

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS, MALAYSIA

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Abstract. Performance appraisal is a systematic process of evaluating employee performance based on predetermined objectives and standards. Issues of fairness, transparency, and clarity may hinder performance and reduce commitment. This study investigates the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance among the Ministry of Youth and Sports Putrajaya employees, guided by Goal-Setting Theory and Expectancy Theory. A survey of 241 full-time employees used 22 items to assess appraisal process and employee performance, with data analyzed using Jamovi software. Findings show both appraisal processes and employee performance were at a high level. Results further revealed a moderate but statistically significant effect of performance appraisal on employee performance. In conclusion, structured, fair, and transparent appraisal systems contribute meaningfully to performance outcomes and organizational goals. Future research should include factors such as motivation, job satisfaction, leadership style, and organizational culture for a more comprehensive view. Expanding the sample to other ministries and public or private organizations would strengthen insights into the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance.

Keywords: performance appraisal, employee performance, public sector, ministry of youth and sports, employee

Introduction

Primarily, human resource management is the strategic and systematic process of managing the workforce of an organization such that the workforce can accomplish its objectives. It means making sure that the employee's needs, personnel needs, and personnel development are planned and organized in such a way by human resources so as to allow this structure for human resources to deliver the activities that are fundamental to human resource management, which refers to all activities of the organization that involve recruiting and selection, training and development, recognition and rewards, performance appraisal, and participation and communication. Human resource management is concerned with aligning employees' needs with organizational goals and objectives in order to maintain an employee population based upon their individualistic, highly skilled, motivated, and efficient resources. It ensures employees are motivated to do their best in their day-to-day work in the organization while at the same time ensuring they become efficient in achieving the organization's objectives (Phiri et al., 2025).

Human resource management is a strategic process of managing an organization's workforce to achieve its objectives. It involves planning employee needs, personnel

requirements, and professional development to ensure effective management (Phiri et al., 2025). One of the keys of human resource management is performance appraisal, which evaluates employee participation, monitors progress toward organizational goals, and identifies training, development, and promotion needs. Performance appraisal provides feedback, highlights strengths and weaknesses, and supports career advancement, aligning employee performance with organizational goals to enhance productivity and effectiveness (Stanikzai et al., 2023). Employee performance, measured by tasks accomplished individually or collectively, reflects an organization's ability to achieve its goals. It requires meeting established standards and working efficiently in dynamic environment (Lim and Ahmad, 2021). Performance improves when job roles incorporate effective methods, motivation, health, education, skills, workload balance, and managerial capabilities. In Malaysia's public sector, accountability and performance alignment are reinforced through structured appraisal systems.

However, organizations continuously seek effective strategies to enhance employee performance and overall productivity. Within the public sector, declining employee performance has increasingly been associated with issues of employee performance, particularly in relation to the implementation of performance appraisal system. According to Kamil et al. (2024), nearly 50% of public sector employees reported dissatisfaction at work, reflecting moderate to low levels of psychological well-being. Furthermore, previous studies conducted across diverse organizational settings have highlighted persistent challenges such as subjectivity, favoritism, rather incompetence, and inadequate feedback systems, all of which undermine the credibility and effectiveness of appraisal processes (Mose, 2024). Common grievances raised by employees include dissatisfaction with performance expectations, the absence of constructive feedback, and mistrust toward those responsible for conducting appraisals. These issues are often exacerbated when employees feel unsupported during role or task transitions, leading to diminished morale, reduced organizational commitment, and lower performance levels (Nawi and Ismail, 2021). Nevertheless, the Malaysian Remuneration System (Sistem Saraan Malaysia, SSM) was replaced in 2024 by the Public Service Remuneration System (Sistem Saraan Perkhidmatan Awam, SSPA), which introduced MyPerformance to promote fairness, objectivity, and transparency while enhancing competitiveness, skills, and productivity (JPA, 2024). Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance among the Ministry of Youth and Sports Putrajaya employees and to determine whether appraisal practices effectively contribute to improved performance outcomes.

