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	<p>Title and Abstract (5%)</p> <p>Title to include: A concise indication of the research question/problem. Abstract to include: A concise summary of the theoretical study undertake.</p>
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CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

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SPORT MANAGEMENT

2014-5

**A Critical Review of the Influence and Impact of the
Performance Appraisal Process on Employee
Motivation**

**(Dissertation submitted under the Management &
Development area)**

Courtney Arberry

20022911

**A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE INFLUENCE AND IMPACT
OF THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS ON
EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION**

Cardiff Metropolitan University Prifysgol Fetropolitán Caerdydd

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<u>Table of contents</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
<u>ACKNOLWEDGMENTS</u>	i
<u>ABSTRACT</u>	ii
<u>CHAPTER 1: EXTENDED INTRODUCTION</u>	1
1.1 Performance Appraisals	2
1.2 Employee Motivation	
<u>CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY</u>	7
2.1 Secondary Data	7
2.2 Meta-Analysis	8
2.3 Thematic Analysis	9
<u>CHAPTER 3: CRITICAL REVIEW</u>	11
3.1 The Performance Appraisal Process	11
3.2 Employee Experience and Perception During The Performance Appraisal	15
3.3 How Performance Appraisals Can Motivate Employees	18
<u>CHAPTER 4: EXPLICIT SUMMARY</u>	21
4.1 Performance Appraisal Process	21
4.2 Employee Experience and Perception	23
4.3 How Performance Appraisals Can Motivate	24
4.4 Conclusion	26
<u>REFERENCE LIST</u>	27

Figures

Figure. 1 (Locke, 1997)

Figure. 2 Thematic Overview

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Abstract

This project looked at performance appraisals, and the effect they have on employee motivation. Though used commonly within organisations, this study aimed to determine their perceived effectiveness within organisations and their influence on employee behaviour. Using a thematic analysis, secondary data was used and analysed to identify common themes within the literature. 62 themes were identified in the thematic overview, which were then further condensed into three overall themes. These themes were discussed further, and conclusions were drawn into what insight they gave into the effect conducting performance appraisals have on employee motivation. Once this had been done, suggestions were then made concerning the appraisal process, and how it could be improved to have a positive impact on employee motivation. Limitations and opportunities for further research have also been discussed.

CHAPTER 1
Extended Introduction

Critical Review of the Influence and Impact of the Performance Appraisal Process on Employee Motivation

Extended Introduction

It was important to review previous literature to gain a further understanding into performance appraisals and whether they had an influence on employee motivation, and if so, whether the influence was positive or not. It aids understanding by allowing the researcher to cumulate relevant data, including methodology and results, to gain a degree of knowledge on the area. Furthermore, it also allows for questions to arise as a result, usually concerning the lack of research in a particular area or any anomalies within the findings (Ridley, 2012). This in turn opens up the opportunity for more research to be conducted and published.

The material which was used throughout this project consisted of a mixture of literature. However, the main source of information came from published articles within the business journals. There are a number of journals which discuss the use of performance appraisals, some of which even crossover depending on results. The journal of Human Resource Management (HRM), for example, has published articles into the perception of the performance appraisal process (Sumelius et al, 2014) which, when compared, supports articles published in the journal of Leadership excellence (Datner, 2013). The fact that they are published in different journals shows the depth of research conducted into performance appraisals as a process. This literature was discussed and referenced back to throughout the project.

Though there are a number of journals which can be used to gather literature concerning the topic, the researchers themselves tend to be consistent. Fletcher is one of the main authors responsible for researching the effect performance management has on an organisation. Formerly professor of Occupational Psychology at Goldsmith college, university of London, he left after 12 years to work on his own private practice. During his time at Goldsmiths, he was awarded an Emeritus Professorship by the college, and still occasionally supports post graduate students who have graduated in his line of field. This includes psychological factors in self-assessment and awareness, and also factors affecting feedback and performance appraisals. In his earlier work, he was involved in establishing the general acceptance that managers seem to be adopting for the use of performance appraisals within their organisations (Fletcher et al, 1977). However, his continual willing to explore the ever changing world of performance appraisals has resulted

in him being involved and writing a number of books and journal articles critically evaluating the approach and searching for ways to improve it. An example of this is his work concerning the development of research into performance appraisals (Fletcher, 2001). Here, he set about not only identifying the nature of performance appraisals, but also the context surrounding it as well as the impact they have both on an organisation and the individual. It is for this reason that Fletcher's work was used throughout this project to not only refer back to, but also as a comparison with other authors.

Performance Appraisals

Before conducting an analysis into the effect of performance appraisals, it was first deemed important to identify what constitutes one. A performance appraisal is a process designed to measure an individual's performance in the work place (Jefferson, 2010). It was identified that a number of steps must be carried out both before and during a performance appraisal meeting in order for it to become effective. These are outlined by Tyson and York (2000) who claim that it is important that employees are aware of the requirements of expected performance while they are working, as this not only provides an aim for them as employees to work towards but also supplies managers with a criteria to measure up against when appraising. During the appraisal process, Tyson and York (2000) highlight the importance of ensuring that employee are aware as to why they are being appraised and the fact that it is a discussion, therefore employees are encouraged to have their own input. At the end of the meeting, employee performance should have been covered, praise and constructive criticism should have been given with employees leaving the appraisal feeling motivated and encouraged. These meetings are usually held annually, though the performance appraisal conducted on the employee usually differs from business to business. Despite this, they can all be generally divided into two main approaches: Results-orientated and Competency-orientated. A results orientated approach involves settings quantifiable objectives, usually time restricted, which are geared towards helping the organisation achieve its own objectives (Rayner and Adam-Smith, 2009). However, a competency orientated appraisal involves an approach which focuses upon the skill set of the employees, assessing whether their behaviour is considered that of a high performance employee (Rayner and Adam-Smith, 2009). Nowadays, businesses are encouraged to adopt both approaches in order to not only achieve their targets, but also to develop their employees skills for the future.

