

EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract:

Performance appraisal systems are essential for managing employee performance, yet their success hinges on how employees perceive their fairness, relevance, and impact. Despite widespread implementation, a critical gap persists in understanding how such perceptions influence organizational outcomes like job satisfaction, engagement, and retention. The aim of this study is to systematically review empirical literature on employee perceptions of performance appraisal systems to identify key factors shaping these perceptions and their effects on organizational outcomes. Using the PRISMA framework, 415 articles were screened from Scopus and ProQuest databases, with 33 peer-reviewed studies (2014-2024) meeting the inclusion criteria. Through content and bibliometric analysis, the review identifies key perception-shaping factors: organizational culture, justice (distributive, procedural, interactional), appraisal accuracy, feedback quality, and transparency. Positive perceptions, particularly fairness and actionable feedback, correlate with improved motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Conversely, perceptions of bias or poor communication lead to disengagement and higher turnover intentions. The review also reveals sectoral and regional differences in how appraisals are perceived. Findings underscore the need for appraisal systems that align with employee expectations and organizational values. The study offers theoretical contributions to HR literature and practical guidance for policymakers and HR professionals. It recommends future research into AI-driven appraisal systems, employee co-design practices, and continuous feedback mechanisms to enhance fairness, transparency, and appraisal effectiveness.

Key words: performance appraisal systems, employee's perception, organizational performance, performance management, workforce motivation, review

INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive business landscape, organizations constantly seek ways to improve performance and gain a competitive edge. One crucial aspect of this endeavour is evaluating employee performance through performance appraisal systems. Performance appraisal assesses and evaluates an employee's performance against predetermined criteria and objectives [1]. However, it is not just the objective evaluation itself that matters; it is equally important to consider how employees perceive the performance appraisal process. Employee perception significantly shapes their attitudes, behaviours, and overall organizational satisfaction [2]. Therefore, understanding employee perception of performance appraisal is crucial to enhancing its effectiveness and achieving desired organizational outcomes [3].

Likewise, it has been found that employee perception of performance appraisal may directly or indirectly affect job performance, job satisfaction, and intention to stay with the organization [4, 5]. These three elements are crucial

to organizational success. Studies have been done to prove this relationship, and many have found that positive perception results in positive outcomes and vice versa [6]. Therefore, organizations must understand how their employees perceive performance appraisal. Many efforts have been made to improve the performance appraisal, but not understanding what employees want from the performance appraisal may only lead to wasted effort and cost [7]. This has led to customize performance appraisal to individual employees and direct employee participation in performance appraisal redevelopment. Moreover, according to [8], the satisfaction of the performance appraisal is significantly and positively correlated with organizational commitment, which highlights the importance of efforts to seek employee satisfaction from the performance appraisal.

Furthermore, performance appraisal has been defined in many different ways. A comprehensive definition would be an ongoing process to assess employee performance based on specific criteria/standards [9]. Performance

here, consisting of behaviours and results, is to be assessed to determine the extent to which the employee has met the criteria/standards set. On the other hand, [10] stresses that the assessment should be translated into feedback to the employee, which he can use to determine which area he needs to improve and identify his strengths. The information obtained from this appraisal can be used to make decisions regarding the employee such as his future in the organization, reward, and other administrative decisions [6]. The perception of performance appraisal reflects how employees view the evaluation process. Understanding and addressing employee perception is crucial for fostering a positive organizational culture and climate conducive to employee growth and success.

Moreover, employee perception impacts various aspects of organizational functioning, including employees' satisfaction, motivation, retention, and overall performance within the organization. [8] and [11] argue that employee satisfaction, driven by positive perceptions of performance appraisal, is essential for fostering a productive and engaged workforce. Furthermore, the alignment between employee expectations, feedback received, and recognition for achievements influences satisfaction levels and overall job fulfilment [12]. Additionally, motivation, which is a key driver of employee performance, is intricately linked to how employees perceive the appraisal process. A transparent and fair evaluation system that provides meaningful feedback and opportunities for growth can enhance motivation levels and drive performance improvement [6]. Considering retention, a critical concern for organizations, it becomes evident that how employees perceive the value of performance appraisal in their career development and growth significantly influences retention. According to [13] and [14], positive perceptions of appraisal processes can contribute to building employee loyalty, commitment, and long-term engagement. Lastly, the overall performance, which is the ultimate outcome of effective performance appraisal, is directly impacted by how employees perceive the evaluation criteria, feedback mechanisms, and recognition practices [15]. Positive perceptions can lead to enhanced performance outcomes, while negative perceptions may affect productivity and engagement. Besides, some studies find that organizational performance system structure affects the employee perception. Understanding how organizational performance system culture aligns with employee perceptions can enhance the effectiveness of performance appraisal processes and drive employee engagement and performance.

Organizational performance system culture plays a pivotal role in shaping employee perceptions of performance appraisal, influencing aspects such as commitment, justice, feedback mechanisms, productivity, and quality of work. Organizational commitment is a key component of culture, reflects employees' dedication and loyalty to the organization. A culture that fosters commitment can positively influence how employees perceive performance appraisal, leading to increased engagement, motivation, and

investment in the appraisal process [12]. Also, organizational justice is essential for ensuring fairness in performance appraisal. Employees' perceptions of justice in the appraisal process impact their trust in the system and their willingness to engage constructively with feedback and development opportunities [16]. Moreover, [16] further emphasize the feedback mechanisms within the organization play a crucial role in shaping employee perceptions of performance appraisal. A culture that values open communication, constructive feedback, and continuous improvement can enhance employees' receptiveness to appraisal feedback and drive performance enhancement [16]. Productivity and quality of work are directly influenced by the organizational culture. A culture that values productivity, quality, and excellence can motivate employees to strive for high performance in the appraisal process, leading to improved outcomes and organizational success. Furthermore, employee perception of performance appraisal is intricately linked to the organizational culture, reflecting the alignment of values, beliefs, and norms within the organization [17, 18]. Creating a culture of continuous improvement, transparency, and recognition can enhance employee perceptions of the performance appraisal process and drive engagement and commitment.

