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Research Article
From Ratings to Results: How Feedback Orientation Bridges Rater Behavior and Job Performance
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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the effects of raters' effective performance management behaviors on ratee job performance, with feedback orientation mediating this relationship. Grounded in social exchange theory, this dyadic study collected data from 301 rater-ratee dyads in the telecom sector Islamabad using a purposive sample and time-lag design. Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather data from both raters and ratees at two separate time points (Time 1 and Time 2). The data were analyzed using MPlus software, revealing that effective rater performance management behaviors positively impact ratee job performance. Feedback orientation emerged as significant mediators highlighting the importance of feedback processes in enhancing ratee performance. This study contributes to the existing literature by elucidating the complex dynamics of rater performance management behaviors, and feedback processes, providing valuable insights for organizations seeking to develop targeted interventions and improve ratee performance. The findings suggest that organizations should prioritize training rater to effectively manage performance and foster open feedback cultures.
KEYWORDS
Performance Management Behaviors, Feedback Orientation, Job Performance, Social Exchange Theory

1 | INTRODUCTION

The field of Performance Management (PM) and Performance Appraisal (PA) is experiencing an unparalleled level of transformation and disruption, with new challenges and opportunities emerging at an unprecedented rate (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). Challenges such as digitalization, financial crises, and pandemics make innovation crucial for organizations to survive (Bauwens, Audenaert, & Decramer, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic, accelerating globalization, and the advent of new technologies have prompted numerous organizations to reevaluate their approach to traditional workforce management, seeking innovative solutions to address emerging challenges and opportunities (e.g. Kim, Vaiman, & Sanders, 2022). The area of PM, specifically the evaluation of ratee performance, has been a major focus of attention, as organizations seek to modernize and improve their assessment methods to better support their evolving workforce and objectives (see, e.g. Murphy, Cleveland, & Hanscom, 2018). Now for the purpose of assessing, involving ratees, and distributing rewards, organizations employ different evaluation systems (Murphy, 2020). One of the central systems used by organizations for evaluating their employees is a Performance Management System (PMS). Organizations that use PMS accounts for 96% (Aguinis, 2019, p.9). The usage of PMS varies from one organization to another. Some organizations use it to link rewards with job performance, while others use it for an administrative purpose by terminating poor performers and to develop forthcoming performance (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995; Welch & Byrne, 2001). Nevertheless, the paramount aim of PMS remains the same, which is suggested by DeNisi and Pritchard (2006), and Selvarajan and Cloninger (2012), that the ultimate objective of PMS should be to motivate ratees to improve their performance, and subsequently

furnishing ratees with the feedback (Aguinis, 2013; Tziner et al., 2005), rather than only assessing past performance (Steelman & Wolfeld 2018). Armstrong (2006) also stresses the importance of the impact of PM on ratee job performance. Armstrong (2006) defines PM as "a process for improving organizational performance by developing the performance of individuals and teams." Further, the PM processes are intended to assist job performance (Van Waeyenberg et al., 2020).

Keeping the impact of PMS on job performance in mind, the PMS has been altered with major and minor tweaks by the researchers. Organizations have also made significant investments in PMS, but the system is far from bearing its intended fruits (Murphy, 2020). One of the biggest reasons for PMS failure is mainly attributed to the fact that these systems have lowered PM to irregular phases and procedures that are not aligned with everyday work and behaviors which impact job performance (Pulakos et al., 2015). Therefore, in the seminal article, which grew out of a debate titled "Getting Rid of Performance Ratings: Genius or Folly?", the prominent researchers of PM, including Colquitt, Murphy, and Ollander-Krane, favored "Get Rid of Performance Rating." On the other hand, scholars such as Adler, Campion, and Grubb, voiced "why Getting Rid of Performance Rating is a Bad Idea?" (Adler et al., 2016). The arguments presented by both sides are compelling; and for a detailed review, reader may refer to Adler et al. (2016). Resultantly, disappointment with the classical PA mounting motivation to shift the focus of PM (Levy et al., 2017; Gorman et al., 2017), and towards PM behaviors that drive performance (Adler et al., 2016; Pulakos et al., 2015). The prior research linked rater behaviors with ratee job performance (e.g. Evans & Dobrosielska, 2021; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Su & Xiao, 2022; Wondim et al., 2021; Hamzah et al., 2021; Asif & Rathore, 2021; Rana & Javed, 2019; Barrick et al., 2015; Shin & Hur, 2020). However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is limited evidence of studies that have specifically tested the impact of rater PM behaviors on ratee's job performance. This link is essential to establish. The importance of this link can be understood by the fact that Google's new project, Oxygen, is also based on eight highly effective behaviors of the rater, which supports the assumption that PM behaviors are critical for work-related outcomes (Bryant, 2011). Further, the effectiveness of a PMS relies on both the rater and the ratee. By understanding and improving rater behaviors, the system can become more equitable and effective, potentially influencing ratee behaviors indirectly. Therefore, merely tweaking the system without addressing and changing the rater's behavior and biases will not lead to significant improvements. Therefore, understanding the effect of rater PM behaviors on ratee job performance needs to be explored.