As well as developing an employee's skills, there are many other perceived benefits for carrying out performance appraisals within an organisation. For the organisation, performance appraisals help their human resource planning which involves key elements

such as the recruitment process and career succession (Torrington and Hall, 1998). Furthermore, by allowing an opportunity for managers to provide their employees with feedback, they should see an overall increase in firm performance as the appraisals purpose is to lay out clear, concise employee expectations. This is done by identifying any faults within their performance and then, if needed, what training to provide them with to help rectify these faults (Torrington and Hall, 1998). Providing employees with training and feedback is meant to motivate employees into improving their own performance. However, this is not always the case. At times, performance appraisals can have a significantly negative effect on the employee. Reports found that instead of feeling motivated, employees left the meeting feeling intimidated and manipulated by the process, claiming that at times the appraisals took place too long after the event (Nelson, 2000) to carry out an effective evaluation. Furthermore, research found that the relationship the employee has with the employer can have a huge impact on the way in which they are appraised.

Though performance appraisal is a common and set approach, it is still open to interpretation from the employer (Storey, 2001). No two appraisal are the same and this lack of criteria could result in an unfair system, where employees deem they are, at times, denied opportunities (such as a promotion) depending on which manager appraised them (Laird and Clampitt, 1985). This further supports the suggestion that performance appraisals could instead be demotivating to the employee, as if they perceive the approach to be unfair then they may be discouraged from trying harder to improve their own performance. Though this research is dated, it provides a basis for further research to be carried out to determine how employees perceive performance appraisals today.

Employee Motivation

Much of the theory surrounding performance appraisals talks about the intention to motivate employees. However, it was important to determine why it is critical for managers to ensure their workforce remains motivated. It is thought that Employees are a key asset to any business, and therefore the ability to motivate them increases the likelihood of improved performance, not only for the individual, but for the business as a whole (Honore, 2009). This is because enthusiastic employees are known to outperform their less enthusiastic colleagues. Therefore, it is in the organisations interest to maintain high levels of motivation within the work place.

A theory of the motivation process within an organisation has been proposed by Locke (1997) and has been produced into a diagram as show in Figure 1. At the heart of this theory is the importance of goal setting. This is an important factor to take into

consideration before carrying out the research as the results of this research project should show that goal setting within an organisation is expected to influence an employees behaviour and values, causing an increase in job commitment and motivation levels as a result (Meyer et al, 2004). As well as this, Locke (1997) suggests that there are a number of conditions deemed necessary for goal accomplishment. These are: feedback, goal commitment, ability and task complexity. Because it was found that goal accomplishment has an effect on employee motivation, this was taken into consideration when analysing the results as there should have been similarities between the two.

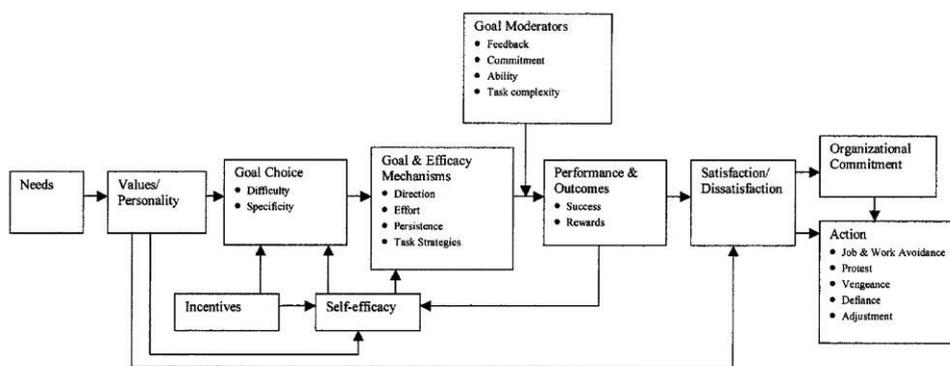


Figure. 1 (Locke, 1997)

As well as this, managers must be aware that motivation can come from both the outside environment and from within the individual themselves. Intrinsic motivation is the term given when the employee is driven from within, they gain self-satisfaction for completing a task or performing well, and it is this self-satisfaction which acts as a motivation (Smith, 1998). Those who are motivated intrinsically tend to respond better to recognition. However, if an employee is motivated by receiving a reward then they are more extrinsically motivated, and respond better to recognition through external agents (Beck, 1978). Though they are two separate concepts, it is deemed important that an organisations finds a way to group both rewards and recognition together within the performance appraisal as failure to do so may result in an appraisal being developed which not only demotivates the employee, but negatively effects their overall performance (Hansen et al, 2012). Di Primio (1988) suggested that the best way to prevent this is to allow employees more of a voice within the organisation by holding meetings and adopting an open door policy where employees feel free to have an input. He also highlights the importance of managers providing their employees with the appropriate feedback and training to improve performance, while adopting a reward system which praises self-development and team effort. Though this literature is dated, it was expected to still be relevant with the themes found within the results of this project.

As previously identified, there is a depth of literature which discusses the effectiveness of performance appraisals, both to the managers and the employees. The majority of the data was collected through a multi-analysis of managers across multiple organisations

(Kuvaas, 2006; Farndale and Kelliher, 2013; Ng'ang'a et al, 2013). This ensured that the sample of their results was representative and could therefore be generalised to most organisations. Having reviewed the literature, it is clear that the research has focused on determining the effectiveness of performance appraisals by assessing whether there has been a perceived influence on the firms performance since their introduction (Ng'ang'a et al, 2013). However, the research carried out centres largely around managers and their own perception of the system. A manager's perception of performance differs depending on their managing style as well as the team they work alongside (Barrett et al, 2009). Therefore, though the research may suggest that performance appraisals are beneficial and motivating for the employee, this may be because the data was collected only from managers, who may have a degree of bias towards the approach. The results from this research, therefore, should be generalised with caution. It is important to bear in mind that, just because an employee's manager deems the system to be effective, the employee themselves may find the appraisal an inconvenient part of their job. In fact, research has been conducted which found that performance appraisals can have a negative effect on the individual, causing unnecessary stress and anguish (Nickols, 2007).

