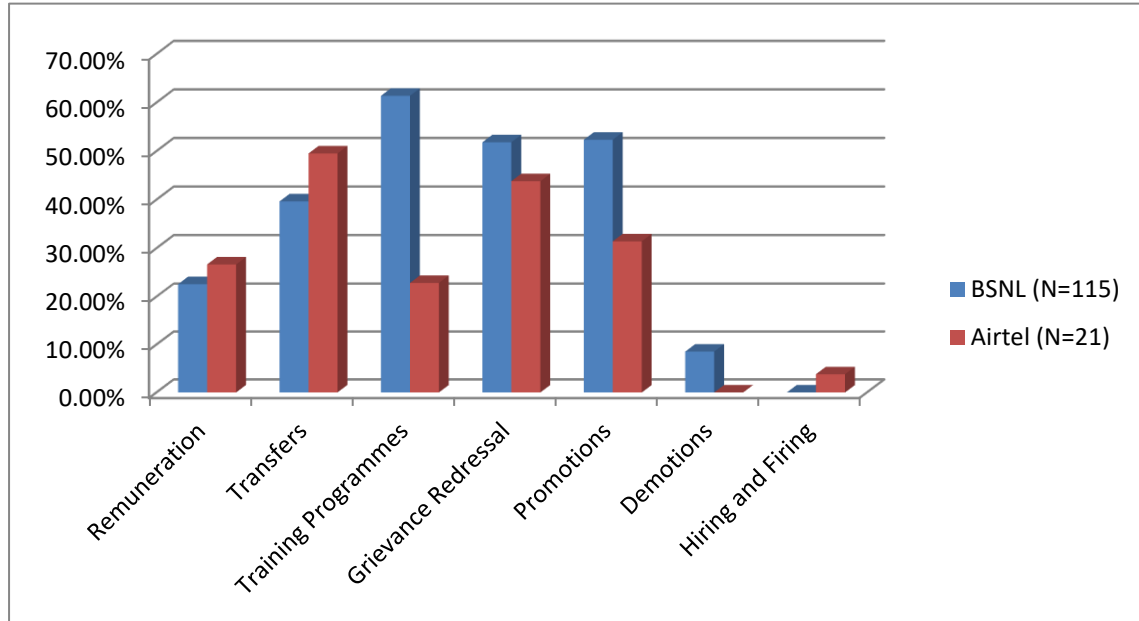
Table 1.3: Rank order of appraisees between BSNL and Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/ Developmental Decisions	BSNL (N=115)			Airtel (N=21)			Rank Difference	Difference
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	130	22.60%	5	28	26.66	4	1	1
2.	Transfers	228	39.65%	4	52	49.52%	1	3	9
3.	Training programmes	353	61.39%	1	24	22.85%	5	-4	16
4.	Grievance redressal	298	51.82%	3	46	43.80%	2	1	1
5.	Promotions	301	52.34%	2	33	31.42%	3	-1	1
6.	Demotions	49	8.52%	6	0	0	0	7	-1
7.	Hiring and firing	0	0	7	4	3.80%	6	1	1

