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Rater's Intention Towards Appraising Accurately

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to stimulate thoughts and introduce new prospects to the study of performance appraisal accuracy, especially in the raters' perspective. It focuses on a relatively understudied aspect of performance appraisal which is raters' intention towards appraising accurately. In order to understand the application of this aspect, this paper attempts to develop a conceptual framework based on hypotheses of the direct and indirect factors that predict the raters' intention to appraise accurately. It is hypothesized that the raters' experience in appraising, raters' perceived purposes of appraisal, and raters' perceived information adequacy for appraising will predict the raters' intention towards appraising accurately by influencing the raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately.

Keywords: performance appraisal accuracy, behavioral intentions, attitudes, perceived subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, background factors

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of conducting performance appraisal is to provide accurate appraisal that serve the purpose of feedback and performance information. In ratee's perspective, the main goal of performance appraisal is to get accurate feedback of their performance, whether their strengths or weaknesses, for current appraisal year in order for them to change and improve their performance. While it is important to study the ratee's reactions

towards performance appraisal process, raters' perspective plays an equally important role in understanding the appraising process. Raters' main goal is to identify useful information of ratee's performance by providing appraisal as accurate as possible in order to report the ratee's real performance. This is exceptionally important as the main function of performance appraisal system in most organizations is to provide utilizable performance information of the ratees in making human resource decisions whether it is for between person decisions (e.g., promotion and salary increments); within person decisions (e.g., feedback and identifying training needs); system maintenance (e.g., manpower planning and evaluation of human resource systems); or documentation (e.g., criteria for validity studies and meeting legal needs) (Cleveland, Murphy, & Williams, 1989). Any equal, accurate appraisal is better than inaccurate appraisal (DeNisi, 2011). Hence, raters' appraisal accuracy is deemed essential in making the performance appraisal perceived as objective, fair, and transparent by the ratees.

The focus of performance appraisal accuracy research shifted its format from rating scales (Bernardin, La Shells, Smith, & Alvares, 1976; Landy & Farr, 1980; Thorndike, 1920) to rater trainings (Day & Sulsky, 1995), rater cognitive process (DeNisi, Cafferty, & Meglino, 1984; Feldman, 1981; Ilgen & Feldman, 1983), rater affects (Tsui & Barry, 1986), rater motivations (Banks & Murphy, 1985; Harris, 1994; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995), and also rater goals and intentions (Murphy, 2008; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995; Spence & Keeping, 2013). Past research indicated that performance appraisal accuracy was heavily investigated because accurate appraisal were likely to be perceived by ratees as fairer, acceptable and they tend to respond positively to feedback (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). DeNisi (2011) found that the problem investigating performance appraisal accuracy as dependent variable in field setting lies in the difficulty to obtain "true scores" (direct measure of accuracy) and incorrect proxy to relate appraisal accuracy with rating errors (indirect measure of accuracy).

Since it is difficult to directly measure accuracy and rating errors, it does not mean it is inaccurate. Therefore it is proposed

that the measurement of raters' intention towards appraising accurately may be used to measure appraisal accuracy indirectly in the field setting. In order to appraise, raters must possess a certain amount and degree of intentions to conduct such difficult task, which is appraising others based on a set of objective and subjective performance aspects. Based on Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), behavioral intentions are the most proximal predictor of behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005) as it explains a variance between 19% and 38% of the behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2001). In other words, individuals who hold high intentions to perform a particular behavior will be more likely to behave as they intended to.

Review on literature emphasizing on a broad range of intentions that raters possess when appraising rates (Spence & Keeping, 2011) such as intention to appraise accurately, avoiding conflicts, to be benevolent and/or manage impressions (Spence & Keeping, 2013) was made. Spence and Keeping (2013) suggested that some intentions may be complementary while others may be competing. For instance, they found that "it is possible that when there is a strong intention to appraise accurately, the effects of other intentions are ameliorated" and "the combination of strong intention to appraise to avoid conflict and to appraise benevolently may provide exceptionally lenient and generous appraisal" (p. 17) which might not be accurate. Based on the example given, intention to appraise accurately is predominant in raters' appraisal intentions because it improved other intentions by reducing inaccuracies such as avoiding conflicts, acting benevolent and managing impressions.

Based on the discussions above, it is assumed that one of the causes of appraisal inaccuracy is due to raters' intentional manipulation. Raters are capable to appraise accurately and the motivation to appraise accurately more likely to be the result of raters' intention to provide accurate appraisals rather than raters' capacity to appraise accurately. This is because raters are rarely motivated to provide accurate appraisal and may, in some cases, be strongly motivated to provide inaccurate appraisals such as refusing to give low ratings. Banks and Murphy (1985) stated that "organizations must also consider factors which affect each raters' willingness to record faithfully the judgments he or she made" (p.343). Hence, this paper attempts to develop propositions for the direct and indirect factors that influence raters' intention towards

appraising accurately based on the Theory of Planned Behavior framework.

