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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Performance appraisal system in the Turkish National Police: the case of Ankara Police Department

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This study examines the performance appraisal system and particularly the problem of the ‘secret appraisal system’ in the Turkish National Police. Using a survey conducted at the Ankara Police Department in 2001, this study explores the raters’ and the ratees’ opinions about the existing performance appraisal system. Multivariate regression analyses show that district captains and lieutenants, in contrast to non-ranking police officers, are less concerned about the secret appraisal system because these ranks are in the position of rating their subordinates. More educated officers and female officers are more likely to be concerned about the secret appraisal system because the officers cannot learn the evaluation results. Finally, this study makes recommendations to improve the current appraisal system, and it also yields important findings and valuable insights for other police organizations.

Keywords: police; performance; evaluation; appraisal; performance appraisal; Turkish National Police

Introduction

An employee performance appraisal is one of the most frustrating rituals of today’s work place. However, the continuous demand for quality and outstanding customer service makes the employee performance evaluation a vital tool for the survival of organizations. Only through an effective system of employee performance evaluations can the staff be guided for development and improvement (Krug, 1998).

Performance appraisal is considered to be one of the most troubling areas of law enforcement human resource management (Allen & Mayfield, 1983; Kane, Bernardin, & Wiatrowski, 1995; Wolfer & Baker, 2000). The appraisal of police officers’ job performance is a crucial managerial task that equally affects the employee as well as the quality of police services (Walsh, 1990). Performance appraisal data is often the basis for employment decisions about training, probation, promotion, merit increases, and transfers (Holden, 1986). The performance evaluation of police personnel becomes crucial because they not only provide services but also fight crime and have the power to restrict rights and freedoms of citizens with their actions or inactions. Police are often in public view and are subject to criticism constantly regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of their services (Gaston & King, 1995).

Travis’ (1996) description of the police role in a democratic society suggests that the police function represents the most visible and powerful interaction between the government and the people. Further, Travis argues that, if the police perform their role effectively,

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society benefits immensely. Conversely, with poor police performance, the damage to police confidence and constitutional rights can be irreparable.

Police performance appraisal plays a critical role in providing better-quality service to the society. Just like the police, all public service agencies have an obligation to the citizens they serve to constantly evaluate and improve their performance on both the individual and organizational levels. A well-designed formal performance appraisal system provides the means to accomplish these goals. In addition, performance appraisals give employees feedback about their work and provide supervisors with a reliable, valid instrument on which to base personnel decisions. Finally, performance evaluations are an ideal way to communicate and reinforce organizational values which will help to increase officer performance and improve service delivery (Kramer, 1998).

This study examines the performance appraisal system and particularly the problem of 'secret evaluation system' in the Turkish National Police. Using a survey conducted at the Ankara Police Department (PD) during the summer of 2001, we wanted to explore the opinions of the raters and the ratees among the police personnel about the existing performance appraisal system to see whether or not there are differing opinions regarding the secret appraisal system.

The lack of research on performance appraisal in the Turkish National Police makes this study the first one on this subject to be performed. The need to conduct such a survey was obvious after hearing the criticisms of the appraisal system by the personnel who are being evaluated. In an effort to make the Turkish National Police performance appraisal system consistent with modern approaches and practices, this study attempts to offer suggestions for future policy after interpreting the findings of this research.

Literature review

A performance appraisal system is typically described as a tool for organizations to motivate their employees to improve performance and productivity (Cardy & Dobbins, 1994). Coens and Jenkins (2000) propose that performance appraisal is a required process in which, for a specified period of time, an employee's work behaviors or characteristics are individually rated, judged or described by a rater and the results are kept by the organization. Carroll and Schneier (1982) describe performance appraisal as a process of identifying, observing, measuring and developing human performance in organizations. A well-designed performance appraisal system allows the organization to identify, monitor and record the incidence of behavioral characteristics that equate with job performance. Analysis of this performance data can facilitate the design of responsive selection procedures, training programs and promotional processes (Gianakis, 1994).