Rho = 0.404, p-value =0.294

Fig. 2.3: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between BSNL and

Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



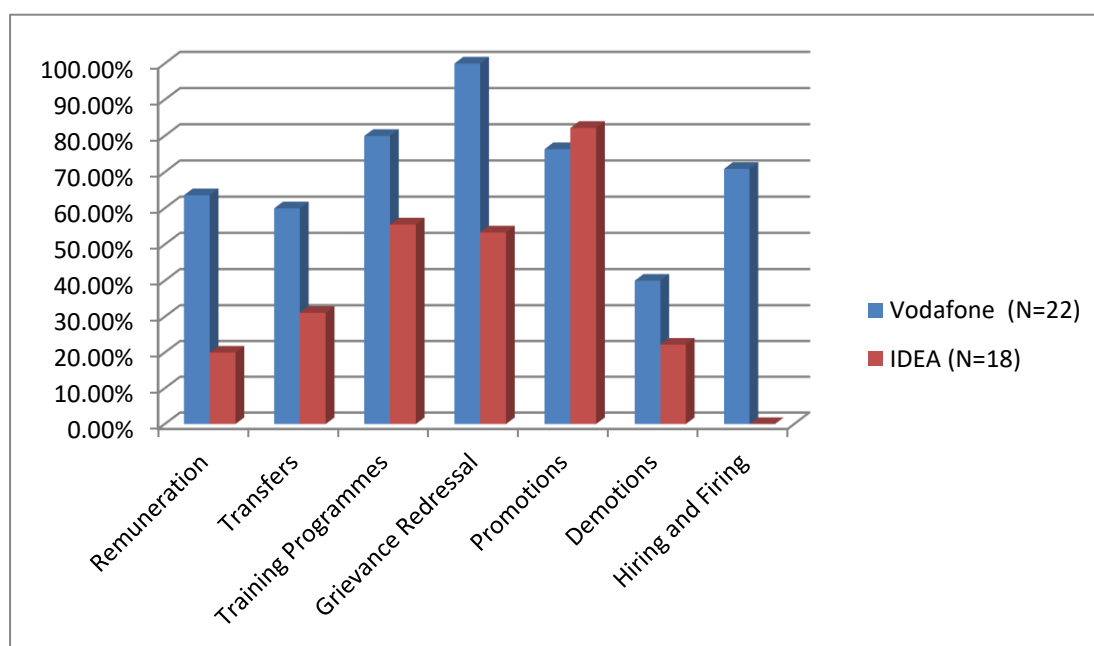
The table 1.3, represents the comparative ranking of BSNL and Airtel. The Rho value=0.404 (positive correlation) and p value is 0.294, which indicates a non-significant difference between the variables under study in table 1.3. Additionally, Airtel appraisees have denoted transfers as being highest in rating, which indicates a need for job rotations in Airtel as well.

Table 1.4: Rank order of appraisees between Vodafone and IDEA with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/Developmental Decisions	Vodafone (N=22)			IDEA (N=18)			Rank Difference	Difference
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	70	63.63%	5	18	20%	6	-1	1
2.	Transfers	66	60%	6	28	31.11%	4	2	4
3.	Training programmes	88	80%	2	50	55.55%	2	0	2
4.	Grievance redressal	110	100%	1	48	53.33%	3	-2	4
5.	Promotions	84	76.36%	3	74	82.22%	1	2	4
6.	Demotions	44	40.00%	7	20	22.22%	5	2	4
7.	Hiring and firing	78	70.90%	4	0	0	7	-3	9

Rho = 0.506, p-value =0.306

Fig. 2.4: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between Vodafone and IDEA with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