This paper is divided into five sections. First, a brief overview of the performance management and performance appraisal process research is offered. The second section of this paper provides discussion of raters' appraisal accuracy research. Next, the theoretical framework is reviewed. The fourth section discusses the hypotheses development of direct and indirect factors that predict raters' intention towards appraising accurately. The final section provides the significant of the study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) founded by Ickes Ajzen and Martin Fishbein. The basic of TRA is to predict individual's behavioral intention. There are three general constructs in TRA, namely behavioral intentions, attitudes and subjective norms. It is suggested that individual tend to have strong intentions (motivation) to perform behavior in question when he/she evaluates the behavioral outcome as positive (attitudes) and believes that individual or group of individuals who are important to him/her approve the behavior (subjective norms). When the individual possesses such strong intentions, hence there is a high probability that the individual will perform the behavior. However, individual's intentions to perform a behavior do not always accurately predict the behavior in question due to the control factors. This showed that intention is not an exclusive determinant for individual performing behavior in question. Therefore, the problem of non-volitional behavior is reduced by introducing the perceived behavioral control factor into TRA and the new framework was being named as TPB as in Figure 1.

A number of meta-analyses research gave a good support to use TPB in understanding and predicting behavioral intentions (Albarracín, Johnson, Fishbein, & Muellerleile, 2001; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Godin & Kok, 1996; Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002; Sheeran & Taylor, 1999). The value of mean correlation for the relationship between attitudes and intentions is 0.45-0.60, subjective norms and intentions is 0.34-0.42, and perceived behavioral control and intentions is 0.35-0.46. However, the TPB assumed that the relative importance between attitudes, subjective norms, and

perceived behavioral control depends on the behavioral intention being studied. Some intentions being studied concerned more about individual's attitude as to compare with subjective norms while other intentions weighted more on perceived behavioral control. In certain situations, only one or two factors needed to explain individual intentions while others may be explained using all three factors. Instead of that, the relative weightage of the three factors may not be the same according to different individuals and population. Therefore, it is an opportunity to study about the direct and indirect predictor variables and weightage of each predictor in predicting raters' intentions in rendering appraisal, especially intention to appraise accurately.

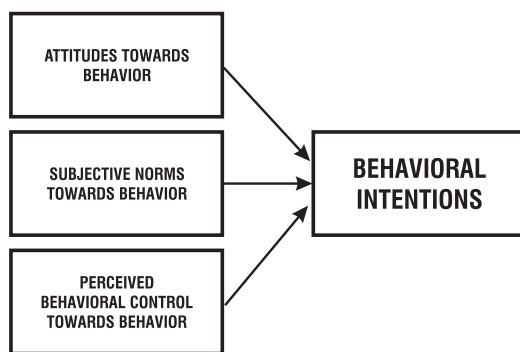


Figure 1. *Theory of Planned Behavior Model*

The raters' intentions to perform a behavior are influenced by direct and indirect factors. Ajzen (1991) proposed that the behavioral intentions determined directly by attitudes towards behavior, perceived subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes towards behavior refer to the raters' overall evaluation that comprises affective and cognitive aspects whether positively or negatively towards the behavior. Perceived subjective norms towards behavior coined as the raters' perception towards individual or group of individuals that are important to them whether to behave or not to behave in a particular manner. Perceived behavioral control termed as the raters' perception towards one's ability to behave in a particular way. For example, rater who have high level of intention to appraise accurately tend to have positive attitude towards appraising accurately, perceived subjective norms that encourage rater to appraise accurately and rater have a strong perception that they are capable to render an accurate appraisal.

Indirect or background factors, such as personal

factors, situational factors, and informational factors, influence raters' intentions to perform a behavior. Raters' personal factors such as experience in rendering appraisal is measured based on the number of years of experience in appraising and involvement in formal training especially for performance appraisal program. Situational factors such as purposes of appraisal is divided into two main purposes namely administrative (increment, promotion and conferment) and development (feedback and training) which measured based on raters' perception of appraisal purposes. Informational factors such as perceived adequacy of information is measured based on the raters' self-report of information sufficiency in terms of performance appraisal system policy and process, guidelines in rendering appraisal, performance aspects to be rated and rates' work performance observation and monitoring. Both the direct and indirect factors to understand and predict the intention towards appraising accurately are illustrated in Figure 2.

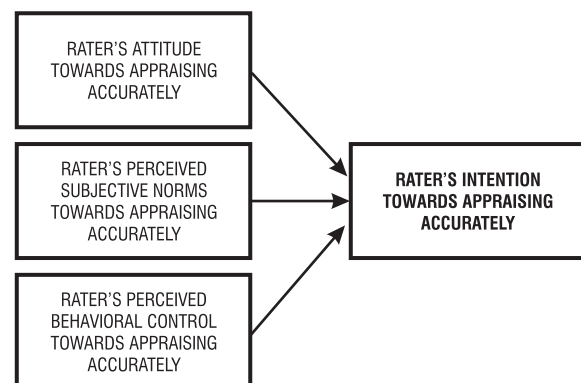


Figure 2. *Conceptual framework*

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

Performance management is arguably one of the most important reform initiatives under the New Public Management. Performance management is a system that linked performance information to human resource decision making. Performance information is gathered via the performance appraisal system which is one part of the performance management process. The utilization of performance information is at the highest level when the information provided is accurate. Hence, accuracy of appraisal is essential so that the utilization of such information can be used for the development of perfor-

mance appraisal process and system.

