

The Performance Appraisal and Psychological Contract - imperative for success

Juanita Illingworth^a and Jacqueline Hiddlestone-Mumford^b

^a Charles Darwin University, Australia

^b Ducere Global Business School, Australia

Abstract

This paper examines the employee perspective of the expectations, both positive and negative, of the Performance Appraisal in the context of Social Capital Theory that impacts on the Psychological Contract. In order to determine the underlying basis of why employees have a negative view of the performance appraisal process, a study was undertaken to examine the perspective of management promises, perceived or actual, and the impact this has on the employee Psychological Contract. A qualitative study of 162 participants across multiple countries within different sectors and age groups, identified findings of gender differences in relation to Social Capital Theory expectations, and that management are not being held accountable for promises, whether implied or actual, which directly impacts on employee engagement, productivity, and view of management integrity within the workplace.

Key words

Performance Appraisal, Employee Expectations, Employee Behaviour, Management Integrity, Psychological Contract, Management Promises.

1. Introduction

The dreaded Performance Appraisal (PA) remains an ongoing topic of research and strong reactions from employees. Management promises, both explicit and implied, made to employees create an expectation that, if breached for any reason, generates discontent from the employee. What appears in literature has a key focus on process and procedure. However, there is a distinct absence of the employee perspective in connection to understanding the contentious issues associated with the PA process, and management promises both explicit and implied. Consideration of whether the PA process itself creates discontent amongst employees, thereby adding to the struggle for managers in the handling of the review discussions, needs to be explored.

Current research examines the source of 'pre meeting tensions' and what is driving reactions, however, exposing the 'why' aspect of PA tensions is a topic that remains current within both management and communication journals (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2023; Shao *et al.*, 2022; Zacher & Rudolph, 2021; Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020; Islami *et al.*, 2018). Within literature to date, it has been established that there is both a psychological and emotional context to the PA (Tenakwah *et al.*, 2023; Hamilton *et al.*, 2018). The explanations and understanding of the defensiveness (Ohana *et al.*, 2024; Lawler *et al.*, 2012) can suggest that the process holds tension and negative interactions from both the manager and employee perspective. However, there is minimal research completed to explain this or identify the reasons that trigger the employee reactions.

Taking an employee perspective, this paper sets out to examine the role of metacommunication surrounding the PA process and the impact it has on determining

employee behaviour and expectations. Exploring a perspective to the role of Social Capital Theory (SCT) (Tsounis *et al.*, 2023; Metz *et al.*, 2022) in application to the existing Pinch Crunch Model (PCM) (Sherwood & Schere, 1976), the paper seeks to identify the role of employee talk in the effectiveness of the PA process and its impact on employee productivity within an organisation (Patro, 2019; Lawler *et al.*, 2012).

2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

The literature review considered key aspects of the PA process, including an understanding of the performance appraisal process, associated Psychological Contract (PC) that evolves, and the SCT as the context of the research. The literature further explores aspects of management integrity and breach of PCs that may evolve as part of the PA process, and the associated metacommunication process.

2.1 Performance Appraisal

Organisations have clear policy and procedure guidelines to enable a structured and consistent approach towards the performance appraisal (PA), however, the process holds tensions for those involved. Whilst the PA process itself is a top-down communication flow, the onus of responsibility is placed on managers to 'get it right' (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023; Murphy 2020; Kinley & Ben-Hur, 2017; Rothwell, 1993). The 'it' element within the PA remains unclear. There are indications that the 'it' could be either company objectives, increased performance outcomes, employee engagement, or that the process is a positive one.

A key element in determining the perception of fairness in relation to the PA is the influence of non-job-related elements such as liking the person, or not, and whether the person undertaking the rating understands the role requirements (Islami *et al.*, 2018; Selvarajan *et al.*, 2018; Dusterhoff *et al.*, 2014). Whether 100 years ago or today, it appears that the accuracy of the PA relies on recollections and general memory of events, which in turn relies on social networks as a communication tool to influence positively or negatively the evaluations 'in peoples' minds', where memory influences people's perceptions which, in turn, influences the ratings given (Murphy & Denisi 2023; Varma *et al.*, 2023; Tziner & Rabenu, 2018; DeNisi & Murphy 2017). When considering the relevance in current times of the error level of the person rating, it appears to be a current issue whether in industrial or commercial environments, despite over 100 years of the PA being implemented in many workplaces (Murphy & DeNisi 2023; Tenakwah *et al.*, 2023; Islami *et al.*, 2018). Despite looking to address the element of 'rater error' through training, it is found that perception, reasoning behind bias, politics and pre-conceived perceptions remains an issue that negatively influence the integrity of PA (Sánchez *et al.*, 2019; Tziner & Rabenu, 2018).

Although literature shows many employees do not like the PA, it is noted as an 'unavoidable event' (Adofo, 2011, p.21), suggesting a negativity surrounding the event as a whole (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). With the association of 'unavoidable' suggesting a defeatist or negative context, this may be considered a fair classification as there is no choice and little employee driven influence in the process, where research shows that the communication methods and rating bias (Ryan, 2018) support the PA as being process rather than relationship driven. Furthermore, DeNisi and Murphy (2017) discuss how perceptions of fairness and rating accuracy have an influence on an employee's reaction to the PA. There are three main factors in relation to an employee's perception of fairness with the PA process that can be considered, 'distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice' (Umair *et al.*, 2016, p.13) which supports the findings by Golin (2017) and further support the notion of a

direct link between perceived fairness of the PA and job satisfaction, as well as retention and organisational commitment (Kuvaas, 2006).

From a management perspective, aside from the meeting with the employee, Weinstein (2016, p.23) found that '95% of managers are dissatisfied with the way their companies conduct performance reviews, and nearly 90% of HR leaders say the process doesn't yield accurate information'. Which is reflected as an ongoing issue, as highlighted by Agovino (2023). In addition, managers tend to view the PA process as both time and energy consuming (Murphy, 2020; Ryan, 2018; Du Plessis & Van Niekerk 2017; Ellis, 2017). When looking at the meeting itself, between the employee and manager, Goretzki *et al.* (2018) found the facet of 'competing interests' within the PA, however there was no identification of what those competing interests are, other than they exist within the PA process (Ryan, 2016).

These clearly identify that the responsibility of 'getting it right' falls on the shoulder of the manager, yet the managers themselves find the process cumbersome and time consuming. Is it that HR push the responsibility to the manager without allowing enough resources for managers to offer the time and focus for a constructive PA meeting? This is an area for further research.

2.2 Metacommunication

Metacommunication or 'codification of communication' is the meaning or interpretation of the employee which they are sharing with another person (Ruesch *et al.*, 2017, p.17). The 'codification of communication' is referred to as 'signals' about one's own understanding of what was communicated, the meaning and expectations (Ruesch *et al.*, 2017, p.17), where codification is found to link the 'intangible' due to the nature of individual interpretation of what was being communicated and the meaning therein (Freeze & Kulkarni, 2007). Linking this to the PA, codification would be the employee's interpretation of what the manager has discussed, which can be interpreted as promises or set expectations by an employee (Karani *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, within this research, codification identifies the forms of metacommunication and codification of the SCT network sources.

2.3 Psychological Contract in relation to the Performance Appraisal review meeting

Studies on the Psychological Contract (PC) have found that employees have expectations and those expectations come from informal discussions with management, colleagues, and personal social networks (Kraak *et al.*, 2024; Tsounis *et al.*, 2023; Hamilton *et al.*, 2018; Kinley & Ben-Hur, 2017; Rousseau, 2011, 1995). These expectations are examined in this research to determine the impact and influence this has on the Performance Appraisal (PA) process being viewed positively or negatively by an employee.

The PC lends an additional complexity to communication in the business relationship due to its very nature of being an implicit agreement of what is expected to be given and received (Ohana *et al.*, 2024; Nelson & Quick, 2013; Rousseau, 1989). In the context of the PA, the giving and receiving can be identified as based on the template elements upon which the employee is measured, and the potential of promotions or pay increase is inferred. Linking the PA to the PC, DeNisi and Murphy (2017) found that the reaction to the appraisal was a cognitive process, with De Meuse (1987) detailing that the non-verbal cues have an impact on the appraisal process. The giving and receiving view can be directly applied to the PA, where bonus links to measured performance elements when considering it on an equity basis, along with a trust-based

relationship between the employee and manager (Newton *et al.*, 2017; Pichler, 2012). In examining this relational and psychological perspective, Kickul and Lester (2001) researched the PC, determining the role of equity on the relationship between PC breach and employee's attitudes and behaviours. Further to this, Ellershaw *et al.* (2014) examined how managing the PC is used to sustain staff commitment. Clearly the PC is an important business relationship which cannot be pre-determined nor taken for granted, considering that it involves 'expectations' on both sides of the relationship (Ohana *et al.*, 2024; Chaudhry & Teleab, 2013; Fletcher, 2010; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Patro (2019) draws attention to the risk that the PA can also have a destructive effect on the relationship between employees and employers.

