

**UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL  
SATISFACTION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF  
TRUSTWORTHINESS TOWARD SUPERVISORS**

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**UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL  
SATISFACTION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF  
TRUSTWORTHINESS TOWARD SUPERVISORS**

by

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADMU	Administrative Utilization
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CA	Cronbach's Alpha
CEIC	Central European International Cup
CR	Composite Reliability
CMB	Common Method Bias
CSC	Civil Service Commission
DEVU	Developmental Utilization
DJ	Distributive Justice
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
PA	Performance Appraisal
PAJ	Performance Appraisal Justice
PJ	Procedural Justice
INFJ	Informational Justice
INPJ	Interpersonal Justice
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modelling
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SD	Standard Deviation (SD)
TTS	Trustworthiness Towards Supervisor
U.S	United States
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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# **MEMAHAMI KEPUASAN PENILAIAN PRESTASI PEKERJA: PERANAN PENYEDERHANA KEBOLEHPERCAAYAAN TERHADAP PENYELIA**

## **ABSTRAK**

Kekecewaan dan ketidakpuasan yang meluas terhadap penilaian prestasi telah mencabar penyelidik dan pengamal dalam sektor swasta dan awam untuk menilai keberkesanan sistem penilaian prestasi. Di sektor awam Kuwait, keberkesanan penilaian prestasi adalah kebimbangan kritikal, dengan peratusan yang ketara daripada pekerja menyatakan ketidakpuasan terhadap penilaian prestasi mereka. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian komprehensif mengenai penilaian kepuasan penilaian prestasi dalam persekitaran lapangan masih jarang ditemui. Masih terdapat kekurangan kajian empirikal yang dapat mengenal pasti hubungan yang signifikan antara dimensi keadilan penilaian prestasi, penggunaan, dan kepuasan pekerja. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menguji hubungan antara dimensi keadilan penilaian prestasi dan penggunaan dengan kepuasan pekerja. Selain itu, penyelidikan ini juga bertujuan untuk menguji kesan moderasi kepercayaan terhadap penyelia dalam hubungan ini. Sebanyak 429 data responden dikumpulkan daripada sektor organisasi awam dan dianalisis menggunakan Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa keadilan penilaian prosedural, maklumat, dan interpersonal secara signifikan dan positif mempengaruhi kepuasan pekerja. Penggunaan penilaian prestasi secara pentadbiran dan pembangunan juga secara signifikan dan positif mempengaruhi kepuasan pekerja. Selain itu, kajian ini mendedahkan bahawa kepercayaan terhadap penyelia memoderasi hubungan antara penilaian prestasi prosedural, distributif, maklumat, pentadbiran, dan pembangunan dengan kepuasan pekerja. Hasil ini dapat

memberikan pandangan yang berharga untuk organisasi yang ingin memperbaiki proses penilaian prestasi mereka, yang seterusnya meningkatkan kepuasan penilaian prestasi pekerja dan prestasi organisasi.

**UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SATISFACTION: THE  
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**ABSTRACT**

Widespread frustration and dissatisfaction with performance appraisal have challenged researchers and practitioners in both the private and public sectors to evaluate the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems. In the Kuwait public sector, the effectiveness of performance appraisals is a critical concern, with a notable percentage of employees expressing dissatisfaction with the assessment of their performance. However, comprehensive research on the evaluation of performance appraisal satisfaction in a field setting is scarce. There is still a lack of empirical studies that can identify a significant relationship between dimensions of performance appraisal justice, utilization, and employee satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to test the relationship between performance appraisal justice and utilization dimensions and employee satisfaction. Furthermore, this research also seeks to test the moderating effect of trustworthiness toward the supervisor in this relationship. A total of 429 respondents' data were collected from the public organizations sector and analyzed by the Structural Equation Modelling. The results indicate that procedural, informational, and interpersonal appraisal justice significantly and positively influences employee satisfaction. The administrative and developmental utilization of performance appraisal significantly and positively influences employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the study reveals that trustworthiness toward supervisors moderate relationship between between procedural, distributive, informational, administrative, and

developmental performance appraisal and employee satisfaction. These results can provide valuable insights for organizations looking to improve their performance appraisal processes, leading to improved employee performance appraisal satisfaction, and organizational performance.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