Due to this fact, this project focused upon research which was conducted where the employee is that main focus of the research. This was to gain an employee perspective into the effect performance appraisals has on their own motivation levels. It is acknowledged that there is a sparse amount of research carried out which has analysed the employees perspective, therefore it is important that more research is conducted and analysed to not only strengthen the results of the existing literature, but also to gain more of an insight into the topic. Because conflicts were discovered with not only the results of the research, but of the participants involved, an overall analysis of the literature concerning the effect performance appraisals have on the motivation levels of employees was conducted. By identifying key themes which run throughout the literature, the objectives of this study was to gain a current understanding into the employee's perception and experience of the appraisal, how a business can use this understanding within their own organisation to ensure employees remain engaged and motivated, and then lastly, how the results found can provide as a basis for further research to be conducted. Based on the literature, it was predicted that the study should find a degree of common ground

surrounding the importance of the perception of fairness during the appraisal process as well as discover ways in which to motivate employees through the approach.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

Methodology

Secondary Data

This study involved the analyses of secondary data. This consisted reviewing and reanalysing existing research which has already been carried out and published by another source. As opposed to primary data, the researcher was not required to have an involvement in conducting the study themselves (Sekaran, 2000). Instead, a secondary data analysis required the researcher to provide an overview of the methods used in the different studies and the data found as a result. Extensively analysing data can result in a number of possibilities being made feasible as a result. One of which is that it allows the researcher to analyse other, previously unexplored themes in the research to possibly develop a different perspective of the findings (Bryman, 2012). From this it is clear that analysing secondary data for research purposes provides the opportunity for the development of new themes and questions to arise (Corti and Thompson, 2004) which in turn ensures that there is an opening for continual research in the field.

In addition to this, there are also a number of reasons as to why using secondary data was not only appropriate for this study, but also a beneficial method to use. Sourcing others data saves time for the researcher, as it means they themselves are not having to conduct and pilot a study. As well as this, actually carrying out the data collection itself (especially that on a wide scale) can prove to be a great cost on the researcher through both time put in and resources needed. Therefore, by using secondary data, it not only saved the researcher money, but time as well, allowing for more focus to be applied to data analysis (Bryman, 2012). Collecting secondary data also ensured that the research was being carried out on a collection of high quality data. The data published is likely to have been produced by a series of expert researchers, all of whom have access to not only more resources and money, but more time as well, compared to a student conducting their own study (Walliman, 2011). They would have also ensured that their sampling process was thorough, thus producing a more representative study.

When it comes to sourcing secondary data, in some areas this was hard to come by either due to confidentiality or a lack of research. However, due to the competitive nature of the business environment, most organisations will have carried out and collected data within their own departments and staff, in order to gain an insight into their current performance. This in turn provides an indication as to what potential changes could be made in order to improve performance in the future (Betz, 2002). This type of data, which comes from within

the organisation, is known as internal secondary data. However, the results of such data is usually hard to obtain as the organisations themselves are unlikely to disclose it for public viewing, therefore permission is usually needed. Because of this, the majority of the data used in this research was external secondary data instead. Like before, this type of data already exists, however it differs in that it has been conducted outside of the organisation by another party (Crowther and Lancaster, 2009). Both these types of data are used heavily within the business world by organisations to not only gain an insight into their own business, but their competitors as well. This is one of the reasons why there is a wealth of research concerning how businesses operate from day to day and why using this type of data is appropriate for the study.

Meta-analysis

Once it was determine what type of data was most suitable, the analyses of this data took place. This study involved the reviewing and reanalysing of a wide range of studies. Therefore it was decided that a meta-analysis approach would not only be the most appropriate method, but also the most effective. Though there is not a single, clear definition of what constitutes a meta-analysis, there seems to be a general consensus amongst researchers as to what it involves. A broad definition describes a meta-analysis as the process of analysing data from a large set results, with the purpose of integrating the findings (Glass, 1976) in order to determine the degree of correlation.

The process of conducting one is explained concisely by Walliman (2011) who states that the first (and what could be argued as the most important) stage will be to define the issue which is to be investigated. Without a clear, concise idea as to the direction of this research project, the process of collecting and analysing the data available would be made significantly more difficult (Dawson, 2009). Once this was determined, studies concerning the research question was collected and any common methods of measurement used within the studies were highlighted. The purpose of focusing upon how the variables were measured was to detect any relationships between the studies. The intention of analysing the chosen studies in this way was to track any common variables which may occur. This then allowed an analyses of the effect these variables have had on each study, and what the outcome is as a result. In the case of this research, the variable was the effect conducting a performance appraisal has on the motivation of the employee. Largely, the purpose of conducting a meta-analysis was to provide an overall summary of results (in this case, concerning the effect of performance appraisals) where there is a range of studies available on the topic (Browne and Rasbash, 2004).

This method of research was appropriate not only because of the degree of information available, but also because of the sensitivity of the topic. Originally, the study intended to collect primary data from a number of employees who work within a sporting organisation. The main focus would be upon the performance appraisal systems used within their company, and the perceived effect it had upon their motivational levels. However, it was difficult to gain access to an organisational setting because of the potentially sensitive nature of the study. This is due to the question itself being of a sensitive topic. Research becomes sensitive when there is the potential that the study and the results produced have an impact on those represented in the study (Lee, 1993). In the case of this research, the organisations may have refused permission due to the implications the results could have on them as a business. Therefore, secondary data was deemed more appropriate.

Thematic analysis

The purpose of conducting a meta-analysis was to provide a depth of literature. This then allowed for a thematic analysis to take place, which was the main data analysis method used within the project. It allowed for the identification, analyses and reporting of any themes found within the literature (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It did so by analysing material in a way which breaks the text down into smaller units of content which are then subject to further analysis to identify frequently found data (Sparker, 2005). This project therefore consisted heavily of comparisons within the literature in order to gain an insight into what the research agrees (and disagrees) on when it comes to the effect of performance appraisals. The first stage of a thematic analysis was to gather all relevant data collected in the meta-analysis, with any irrelevant data being immediately dismissed. This stage is important as being immersed within the data makes it easier for the researcher to identify any relevant and reoccurring themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This was vital to be able to conduct the next step of the analysis: the thematic overview. This occurred after all the text had been compiled, and common themes were then highlighted and extracted from the data. Once this had been done, the data previously extracted was titled and then analysed as separate themes (Gavin, 2008). It is important that these themes were justified and relevant, which means they must refer back to the literature. This allowed inferences to be made, which in turn permits for conclusions to be drawn from the analysis (Aronson, 1994). Overall, it was important to identify anything which could potentially link the sub categories together, as this in turn helped determine either a negative or positive response to the effect of performance appraisals (Gavin, 2008).