It is found that perception, reasoning behind bias, politics and pre-conceived perceptions remain an issue that negatively influence the integrity of PA (Ohana *et al.*, 2024; Merkel *et al.*, 2021; Tziner & Rabenu 2018; Bayo-Moriones *et al.*, 2019, 2011). Applying the perspective of the PC and relationship to the PA based on the 'Assessment of Psychological Contract' by Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998), shown in Figure 1, highlights the separation between transactional, short-term and that of relational, loyalty orientated (O'Leary-Kelly *et al.*, 2014). By having relational on the opposite spectrum, 'relational' can be considered as 'long term' where transactional is short-term. Figure 1 also highlights that within the PC the perspective of negative reactions within the lower 'transitional' half of the chart where there is 'no trust, uncertainty and erosion' which can be linked to employee reactions.

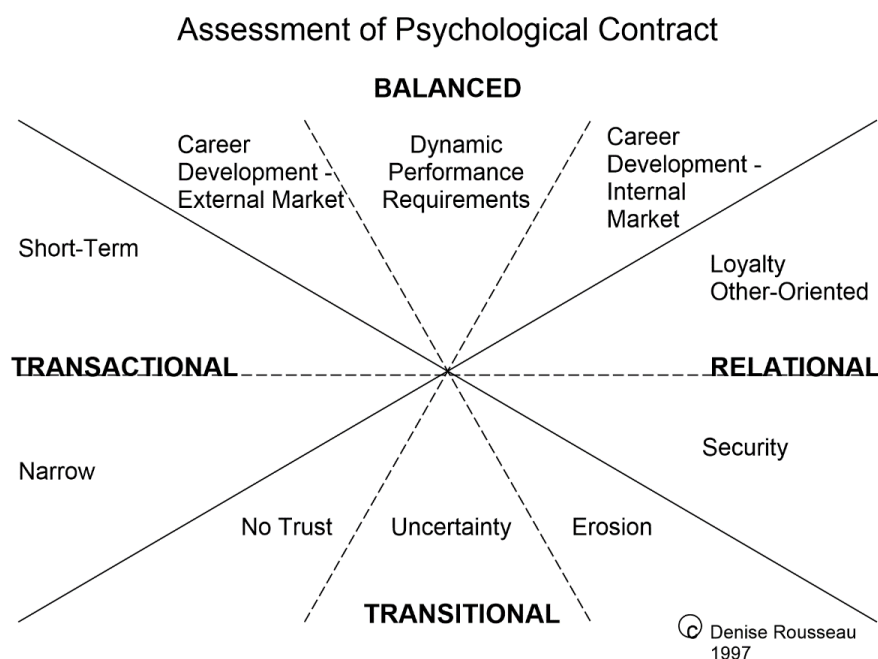


Figure 1. Assessment of Psychological Contract (source: Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998)

To determine what is influencing or impacting the PC, PC can be explained by applying the PCM, as shown in Figure 2 (Sherwood & Schere, 1976). The PCM (Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973) specifically mentions the role of 'talk' and 'relationship' as factors that can influence a reaction by the receiver.

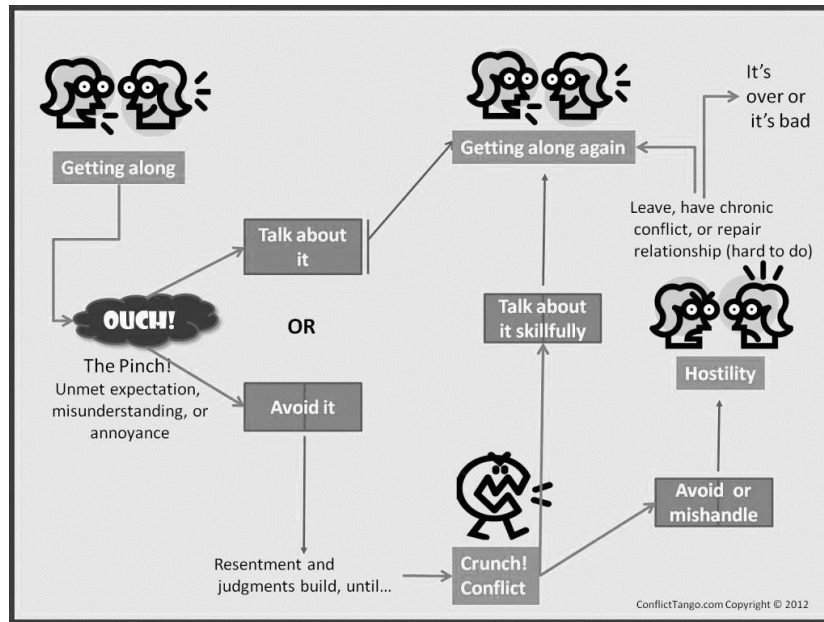


Figure 2. *The Pinch Crunch Model* (source: Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973)

The Pinch Model offers a framework for identifying forms of formal and informal communication within the element ‘talk’, which has been further endorsed by De Meyer (1991, p.49) who referred to talk as ‘a way to exchange information and ideas’.

Further to this, Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1998) identify that communication [talk] and trust are part of the PC, where ‘dysfunctional and low commitment’ are the results of a rupture in the relationship. This offers the potential to underpin the connection of metacommunication [talk] and the PC, which are supported by the Adobe study by Golin (2017). An adaption of the PCM in the context of PA is proposed in Figure 3.

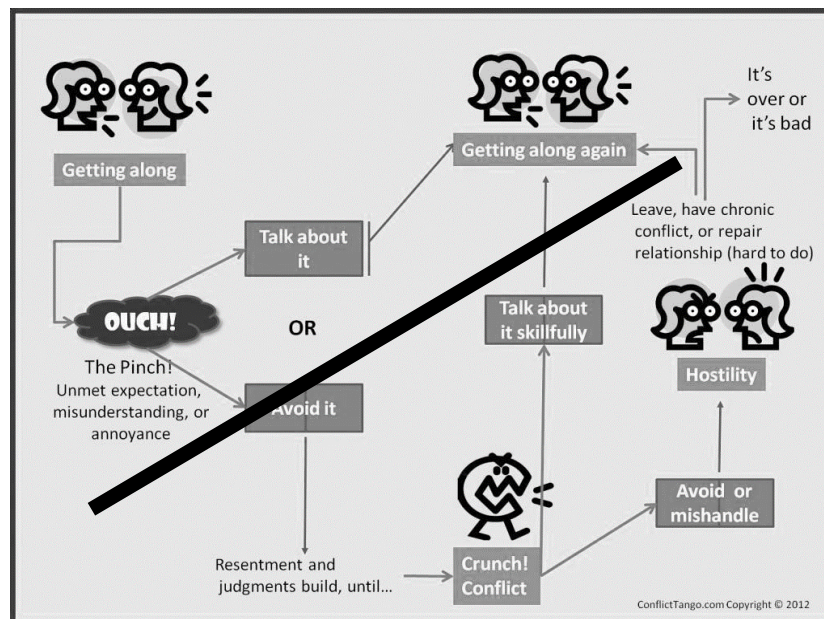


Figure 3. *Adaption of The Pinch Crunch Model* (Illingworth 2023 from Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973) in the context of Performance Appraisals as an employee perspective

2.4 Psychological Contract (in relation to PA review meeting)

When considering the adaptation of the PCM that Sherwood and Schere (1976) built on the Sherwood and Glidewell (1973) model by examining small group behaviour aligned to the PCM, this model can clarify the phases of an unhappy employee or workforce in determining that if discontent or negative reactions are happening and where these are not addressed, managed, and rebalanced, that the relationship, whether with the organisation or confidence and trust in a line manager, can be broken beyond repair.

Although the PCM (Sherwood & Schere, 1976) is not noted for being part of the PA, there is a clear potential due to the specific mention of the role 'talk' has in the relationship process (Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973). The 'talk' element falls in a position of either 'pinch or reconciliation' of a relationship as shown in Figure 3 above, where the model can be divided in two halves, separating the part which is the process of formal communication. The importance of the role of 'talk' and 'mishandling' clearly fits within the perspective of the role of metacommunication and that of the importance of the PA on the employer/employee relationship.

2.5 Social Capital Theory

Social capital (Filipovic & Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, 2023) refers to 'features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam, 2000, p.67). When considering the literature and key findings pertaining to Social Capital Theory (SCT), the perspective of *trust* within SCT can be linked to the PA (Tsounis *et al.* 2023; Metz *et al.*, 2022; Putman, 2000). Within the PA, the trust issues were identified as being either the process through the level of transparency or trust in the outcomes discussed with the manager. Within the SCT literature, the identification of the role of social capital, SCT and networks within the workplace have the function of offering morale support (Filipovic & Arslanagic-Kalajdzic 2023; Metz *et al.*, 2022; Munzel *et al.*, 2018; Treas, 2011; Widmer *et al.*, 2009; Milardo & Duck, 2000; Gilchrist, 1998). These have not been explored in the context of this research.

Munzel *et al.* (2018) proposed a conceptual framework based on SCT (Lin, 2017, 2001) on the two central social network characteristics of quality (i.e., intimacy with social network friends) and quantity (Munzel *et al.*, 2018). The main themes are that informal networks including those within formal structures such as the workplace offer support and guidance to those in the network. SCT is shown to add value to an organisation, however, it has not been linked to PA and the influence on perceptions of trust, fairness, and expectations of outcomes such as pay or promotion. The gap, however, is that SCT has not been examined in the employee perspective of the PA process. The theory and literature support the relevance of exploring the phenomena through the SCT lens. Linking this to the PC and expectations supports the need for future research of PA discontent linked to the PC, where metacommunication playing a role when aligned to the PCM (Haden, 2015; Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973, 1971). This all forms within SCT, as SCT can influence certain behaviours and actions (Tsounis *et al.*, 2023; Metz *et al.*, 2022; Coleman, 1988).