Some researchers argue that training raters to adopt specific PM behaviors could positively impact ratees' job performance, although this has not yet been empirically tested. Others, however, believe that shifting the focus of PM toward more open conversations and frequent feedback may lead to better outcomes. For example, Baloch et al. (2021) claimed that PM research is shifting its focus from evaluation to feedback. This approach emphasizes ongoing communication and continuous development, rather than relying solely on periodic evaluations. Further organizations worldwide are trying to escape the annual performance rating and, as an alternative, moving towards employing regular dialogues during the whole performance cycle (Adler et al., 2016; Aguinis, 2019; Buckingham & Goodall, 2015). Because after every evaluation process, many ratees resign (Tripathi et al., 2021), organizations have started to move towards open conversation days to provide feedback (Dessler, 2020). Because PM is "one of the most persistent problem in organizations" (Gordon & Stewart, 2009, p. 473). Studies examining the effectiveness of PA and PMS provide empirical evidence that supports the argument that these systems do not fully accomplish their main purposes (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). This research suggests that these systems may require significant improvements or innovative solutions to better meet their intended goals. The notion is that if ratees get feedback about their performance, they will be encouraged and empowered to apply it, impacting their performance. The principal justification shareholders give while investing in PA and PMS is that it gives valued performance feedback to the ratees (Murphy, 2020). Feedback about a ratee's performance remains vital to the ratee motivation, training, satisfaction, and job performance (Greller & Herold, 1975; Christensen-Salem et al., 2018). The importance of job performance feedback is evident, which is essential for effective job performance; however, feedback is rarely given and often misused (Steelman & Williams, 2019). It seems that the idea of feedback is questionable (Murphy, 2020).

Furthermore, the vital research study Kluger and DeNisi (1996) proposed that feedback messages resulted in lowering performance as much as one-third of the time instead of improving it. Feedback-related studies further present mixed findings. Few authors contend feedback impacts performance (DeNisi & Smith, 2014), while others present the opposite findings (Atwater et al., 2007; Atwater et al., 2002; Smither et al., 2005; Seifert et al., 2003). For example, feedback-related studies are questioned by scholars on the ground that feedback will not impact job performance and save time; unless researchers start thinking systemically about how people's beliefs and attitudes

towards feedback can be enhanced (Dahling et al.,2017; Chawla et al., 2016). It seems that ratee differences in receiving feedback can impact its effectiveness to a great extent. For example, some ratees might like to receive feedback & act on it. While on the other hand, some ratees may discard feedback, let alone act on it. In a nutshell, existing theory and research indicate that ratees' and raters' attributes and behaviors affect their feedback giving and seeking to a great extent. Further, to decrease reliance on a formal evaluation, rater engagement in daily PM behaviors is recommended (Adler et al., 2016), which will help PM in delivering its commitment (Pulakos et al., 2015). Therefore, if ratee job performance is considered a primary focus of the PM, this might be achieved using effective PM behavior by rater.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | Rater Performance Management (PM) Behaviors

