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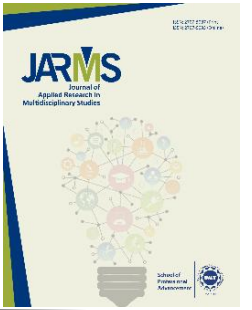

Title: **Rate Like an Expert: Bridging the Gap Between Rater's Knowledge and Ratee's Self-Efficacy**

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Rate Like An Expert: Bridging The Gap Between Rater's Knowledge And Ratee's Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the role of an expert rater (knowledgeable and experienced) in predicting the ratee's self-efficacy through fair procedures (procedural justice). Performance appraisal research has been of particular interest to researchers while dealing with problems long associated with performance appraisals. The role of rater in determining positive reactions is under-researched, since the role of the rater-ratee relationship remains the main focus of all rater-centric studies. However, the role of the rater's expertise, that is, knowledge and experience, has not been tested with regards to the ratee's reactions. In this regard, the current study determines the impact of the rater's knowledge, experience, and procedural justice on the ratee's self-efficacy keeping in view the perspectives of the systems theory and the echelon theory. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from 252 respondents from different sectors of the economy. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS-3. Interestingly, the results showed that rater's knowledge is not a direct predictor of the ratee's self-efficacy. However, rater's knowledge remains an indirect predictor of the ratee's self-efficacy through procedural justice. Similarly, rater's experience moderates the direct relationship between rater's knowledge and procedural justice (moderation), while rater's experience moderates the indirect relationship between rater's knowledge and ratee's self-efficacy through procedural justice (mediated moderation). The current study provides important insights for policymakers regarding the use of expert raters to produce positive ratee reactions through fair processes.

Keywords: performance appraisal, rater's experience, rater's knowledge, ratee's reactions, procedural justice

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Introduction

In contemporary organizations, ratee's reactions are often termed as the most crucial outcome of a performance appraisal system (Pichler, 2019). The effectiveness of the performance appraisal system is judged through the ratee's perceptions. These perceptions include justice, purposefulness, and the linkage between their performance and performance appraisal system ratings. Besides others, ratee's reactions are also seen to be predicting the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal system. Ratee's reactions, such as motivation to work, creativity, and innovative behaviour also depict the strength of the performance appraisal system (Schleicher et al., 2018). Likewise, the ratee's self-efficacy (SE), which ensures their work engagement, could determine the success or failure of the performance appraisal system. The rater, being the handler of the performance appraisal system, could also lead the performance appraisal system to success or failure (Govaerts et al., 2011). By implementing the performance appraisal system, the rater usually bridges the formal and informal elements of the performance appraisal system (Schleicher et al., 2018). The rater's cognitive information processing plays an important role when the formal processes are translated to the ratees while implementing the performance appraisal system. The raters often use both explicit and tacit knowledge about the performance appraisal system, while implementing the system (Xiaolan et al., 2018). However, the rater's cognitive traits, like the rater's knowledge (RK), could not attract much attention in the previous studies. Likewise, RK about the performance appraisal system, and the rater's experience has also been ignored in the performance appraisal system research.

Rater-centric motivational and cognitive attributes have the potential to predict ratee's reactions directly. For instance, certain rater-centric behavioural attributes are often associated with the perceptions of rating accuracy (Wood & Marshall, 2008), rating leniency (Ng et al., 2011), ratee turnover intentions (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015), and ratee's motivation to improve performance. On the contrary, some studies have also reported weak or no link between some rater-centric motivational and cognitive attributes. Therefore, there seems to be a need to investigate such an association between RK and the ratee's reactions due to the difference between RK and his willingness to transform the knowledge towards the

designated task (that is, PJ) (Minbaeva & Michailova, 2004). So, it is likely possible that RK may enhance SE, while considering the fair procedures.

The current research has emphasized that the education and experience are essential parts of the required combination which acts as a pre-requisite to handle the complex relationship between the rater and ratee. In this vein, the current study expects that RK would likely predict the ratee's SE through the ratee's perceptions of PJ. The above mentioned notion highlights that the said combination is required to determine the ratee's positive outcomes, through the lens of the upper echelon theory. The current study contemplates that the rater's experience would likely predict the RK – ratee's SE indirect relationship. The study is also expected to add value in multiple ways. *Firstly*, to find the missing link that helps develop the connection between the rater's cognitive abilities and ratee's reactions. This process is carried out by testing the relationship between RK and ratee's SE through PJ. *Secondly*, the study looks forward to elaborate the combination of RK and experience in determining the rater's ability to conduct performance appraisal with fair procedures. *Thirdly*, the study elaborates the combination of RK and experience in determining the ratee's SE through PJ.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

Systems Theory and its Integration into the Performance Appraisal System

Organizations could be better understood if they are studied as dynamic and open social systems. Systems theory principles explain how the system elements are likely to interact (Katz & Kahn, 1978). In terms of the performance appraisal system, different elements are connected to work together to produce favourable outcomes for individuals and the organizations. Schleicher et al. (2018), extended the performance appraisal system into six system elements. The elements explained the integration within and across the components to determine performance appraisal system and its effectiveness. These elements expound the effectiveness of performance appraisal system with the help of performance appraisal system-related rater and ratee *reactions*, ratee *learning*, rater, and ratee *transfers* (Schleicher et al., 2019). The components are required to perform optimally to enable the system work appropriately. RK and experience (*individuals*), PJ (*formal processes*), and ratee's SE (*individuals*) are all

components of a closed system and direct stakeholders of performance appraisal system. All the components work in coordination to produce favourable individual and organization-centric outcomes.