Experts and researchers have recommended two extensive uses of performance appraisal in organizations. First, it serves for *administrative purposes* in areas such as reward allocation (salary increases, bonuses) and assignment decisions (transfers, promotions, demotions). Second, it contributes to *employee development* in that it makes possible the identification of their strengths and weaknesses, provides performance feedback and facilitates exchanges with managers (Dorfman, Stephan, & Loveland, 1986; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995).

Coutts and Schneider (2004) consider five important components for an effective performance appraisal system. The first is a focus on performance variables rather than on personal characteristics. The second is an opportunity for the employee to have input into the evaluation process, which increases the perceived fairness of the evaluation procedure. The third is to provide feedback to promote employee development. The fourth component is to foster the accomplishment of individual and organizational goals for both the supervisor

and employee. The last component is the rater's attainment of task-relevant skills and knowledge, which requires training.

According to Oettmeier and Wycoff (1999), a well-designed performance appraisal system can be used as a means to shape behavioral responses and smooth the progress of organizational change. In addition, officer performance appraisals might be used to change the service expectations, policing styles and responsibilities of patrol officers.

In the United States, by the 1970s, 80% of the law enforcement agencies were conducting formal evaluations of employees (Geller, 1991). Approximately 80% of the police departments officially appraise patrol officers at least once a year (Bradley & Pursley, 1987) and the types of police performance appraisals vary from department to department. Many police departments require quarterly performance appraisals, some use annual, some use pre-promotional, and some use a combination of both. There are even some departments that require no performance appraisal or job evaluations at all (Templeton & Ernst, 1995).

Cordner, Greene, and Baynum (1982) reported that almost 95% of the respondents to their survey of 250 police agencies collected performance data and nearly 90% of them had conducted a formal job analysis. Walsh (1990), in his study of performance appraisal systems that included 150 supervisors from 67 small and medium-sized police departments, revealed that most of the supervisors (93%, $N = 114$) were using appraisal forms that their departments had copied from other police agencies.

Performance data is utilized for purposes as varied as administrative decisions regarding layoffs, promotions and transfers; feedback and employee training and development; salary administration and as validation of personnel selection criteria (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). In spite of the varied and extensive use of performance appraisal, both organizations and employees continue to express dissatisfaction with the current state of appraisal technology and application (Banks & Murphy, 1985; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). In spite of these dissatisfactions, managers are unwilling to abandon performance appraisal, which they still view as a vital tool of management (Meyer, 1991).

Although most of the police departments utilize formal performance appraisal systems, the majority of those involved in this process express considerable *dissatisfaction* with it. This includes not only the people who perform the evaluations but also the people who are evaluated and the administrators of the programs as well. Performance appraisal systems are barely able to deliver all of their intended benefits to police organizations. Surveys have revealed widespread discontent in relatively large police departments, which most likely have the resources to obtain the best available appraisal technology (Coutts & Schneider, 2004; Walsh, 1990; Huber, 1983).

For example, Coutts and Schneider (2004), in their survey of Canadian police departments, found that most officers are not satisfied with their organization's performance appraisal systems, which were deficient with respect to well-established key components of performance appraisal. The officers also indicated that they had little or no opportunity for input, and received evaluations that were based on personal characteristics (as opposed to performance criteria) and their appraisals did not lead to improved job performance.

There is a lack of research attention about subordinates' reaction to the appraisal process and factors contributing to these reactions (Cardy & Dobbins, 1994; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Research has usually focused on rating accuracy and rater error (Cardy & Dobbins, 1994). One may develop an advanced performance appraisal system, but if that system is not accepted and supported by workers, its efficiency will eventually be limited (Carroll & Schneier, 1982; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). Hedge and Borman (1995) suggest that employees' attitudes toward performance appraisal may play an increasingly crucial role in appraisal processes as the systems and procedures continue to develop.