Literature review

Human resource management

Human resource management significantly influences employee engagement, motivation, and performance through learning opportunities, workplace support, and equitable compensation systems (Abu-Mahfouz et al., 2023). Evidence shows that fostering a learning culture, empowerment initiatives, reward systems, and supervisory support enhances engagement and improves performance outcomes. These practices highlight the critical role of human resource management in shaping both the affective and behavioural responses of employees (Parabakaran and Lasib, 2021). According to Zumrah et al. (2022), remuneration plans, designed training motivators, career

advancement paths, and work-life balance plans also been linked to enhanced motivation to learn new things, as well as to transfer the acquired knowledge within the organizational context. Together, they support the notion of the conceptualization of human resource management as a strategic and integrative system that complements engagement, capability, and general performance through the administration of human resource functions in a way that is both evidence-based and consistent with organizational goals (Ahmad et al., 2022).

Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is widely recognized as a systematic process used to evaluate employees' job performance based on predetermined organizational standards and job requirements. It involves assessing employees' achievements, strengths, and areas for improvement in relation to established objectives and performance criteria. In human resource management, performance appraisal is commonly defined as a systematic and periodic evaluation of an employee's performance and potential for future development within an organization. As such, it serves as an essential mechanism for monitoring employee contributions and aligning individual performance with organizational goals. According to Safwan et al. (2023), performance appraisal is a critical managerial responsibility and an essential expectation for individuals holding supervisory positions. Through this process, managers collect, assess, and document information regarding employees' performance and their relative contribution to organizational outcomes. Similarly, Muriuki and Wanyoike (2021) describe performance appraisal as a systematic, objective, and periodic evaluation of employees based on job requirements and their potential for future development. Such systems enable organizations to gather reliable performance-related data that support managerial decision-making regarding promotions, compensation, training, and performance improvement.

Within organizational contexts, performance appraisal often takes the form of a formal interaction between supervisors and subordinates, typically conducted on an annual or semi-annual basis. During this process, employees' work performance is evaluated, and constructive feedback is provided regarding their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for professional development. This interaction not only facilitates communication between managers and employees but also encourages continuous improvement and skill development (Dike et al., 2021). Effective appraisal systems therefore play an important role in enhancing employee engagement, performance improvement, and career advancement. Employee performance itself refers to the extent to which employees successfully accomplish their job responsibilities and organizational tasks. It encompasses various aspects such as output quality, effort, productivity, and efficiency within specified time frames and organizational expectations. Performance is often measured through the achievement of organizational goals and the completion of assigned tasks according to established standards. Consequently, organizations frequently implement performance management systems that integrate goal-setting programs and reward mechanisms linked to employee performance outcomes.

Furthermore, performance appraisal serves as a managerial tool to address agency-related challenges by ensuring that employees' actions align with organizational objectives. Through systematic evaluation and feedback, supervisors are able to assess the work performance of subordinates and allocate rewards or incentives based on these assessments. Such mechanisms help motivate employees and encourage them to achieve

higher levels of productivity and organizational commitment (Nawi and Ismail, 2021). The success of performance appraisal systems largely depends on the effective involvement of managerial leadership. Toki et al. (2023) highlight that line managers play a primary role in implementing and maintaining the effectiveness of performance management systems, as they are directly responsible for monitoring employee performance and providing feedback. Meanwhile, top management is responsible for strategically managing organizational resources and ensuring that appraisal systems align with organizational objectives. To support these responsibilities, organizations employ various performance management tools, frameworks, and techniques designed to enhance the effectiveness of appraisal processes and improve overall organizational performance.