The appraisal of performance is a controversial subject in both the public and private sectors and most public organizations it is more a ritual than a practice (Rodrigues et al., 2023). Performance appraisal has come to occupy a prominent place in organizations because only it can be used to measure the competencies of their workers and the way they contribute to achieving organizational success, both qualitatively and quantitatively (Okolie et al., 2020). Consequently, employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal is vital to reap the rewards of the most talented resources (Memon et al., 2019). From a more employee-focused perspective, satisfaction with performance appraisal has been linked to improved work engagement, creativity, organizational citizenship, and employee-manager relationships (Memon et al., 2020; Ismail & Rishani, 2018). Satisfaction with performance appraisal encourages employees to participate actively and revise their performance according to the demands of the organization (Sumayya & Raziq, 2019). Performance appraisal is one of the final steps of the performance management process, where employees are informed of the outcomes of their performance (Ghaleb & Yaşlıoğlu, 2023). The argument is that organizations need to develop performance appraisal systems to maximize the value of their human resources capital and accomplish employee and organizational results (Gozukara et al., 2017; Ismail & Gali, 2017).

Likewise, it is worth noting that enhanced levels of employee satisfaction lead to improved organizational performance, underscoring the importance of elevating

organizational standards (Eyoun et al., 2020). Organizations that build performance appraisal systems considered to be satisfactory by their workers “reap” and foster attitudes and behaviors that contribute significantly to organizational success (Memon et al., 2020). Moreover, satisfaction with performance appraisal is a significant goal for organizations to achieve, factors which mostly contribute and relate to employee satisfaction organizational justice, and fairness perceptions (Cappelli & Conyon, 2018; Farndale, 2017). Hence, performance feedback and satisfaction with performance appraisal play a significant role in various administrative activities such as training and development, career growth and motivation, and ultimately improving overall performance and organizational outcomes (Dal Corso et al., 2019).

On the other hand, employee dissatisfaction with PAs has been linked to increased counterproductive work behaviors, deviant behaviors, and higher turnover intentions (Ghazi et al., 2023; Memon et al., 2020). Conventionally, studies on performance appraisal stressed employee satisfaction with their appraisal, to motivate and improve employee job performance with the performance appraisal system (Chowdhury & Shil, 2017; Elangovan & Rajendran, 2021; Khan et al., 2020). In this sense, satisfaction with the performance appraisal is considered one of the most important reactions to the performance appraisal per se, especially when it is seen as useful and accurate (Widiani & Dudija, 2020). Public administration researchers and professionals commonly acknowledge the importance of assessing performance appraisal satisfaction within the public sector (Aslam et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2020; Saraih et al., 2018). It is often contended that the success of any PA system hinges on employees' perceptions of the fairness of evaluations and the feedback they receive (Rubin & Edwards, 2020). Failures within performance appraisal systems can arise from dissatisfaction or perceived unfairness in appraisal evaluations (Khan et al.,

2020), resulting in issues such as the breakdown of the performance appraisal system, inaccurate ratings, flawed criteria, and inadequate support for performance appraisal as a tool for employee development and motivation (Lin & Kellough, 2019).

Public organizations are anticipated to apply evaluation systems to direct and regulate their workforce's behavior, thereby enhancing efficiency (Vidè et al., 2022). Naeem et al. (2017) reported that dissatisfaction with the performance appraisal process has also been considered to be a major concern to public organizations where it increased turnover and decreased engagement (Sharma & Sharma, 2017). When the performance appraisal enables the workers to acquire more knowledge of the dimensions and procedures of their evaluation and allows them to direct their efforts and actions toward the strategic objectives of the organization, they tend to feel more satisfied with the results of their performance (Bayo-Moriones et al., 2020). It is also common to accept the fact that without satisfaction with performance appraisal procedures, employees may view performance appraisal as unjust (Sumayya & Abdul Raziq, 2019). More than half of employees in some organizations disagree with the outcomes of PA, which means they do not agree with the evaluation manager's conclusions (Khan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2018; IvyPanda, 2022). Despite the existing research on performance appraisal satisfaction, studies indicated that understanding the determinants of appraisal satisfaction is essential for public organizations seeking to optimize performance (Naeem et al., 2017; Podrigues et al., 2023).

Organizational justice is one of the important points of concern about the performance appraisal system (Thurston Jr & McNall, 2010). In management literature, studies have revealed that justice perceptions influence employee satisfaction in organizations particularly in the public sector (Khan et al., 2020). In an

organizational context, for the first time, Greenberg (1986) applied organizational justice theory to performance appraisal. The author further elaborates that fairness is subject to the organization. Four-factor structure of organizational justice is of particular interest to human beings as per previous literature; distributive justice (fairness of outcome), procedural justice (fairness of process), informational justice (fairness in providing relevant information), and interpersonal justice (dignified and respectful treatment) (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1993, cited by Dal Corso et al., 2019; Thurston & McNall, 2010).