Keeping and Levy (2000) point out that there is a common agreement among performance appraisal researchers that the assessment of employee's reactions to performance appraisals is essential for appraisal system acceptance by the users of the system and for the efficiency of those evaluations. A performance appraisal system is not effective if it does not include user satisfaction (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995) and is not accepted by the users (Latham & Wexley, 1994; Landy, Zedeck, & Cleveland, 1983). Therefore, it is important to learn the reactions and attitudes of raters and ratees about the performance appraisal system since any system ultimately depends on feedback for its efficiency.

Analyzing the managerial viewpoint is vital because the effectiveness of a performance appraisal system relies on the manager and his/her capacity to make precise judgments about job performance. It is reasonable to presume that police supervisors would be a suitable source of information about the existing police performance appraisal practices (Devries, Morrison, Shullman, & Gerlach, 1986).

Ratee satisfaction of an appraisal system is also an essential element in performance appraisal. The success of appraisal and feedback depends considerably on the degree to which ratees accept the appraisal method (Wiersma & Latham, 1986; Tziner, Joanis, & Murphy, 2000). As Bernardin and Beatty (1984) emphasized, user acceptance is very critical for the successful implementation of a performance appraisal system.

Performance appraisal has been an ongoing cause of dissatisfaction and debate among both researchers and practitioners as there is never a 'right' system (Lawler, Mohrman, & Resnik, 1984; Markowich, 1994; Newton & Findlay, 1996). In spite of the high rate of discontent, organizations continue to dedicate much time and resources to performance appraisal because it is considered as a 'necessary evil' for human resource management (Roberts, 1995).

In order for the performance evaluation to yield the expected benefits, it is important to obtain the views and recommendations of both the raters and the ratees about the performance appraisal system. The effectiveness of the performance evaluation system depends on both the personnel evaluated and the personnel performing the evaluation (Dobbins, Cardy, & Platz-Vieno, 1990). Therefore, this study will first provide a brief overview of the Turkish National Police (TNP) and its performance appraisal system and then will measure the opinions of both the raters and ratees on the existing performance appraisal systems in the TNP focusing on Ankara PD as a case study.

The Turkish National Police

Public administration in Turkey is highly centralized and this can be felt throughout the country's public services, even within the society and social life itself, and the police organization is no exception to that (Cevik, 1999).

The Turkish National Police (*Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü*) operates under the Ministry of Interior. The General Director of the TNP, the top manager of Turkish Police, is nominated by the Minister of Interior, appointed by the Prime Minister and approved by the President. TNP Headquarters is located in Ankara and it coordinates the central departments and Provincial Police Departments in 81 different cities throughout Turkey. The chiefs of the provincial police departments are accountable to TNP Headquarters as well as to the governors of the provinces.

The Headquarters consists of the General Director, who has five assistants, the Director of Inspection Commission, Head of the National Police Academy, Chief Law Advisor and 27 chiefs of central departments such as public order, intelligence, anti-terrorism etc. Each department in the headquarters has connections with the departments in the provinces. On

the other hand, the provincial structure consists of 81 province security departments. There are approximately 200,000 personnel in TNP throughout the country.

The basic training of the non-ranking police officers for the organization is accomplished through the police schools (equivalent to police academies in the United States) in various provinces in Turkey. Cadets admitted to the police schools are selected among high school graduates. The applicants have to pass the background check, followed by an interview, a written exam, and finally a physical test and a final exam. The admitted applicants continue a boarding-school training and education for two years covering policing practices and various issues (Dogutas, Dolu, & Gul, 2007).

The training of the ranking officers for management levels of the TNP is done through the Police College (High School), followed by the Turkish National Police Academy (College of Security Sciences). The police college, a high school-level police boarding school, gives four years of high school education without any police training. As long as they meet the health, physical and psychological criteria, all of the graduates of the police college are admitted to the Turkish National Police Academy (TNPA). The other source of TNPA cadets is high school graduates. Those who take the exam for applicants nationwide to go to university and obtain the required grades are entitled to apply to the TNPA. After successful completion of the TNPA, the cadets start their career with the rank of sergeant. However, this does not mean all of the ranking officers in the TNP have university degrees. A small portion of the ranking officers have middle school degrees. These officers are from the older generation who entered the profession decades ago when the educational requirement for being a police officer was as low as having a middle school degree. In the course of time, these officers proved successful and they were promoted to upper ranks.