Rater's Knowledge and Ratee's Self-Efficacy

Raters require knowledge about the performance appraisal system and the ratee's performance to adequately evaluate the ratee's performance. The relevance of the rater-ratee interaction (rather than the number of interactions) is more important in this regard (Barbieri et al., 2021). Rater's cognitive ability (knowledge of prior performance, information processing ability, and memory) towards ratee's performance has been associated with ratee's performance appraisal system-related reactions (Huber et al., 1987). A higher RK about the ratee's performance is found to facilitate the developmental purposes in return for performance weaknesses (Batista-Foguet et al., 2018). Therefore, it can be assumed that greater rater knowledge of ratee performance is a strong basis for the constructive helping role of the rater.

The raters with high motivation to conduct performance appraisal and lower performance appraisal system-related knowledge or skill fail to be accurate. A fair count of studies claimed that merely familiarity (proxy of knowledge), positively impacts the ratee reactions (see Pichler, 2019). This emphasizes that at least the raters may make an impression that they are familiar with the ratee performance. Scholars of performance appraisal systems have highlighted the existence of a positive relationship between RK of performance standards and performance appraisal system reactions. For instance PJ, distributive justice (DJ), and system satisfaction (Williams & Levy, 2000). This implies that the improved performance appraisal system reactions could be generated with higher knowledge of the performance appraisal system and the performance standards. So, RK of performance appraisal system may positively predict the ratee performance appraisal system-related reactions. Therefore, it has been hypothesized that:

H1: RK positively predicts Ratee's SE.

Mediating Role of Procedural Justice

Among numerous administrative concepts, organizational justice has been considered the key concept that researchers have been using to test the functioning of an organization. PJ refers to the fairness of the organizational procedures and structures used to perform its functions, specifically how the

organizational resources are distributed (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). In certain situations, employee perceptions of justice towards the procedures are believed to determine the operations' effectiveness (Kim, 2016). In terms of performance appraisal system, a knowledgeable rater is likely to exert evaluation skills better than the ones with less knowledge. Over the time, raters become more knowledgeable and confident in providing evaluations and opinions about the ratee performance. Afterwards presenting themselves as opinion leaders and are less proned to be affected by the crowd and, thus, are more accurate (Sunder et al., 2019).

PJ predicts certain *ratee reactions* like emotions, stress (Vermunt & Steensma, 2013), organizational commitment, trust (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011), and perceived senior management support (Tekleab et al., 2005). The procedures of the organization bridge the organization's targets with the ratee performance (Schleicher et al., 2018). The procedures translate the organization's motive to the employees. As discussed earlier, the knowledgeable rater understands the organizational procedure well and is able to follow the procedural guidelines, thus increasing the ratee perceptions of PJ. Subsequently, ratees with positive PJ perceptions are more satisfied with the overall organization and tend to have more SE towards the assigned tasks (Çelik et al., 2016). So, all else equal, RK is expected to lead towards a more accurate and fairer evaluation and thus, producing more favourable ratee reactions that is, increased SE. So, it is hypothesized that:

H2: RK indirectly predicts ratee's SE through PJ.

The Moderating Role of Rater's Experience

Carrying out the interpretation with the help of the upper echelon theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), raters, being the handlers of the performance appraisal system, have to perform their rating task in the context of time pressure, unstandardized assessment tasks, and ill-defined goals (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Research findings indicated that these contextual factors affect the rating behaviour and, subsequently, rating outcomes (Levy & Williams, 2004). The rater regularly assesses the performance data, infers findings, matches the assessment criteria, and translates the judgments to document the decisions. The raters are the information processors of the organization and are of central importance for the cognitive-based performance appraisal system (DeNisi, 2003). Performance ratings are not

merely about measuring employee performance however judging, reasoning, and making decisions in a dynamic environment as well. Therefore, a rater's performance is likely affected by the contextual factors like motivation, time pressure, and prior experience, which could cause variation in information processing (Levy & Williams, 2004).

The set of expertise is developed, not only through time, but through the acquisition of an extensive and well-structured knowledge base over time. For instance, craftsmen trained their students in the Middle Ages by passing on their special knowledge to them. Back then, the time to learn craftsmanship varied, depending upon the complexity of the craft (Ericsson et al., 2018). Resultantly, the knowledge about the skill and the time spent on practising the skill makes an expert. In terms of performance appraisal system, a more tenured rater tends to avoid biases, while assessing employee performance (Merkel et al., 2020). Therefore, an expert rater understands the system dynamics well and tends to gather, analyze, and evaluate information to understand the problem better, whereas novice raters are more prone to conclude the problem with minimal gathered information (Ross et al., 2006).