Researchers in the past linked different work-related outcomes, such as setting goals (DeShon et al., 2004), providing feedback (Kinicki et al., 2004), and coaching (Liu & Batt, 2010), to the PM process. Nevertheless, Kinicki et al. (2013) compiled all prior research and discovered six different dimensions of PM behaviors. As per Kinicki et al. (2013) and Aguinis (2019), the first dimension of rater PM behavior consisted of the 'process of goal setting'. Goal setting displays the capacity of a rater to satisfactorily set up ratee developmental and job performance-related objectives aligned with the strategic vision and goals of the organization (Kinicki et al., 2013). Furthermore, these goals must be jointly agreed upon and must be challenging (Kinicki et al., 2013). Past research indicates no difference in terms of effectiveness between goals set up by ratees, assigned by the rater, or mutually agreed (Locke & Latham, 1990). However, research conducted by Buchner (2007) shows that in the management process, now ratees hope for more mutually agreed goals and more empowerment as it directly impacts their jobs and rewards. Furthermore, a research study by Steinmann et al. (2018), transformational leaders enable followers to be responsible for the goals they agreed to. Minimum a rater is expected to set ratee goals which impact their subsequent performance (Tseng & Levy, 2019). The second dimension of rater PM behaviors is comprised of 'coaching.' Defining coaching may differ based on perception, intended addressee, context, and goals (Carey et al., 2011; p. 53). For instance, Heslin et al. (2006) narrowly define coaching as a rater who gives feedback and offers insight by inspiring and providing direction to enhance job performance. On the other hand, researchers, i.e., Liu and Batt (2010), comprehend coaching as a broader process consisting of raters setting goals, giving direction in terms of feedback, and assisting ratees in taking on complex problems or new challenges (p. 270–271). However, the central premise of coaching in these definitions remains constant. As per (Kinicki et al., 2013), coaching is a rater behavior that aims to increase ratee job performance. Coaching aims to bring changes into ratee behavior so that the ratee can enhance their forthcoming job performance (Aguinis, 2019). Moreover, prior research linked coaching with ratee job performance (Agarwal et al., 2009; Ellinger et al., 2003; Gilley et al., 2010; Hagen, 2010; Liu & Batt, 2010). Above all, the prime aim of coaching is to bring changes to ratees' behavior and set a path for them for how the ratee would act differently in the future (Aguinis, 2013). Kinicki (2013) proposed that feedback is the third dimension of PM behaviors. Performance feedback is "information about performance that allows a person to change his/her behavior" (Daniels & Bailey, 2014, p. 157). Feedback is a crucial component of any PMS. While performance feedback is not a silver bullet, when delivered effectively, it can indeed enhance performance (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). Properly administered feedback can have a positive impact on ratee performance, making it an essential aspect of PM. Previous studies have consistently shown that raters' positive feedback, perceived by ratees as supportive and encouraging behavior (Hamzah et al., 2021), has a profound and accelerated impact on employees' attitude, behavior, and performance (Evans & Dobrosielska, 2021; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Su & Xiao, 2022; Wondim et al., 2021). Feedback can only be translated into action and behaviors when feedback and standards given by raters match the actuality (Riordan, 2020).). The role of feedback in enhancing job performance is further substantiated by the work of Daba et al., (2024), which reveals that nurses who perceive feedback on performance appraisals are significantly more likely to exhibit good performance. Furthermore, studies have shown that when supervisors actively engage in providing constructive feedback, it can lead to improved employee performance outcomes (Wu et al., 2024) Another critical dimension of PM behavior is communication. Kinicki et al. (2013) defined communication as understanding and exchanging information among individuals. It is well known that communication is considered to be the cornerstone of every business's success (Pongton & Suntrayuth, 2019). Huang et al. (2018) research shows that rater safety communication enhances ratee safety performance. Poor communication between ratees and their raters leads to ratee turnover intention (Kim et al., 2010; Adebayo & Ogunsina, 2011). Further, effective communication between rater and ratee leads to job performance (Mishra et al., 2014). Research by Huerta-González et al. (2024) indicates that effective