The rank structure of the TNP is as follows: police officer, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, major, and chief. The rank of chief is also comprised of four different levels: Division Chief – or, in TNP terms, 4th Degree Chief Superintendent (one star); Division Chief, or 3rd Degree Chief Superintendent (two stars); Deputy Chief of Police, or 2nd Degree Chief Superintendent (three stars); and Chief of Police, or 1st Degree Chief Superintendent (four stars). Every three or four years the ranking officers receive automatic promotion up to the rank of police major. But this, of course, is for those who have good files: any misbehavior may lead to a delay in promotion. After graduation, a cadet is appointed by the TNP headquarters to any one of the 81 city police departments. After the first year of probationary period, the cadet gains all the rights of a police officer.

In Turkey, the police operate only in the centers within the boundaries of municipalities of cities and towns. In the rural areas, there is a military force called the gendarmerie, operating seemingly under the Minister of Interior for performing policing functions, but organically attached to the General Staff for military functions.

Performance appraisal in the Turkish National Police

In Turkey, the personnel of the police organization are evaluated according to the provisions of Law no. 657 and the Regulation titled ‘Governmental Officials’ Performance Evaluation Regulation’. Accordingly, the evaluation is the basis for differentiating police officers to be promoted, to be retired, to be released from duty or to have changes of duties (Canman, 1993).

Article 10 of the Regulations mentions the importance of the personnel and performance evaluation files and states that the personnel and performance evaluation files are the main foundation in the determination of the capacity of the police officers, their rank progression, merit increases, retirement and dismissals. When police officers change institutions, their personnel and performance evaluation files are sent in complete form to their new institution.

The confidential performance evaluation forms of the police officers are completed each year within the second half of the month of December. To be able to complete a performance evaluation report, an officer has to have worked at least six months with the relevant supervisor.

Supervisors evaluate the officers by giving numerical values of up to 100 points. The average score of the officer is calculated by dividing the total number of points into the total number of questions. There are four grades: bad, average, good and very good. The points below 60 are 'bad', between 60 and 75 are 'average', between 76 and 89 are 'good', and between 90 and 100 are 'very good' performance grades.

In Ankara PD, division chiefs are the first raters and the deputy chiefs are the second raters. If there is a 10-point difference between the first and second raters' grades then the chief of police has the right to make final decision.

Officers can only appeal if they receive a 'bad' evaluation, which is below 60 points. When an officer receives a bad grade two years in a row, he or she is assigned to another supervisor. If the officer receives a third bad grade, he or she is dismissed from duty. In contrast, if an officer receives a very good grade for six years consecutively, then he or she becomes eligible for rewards and meritorious consideration.

Officers can only learn their evaluation grade when they receive a bad grade (below 60 points). In addition, the Freedom of Information Act, which was enacted in 2004, allows employees to learn their grades if they make a formal application to their departments. However, employees cannot learn their exact evaluation scores. The department only provides the grades, which are grouped as bad, average, good and very good.

Raters evaluate the officers in two categories. The first category is an evaluation of the officers' personal characteristics such as intelligence level, honesty, confidentiality, physical appearance and bad habits such as alcohol or gambling. The raters write their comments on the space provided on the evaluation form. As may readily be observed, these criteria are subjective and open to varied interpretation.

The second category is the officer's job knowledge (responsibility, loyalty, professional knowledge, discipline, impartiality, etc.). There are also two additional sections in the evaluation form. The first one is an evaluation of the supervisory skills (only for ranking officers), and the other one is only for employees who are assigned to duty abroad.

The law allows government agencies to include additional criteria in the job knowledge section of the evaluation form upon obtaining approval from the National Personnel Department. Accordingly, the TNP added the following two criteria: 'Maintenance and protection of the equipment and weapons and the ability to use them when necessary', and 'marksmanship'.

