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Association of Managers' Political Interests towards Employees' Feelings of Distributive Justice and Job Satisfaction in Performance Appraisal System

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Abstract

This research investigates the association between managers' political interests in performance appraisal system toward employees' feelings of distributive justice and job satisfaction using self-report questionnaires gathered from employees at a defence oriented higher institution in Malaysia. The outcome of SmartPLS path analysis model shows four important findings: first, motivational motive significantly correlates with feelings of distributive justice. Second, punishment motive significantly correlates with feelings of distributive justice. Third, motivational motive significantly correlates with job satisfaction. Fourth, punishment motive insignificantly correlates with job satisfaction. The result confirms that managers' political interests act as important determinants of employees' feelings of distributive justice and motivational motive does act as important determinants of employees' job satisfaction in the studied organization. Additionally, this research offers discussion, implications and conclusion.

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1. Introduction

Performance appraisal is a crucial decision making tool often used by an employer to assess and develop employee performance in organizations (Sanyal & Biswas, 2014; Swanepoel, Botha & Mangonyane, 2014). Appraisal decision making method consists of two major types: cognitive based appraisal and subjective based appraisal (Ismail, Najib & Arshad, 2012; Ismail & Raduan, 2013). Cognitive based appraisal is usually defined as a method which puts an emphasis on psychometric issues in evaluation, gives performance scores, and uses objective criteria to measure performance (Ismail et al., 2012; Suliman, 2007). For examples, comparison method, rating individual, measuring results, and measuring both attributes and results are designed based on cognitive models by HR managers to resolve routine personnel management functions like selection, training, compens ation and career (Ismail, Zainol & Najib, 2011; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2013).

Extend a review of the recent performance appraisal literature highlights effectiveness of performance appraisal cognitive is questionable when it has been implemented to assess the ability of employees in performing unroutine and unstructured (e.g., marketers, public relation officers and policy makers) (Ferris & Judge, 1991; Ferris, Perre we & Davidson, 2006; Murphy & Cleveland, 1991). In order to overcome the inadequacy of cognitive method, many managers unofficially have used subjective based appraisal in workplace. Under this approach, political interests is viewed as a vital subjective based appraisal factor because it has played a more dynamic role than cognitive models in increasing the effectiveness of performance appraisal processes and outcomes. Political interests broadly defines as organization is a political arena and political behaviour in performance appraisal which is an instrument to exercise management power and influence in order to accomplish its mission (Bing, Davison, Minor, Novicevic & Frink, 2011; Ismail et al., 2011).

According to a performance appraisal politics literature, managers' political interests have two influential elements: motivational motive and punishment motive (Arshad, Masood & Amin, 2013; Ismail & Raduan, 2013; Ismail et al., 2011; 2012). Motivational motive is often defined as a manager's personal motive (self-interest) give out high performance ratings in order to stimulate, direct, and endure employees (appraises) actions to achieve job, department and / or organizational goals (Ismail et al., 2011; 2012; 2013). Whereas, punishment motive is often related to a manager's personal motive (self-interest) assign low performance ratings in order to punish employees (appraises) who have committed misconducts in order to correct their faults as well as increase their work ethics (Ismail et al., 2011; 2012; 2013).

Surprisingly, extant research in performance appraisal politics reveals that the ability of managers to appropriately use their motives in performance appraisal systems may have a positive impact on personal outcomes, especially subordinates' feelings of distributive justice (Jewoola, 2014; Rowland & Hall, 2013; Ismail et al., 2012) and job satisfaction (Arshad et al., 2013; Ismail & Raduan, 2013; Moayeri, 2014). Distributive justice is often viewed as individuals perceive fairness about the type, level and amount of outcomes (e.g., rewards or resources) received from their employers (Jewoola, 2014; Salleh, Amin, Muda & Halim, 2013; Saraih, Ali & Khalid, 2014). Conversely, job satisfaction is often defined as individuals' like or dislike about their job, for example, if individuals are satisfied with their job, this may induce their positive or negative reactions in the organization (Ismail & Raduan, 2013; Moaveri, 2014). Within a performance appraisal model, the ability of managers to properly use motivational motive (e.g., intend to motivate employees for working to achieve organizational agenda) and punishment motive (e.g., intend to prevent employees for working to attain their personal agenda) in determining performance ratings may strongly invoke subordinates' feelings of distributive justice (Jewoola, 2014; Rowland & Hall, 2013; Ismail et al., 2012) and job satisfaction (Arshad et al., 2013; Ismail & Raduan, 2013; Moayeri, 2014) in organizations. Although the nature of this relationship is significant, little is known about the predicting variable of managers' political interests in performance appraisal research literature. Hence, it motivates the researchers to further explore the nature of this relationship. This study has four major objectives: firstly, is to examine the relationship between motivational motive and distributive justice. Secondly, is to examine the relationship between punishment motive and distributive justice. Thirdly, is to examine the relationship between motivational motive and job satisfaction. Fourthly, is to examine the relationship between punishment motive and job satisfaction.

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