communication between nurse managers and their staff is vital for understanding needs and providing necessary support. This two-way communication fosters a supportive environment where employees feel valued and understood, which is essential for their performance and well-being. Furthermore, the findings of El-Sayed et al. (2024) suggest that supervisors who actively share knowledge and information contribute significantly to their subordinates' creativity and performance, reinforcing the idea that knowledge sharing is a vital supervisory behavior that enhances team dynamics. Another dimension of rater PM behaviors is providing consequences which means if the rater rewards extraordinary performance connects rewards and performance, and recognize exceptional performance (Kinicki et al., 2013). Every PM cycle is followed by providing consequences. It deals with rewarding behavior consistent with agreed goals. This dimension amalgamates other activities to improve performance (Cardy, 2004; Cascio, 2006). As per Kinicki et al. (2013), the meta-analysis by (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997) linked the consequential behavior of raters with job performance. The latest research study by (Schwarz et al., 2020) indicates that public servants accountability increases their performance. In research work, recognition has been linked with job performance in challenging financial situations (Romero & Kleiner, 2000). A just reward system impacts ratee forthcoming job performance (Bamel et al., 2013). Furthermore, the result of (Rai et al., 2018) indicates that good rewards and recognition systems enhance engagement and job performance. However, the recognition system's effectiveness depends on the frequency, must focus on all ratees, and must depict a genuine sense of appreciation (Limaye et al., 2013, p. 19). Prior research well documents the fact that HR practices (i.e., rewards system) help increase the motivation of ratees and their job performance (Deeprose, 1994; Qureshi et al., 2010). Ratees who perceive that their supervisors are willing to negotiate specific arrangements that cater to their individual needs are more likely to exhibit higher levels of job performance and lower turnover intentions (Bohle, 2024). The last dimension of PM behavior is establishing and monitoring performance. Commonly, monitoring is considered a rater's job (Komaki,1986). Monitoring is a central component of an effective rater (Komaki, 1986). The term (monitoring performance) is used for many work-related procedures, which is used to collect ratee job performance data (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Aiello & Svec, 1993; Komaki et al., 1986). The relationship between monitoring and job performance is not new. Hawthorne studies, conducted about a century ago, also concluded that monitoring ratees enhances their productivity. These studies were aimed to check the light's effect on human productivity but concluded that human productivity is increased due to being closely monitored. The study conducted by Gale (2004) also confirmed that individuals change their behavior when being monitored. The effort ratees put into a task is influenced by how the rater monitors them (Brewer, 1995; Brewer & Ridgway, 1998; Larson & Callahan, 1990).

2.2 | Feedback Orientation

Over the past decades, almost 49% of empirical research studied individual differences in PM research (Schleicher et al., 2018). One such individual difference variable in PM feedback research gaining prominence is feedback orientation (Hawass, 2017). Feedback orientation, an individual difference variable, represents an individual's openness and receptivity to feedback (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010; London & Smither, 2002). This individual difference variable (feedback orientation) also affects every process of PMS (Schleicher et al., 2018). In a research study by Dahling et al. (2012), rater feedback environment and emotional intelligence were antecedents of the feedback orientation. In another study by Wang et al. (2015), the researchers investigated the impact of age on feedback orientation. Their results indicated that older ratees also scored high on the social awareness dimension but low on the utility dimension of feedback orientation. Similarly, Dahling and O'Malley (2011) argue that a ratee feedback experience with the rater is an antecedent of feedback orientation. Other study (e.g., Dahling et al., 2016) found that rater's coaching ability influences ratee feedback orientation. Supportive raters who provide accurate feedback may improve their ratee feedback orientation. Other researchers assert that receptivity towards feedback can be developed via effective PMS, which enhances ratee orientation towards coaching (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010; London & Smither, 2002).

A rater needs to develop feedback orientation in their ratees as it is linked to many important organizational outcomes. Any strategy of PMS along with the feedback process is aimed to impact ratee job performance, which can further trigger organizational performance (Schleicher et al., 2018; Schleicher et al., 2019). Simply stating, even the best designed PMS will not be able to yields results if ratees are disinterested in feedback or have low feedback orientation (Patel et al., 2019). London and Smither (2002) proposed that ratees having high feedback orientation are likely to act positively on the feedback received from the raters. In line with the proposition made by London and their colleagues, other researchers also call that individuals having high feedback orientation are likely to seek feedback frequently and subsequently enhance performance (London, 2001, 2003; London & Maurer, 2004; London