Data and methodology

This study utilizes a cross-sectional research design and data analysis, which is one of the two types of non-experimental approach. Since the dependent variable is ordinal level, ordered logistic regression analysis is used to test the relationships and control for rival hypotheses. Using multiple regression analysis, the relationships between a single dependent variable and several independent variables are studied. To facilitate interpretation of the statistical findings, Monte Carlo simulations were run to calculate predicted probabilities.

Instrument

The questionnaire consists of three sections. The first section includes questions on demographic information. The respondents were asked to report their gender, age,

education, years of service and current rank. The second section contains 10 items regarding the existing performance evaluation system which are considered to be indicators of employee satisfaction with the overall performance appraisal process. Part three includes 12 statements regarding recommendations for the performance appraisal system. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a five-point Likert scale: 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neutral; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree. Higher values mean higher support for the statements.

Sampling

The questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected sample of 500 sworn officers from Ankara PD in the summer of 2001. According to the data of the Personnel Affairs Department of the Ankara PD, the department had a total of 12,459 sworn personnel as of the year 2001. The sample for this study constitutes 3.6% of the law enforcement population in the department. Out of 500, a total of 453 subjects completed the questionnaire, which translates into a response rate of approximately 90%.

A draft questionnaire was pre-tested with 40 randomly selected employees in Ankara PD to fine-tune the instrument for a larger sample. On this basis, a number of questions were revised in order to assure greater clarity. Furthermore, a number of questions were deleted, some were added and the questionnaire was prepared for distribution. For example, the term 'performance appraisal' was used in the original instrument. However, some of the respondents were not sure whether that term referred to 'registry report', which is commonly used instead of 'performance appraisal'.

The questionnaires were handed out to the units and then collected after 10 days by the researchers. In order to prevent any administrative difficulties, an endorsement was obtained from the Turkish National Police Headquarters by the researchers.

At the beginning of the questionnaire an introduction explained the goal, scope and benefits of the survey. Thus, the participants' attention was drawn to the questionnaire. In addition, it is stated that the information obtained was confidential and that there was no obligation to provide identification. Thus, the real opinions and inclinations of the personnel could be better identified.

Hypothesis

It was expected that the evaluators would be less concerned about the secret performance evaluation system than police officers who were being evaluated. Generally speaking, evaluators are higher ranking officers but not all the higher ranking officers at the same rank are evaluators. It depends on where the ranking officer works and what his or her duties and responsibilities are. However, in principle we can say that the higher the rank of the officer, the higher the probability of that officer being at the evaluating position, and thus in favor of secret evaluation. In other words, police chiefs, majors, district captains, captains¹, lieutenants and sergeants are more likely to support the secret evaluation method than police officers.

Data

Dependent variable

In order to measure police officers and supervisor's opinions of the existing evaluation system, subjects were asked to rank their level of agreement with the following statement:

'Because the existing system practices the "secret evaluation" method, it is impossible for the personnel to learn about his/her imperfect aspects and to make efforts to correct these'. The answer options are ordinal level and as follows: 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree.

Independent variables

In order to test for the effect of rank of the officer on the dependent variable, the following question was used: 'What is your current rank?' with responses including police chief, major, district captain, captain, lieutenant, sergeant, and police officer. The variable was recoded into six dummy variables (police chiefs, majors, district captains, captains, lieutenants and sergeants) with police officers left out as the reference group.

Four control variables were used in the analysis to control for demographic factors. Education was measured on an ordinal scale as follows: middle school, high school, university, police academy and graduate school. Since university and police academy have four years' education and police academy is not necessarily higher or lower than university, they were combined (recoded as bachelor's degree) and coded from 1 to 4.

Gender was measured with a binary variable with male recoded as '0' and female recoded as '1'. In order to control for the effect of different ages on the dependent variable, an ordinal variable was used ranging from 1 to 4 for the following age cohorts: 21–30, 31–40, 41–50, and 51 and more. To control for the effect of years of service on the dependent variable, an ordinal variable was used ranging from 1 to 5 for the options as follows: 1–5 years, 6–10 years, 11–15 years, 15–20 years, and 21 years and more.