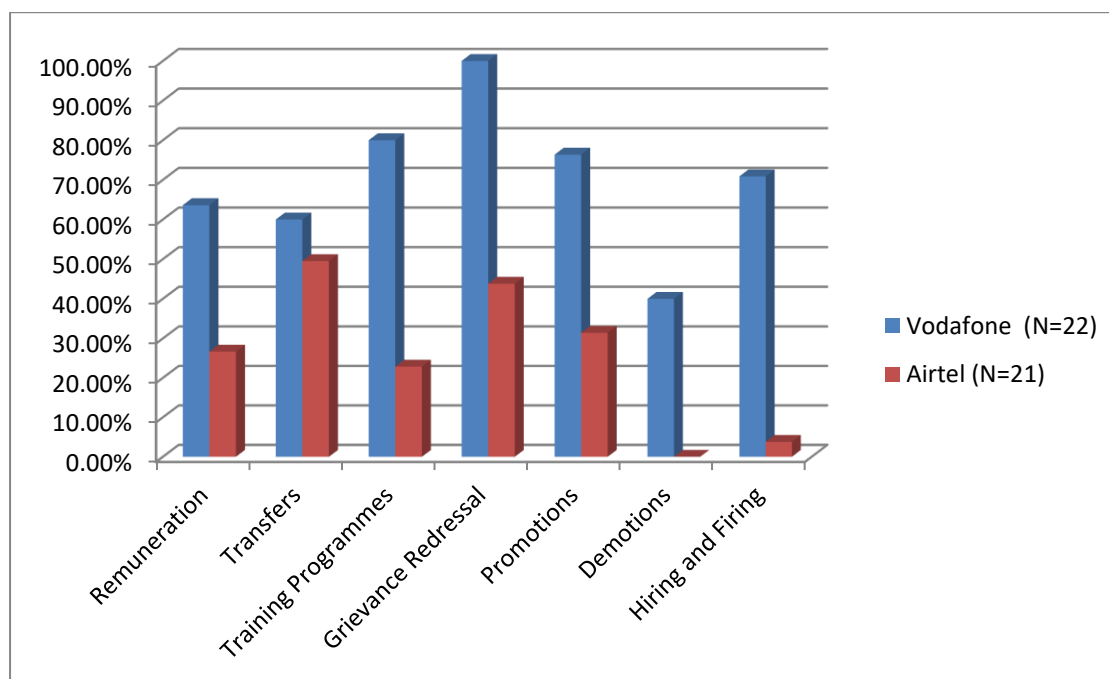
The table further 1.4, exhibits rankings of Vodafone and IDEA, the highest ranking (100%) in case of Vodafone is observed for grievance redressal. Grievance redressal is an important factor which leads to satisfaction of managers on job. It is the prime responsibility of the HR department to look after all the grievances related to rating of performances in organisations. While as IDEA appraisees ranked promotions as the highest in ranking (82.22%). The value for Rho = 0.506 (positive correlation) and p value ranges to 0.306, which indicates that there is no significant difference between the variables under discussion; hence the null hypothesis stands acceptable.

Table 1.5: Rank order of appraisees between Vodafone and Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/ Developmental Decisions	Vodafone (N=22)			Airtel (N=21)			Rank Difference	Difference
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	70	63.63%	5	28	26.66	4	1	1
2.	Transfers	66	60%	6	52	49.52%	1	5	25
3.	Training programmes	88	80%	2	24	22.85%	5	-3	9
4.	Grievance redressal	110	100%	1	46	43.80%	2	-1	1
5.	Promotions	84	76.36%	3	33	31.42%	3	0	0
6.	Demotions	44	40.00%	7	0	0	0	7	49
7.	Hiring and firing	78	70.90%	4	4	3.80%	6	-2	4

Rho = 0.286, p-value =0.535

Fig. 2.5: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between Vodafone and Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



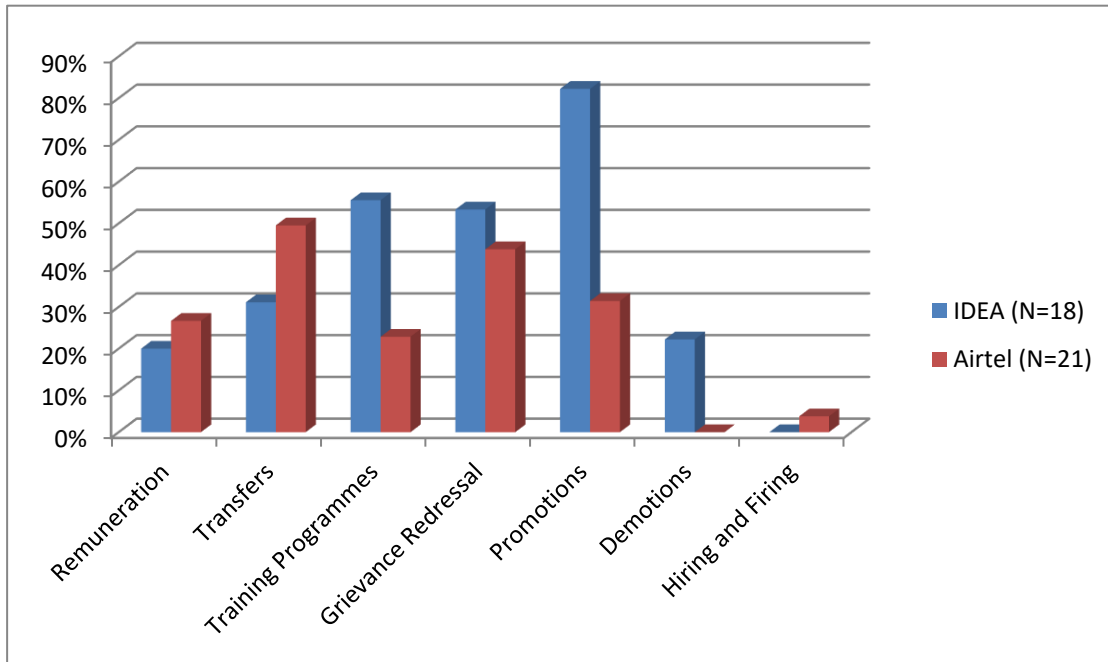
The table 1.5, is indicative of the rankings between Vodafone and Airtel. The highest ranking in Airtel has been given to transfers (49.52%), and the value for Rho is 0.286 (positive correlation) with a p value= 0.535 which is indicative of a non-significant difference in perception of appraisees with respect to the variables, hence the null hypothesis is accepted with respect to table 1.5.