& Sessa, 2006). Ratees scoring high on feedback orientation are also anticipated to utilize that same feedback for personal development and career enhancement (Patel et al., 2019). Moreover, it is hypothetically assumed that individuals who are high on feedback orientation are likely to regulate better their emotional response to feedback (Braddy et al., 2013; Dahling et al., 2012). This emotional control can assist in feedback acceptance and help in effectively utilizing negative feedback (Ilgen & Davis, 2000). Individuals having high feedback orientation are expected to have a mindset that acts to learn from mistakes (London & Smither, 2002; Linderbaum & Levy, 2010). Learning from prior mistakes impacts ratee's job performance. Because performance change is encouraged by feedback, this is why it is received by those who are interested in performance improvement and learning (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Moreover, individuals having high feedback orientation are likely to view feedback as helpful, even if it is critical (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010). Therefore, feedback importance is widely recognized in motivating and directing behaviors (Andiola & Bedard, 2018). In a meta-analysis by Katz (2020), it was found that feedback orientation is positively related to job performance (r = 0.35)

2.3 | Job Performance

Simply defining job performance is a behavior of accomplishment in an individual, which contains certain measurable elements (Motowildo et al., 1997). Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) defined job performance as task executed by a ratee. However, the definition and conceptualization of performance have significantly progressed during the last century (Matta & Van Dyne, 2015) and there are multiple definitions available in the prior literature (Darvishmotevali & Ali 2020). Initially, it was conceptualized to the extent of task performance (Matta & Van Dyne, 2015). But in the last five decades, several variables have been identified contributing to the organization's effectiveness but could not only be captured by task performance (Campbell et al., 1993). For example, while searching for the definition of performance, the researcher identified four performance-related variables studied in the past literature. The critical variable studied capturing performance is task performance. It is a type of performance that captures to what extent an individual achieves their known job-related prerequisite and expectations (Campbell et al., 1993) or what a ratee achieves during the job (Darvishmotevali & Ali 2020). The second type of variable capturing performance is affiliative extra-role behavior. In this type of performance, ratees go beyond the defined job expectation, benefit the organization, and also maintain relationships (Vandyne et al., 1995). Another type of performance is change-oriented extra-role behavior. Here the ratee engage in all required behaviors while at work (Fogaça et al., 2018). They also preserve the relationship and recommending change to the status quo (Vandyne et al., 1995). The final type of performance is adaptive performance, where ratees cope with change and support change that impacts their job roles (Pulakos et al., 2000). This research adopts the operational definition of ratee job performance by Thompson (2005) and Armstrong (2006). They operationalize job performance as the extent or degree to which ratee productivity meets the benchmarks of organization performance (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2018). Further, the latest research by Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) also defines job performance as the capacity of ratee to acheives the organization expectations.

3 | DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Data for the study was collected from white-collar employees working in the telecom sector in Islamabad. We collected data in two waves and from both employees and their immediate supervisors to deal with common method bias. We excluded questionnaires from individuals who departed from the organization before the end of the year, as they were not evaluated for job performance or did not provide acceptance-related feedback at time-2. Moreover, we adopted a purposive or selective sampling approach to collect data from the respondents who fulfilled the conditions required to be participants. At Time 1 (June 2023), during the midpoint of the PM cycle, the researcher collected data from ratees on rater's PM behaviors and ratees' feedback orientation. At Time 2 (January 2024), which coincided with the end of the PM cycle when feedback was provided and performance evaluations occurred, data on ratees' job performance were collected from their immediate supervisors. In Time 1, a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed among subordinates of which 373 were returned. Of 373, 8 responses were incomplete, leaving 365 complete responses. Of the 365 ratees from Time-1, 28 ratees left the organization when we reached out to collect Time 2 data, resulting in a 327 ratee data. These 327 ratees were nested in 58 dyads (supervisor-employee pairs), hence we collected data from their supervisors to rate performance of these 327 subordinates. Of 58 raters, only 49 submitted their responses, with 3 being incomplete, which resulted in a final sample of 301 rater-ratee dyads (Ratee n=301, Rater n=46). 06 responses were removed due to outliers, resulting in 295 final sample.