This research adds value by examining people's 'happiness' in relation to the PA, bringing new dimensions to existing models and new context to SCT literature. Therefore, SCT allows the incorporated perspectives of trust, morale, informal network support that take place in and out the workplace, with modern methods for evaluation.

2.6 Management Integrity and Breach of Psychological Contract

Ngobeni *et al.* (2022, p.2) state that 'The informal agreement, known as the psychological contract, is often overlooked, although it is pivotal in determining the engagement of employees in an organisation' which raises the question as to why can something be so important, so 'pivotal' and yet be overlooked and by whom is it being overlooked? When we consider the role of compassion in addressing workplace disharmony, is it that we have become so individualised and self-focussed that managers need to return to realising that the employee is important, and that the relationship is to be nurtured and developed by the manager (Simpson *et al.*, 2020; Muratbekova-Touron & Galindo, 2018)?

Aggarwal and Bhargava (2009) researched the link between Human Resource (HR) practices, of which the PA is within and the psychological impact on employee attitude, however, their research identified the provision of training and development as the key factor that could breach the PC. Whereas Karani *et al.* (2022) found that within the healthcare sector, the results did not support previous research that had identified managerial support as one significant major enabler in creating ambidextrous behaviour (Rosing *et al.*, 2011; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). Although it could be considered relevant, it would appear that literature has sought to identify tangibles as a means to explain employee behaviour linked to the PC. What we explore in this paper is that, indeed, it is managerial behaviour through the intangible promises as the key that makes or breaks the employee PC, which then goes on to impact on employee engagement and productivity. Something Leyshon (2021) considered from a psychological contract/management authenticity perspective in decision making bias during senior management approval and in manager/employee meetings. Wherein, every interaction is considered at risk of misunderstandings if communication is only guided visually by policy as the invisible barriers at every stage of this process can be missed, which is individual culture fuelling perception (Leyshon & Hiddlestone-Mumford, 2023; Leyshon, 2021).

2.7 Social Capital Theory and Network Theory

When looking at more recent reviews of the Network Theory (NT) connected to social capital within the work environment, it appears as still in development (Zhao *et al.*, 2023; Metz *et al.*, 2022; Lin, 2017). Supporting this, Burt and Soda (2021) and Borgatti (2011) found that despite considerable research on social networks, there is certain confusion about NT itself. NT is built upon Granovetter's (1973) and Burt's (1992) research, whilst Hooghe and Stolle (2003) examined the perspective of social capital in the context of the workplace, finding that indeed SCT is linked to and influenced by social interactions, a person's network. The network is also identified as a mechanism for social capital within organisational knowledge sharing perspective (Wulandhari *et al.*, 2022; Monaghan *et al.*, 2017; Chow & Chan, 2008).

When considering the literature and key findings pertaining to SCT, the perspective of *trust* within SCT can be linked to the PA. Within the PA, the trust issues were identified as being either the process through the level of transparency or trust in the outcomes discussed with the manager.

3. Methodology

When reviewing extant literature on the themes and methodological approaches that underpinned this research, it was apparent that there has not been one set approach used. The summary table below (Table 1) offers a holistic view of the main researchers

identified within the literature review, their research technique, and their chosen methodological approach.

Table 1. Summary of key authors, technique, and methodological approach

Topic	Author/s	Technique used	Quant	Qual
Psychological Contract				
	Kraak <i>et al.</i> , 2024	Round table discussion of leading psychological contract scholars		
	Sandhya & Sulphey, 2020	Survey google.doc cross-sectional, 392 responses.	✓	
	Muratbekova-Touron & Galindo, 2018	Interviews with employees and managers. <i>The working environment contributes to the development of trust and fairness, which forms part of the content of the balanced contract.</i>		✓
	O'Leary-Kelly <i>et al.</i> , 2014	Qualitative methodology to develop grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 2014) that would provide an understanding of the employment relationships and experiences. Semi- structured phone interviews. Sample size 54.		✓
	Gioia <i>et al.</i> , 2013	Qualitative for sensemaking of experiences.		✓
	Chao <i>et al.</i> , 2011	238 questionnaires distributed. 131 valid responses. Snowball sampling used.	✓	
	Rousseau, 2011	Online survey.		✓
Performance Appraisal				
Sector specific	Bayo-Moriones <i>et al.</i> , 2019	Mixed methods. Interviews with HR manager and survey when Manager not available with controlled sampling.	✓	✓
PA and Satisfaction	Islami <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Using primary and secondary data. Primary data - quantitative survey using a self-administered questionnaire.	✓	
Country comparison	Selvarajan <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Survey. Testing the hypothesis using the mediational analysis during the procedure.		✓
	Tenakwah <i>et al.</i> , 2023	Two wave survey 439 respondents	✓	✓
	Dusterhoff <i>et al.</i> , 2014	71 respondents. Internet survey. Likert-type Scale 1-5. 70% female.	✓	
	Bayo-Moriones <i>et al.</i> , 2011	Individual interviews with 50 managers, employees and representatives ... however... 'further knowledge of the issues included in the questionnaire ...resulting in more reliable data'.	✓	✓

Table 1 influenced the anticipated number of responses required as a minimum and whether the research would take a quantitative or qualitative approach.

3.1 Philosophical Stance

Having explored the various methodological approaches and supporting literature of these, the choice of structured questionnaire with an 'interpretative' philosophical stance, taking an 'abductive' approach to the research (Ong, 2023; Saunders *et al.*, 2011) was selected. The reason being that when reviewing the techniques for data collection from research within the fields of psychological contracts, PA, and metacommunication, there was no clear one approach applied.

The 'interpretivist' philosophical stance is focussed on interpretation of human interaction and interpretation of the significance of that interaction (Clark *et al.*, 2021; Frechette *et al.*, 2020; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Cresswell, 2003). Data collection from an interpretivist stance tends to use qualitative methods rather than quantitative methods (Grass 2024; Wahyuni, 2012; Schram, 2006; Mertens, 2005; Ponterotto, 2005). This is best explained as 'researchers who are using interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods often seek experiences, understandings and perceptions of individuals for their data to uncover reality rather than rely on numbers of statistics' (Thanh & Thanh, 2015, p.24) and reinforced by Tenakwah *et al.* (2023). Taking an interpretivist approach allows examination of experiences, perceptions and understanding to understand the 'meanings expressed through words' (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.482) from 'real world settings' (Golafshani, 2003, p.600).

A pre-study was undertaken to determine which research method to apply and the efficiency of it to obtain valid and reliable data, along with ensuring that the questions presented were clearly understood (Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Blessing & Chakrabarti, 2009). The initial study involved a sample size of ten face-to-face interviews using semi-structured questions. Question refinement was then applied to 30 masters students through a supervised online structured survey that reflected the questions used in the study, and evaluated as to the level of data presented, resulting in some refinements of the final question order and question phrasing, to avoid leading participants to taking a more negative stance in their replies (Ashforth *et al.*, 2007; Baker & Nelson, 2005; Corley & Gioia, 2004). The order of the questions was guided to ensure themes and questions flow to ensure the respondent offers their full recollection of events that took place and their reactions and checked for 'construct validity' (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The structure of the questions alternated with a positivist angle first then a negative angle, e.g., Have you ever had a positive PA discussion? Y/N. The balance was to ensure the respondent was not influenced to take a more negative reaction to the questions but to trigger a real recollection of their reaction to PA events.

3.2 Data Collection Method

The use of online software offers wider data interpretation, with ease of access to gather a larger response rate and facilitates time-efficient interpretation compared to manual interpretation of notes or recordings (Allsop *et al.*, 2022; Dalkin *et al.*, 2021; Roberts *et al.*, 2021). Using software for data analysis has been widely researched and although there exists a wide selection of tools, when compared they offer many similarities (Mazumdar *et al.*, 2023; Clark *et al.*, 2021; Cobanoglu *et al.*, 2021).

As a pre-study validity test, both NVivo and Qualtrics online options were compared to manually collected data. Further to the methodology pre-study, a pre-study was undertaken by 30 participants across a range of age-groups and industry sectors, using semi-structured interviews which followed an online survey using the same questions to determine whether the responses were: a) understandable, and delivered

b) consistency in results. This pre-study supported that the survey was understood and generated consistent results compared to the recordings of responses of the 30 individual interviews. The result of this second pre-study confirmed that nothing was 'lost' in the interpretation of the questions by using an online option for data collection compared to an interview and that it gave usable data interpretations.

Qualtrics was selected as the data collection medium for its contextuality, where data interpretation was able to be single question data or related question data e.g., gender and perceived promises during the PA meeting. Qualtrics offered ease of accessibility to the survey, descriptive and relational data whilst being user-friendly for participants (Roberts *et al.*, 2021) and has been used for both data collection and data analysis in this research. By using Qualtrics online survey, we sought a minimum of 100 valid responses from a cross-sectional and cross-age group cohort, with a focus on three countries (Australia, UK, and France). The countries chosen were based on their 'cultural differences' (Segundo, 2023; Hofstede, 2011) with the goal to examine if culture has an impact on the phenomenon being examined.