Building on the theoretical constructs, distributive justice in the performance appraisal system refers to the employees' perception of performance appraisal outcomes reflecting the rate of effort, contribution, and performance (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Distributive performance appraisal justice is rated the strongest predictor of employee satisfaction with the performance appraisal system (Brefo-Manuh & Anlesinya, 2023; Rana & Singh, 2022; Saraih et al., 2018). However, distributive performance appraisal justice alone might not account for employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal system without the support of procedural justice. Thus, the study seeks to establish the influence of distributive justice on employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal system.

Procedural performance appraisal justice refers to the employee's perception of fairness policies and processes that guide the implementation of performance appraisal (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Ahmed and Satta (2018) and Saraih et al. (2017) indicate that this critical component of performance appraisal justice significantly affects the level of satisfaction derived from such appraisals. While procedural performance appraisal justice is also linked to employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal system,

procedural performance appraisal justice could influence the implementation of performance appraisal. Therefore, the study seeks to determine the influence of procedural PAJ on employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal system.

Interpersonal performance appraisal justice refers to the employees' perception that supervisors treat them with dignity, respect, and politeness during performance appraisal (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Employees' perceptions of procedural justice are influenced by factors like dignity, respect, and participation in decision-making processes, which in turn impact their performance appraisal satisfaction within the organization (Abd Razak, 2018; Ahmed & Sattar, 2018; Dwomoh et al., 2017). It is significant to highlight that Interpersonal justice gets attention to how the employees of the organizations are being treated by their immediate bosses using their authority in making decisions (Khan et al., 2020). The research study seeks to determine the impact of interpersonal performance appraisal justice on employees' satisfaction with the performance appraisal system. However, the three preceding constructs, distributive performance appraisal justice, interpersonal performance appraisal justice, and procedural performance appraisal justice could not deliver satisfaction with the performance appraisal system without fairness in providing relevant information. The fairness in providing relevant information was referred to as informational justice of performance appraisal.

Informational performance appraisal justice, which focuses on employees' perceptions of the fairness and accuracy of the information used in performance appraisals, plays a crucial role in shaping their reactions and attitudes toward the appraisal process (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Scholars emphasize the importance of employees' perceptions of fairness in performance appraisal, as it can affect their

acceptance of the system and the overall effectiveness of performance management practices (Kuwait Country Report, 2022; Malla & Malla, 2023). The study seeks to establish the possible influence of informational performance appraisal justice on satisfaction with the performance appraisal system.

Performance appraisal utilization is carried out for different purposes likewise, to promote employee performance and productivity or improve those weak areas of employees that have negative scores in any organization (Eyoum et al., 2020). The underlying reason behind investigating performance appraisal utilization to employees satisfaction with performance appraisal system is that that perceived utilization of performance appraisal can play an important role in employee's work outcomes such as psychological contract (Eyoum et al., 2020), rate reactions (Iqbal et al., 2019), in-role performance (Aslam et al., 2017), employee satisfaction with performance appraisal (Khan et al., 2020). Khan et al. (2020) and Ikramullah et al. (2016) postulated that the performance appraisal system is meant for administrative utilization i.e. salary, promotion, termination, and layoff, and also for developmental utilization i.e. training of employees, providing employees with continuous performance feedback and establishing employees strengths and weakness. Studies indicated that performance appraisal administrative and performance appraisal developmental utilization directly and significantly influences employee satisfaction with performance appraisal (Khan et al., 2020; Rana & Singh, 2022).

Building on the organizational justice theory, the current research investigated the performance appraisal justice dimensions of employee satisfaction with performance appraisal. Organizational justice theory, as explored by various scholars, delves into employees' perceptions of fairness in the workplace and its impact on

organizational outcomes (Brefo-Manuh & Anlesinya, 2021; Dwomoh et al., 2017; Rana & Singh, 2022). These outcomes are reliable with the prediction of organizational justice theory, which states that fair performance appraisal systems encourage strength, and in turn, ultimately affect employee satisfaction (Ahmed & Sattar, 2018; Khan et al., 2020). Besides, the expectancy theory provides the basis for the relationship between performance appraisal administration, performance appraisal developmental utilization, and employee satisfaction with performance appraisal since it posits that, employees are perceived as satisfied when the actual outcome equals or exceeds their expectations. The results of administrative performance appraisal are often used to make administrative decisions that can lead to valued outcomes for rates, e.g., satisfaction (Iqbal et al., 2019).