3.1 | Instrumentation

Data was collected from participants using self-administered questionnaires, All scales were adopted from previous studies and measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree. Rater PM behaviors were assessed using a 27-item scale adapted from Kinicki et al. (2013), comprising six dimensions. An example item was "My supervisor gives special recognition for exceptional performance." Feedback orientation was measured with a 20-item scale comprised of four dimensions. The scale was developed by Linderbaum and Levy (2010). An example item was "I feel confident when responding to both positive and negative feedback." Lastly, the job performance scale was adopted from Thompson (2005), which built upon the original scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1982) with minor adjustments. It consisted of four items. The sample item was "This subordinate attains the goal he/ she set".

3.2 | Data Aggregation

Since this research data was multilevel, i.e., subordinates' data nested in supervisors, the researcher aggregated the individual rated measures to the supervisor level. To justify the aggregation, the researcher first calculated the Intraclass Coefficients (ICC1 and ICC2) of Level 2 variables, namely rater PM behavior. The researcher found that the ICC values of rater PM behavior (ICC1 = .45; ICC2 = .83) met the recommended threshold of .12 (Zhang & Tu, 2018) and .50 (Bliese 2000) for ICC1 and ICC2, respectively. Furthermore, the results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for rater PM behaviors (F = 8.83, p < .001) revealed that these constructs significantly differ across raters, providing further support for the aggregation and multilevel analyses (Badar et al., 2023).

3.3 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

CFA was run to test the model's fitness and construct distinctiveness. Constructs were modeled as latent variables with their items or scale means as indicators. For example, rater PM behaviors were modeled as one latent factor with the six scale means as indicators, and job performance was modeled as a latent factor with four items as indicators. This approach is widely used by organizational behavior researchers (e.g., Akkermans & Tims, 2017). Moreover, following Yang et al. (2023). This research hypothesized three-factor model comprising rater PM behaviors, feedback orientation, job performance yielded an adequate fit to the data: x^2 = 203.58, df = 58, CFI = .90, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .09, and SRMR = .07. The CFI was greater than .80 (Lin et al., 2022), and SRMR was less than .08 (Jimenez-Barreto et al., 2022). Although RMSEA was equal to .09, however as per Hair et al. (2007), RMSEA greater than .10 with a CFI higher than 0.8 represents an acceptable fit. Hence, this research baseline model demonstrated an acceptable fit to the data. One item of job performance was deleted due to factor loading less than .5.

4 | RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

Furthermore, the researcher examined the convergent validity of constructs by calculating the AVE and composite reliability scores. The threshold for AVE and compositive reliability are .5 and .7, respectively (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). As shown in Table 4.4, this research results demonstrated that all constructs had AVE and compositive reliability scores greater than the recommended threshold. Only rater PM behaviors had an AVE score of .41. However, as per Hair et al. (2016), an AVE greater than .4 is generally considered acceptable. Hence, the convergent validity of study variables was established. Next, following the suggestion of Fornell and Larcker (1981), the researcher assessed the discriminant validity of constructs by comparing the square root of the AVE of each contract with the inner construct correlations. As can be seen in Table 4.3, the square root of AVE was higher than the inner construct correlations, establishing the discriminant validity of the construct.

Table 1
Survey Items

Items	Factor loading	AVE	CR
Rater PM behaviors		.42	.81
Process of Goal Setting	.61		
Communication	.71		
Feedback	.63		
Coaching	.77		
Providing Consequences	.54		
Performance expectations	.59		
Feedback orientation		.51	.80
Feedback Utility	.67		
Accountability	.61		
Social Awareness	.77		
Self Efficacy	.75		
Job performance		.46	.71
This subordinate set high goals for themselves.	.63		
This subordinate attains the goal he/ she set.	.65		
This subordinate achieves the required work outcomes.	.74		

Note: Standardized coefficients are reported. AVE = average shared variance. CR = composite reliability