3.3 Research Design

When considering whether to take a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approach to this research, it was determined that a qualitative method would support recommendations from the data interpretation, whereas quantitative would evidence that a problem exists and provide statistics. The research examines the perspective of a perceived promise occurring endorsing this as qualitative research; whereas if examining whether the perspective was a formalised promise then the research would take a quantitative approach e.g., did the promised pay rise (for example) get actioned prior to the following PA review.

To facilitate this, each question had 'free text' if respondents wished to add further context or detail. Some measures were based on a Likert Scale to identify the level of impact rather than a 'yes no n/a' approach. The resulting data also offers secondary data for future development for either or both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Therefore, for this study, a qualitative approach was used in developing both open and closed questions and distributed using the Qualtrics survey tool. The survey used a design that was initially tested through a mix-method of doing in-person interviews to determine whether the questions delivered had clarity for both respondents and data generated. This was then applied to an online survey format using Qualtrics to a small group of 15 to test if the questions drew the same level of information from the respondents as it did in person and online in the second pre-study group. Some minor adaptations were applied following these, which resulted in a final format questionnaire that was distributed through various networks resulting in 162 responses, with the majority being from Australia, France, and the UK. The items in the questionnaire were self-developed following the interview approach format to validate rigour.

As a result, an online structured questionnaire was used to identify key themes and patterns, offering primary data that identified valuable insights to the phenomena being researched (Ohana *et al.*, 2024; Braun & Clarke, 2021, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Gioia *et al.*, 2013; Keyser, 2010). The questionnaire contained both positive and negative angles to ensure the respondents were not influenced to focus on negative experiences alone. The link to the survey was shared within a variety of social and professional networks primarily within Australia, UK, and France.

When looking at data interpretation, it was determined that qualitative data was able to offer a greater level of detail and interpretation using Qualtrics in comparison to NVivo.

Measures focussed on:

- Metacommunication: employee to colleagues pre- and post-PA.
- Metacommunication: employee to friends and family pre- and post-PA.
- Metacommunication: employee to Trade Union pre- and post-PA.
- Employee expectations: pre the PA process involving metacommunication with social network.
- Employee expectations: based on previous PA meetings.
- Promises: implied promises during the PA process.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

When looking at research methods, analysis of existing literature on the psychological contract and performance appraisals, data collection methods evidenced that there was no one consistent approach applied (Table 1). What is apparent is that rigour, reliability, and validity are extremely important, especially within qualitative research when being applied in research that examines reactions and interpretations (Harley & Cornelissen, 2022; Campbell *et al.*, 2020; Rahman, 2020).

The survey was distributed using an anonymous link, using the snowball effect, similar to that of Chao *et al.*'s (2011) research approach. In using the snowball effect, people shared the survey link to their networks across various industries. Onward unrestricted sharing with ethical considerations have been considered in collecting the data (Zapata-Barrero & Yalaz, 2020). The purpose of not restricting the survey audience was to evidence anonymity, where the focus is on the responses, not on identifying factors pertaining to a single organisation or group, creating cross-group and cross-industry representation. Additionally, the inability to submit more than one response by enabling the 'prevent multiple submissions' feature of Qualtrics, prevented participants taking the survey more than once, further supporting legitimacy in responses.

Data saturation is considered at the point where the responses become repetitive, 'data adequacy', from a data interpretation perspective (Aguboshim, 2021; Braun & Clarke, 2021). For the data to be 'usable', 'saturation' is anticipated to begin after 50 completed responses, based on the pre-study data which determined the goal of achieving over 100 responses to the survey. This approach is also endorsed in the existing literature response levels shown in Table 1.

This research considered the common method bias, due to being a structured questionnaire, could be a concern. To address this possible bias, when looking at research methods, what is clear is that rigour, reliability, and validity are extremely important, especially within qualitative research (Cypress, 2017; Noble & Smith, 2015). What this means is that the results need to be continually producing the same results and would do if the process was repeated at another time, with another set of respondents, which offer valid findings through their accuracy (Clark *et al.*, 2021; Noble & Smith, 2015; Zikmund *et al.*, 2012; Schram, 2006). It was anticipated that as the source of the respondents would be from a broad range of sectors, a pre-test was undertaken on a sample of 30 respondents, using semi-structured interviews, to determine whether the responses were consistent, and was tried with different age

groups. It was found that the testing of the proposed process and questions offered reliable data and that the online questionnaire was anticipated to offer a larger scale of responses offering data that will be valid and reliable in shaping theories pertaining to the phenomena. Both positive and negative reactions had open text space for respondents to elaborate if so desired.

3.5 Reliability Testing

To ensure reliability, comparative data was tested at 25, 50 and 75 responses for fit within the Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) context of ensuring consistency of interpretation by respondents and data that resulted from the same questions (Protogerou & Hagger, 2020). In addition, to further ensure reliability, the ‘test – retest’ was applied in the pre-studies (Matthews et al., 2022). The test - retest took place one month apart to ensure the reliability of two pre-study groups to ensure the questions were understood in the same context and interpretation, offering the same results. Thus, the survey was considered to offer reliable and valid data for use in this research as per Figure 4 provides a summary of the pre-study process, showing rigour, reliability and validity of the survey development and testing.

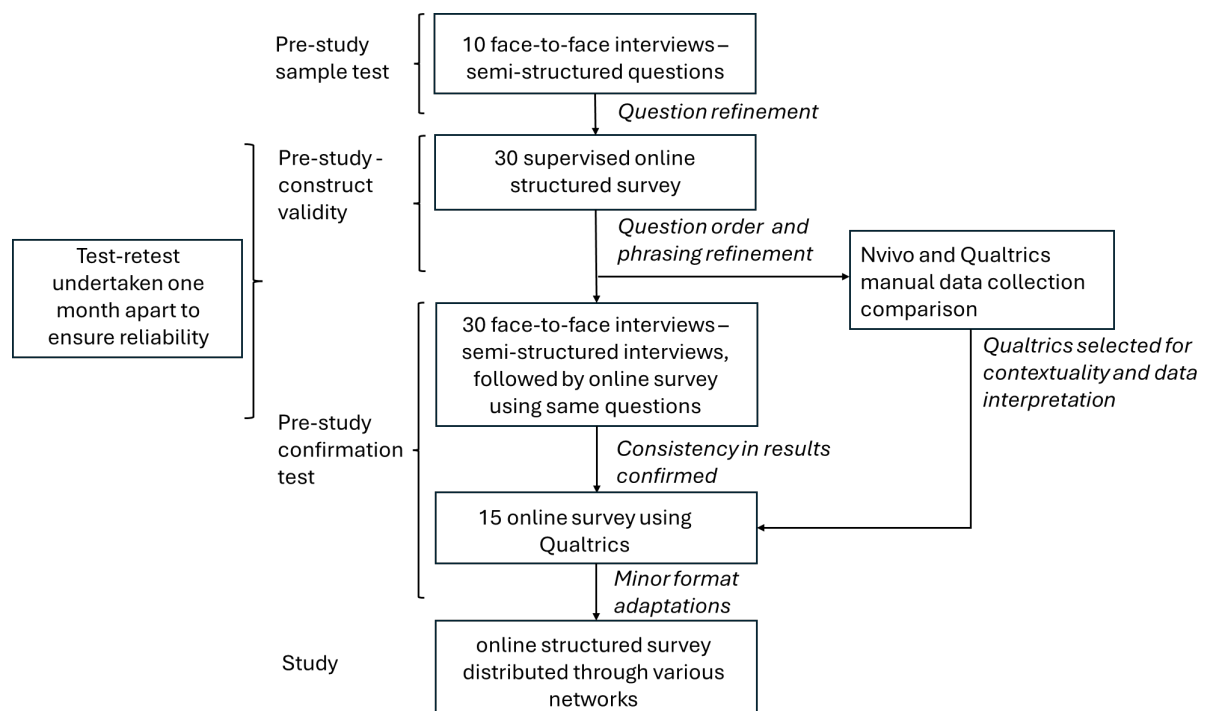


Figure 4. Survey Validation Process

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Demographics

We approached respondents that resided in three core countries to undertake the structured questionnaire, with wider responses through social networks. Table 2 provides the country of respondents at the time of response.

Table 2. Respondents by country of residence at time of response

Country location of respondent	Quantity
Australia	71
France	54
United Kingdom	26
New Zealand	2
Other	9
Total	162

Table 3 provides the age range of respondents at the time of responding to the structured questionnaire.

Table 3. Age range of respondents

Age range	Quantity
18-24 years old	12
25-34 years old	22
35-44 years old	36
45-54 years old	43
25-64 years old	40
65+ years old	9
Total	162

4.2 Promises during the PA

To examine whether promises, whether implied or implicit, had been made the question was asked: In your opinion, have you ever felt that your manager (or a previous manager) has made a promise of something positive that didn't eventuate?

As shown in Table 4, findings show that 77.3% of female respondents reported 'actual promises' in comparison to 22.7% of males. When considering 'perceived promises', 63.9% of males reported having had what they perceived or considered a promise made, whilst only 36.1% of women reported having had perceived promise. These findings identify that during the PA an employee can perceive a promise to have been made whether implicit or explicit.

Table 4. Promises made from the employee perspective

Statement made during PA	Male	Female
Actual Promise 'you will', 'I will' ...	22.7%	77.3%
Perceived promise 'You should ... it might be possible to ..	63.9%	36.1%

These results clearly identify that, from an employee perspective, promises are made during the PA discussion. There is a significant gender difference within the results which raises the question on gender interpretation of what was considered an actual promise, or whether the difference is on the manager communication style being adapted to the gender of the employee, or that managers are more comfortable making promises without certainty on being able to deliver. This raises the question as to whether the issue is the manager making the promise or the organisation not supporting managers decisions in the interest of enhancing team performance and staff motivation. This would benefit from further research to understand in more detail

as to the motivations and interpretations of a management promise made during the PA.