One of the main reasons as to why a thematic analysis was used in this project is because of the amount of literature there is concerning this topic. A thematic analysis allows for

literature in a topic to be rigorously analysed, resulting in the possibility of new variations and themes of the data to occur (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013). Therefore, because there is a depth of research concerning the effect of performance appraisals, this method was used to its full affect, while providing a potentially new insight into a well-known topic. Furthermore, because the process involved the data which was found to be split into sub themes and then further into sub categories, the reader was able to follow the process which the researcher took in order to gain the results they did. It also allows for readers to replicate the design if they wish to do any part differently, allowing for further research in the field to be conducted (Gavin, 2008). It is important that evaluations of previous research continue as it allows for not only new knowledge to be discovered but it also increases the chances of ones actions meeting their desired outcomes (Garvey, 2006). In this incident, the research would allow managers to gain an insight into the effectiveness their performance appraisals have on their employees and then implement changes according to the analysis, which would ensure future successes. Once this study analysed and reviewed the results, a conclusion was made as to the overall effectiveness of the appraisal process, and how managers can modify them to ensure they are successful within their organisations.

CHAPTER 3
Critical Review

Critical Review

Having conducted a thematic analysis on the literature, 62 pieces of information were identified. All 62 pieces of information were deemed to be important to answering the question concerning performance appraisals, and the effect they have on employee motivation. Each individual piece of information was collected together and categorised into 3 different themes, which can be shown in Figure. 2. These themes are all key when it comes to the research question, allowing for a more thorough analyses of the topic, and were discussed thoroughly.

The Thematic Overview

Annually Recency error Job-related expectations Perception Guidelines Commitment Skills and Knowledge Reward system Negative judgements Annually Behaviour evaluation Criteria Recency error Company specific Motivates Personal performance Feedback PA Experience PA Quality HR Outcomes Negative assessment Negative experience Extrinsic rewards Trusted Rewards Fairly PA Process Autonomy Faith Commitment PA Quality Rewards and Recognition Performance Rewards and Recognition Clarity Autonomy Recognition Fairness Emotional toll Individual and Environment Fairness Extrinsic rewards Fairness Fairness Perception Content and Process Knowledge and Skills PA Objectives Employee involvement Performance and Reward Feedback Rewards and Recognition Personal recognition Annual Recent performance Employee involvement Motivate PA Quality PA Quality Manager relationship Set goals Manager relationship

- 
- Themes:
1. **The Performance Appraisal Process**
 2. **The Employee Experience and Perception**
 3. **How Performance Appraisals can Motivate**

Figure. 2 Thematic Overview

The Performance Appraisal Process

The first theme identified from the analysis is the appraisal as a process, its content and processes, and how often it is conducted. Performance appraisals are used throughout different organisations, regardless of whether they are public sector, private sector, service industry or involve the selling of goods. Having said this, no two organisations will adopt the same process. Organisations create, review and change their appraisals depending on their perceived effectiveness (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). If they believe their appraisal to be ineffective, then some organisations may even abolish the process, deeming it a waste of time and resources. To prevent this from happening, Datner (2013) emphasises the importance of the appraisal focusing both upon the individual and the situation. By doing so, employees feel less pressured about their own performance as the appraisal ensures it takes into consideration their colleagues and the working environment. As well as this, Datner (2013) claims that a system focusing on both allows employees to evaluate and

learn from their performance. The ability to provide this kind of feedback has been shown to increase an individual's motivation (Prowse and Prowse, 2009).

It was also important to determine the purpose of an appraisal. The objectives of a performance appraisal have been identified by Mishra (2014) and concurs with the data analysed. It claims that the first aim is to allow the employer the opportunity to assess the individual's job competencies. By doing so, this creates an opening for employers to provide their employees with feedback against pre-determined goals set out prior to the appraisal. The feedback bestowed enables employees to develop their skills and knowledge, allowing them to progress within their job. In addition to this, Mishra (2014) found by assessing job competencies, an organisation is also able to identify any areas for training needed to help improve performance. This is important as it allows for organisations to grow and become more competitive within their markets.

Once the objectives of a performance appraisal have been identified, it was important to then determine what a performance appraisal consists of. There are 2 main features of a performance appraisal which are deemed important to its effectiveness: the content and the process (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). The content refers to the individual practices and policies of the appraisal. This involves the expectations of the employees both as individuals and as an organisation as a whole and are driven by the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). As well as focusing upon achieving the goals set, the content of the performance appraisal also aims to assess the competencies of the employees (Fletcher, 2001). This involves their performance on the job. The process of a performance appraisal refers to how the system is designed and implemented into the organisation (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). This is important, as failure to design an effective appraisal would mean a waste time for both the employee and the employer. Therefore, it is critical that employees ensure they get this stage right prior to the meeting, and suggestions about how they should go about doing so will be discussed further.

It became clear by looking at the results that the performance appraisal process itself needs to be understood and validated, before it is used by a business. It was described in the literature as a systematic evaluation (Prowse and Prowse, 2009) conducted on employees to assess their individual performance. This suggests that the process itself focuses solely upon the individual, as opposed to the team performance – which could potentially have an effect on the individual's perception of the appraisal. Employee perception has been identified as a huge influence when it comes to the effectiveness of

performance appraisals, and will be thoroughly discussed later. It was also found that the results of the appraisal was based upon on a criteria of expected behaviours (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). This was found to be an important part of creating the appraisal because, by ensuring that employees were aware of their expected job-related behaviours, the tendency for employer interpretation or bias would be reduced as a result (Boachie-Mensah and Seidu, 2012).

In order for employees to be able to understand the appraisal, it must ensure that it remains simple. It was suggested that the length of the appraisal as well as the ability to understand its purpose was deemed an important factor to consider when designing the process (Harri, 1994). A complex, long process where employees struggle to understand the concept has found to have a huge effect on employee motivation (Harri, 1994). The quality of the performance appraisal does vary from organisation to organisation. According to the results, it is established on a number of different aspects; for example the quality of feedback given, the perceived used of the appraisal or the process involved (Brown et al, 2010). Abdulkadir et al (2012) found that the higher the level of performance appraisal, the higher the employee's commitment is to the organisational. Commitment is a big part of employee motivation as both are believed to be correlated (as in the higher the commitment levels, the higher the motivation) and therefore managers should take into consideration the quality of the appraisal they have produced, before implementing it.