RK, aided by their experience as appraisers, makes the rater an expert (Ericsson et al., 2018). Matsuo and Kusumi (2002), tested the moderating effect of experience on the relationship between knowledge and performance, and concluded that knowledge is built through repeated experiences, as the experiences help align their job-related knowledge. Recent studies have found that employee experience significantly interacts with information sharing (Liu & Bakici, 2019), passion for investing, and cultural intelligence (Puyod & Charoensukmongkol, 2019) in determining several employee reactions. One would expect that the rater's experience may positively interact with the rater's experience in shaping the ratee's PJ perceptions. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H3: Rater's experience moderates the relationship between RK and PJ.

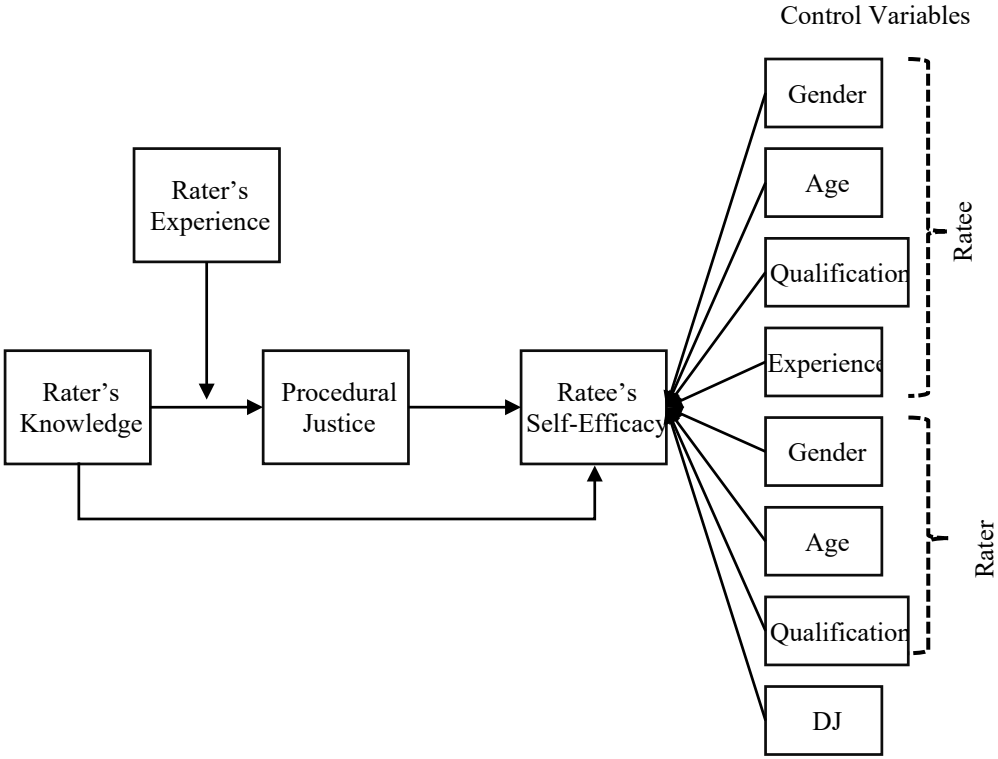
As raters gain experience, they positively impact the ratee reactions. A senior management team is more likely to be more sensitive towards employee-related key issues. So, the organizations with more diverse senior management are expected to adopt ways to facilitate organizational functioning through keen attention to employees (Kim, 2021). The human capital theory also suggests that when employees invest in gaining

experience, they tend to enhance their ability towards the task which subsequently impacts their job performance (Ehrenberg et al., 2021). The notion that experienced raters perform their duties more vigilantly, engenders outcomes like enhanced knowledge, assertiveness, and motivation towards conducting a performance appraisal. Regarding performance appraisal system, the rater's experience affects the ratee behaviour towards organizational tasks through certain defining variables like the rater's commitment, motivation, and fewer rating disorders (Sunder et al., 2019). Therefore, it is plausible that the rater's experience is expected to moderate the existent indirect RK – ratee's SE relationship through PJ. So, it is hypothesized that:

H4: Rater's experience moderates the indirect relationship of RK with ratee's SE through PJ.

Figure 1

Research Model



Method

Research Setting, Sample, and Procedure

The current study is a part of a larger research in which 25 organizations were contacted to participate. In this regard, a two-stage purposive sampling procedure was employed. At stage one, different organizations from the public and private sectors were chosen that had an established employee performance appraisal system. The organizations were selected from various industries, including but not limited to information technology, banking, health, public administration, telecom, and education. At stage two, raters with a minimum of one year of experience were selected to rate their subordinates. Firstly, the raters were contacted to respond to questionnaire-1 (for raters). Later on, questionnaire-2 (for ratees) was shared with the ratees nominated by the rater. As this study is a part of a larger research, data was utilized which was elicited from 252 respondents.

The data was collected from 58 raters and 194 ratees, respectively. Out of the 58 raters, 54 (93%) were males, 26 (45%) were between the age of 31 and 35 years, 22 (38%) were between the age of 36 and 40 years, whereas 40 (69%) had a Master's degree. Out of the 194 ratees, 142 (73%) were males, 42 (22%) were females, and the rest did not prefer to disclose their genders. One hundred ratees (52%) were between the age of 26 and 30 years, 52 ratees (27%) were between the age of 31 and 35 years, and 22 (11%) were between the age of 21 and 25 years. Ninety-two ratees (47%) had Bachelor's degrees, and 94 ratees (49%) had Master's degrees. Eighty-six ratees (44%) had an experience of 1 to 5 years, 78 (40%) had an experience of 6 to 10 years, and 20 (10%) had an experience of 11 to 15 years.