It has been a notable fact that there is still a lack of empirical studies that can identify a significant relationship between performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization dimensions with employee satisfaction of performance appraisal in the public sector including Kuwait. For this reason, the following research is determined to investigate how trustworthiness in supervisors moderates the relationship between performance appraisal justice and utilization of performance appraisal dimensions with employee satisfaction with performance appraisal. Concerning the studies on employee trust, previous studies have looked into the role of trust as a mediator in the relationship between organizational justice and PA satisfaction (Saraih et al., 2018) or a moderator in the relationship between organizational justice dimensions and performance appraisal satisfaction (Abdullah et al., 2015; Sumayya & Raziq, 2019).

Trustworthiness in supervisors could influence the level of employee

satisfaction and these should be managed and considered by the management of public organizations to sustain overall organizational effectiveness (Belsito & Reutzler, 2020; Håvold et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2022). As such, it could be assumed that PAJ and PAU do not necessarily enhance performance appraisal satisfaction if they are not represented in trustworthiness in the supervisor which refers to a trustee's beliefs and attributes that inspire trust in the supervisor, such as ability, benevolence, and integrity (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011). This gap in literature requires investigation relative to the public sector in the context of management practices and organizational development such as employee satisfaction (Sumayya & Abdul Raziq, 2019).

Social exchange theory (SET) explains that human behavior includes: social relationships seen as exchange processes whereby employees contribute to certain outcomes; and, employees evaluate exchange fairness via information gained through social interactions ( Ahmed & Sattar, 2018). SET predicts how employees who have a high level of trustworthiness in their supervisors will work to help their organization meet the goals set (Mayer & Davis 1999). In that, if employees perceive their trustworthiness toward the supervisor to be high, they are more likely to be satisfied with their performance appraisal. According to this theory, the importance of trust in supervisor-employee relationships leads to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction (Blau, 1964). SET suggests that because supervisors tend to value employee trustworthiness they will be more likely to adhere to justice and the utilization of performance appraisal with trustworthy employees which in turn influences employee satisfaction with performance appraisal (Zapata et al., 2013).

Specifically, trustworthiness between supervisors is crucial as it enhances job satisfaction and organizational commitment, ultimately impacting work performance

and adaptation to work life (Yuan & Lee, 2022). Additionally, SET posits that individuals enter and maintain relationships expecting greater rewards from the performance appraisal process than costs, which fosters trust, satisfaction, and commitment over time. (Su, 2020). Saraih et al. (2018) realized that the relationship between organizational justice and performance appraisal satisfaction might be problematic due to the complex social exchange process. The authors integrated social exchange mediators like organizational trust into their relationship analysis. Thus, this study suggests that the connection between performance appraisal justice and, utilization dimensions of performance appraisal, and performance appraisal satisfaction depends on the moderating of trustworthiness providing empirical evidence in the context of public organizations when considering trustworthiness.

The public sector organizations in Kuwait were chosen for the study due to their substantial workforce size compared to the private sector, particularly in the services sector. The public sector in Kuwait plays a crucial role in economic growth and employment opportunities, as evidenced by the fact that over 70% of public sector employees are Kuwaiti, while only 4.5% of private sector workers share this nationality. The public sector presents more attractive remuneration, benefits, working conditions, and job stability compared to the private sector (Alharbi, 2021; Kuwait Country Report 2022). This significant disparity highlights the dominance and importance of the public sector in providing job prospects and contributing to the nation's financial resources. In the concurrent scenario, employee satisfaction, increased operational efficiency, and productivity are the important goals of the public sector which cannot be attained until employees are managed effectively.

The Kuwait National Development Plan (2020-2025) has placed considerable

emphasis on the enhancement of robust and efficient public sector entities within Kuwait. In line with this declaration, the plan is geared towards meeting the future needs of Kuwaiti residents while positioning Kuwait's economy as a prominent financial and commercial center in the region. Kuwait's Vision 2035 strongly underscores the augmentation of capacities and skills of public sector employees, the enhancement of service delivery, and the promotion of transparency (Saeid & Shuriye, 2018). The changed scenario has also posed some challenges such as insufficiency of annual incentives, supervisory positions, bonuses, and job promotions, among other factors, in Kuwait's public organizations (Alhamady 2020; Zayed et al., 2020). Problems related to supervisors who handle performance reporting and trust in those supervisors whether the performance information is being used, are examples of complainants reporting in many public organizations (Personal Communication, June 2, 2018). Therefore, to address the challenges, the present study focuses on the Kuwait public sector.