Employee performance

Performance appraisal is widely recognized as a systematic process used to evaluate employees' performance based on predetermined objectives, job requirements, and organizational standards. It is considered a crucial managerial responsibility and an essential expectation for individuals in supervisory positions (Dike et al., 2021). Performance appraisal involves the collection, assessment, and documentation of information related to employees' contributions and overall value to the organization. This evaluation is typically conducted periodically and objectively in order to assess employees' performance in relation to job expectations while also identifying their potential for future growth and development (Muriuki and Wanyoike, 2021). Effective performance appraisal systems play a vital role in supporting managerial decision-making processes. By providing structured and reliable information about employee performance, these systems assist supervisors and human resource managers in making informed decisions regarding promotions, training and development, compensation, and performance improvement strategies (Muriuki and Wanyoike, 2021). In most organizations, performance appraisal is implemented through formal interactions between supervisors and subordinates, often conducted annually or semi-annually. During these sessions, employees' work performance is reviewed, feedback is provided, and opportunities for improvement and professional development are discussed (Dike et al., 2021). Such interactions help organizations identify employees' strengths and weaknesses while encouraging continuous improvement.

Employee performance refers to the quantity and quality of work or services delivered by an individual within a specified period. Organizational performance standards serve as benchmarks for evaluating employee productivity, efficiency, and work quality. When these standards are objective, comprehensive, and clearly defined, they enable organizations to assess performance more accurately and transparently. Establishing clear performance expectations is therefore essential, as achieving organizational objectives requires competent, skilled, and well-trained employees (Alsafadi and Altahat, 2021). Moreover, performance evaluation should not focus solely on technical competencies but should also consider employees' work-related behaviours as well as the psychological and social dimensions of the workplace environment (Dike et al., 2021). Empowering employees with relevant skills and allowing them to exercise initiative can significantly enhance both job satisfaction and organizational productivity. Employees who feel capable of utilizing their abilities effectively are more likely to demonstrate higher engagement and commitment to their roles (Dike et al., 2021). In this regard, employee performance can be understood as the level of work

accomplishment achieved through the effort exerted in fulfilling assigned responsibilities. This concept is closely associated with meaningful work, employee engagement, and supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors (Zar, 2022). High-performing employees contribute significantly to organizational success, enabling organizations to achieve strategic objectives and maintain a competitive advantage in their respective sectors.

Previous study on effect of performance appraisal on employee performance

Performance appraisal has been known to be an important tool in enhancing productivity, motivation, and organizational performance among employees. It presents formal feedback to employees to inform them of their weaknesses, strengths, and areas for improvement. As several studies have demonstrated, the study of Dike et al. (2021) found all three appraisal techniques reviewed, based on Management by Objectives (MBO), 360-Degree Feedback, and Goal Setting had a statistically significant positive correlation with employee performance in selected firms in Anambra State of Nigeria. This study highlights the fact that the various appraisal mechanisms play a positive role in enhancing employee performance outcomes. The results also indicate that when appraisal practices are carried out in a systematic and efficient way, they provide a significant contribution to employee motivation, achievement of goals, and general productivity in the workplace.

Furthermore, a study by Stanikzai et al. (2023) reveals that performance appraisal has a considerable effect on the performance of employees in this industry. The study indicates that performance appraisal positively influences employee performance significantly in the private universities within Afghanistan. The results show that proper appraisal practices can make significant contributions to improving employee motivation, commitment, and job performance. Similarly, Aman (2024) validated that his study results showed that there are indeed positive, strong, and significant connections between the quality of appraisals, feedback, and performance. The study reveals that employee performance is strongly and positively related to performance appraisal quality and feedback at Homa Construction PLC, Ethiopia. This study underlines that with quality performance appraisals that are supported by effective feedback, employees become better motivated, engaged, and productive. In line with these results, the study by Mulidzwi et al. (2024) noted that performance appraisal has a positive impact on employee performance. The study reveals that performance appraisal has a positive effect on employee performance in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The results show that a significant percentage of the employees find performance appraisals helpful in improving their work performance and enabling them to meet organizational objectives. This implies that a properly designed appraisal system may be used as a motivational instrument, and the employees may be directed towards greater output and accomplishment of set objectives. This highlights that the proper appraisal practices will enhance the employee performance outcomes.