Table 1

Sample Demographics

Categories	Rater (%age)	Ratee (%age)
Gender		
Male	93.1	73.2
Female	6.9	21.6
Did Not Mention	0	5.2
Age		
20 years or less	0	0
21 years to 25 years	3.4	11.3

Categories	Rater (%age)	Ratee (%age)
26 years to 30 years	6.9	51.5
31 years to 35 years	44.8	26.8
36 years to 40 years	37.9	7.2
41 years to 45 years	3.4	1.0
More than 45 years	3.4	2.1
Qualification		
Secondary School Certificate	0	0
Higher Secondary School Certificate	0	3.1
Bachelors	13.8	47.4
Masters	69.0	48.5
PhD	3.4	1.0
Others	13.8	0
Experience		
Less than 1 year	0	3.1
1 year to 5 years	22. 4	44.3
6 years 10 years	34.5	40.2
11 years 15 years	10.3	10.3
16 years 20years	32.8	2.1
More than 20 years	0	0

Measures

RK was measured using a 5-item scale on seven-point response categories ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, adapted from Evans and Mcshane (1988). PJ was measured using five items scaled on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, adopted from Colquitt (2001). Six items of ratee's SE were adapted from Rigotti et al. (2008). The items were scaled on six-point response categories (1 = not at all true – 6 = completely true).

Control Variables

Rater's and ratee's demographic characteristics influence the perceptions about work attitudes and behaviours. Consistent with the previous studies, the effect of demographic characteristics was controlled that is, rater's age, gender, qualification, and experience (Levy et al., 2012).

The effect of DJ was also controlled as justice researchers view PJ and DJ as closely correlated variables (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015).

Analysis and Results

In order to establish the normality of the data, the Shapiro-Wilk test was performed ($p > 0.05$) (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). The results suggested that the dependent variables were not normally distributed, concerning its response group of independent variables. Keeping in mind the abnormality of the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test, partial least squares structural equation modeling method was selected to be used (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 3 (Hair et al., 2017). This method has become a popular analysis tool for business research nowadays. The nonparametric method of PLS-SEM (bootstrapping) was used, which could approximate the normality of data.

Controlling for CMB

Data collected from a single source (that is, a survey) is embedded with a frequent problem of Common Method Bias (CMB). *Ex-ante* and *ex-post* measures were taken into account to cater to CMB. *Firstly*, the questions to measure the constructs, were placed randomly so that the respondents may not infer the logical relationship between the study variables (Chang et al., 2010). *Secondly,* the questions related to independent and mediating variables were placed prior to the dependent variable (Williams et al., 1989). *Thirdly,* the cover letter on the questionnaire briefed the respondents regarding the confidentiality and anonymity of the responses. The collected data was tested for CBM using Herman's one-factor test, which showed that the estimated variance is 34% (upper threshold = 50%) (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results showed enough evidence to establish that no serious CMB problem exists in the data. To test the data for collinearity among the predictors, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was used. The results showed that the value of VIF for RK and PJ was 1.25, well below the threshold of 5 (Kock, 2015). (See Table 2)

Measurement Model

The measurement model was tested for internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Table 2 shows that the values of Cronbach's α were above the threshold of 0.70, and values of composite reliability (ρ_c) were above the threshold of 0.80 (Hair et al., 2017). The results are evidence of internal consistency. The standardized loadings of

individual items and average variance extracted (AVE) were considered to determine the items' convergent validity. Results (Table 2) show that all the individual items' loadings were above 0.70, and AVE values were above 0.50, meeting the convergent validity criteria. To establish the discriminant validity of the scale, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) was used to determine the ratio of correlations (5000 bootstrapped samples). The results showed that the values of HTMT (Table 3, above the diagonal) were less than the threshold of 0.85, and their confidence interval did not contain 1.

Table 2

Measurement Model

Constructs	Items	Loadings*	*Pc*	*AVE*	α	VIF
Rater's Knowledge	RK1	0.82	0.90	0.65	0.86	1.25
	RK 2	0.76				
	RK 3	0.73				
	RK 4	0.84				
	RK 5	0.87				
Procedural Justice	PJ1	0.79	0.90	0.64	0.86	1.25
	PJ2	0.79				
	PJ3	0.79				
	PJ4	0.79				
	PJ5	0.83				
Ratee's Self-Efficacy	SE1	0.75	0.90	0.61	0.87	-
	SE2	0.80				
	SE3	0.78				
	SE4	0.74				
	SE5	0.81				
	SE6	0.80				

Note. ρ_c = Composite Reliability, *AVE* = Average Variance Extracted, α = Cronbach's alpha, *VIF* = Variance Inflation Factor.* $p < 0.001$.