A way in which to increase the chances of the appraisal being understood is by developing a criteria. While it has been identified that a criteria is important for both employees and employers, the clarity of this criteria must also be considered (Ng'ang'a et al, 2013). It was found throughout the literature that employees must be able to understand exactly what they are being appraised against. A lack of communication in this sense could result in employees believing they are being appraised unfairly. This may lead to them having a negative appraisal experience. Therefore, to prevent miscommunication, it is suggested that a way in which employers can communicate their expected behaviours is through producing a set of guidelines. These provide the employees with a set of expectations which are not only consistent throughout the organisation, but also highlights opportunities for employees to enhance their own performance (Inyang and Akaegbu, 2014).

Another important factor which has appeared through the data analysis is the importance of autonomy within the job. It is important that employees are at least provided with the opportunity to suggest improvements, not only in their own performance, but also in the way things are run within the organisation (Abdulkadir et al, 2012). According to Mishra

(2014), embracing employee participation not only enhances clarity (which was identified as an important part to performance appraisals) but also increase motivation by acknowledging employee input. This allow employees to have a voice, which is critical to the success of a performance appraisal, justifying why they must ensure that employees are as participative as possible (Nelson, 2000). Therefore, employers must not only implement a degree of autonomy within their workforce, but also ensure that employees feel as if they have a degree of independence while working. They could do so but encouraging feedback, the importance of which was discussed further in the explicit summary.

As well as determining the process of the performance appraisal, the analysis also highlighted an issue with how often performance appraisals are conducted. It was found that managers usually meet with their employees only once a year (Nelson, 2000). This means that the appraisals requires a look back on the employees performance throughout the whole year, taking into account positives areas of performance and where there is room for improvement. However, because interviews are conducted annually, it was found that this may have an effect in the results of the appraisal. Only recent events were taken into consideration, therefore creating a 'recency' effect (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). The 'recency' effect can be described as the brain remembering only the most recent events, and forgetting any events which may have took place beforehand. In the case of performance appraisals, the appraisal itself usually focused upon the negative aspects of recent performance, as opposed to the performance as a whole over the last 12 months (Nelson, 2000). The employees themselves are also having to recall their own performance over the last year which again, according to the results, when doing so, will only cause them to recall recent events. Because of this, the possibility of them committing recency error on their reflections is greatly increased (Boachie-Mensah and Seidu, 2012). This, therefore, results in an inaccurate reflection of employee performance, which would have a negative effect on both the employee and the employer. The employee is likely to become dissatisfied with the system, resulting in a loss of motivation and job commitment and the employer would become dissatisfied with the perceived performance of their employees. This would in turn effect the organisation and the employer as they then run the risk of dealing with an unmotivated workforce. Therefore, it is important that employers reduce the risk of recency error occurring within their appraisals by conducting them more often than once a year. The way in which employees can do so, including the pros and cons of a more frequent appraisal was again discussed further in the explicit summary.

Employee experience and perception during the performance appraisal

The second theme identified is the employee experience during the process and how they perceived it was conducted. As well as determining how often the appraisal is conducted, the analysis also highlighted the importance of the employee experience. In fact, it was found that a negative performance appraisal assessment actually acts as a driver to employee behaviour and attitude (Brown et al, 2010). It is thought that the outcome of the assessment has a huge effect on the employee's future actions. However, Brown et al (2010) states that it will act as a negative drive instead of a positive one, as employees are likely to become unmotivated with their work. Furthermore, it was found that employees who have a low performance appraisal experience are also prone to be less satisfied with their job, resulting in a loss of commitment and even, in some cases, the contemplation of actually leaving altogether (Brown et al, 2010). This supports that it is likely to have a huge impact on their motivation levels, where a negative experience actually lowers employee motivation. Another factor which has found to have an impact on motivation is the nature of the judgements made during the appraisal. Performance appraisals are designed to provide feedback to employees to help improve their performance (Mishra, 2014). However, if this feedback is judged to be conducted in a negative manner, then this has been found to again demotivate employees (Prowse and Prowse, 2009) as opposed to providing them encouragement to improve their performance.

This is an interesting result and one of which employers should take head of. As identified in the results, encouragement is important for employees, and therefore managers need to consider how they can ensure their employee remain encouraged within their job. One way in which employers can do so within their organisation can be adapted from House (1971) path goal theory. This theory states that it is important for leaders to ensure they have created a structure (Path) for employees to follow in order to achieve their organisational objectives (goals). According to House (1971), it is important that leaders take into consideration the characteristics of their employees in order to determine their leadership style and then, subsequently, develop ways in which they can motivate their employees. If managers are able to develop this thinking into their appraisals, then, according to House (1971), they should find them to be a more encouraging and therefore motivating process as a result.

Not only does the employee need to ensure the appraisal process provides a clear pathway for employees, but they also need to ensure they themselves execute the appraisal effectively. A badly executed performance appraisal has found to make employees feel unimportant and unappreciated within the organisation (Nelson, 2000).

This could result in unnecessary tension between the employee and the manager conducting the appraisal, developing a loss of goodwill within the relationship. It is important to understand that the relationship with the manager conducting the appraisal is hugely important to the impact it has on the employee. If the employee has a good relationship with their manager then they are likely to leave the appraisal feeling motivated, as opposed to if they have a poor relationship, where the impact is likely to be negative, leaving the employee feeling demotivated by the experience (Fletcher, 2001).

It was further found that a badly conducted performance appraisal may also result in the employees feeling defensive and intimidated (Nelson, 2000), which has a significant effect on their motivational levels. Having said this, it appears that it is not only a negative assessment which could have a detrimental effect on employees. It was found that the whole performance appraisal experience has an emotional toll on some employees, causing unnecessary stress and anguish (Nickolos, 2007). This stress is found to be at all stages of the appraisal, leading up to it, during the appraisal itself, and even after depending on the results. Employers should take this into account, as this emphasises the importance of ensuring the appraisal process is effective before conducting it.

