



Perceived Fairness in Performance Appraisal and Political Behaviors: A List Experiment of Employee's Reaction to Performance Appraisals

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Introduction

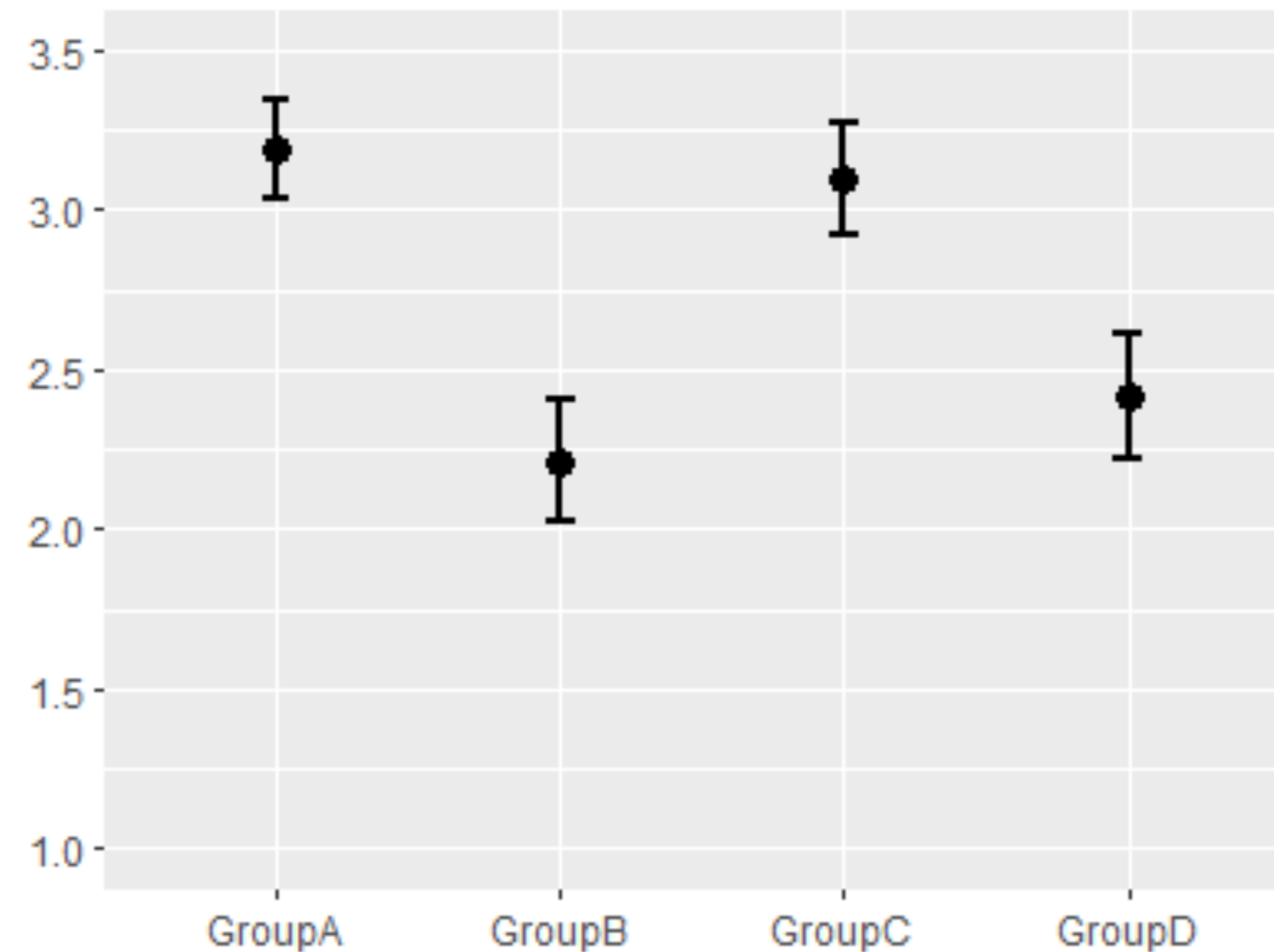
- In managerial research, perceived fairness of performance appraisal is important and widely studied. This study adds to how the perceived fairness of a performance appraisal impacts or motivates employees to participate in political behavior at their place of work.
- The definition for perceived fairness of a performance appraisal is to the extent to which the employees feel the overall process of performance appraisal to be fair, accurate, and valid (T. Kim & Holzer, 2016).
- Political behaviors are not studied to the extent of general perceived fairness. This study utilizes literature on performance appraisal as a background to help investigate political behaviors.
- For this study the goal is to find out how the perception of fairness in performance appraisal will impact the probability of an employee to engage in political behaviors in the workplace.
- This experiment aims to test two hypothesis:
 - Is an employee with a perception of an unfair performance appraisal more likely to engage in ingratiation and more likely to engage in exchanges of favors?
 - Do people who perceive their review as fair play dumb or are they more likely to engage in scapegoating?

Research Questions

How does perceived Fairness in Performance Appraisal affect employees work and how they participate in politics within the office.

Data and Methods

- To investigate this, a list experiment method is utilized to apprehend an employee's true intention to behave politically based on their assessment of their performance appraisal.
- A list method was utilized so participants could be measured more accurately while taking into account the social desirability bias (Bromberg et al., 2018; Streb et al., 2008).
- During the experiment, 220 FSU students were divided into four groups. Two had a fair appraisal and two had an unfair appraisal.
- Group C and D were the experimental variables, so they had an extra question with the topic of political behavior on top of the one already being used.
- In addition, Group A and C received fair performance appraisals while Group B and D received the unfair appraisals



Differences in Perceived Fairness across Groups

Evaluation Factors		S	NI
Dedication	Reports to work on time Uses time Constructively	✓✓	
Performance	Good working knowledge of job assignment Organizes and performs work in timely and professional matter	✓	✓
Cooperation	Willingly accepts work assignments Willingly accepts changes in assignments not directly related to job	✓✓	
Initiative	Performs assigned duties with little or no supervision even under pressure	✓	
Communication	Communicates clearly and intelligently in person and during telephone contracts	✓	
Teamwork	Works well with fellow employees without friction	✓	
Character	Accepts constructive criticism without unfavorable responses	✓	
Responsiveness	Handles stressful situation with tact		✓
Personality	Demonstrates a pleasant, calm personality when dealing with customers and fellow employees	✓	
Appearance	Well groomed, clean, neat, and Appropriately dressed for work	✓	

Example of Fair Performance Appraisal

Results

- This study found the perception of fairness in one's performance appraisal did impact whether they choose to participate in political behavior in the office.
- When someone saw their review as unfair, they would participate in more proactive political behavior.
- However, when a review is perceived as fair an employee's behavior would be more reactive.
- This study found an employee who perceives their reviews as unfair starts more political behavior while someone who thinks it was fair acts politically in response to others.
- This study also found employees are more likely to play dumb in the office if they believe their performance appraisal is fair.
- The findings from this experiment also relate to the argument of Ashforth and Lee(1990), who described how employees will play it safe when they have clear expectations.
- This study explained how complex the relationship truly is between fairness perception and political behavior.

Future Directions

- This is an ongoing study with a small sample size of two hundred participants. The sample was only representative of undergraduate college students.
- Future directions involve a more representative sample size involving different types of employees in the public sector.
- Joohi plans to expand on this study to assess whether the results are transitive to everyone in the workforce.

References

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