Structural Model

To test the hypotheses, three path models were analyzed that is, *i)* the baseline model, *ii)* the mediation model, and *iii)* the moderated mediation model.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics, Pearson's correlations and HTMT

		M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Ratee's Gender	—	—	—	0.23	0.17	0.20	0.05	0.11	0.03	0.10	0.01	0.05	0.09	0.25
2	Ratee's Age	—	—	–0.23**	—	0.05	0.71	0.04	0.01	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.07	0.04	0.24
3	Ratee's Qualification	—	—	0.17**	0.05	—	0.11	0.02	0.11	0.15	0.02	0.02	0.13	0.08	0.18
4	Ratee's Experience	—	—	–0.20**	0.71**	–0.11	—	0.12	0.03	0.25	0.28	0.09	0.11	0.17	0.38
5	Rater's Gender	—	—	–0.05	–0.04	0.02	–0.12*	—	0.11	0.05	0.14	0.04	0.11	0.06	0.19
6	Rater's Age	—	—	0.11	–0.01	0.11	0.03	–0.11	—	0.20	0.13	0.05	0.15	0.07	0.05
7	Rater's Qualification	—	—	0.03	–0.13*	0.15*	–0.25**	–0.05	0.20**	—	0.25	0.14	0.06	0.11	0.04
8	Rater's Experience	—	—	0.10	0.14*	0.02	0.28**	–0.14*	0.13*	–0.25**	—	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.31
9	Distributive Justice	2.99	1.07	–0.01	0.15*	0.02	0.09	0.04	0.05	–0.14*	–0.04	—	0.02	0.06	0.04
10	Rater's Knowledge	5.96	0.79	0.02	–0.06	0.12	–0.10	–0.09	–0.14*	–0.03	–0.03	–0.02	—	0.41	0.12
11	Procedural Justice	4.80	1.11	–0.08	0.04	0.06	0.16*	–0.05	0.06	–0.10	0.02	0.03	0.36**	—	0.35
12	Ratee's Self-Efficacy	5.50	0.83	–0.24**	0.23**	–0.17**	0.36**	0.18**	–0.03	–0.01	0.29**	0.03	–0.09	0.30**	—

Note. Above the diagonal elements are Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios. HTMT ratios do not include 1 at 5000 bootstraps at a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval.
$^{*}p < 0.05$. $^{**}p < 0.01$.

Table 4

Structural Equation Modeling

Relationship	β	BCCI95%	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2	f^2	Q^2	SRMR	NFI
Baseline Model Results										
RK → Ratee's SE (path c)	–0.02	[–0.09; 0.26]	0.39	*ns*	0.23	0.20	0.00	0.13	0.04	0.87
Controls Variables										
Ratee's Gender → Ratee's SE	–0.14	[–0.27;–0.01]	2.11	*			0.02			
Ratee's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.10	[–0.26; 0.08]	1.10	*ns*						
Ratee's Qualification → Ratee's SE	–0.11	[–0.22; 0.01]	1.86	*ns*			0.04			
Ratee's Experience → Ratee's SE	0.44	[0.28; 0.60]	5.47	***			0.10			
Rater's Gender → Ratee's SE	0.23	[0.10; 0.34]	3.52	***			0.10			
Rater's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.02	[–0.15; 0.11]	0.34	*ns*			0.00			
Rater's Qualification → Ratee's SE	0.13	[0.01; 0.24]	2.14	*			0.04			
Distributive Justice → Ratee's SE	0.01	[–0.10; 0.12]	0.18	*ns*			0.00			
Mediation Results										
Direct Effects										
RK → Ratee's SE (path c′)	–0.03	[–0.13; 0.08]	0.51	*ns*	0.39	0.36	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.86
RK → PJ (path a)	0.41	[0.25; 0.47]	6.48	***	0.17	0.17	0.21	0.08		
PJ → Ratee's SE (path b)	0.41	[0.22; 0.45]	5.32	***			0.20			
Indirect Effects										
RK → PJ → Ratee's SE	0.17	[0.10; 0.27]	3.75	***						
Control Variables										
Ratee's Gender → Ratee's SE	–0.11	[–0.25; 0.03]	1.54	*ns*			0.02			
Ratee's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.02	[–0.19; 0.16]	0.22	*ns*			0.00			
Ratee's Qualification → Ratee's SE	–0.14	[–0.25;–0.03]	2.49	*			0.03			
Ratee's Experience → Ratee's SE	0.34	[0.16; 0.51]	3.85	***			0.08			
Rater's Gender → Ratee's SE	0.23	[0.08; 0.37]	3.15	***			0.08			
Rater's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.08	[–0.23; 0.07]	1.11	*ns*			0.01			
Rater's Qualification → Ratee's SE	0.17	[0.06; 0.27]	3.08	**			0.04			