In Kuwait, employees from the public sector are assessed through the Integrated System for Performance Appraisal in the Public Administration which was developed in 2006, to support decision-making relating to the performance appraisal in the Public Administration. This system, which is fully available for consultation, also aims to enhance productivity and competitiveness in the public sector, addressing challenges faced by organizations where all employees receive equal compensation regardless of performance. The CSC's decision to require employees to achieve excellent ratings (90%) in performance appraisal for promotions and bonuses highlights the system's impact on career progression and rewards, emphasizing the significance of performance appraisal in employees' professional

growth (CSC decision, 36, in 2006). However, despite the emphasis on performance appraisal for professional growth and rewards, the number of performance appraisal complaints from employees surged by 300% from 370 in 2013 to 1059 in 2016, indicating challenges and dissatisfaction within the system. This increase in complaints underscores the importance of addressing employee satisfaction and ensuring transparency and fairness in the performance appraisal process to maintain employee motivation and engagement in the public sector. On the other hand, the performance appraisal system is governed by biased managerial decisions can lead to unfair ratings, leading to low dissatisfaction toward performance appraisal among employees in public organizations (Alkhalaf, 2016; Khan et al., 2020).

According to the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB, 2017), the Ministries of Health and Education are the two highest governmental institutions, comprising 47% of the total public sector workforce. Reports by Abdullah (2018, 2019) and Alhamady (2018) indicate that both ministries experienced an increase in public administration complaints during 2017 and 2018. The data suggests a concerning trend of rising complaints within these key governmental bodies, highlighting potential issues in public administration practices within the Ministries of Health and Education ( Table 1.1). This inadequacy hinders the development of strong, effective public sector organizations in Kuwait. Consequently, this may impede Kuwait's governmental ambitions to enhance public services for its citizens. Additionally, the need for further investigation and potential interventions to address the root causes of these complaints and improve overall performance appraisal efficiency within these institutions is evident from the data provided in the contexts.

Table 1.1 Performance Appraisal Complaints of Employees Recorded in 2017 & 2018

Ministry	2017	2018
Ministry of Health	2000	5000
Ministry of Education	4944	10223
Total	6944	15223

*Source: Ministries of Education and Ministry of Health*

Correspondingly, Alainati et al. (2024) indicate that employees in the public sector in Kuwait exhibit a moderate level of satisfaction with their performance appraisal system. Furthermore, the outcomes highlight notable disparities between participants from the public and private sectors, with a preference towards the private sector, potentially attributed to differing human resource strategies and levels of job satisfaction across the sectors. The study also argued that the major weakness of the performance appraisal system in Kuwait is related to its performance appraisal, as there is always an inadequate use of performance appraisal results for administrative and development purposes such as retention, promotion, salary administration, and training which consequently raises reasons to question it.. Alainati et al. (2024) demonstrated that employees who are provided with constructive feedback, training, promotions, and acknowledgment tend to display higher levels of satisfaction towards their job's performance appraisal system. The presence of bonus requirements, unjust promotions, and other compensation aspects plays a pivotal role in talent retention, reduction of turnover rates, and the preservation of project and initiative consistency (Zayed et al., 2020).

Addressing such injustices is crucial to ensure fair practices, treatment of all employees, and better employee performance. Notably, employees in public organizations are remunerated at the lowest end of the discretionary salary scales (Zayed et al., 2020). Public sector organizations' subjects present issues that necessitate extensive examination. The public sector has received comparatively less attention, particularly in Kuwait, where much remains to be accomplished (Zayed et al., 2020). The present study endeavors to scrutinize the impact of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization on employee performance appraisal satisfaction in public sector organizations in Kuwait. It is expected that recommendations for individuals and organizations to improve their shortcomings will be offered based on the findings of this study, thereby paving the way for future research.

By violating workers' expectations regarding the process (e.g., transparency, fairness, usefulness, and accuracy), such practices have negative consequences for the satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and performance of workers. Those who are recognized as key contributors are more inclined to exhibit dedication to their tasks and make positive contributions to the organization's advancement goals in terms of employee performance and organizational productivity. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that public sector entities prioritize task finalization above employee efficiency, indicating the bureaucratic nature of management. At the same time, it's becoming increasingly clear that counterproductive behaviors, such as employee sabotage behaviors, are a rampant problem in the public sector (Sumayya & Abdul Raziq, 2019). Thusi (2023) advocates for public institutions to closely monitor and improve individual employee performance and productivity to ensure the efficient delivery of