4.1 | Hypotheses Testing

The researcher ran multilevel structural equation modeling in Mplus software. In particular, this research model was a 2→1→1 model where a Level 2 variable (i.e., rater PM behaviors) affects a Level 1 variable (i.e., job performance) via mediation of Level 1 variable. The results revealed that rater PM behaviors positively relates to ratee feedback orientation ($\beta = .754$, $p < .01$) and job performance ($\beta = .847$, $p < .01$). Similarly, feedback orientation was positively related to ratee job performance ($\beta = .187$, $p < .01$). Next indirect effects were calculated. Following Aboramdan and Kundi (2023), calculated indirect effects were calculated by multiplying the path coefficients at organizational level. This is because indirect effects that start with a between (organizational) level predictor occur only at the between (organizational) level (Zhang et al., 2009). Hence, in support of the Hypothesis 2, the researcher found a positive indirect effect of rater PM behaviors on ratee job performance via rater feedback orientation (indirect effect = .692, 95%, $p < .01$).

Table 2
Results of Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling

Path	Estimate	P value
RPMB → Job performance	.847	.000
RPMB → Feedback orientation	.754	.000
Feedback orientation → Job performance	.187	.000
RPMB → Feedback orientation → Job performance	.692	.000

Notes: n (individual) = 295; n (raters) = 46; RPMB = rater performance management behaviors.

5 | DISCUSSION

In this study, an attempt was made to establish the correlation between rater PM behaviors and ratee job performance. This research has provided findings that raters with high level of PM behaviors like goal setting,

communication, evaluating, coaching, providing consequences as well as performance expectations would likely to have ratees with higher job performance. Present findings underscore the modality of PM, with raters playing strategic and active involvement as they support their ratees in the course of implementation. By doing so, organizations can create a work environment that fosters growth, development, and high performance among ratees. It thus calls for organizations to incorporate investing in PM training and development programs in order to equip the raters with all the required skills and knowledge as far as ratees management and development is concerned.

It is well established that raters significantly influence organizations, akin to a helmsman guiding a ship (Damanpour & Schneider, 2006; Lin et al., 2022; Sampaio et al., 2021). Raters' daily behaviors set the tone for their team's attitudes, behaviors, and productivity (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003; Lee et al., 2019). In alignment with this, this research findings indicate that rater behaviors, setting clear goals, communicates, providing regular feedback, coaching, providing consequences and performance expectations, positively impact ratee job performance, supporting the notion that effective PM is crucial for improving ratee performance (Aguinis, 2013). Effective rater PM behavior can significantly impact ratee and organizational performance, necessitating appropriate management practices to address ratee performance issues (Asif & Rathore, 2021). These findings align with recent literature highlighting the importance of rater behaviors in PMS (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). Previous research has confirmed that positive feedback from raters, perceived by ratees as supportive and encouraging behavior, tends to accelerate improvements in ratee attitudes, behaviors, and performance (e.g. Evans & Dobrosielska, 2021; Hamzah et al., 2021; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Su & Xiao, 2022; Wondim et al., 2021). Furthermore, research emphasizes the significance of PM in achieving organizational goals (Cascio, 2014) and suggests that raters who foster a positive work environment can encourage ratees to take ownership of their performance (Gubbins & Rousseau, 2015). Conversely, raters who fail to provide adequate feedback and coaching may hinder ratee performance, leading to decreased job satisfaction and engagement (Rynes et al., 2005).

6 | CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between rater PM behaviors and ratee job performance, with a specific focus on the mediating role of feedback orientation. Notably, feedback orientation plays a crucial mediating role in this relationship. Ratees with high feedback orientation tend to benefit more from rater effective PM behaviors, emphasizing the importance of feedback orientation in shaping ratee job performance. By exhibiting effective PM behaviors such as setting clear goals, communicates, providing regular feedback, coaching, providing consequences and performance expectations, raters can enhance ratees' understanding of the value and purpose of feedback, leading to increased feedback utility. Additionally, effective PM behaviors promote a sense of accountability among ratees, encouraging them to take ownership of their performance and feedback. Furthermore, raters with effective PM behaviors help ratees develop a greater awareness of their social context as well, thereby increasing social awareness. Lastly, effective PM behaviors can also boost ratees' self-efficacy, empowering them to believe in their ability to perform well and achieve their goals. Overall, the results highlight the critical role that raters play in shaping ratee feedback orientation and ultimately, job performance. This finding aligns with previous research. London and Smither (2002) theoretically proposed that effective coaching and leadership behaviors can help ratees develop a positive attitude towards the usefulness of feedback. Additionally, Hawass (2017) found that paternalistic leadership is positively associated with feedback utility, accountability, awareness, and self-efficacy. Research has shown that feedback can facilitate learning (Ilgen et al., 1979), motivation (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996), and performance in organizations (London, 2003). London and Smither's (2002) theoretical model of PM noted that feedback orientation influences how individuals receive, process, and use feedback, impacting important outcomes such as behavioral changes and performance improvement.