Relationship	β	95% BCCI	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2	f^2	Q^2	SRMR	NFI
Distributive Justice → Ratee's SE	–0.00	[–0.10; 0.11]	0.04	*ns*			0.00			
Moderated Mediation Results										
Direct Effects										
RK → Ratee's SE (path c′)	–0.03	[–0.15; 0.08]	0.47	*ns*	0.39	0.36	0.05	0.18	0.06	0.87
RK → PJ (path a)	0.42	[0.31; 0.53]	7.55	***	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.11		
PJ → Ratee's SE (path b)	0.41	[0.27; 0.59]	5.15	***			0.20			
RK X RrExp → PJ	0.34	[0.16; 0.50]	4.07	***			0.09			
Indirect Effects										
RK X RrExp → PJ → Ratee's SE	0.14	[0.6; 0.23]	3.32	***						
RK → PJ → Ratee's SE	0.17	[0.11; 0.28]	3.84	***						
Control Variables										
Ratee's Gender → Ratee's SE	–0.11	[–0.26; 0.04]	1.52	*ns*			0.02			
Ratee's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.02	[–0.19; 0.15]	0.21	*ns*			0.00			
Ratee's Qualification → Ratee's SE	–0.14	[–0.26;–0.03]	2.51	*			0.04			
Ratee's Experience → Ratee's SE	0.34	[0.16; 0.51]	3.83	***			0.08			
Rater's Gender → Ratee's SE	0.23	[0.07; 0.37]	3.06	***			0.08			
Rater's Age → Ratee's SE	–0.08	[–0.22; 0.06]	1.09	*ns*			0.00			
Rater's Qualification → Ratee's SE	0.17	[0.06; 0.28]	2.93	**			0.04			
DJ → Ratee's SE	0.00	[–0.10; 0.11]	0.07	*ns*			0.00			

Note. BCCI95% = Biased Corrected Confidence Interval, f2 = Effect size, Q2 = Stone-Geisser's.
*$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. ***$p < 0.001$. ns = not significant.

Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and normed fit index (NFI) were used to assess the model fit. SRMR shows the difference between observed and model-implied correlations (Henseler et al., 2016). The values of SRMR were below the threshold of 0.08 for all the three models, and the values of NFI were below the threshold of 0.90 (Hair et al., 2017) however, above the satisfactory level of 0.80 for all three models (Latan et al., 2017). (see Table 4)

Hypotheses Testing

H1 states that RK positively predicts the ratee's SE however, results show that RK does not predict ratee's SE (*path c*: $\beta = -0.02$, $t = 0.39$, $p > 0.05$, $f^2 = 0.00$) (see Table 4). Hence, H1 has been rejected. In accordance with the assumption of Baron and Kenny (1986), the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV) must hold a significant relationship for mediation to exist. However, as per the new convention, Hayes (2009), established that it is not necessary for IV to significantly predict DV for mediation to exist (e.g., Dong et al., 2017; Rucker et al., 2011). Although, it is suggested to caption it as an indirect effect of IV on DV through the mediator rather than a mediation effect.

H2 pertains to the indirect effect of RK on the ratee's SE through PJ. The indirect effect was tested using the bootstrapping procedure (5000 iterations, bias-corrected, 95% confidence intervals). Results show that RK significantly predicts PJ (*path a:* $\beta = 0.41$, $t = 6.48$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.21$). PJ significantly predicts ratee's SE (*path b:* $\beta = 0.41$, $t = 5.32$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.20$). The effect of RK on ratee's SE was still insignificant (*path c':* $\beta = -0.03$, $t = 0.51$, $p > 0.05$, $f^2 = 0.05$). However, the indirect effect of RK on ratee's SE through PJ was significant ($\beta = 0.17$, $t = 3.75$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, *H2* is supported.

H3 pertains to the moderating role of rater's experience on the RJ – PJ relationship. A two-stage approach was used to test the moderation effect of the rater's experience and created an interaction term (Hair et al., 2017). The moderation results (Table 4), showed that the effect of the interaction term (RK X rater's experience) significantly predicts PJ ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 4.07$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.09$). The direct effect of RK on PJ was also significant ($\beta = 0.42$, $t = 7.55$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.23$). Furthermore, the results (see Figure 2), also show that the relationship between RK and PJ is 0.42 for an average level (0*SD*) of rater's experience. The relationship between RK and PJ

seems to be decreased (0.42 – 0.34 = 0.08) at lower level (–1*SD*) of rater's experience and increased (0.42 + 0.34 = 0.76) at higher level of rater's experience (+1*SD*). So, *H3* is supported.