4.3 The effect of Management Promises whether implied or actual

Of the respondents, 56.3% consider themselves to be immune to management promises indicating a perceived lack of integrity to promises made by a line manager. Where the respondent felt a promise by their manager had been broken, all age groups reported the effect being less happy at work. When looking at age reactions to 'broken promises', 80% of respondents in the 18-24 age group reported 'bad mouthing' the manager. This is something that could be further explored as to whether it is a broken relationship and the communication methods of 'bad mouthing' the manager.

The responses by those who had a negative experience and view of the PA stated that there had been a breach of promises by their line manager made in the previous PA meeting. These promises were perceived based on words used, leading the employee to have expectations of an action over the coming year. When this did not eventuate, it caused a break in the psychological contract having a direct negative impact on employee engagement. Findings also show that employees consider promises to have been made in previous PA meetings and to be delivered, whether these promises were actual or perceived.

The reaction of looking for a new job also drew high response levels for younger age groups and reduced for older age groups, with 100% in the 18-24 age group reported positively, where in comparison to 50% of those in the 35-54 age group to 0% in the 60+ age group. This could be further examined in ageism of the workforce and the requirement of wage security for the older workforce.

When looking at discretionary effort, as a direct result of the psychological contract, 37% of respondents in the 18-34 age group responded that they would 'do less extra hours at work', effectively withdrawing their discretionary effort. This aspect could be examined in a tangible dollar value of hours worked by salaried employees.

The older the respondent the greater the reaction of the PA being a 'make or break' of the positive working relationship which supports the interpretation of the PCM as relevant in understanding employee behaviour in connection to the PA process.

4.4 People talk - the talk that influences expectations

The findings showed that men were more influenced than women from talking to someone in relation to influencing expectations of the PA outcomes. The findings showed 60% of men compared to 40% of women, with the gender they associated themselves as, were more influenced from such talking. Findings identified that there are gender differences in relation to SCT, where males talk to others about their forthcoming PA meeting whilst women did not talk to their social network. However, strangers, someone unknown to the female respondents was asked for guidance in relation to an anticipated negative PA discussion. The discussions were shown to identify expectations of the PA meeting both positive and negative.

When looking at expectations, with the question 'has a discussion with a colleague influenced your expectations of a performance appraisal meeting', respondents by job level showed that 54.5% at junior or low skilled levels expected a positive outcome, with 20.8% expecting a negative outcome. Comparing this at higher work levels, such as supervisor level, 27.3% reported expecting a positive outcome with 34.4%

expecting a negative outcome. Whereas at manager level the expectation of a negative outcome was greatest at 53.7%, with 20% as having no influence on expectations.

This can be interpreted that the negative expectations increase at higher levels of the organisation, while at lower levels there is a positive expectation. When considering these findings in connection to reactions of ‘broken’ promises, in the context of SCT we can determine that indeed talk does matter in the PA process. That is, talk not only with the manager but with others in the social network.

4.5 Broken Promises - reasonable adjustments withdrawn

This study drew an alarming and unexpected set of results which are of concern when considering the number of people with health conditions, disabilities and, in particular, those with hidden disabilities who are in the workforce. Findings related to those requiring workplace adjustments due to health conditions which were already in place with the new manager declining ‘continuation of the reasonable adjustments’.

Of the 162 respondents, 38.1% considered themselves to have requirements for reasonable adjustments, where 70% of that group reported having had a new manager decline continuation of the reasonable adjustments.

5. Discussion

The implications of this study identify that ‘talk’ is a major factor in the PA process. Figure 5 provides the interpretation of the PA communication flow drawn from the literature. Literature provides a flow that the research found not to be the case in the PA communication process, where a web of communication evolves, reflective of the underlying culture of the organisation, as well as individual cultural influences.

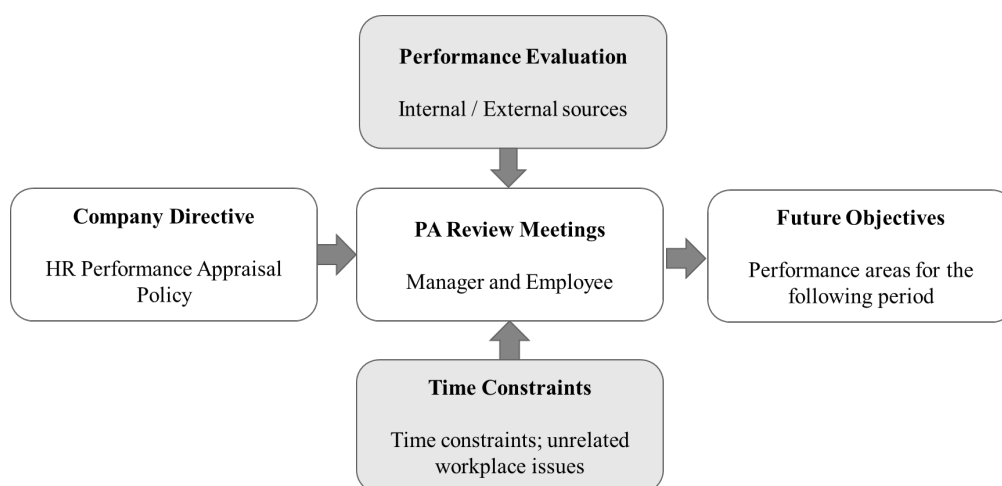


Figure 5. Interpretation of PA communication flow from literature (Illingworth, 2023)

When looking at formal communication elements within the PA process, the policy and forms are indeed a form of direct communication. However, it is the web of communication that surrounds the PA process which is being suggested as the potential influence on the employee’s reaction based on their expectations and Psychological Contract (PC). It appears from both experience and the above extant research covering the elements of PA, communication, metacommunication and the PC, that a key role in the way the process is experienced by the employee, could be dominated by a web of metacommunications (MC), a web that goes wider than just

the formal manager and employee discussion. The findings support the development of the model below (Figure 6) that reflects the thematic web of metacommunication surrounding the PA.

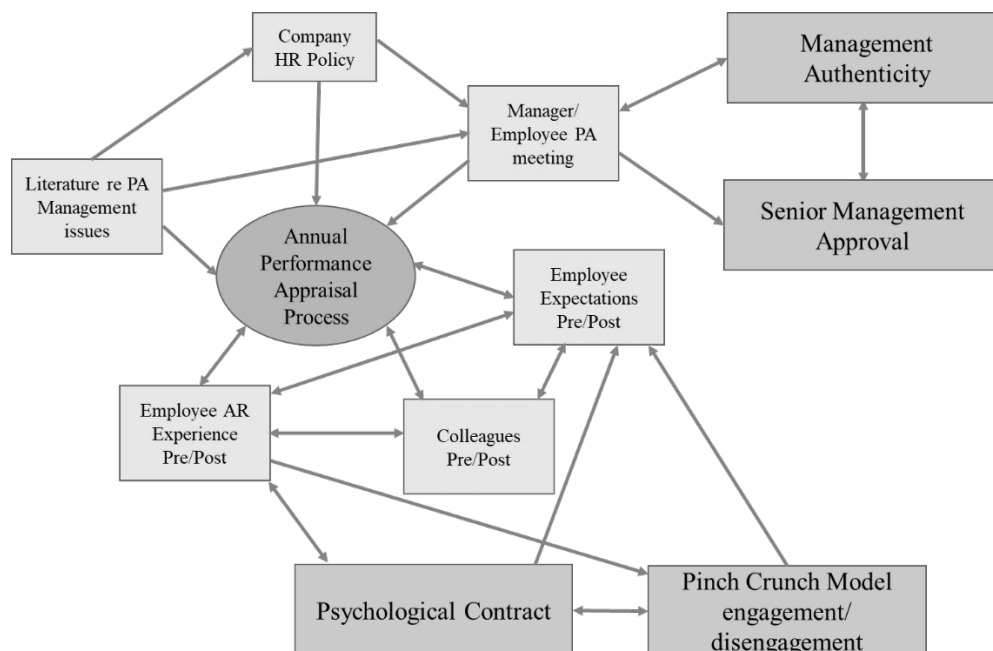


Figure 6. Thematic web of metacommunication surrounding the PA (Illingworth, 2023)

It is the web of metacommunication set out as informal communication channels that sheds light on the hidden complexities surrounding the PA. Further to this, it would appear logical to interpret that indeed informal communication in the form of metacommunication does take place during the PA process. The pre- and post-PA employee experience reflects how perceptions, and both the organisational and individual cultural lenses influence the experience, along with the associated PC and management authenticity, supporting Leyshon's (2021) and Leyshon and Hiddlestone-Mumford's (2023) findings and taking it further into the metacommunication web.