However, despite this being identified, Nelson (2000) found that a good performance appraisal actually does have a positive effect on both the employee and the organisation. He claims that a performance appraisal which is effective allows employees to put forward their best efforts when working towards achieving both strategic and personal goals. This is good for the organisation as it demonstrates a motivated workforce and means that more effort is put in as a collective towards the organisations aims. The results showed that, in order for the appraisal to be considered effective, recognition of performance is considered to be a huge factor (Ng'ang'a, 2013). Ensuring there is a consistent link between performance and recognition is hugely important to developing an employee's motivation. Though it's thought that monetary rewards are the best tool of motivation, Nelson (2000) found that personal recognition is actually a more effective way of motivating employees. He recommends that a simple congratulation from managers or even public recognition for performance is likely to boost the individual's motivation levels. Furthermore, even if employees were looking for more of a tangible reward, Nelson (2000) claims that using performance as a basis for promotion is still more effective than monetary rewards. Suggestions for how managers can incorporate recognition both into their appraisals and their organisation were made and explained in the explicit summary.

It was identified earlier the importance employee perception had on performance appraisals. How it is perceived by employees has been identified as a key factor to the effectiveness of the appraisal. It is a big determinant to how the employees react and are motivated by the process (Mani, 2009). If employees perceive the whole process negatively, then they are likely to be unmotivated by it (Boachie-Mensah and Seidu, 2012). Employees are likely to adopt this view due to the subjectivity of it. Despite it being identified that developing a criteria is an important part of the appraisal process (Prowse and Prowse, 2009), if this is not executed well then employees are still likely to deem the process open to subjectivity, which has found to affect their motivation levels. Again, these results highlight the importance a criteria has on producing an effective appraisal process.

The perception of fairness in particular has been identified as a key factor to employee motivation (Nickols, 2007). It was found that employees must perceive themselves to be being evaluated fairly by their employers. This means that each employee is on a level playing field in terms of the process, where they all have an equal opportunity to present themselves a best as possible. If employees deem themselves to be appraised unfairly, then their performance is likely to drop, along with their job satisfaction and commitment levels (Datner, 2013). They assess whether they have been appraised fairly by comparing themselves to their fellow colleagues (Mani, 2009). Employees would look for any differences between how they are treated during the process, and how others are treated, and if they do find any differences then their performance and motivation is likely to fall. This could potentially result in an unmotivated work force, where employees are unwilling to improve their performance after the appraisal process.

The process itself, however, is not the only part of the appraisal which has to ensure remains fair. The employers must ensure that the data they obtain during the process is used fairly and objectively (Harri, 1994). This refers to the way in which employers respond to the feedback given. Employees must feel as if they are all being given the same opportunities in terms of performance development. This includes the amount of training and support offered after the appraisal. If employees believe that some are receiving more attention than others, then this could have a huge effect on their motivation levels (Harri, 1994) resulting in a drop in performance as a result. Employers therefore should ensure that they remain unbiased throughout the process, while creating an appraisal which is as not open to interpretation as possible. Again, how managers can do so was discussed throughout the explicit summary.

How performance appraisals can motivate employees

The last theme to have come from the thematic analysis acts as a summary for all of the results produced: how performance appraisals can motivate employees. Having analysed the data, it is clear that the results point towards not whether performance appraisals are motivational, but how they can be used as a motivational tool for organisations. It was identified that performance appraisals should aim towards enhancing the skills and knowledge of employees (Inyang and Akaegbu, 2014) as doing so has been found to have a big impact on employee motivation (Bowen and Ostroff, 2014). It is therefore important for employers to focus upon developing a system which considers the importance of employee's abilities. The data suggests that the best way of doing so is to place an emphasis on encouraging performance development by developing an adequate rewards system. This creates a conducive working environment, where employees are encouraged and motivated to improve their own performance (Inyang and Akaegbu, 2014).

To develop an adequate reward system, managers could implement Herzberg (1959) motivational theory, where research led to two main factors being identified. The first was labelled 'Hygiene factors' and includes issues which employees may find dissatisfying and, therefore, demotivating within the work place environment (i.e. Company policies, salaries, working conditions etc...). The second was labelled 'Motivator factors', and these include concepts intended to motivate employees and increase job satisfaction. Overall, using this theory allows employers to determine what factors need to be avoided (Hygiene factors) and what should be focused upon in order to enhance individual growth (Motivator factors). This can be used to develop a systems which steers away from demotivating areas of the job and focus more upon motivator factors. For example, Mani (2009) found that a lack of monetary rewards could be detrimental to an organisation. Even those who are usually self-motivated may find themselves demotivated when organisations fail to extrinsically reward them. This is particularly important as performance appraisals which reflect a distinct and relative correlation between performance and reward is likely to increase commitment, and increase motivation as a result (Mishra, 2014).

Furthermore, it was found that organisations must identify the difference between rewards and recognition when conducting their appraisals (Hansen et al, 2002). Rewards tend to be more tangible, such as receiving a promotion or pay rise, whereas recognition tends to come from someone of a higher position. Failure to do so could result in a system which demotivates employees, and therefore effects performance as a result. However, it was suggested that if employers are able to combine and adapt rewards and recognition appropriately into their appraisal, then they should see an increase in motivation through

the work rate and performance (Hansen et al, 2002). It is important that this involves continuous feedback. By doing so, employers are more likely to recognise (and consequently reward) employees for their accomplishments, thus increasing motivation as a result (Nelson, 2000).

Another way which the performance appraisal can motivate employees is through the clarification of objectives (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). This not only allows employees to adapt their performance, but also allows organisations to establish the provisions and training needed to help organisations achieve their objectives as well as develop employees skills and knowledge, which was previously highlighted as being key to employee motivation.

An interesting point which became apparent having analysed the data is what performance appraisals actually motivate employees to do. A performance appraisal is a system which is intended to produce a range of positive human resource outcomes for the employees, their employers and the organisation as a whole (Brown et al, 2010). However, despite it being a clear objective of the appraisal, the employees may be motivated to focus upon less important parts of their performance. This relates to the key performance indicators which are concerned with the appraisal, as opposed to the objectives of the organisation (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). Though organisations may claim that their employees are being motivated by the appraisal, it seems as though this could be detrimental to the organisation as a whole, where the employee ends up focusing upon their own personal performance over the performance of the organisation (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). In reality, this implies a delicate balance across the performance appraisal process where job autonomy is encouraged, but also clear boundaries and expectations are also set to help guide employees.