Figure 2

Moderation Graph

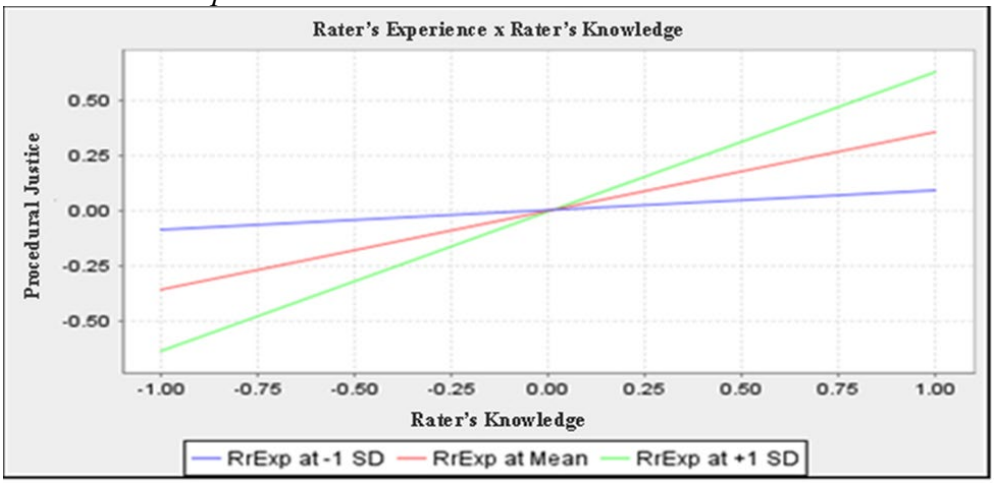
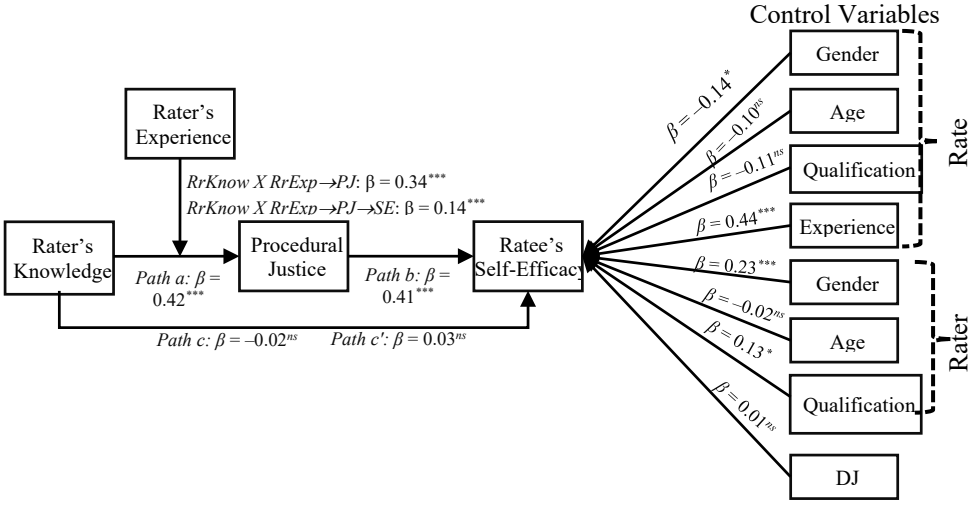


Figure 3

Statistical Model



H4 pertains to the conditional effect of rater's experience on the indirect relationship of RK on ratee's SE through PJ. The results show that the interaction term (RK X rater's experience) on ratee's SE through PJ was significant ($\beta = 0.14$, $t = 3.32$, $p < 0.001$). The results indicate that, overall, moderated mediation exists. Thus, *H4* is supported.

Discussion

The prime objective of this study was to determine how a rater's learning related to the performance appraisal system helps in shaping the positive ratee-centric *transfers*. The current study was conducted in a non-western setting, that is, Pakistan. The results revealed that RK does not predict the ratee's SE, that is, H1. According to the SE literature, there are four sources of SE, that is, past performance, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional cues (Bandura, 1997). Understandably, RK is unrelated to the ratee's SE. In the current study, RK was conceptualized as RK about the employed performance appraisal system, rather than RK about the ratee's performance. Considering the performance appraisal system's effectiveness model presented by Schleicher et al. (2019), RK was obtained from the performance appraisal system in the shape of rater-related reactions. However, it was found that it does not directly impact the ratee's performance appraisal system-related reactions. Ratee's learning results in rater transfers, for instance job attitudes, motivation, creativity, and SE (Schleicher & Baumann, 2020). However, rater's transfers also predict ratee's transfers. It is pertinent to maintain that RK does not directly impact the ratee's SE but through anunderlying mechanism.

More importantly, the study contributes by investigating the underlying linkage between the RK – SE relationship, that is, the mediating role of PJ (H2). The results showed that RK indirectly predicts the ratee's SE through PJ. The results of a rater's performance appraisal system-related learning is rater-centric transfer, which predicts ratee-centric transfers, that is, SE (Schleicher et al., 2019). More clearly, RK of the performance appraisal system, enables the rater to perform better in terms of choosing better procedures for performance appraisal system-related operations, It subsequently leads to positive performance appraisal outcomes like employee SE. From the ratee's perspective, Ratees might attach unnecessary expectations with the rater that knowledgeable raters would facilitate them to achieve objectives without creating hurdles in doing the

task. The results are in line with previous studies like DeNisi and Murphy (2017), among others.

Unlike previous studies, where the rater's experience was measured with the number of years served or the number of subordinates rated (Sunder et al., 2019; Wood & Marshall, 2008), we used the interaction of RK about the performance appraisal system and rater's experience in years to predict performance appraisal related outcomes (Ericsson et al., 2018; Govaerts et al., 2011) (H3). The interaction of RK and the rater's experience is evidenced to be a good predictor of PJ. Raters are essential players in the performance appraisal system, and Expert raters, being experienced and knowledgeable, are better at handling the performance appraisal system in comparison to novice raters (Spence & Keeping, 2009). At lower levels of the rater's experience, the relationship between RK and PJ is weaker as compared to the situation where the rater's experience is at higher levels. This notion illustrates that novice raters, being new to the task, have less knowledge about the performance appraisal system Moreover, having spent less time rating the ratees, they have a limited understanding of the procedures to be followed to appraise ratee performance. As raters become experts by gaining experience and acquiring relevant knowledge and skills, they understand performance appraisal procedures in a better way.