Although this topic has scope to be applied to a single sector, single country and other avenues, as the method for distribution was the 'snowball' effect, where a selected starting group then shared with their networks and onwards, this research reflects multiple sectors, multiple job levels, gender and age groups. Through this approach, the phenomenon was evidenced consistently, which highlights the importance and attention required by management to ensure perceived promises and perceived integrity are paramount during the PA process from an employee perspective. Findings indicated that 88.9% of male respondents go to the PA with expectations, whether positive or negative, compared to 79.6% of female and non-binary respondents. Furthermore, males reported a higher rate of 'perceived promises' (69.7%) occurring during the PA discussion with their manager compared to female and non-binary respondents at 27.7%. In the context of 'actual promises', 15.2% male respondents reported lower than female and non-binary respondents at 36.2%, with 44.4% of males reported to anticipate negative outcomes compared to other genders. From a cross-country comparative stance, France reported higher at 80.6% for 'becoming immune to management promises' when compared to Australia at 48.6%, UK at 37.5% and other countries at 25%, where respondents 'switch off if my manager

makes a promise'. Overall, 83.3% of respondents go to their PA review meeting with expectations.

The most concerning data set evidenced negative actions impacting on those who have had 'reasonable adjustments' in the workplace. Reasonable adjustments impact those with both visible and hidden disabilities, where the data evidenced managers are found to revoke continuation of these adjustments. As this is in the PA process it can be interpreted that it is occurring without explanation or considering the impact (Figure 7 which examined by age-group).

Response	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years
Yes	50.0%	80.0%	60.0%	75.0%	80.0%
No	50.0%	20.0%	40.0%	25.0%	20.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 7. Age group of respondents for the question of 'Have you ever had a manager decline continuation of adjustments agreed by a previous manager?'

This research study had anticipated differences based on country but had not anticipated exposing differences in relation to those with 'hidden' disabilities. This finding requires the urgent attention of HR and senior leaders in the workplace.

6. Limitations

This study was undertaken over a three-month period for the pre-study phase and a further two-month timeframe for the questionnaire phase. This impacted on the number of responses gathered and would have benefitted with being analysed through SPSS software for finer precisions of data analysis, taking a blended quantitative and qualitative context rather than data being interpreted from a qualitative perspective alone using Qualtrics analysis.

Limitations of this research are primarily relying on respondents having a true and accurate recollection of their emotional reactions to the PA process in a neutral and constructive manner. Further limitation is time factor in relation to following up to validate responses through in-person interviewing allowing probing for further detail in some questions.

7. Future Research

Based on the responses indicating that managers are not adhering or respecting existing reasonable adjustments, future research would benefit those in the workplace who have a diagnosed health condition requiring reasonable adjustments and if or when changes to these occur and the reactions it forces on the employee.

Gender showed results that would benefit from further research in relation to the breach of PC during the PA process. Similarly, the discretionary effort in terms of a tangible dollar value of hours worked by salaried staff. Further, an examination in agism in the workforce and the requirement of wages security for the older workforce. Additional future research could examine if an employee makes the decision to leave the organisation as a result of a PA failure of delivering previous promises, whether implicit or formal.

Finally, whether HR's push of the responsibility to the manager without allowing enough resource for managers to offer the time and focus for a constructive PA meeting is warranted.

8. Conclusion

This paper identifies the importance of 'management promises' whether implicit or explicit that are made during the PA process. Management, or mismanagement of these, has identified as the source of employee engagement and impact on employee performance through engagement of the PC. These finding show that there is much work to be done in the realms of management communication that aligns to the purpose of the PA being on improving and maintaining employee performance levels. It can be interpreted from the data that management are not being held accountable for promises, whether implied or actual, which directly impacts on employee engagement, productivity, and view of management integrity within the workplace.

The study offers important insight in identifying the 'why' of the negative view towards the PA process. There has been no prior research or data that links the employee PC to the PA process which clearly identifies the responsibility of the PA integrity as the responsibility of management communication and perceived integrity by the employee. The implications of the data show that although there are processes in place and even laws when considering 'reasonable adjustments', that managers themselves are not being held accountable for the management/mismanagement of employee expectations.

The issue of communication including the time pressures on managers taking on a new team, is that making time to focus and discuss with the employee rather than taking a process driven and non-engaging approach is the key to breaking the negativity surrounding the PA. The concerning results of withdrawal of existing reasonable adjustments is alarming and one that managers need to be educated and supported in understanding the complexities surrounding health conditions in the workplace. The organisation through allowing non-awareness and indirectly supporting the manager in withdrawing reasonable adjustments has an impact both on Government initiatives in multiple countries, and also on the workforce members themselves. Therefore, this paper identifies that where managers are lacking in integrity of their word, it influences directly on the employee's interpretation of the validity and effectiveness of the PA process.

9. References

- Adofo P. S. (2011). An evaluation of the performance appraisal system and its effect on Employee Performance: A case study of selected senior high schools in the Kwahu-South District. *Thesis Submission*, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=2422989>
- Aggarwal, U. A., & Bhargava, S. (2009). Reviewing the relationship between human resource practices and psychological contract and their impact on employee attitude and behaviours: A conceptual model. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33(1), 4-31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090590910924351>
- Agovino, T. (2023) The Performance Review Problem, Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) (May 15, 2023). Available at: <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/hr-magazine/performance-review-problem>
- Aguboshim, F. C. (2021). Adequacy of sample size in a qualitative case study and the dilemma of data saturation: A narrative review. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 10(3), 180-187. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2021.10.3.0277>

- Allsop, D. B., Chelladurai, J. M., Kimball, E. R., Marks, L. D., & Hendricks, J. J. (2022). Qualitative methods with Nvivo software: A practical guide for analyzing qualitative data. *Psych*, 4(2), 142-159. <https://doi.org/10.3390/psych4020013>
- Ashforth, B. E., Sluss, D. M., & Saks, A. M. (2007). Socialization tactics, proactive behavior, and newcomer learning: Integrating socialization models. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 70(3), 447–462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2007.02.001>
- Baker, T., & Nelson, R. E. (2005). Creating Something from Nothing: Resource Construction through Entrepreneurial Bricolage. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 50(3), 329–366. <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.2005.50.3.329>
- Bayo-Moriones, A., Galdon-Sanchez, J. E, & Martinez-de-Morentin. S. (2019). Performance appraisal: dimensions determinants. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(15),1984-2015. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1500387>
- Bayo-Moriones, A., Galdon-Sanchez, J.E and Martinez-de-Morentin S. (2011). Performance Appraisal: Dimensions and Determinants, *IZA Discussion Paper No 5623. April 2011*, IZA DP No. 5623.
- Blessing, L., & Chakrabarti, A. (2009). *DRM: A Design Research Methodology*, Springer Publication. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84882-587-1_2
- Borgatti, S. O. P., & Halgin, D. S. (2011). On network theory. *Journal of Organization Science*, 22(5), 1121-1367. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0641>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). To saturate or not to saturate? Questioning data saturation as a useful concept for thematic analysis and sample-size rationales. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, 13(2), 201-216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1704846>
- Burt, R. (1992). *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674029095>
- Burt, R. S., & Soda, G. (2021). Network capabilities: Brokerage as a bridge between network theory and the resource-based view of the firm. *Journal of Management*, 47(7), 1698-1719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320988764>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing: JRN*, 25(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Chao, J. M. C., Cheung, F. Y. L., & Wu, A. M. S. (2011). Psychological contract breach and counterproductive workplace behaviors: Testing moderating effect of attribution style and power distance. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(4), 763–777. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2011.555122>
- Chaudhry, A., & Teleab, A. (1996). A Social Exchange Model of Psychological Contract Fulfillment: Where Do Promises, Expectations, LMX and POS fit in? *Journal of Organization Management*, 10(3), 158-171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15416518.2013.831701>
- Chow, W. S., & Chan, L. S. (2008). Social Network, social trust and shared goals in organizational knowledge sharing. *Journal of Information and Management*, 45(7), 458-465. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2008.06.007>
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching Thematic Analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 20-123. <http://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:30997001>
- Clark, T., Foster, L., Bryman, A., & Sloan, L. (2021). *Bryman's social research methods*. Oxford university press. ISBN: 9780198796053.

Cobanoglu, C., Cavusoglu, M., & Turkstarhan, G. (2021). A beginner's guide and best practices for using crowdsourcing platforms for survey research: The Case of Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). *Journal of Global Business Insights*, 6(1), 92-97. <https://www.doi.org/10.5038/2640-6489.6.1.1177>

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, Supplement S95–S120. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2780243>

Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2004). Identity Ambiguity and Change in the Wake of a Corporate Spin-off/ *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 49(2), 173–208. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4131471>

Cresswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, California: Sage Publications. ISBN 978-1-5063-8670-6

Cropanzano, R., Keplinger, K., Lambert, B. K., Caza, B., & Ashford, S. J. (2023). The organizational psychology of gig work: An integrative conceptual review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 108(3), 492. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001029>

Cypress, B.S. (2017). Rigor or Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 36, 253-263. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000253>

Dalkin, S., Forster, N., Hodgson, P., Lhussier, M., & Carr, S. M. (2021). Using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS; NVivo) to assist in the complex process of realist theory generation, refinement and testing. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 24(1), 123-134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2020.1803528>

De Meuse, K. P. (1987). A review of the effects of non-verbal cues on the performance appraisal process. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 60(3), 207-226. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1987.tb00254.x>

De Meyer, A. (1991). Tech Talks: How managers are stimulating global R&D communication. *Sloan Management Review*, 32(3), 49-66. https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb_research/5473

DeNisi A. S., & Murphy, K. R. (2017). Performance Appraisal and Performance Management: 100 years of progress? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 421-433. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000085>