Materials and Methods

This study adopted a quantitative approach to examine the level of performance appraisal processes, the level of employee performance, and the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance. Data were collected using simple random sampling, ensuring each respondent had an equal chance of selection. The questionnaire

comprised 7 items on the performance appraisal process adapted from Mulidzwi et al. (2024) and 12 items on employee performance from Abelsen et al. (2015). A total of 241 employees from the Ministry of Youth and Sports Putrajaya participated. A five-point Likert scale format was used to measure response of employees. *Table 1* presents the Cronbach's alpha, which demonstrated a high level of internal consistency across the questionnaire items.

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha value of performance appraisal process and employee performance.

Variable	Number of questions	Cronbach's Alpha
Performance Appraisal Process	7	0.89
Employee Performance	12	0.97

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics were used to measure the level of performance appraisal process and the level employee performance among the Ministry of Youth and Sports Putrajaya employees. *Table 2* presents the adapted mean score interpretation from Almohtadi and Aldarabah (2021). *Table 3* shows descriptive statistics for the performance appraisal process, with a mean score of 4.12, indicating high level of agreement on the effectiveness of the appraisal process. *Table 3* displays the descriptive statistics for employee performance, with a mean score of 4.26, reflecting a high level of self-reported performance. *Table 4* presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis on examining the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance. The analysis revealed a statistically significant effect ($\beta = 0.60$, $\beta = 0.65$, $t = 13.03$, $p < 0.05$), confirming the critical role of performance appraisal in shaping employee performance outcomes and reinforcing the importance of fairness and transparency in appraisal systems. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2. Interpretation of mean score.

Mean score	Level
Less than 1.5	Very low
Between 1.5 and 2.5	Low
Between 2.5 and 3.5	Moderate
Between 3.5 and 4.5	High
Between 4.5 and 5	Very High

Table 3. Means score.

Variable	Frequency (n)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Performance Appraisal Process	241	4.12	0.54	High
Employee Performance	241	4.26	0.50	High

Table 4. Simple linear regression: The effect of performance appraisal on employee performance.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficient	t	Sig.
Intercept	1.79	-	9.32	< 0.05
Performance Appraisal	0.60	0.65	13.03	< 0.05
R ²	0.42			
Significant	< 0.05			

Level of performance appraisal process

The findings indicate that the performance appraisal process was perceived to be at a high level among employees. This result suggests that the organization has implemented appraisal procedures that are viewed as fair, structured, and transparent, which in turn contribute to positive employee perceptions of the appraisal system. Procedural fairness within performance appraisal systems is widely recognized as an important factor influencing employee satisfaction and acceptance of evaluation outcomes. Elements such as rater credibility, rater behaviour, the quality of feedback provided, alignment between performance goals and organizational objectives, and the linkage between appraisal results and performance outcomes appear to contribute to this positive perception. These findings are consistent with the study by Taneja et al. (2023), which demonstrated that procedural justice, rater credibility, and feedback quality significantly influence employees' perceptions of fairness in the appraisal process, ultimately enhancing employee commitment and performance in the Indian banking industry. Similarly, Nawari and Ismail (2021) reported that employees generally expressed positive acceptance of the appraisal system, particularly when clear performance standards were established and when evaluators demonstrated competence in conducting assessments. In their study at University Hospital X, employees reported satisfaction with the performance appraisal system because the evaluation procedures were structured and the assessment criteria were clearly communicated.

Furthermore, the present findings align with the results reported by Pauzi and Rahim (2023), who found that the level of performance appraisal implementation in a Malaysian government agency was also high. This was largely attributed to employees' perceptions that the appraisal process was fair, consistent, and aligned with principles of organizational justice. Employees indicated that appraisal practices were based on transparent and standardized criteria linked to job descriptions and key performance indicators (KPI). Such clarity in evaluation standards helps minimize ambiguity and potential bias while strengthening accountability and trust in the appraisal system.