Despite the widespread implementation of performance appraisal systems in both public and private sectors, there is a persistent research gap in understanding how employees perceive these systems and how such perceptions influence critical organizational outcomes. While prior studies have predominantly focused on the technical, procedural, or managerial dimensions of performance evaluations, the employee-centric perspective, particularly regarding fairness, transparency, feedback mechanisms, and organizational culture, remains underexplored. This oversight is especially consequential, as misaligned perceptions can result in disengagement, reduced motivation, and high turnover, undermining the very objectives of performance management.

To address this gap, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the prevailing themes and factors shaping employee perceptions of performance appraisal systems?
2. How do these perceptions influence job satisfaction, motivation, organizational commitment, and retention?
3. What patterns and methodological trends characterize existing literature in this field?
4. What are the unresolved challenges and directions for future research and practical improvement?

The main objective of this systematic literature review is to synthesize and critically evaluate existing research on employee perceptions of organizational performance appraisal systems. Using the PRISMA framework and a combination of content and bibliometric analysis, the study identifies recurring themes, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches while pinpointing knowledge gaps and contextual nuances. The review draws on 33

peer-reviewed studies published between 2014 and 2024, offering a comprehensive assessment of this evolving field.

The theoretical implications of this study lie in its contribution to human resource and organizational behavior literature. By integrating insights from justice theory, motivation theory, and organizational culture models, the review deepens our understanding of how employee perceptions mediate the link between appraisal practices and work outcomes. It highlights the need to reconceptualize appraisal systems not merely as evaluative tools, but as relational mechanisms embedded in organizational culture and employee experience.

The practical implications are equally significant. The findings provide actionable guidance for HR professionals, line managers, and policymakers aiming to enhance the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems. Specifically, the review underscores the importance of aligning appraisal processes with employee expectations, ensuring fairness and accuracy, fostering open feedback mechanisms, and leveraging digital tools to improve transparency and reduce bias. Such improvements can lead to greater employee engagement, improved performance, and stronger organizational commitment.

This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 details the systematic methodology adopted for literature selection and analysis, following PRISMA guidelines. Section 3 presents the findings of the content analysis, identifying key themes related to both organizational and employee-level factors. Section 4 offers a bibliometric analysis of the reviewed literature, highlighting publication trends, authorship networks, and thematic clusters. Finally, Section 5 discusses the broader implications of the findings, addresses identified research gaps, and proposes future research directions to advance the development of more equitable, transparent, and perception-driven appraisal systems.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this research follows a systematic approach to gather and analyze literature concerning employee’s perception on the performance appraisal. It involves the following four key step:

a. Literature retrieval – This step involves selecting appropriate search terms and keywords to capture relevant publications related to the research topic. Researchers typically use online databases such as PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar to retrieve a wide range of scholarly articles, journals, and conference papers. In this study of employees’ perceptions on performance appraisal, we use keywords “Employee Perception” AND “Organizational Performance Management” OR “Workforce Performance” OR “Performance system” OR “Performance Appraisal” to conduct a targeted search. By searching across titles, abstracts, and keyword fields, we identify a comprehensive list of relevant publications with a total of 415 papers were retrieved from databases spanning the years 2014 to 2024.

b. Literature screening – During this step, researchers evaluate the relevance of each study based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Screening helps to eliminate irrelevant studies and focus on those that are most pertinent to the research question. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2014 and 2024; (2) studies written in English; (3) research focusing on employees’ perceptions of performance appraisal or performance management systems; and (4) studies involving empirical analysis or conceptual frameworks relevant to organizational or workforce performance. Exclusion criteria included (1) studies not focused on employee perceptions (e.g., managerial perspectives only); (2) articles not providing sufficient methodological detail; (3) non-English publications; and (4) editorials, opinion pieces, or non-peer-reviewed content. For quality assessment, studies were evaluated based on clarity of research objectives, appropriateness of methodology, transparency of data collection and analysis, and relevance of findings to the research scope. Each study was reviewed independently by two authors to ensure consistency, and disagreements were resolved through discussion. Managing duplicates and ensuring consistency in the screening process are essential to maintain the integrity of the review. In this step, the PRISMA statement was applied, which is widely recognized for conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

PRISMA provides a structured framework to ensure the systematic identification, selection, and evaluation of the relevant literature, promoting the reliability and reproducibility of the review process. Figure 1 illustrates the methodology employed in this study for literature screening, utilizing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework.

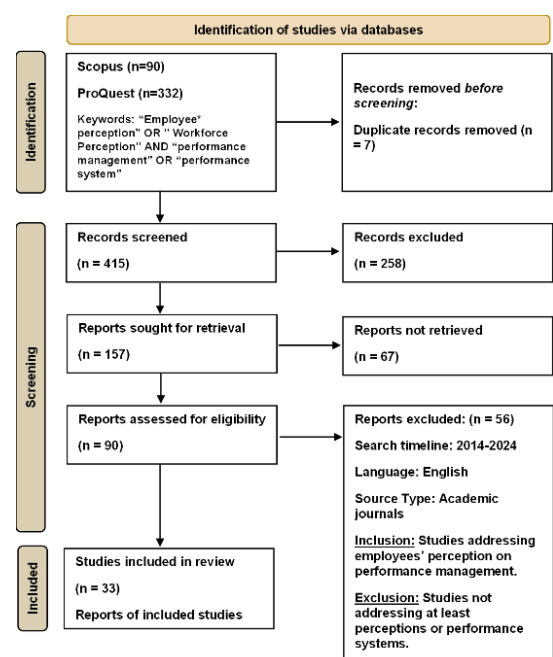


Fig. 1 Literature screening approach

The screening process consisted of three primary stages: identification, screening, and inclusion. During the identification phase, two databases, namely SCOPUS ($n = 90$) and ProQuest ($n = 332$), were queried using specific search terms such as "employee perception" OR "workforce perception" and "performance management" OR "performance system." Initial screening involved eliminating duplicate records ($n = 7$). Subsequently, out of 415 studies screened, 258 studies were excluded, and 157 studies were identified for retrieval, with 67 studies not being retrieved. In the final step, 90 studies were evaluated for eligibility, and 56 studies were excluded based on predetermined criteria. The search period ranged from 2014 to 2024, focusing on academic journal papers published in English. The inclusion criteria encompassed studies that addressed employees' perceptions of performance management.