Performance appraisal process had been researched to improve performance appraisal accuracy. Basically, the research on performance appraisal process can be deduced into two main focus which are (1) improvement on the process design (such as including new performance aspects and scales, increasing the interaction between raters and ratees, and involving more raters) and (2) improvement on the process implementation (such as providing better trainings, having strict enforcement on the rules and procedures, and checking on the raters consistency and bias). These initiatives to increase the performance appraisal accuracy turned up unfruitful because the source of the problem is not on the process design or implementation but the raters' intentions. Appraisal accuracy does not only depend on obeying the rules, understanding the appraisal principle, and having commitment in rendering accurate appraisal but also on having the raters' intention to appraise accurately. The next session will discuss the progress of appraisal accuracy research in raters' context with the aim of understanding more on the limitations and propose an alternative perspective to research on raters' appraisal accuracy.

RATERS' APPRAISAL ACCURACY RESEARCH

The concept of appraisal accuracy is used to observe the appraisal quality. The quality of appraisal is one of the most important criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process. Previous researchers stated that the most suitable criterion used to evaluate appraisal quality is based on the accuracy of appraisal made by raters (Bernardin & Pence, 1980).

The term appraisal accuracy is used to explain the type of relationship that exists between a set of measurement and another set of measurement (appraisal score versus "true score") as a benchmark that is widely accepted for the purpose of comparison (Guion, 1961). The appraisal accuracy is measured based on direct and indirect measurements. The direct measurement is calculated by comparing raters' appraisal towards a number of ratees (n) and a number of performance aspects (k) with appraisal by the expert raters. The expert raters' appraisal is calculated by averaging the scores of a group of expert raters to obtain "true score" for each ratee in each performance aspect (Borman, 1977). Then the raters' appraisal score ($n_1 \times k_1$) is compared with the averaged expert raters' appraisal score ($n_2 \times k_2$) to identify the

range of differences. The smaller the score differences, the more accurate the appraisal. In other words, performance appraisal accuracy is the relationship differences between "true score" and performance rating score. On the other hand, the indirect measurement of appraisal accuracy is measured based on the proxy related to rating errors such as leniency, halo, and central tendency.

The common use of indirect measurements of performance appraisal accuracy is being investigated to understand and reduce raters' errors in appraising because Landy and Farr (as cited in Sulsky & Balzer, 1988) found that there is no other objective ways for raters to appraise ratees' real performance. Therefore, performance appraisal accuracy is one of the issues being concerned by the raters. Raters are faced with difficulties to measure ratees' performance quality because each rater has different understanding on the performance aspects. Therefore, raters are normally being blamed for errors in terms of perceptions, judgments and responses that caused appraisal inaccuracy. Hence, the raters' appraisal accuracy has been the main subject to be studied by researchers and practitioners.

Performance appraisal process research focused on improving the accuracy of appraisal by developing better rating scales and training raters. A body of research developed better rating scales that could increase accuracy and defined as "the decrease of either rating errors or rater disagreements" (DeNisi, 2011: 264) such as Forced Distribution Rating Scales (Berkshire & Highland, 1953) or Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (Smith & Kendall, 1963) and provide trainings to the raters to reduce errors in their appraisal (Latham, Wexley, & Pursell, 1975). However, there was no evidence that any one rating scale is superior to other scales (Landy & Farr, 1980).

Then the performance appraisal accuracy research shifted to raters' cognitive process that are closely related to appraisal accuracy. It looks at raters as decision makers in processing ratees' performance appraisal by investigating how raters process the performance related information and appraise ratees based on the information. For example, the raters' cognitive process in processing limited information of performance appraisal such as acquiring, storing, retrieving and integrating observed ratees' performance information may cause errors and bias in appraisal.

Cognitive researchers attempted to understand and

tried ways to reduce raters' errors, bias, and subjectivity in the performance appraisal process. The studies based on proposed models (DeNisi, Cafferty, & Meglino, 1984; Feldman, 1981; Ilgen & Feldman, 1983) were almost in laboratory environment and used accuracy as dependent variable whereby it is possible to construct "true score" using Borman's (1977) videotapes procedures that portrayed known levels of performance that allowed for the direct measure of accuracy. However, the "true score" is difficult to obtain especially in the field. Although "true score" can be obtained in laboratory studies using videotapes, the results are not generalized and other factors, which affect the accuracy of appraisals, are not taken into account. As a result, researchers and practitioners rely upon proxies for accuracy such as proxies related to rating errors. It is assumed that the reduced in errors will improve accuracy. Again, this proves to be incorrect to a certain extent. The rating errors such as leniency or halo may not be errors but simply reflect response tendencies (Bernardin & Pence, 1980; DeNisi & Peters, 1996). In addition, it is shown that increased error such as halo error may actually increase accuracy (Murphy & Balzer, 1989).

After learning about these, researchers and practitioners found that the cognitive approach alone did not bring much improvements and changes in the performance appraisal process practically (Banks & Murphy, 1985; Bretz, Milkovich, & Read, 1992). This is because such approach only answered the questions on how raters appraise, which depends on their cognitive ability and memory power. The criticisms towards cognitive approach lead to non-cognitive research, such as social contexts (Banks & Murphy, 1985; Levy & Williams, 2004). The performance appraisal research mainly focused on raters' cognitive process and it resulted in the complex humanity and social factors that are not given sufficient attention. Hence, Levy and Williams (2004) had changed the way of looking at performance appraisal process research and they argued that social context plays a major role in the effectiveness of appraisal process.