public services. Idowu (2017) suggests that conducting a performance appraisal system without clear objectives could lead to employee discontent, consequently diminishing productivity and organizational dedication. This issue is prevalent in the public sector, where performance appraisals are often carried out as a mere formality, demotivating employees and reducing overall productivity and performance. Yet only a limited number of studies have investigated the determinants of performance appraisal satisfaction in either a general or a public sector context including Kuwait. In this way, as an understanding of the impact of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization aspects on performance appraisal satisfaction is lacking, there exist practical knowledge gaps in the current body of literature.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The performance of public sector organizations in Kuwait has been a concern, with employees often perceived as non-productive and lacking in contribution to organizational performance (Alainati et al., 2024; Alhamady 2020; Zayed et al., 2020). Studies have highlighted issues such as employees prioritizing attendance tracking over productivity and creativity, indicating a need for enhanced efficiency and engagement within these organizations (Alainati et al., 2024). The data from the Central European International Cup (CEIC) global database reveals a concerning trend in labor productivity growth in Kuwait, with a drop to minus 2.74 percent in December 2017 from the previous year's minus 2.62 percent. Over 25 years from 1992 to 2017, the country's labor productivity averaged a disappointing minus 1.97 percent, fluctuating from a low of minus 13.97 percent in 2009 to a high of 4.05 percent in 2011. This decline in labor productivity underscores the challenges faced by Kuwait in enhancing its workforce efficiency and economic output (Times, 2018).

Recent studies carried out in the public sector (e.g., Alainati et al., 2024; Zayed et al., 2020) have indicated that employees from the Kuwait public organizations tend to consider their performance appraisal, and resulting performance appraisal system, as unsatisfactory, inadequate, and unfair. It is also noted with great concern that the performance appraisal process in Kuwait is ill-suited for addressing real employee performance, and many issues arise regarding the performance review procedures. There are so many reasons behind this situation's lack of organizational justice, employee satisfaction from appraisal and low job performance are the most crucial ones and need to be addressed (Alainati et al., 2024). Salwa Bahbahani, a former manager of legal affairs at the CSV, highlighted various factors contributing to this ineffectiveness, including inaccurate performance reports, flawed measurement systems, unreliable indicators, and unjustifiable aggregation, leading to employee dissatisfaction with the performance appraisal system in the Kuwait public sector (An interview with the researcher).

Moreover, the research conducted by Alainati et al. (2024) sheds light on the challenges performance appraisal implements ion as highlighted by managers in Kuwait public organizations, including deficiencies in organizational design, inadequate emphasis on organizational culture, avoidance of addressing underperformance, and rushed decision-making processes. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of evaluating multiple factors in employee assessment due to the presence of various assessment options, highlighting the complexity of performance appraisal in Kuwait's public sector. In response, commentators have called on researchers to study the possible factors affecting satisfaction regarding performance appraisal more thoroughly (Alainati et al., 2024). Along these lines, this study aims to address the above-mentioned research gaps in Kuwait. According to

Khan et al.(2020), it will contribute to the knowledge gap on satisfaction with performance appraisal in the public sector by examining the employee perceptions of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization as predictors of performance appraisal satisfaction. The performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization aspects might be one of the leading problems that are not examined thoroughly in the public sector in Kuwait to identify its impact on employee satisfaction with performance appraisal.

Although researchers have examined employee satisfaction with performance appraisal using the four-factor justice model, the results cannot be generalized to Kuwait due to its unique socio-economic conditions (Amlus & Abashah, 2018; Brefo-Manuh & Anlesinya, 2021; Khan et al., 2020; Sumayya & Abdul Raziq, 2019). Existing studies in Kuwait mainly focus on appraising practices and outcomes without considering employee satisfaction with performance appraisal (Alainati et al., 2024). However, still, there is no consensus on the effect of various organizational justice dimensions (i.e., distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) on employee satisfaction with performance (Amlus & Abashah, 2018; Saraih et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2020; Rana & Singh, 2022). There are very few studies that have endeavored to look at justice perceptions of employees and their effect on satisfaction with performance appraisal using four-factor justice models in the public sector (Khan et al., 2020; Saraih et al., 2018). It is important to explore the relationship between various justice dimensions and satisfaction with performance appraisal (Elangovan & Rajendran, 2021; Saraih et al., 2018). This study is an endeavor to fill this gap by differentiating the effect of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice by relating these to satisfaction with performance appraisal.