Ultimately, a total of 33 studies were included in the review, offering a comprehensive overview of the current research landscape on this subject.

Figure 2 presents the trend in the number of publications and papers concerning the topic of employee perceptions towards performance management from 2014 to 2024.

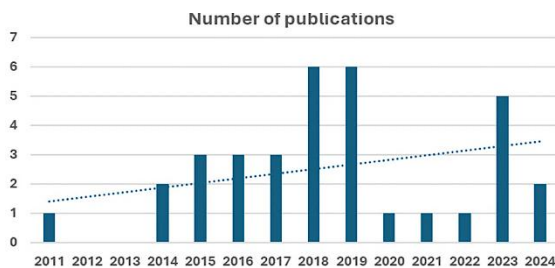


Fig. 2 The number of papers and publications in employee perception on performance appraisal (2014-2024)

The graph demonstrates an increasing trend in the number of papers published annually up to 2019, followed by a noticeable drop. This decline may be potentially attributed to various factors, such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted research activities and priorities across various fields. Additionally, other possible reasons for the drop in publications could include shifts in research focus, changes in funding availability, or fluctuations in academic interest in the topic. Despite the temporary decline in 2019, the overarching trajectory indicates a mounting curiosity and emphasis on comprehending employee viewpoints on performance management throughout the past decade, underscoring the importance of this research domain within organizational studies.

c. Content analysis – The current section involves systematically analysing and synthesizing data from selected studies to identify key themes, patterns, and findings. Researchers may use qualitative or quantitative methods to extract and interpret data, depending on the nature of the research question. In this study, the content analysis focuses on several themes covered in the literature mainly categorized into organizational culture based and employee based.

d. Bibliometric analysis – This step provides valuable insights into the scholarly impact, visibility, and trends related to the topic of employee perception on organizational performance appraisal. By quantitatively analyzing publication patterns, citation networks, and collaboration trends within the literature, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the research landscape and the influence of key studies in this field.

The remaining part of this paper present both content and bibliometric analysis while considering the methodological steps demonstrated in this section.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

The consideration of employee perception is fundamental when evaluating and improving existing or developing new performance appraisal systems. Employees' attitudes and perceptions towards several characteristics such as fairness, effectiveness, and purpose of the appraisal process has a directly influence on job satisfaction, motivation, and ultimately, on performance or work outcomes. Understanding employee perception supports organizational managers in designing and implementing effective appraisal systems which align with strategic organizational goals. This section provides a thorough content analysis of themes in the literature covering employee perception through several aspects and views.

Organizational level factors

Organizational Commitment

Organizational culture, specifically considering the organizational commitment theme influences employee perceptions and work outcomes. Employee perceptions of human resource management (HRM) practices play a significant role in shaping organizational culture and commitment levels. Shaoheng Li [19] illustrated how HRM practices act as a form of communication from the employer to the employee, thus impacting how employees perceive their roles within the organization. Frank L.K. Ohemeng et al. [6] found that Employee perception influence the successful implementation of performance management systems, highlighting the importance of understanding how employees interpret and react to organizational processes.

Productivity and Quality of work life

Studies have also indicated a positive relationship between HRM practices, employee satisfaction, and financial performance, emphasizing the interrelation of these factors in driving organizational success. Moreover, organizational culture plays a key role in shaping employee perceptions towards performance appraisal systems, particularly in relation to productivity, quality, and quality of work life. Lilian M. de Menezes [20] found that quality management practices, including performance management, have been associated with improvements in job satisfaction and quality of work life. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that the impact of performance management on workplace performance is likely to be mediated by employees' perceptions of work conditions [20].

In Table 1, two main organizational cultural themes are outlined after being derived from literature, namely, commitment and productivity/quality/quality of work life.

Table 1
Organizational cultural themes: commitment and productivity/quality

Themes	Authors	Focus
Organizational level Factors	Commitment	[6] Examines the effect of employees' perception on institutionalization and implementation of performance management systems (PMS) in Ghana's public service through highlighting the importance of ensuring commitment and ownership, sufficient resources and capacity, alignment and integration, and presence of trust and fairness.
		[12] Assesses the relationship between performance appraisal satisfaction and organizational commitment; findings revealed positive correlation between performance appraisal satisfaction and total commitment.
		[19] Examine the relationship between employees' perception of human resource management practices and two outcomes: employee commitment and turnover intention.
		[21] Explores the relationship between performance appraisal reactions and employees' affective organizational commitment and work performance in the banking sector.
Productivity/Quality/Quality of work life	[20] Highlights potential effects of elements in quality management and performance management on organizational performance; considering direct and indirect pathways from performance management to productivity and quality.	
	[22] Demonstrates employees' perception towards performance appraisal system where performance appraisal is found to increase quality and quality of work to employees.	

Commitment encompasses various aspects related to employees' dedication and loyalty to the organization. This includes employees' intention to remain with the organization in the long term. In line with several studies, [12] highlights that performance appraisal satisfaction and total commitment are positively correlated. Consistently, research studies assert that a positive employee perception towards performance appraisal processes correlates directly and positively towards employees' overall commitment to the organization, as it directly impacts their

trust in organizational processes and their willingness to contribute to organizational goals. Alternatively, the theme of productivity/quality/quality of work life focuses on factors influencing employees' ability to perform effectively and maintain a high quality of work life within the organization.