Level of employee performance

The results of the study also reveal that employee performance was reported at a high level. This finding suggests that employees are motivated to meet their job responsibilities effectively while continuously improving their competencies in accordance with established key performance indicators (KPI). Within the public sector context, standardized performance benchmarks have been introduced to ensure that employees consistently meet expected performance standards. This interpretation is supported by Pekeliling Bilangan 1 Tahun 2024 issued by Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam Malaysia (JPA, 2024), which outlines performance evaluation policies for public sector employees. The circular specifies that employees who obtain performance scores of 75 percent or below may fall under an exit policy, which could result in termination of service. Such policy frameworks encourage employees to maintain high performance standards in order to retain their positions and progress within the organization. Consistent with the present findings, Nawari and Ismail (2021) also reported generally high levels of employee performance, attributing this outcome to the presence of trust within the organization. Trust between employees and management strengthens productivity, improves managerial effectiveness, and promotes positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace. In this context, employee performance can be understood as the quality and quantity of work produced in fulfilling assigned responsibilities, meeting job requirements, and adhering to established procedures.

These elements collectively contribute to the achievement of organizational goals (Zar, 2022).

Effect of performance appraisal on employee performance

The results further demonstrate that performance appraisal has a statistically significant effect on employee performance among employees of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Putrajaya. This finding indicates that effective appraisal practices play an important role in enhancing employee performance. Several factors may contribute to this relationship, including the use of certified assessors, clearly defined performance goals, structured appraisal procedures, and transparent evaluation criteria. When employees perceive appraisal systems as fair and credible, they are more likely to respond positively and demonstrate higher levels of work performance. These findings are supported by Stanikzai et al. (2023), who reported that employees tend to experience greater satisfaction and motivation when performance appraisal systems are implemented effectively. When the appraisal process is conducted fairly and consistently, employees develop greater confidence in the system, which positively influences their attitudes and performance outcomes. In addition, employees who demonstrate strong performance contribute significantly to organizational success by improving productivity, efficiency, and skill development.

This interpretation is consistent with the findings of Rasheed (2025), who emphasized that employee productivity and work output have a significant positive impact on organizational performance. Efficiency, skill enhancement, and increased productivity collectively contribute to improved organizational outcomes. Similarly, Akanmu et al. (2025) confirmed that comprehensive performance appraisal practices significantly and positively influence employee performance outcomes, highlighting the importance of appraisal systems as a strategic human resource management tool for improving organizational effectiveness. Yoshua and Rismawati (2024) also reported that well-structured performance appraisal systems positively influence employees' ability to meet and exceed performance expectations. Overall, these findings reinforce the importance of implementing fair, transparent, and well-structured performance appraisal systems within organizations. Such systems not only provide employees with clear performance expectations and constructive feedback but also serve as an important mechanism for motivating employees to improve their performance and contribute more effectively to organizational objectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlighted the significant effect of performance appraisal on employee performance among the Ministry of Youth and Sports Putrajaya employees. Performance appraisal was shown to enhance work output, strengthen responsibility, and improve task effectiveness, underscoring its strategic value as a human resource practice rather than merely an administrative requirement. When fairly implemented, clearly articulated, and goal-oriented, appraisal systems help employees understand expectations, increase motivation, and encourage positive contributions to organizational objectives. These findings provide a broader understanding of the link between appraisal and performance across contexts. Future research should adopt wider designs and examine factors such as motivation, job satisfaction, leadership style, and organizational culture. Comparative and longitudinal studies across ministries would

offer deeper evidence of appraisal effectiveness in Malaysia. Overall, this study reinforces the importance of effective appraisal systems in facilitating employee development and enhancing organizational performance within public service.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involved with any parties in this research study.

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