Having said this, it also became apparent from analysing the data that failure to conduct a performance appraisal properly could actually be detrimental to an organisation. Motivational levels appeared to drop if an employee is being punished or rewarded for situations which are out of their control (Nickols, 2007). There are two issues with this result. The first is that this suggests a lack of autonomy within their job, which has previously been identified as an important aspect of the process (Abdulkadir et al, 2012). The second issue is that if employees are being punished/rewarded for performance which they played no part in, then they're less likely to put effort into improving their future performance, with the belief that it would not be recognised by their employers anyway (Nickols, 2007). As well as this, the data found that including rewards at all in an appraisal

could demoralise employees if they fail to receive one and are criticised instead (Harri, 1994). Furthermore, the use of rewards may even damage the relationship between the employee and their manager. This is due to the appraisal producing inaccurate ratings concerning the employee performance as well as proving a distraction, where employees' attentions is being diverted away from other, more important tasks (Harri, 1994). Both of these points will affect not only employee performance, but the performance of the organisation as a whole. Therefore, it is important that employees ensure they strike a balance between recognising and rewarding employees success. The importance of why and how they could do so was discussed thoroughly in the explicit summary.

CHAPTER 4
Explicit Summary

Explicit summary

Overall, conducting a thematic analysis on the existing literature has produced some interesting results on performance appraisals and the effect they have on employee motivation. From these results, a number of conclusions were drawn on the future of performance appraisals as well as what requires further research.

Performance Appraisal Process

It was found that the content of the appraisal is significantly important to the success of the process (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). This, therefore, means that organisations must focus upon the content of the appraisal process, before engaging in the process with their employees. The results highlight the importance of objectives. Employers must clearly highlight their job-related expectations, not only prior to the appraisal but throughout the employees time with the organisation (Boachie-Mensah and Seidu, 2012). These expectations must then be thoroughly explained to the employees to ensure their understanding. The way in which employees should do this is by first of all determining the organisations expectations prior to conducting the appraisal. Producing cohesion and unity between managers in terms of employee expectations will result in the organisation having a set dream or vision, therefore producing a more concise performance appraisal (Mullins, 2010). Once expectations have been settled, they must then be communicated throughout the organisation. To do so, employers should produce a path of communication ensure that all employees receive the same set of expectations. There are a number of ways in which employers can communicate within their organisation, but one simple way is to hold meetings with their employees to pass the information on face to face. Though different jobs will have different expectations, employers are still able to hold job specific meetings to state their expected behaviours. Doing so not only reduces the risk of miscommunication, but also ensures that employees have a better understanding as to what their employers are assessing during the appraisal. This increase in understanding is expected to increase job performance, which will in turn have a positive impact on employee motivation (Harri, 1994).

To ensure that understanding and communication remains high, it was found that feedback is an important factor. Constant feedback within an organisation allows employees and employers to continuously improve their own performance, which will have a positive impact on their motivation levels (Jain and Jain, 2014). Therefore, a good performance appraisal must ensure that it allows opportunity for both the employee and

employer to feedback their views on performance. The way in which organisations can encompass feedback within their appraisals, is by allowing the employees to have their say during the process. Known as upward feedback, employees are given the opportunity to feedback on their managers performance and this could take place during the appraisal itself or on a separate occasion (Mullins, 2010). In addition, if managers are able set aside time for employees to have a say not only on their own performance, but also on how the appraisal was conducted, then both themselves and their employees should see an increase in performance, cohesion and motivation as a result. The nature of the feedback must also be considered. It is important that the feedback given relates to both personal and organisational objectives, as well as is conducted in a critical, yet sensitive manner, to ensure that employees are not demotivated by it (Mullins, 2010). This includes involving positive feedback and highlighting successes in performance.

Including feedback within an appraisal and an organisation also increases the employees sense of autonomy within their job, which was identified as an important factor when it comes to increasing employee motivation. Employees must believe that they have a degree of autonomy within their job and therefore it is key that employees are included in decisions which affect not only themselves, but the organisation as a whole (Abdulkadir et al, 2012). Managers should therefore ensure that employees are present when decisions are being made. The way in which they should incorporate this into their business is by holding group meetings, where both employees and managers are present. It is important that managers lead these meetings in order to communicate any changes planned and also exchange feedback with their employees. However, it is just as important that employees are also present and given the opportunity to provide their own opinion on any changes planned (Kotter, 1996). This in turns provides an opening for employees to increase the autonomy within their job, which was found to important in terms of motivation and appraisal success. Further suggestions of improvement come from Fletcher (1986), who proposes that by allowing employees to self-appraise themselves, they will feel more involved within their role in the organisation. This in turn, according to Fletcher (1986), will have a positive impact on commitment levels and employee motivation.

As well as autonomy, the results clearly showed that a fault of the performance appraisal process is how often it is conducted. Typically, performance appraisals take place once a year, where managers and employees meet to discuss their performance (Nelson, 2000). It was found that this creates a recency effect, where both employees and employers recall only the most recent events which took place (Prowse and Prowse, 2009). This had an impact on motivation as employees believed it didn't reflect their overall performance

throughout the year. Therefore, a suggestion to organisations is to conduct their appraisals more than once a year (Boice and Kleiner, 1997). Though appraisals tend to cost an organisation both time and money, ensuring that it is conducted more often than once a year increases the possibility of the results being more representative of the employees' performance during that year. This is important to increasing the motivation of employees, therefore organisations should focus upon conducting quarterly or even monthly appraisals to ensure that lines of communication remain open between employees and managers (Fletcher, 1978).