Another unique finding of this study is the assessment of the moderated mediation, that is, the moderating role of the rater's experience in the RK – SE's indirect relationship through PJ (H4). The results revealed that the rater's experience plays a significant moderating role in the aforementioned relationship. This implies that both RK about the performance appraisal system and the rater's experience of rating the ratees meets the PJ needs of the performance appraisal system which ultimately helps to shape the SE of the ratees. The study underscores that the rater's mere knowledge is not an indemnity towards shaping the ratee's SE. In fact, it requires using RK, aided with experience, during the performance appraisal activities. The perception that correct procedures are being followed during performance appraisal may ascend SE in ratees.

Following the systems theory by Katz and Kahn (1978) and performance appraisal system effectiveness model presented by Schleicher et al. (2019), we extend that different elements of the performance appraisal system (rater's performance appraisal system-related learning, knowledge, and experience) work together to produce favourable results for the

organization (performance appraisal system effectiveness) and its employee (SE). Thus, organizations may exert more effort in making their raters expert by using the by-product of the performance appraisal system-related learning and making their *transfer* efficient and effective.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The current study contributes to the existing body of literature in multiple ways. *Firstly*, it establishes that RK of performance appraisal system solely does not predict the ratee's SE (Bradley et al., 2006). This adds to the systems theory by providing evidence that system elements are interrelated and often require aid from other system elements to function properly (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Here, RK of the performance appraisal system is not capable enough to predict the ratee's positive behaviour solely. Rather, it requires aid from other system elements (PJ) to assert positive ratee behaviour. Therefore, the rater knowledge, when translated into resultant rater behaviour, predicts positive ratee behaviours. The study extends the systems theory by elaborating on the interrelated role of system elements working together to make the system work. However, some elements may underperform if not aided by other system elements appropriately.

Secondly, the current study differs from the previous by adding the rater's experience as a moderator alongside RK. Previous studies used single indicator conceptualization of expert rater to predict individual and organizational outcomes (Sunder et al., 2019). However, an expert's true conceptualization includes more than a single indicator. Mere knowledge or experience does not make a rater expert (Bradley et al., 2006). The current study conceptualized the expert rater's interaction of RK and experience to examine the impact of an expert rater on the ratee's behaviour. Through the lens of the systems theory, the study first established that knowledge produces positive outcomes, where the knowledge is converted into actions through the use of knowledge (PJ). Furthermore, knowledge combined with experience helps bridge the link towards ratee's SE through PJ.

In addition to the above mentioned facts, the findings are expected to benefit organizations using a formal performance appraisal system in Pakistan. Generally, organizations in Pakistan do not rely on using a formal performance appraisal system; rather, they rely on informal ways to appraise performance. Performance appraisals are usually a waste of time

and resources (Murphy, 2019). In this regard, it is pertinent to mention that usually, the rater is a person who is the most senior member of the team in terms of experience. Still, mere experience may not be used for the appointment of a rater. Rather, experience may be considered one of the qualifications, alongside the cognitive ability of the rater, that is, task knowledge. This may help organizations get the most out of their performance appraisal system.

Conclusion

The study in hand highlighted the importance of an expert rater in delivering PJ, while conducting performance appraisals. The results showed that RK did not predict the ratee's SE alone but indirectly through PJ. However, the interaction between RK and experience in conducting performance appraisal helps deliver PJ and generates positive ratee reactions. So, both RK and experience help inculcate the most into the intended performance appraisal system. Looking through the lens of the human capital theory, it was established that raters invest into gaining experience over time in conducting performance appraisal and obtain tacit and explicit knowledge from the performance appraisal system. The raters, after gaining expertise, can conduct performance appraisal better in comparison to novice raters. Additionally, through the lens of the systems theory, it has been concluded that certain elements of the performance appraisal system may work in coordination. It makes the procedures just and produces favourable outcomes for the ratees and the organization.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the theoretical and pragmatic value of the current study, the readers may have some concerns regarding some issues. *Firstly*, this study used cross-sectional design with a self-reporting method to measure the ratee's SE. However, the robustness of the analysis and techniques used to ensure internal validity and control common method variance would aid the limitation of using a cross-sectional design with a self-reporting method. Moreover, only ratee's SE was used to measure ratee's behaviours related to the performance appraisal system. For generalizability, future studies may use more ratee-centric performance appraisal system outcomes. For instance, ratee's motivation would improve their current performance, creative behaviour, and turnover intentions. Also, it seems that DJ is also a closely related concept to PJ, as well as ratee's self-efficacy. Therefore, in

future studies, there is a need to explore DJ as an underlying mechanism between RK and ratee's SE.

Additionally, more dimensions of expertise may be considered, such as individual accomplishment, esotericism, and exposure to tacit knowledge, to conceptualize the rater expertise (Ericsson et al., 2018). Finally, it would be interesting to compare different types of raters, that is, with high and low motivation, to conduct performance appraisal. Considering the existence of different performance appraisal systems in organizations, multi-level research can be conducted to determine the impact of rater knowledge on ratee behaviours.

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