As noted by Ambrose and Schminke (2003) and Lee et al. (2019), raters' daily actions and words profoundly impact ratees' attitudes, behavior, and performance. Dahling et al. (2012) argue that ratees with high feedback orientation are better equipped to handle emotional reactions to feedback, process feedback more meaningfully, and use it effectively to set job-related objectives and enhance performance. Furthermore, Li et al. (2022) explored the impact of supervisor developmental feedback on subordinates' task performance through the lens of conservation of resources theory, highlighting the mediating effect of relational energy. This study emphasizes how feedback positively influences task performance by enhancing relational energy. Similarly, Cai et al. (2022) investigated the influence of supervisor developmental feedback on ratee innovative behavior, revealing the mediating role of psychological safety and the moderating effect of face orientation. Their research underscores the significance of

feedback in promoting innovative behaviors among ratees and its impact on job performance through mechanisms like psychological safety.

7 | IMPLICATIONS

The PMS serves as a double-edged sword in organizations. On one hand, it aids in administrative and developmental decisions such as pay, promotions, firing, and training needs assessment. On the other hand, it aims to improve ratee's job performance by setting future goals. As discussed in the introduction of this research, despite organizations investing in PMS, the intended benefits are often not realized. Recent debates in the field of PM suggest that rather than enhancing performance, PMS can sometimes diminish it. This study indicates that organizations might benefit more by focusing on developing effective rater PM behaviors, which significantly impact ratee performance. The results highlight the need for organizations to prioritize rater training programs that focus on developing effective PM behaviors, such as goal setting, regular feedback, and coaching. Past research on feedback presents mixed results, with inconsistent effects on performance. A comprehensive analysis by Kluger and DeNisi (1996) of nearly a century of research revealed that feedback does not consistently improve performance. In fact, in one-third of cases, feedback led to a decrease in subsequent performance (Murphy & DeNisi, 2023). This research findings suggest that organizations should not assume that feedback is universally beneficial. Instead, they should assess individual ratees feedback orientation and seeking behaviors before deciding whether to provide feedback. This tailored approach acknowledges that feedback may not be equally valuable or effective for all ratees and can help organizations maximize the benefits of feedback while minimizing potential negative consequences. By adopting a more nuanced and ratee-centered approach to feedback, organizations can create a more effective and supportive PM culture.

8 | LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Initially, the sample size was limited, with only two telecom companies in Islamabad agreeing to participate in this study. Due to time and resource constraints, the researcher was unable to collect data from a wider population in other cities of Pakistan. The inability to obtain data from other telecom organizations, such as Ufone and Telenor, may have limited the generalizability of the findings and restricted the breadth of insights. Future research should aim to include a more diverse and representative sample by collecting data from all telecom organizations in Islamabad and potentially expanding to other cities and industries. Secondly, the measurement tools used in the study may not have fully captured the complexities of the variables being studied, potentially leading to measurement errors or omissions. Future researchers could explore the use of alternative methods, such as qualitative interviews or focus groups, to gain a deeper understanding of these constructs and their interrelationships. Thirdly, although the study employed a time-lag design, which is an improvement over a traditional cross-sectional design, it still limits the ability to draw causal inferences and understand longitudinal effects. The time-lag design allows for some insight into temporal relationships, but it remains difficult to determine the direction of causality or the long-term effects of the variables on each other. To fully understand the causal relationships and temporal dynamics, a longitudinal design with multiple data points over an extended period would be necessary. Future research should consider developing feedback needs assessment tool to identify ratee's specific feedback needs and preferences. This tool could assess individual differences in feedback orientation (London & Smither, 2002).

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