Raters' effects had been found as one of the most studied rater variables in social contexts. Raters' effects can be explained either in terms of raters' personal feelings towards appraising task or their feelings towards their ratees in appraisal contexts. For the latter, rater liking or interpersonal affect towards ratees is one consistent theme in the research on social and motiva-

tional aspects of performance appraisal (Cardy & Dobbins, 1986; Lefkowitz, 2000; Tsui & Barry, 1986). Raters' affective regard or degree of liking to ratees impacts directly towards performance appraisal by appraising ratees based on the extent to which raters like each ratee without considering the ratee's actual job role performance or capabilities (Bernardin & Villanova, 1986). Previous findings indicated that raters who favor a ratee will appraise less accurate than raters who neither like nor dislike their ratees (Cardy & Dobbins, 1986). Tsui and Barry (1986) discovered that positive rater liking found to be more lenient and lower halo while negative rater liking to be least lenient and higher halo. Lefkowitz (2000) concluded from his review of 24 studies that positive rater liking is related to frequently higher appraisal ratings, less inclination to punish subordinates, better supervisor-subordinate relationships, greater halo and less accuracy.

Furthermore, raters' affective state and emotional factors towards appraising task cannot be ignored because they affect appraisal accuracy (Fried, Levi, Ben-David, Tiegs, & Avital, 2000; Judge & Ferris, 1993; Sinclair, 1988). Previous findings indicated that raters in good mood tend to recall more positive information from memory and tend to appraise more positively than rater experiencing neutral or negative moods. In addition, Sinclair (1988) demonstrated that raters in depressed moods tend to appraise more accurately because it is least subject to halo effects. However, it is difficult to see how observations on raters' mood can have any real practical applications, such as telling raters not to do appraisals when they are in bad mood. Instead, it is likely that doing the appraisal caused the bad mood. In order to enhance more influences on performance appraisal process research, it may need a greater collaboration between scholars and practitioners to address the social realities of organizational life and circumstances.

The second area of the social context is the research on raters' motivation. Performance appraisal model (Harris, 1994; Levy & Williams, 2004; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995) and performance appraisal research (Murphy, Cleveland, Skattebo, & Kinney, 2004; Spence & Keeping, 2010; Wong & Kwong, 2007) started to pay attention back to raters' motivation in performance appraisal process. Traditionally, it is assumed that raters were motivated to appraise accurately (Levy & Williams, 2004). Raters' motivation had been studied as indepen-

dent variables in performance appraisal research (Decotiis & Petit, 1978) and it showed that there is relationship between raters' motivation to appraise accurately and performance appraisal factors. For instance, a more experience rater is motivated to render a more accurate appraisal compare to a less experience rater. Instead, raters' perceived developmental purposes in conducting performance appraisal tend to be motivated to render accurate appraisal compare to administrative purposes. In addition, raters possess a high level of motivation when raters need to discuss appraisal results and provide feedback to ratees with the condition that raters have adequate information to appraise.

In order to understand other elements of raters' motivation and how motivation affects the appraisal process, lines of research on raters' motivation had focused on raters' feelings of discomfort in conducting performance appraisal (Villanova, Bernardin, Dahmus, & Sims, 1993); raters' personality (Bernardin, Cooke, & Villanova, 2000); raters' attribution (Struthers, Weiner, & Allred, 1998); and raters' accountability (Klimoski & Inks, 1990). However, Levy and Williams (2004) found that the researchers began to question "whether all or even most raters are truly motivated to appraise accurately" (p.887).

Bearing that in mind, researchers turn to examine raters' goals and intentions which are more applicable in organizational life (Murphy, 2008; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995; Spence & Keeping, 2013). In performance appraisal, ratees' main goal is to improve their performance while raters are expected to provide a more accurate appraisal so that the performance information provided by raters will be utilized by the organizations in order to make any human resource decisions. Therefore, raters must have the willingness or intention to conduct appraisal accurately. The research question here is; do raters intend to appraise accurately and what are the direct and indirect factors that influence their intention towards appraising accurately?

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Generally, raters face a lot of challenges such as time pressure, conflict and other commitments in their tasks. These make the raters burdened with core tasks and appraisal process becomes difficult for them especially when the subjective performance aspects involve. Hence, raters' motivation to appraise accurately has been ques-

tioned. In order to appraise accurately, raters' intention to appraise accurately is highly anticipated. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) states that one's intention to perform behavior in question will influence their behavior to act upon. Based on TPB, behavioral intentions are influenced directly by raters' attitudes towards behavior, raters' perceived subjective norms, and raters' perceived behavioral control and indirectly influenced by selected background factors, such as personal factors (raters' experience in appraising), situational factors (raters' perceived purposes of appraisal), and informational factors (raters' perceived information adequacy for appraising).

A. RATERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS APPRAISING ACCURATELY

Raters' attitude towards appraising accurately refers to raters' overall favorability or unfavorability on rendering accurate performance appraisal for a particular ratee, within a given performance aspects, at a given time of appraisal period, which is determined by the assessment of consequences whether positively or negatively towards appraising accurately. The semantic differential methods used to measures positivity and negativity of attitudes are based on the raters' evaluation towards the consequences of appraising accurately via instrumental and experiential dimensions (Ajzen & Driver, 1992). The instrumental dimension involves the raters' cognitive aspects in examining whether consequences of appraising accurately follows adjective pairs placed on oppose ends of seven-point scales such as bad-good, unimportant-important, useless-useful, harmful-beneficial, worthless-valuable, unnecessary-necessary, and unproductive-productive. While experiential dimension involves raters' affective aspects in experiencing whether appraising accurately follows adjective pairs placed on oppose ends of seven-point scales such as unpleasant-pleasant, stressful-relaxed, and detrimental-constructive. If a rater feels that appraising accurately provides positive consequences (beneficial and constructive), therefore he/she has higher tendency to show positive attitude towards appraising accurately.

Past researches show that there is a relationship between raters' attitudes and performance appraisal. Decotiis and Petit (1978) argued that the perceived consequences of accurate appraisal partly determine raters' motivation to appraise accurately. Longenecker, Sims, and Gioia (1987) found that raters tried to manipu-

late the performance appraisal when they failed to see goodness in giving accurate appraisal. When the consequences of accurate appraisal is negative, raters tend to have negative attitudes towards appraising accurately; hence their intention to appraise accurately will be low and vice-versa. Harris (1994: 740) categorized the negative consequences into five categories, namely damage to rater-ratee relationship, demoralization of ratees, criticism from raters' subordinate, criticism from raters' supervisor, and interference with other tasks. On the other hand, several researchers found positive consequences of accurate appraisal such as increasing utilization of performance information, providing more accurate feedback, improving ratees' performance (Latham & Wexley, 1994), increasing ratees' perception of fairness (Narcisse & Harcourt, 2008; Roberson & Stewart, 2006; Taylor, Tracy, Renard, Harrison, & Carroll, 1995), increasing ratees' acceptance of performance appraisal system (Jiing-Lih, Werbel, & Bedeian, 1988; Roberts, 1992), increasing ratees' participation in appraisal process (Miller & Thornton, 2006), stronger motivational effect to improve performance of ratees (Roberson & Stewart, 2006; Selvarajan & Cloninger, 2011), encouraging ratees to possess positive reactions towards performance appraisal (Lam & Schaubroeck, 1999), contributing to performance appraisal system effectiveness, increase ratees' trustworthy towards appraisal (O'Reilly & Anderson, 1980), and increasing ratees' satisfaction towards appraisal system (Selvarajan & Cloninger, 2011)..

Researchers tried to understand the influence of raters' perceptions or attitudes on appraisal consequences (whether good or bad) towards performance appraisal outcome as a whole (Cleveland & Murphy, 1992; Harris, 1994; Whisler, 1958). However, it is less known that how raters' attitudes based on appraisal consequences will help in predicting raters' intention to appraise accurately as an outcome. The concept of attitudes based on TPB seems to complete the puzzles in understanding and predicting the raters' intentions in appraising. The TPB argues that raters' attitude towards appraising accurately is based on whether they perceive the outcomes of appraising accurately as positive or negative (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). The raters' attitude consists of both raters' general attitude on appraising accurately in organizational level and raters' specific attitude on appraising accurately in evaluating ratees' performance based on performance

aspects during appraisal period. For instance, if the rater assumed that appraising accurately will compensate fairly to ratees' work performance and organization benefitted in terms of accurate performance information; thus, raters tend to possess positive attitude towards appraising accurately as well as highly intend to appraise accurately.

In this research context, raters' attitude towards appraising accurately is measured directly based on single unitary construct comprising both instrumental and experiential items (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). In other words, raters' attitude towards appraising accurately is assessed by means of an evaluative semantic differential such as unlikely to likely evaluation. The past meta-analytic reviews found a mean correlations between attitudes and intentions in a range from .45 to .60 (Albarracin, Johnson, Fishbein, & Muellerleile, 2001; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Godin & Kok, 1996; Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002; Sheeran & Taylor, 1999; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). Hence, it is assumed that raters' attitude towards appraising accurately will predict the raters' intention to appraise accurately. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H1: There is a positive relationship between raters' attitude towards appraising accurately and raters' intention towards appraising accurately.

B. RATERS' PERCEIVED SUBJECTIVE NORMS TOWARDS APPRAISING ACCURATELY

The raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately refer to raters' perceptions on social pressure whether they should or should not appraise accurately. The perceptions on social pressure are formed based on raters' consideration whether the individual or group of individuals important to them (referents) prescribe, desire, expect, or encourage whether they should or should not perform behavior in question, such as appraising accurately (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The construct of perceived subjective norms consists of both injunctive and descriptive norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). Injunctive norms refer to perceptions regarding what should or should not be done pertaining to performing behavior in question, while descriptive norms denote perceptions that important other(s) is/are or is/are not performing a given behavior. In other words, the perceived subjective norms combine and integrate both the desires (injunctive norms) and actions

(descriptive norms) of important referent individual and groups.