Findings

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for the independent variables in the study. The survey sample included 382 male officers (84.3%) and 70 female officers (15.5%). The majority of the respondents' ages were between 21 and 40 (68.3%). As for the education level of the participants, the majority comprised high school graduates (40.2%). They were followed by the police academy graduates (35.8%). Those with a graduate degree had a percentage of 3.5%.

As for the distribution according to the years of service, the subject's years of service were equally distributed over five-year increments (approximately 20% each). If the participants are examined according to the distribution of ranks, it can be observed that 10.6% were police chiefs, 6.8% majors, 9.1% district captains, 9.5% captains, 10.4% lieutenants, 10.8% sergeants and 42.8% police officers.

About half of the sampling group had the rank of police officer (42.8%). However, if ranks other than the police officers are considered as supervisors, more than half of the group consisted of the police supervisors (57.2%). Some 19.7% of the respondents were the evaluators: police chiefs and the district captains. The rate of evaluating personnel (majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and police officers) was 80.3%.

Table 2 examines the police personnel's concerns on the existing performance evaluation system in the Ankara PD. The results of ordered logistic regression analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the ranks of 'district captain' ($z = -3.20, p < 0.001$) and lieutenants ($z = -1.76, p < 0.078$) and the concern about having a closed evaluation system. The direction of the relationship for both ranks was negative. This means that district captains, and lieutenants are less likely to be concerned about the secret evaluation method than police officers. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the survey respondents.

Variables	Groups	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	70	15.5
	Male	382	84.3
	Missing	1	0.2
	Total	453	100
Age	21–30	162	35.8
	31–40	147	32.5
	41–50	120	26.5
	51 and up	21	4.6
	Missing	3	0.7
	Total	453	100
Education	Middle school	13	2.9
	High school	182	40.2
	University	78	17.2
	Police academy	162	35.8
	Graduate school	16	3.5
	Missing	2	0.4
Total	453	100	
Years of service	1–5 years	99	21.9
	6–10 years	91	20.1
	11–15 years	82	18.1
	15–20 years	88	19.4
	21 years and up	87	19.2
	Missing	6	1.3
Total	453	100	
Current rank	1, Police chief	48	10.6
	2, Major	31	6.8
	3, District captain	41	9.1
	4, Captain	43	9.5
	5, Lieutenant	47	10.4
	6, Sergeant	49	10.8
	7, Police officer	194	42.8
	Total	453	100

that raters or higher ranking officers are less likely to be concerned about the secret evaluation method than police officers. However, it is surprising that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the other ranks and concern about the secret evaluation method. Even though police chiefs also perform evaluations, they have the same level of concern with the evaluation system as officers.

Another statistically significant relationship was found between female officers ($z = 1.85, p < 0.064$) and the concern about the closed evaluation system. The direction of the relationship was positive. This means that female police officers were more likely to be concerned about the secret evaluation method being used in their department than male officers.

Table 2. Concerns about the secret evaluation system for police personnel.^a

Variables	B (SE)	Probability	z-value
Police chiefs	-0.300 (0.387)	0.438	-0.078
Majors	-0.562 (0.439)	0.201	-1.28
District captains	-1.117 (0.348)	0.001	-3.20
Captains	-0.069 (0.400)	0.862	-0.17
Lieutenants	-0.653 (0.370)	0.078	-1.76
Sergeants	-0.298 (0.382)	0.435	-0.78
Female	0.539 (0.290)	0.064	1.85
Education	0.449 (0.230)	0.051	1.95
Age	-0.245 (0.213)	0.250	-1.15
Years of service	-0.043 (0.138)	0.754	-0.31
N	453		
Pseudo R ²	0.0315		
Chi sq. prob.	.0008		

Source: The data were obtained from a survey study, titled ‘Police performance appraisal in the Turkish National Police: A survey of the Ankara Police Department’, Ankara, Turkey, 2001, by Serdar Kenan Gul. Unstandardized ordinal logistic regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses; probabilities based on two-tailed test. Statistically significant coefficients ($p < 0.10$) are in bold. Police officers are the reference group for all the rank variables.