Organizational Justice and Transparency

Another considerable features as to organizational culture are justice and transparency of performance appraisal systems. In assessing justice within performance appraisal systems, we prioritize both the fairness and accuracy of the evaluation process. Employees' perceptions of accuracy and fairness are key for effective performance appraisal system. Accuracy in performance appraisal systems refers to the correct evaluation of employees' performance, while fairness relates to just treatment in the appraisal process. Employees' perceptions of justice in performance appraisals are multifaceted, encompassing distributive, procedural, and interactional justice components [23]. Distributive justice, which concerns the fairness of appraisal results, is crucial as it influences employees' perceptions of whether their evaluation outcomes align with their actual efforts compared to their peers [24]. Additionally, procedural justice, related to the fairness of the appraisal process, and interactional justice, involving the fairness of interpersonal interactions during the appraisal.

Research shows that the perceived fairness and accuracy of performance appraisals are vital for employee satisfaction and commitment [25]. When employees perceive accuracy in appraisal process, their satisfaction and intention to stay in the organization increase. Furthermore, the fairness of the appraisal, appraisal accuracy, and appraisal satisfaction positively impact employee performance [26]. Fairness in performance appraisals extends beyond work output accounting to include interpersonal treatment, reward allocation, and decision explanations. Employees evaluate their efforts based on the appraisal they receive, and the fairness and sincerity of the assessment determine distributive justice perceptions in performance appraisals [27]. The two main themes: justice and transparency derived from literature are presented in Table 2. Justice theme relates to an organizational culture and it encompasses various aspects related to fairness and equity in organizational performance appraisal systems. This includes procedural justice, distributive justice, and interactional justice. According to several studies [28, 29, 30, 31], the significance of fairness and accuracy in performance appraisal systems extends beyond maintaining employee trust, satisfaction, and commitment. Justice directly influences attitudes towards appraisal process, and overall organizational performance.

Table 2
Organizational cultural themes: justice and transparency

Themes	Authors	Focus
Organizational level Factors	Justice	[28] Investigates factors influencing employees' perceptions towards performance management and highlights the importance of effective and fair performance management by focusing on communication, talent management, retention, recruitment and selection, engagement, and motivation.
		[29] Explores employees' perception of performance management system effectiveness (PMSE) and considers a valid and reliable scale to measure accuracy and fairness of PMS.
		[30] Studies the nature of employee perception towards performance management and development systems (PMDS) specifically in the department of social development for people with disabilities; highlights the significant contribution employee perception has on managers' ability to develop employee performance.
		[31] Studies how goal properties in US federal agencies impact public employees' perceived fairness of performance appraisals, highlighting the significant positive influence of goal-related properties on appraisal fairness. Emphasizes the importance of appropriate goal setting strategies over tangible rewards in public organizations.
	Transparency	[9] Explores the relationship between performance appraisal systems' design and discrimination complaints where low clarity and consequences are linked to higher chance of experiencing high complaint rates.
		[16] Measures employees' perceived effectiveness of performance management system (PMS) by considering various contextual factors such as organizational culture, leadership, communication, feedback, and training.
		[10] Investigates employees' perception on the use of performance management systems in higher education institutions where effective communication on the purpose of the system is considered fundamental to avoid negative perceptions.
	Others	[32] Explores the positive influence of knowledge management on organizational performance and suggests that prioritizing knowledge management practices enables achieving corporate objectives and handling contemporary challenges.
		[33] Determines the sequential effects of employee perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), organizational identification (OI), higher-order quality-of-work-life (HQWL), and intention to stay (IS). Highlights the importance of CSR initiatives in enhancing employee commitment and well-being, ultimately leading to improved retention rates within organizations.
		[34] Investigates the impact of customer injustice on employee performance, specifically examining the mediating roles of emotional exhaustion, surface acting, and the fit between emotional demands and abilities.
		[35] Examines the significance of training effectiveness in relation to employee performance within an organization. The findings likely emphasize the crucial role of effective training programs in enhancing employee performance.

The characteristic of transparency in performance appraisal systems contributes to the effectiveness of performance management practices within the organization as well. Employee trust is fostered by focusing on a high measured degree of openness and clarity in communication. For instance, transparency between the organizational top management and employee in goal setting, feedback delivery, or decision-making processes related to performance appraisal.

The later section in Table 2 known as others, covers several studies that do not explicitly explore employee perceptions, yet they investigate significant concepts such as knowledge management, and corporate social responsibility and their influence on organizational performance management.

Employee level factors

This section explores employee-level features shaping perceptions of performance appraisal systems. The identified themes include employee satisfaction, motivation and engagement, retention, and performance outcomes.

Employee Satisfaction

In the context of employee-related features in performance appraisal systems, several key themes are derived from the literature. Satisfaction with the performance appraisal system is a crucial aspect that impacts employees'

overall job satisfaction. Several studies [36, 37, 38] emphasise that when employees perceive the performance appraisal process as fair and accurate, they are more likely to view the system positively and be satisfied with it. Additionally, the link between organizational justice and employee satisfaction in performance appraisal highlights the importance of fairness in the appraisal process.

Employee Motivation

Maintaining satisfaction drives the second theme involving motivation and engagement, which also significant factors influenced by performance appraisal systems. [39] argues that a well-structured performance appraisal system can enhance employees' commitment by providing a framework for recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance. Furthermore, employee motivation is closely tied to the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system, as it plays a critical role in boosting employee morale and driving performance.

Employee Retention

Retention is another essential aspect influenced by employees' perception of performance appraisal systems. Studies have shown that employees' satisfaction with the appraisal process can impact their intention to stay in the organization [40]. When employees perceive the appraisal system as fair and aligned with their expectations,

they are more likely to be satisfied and committed to the organization [41, 42]. As such, all factors consequently contribute to employees’ performance. Performance is a fundamental outcome associated with performance appraisal systems.