In performance appraisal research, the term 'norms' is frequently discussed with inaccuracy issues such as leniency, commitment and normative information. Harris (1994) found that situational variables such as organization norms tend to influence the raters' motivation to appraise accurately. He also proposed that if there are norms that make raters become more lenient, then they will tend to rate the performance appraisal with high marks. Similarly, Longenecker, Sims and Gioia (1987) found that raters tend to appraise inaccurately when top management not taking performance appraisal process seriously. Raters having such feelings tend not to be committed to appraise accurately since the top management is not committed either. Spence and Keeping (2010) also found that raters will be influenced by the normative information on how other raters appraise in their organization. Hence, raters tend to appraise towards the normative information. When the normative information are insufficient, inflation norms will cause raters to provide higher ratings and accuracy norms will cause the raters to provide lower ratings.

There is possibility that raters feel pressured to appraise accurately due to social pressure, such as the organization informs raters how they should interpret their appraisal. In accordance with this idea, normative pressures on how other raters appraise are also an essential element in determining the behavior of appraising accurately. Consequently, the perceived subjective norms are applicable in the performance appraisal context because raters may be inflicted with pressures from different parties (e.g., top management, peers, and ratees) that will influence their appraisal and they will appraise accurately based on normative influences. For example, if a rater thinks that the important others, such as top management, feels that the rater should appraise accurately and other raters in the organization are appraising accurately; hence, the rater tends to have a high intention to appraise accurately.

In this research context, raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately is measured directly based on single unitary construct consisting of both injunctive and descriptive normative items (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). In other words, raters' perceived subjective norms is measured by directly asking what important others (organization referents such as top managements,

peers and subordinates) think raters should do and what these important others are doing. The previous meta-analyses found a mean correlations between perceived subjective norms and intentions in a range from .34 to .42 (Albarracín, Johnson, Fishbein, & Muellerleile, 2001; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Godin & Kok, 1996; Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002; Sheeran & Taylor, 1999; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). Hence, it is assumed that raters' perceived subjective norms will predict raters' intention to appraise accurately. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H2: There is a positive relationship between raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately and raters' intention towards appraising accurately.

C. RATERS' PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL TOWARDS APPRAISING ACCURATELY

Raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately refers to raters' perceived abilities to appraise accurately. The construct of perceived behavioral control consists of both perceived capacity and perceived autonomy (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Perceived capacity refers to the raters' general expectations regarding the degree to which they are capable of appraising accurately (perceived ease or difficulty), while perceived autonomy implies the extent to which raters have the requisite resources and believe that they have the control to overcome whatever obstacles they may face (perceived degree of control).

Based on Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), the term 'perceived behavioral control' has theoretical similarity with the concept of Bandura's self-efficacy (1977). The term 'perceived self-efficacy' is used to elaborate more on perceived behavioral control components in the performance appraisal process (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Raters' self-efficacy being studied with performance appraisal inaccuracy (Bernardin & Villanova, 1986) by showing that raters with low self-efficacy tends to provide higher marks (Tziner & Murphy, 1999). The reason is because raters tend to use avoidance strategy to avoid confrontations with their respective ratees. Raters with low self-efficacy are not able to face such confrontation with their ratees on giving low marks or providing correct justifications based on requisite resources for the low marks. Hence, the raters try to avoid such difficulty by providing higher marks. If there are no negative

appraisal and feedback, the probability for raters to face negative consequences will be lessened (Bernardin & Villanova, 2005; Tziner & Murphy, 1999). In order for a rater to have high self-efficacy, it is assumed that raters have considerable information on ratees' task behavior and raters are capable to assess ratees' performance accurately (Folger, Konovsky, & Cropanzano, 1992).

In this research context, raters' perceived behavioral control is measured directly by means of a single unitary construct consisting of both perceived capacity and perceived autonomy items (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). In other words, perceived behavioral control is measured by inquiring directly whether raters believe that they are capable of appraising accurately and the extent to which appraising accurately is under raters' control. The previous meta-analyses found a mean correlation between perceived behavioral control and intentions in a range from .35 to .46 (Albarracín, Johnson, Fishbein, & Muellerleile, 2001; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Godin & Kok, 1996; Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002; Sheeran & Taylor, 1999; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). Hence, it is assumed that raters' perceived behavioral control will predict raters' intention to appraise accurately. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H3: There is a positive relationship between raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately and raters' intention towards appraising accurately.

D. RATERS' INTENTION TOWARDS APPRAISING ACCURATELY

All behaviors involve planning and "every intended behavior is a goal whose attainment is subject to some degree of uncertainty" (Ajzen, 1985: 24). It is essential for raters to evaluate why there is a need to appraise accurately. When it is being understood, raters will feel empowered to act for the right reasons and be brave enough to follow their heart without fearing or feeling vulnerable. Therefore, raters' intention is one of the important concepts to be discussed in the process of rendering accurate performance appraisal.

The term 'intention' is coined as an indicator of an individual's readiness to perform behavior in question (Ajzen, 2002) and is the most proximal predictor of behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). The individual's readiness to perform a behavior can be assessed using various indicators such as intentions, expectations,

willingness, trying, and planning (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). A distinction has been made between behavioral intention and behavioral expectation (Warshaw & Davis, 1985), and willingness to perform a behavior (Gibbons, Gerrard, Blanton, & Russell, 1998). Gibbons and colleagues found that willingness is in some way able to apprehend non-intentional effect on behavior and it adds a significant amount of unique variance to the prediction of behavior. For example, past studies on smoking, drinking, and drug use among adults combined measures of intention, expectation and willingness to generate a single index (Gibbons, Gerrard, Cleveland, Wills, & Brody, 2004).