Table 1.6: Rank order of appraisees between IDEA and Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions

S.No.	Administrative/ Developmental Decisions	IDEA (N=18)			Airtel (N=21)			Rank Difference	
		Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	Scores Obtd.	%age of Max. Possible Score	Rank	D	D ²
1.	Remuneration	18	20%	6	28	26.66	4	2	4
2.	Transfers	28	31.11%	4	52	49.52%	1	3	9
3.	Training programmes	50	55.55%	2	24	22.85%	5	3	9
4.	Grievance redressal	48	53.33%	3	46	43.80%	2	1	1
5.	Promotions	74	82.22%	1	33	31.42%	3	2	4
6.	Demotions	20	22.22%	5	0	0	0	5	25
7.	Hiring and firing	0	0	7	4	3.80%	6	1	1

Rho = 0.429, p-value =0.337

Fig. 2.6: Graphical representation of rank order of appraisees between IDEA and Airtel with respect to administrative and developmental decisions



The table 1.6 exhibits IDEA and Airtel appraisee’s rankings, the value of Rho calculated is 0.429 (positive correlation) and p value = 0.337, which is indicative of a non significant difference between the appraisees of the two companies under discussion, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted in this regard.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Performance appraisals can serve as an administrative and developmental tools in the organisations, linking performance to the multiple functions in organisations like promotions, transfers, pay raises, bonuses, employee rewards and training & development, yet the prime focus of PAS should be to improve the performance of the employees as well as the organisation at large. Among all the multi functions transfers, promotions, training programmes and grievance redressal are the most rated administrative/developmental decisions by the appraisees in all the four organisations.

PAS must be designed keeping in view the involvement of “human entity” it is targeted upon, using uniform criteria, so as to bring opens and transparency in the HR system aiming at measurable outcomes for overall development. This can be ensured by constant efforts on part of organisation and the individuals as well, so that PAS contributes to the overall satisfaction of the employees leading eventually to accomplishment of organisational goal.

The following suggestions should be taken care of in performance appraisals; the organisations should provide ample guidance for the development of the managers by

making use of the appraisal data. Trainings/orientation programmes where ever necessary should be followed for the betterment of the managerial cadre. In case of grievance redressal, the HR department should play an unbiased role towards the appraisees. Discrimination if any should be brought to notice and rectified thereby.

Further, the appraisees should be made to understand the importance of PA in their career advancement and development by the HR department, encouraging them to take active part in it and put forth the problems or any constraints faced by them at work. HR department must follow up on the training programmes that would help the managers at all the levels improve their performance. Managers should be rewarded and encouraged for their efforts so that they do not feel under paid and dissatisfied. Development of subordinates should be seen as an important factor by the higher authorities. Superiors must plan well the performance of their subordinates through performance appraisal practices. Work schedules should be time bound and pre decided, only then can future performances be evaluated properly. The data from the PA should be used by the HR department for developing appropriate training programmes for the managers as per their needs. Not only that even the appraisers should be trained on how to conduct an effective PA within the organisation before the PA begins. The appraisees should actively participate in the performance interviews and freely talk about their future performance planning, constraints and problems.

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