Performance Outcomes

While it is usually what employees are being evaluated based on, yet the organizational appraisal system structure and setting contributes to performance as well; it is

considered a two-way influence. [43] state that the relationship between employee satisfaction with performance appraisal and job performance highlights the importance of a positive perception of the appraisal process in driving employee performance. In Table 3, the employee level factors themes discussed in this section are outlined, derived from existing literature. These themes encompass satisfaction, motivation/engagement, retention, and performance.

Table 3
Employee-related themes

Themes	Authors	Focus
Employee level factors	Satisfaction	[44] Explores employees’ perception towards performance appraisal and the impact it has on organizational outcomes such as employee motivation, retention, productivity, and quality.
		[36] Describes and quantifies predictors of employees’ perception towards the suitability and effectiveness of performance appraisal system; employees’ positive perception and satisfaction is associated with fairness and assessment based on key performance indicators.
		[37] Captures employees’ perceptions towards criteria involved in performance measurement. Investigates the relationship between several variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to leave, and overall employee performance.
	Motivation/Engagement	[45] Illustrates the overall employees’ perception towards performance management system (PMS); PMS influences organizational success through enhancing employee motivation and satisfaction.
		[7] Studies employees’ perception on performance appraisal to evaluate existing performance appraisal systems; there is a positive significant relationship between performance appraisal with work performance, affective commitment and employee engagement.
		[46] Investigates the association between employee involvement, performance-oriented culture, management commitment and effective performance management system (PMS); the findings reveal the importance of having employees engaged and involved in the development of PMS.
		[47] Inspects how the perception of fit and workplace fun influence employee engagement by exploring the relationship between employees’ perceptions of fit within the organization and the presence of fun in the workplace with their level of engagement. Highlights the importance of such factors in enhancing employees’ commitment and involvement.
		[48] Explores factors that influence the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within a hybrid working model and the impact on the connection between employee engagement and performance.
		[49] Investigates employees’ motivation and engagement impact on job performance through the mediating factor of job satisfaction. The study aims to understand the interplay between employee motivation, engagement, job satisfaction, and job performance.
	Retention	[41] Investigates the relationship between employees’ performance appraisal satisfaction and self-reported work effort, affective organizational commitment and turnover intentions in higher education institutes where higher level of satisfaction regarding performance appraisal lower the intention to quit current organization.
		[42] Assesses employees’ perception of performance appraisal practices and its effect on employees’ work outcomes in terms of work performance, affective commitment and turn over intention.
		[50] Examines the impact of human resource management practices on various aspects (satisfaction, retention, recommendation, engagement) related to employee behavior and outcomes within the dairy farm industry. Highlight the importance of effective HRM practices in positively influencing workforce dynamics and organizational performance.
	Performance	[15] Investigates the perceived work stress of employees in the construction industry and how it correlates with employees’ performance through exploring interpersonal and organizational climate and employee performance.
		[51] Focuses on employees’ perception towards the relationship between human resource policies and organizational performance.
		[52] Demonstrates the effect of employee engagement towards competence on employee performance in public sector organization. Highlights the positive significant effect of employee engagement on employee performance.
		[53] Examine the perceptions of diversity management’s influence on employee performance in the UAE, finding significant differences between younger and older generations and UAE nationals and non-nationals. Suggests that implementing diversity management programs positively impacts employee performance.

The review paper provides a comprehensive overview of the literature on employees' perceptions of organizational performance management or appraisal systems. It highlights the diverse perspectives and focuses of the papers included in the review, offering valuable insights into the relationship between organizational practices, employee perceptions, and organizational outcomes. To sum-up the key findings in this section, Figure 3 provides a comprehensive visual categorization of the research themes influencing employees' perception towards organizational performance management.

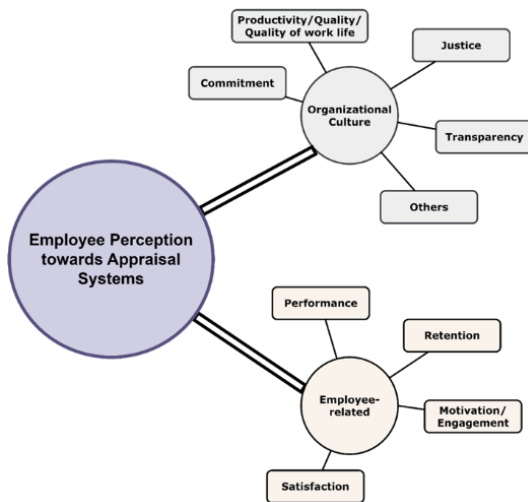


Fig. 3 Summary of employee perception towards performance appraisal systems research

In reflecting on the key findings, several key findings and gaps have been identified. Research indicates that employees' perception of justice, encompassing procedural, distributive, and interactional justice, significantly impacts their satisfaction with the performance appraisal process. Furthermore, the fairness of the appraisal system, as perceived by employees, is crucial for their job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. However, there is a lack of understanding regarding the specific organizational and psychological factors influencing employees' perception of performance appraisal fairness, particularly in public organizations. Additionally, it is emphasized in the literature that aligning performance appraisal systems with employees' perception of fairness is essential to enhance appraisal acceptance and effectiveness. Moreover, the influence of personal characteristics and employees' perception of the objectivity of performance appraisal on their attitudes towards the system is an area that necessitates further exploration. There was a prevalent focus on the impact of employee perception on various organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, motivation, retention, and overall performance. However, despite the wealth of studies examining employee perceptions of performance appraisal, notable gaps remain. Firstly, there appears to be limited research specifically addressing the intersection of organizational culture and employee perceptions of performance appraisal systems. Moreover, while numerous studies investigate the impact of appraisal processes on individual-

level outcomes, there is a scarcity of research examining the broader organizational implications of employee perceptions. Furthermore, the literature largely overlooks the influence of contextual factors, such as industry type, organizational size, and cultural differences, on employee perceptions of performance appraisal systems. Addressing these gaps in the literature would provide valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners seeking to enhance the effectiveness of performance appraisal practices in organizations.

BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

The bibliometric study on employee perception of organizational performance appraisal involved an in-depth analysis of key aspects related to the selected publications. The analysis provided valuable insights into the frequency of keywords, geographic distribution, authorship relations, article sources, document types, research methodologies, sector types, and industries studied. Here is a summary of the key findings from the data analysis.

Keyword Occurrence

The frequently occurring keywords were identified by analyzing the bibliographic data of the 38 papers reviewed in content analysis section. A total of 76 keywords were found, and a list of the ten most frequently used keywords and their occurrences can be found in Table 4.

Table 4 Top 10 Keywords on the selected publications

Ranking	Keyword	Occurrences
1	Performance Appraisal	8
2	Performance management	6
3	Accuracy	5
4	Employee perception	5
5	Fairness	5
6	Appraisal	4
7	Effectiveness	4
8	Performance Management System	2
9	Productivity	2
10	Quality	2

Table 4 analyzes the most frequently occurring keywords in employee perception of organizational performance management, offering valuable insights into the prominent themes and research areas. "Performance Appraisal" and "Performance management" were the highest keywords in the occurrences, reflecting the overarching role of the performance management system in organizations. "Accuracy" was in a high position, showing how perceived accuracy is essential in the performance appraisal and evaluation process. "Employee perception" illustrates that understanding and addressing employee perceptions are essential for fostering a positive organizational culture. "Fairness" reflects the criticality of maintaining employee trust and commitment by having fair

and unbiased evaluations. “Effectiveness” and “Productivity” signified the outcome as productivity is crucial to effective performance appraisal and management practices. Furthermore, Figure 4 supports the analysis by providing a visual representation of the keywords’ occurrences in the reviewed literature. The analysis shows a noticeable three cluster mainly concerning human resource management, performance appraisal, and performance management.



Fig. 4 Highest keywords occurrence using text mining software (WordStat)

The size of each keyword corresponds to its frequency and prominence in the analyzed texts. The most dominant keyword is “Performance”, reflecting the central focus of the studies on performance appraisal and management. Closely following are terms like “Employees”, “Appraisal”, and “Management”, indicating the thematic intersection of human resource practices, evaluation systems, and employee-centered outcomes. Other notable keywords such as “Research”, “Satisfaction”, “Feedback”, “Commitment”, and “Motivation” highlight the literature’s emphasis on the psychological and organizational impacts of appraisal systems. Sectoral references like “Public” and methodological indicators like “Study”, “PMS” (Performance Management System), and “HR Policies” further contextualize the scope and analytical approaches within this body of research. This visualization provides a high-level summary of key research areas and terminology, reinforcing the recurring themes explored in the systematic content analysis.

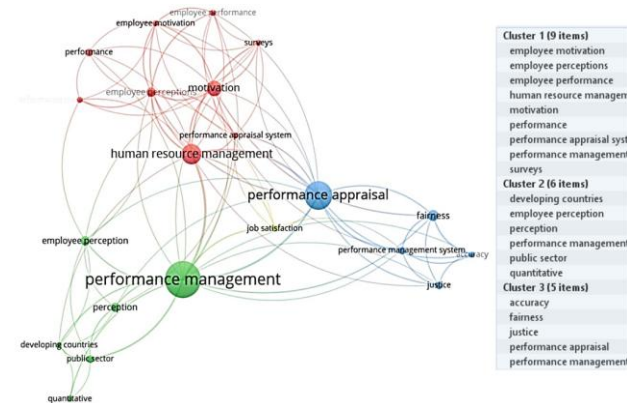


Fig. 2 Keywords occurrences using VOSviewer

Figure 5 presents a dendrogram generated using WordSat, a text mining analysis, illustrating the hierarchical clustering of key themes identified in the literature on employee perceptions of performance appraisal systems.

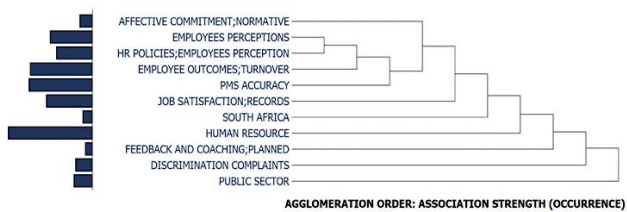


Fig. 3 Dendrogram of main themes captured in literature of employees’ perception towards performance appraisal systems

The themes are grouped based on their co-occurrence and association strength across the reviewed studies. Closer branches represent stronger associations between terms. For instance, the terms “Affective Commitment”, “Employees’ Perceptions”, and “HR Policies” appear closely linked, indicating their frequent co-occurrence and conceptual proximity in the literature. Similarly, “Feedback and Coaching” is closely tied with “Discrimination Complaints” and “Public Sector”, suggesting that concerns around feedback quality are often discussed alongside fairness and contextual application in government or institutional settings. This visual representation aids in understanding how themes such as commitment, perception, fairness, accuracy, and sector-specific factors cluster within the scholarly discourse, thereby guiding the thematic structuring of the content analysis. Additionally, Figure 6 presents the highest keyword occurrence generally in literature and not limited to the 33 reviewed papers.

Co-Occurrence Map Based on Country

Furthermore, the data analysis enabled us to examine the geographic distribution of these publications. The visualization map was generated for the countries of these publications as shown in Figure 7. The highest countries of the publication were in South Africa and India. All publication were on English language and most of them were come from South East of Asia. This geographical distribution of publications demonstrates the interest of understanding the employee perception on organizational performance management on East Asia. Collaboration and knowledge sharing across countries and regions can further propel advancements and foster cross-cultural perspectives in organizational performance management.