In this research context, raters' intention to appraise accurately is measured directly based on a single unitary construct consists of multiple indicators such as behavioral intentions (I intend to engage in the behavior), behavioral expectations (I expect to engage in the behavior), willingness (I will engage in the behavior), planning (I plan to engage in the behavior), and trying (I will try to engage in the behavior). In other words, the criterion measure of intention is attained by asking raters how likely it is that they intend to, expect to, willing to, planning to, and trying to appraise accurately. The results of several studies for a wide array of behaviors which calculated by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010: 188) recorded a multiple correlations ranged from .62 to .88, indicating that the three predictors (attitudes, perceived subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) ranged between 39% and 77% of the variance in intentions. Hence, it is assumed that raters' intention towards appraising accurately is influenced by (1) raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, (2) raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and (3) raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H4: Raters' intention towards appraising accurately is influenced by (1) raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, (2) raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and (3) raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately.

E. RATERS' EXPERIENCE IN APPRAISING

Raters' experience in appraising is one of the most important personal factors. It is shown that raters' experience is essential in assisting raters to render an

appraisal that is acceptable by ratees (Charmine & Hartel, 1993) and contributes to the effectiveness of performance appraisal system (Anderson, Payne, Ferguson, & Smith, 1994; Prussia, Anderson, & Manz, 1998).

Previous studies related to raters' experience show that more experienced raters tend to provide more accurate appraisal. Landy and Farr (1980) found that more experienced raters indicate positive relationship with performance appraisal quality and validity. As a result, more experienced raters tend to appraise consistently and thus accurately compared to less experienced (Spicer & Rusli Ahmad, 2006). In another study, raters report on critical incident differently based on their experience (Bernardin & Villanova, 2005). The study found that less experienced raters tend to appraise based on interpersonal aspects while more experienced raters use the work performance aspects of the performance appraisal process, which is more accurate. Other than that, more experienced raters are likely to provide lower ratings and more accurate contrast to less experience when appraising the same ratee (Spence & Keeping, 2010).

In this research context, the raters' experience in appraising is measured based on raters' self-report of the number of years holding the role as raters and whether they have attended any formal trainings on conducting performance appraisal (Spicer & Rusli Ahmad, 2006). It is assumed that raters' experience in appraising will predict their intention to appraise accurately by influencing their attitudes, perceived subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The more experienced raters tend to have a higher level of awareness and understanding of performance aspects that need to be rated and their ability to justify their appraisal towards ratees' performance. Hence, more experienced raters are likely to possess positive attitude towards appraising accurately. In addition, more experienced raters tend to be influenced by subjective norms to appraise accurately because they were believed to give a more reliable appraisal (Jurgensen, 1950). More experienced raters also held strong perceived behavioral controls to appraise accurately. This is due to their experience in using appraisal instruments that may reflect higher accuracy in the appraisal process (Gordon, 1972). Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H5: Raters' experience in appraising will predict raters' intention towards appraising accurately by influencing (1)

raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, (2) raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and (3) raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately.

F. RATERS' PERCEIVED PURPOSES OF APPRAISAL

Raters' perceived purposes of appraisal is one of the essential situational factors. Basically, the primary purposes of appraisal are categorized into two main groups, namely administrative and developmental (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Administrative purposes by helping organizations to make decisions on promotions and salary decisions while developmental purposes concerned with providing feedback and identifying training needs (Cleveland, Murphy, & Williams, 1989; Landy & Farr, 1980).

The previous studies show that appraisal conducted for developmental purposes is less disposed to appraisal bias, and thus more accurate, compared to appraisal conducted for administrative purposes (Meyer, Kay, & French, 1965; Zedeck & Cascio, 1982). This is because raters have fewer needs to manipulate their appraisal related to developmental components of performance appraisal (Youngcourt, Leiva, & Jones, 2007). In contrast, performance appraisal used for administrative purposes is influenced by friendship and political influences (Cardy & Dobbins, 1994; Longenecker, Sims, & Gioia, 1987). Hence, the inflation of ratings is likely to happen when appraisals are used for administrative decisions (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995) compared to developmental decisions (Jawahar & Williams, 1997). As a result, appraisals tend to be less accurate when they are made for administrative purposes than developmental purposes.

In this research context, the raters' perceived purposes of appraisal are measured based on a random list of appraisal purposes, which is categorized into administrative and developmental purposes. The perceived purposes of appraisal are either for administrative purposes only or for both administrative and developmental purposes. This is because appraisal conducted for the purposes of developmental will lead to the fulfilment of administrative purposes because better-trained ratees are assumed to be at higher performance level compared to less-trained rates, and thus having a higher chances for

promotion and salary increments. Therefore, it is assumed that raters' perceived purposes of appraisal will predict their intention to appraise accurately by influencing their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Raters' perceived purposes of appraisal tend to influence raters' attitude towards appraising accurately because raters tend to think of the appraisal outcomes prior to appraising and this will influence their appraisal (Cleveland & Murphy, 1992). For example, raters' perceived administrative and developmental purposes of appraisal will have positive attitude towards appraising accurately because it is perceived more accurate by ratees compared to administrative purposes alone (O'Donnell, 1990; Selvarajan & Cloninger, 2011). Furthermore, raters' perceived purposes of appraisal will form distinct subjective norms towards influencing raters' intention to appraise accurately. For instance, raters who perceived the appraisal for both administrative and developmental purposes intended to provide accurate high marks to deserved ratees if the organization supports promotion advancement for potential ratees. The raters' perceived both administrative and developmental purposes of appraisal also influenced raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately. This is because raters have the abilities to appraise accurately if it is for both administrative and developmental decisions compared to administrative decisions alone. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H6: Raters' perceived purposes of appraisal will predict raters' intention towards appraising accurately by influencing (1) raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, (2) raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and (3) raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately.