^aThe question for this variable is ‘what is your level of agreement to the following question?’: ‘Because the existing system practices the “secret evaluation” method, it is impossible for the personnel to learn about his/her imperfect aspects and to make efforts to correct these’. The answer options are ordinal level and as follows: 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree.

There was also a statistically significant relationship between police personnel’s education level and the concern about the secret evaluation method ($z = 1.95, p < 0.051$). The direction of the relationship was positive. The officers who had a higher level education were more likely to be concerned about the secret evaluation method than the officers who had less education. In other words, as the officer’s level of education increased, the concern about a secret evaluation system increased.

Since not all the variables in the analysis shown in Table 2 were statistically significant, we do not discuss the non-significant variables (police chief, major, captain, sergeant, age and years of service) in the following sections.

Tables 3 and 4 present the expected probability of concern about the secret evaluation method for police personnel. Individuals are assumed to have mean age, education and years of service and be female. Table 3 shows that, holding other factors constant, changing the rank from district captain to police officer increases the expected probability of strong concern about the secret evaluation system from 33 to 59%. This is a difference of 26%, all

Table 3. Expected probability of concern with ‘secret’ evaluation for police personnel.^a

	District captains	Police officers	Difference
Strongly agree	33% (0.084)	59% (0.068)	26%

^aNote: expected probabilities were computed from an ordinal logistic regression model. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Values for police rank varied from district captain to police officer, holding the other variables constant. Individuals are assumed to have mean age, education, years of service and be female. The estimates were calculated using Clarify Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results, by Michael Tomz, Jason Wittenberg, and Gary King.

Table 4. Expected probability of concern with secret evaluation for police personnel.^a

	Lieutenants	Police officers	Difference
Strongly agree	43% (.102)	59% (0.068)	16%

^aNote: expected probabilities were computed from an ordinal logistic regression model. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Values for police rank varied from lieutenant to police officer, holding the other variables constant. Individuals are assumed to have mean age, education, years of service and be female. The estimates were calculated using Clarify Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results, by Michael Tomz, Jason Wittenberg, and Gary King.

else being equal. On the other hand, Table 4 reveals that, changing the rank from lieutenant to police officer increases the expected probability of opposition to the secret evaluation system from 43 to 59%, holding all other factors constant. This is a significant difference of 16%, *ceteris paribus*.

Table 5 presents the expected probability of police officer's concern about the secret evaluation method varying with *education level*. This table shows that changing police officers' education level from middle school to graduate school increases the expected probability of strong concern about the secret evaluation system from 42 to 72%. This is a difference of 30%, holding other factors constant. Thus the effect of education is even stronger than rank, but both are significant factors in explaining attitudes about the evaluation system.

Finally, Table 6 presents the expected probability of a police officer's concern about the secret evaluation method with *varying gender*. This table shows that changing police officers' gender from male to female increases the expected probability of strong concern about the secret evaluation system from 45 to 59%. This is a difference of 14%, holding other factors constant.

Table 5. Expected probability of police officer's concern for 'secret' evaluation varying education level.^a

	Middle school	Graduate	Difference
Strongly agree	42% (0.081)	72% (0.723)	30%
Agree	36% (0.033)	21% (0.066)	15%

^aNote: expected probabilities were computed from an ordinal logistic regression model. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Values for police officer's education level varied from middle school to graduate, holding the other variables constant. Individuals are assumed to have mean age and years of service and to be female. The estimates were calculated using Clarify Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results, by Michael Tomz, Jason Wittenberg, and Gary King.