Du Plessis, T., & Van Niekerk, A. (2017). Factors influencing managers' attitudes towards performance appraisal. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.880>

Dusterhoff, C., Cunningham, J. B., & MacGregor, J. N. (2014). The effects of performance rating, leader–member exchange, perceived utility, and organizational justice on performance appraisal satisfaction: Applying a moral judgment perspective. *Journal of business ethics*, 119, 265-273. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1634-1>

Ellershaw, J., Steane, P., McWilliams, J., & Dufour, Y. (2014). Promises in psychological contract drive commitment for clinicians. *Clinical Governance: An International Journal*, 19(2), 153-165. DOI:10.1108/CGIJ-01-2014-0003

Ellis, R. (2017). Reviewing the Annual Review. *Public Manager*, 6. <https://www.td.org/magazines/the-public-manager/reviewing-the-annual-review>

Filipovic, J., & Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, M. (2023). Social capital theory perspective on the role of academic social networking sites. *Journal of Business Research*, 166, 114119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114119>

Fletcher, C. (2010). Performance appraisal and management: The developing research agenda. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 74(4), 473-487. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317901167488>

- Frechette, J., Bitzas, V., Aubry, M., Kilpatrick, K., & Lavoie-Tremblay, M. (2020). Capturing lived experience: Methodological considerations for interpretive phenomenological inquiry. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920907254>
- Freeze, R.D., & Kulkarni, U.R (2007). Knowledge Management Capability Defining Knowledge Assets. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 11(6), 94-109. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673270710832190>
- Gibson, C. B., & Birkinshaw, J. (2004). The antecedents, consequences, and mediating role of organizational ambidexterity *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(2), 209-226. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20159573>
- Gilchrist, A. (1998). A More Excellent Way: Developing Coalitions and consensus through Informal Networking. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, 13(1), 5-83. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44257394>
- Gioia, D. A., Corley K. S., & Hamilton A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on Gioia Methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15-31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452151>
- Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-607. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2003.1870>
- Golin Research (2017). commissioned by Adobe, Difficult Conversations made easier. *Journal of Human Resources*, Winter issue. <https://doi.org/10.3368/jhr.57.6.2150>
- Goretzki, L., Mack, S., Messner, M., & Weber, J. (2018). Exploring the Persuasiveness of Accounting numbers in the Framing of 'Performance' – A micro-level Analysis of Performance Review Meetings. *European Accounting Review*, 27(3), 495-525. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638180.2016.1262273>
- Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380. <https://doi.org/10.1086/225469>
- Grass, K. (2024). The Three Logics of Qualitative Research: Epistemology, Ontology, and Methodology in Political Science. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 8(1), 42-56. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/14083>
- Haden, J. (2015). *11 Ways bad bosses flub your Performance Reviews*. Government Executive. <https://www.govexec.com/management/2015/07/11-ways-bad-bosses-flub-your-performance-reviews/117364>
- Hamilton, S. H., Malinen, S., Näswall, K., & Kuntz, J. C. (2018). Employee wellbeing: The role of psychological detachment on the relationship between engagement and work-life conflict., *EID Journal of Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 1-26. Sage publications. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X17750473>
- Harley, B., & Cornelissen, J. (2022). Rigor With or Without Templates? The Pursuit of Methodological Rigor in Qualitative Research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 25(2), 239-261. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120937786>
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(8). <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>
- Hooghe, M., & Stolle, D. (2003). *Generating Social Capital: Civil Society and Institutions in Comparative Perspective*, NY USA and UK: Palgrave Macmillan Publication. ISBN-1-4039-6219-7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2019.54>
- Illingworth, J. (2023). Promises, promises: An exploration of the impact meta-communication has on the psychological contract, as part of the employee performance appraisal (PA) process. *Unpublished Thesis*, Charles Darwin University, Australia.
- Islami X., Mulolli, E., & Mustafa, N (2018). Using Management by Objectives as a performance appraisal tool for employee satisfaction. *Future Business Journal*, 4, 94-108. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2018.01.00>

- Jarvenpaa, S. L., & Leidner, D. E. (1998). Communication and Trust in Global Virtual Teams. *Journal of Computer-Mediated communications*, 3(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.1998.tb00080.x>
- Karani, A., Jayswal, M., Panda, R., & Trivedi, P. (2022). If you fulfill your promise, I will be an asset for you: exploring the relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and individual ambidexterity. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 42(9/10), 831-851. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-06-2021-0164>
- Keyser, E. (2010). *The changing employment relationship in the chemical industry: the role of the employment – and psychological contract*, South Africa: North West University Publication. <http://hdl.handle.net/10394/4781>
- Kickul, J., & Lester, S. W. (2001). Broken Promises: Equity Sensitivity as a Moderator Between Psychological Contract Breach and Employee Attitudes and Behaviour. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 16(2), 191-217. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011105132252>
- Kinley, N., & Ben-Hur, S. (2017). The missing piece in employee development: In some companies, traditional annual review processes are being replaced by ongoing effort to help employees improve their performance. The Challenge? Many managers aren't confident they can change employee behaviour. *MIT Sloane Management Review*, Summer, 58(4), 89-90. <http://mitsmr.com/2rZTdbR>
- Kraak, J. M., Hansen, S. D., Griep, Y., Bhattacharya, S., Bojovic, N., Diehl, M.-R., Evans, K., Fenneman, J., Ishaque Memon, I., Fortin, M., Lau, A., Lee, H., Lee, J., Lub, X., Meyer, I., Ohana, M., Peters, P., Rousseau, D. M., Schalk, R., ... Tekleab, A. (2024). In Pursuit of Impact: How Psychological Contract Research Can Make the Work-World a Better Place. *Group & Organization Management*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011241233019>
- Kuvaas, B. (2006). Performance appraisal satisfaction and employee outcomes: mediating and moderating roles of work motivation. *The International Journal of Human Resources*, 17(3), 504-522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190500521581>
- Lawler, E. J., Benson, G. S., & McDermott, M. (2012). What Makes Performance Appraisals Effective? *Journal of Compensation and Benefits Review*, 44(4), 191-200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886368712462331>
- Leyshon, C. (2021). How does an Individual's Culture Trigger Barriers of Communication in a Diverse Environment? The Case of a European Enforcement Network in Action Research Inquiry. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 20(2), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.17638/03090922>
- Leyshon, C., & Hiddletone-Mumford, J. (2023). *Culture Based Performance: How CEOs and Leaders can co-create high-performing teams and sustainable growth*, CQify Publishers. ISBN-10: 3952591610
- Lin, N. (2001). *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action*, New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511815447>
- Lin, N. (2017). Building a Network Theory of Social Capital: Theory and Research. In R. Dubos (Ed.), *Within 'Social Capital'*, (pp. 3-18), New York: eBook Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315129457-1>
- Mackenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research*, 16(2), 193-205. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier16/mackenzie.html>
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a Thematic Analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *AISH-J (The Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in higher education)*, 9, 3351. <http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335>
- Matthews, R. A., Pineault, L., & Hong, Y. H. (2022). Normalizing the use of single-item measures: Validation of the single-item compendium for organizational psychology. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 37(4), 639-673. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-022-09813-3>

- Mazumdar, B., Warren, A., Dupré, K., & Brown, T. (2023). Employment expectations: examining the effect of psychological contract fulfillment on bridge employees' personal and work attitudes. *Personnel review*, 52(5), 1563-1578. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-08-2020-0658>
- Merkel, S., Chan, H. F., Schmidt, S. L., & Torgler, B. (2021). Optimism and positivity biases in performance appraisal ratings: Empirical evidence from professional soccer. *Applied Psychology*, 70(3), 1100-1127. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12266>
- Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and Evaluation in Education and-Psychology: Integrating diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods* (pp.2, 88-189), Thousand Oaks, London: Sage Press. ISBN 141297190X, 9781412971904
- Metz, I., Stamper, C. L., & Ng, E. (2022). Feeling included and excluded in organizations: The role of human and social capital. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 122-137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.12.045>
- Milardo R. M., & Duck, S (2000) *Families as Relationships* (pp. 59-78 & 506-522). New York, NY: Wiley. ISBN 978-0471491521
- Monaghan, S., Lavelle, J., & Gunnigle, P. (2017). Mapping networks: Exploring the utility of social network analysis in management research and practice. *Journal of Business Research*, 76, 136-144. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.03.020>
- Munzel, A., Galan, J. P., & Meyer-Waarden, L. (2018). Getting By or Getting Ahead on Social Networking Sites? The Role of Social Capital in Happiness and Well-Being. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 22(2), 232-257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10864415.2018.1441723>
- Muratbekova-Touron, M., & Galindo, G. (2018). Leveraging psychological contracts as an HR strategy: The case of software developers. *European Management Journal*, 36(6), 717-726. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2018.01.001>
- Murphy K. R., & Cleveland, J. N. (1995). *Human Resource Management Series, Performance appraisal: An organisational perspective*. Needham Heights MA, USA: Allyn and Bacon Publishing. ISBN: 0803954743
- Murphy, K. R. (2020). Performance evaluation will not die, but it should. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 30(1), 13-31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12259>
- Murphy, K. R., & DeNisi, A. (2008). A model of the performance appraisal process, in Performance Management Systems. In Gerhart, B., & Trevor, C.O. (eds) pp 81-94 Routledge Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203885673-6>
- Murphy, K. R., & DeNisi, A. (2023). New approaches to dealing with performance management: getting rid of performance appraisals is not the answer. *IIM Ranchi journal of management studies*, 2(2), 143-158. ISSN: 2754-0138.
- Nelson D. L., & Quick J. C. (2013). *Organizational Behaviour: Science, the Real World, and you*, (8th ed.). USA: South-Western Engage Learning Publishers. ISBN: 9780357692882
- Newton, K., Stolle, D., & Zmerli, S. (2017). *Social and Political Trust*, (pp 37-56), Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190274801.013.20>
- Ngobeni, D. A., Saurombe, M. D., & Joseph, R. M. (2022). The influence of the psychological contract on employee engagement in a South African bank. *Frontiers in Psychology*, (Aug 2), 13, 958127, 2-20. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.958127>
- Noble H., & Smith J (2015). Issues of Validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence Based Nursing: British Medical Journal*, 18(2), 34-35. <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102054>
- O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Henderson, K. E., Anand, V., & Ashforth, B. E. (2014). Psychological contracts in a nontraditional industry: Exploring the implications for psychological contract