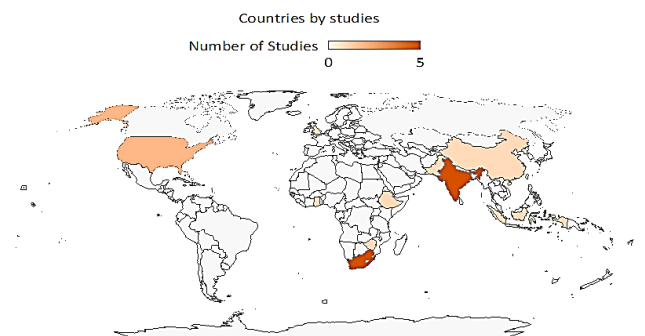


Fig. 5 Countries based on Studies

Co-Occurrence Map Based on Authorship

A further analysis looks at investigating the authorship relations across the multitude of authors of the

publications. By selecting authors with a minimum of 3 citations, the analysis aims to highlight those individuals whose work has garnered attention and acknowledgment, potentially indicating a higher level of contribution or significance in the research domain. Out of 62 authors, only 3 authors met the threshold. Figure 5 present the network visualization map between the authors.

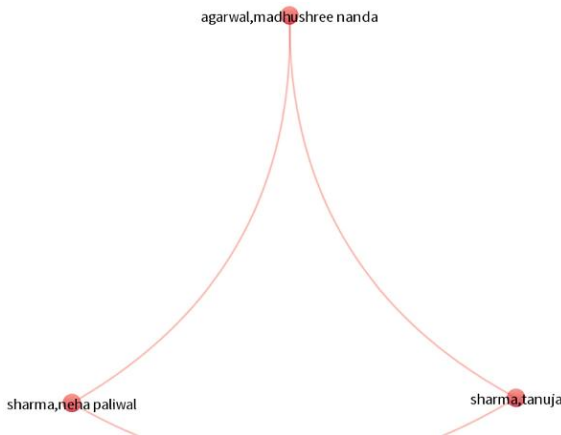


Fig. 6 Co-occurrence map of authors

Only these three authors are linked in the selected publications. All of them from the same country which is India and they are belonging to the Management Development Institute (MDI). Table 5 presents these authors, documents and total links.

Table 5 Authors co-occurrence names

Ranking	Author	Document	Total Link
1	Madhushree nanda agarwal	2	4
2	Neha Paliwal Sharma	2	4
3	Tanuja Sharma	2	4

Data Analysis on Article Sources

For the selected publication, only two journals have been repeated while other journals have only one publication related to the topic. Figure 9 showing the repeated journals with their occurrences.

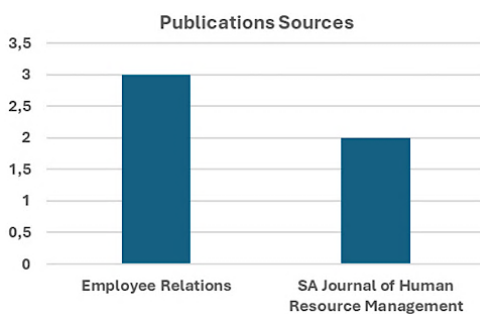


Fig. 7 Repeated sources for the selected publications

Hence, the two journals with the highest number of publications of the reviewed literature are Employee relations and SA Journal of Human Resource Management, highlighting their prominence in the reviewed literature. As such, there is a significant focus on human resource

management and employee-related topics. These journals serve as key resources for research in the field, particularly in areas like employee engagement, relations, and performance where their importance is evident in contributing to discussions on topics such as organizational commitment, transparency, and employee retention.

Data Analysis on Document Type and Research Methodology

In addition, the selected 33 publications were classified on their document type and the research methodology used in the research. Figure 10 shows the occurrence of document types. Most of the publications were journal papers with a total of 32 papers, one conference paper, and only one other type was found, which is a PhD dissertation.

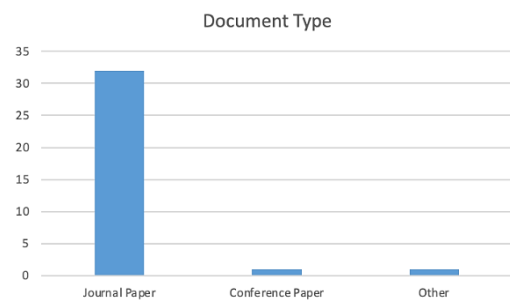


Fig. 8 Occurrences of document types

Moreover, the research methodology analysis has been conducted. Mathematical modeling was the highest among other methodologies with a total of 16 publications. Two publications have used case study methodologies, and one publication used empirical study. Also, only one publication was found using conceptual research and literature review methods respectively. Three publications were found using other methods. These methods are mixed research methods: Quantitative and Qualitative methods, and two publications used a convenience sampling method. Figure 11 shows the research methodology occurrences.

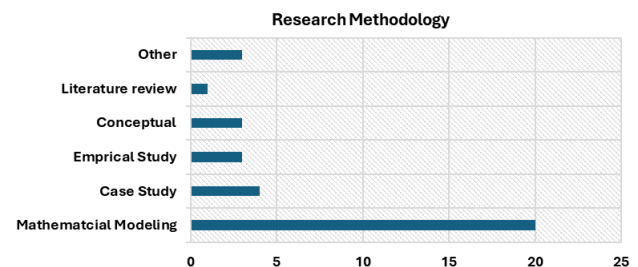


Fig. 9 Research methodology occurrences

Data analysis based on sector type and industry

In this section, we conduct data analysis based on the sector type and industry used in the 33 selected publications. Figure 12 presents the distributions of the type of sectors in the selected studies. 44% of the selected publications were studied in the public sector and 21% were studied in the private sector. Finally, 35% of the selected publications did not specify which sector they studied in.

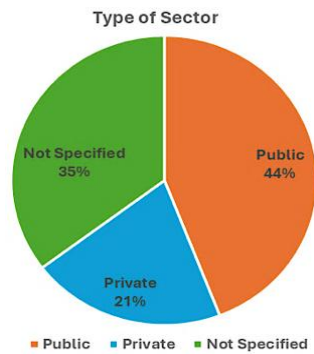


Fig. 10 Type of Sector used in the publications

In addition, Figure 13 shows the studied industries that been used in the publications. IT and manufacturing industries were the highest industries that have been studied. Then, Service industry was the second with 3 publications. Finally, the highest educational institutes, banking and construction industry had occurred in two publications.