The existing literature on performance appraisal emphasizes the importance of exploring the link between performance appraisal administrative and developmental utilization and satisfaction in the public sector, particularly from an Eastern perspective (Eyoum et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2019). Hence, the study aims to fill a gap in the existing literature by examining the relationship between performance appraisal administrative and developmental utilization and satisfaction in the public sector, particularly from Kuwait as an Eastern country. The research emphasizes that performance appraisal practices, when effectively implemented, have a positive impact on employee satisfaction and perceived utility, with a performance-driven culture playing a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of performance appraisal practice (Ahmed & Abdul Satta, 2020; Iqbal et al., 2019). The use of performance appraisal as a motivation tool has shown significant positive outcomes, especially when linked to rewards and setting objectives, emphasizing its value in human resources management (Ahmed & Abdul Satta, 2018).

Concerning the research work done on performance appraisal, the impact of the performance appraisal justice dimension on performance appraisal satisfaction can be elucidated by moderating or mediating variables, such as trust (Ibeogu & Ozturen, 2015; Naji et al., 2015; Saraih et al., 2018). Trust in supervisors significantly and positively correlated with performance appraisal satisfaction (Sumayya & Raziq, 2019). Considering the previous studies use trust in the supervisor as a mediator (e.g. Sumayya & Raziq, 2019), it would be interesting to experimentally examine the moderating effect of trustworthiness toward the supervisor relationship between PAJ and performance appraisal utilization dimensions, and employee satisfaction with performance appraisal. However, the moderating effect between dimensions of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization, and employee

satisfaction with performance appraisal has been a less explored area in existing literature, creating a research gap.

While previous studies have often focused on how trust in supervisors influences satisfaction with performance appraisal, the current study suggests that trustworthiness in supervisors can be a moderating variable. By emphasizing the importance of trustworthiness toward the supervisor and its role in employees' satisfaction with performance appraisal, the current research contributes to a deeper understanding of how trustworthiness toward the supervisor can strengthen the relationship between procedural, interpersonal, and informational aspects of performance appraisal justice administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal utilization, and employees satisfaction with performance appraisal.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Based on the above problem statement, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational aspects of performance appraisal justice influence performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait?
2. How do administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal utilization influence performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait?
3. How does trustworthiness toward the supervisor moderate the relationship between distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational aspects of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal satisfaction among

public employees in Kuwait?

4. How does trustworthiness toward the supervisor moderate the relationship between administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal utilization and performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

In support of Kuwait's 2035 vision aspirations for developing public administration as one of the seven pillars of the New Kuwait, this study proposes a model for the performance appraisal satisfaction of employees in public sector organizations. More specifically, the model is expected to demonstrate the relationships between the dimensions of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization (i.e., distributive, procedures, interpersonal, informational), administrative utilization, and developmental utilization of performance appraisal utilization) and performance appraisal satisfaction. More specifically, the model aims to explain the moderating role of trustworthiness toward supervisors in the relationship between these dimensions and public employees' performance appraisal satisfaction in Kuwait. To accomplish this main objective, the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the relationship between distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational aspects of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait.
2. To investigate the relationship between administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal utilization and performance appraisal

satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait.

3. To explore the moderating effect of trustworthiness toward supervisor on the relationship between distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational aspects of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait.
4. To explore the moderating effect of trustworthiness toward supervisor on the relationship between administrative and developmental aspects of performance appraisal utilization and performance appraisal satisfaction among public employees in Kuwait.

## **1.5 Research Significant**

This study will contribute theoretically and empirically to public employees' performance appraisal satisfaction and performance appraisal knowledge.

### **1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution**

The study's findings carry substantial importance for researchers in public administration, offering them empirical evidence to advance their studies on employee satisfaction with performance appraisal in Kuwait, as well as in broader contexts across GCC and beyond. Performance appraisal satisfaction continues to be one of the most neglected areas in performance appraisal research (Ghazi et al., 2023; Memon et al., 2020). This is especially the case in the public sector (Rodrigues et al., 2023). This is the first study that validates the four-factor structure of organizational justice and the instrument proposed by (Thurston & McNall, 2010) in the Kuwait context which is different from the West in the socio-economic context thus paving the way for the

cross-cultural comparison of the phenomenon. This is also the first study to investigate the influence of four dimensions of performance appraisal justice and two dimensions of performance appraisal utilization on employee satisfaction with performance appraisal in public sector organizations in Kuwait. It fills the gap that must be addressed and filled as previously the studies on performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization dimensions and attitudinal outcomes such as employee satisfaction with performance appraisal justice have mainly emerged from developed countries less specifically concerning the trustworthiness between employees and supervisors.