- development. *Group & Organization Management*, 39(3), 326-360.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601114525>
- Ong, B. K. (2023). Ways of establishing rigour in the Abductive Research Strategy (ARS). *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2023.2265255>
- Patro, C. S. (2019). Performance appraisal system effectiveness: A conceptual review. *Human performance technology: Concepts, methodologies, tools, and applications*, (pp. 372–396) Business Science Reference. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-8356-1.ch019>
- Pichler, S. (2012). The social context of performance appraisal and appraisal reactions: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 51(5), 709-732.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21499>
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 126–136. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.126>
- Protogerou, C., & Hagger, M. S. (2020). A checklist to assess the quality of survey studies in psychology. *Methods in Psychology*, 3, 100031. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.metip.2020.100031>
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon and Schuster. ISBN13: 9780743219037
- Rahman, M. S. (2020). The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language “testing and assessment” research: A literature review. University of Plymouth. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v6n1p102>
- Roberts, J. K., Pavlakis, A. E., & Richards, M. P. (2021). It’s more complicated than it seems: Virtual qualitative research in the COVID-19 era. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211002959>
- Rosing, K., Frese, M., & Bausch, A. (2011). Explaining the heterogeneity of the leadership-innovation relationship: ambidextrous leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(5), 56-974. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.07.014>
- Rothwell, S. (1993). Annual Review Article 1992. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, March issue, 31(1), 135-149. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8543.1993.tb00384.x>
- Rousseau, D. M. (1989). Psychological and implied contracts in organizations. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 2, 21-139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01384942>
- Rousseau, D. M. (1995). *Psychological contracts in organisations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231594>
- Rousseau, D. M. (2011). The individual–organization relationship: The psychological contract. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology, Vol. 3. Maintaining, expanding, and contracting the organization*, (pp. 191–220). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/12171-005>
- Rousseau, D. M., & Tijoriwala, S. A. (1998). Assessing Psychological Contracts: Issues, alternatives and measures. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 19, Special Issue, 679-695. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-1379\(1998\)19:1+<679::AID-JOB971>3.0.CO;2-N](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(1998)19:1+<679::AID-JOB971>3.0.CO;2-N)
- Ruesch, J., Bateson, G., Pinsker, E.C., & Combs, G. (2017). *Communication: The Social Matrix of Psychiatry*. Routledge Publication, Taylor & Francis group. ISBN 9781412806145
- Ryan, L. (2016). *Reinvention Roadmap: Break the Rules to get the Job you want and career you deserve*. USA: BenBalla Books. ISBN 978-1942952688
- Ryan, L. (2018). Performance reviews are pointless and insulting – so why do they still exist? *Forbes Column* (Forbes.com), January issue.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lizryan/2016/05/07/ten-reasons-your-performance-review-doesnt-matter/?sh=b09ff4363f6d>

- Sánchez, C. R., Diaz-Cabera, D., Hernández-Fernaudo, E., & Alessandri, G. (2019). Does effectiveness in performance appraisal improve with rater training? *PLoS ONE*, 14(9), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0222694>
- Sandhya, S., & Sulphay, M. M. (2020). Influence of empowerment, psychological contract and employee engagement on voluntary turnover intentions. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 70(2), 325-349. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-04-2019-0189>
- Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research Methods for Business Students* (4th ed.), London: Pearson. ISBN 0273701487, 9780273701484
- Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2011). *Research Methods for Business Students* (5th ed.). Essex: Pearson Education. Prentice Hall. ISBN 0273716867, 9780273716860
- Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th ed.), Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd. ISBN 0273750801, 9780273750802
- Schram, T. H. (2006). *Conceptualizing and proposing qualitative research*, (2nd ed.), Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall. ISBN 0131702866.
- Segundo, M. G. (2023). Leadership and Culture: What Difference Does it Make? 2022 *Editorial Board*, 2022 Regent Research Roundtables Proceedings pp. 104-119. © 2023 Regent University School of Business & Leadership <https://www.regent.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Regent-Research-Roundtables-2022-Global-Consulting-Segundo.pdf>
- Selvarajan, T. T., Singh, B. and Solansky S. (2018) Performance appraisal fairness, leader member exchange and motivation to improve performance: A study of US and Mexican employees. *Journal of Business Research*, 85, 142 – 154 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.11.043>
- Shao, L., Guo, H., Yue, X., & Zhang, Z. (2022). Psychological contract, self-efficacy, job stress, and turnover intention: a view of job demand-control-support model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 868692. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.868692>
- Sherwood J. J., & Scherer J. J. (1976). Pinch Crunch Model. *Journal for Small Group Behaviour*, February Issue.
- Sherwood, J. J., & Glidewell, J. C. (1973). Fundamental Tool for Self-Coaching 'Pinch-Crunch Model' for managing expectations and conflict. Cited by Hardwick M. W. *Turning potential into Performance*, January 28, 2014.
- Sherwood, J. J. & Glidewell, J. C. (1971). *Planned renegotiation: A norm-setting OD intervention*. Institute of Research in the Behaviours, Economic, and Management Sciences. 187-202.
- Simpson A. V., Farr-Wharton, B., & Reddy, P. (2020). Cultivating organizational compassion in healthcare. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 26, pp.340-354.
- Tenakwah, E. S., Erdiaw-Kwasie, M. O., Asiedu, E., & Al Aina, R. (2023) Unleashing the power of support: how co-worker and supervisor support mediate firm performance through performance management. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*. ISSN: 1463-5771 <https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-06-2022-0402>
- Thanh, N. C., & Thành, T. T. (2015). The Interconnection Between Interpretivist Paradigm and Qualitative Methods in Education. *Corpus*, Corpus ID 39607585.
- Treas, J. (2011). Revisiting the Bott thesis on kin networks and marriage. *Social Science Research*, 40, 716–726. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.12.005>
- Tsounis, A., Xanthopoulou, D., Demerouti, E., Kafetsios, K., & Tsaousis, I. (2023). Workplace Social Capital: Redefining and Measuring the Construct. *Social Indicators Research*, 165(2), 555-583. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-022-03028-y>

- Tziner, A., & Rabenu, E. (2018). *Ways to improve the performance appraisal system 1: Rater training*, Chapter 10, 247-254, Elgar Online.
<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788115216.00017>
- Umair, T., Javaid M. F, Amir, H., & Luqman, K. (2016). Effect of Perceived Appraisal Fairness on Job Satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Environmental and Biological Sciences*, 6(2), 12-20. ISSN: 2090-4274
- Varma, A., Budhwar, P., & DeNisi, A. (2023). *Performance management systems around the globe* (pp.81-96). London, UK: Routledge. ISBN 9781032308173
- Wahyuni, D. (2012). The Research Design Maze: Understanding Paradigms, Cases, Methods and Methodologies. *Journal of Applied Management and Advanced Research, JAMAR*, 10(1), 69-80. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2103082>
- Weinstein, M. (2016). Annual Review under Review. *Journal of Training*, July/August, 22-28.
- Widmer, E. D., Giudici, F., Le Goff, J. M., Pollien, A. (2009). From support to control: A configurational perspective on conjugal quality. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(3), 437-448. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00611.x>
- Wulandhari, N. B. I., Gölgeci, I., Mishra, N., Sivarajah, U., & Gupta, S. (2022). Exploring the role of social capital mechanisms in cooperative resilience. *Journal of Business Research*, 143, 375-386. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.01.026>
- Zacher, H., & Rudolph, C. W. (2021). Relationships between psychological contract breach and employee well-being and career-related behavior: The role of occupational future time perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 42(1), 84-99.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2495>
- Zapata-Barrero, R., & Evren, Y. (2020). Editorial Special Issue on: "The Practice of Qualitative Research in Migration Studies: Ethical Issues as a Methodological Challenge", *Qualitative Research Journal*, 20(3), 265-67. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-08-2020-106>
- Zhao, X., Lin, C., Knerr-Sievers, B., Lu, Q., & Mardani, A. (2023). The impact of institutional environment on entrepreneurial performance in micro E-commerce for Women: The mediating role of entrepreneurial network. *Journal of Business Research*, 154, 113313.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113313>
- Zikmund, W, Babin, B., Carr J., & Griffin, M (2012). *Business Research Methods*, (9th Ed.), USA: South Western Publishing. ISBN 1111826927, 9781111826925