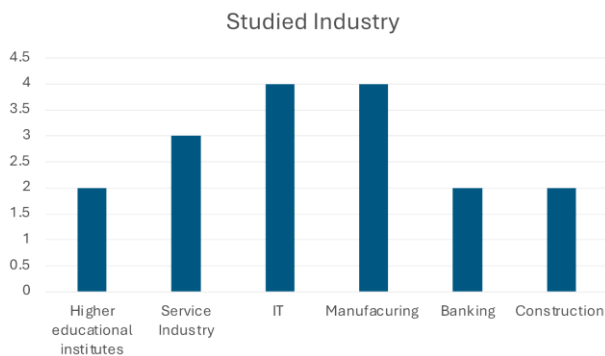


Fig. 11 Industry studied in the publications

Table 6
Bibliometric analysis key finding

Aspect	Key Findings
Keyword Occurrence	The most frequent keywords included "Performance Appraisal", "Performance Management", and "Accuracy", indicating focus areas in the literature.
Geographic Distribution	Publications mainly from South Africa and India, highlighting a regional focus on performance appraisal studies.
Authorship Relations	Three authors from Management Development Institute (MDI), India, are most cited, suggesting a concentration of work from this institution.
Article Sources	The most contributions were in journals like "Employee Relations" and "SA Journal of Human Resource Management".
Document Types	Predominantly journal papers (32 out of 33), with a few conference papers and a PhD dissertation.
Research Methodology	Mathematical modeling was the most used methodology, followed by case studies and empirical studies.
Sector Type and Industry	44% of studies were conducted in the public sector, showing significant interest in public sector appraisal systems.

As a summary, Table 6 represents the main themes and trends identified in the bibliometric analysis, giving an overview of the research landscape concerning employee perception of performance appraisal systems.

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This systematic literature review has comprehensively examined how employees perceive organizational performance appraisal systems and the extent to which those perceptions influence key organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, retention, and performance. Based on an analysis of 33 peer-reviewed studies published between 2014 and 2024, and guided by the PRISMA framework, this study applied both content and bibliometric analysis to uncover key themes, research patterns, and significant gaps in the current body of knowledge.

The findings clearly demonstrate that employee perceptions are not passive reactions but active determinants of how appraisal systems are received, interpreted, and acted upon. The review highlights that perceptions of fairness, transparency, accuracy, and feedback quality are consistently associated with more positive outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels. Employees who perceive appraisal systems as fair and aligned with their values are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to organizational goals. Conversely, when appraisals are perceived as biased, punitive, or lacking clarity, they undermine employee morale and performance.

One of the most critical insights emerging from this review is the central role of organizational culture in shaping these perceptions. Elements such as managerial communication, justice (distributive, procedural, interactional), and developmental feedback mechanisms are consistently shown to influence employee trust in appraisal systems. Furthermore, the effectiveness of performance appraisals varies by sector and region, revealing a lack of one-size-fits-all models and highlighting the importance of contextual and cultural sensitivity in system design.

The bibliometric analysis reinforced these themes by identifying a strong concentration of studies in South Africa and India, a predominant focus on public sector settings, and a methodological bias toward quantitative approaches, especially mathematical modeling. These findings suggest a need for greater diversity in geographic focus, organizational contexts, and methodological approaches, particularly those capturing the qualitative and experiential dimensions of employee perception.

This study makes several key contributions:

- Theoretically, it integrates employee perception into the discourse on performance appraisal by linking empirical findings with justice theory, expectancy theory, and organizational behavior frameworks. It conceptualizes appraisal systems not merely as tools for evaluation, but as dynamic, relational processes shaped by employee experience.
- Practically, the study provides evidence-based guidance for HR managers, policymakers, and

organizational leaders. Key recommendations include ensuring appraisal transparency, co-creating appraisal systems with employees, investing in appraiser training, and adopting real-time digital feedback tools. These practices are critical to building trust and maximizing the developmental impact of performance evaluations.

- Scholarly mapping, through bibliometric analysis, has also yielded a clearer understanding of the intellectual structure and publication trends in the field, helping to orient future researchers to promising directions and underexplored areas.

While this review offers a comprehensive synthesis, several limitations must be acknowledged. The selection of English-language, peer-reviewed articles may have excluded relevant grey literature or non-English studies. Additionally, the heterogeneity of study designs and outcomes posed challenges for direct comparison. Most reviewed studies focused on the public sector and originated from specific geographic regions, limiting the global generalizability of findings.

To address existing gaps and strengthen future inquiry in this field, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Conduct cross-cultural comparative studies to understand how cultural norms influence perceptions of fairness, feedback, and recognition in appraisal systems.
- Adopt mixed-method and longitudinal research designs to capture evolving perceptions and the long-term impact of performance appraisals on behavior and retention.
- Explore the role of emerging technologies, such as AI and automated appraisal platforms, and assess how these tools are perceived in terms of bias, transparency, and trust.
- Examine co-design models, where employees actively participate in shaping appraisal processes, to assess whether involvement increases system acceptance and perceived fairness.
- Assess real-time, continuous feedback systems versus traditional annual reviews, focusing on motivation, adaptability, and psychological impact.
- Investigate appraiser training programs, particularly those aimed at bias reduction, effective communication, and cultural competence.
- Study appraisal systems through the lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion, exploring how underrepresented groups experience evaluation processes and how systems can be made more inclusive and just.

In an era where organizational agility, inclusivity, and engagement are more critical than ever, this study repositions employee perception as a strategic lever in the design and implementation of effective performance appraisal systems. By shifting the focus from purely structural efficiency to the lived experiences and expectations of employees, this review lays the groundwork for building more transparent, equitable, and human-centered performance management practices. Organizations that embrace this shift will not only enhance individual

performance and satisfaction but also foster a more resilient and committed workforce where appraisal is seen not as a threat, but as a meaningful opportunity for growth.

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