Employee experience and perception

As shown in the results and the critical review, a positive performance appraisal experience is critical for employees to be motivated by the process. There are a number of ways which employers can ensure that employees are having a positive experience. The first, and most important, is offering the employees an opportunity to provide feedback (Eisele et al, 2013). The importance of feedback has been mentioned previously, however this relates more to the process itself as opposed to their performance. After the appraisal is conducted, employers should provide an opportunity for employees to feedback how they believe the appraisal went (Pavlou, 2010). They should be encouraged to suggest rooms for improvements for the next appraisal by stating which aspects they deemed motivational and aspects they perceived to be detrimental to their motivation. This provides the employee with more autonomy within their job, which has been previously identified as a huge motivation for them. However, it is important that managers incorporate the feedback in future appraisals (Daft, 2013) as, failure to do so, could result in the employees becoming even more demotivated as a result.

To have a positive experience, ensuring the employees were recognised for their work was identified as an important part of the appraisal process. If managers fail to acknowledge hard work and achievements while conducting the appraisal, then employees are likely to feel demotivated by the process (Mishra, 2014). Therefore, employees must ensure they incorporate some form of recognition system within their appraisal, to ensure that employees feel appreciated. However, this must correlate with performance. Employees must feel as if they are being recognised for their work rather than for just the sake of recognising them to increase motivation. It was, in fact, found that if recognition was not relevant to performance then employees were perturbed by the whole process, and found it demotivating despite receiving recognition (Valle and Davis, 1999). It was also suggested that employers recognise their employees work personally, as opposed to congratulating the team as a whole (Nelson, 2000). Employers should use

these results to their advantage to create an appraisal system which ensure that they are able to personally recognise their employees for their hard work and success. This could be anything from a personal congratulations from their managers one on one, or even a congratulations in front of their fellow colleagues. One way in which is deemed to be affective in ensuring that employees receive the recognition they deserve is by introducing titles which have a symbolic value, such as employee of the month, for those who are more intrinsically motivated (Hansen et al, 2002). By being acknowledge personally by their managers for their performance, and then subsequently rewarded for it, employees are likely to develop a bigger sense of belonging and achievement, which subsequently will increase their motivation levels as a result (Wilde, 1985). However, if managers are to incorporate this type of recognition into their appraisal, they must ensure that it not only correlates with performances but is also consistent, so that employees know what is expected and how they themselves can improve.

In order for recognition to be effective, it was found that employees must deem this to be distributed fairly. Employees who deem they are being unfairly treated in comparison to their fellow colleagues are likely to have a negative experience, resulting in them becoming demotivated, their commitment levels are likely to drop and it may result in them quitting their job altogether (Brown et al, 2010). Therefore, employers must ensure a number of things take place to prevent this from happening. The first is to ensure that recognition is consistent throughout the organisation (Cook and Crossman, 2004). As already suggested, setting a criteria from which the appraisal is being conducted against allows for employees to see exactly what is expected and therefore where they can gain praise and recognition from they're employees. Another factor which was also highlighted and can be applied in this situation, is the importance of feedback from the employee to their employers. From this, managers can determine how fairly the appraisal is being perceived by their employees through the use of questioning. Not only can they determine what areas to improve, but they can also then apply the feedback to future appraisals to ensure that, in the future, they remain a fair and unbiased process.

How performance appraisals can motivate

It was identified that there are two parts to an appraisal, the content and the process (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). The importance of ensuring the process is a fair, understandable process has already been discussed, but the results also highlighted how exactly the appraisal can motivate by focusing on the content. It was found that employers should focus time and money on developing an adequate and systematic process to rewarding employees, to use as a tool of motivation for those who are extrinsically

motivated (Hansen et al, 2002). However, similar to recognition, it is important that the distribution of rewards correlates with employee performance. This is important as if employees are rewarded for work they haven't done, or are not recognised for work they have achieved, then their motivation levels will drop as a result (Nickols, 2007). Employers should therefore ensure that the rewards system is classified, including what behaviours are expected and what constitutes as a high performance. As well as this, employers should state what rewards employees could receive as a result, for example a bonus, as this could act as a motivator.

Developing an appraisal which has clarified objectives has also been identified as important to ensuring the process remains motivational. These objectives should not only include expectations and long/short term goals, but also a time frame in which employers expect them to be met by (Daft, 2013). Employers should also ensure that both personal and organisational objectives are included, as this allows the employee to focus upon both their personal goals and the goals of the organisation (Boice and Kleiner, 1997). However, it is important to identify that there is a delicate balance between employees focusing upon their own objectives and that of the organisation. If employers fail to regulate this, then they could notice either a drop in organisational performance or a drop in employee performance. Regardless of which occurs, both would have a negative impact on employee motivation.

In order to prevent this, there are a number of changes which employers could make to the appraisal process. These recommended changes have been consistent throughout the whole critical review, and therefore summarise the implications of the results found.

The first is to conduct the appraisals more frequently in order to reduce recency error and to increase the feedback and communication between employers and their employees. The second, is that employers clarify their boundaries and job related expectations to ensure that employees are aware of what exactly is expected, and when the set objectives are expected to be completed by. Lastly, it has become apparent throughout the project that employees must be recognised and rewarded appropriately for both personal and organisational improvement. This can come in the form of personal recognition or some form of rewards, both have proven to be effective as long as it correlates with performance (Honore, 2009).

Conclusion

Overall, the thematic analysis provided some interesting points concerning performance appraisals, and the affect they have on employee motivation. It became clear, after analysing the results, that managers should strongly consider using the appraisal process within their business, as long as they do so effectively. According to the results, this would include ensuring that appraisals are conducted frequently, include a set of clear, understandable standards and have a fair, consistent system which both recognises and rewards employee behaviour. Doing so will have a huge effect on employee motivation as their commitment and skill levels is likely to increase as a result, which benefits not only the individual but the organisation as a whole.

Though this study was conducted using secondary data, it provides an opportunity for a degree of future research to be conducted into the performance appraisal process. By implementing the identified changes into an appraisal, researchers can conduct primary research into whether these do have an effect on an employee's motivation and, if so, what type of effect. Another limitation of this study is that the research is not specific to organisations, therefore includes different sizes and cultures within the analysis. This, however, also opens up an opportunity for researchers to use the results and make them company specific, either to smaller organisations or even to organisations in different cultures, to determine if this, too, has an impact.

Having said this, what this project has provided the reader with, is an insight into the complicated process which are performance appraisals. It has highlighted the key issues surrounding them, the important part they play in an organisation and then further suggested ways in which managers could improve them to help increase an employees motivation.

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