G. RATERS' PERCEIVED INFORMATION ADEQUACY FOR APPRAISING

Raters' perceived information adequacy for appraising appears to be one of the most important informational factors and it has not been elaborated explicitly. The emphasis on providing sufficient information and advice on accurate appraisal enables more informed decisions by raters. Before appraising ratee's performance, raters must acquire relevant information to assist them when appraising. It is assumed that the accuracy of appraisal is directly related to the quantity and quality of information

about ratees (Kondrasuk, Crowell, Dillon, Kilzer, & Teeley, 2008). Roberts (1998) found that there is a lack of information provided by the organization to adequately establish the performance appraisal process, especially for the raters. If the information is inadequate, raters may determine what information is missing and then attempt to collect it (Crocker, 1981). Hence, the raters must not only be motivated to observe but also be proficient at documenting and assessing the ratee's performance and at the same time providing continuous feedback (Liu & Dong, 2012: 158). These tasks need raters to be equipped with sufficient information.

Raters are not a passive measurement instrument but rather an active agent pursuing specific goals, such as accurate appraisal. Raters can obtain information about the ratees' performance in order to justify their appraisal and also evidence for their justifications. This information might include direct observation of ratee's work behavior, reports from customers and other members in the organization, inspection of the results of work performance, such as products or reports, raters' prior appraisal of ratees' performance (Balzer, 1986; Murphy, Balzer, Lockhart, & Eisenman, 1985), and the ratees' general reputation as a good or poor performer (March & March, 1978).

Based on the signal-detection theory, both Green and Swets and also Macmillan and Creelman (as cited in Brewer & Wells, 2006) found that there is a relationship between confidence and accuracy whereby the strength of evidence or information adequacy determines both accuracy and confidence. It is assumed that the information adequacy is directly related to raters' confidence and indirectly to raters' intention to appraise accurately. Raters equipped with adequate information to help them appraise could boost the raters' confidence and thus possess a higher intention to appraise accurately.

Information adequacy is measured by asking raters to indicate how well-informed they were with respect of the appraisal system, appraisal implementation process, appraisal forms, performance aspects to be rated, appraisal standard used, observation on ratees' performance, ratees' performance reports from relevant parties, past performance appraisal reports, and ratees' general reputation. It is assumed that raters' perceived information adequacy for appraising will predict their intention to appraise accurately by influencing their attitude, perceived subjective norms, and perceived behavioral

control. Raters who perceive to have adequate information for appraising are likely to possess positive attitude towards appraising accurately because their appraisal can be justified based on the information provided. Raters who have sufficient normative information will not be influenced by social pressure to appraise inaccurately. Other than that, raters tend to have strong perceived behavioral control when they are equipped with sufficient information, which make them understand the whole process of implementing accurate performance appraisal. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H7: Raters' perceived information adequacy for appraising will predict raters' intention towards appraising accurately by influencing (1) raters' attitude towards appraising accurately, (2) raters' perceived subjective norms towards appraising accurately, and (3) raters' perceived behavioral control towards appraising accurately.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides a conceptual framework to understand direct and indirect factors that predict the raters' intention towards appraising accurately. The study hopes to contribute in several ways. First, the present study contributes to understanding the direct and indirect factors that influence the raters' intention to appraise accurately based on TPB framework. The TPB is applied in various fields, such as health (Albarracin, Johnson, Fishbein, & Muellerleile, 2001), nutrition (Liou, 2007), and even entrepreneurship (Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Tornikoski, 2011) - just to name a few. Nevertheless, it is not being applied in the performance appraisal research, especially in predicting the raters' intention towards appraising accurately.

Second, knowledge about raters' intention to appraise accurately is important in providing awareness of the existence of bias and errors in appraising which can be intentional even though raters state that it is unintentional to escape for being blamed as inaccurate. It is assumed that raters have the ability to appraise accurately, but the intention is a motivation for raters to show their abilities and efforts to appraise accurately. Therefore, it is significant to study the raters' intention to appraise accurately in order to predict whether raters are intended or unintended to appraise accurately and what factors that facilitate or impede raters to appraise accurately.

Third, the integration of various factors in a framework is always welcome as performance appraisal involved a complex process. This research attempts to include conative (intention), affective (attitude), cognitive (attitude), social (perceived subjective norms), abilities (perceived behavioral control), personal (experience), situational (perceived purposes of appraisal), and informational (perceived information adequacy) factors into raters' intention towards appraising accurately framework. Such integration allows researchers and practitioners to understand more about the concept of intention towards appraising accurately in a social psychology environment. We hope that the current paper will encourage further research and theoretical advancements in the raters' performance appraisal accuracy literature.

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