The study suggests that there is a strong relationship between performance appraisal justice dimensions and employees' satisfaction with performance appraisal. These findings are reliable with the prediction of organizational justice theory and Thurston and McNall's (2010) model, which states that fair performance appraisal systems encourage strength, and in turn, ultimately affect satisfaction. Performance appraisal utilization utilization (administration and development) and performance appraisal satisfaction are relatively neglected areas of research within the context of the public sector, in particular, a study exploring the relationship between these two constructs from employee perspectives in different government organizations, would add to and enhance existing knowledge and best practices in this area. The study responds to calls for more research on performance appraisal satisfaction (Ikramullah et al., 2012; Khan et al., 2020), as little research has examined the link in a public context.

The study will draw attention to the effects and relationships between factors that have, so far, received sparse attention, such as the influence of performance

appraisal justice dimensions on satisfaction with performance appraisal, and the moderating effects of trustworthiness toward supervisors on the relationship between performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization dimensions and employees' satisfaction with performance appraisal. As such, it will have a pioneering contribution, to these under-examined factors, and lay down the groundwork for future research in any organizational context. Hence, the present study adds to the academic literature of public management as employees' trustworthiness toward supervisors differs in their perceptions of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization which affects their satisfaction with performance appraisal levels. This may encourage more research on trustworthiness toward supervisors and the direct links between performance appraisal justice, performance appraisal utilization dimensions, and satisfaction. Also, greater emphasis on trustworthiness among employees and supervisors especially on the performance appraisal process could help in realizing improvement in performance appraisal results subsequently leading to better satisfaction. Eventually, this will be reflected in a better positive effect on employee performance and performance management of public organizations.

### **1.5.2 Practical Contribution**

The results of the current study will also have implications for performance appraisal practice and performance in the public sector. Once the links between employee perceptions of performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal utilization dimensions, and performance appraisal satisfaction are demonstrated, suggestions will be offered to public sector managers. If implemented, these should have a positive effect on the efficiency and productivity of their employees, reducing their desire to deliberately damage operations or reputation, and encouraging them to

take a proactive interest in improving their public's services and processes. Thus, the information can be used to make informed decisions for improvement in performance appraisals and performance appraisal satisfaction thereby utilizing the information to modify their appraisal process. The findings of this study also dictate that public managers can affect employee satisfaction with different facets of performance appraisal by providing procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice. Based on findings, organizational managers can be trained to focus on various aspects of justice and utilization while implementing the appraisal process. This can also help to reduce turnover and improve overall organizational performance.

The findings have some practical implications for managers of the public sector in that if they want to enhance the effectiveness of their performance appraisals they have to ensure that their performance appraisal processes are perceived as fair by employees. By emphasizing the perceived developmental purpose of performance appraisals and promoting interactional justice perceptions, public organizations can boost employee work engagement and satisfaction, leading to improved overall organizational performance. They can modify their appraisal processes to have substantial enhancement in employees' performance thus impacting overall organizational performance positively. By using this information, public organizations can develop an effective performance appraisal system for managers and employees to be fair and make better use of performance appraisal.

In addition, these suggestions served to aid decision-makers in assessing and enhancing the performance appraisal system's efficacy and ultimately improve employee satisfaction and performance outcomes. Additionally, managers need to prepare various strategies for the trustworthiness of supervisors among employees if

they want employees to be more committed, supported, effective, and efficient in performing their tasks, which subsequently enhances their employees' satisfaction with performance appraisal.

The findings of this study will directly benefit human resources professionals who are considering an effective performance management system to implement within their organization by helping them understand how to reduce employee complaints and dissatisfaction related to performance appraisal by overcoming issues related to the justice and use of performance appraisal in a more effective manner. This study shows that both administrative performance appraisal and developmental performance appraisal with trustworthiness boost satisfaction, and human resources professionals can concentrate training efforts to improve the supervisor linked with performance appraisal utilization's level of trustworthiness. In other words, the findings will help policymakers and the government restructure their performance appraisal to make it fair and where employees can use it to improve satisfaction in the Kuwaiti public sector. It will prompt administrators and top management to acknowledge the significance of integrating fairness into the appraisal system during the preparatory phase. The design and execution of the appraisal system should follow the expectations of stakeholders to minimize the likelihood of unforeseen adverse impacts on the behaviors of raters and rates, which could lead to the ineffectiveness of the system and hinder the achievement of organizational goals. Therefore, this study offers a significant meaning for the government to review the current policy on performance appraisal justice systems and consider developing a specific strategy for its implementation.