Table 6. Expected probability of police officer's concern for 'secret' evaluation varying gender.^a

	Male	Female	Difference
Strongly agree	45% (0.046)	59% (0.068)	14%

^aNote: expected probabilities were computed from an ordinal logistic regression model. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Values for police officer's gender varied from male to female, holding the other variables constant. Individuals are assumed to have mean age and years of service. The estimates were calculated using Clarify Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results, by Michael Tomz, Jason Wittenberg, and Gary King.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to examine the performance appraisal systems of the Turkish National Police and to assess the reactions of officers and supervisors from Ankara PD regarding their performance appraisal process. Employee reactions to performance appraisal has been suggested by researchers as being one an important component essential to the acceptance and use of performance appraisal in organizations (Bernardin & Beatty, 1984; Cardy & Dobbins, 1994; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). In addition, the effectiveness of an appraisal system is particularly contingent on the attitudes of the system users, both raters and ratees (Roberts, 1990).

Traditional approaches suffer from two fatal flaws: frequent use of irrelevant criteria and extreme subjectivity. Careful supervisory and organizational oversight will significantly reduce this problem through the development of reasonable and carefully-drawn key job elements, measurable job standards and reasonable performance appraisal criteria (Swank & Conser, 1983).

Completely closed performance appraisal systems, in which employees do not see or have any access to their own performance appraisal forms, have become extremely rare. Most appraisal systems have built-in procedures to make sure that employees have a chance to see their completed performance appraisal forms (Anderson, 1993). Turkish National Police Organization has a closed performance evaluation system in which officers do not receive feedback unless it is a negative evaluation (59 points or below). Indeed, several studies have indicated that employees are more satisfied with appraisal systems that provide substantial feedback about job performance than with appraisal systems that provide little feedback (Dobbins et al., 1990; Greller & Parsons, 1992).

According to article 16 of the Governmental Officials Performance Evaluation Regulation, personnel receiving a grade of '59' or less are deemed to have received a negative performance evaluation and the employee is warned according to the procedure mentioned in article 21. However, what happens when an employee's average performance evaluation is, for example, '60'? The performance is evaluated according to the '100' full points system and the said employee has received '40' points less than the full points. The reasons for receiving '60' instead of '100' should be explained to the employee and his/her deficiencies, and the areas to be improved should be stated.

In Ankara PD's appraisal system, there is only feedback if the evaluation is highly negative, which is very rare. There is no way employees can challenge what they may perceive to be an unfair or biased evaluation from their supervisors. This obviously leads to a situation where employees are forced to accept whatever evaluation decision management makes about their work status.

Conclusion

This study tested whether there is a relationship between the rank, education, gender, age, years of service and officers' perceptions regarding the secret appraisal system. The findings revealed that, in contrast to police officers, district captains and lieutenants are less concerned about the secret evaluation system. This might be perhaps because they want to keep the status quo and not give up their power. This finding is in agreement with the literature. For instance, Williams and Levy (2000) found that supervisors reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with performance evaluation than did non-supervisory employees. According to the authors, this finding was due to supervisors being more exposed to the process and better trained. Thus they had more information to assess the system. In the case of Ankara PD, higher ranking officers were less concerned about the secret appraisal system

than lower ranking officers, perhaps because they wanted to keep the status quo and not give up their power.

Female police officers were more likely to have concerns about the secret evaluation system than male officers. Education also mattered in the police officers' opinions of the secret evaluation method. Highly educated officers were more likely to have concerns with the current appraisal method in which the officers cannot learn the evaluation results. This finding suggests a possible significance of education in law enforcement and its possible importance for organizational development. If an organization can increase the overall quality of its personnel through employing better educated staff or providing opportunities for its personnel to increase their educational level, it may produce better products and services. This may be because better educated employees can see the deficiencies and problems more easily and contribute to the overall quality in the organization.

The secret appraisal system does not allow officers to learn about their mistakes and weaknesses. In order to be able to benefit from the performance evaluation, the results of the performance evaluation should be shared with the officers and feedback should be provided to them. Through the application of an open evaluation system in the police organization, the employees would then be able to find out their deficiencies and have the opportunity to correct and improve them. As a result, the quality of the police services in the Turkish National Police would increase. It is necessary that the performance evaluation method in the Turkish National Police Organization should be immediately reviewed and updated.

In considering future revisions and improvements of the performance appraisal systems in Ankara PD, and as well as in other police forces in the world, we hope that the findings of this study will produce some insights to provide guidance to these departments' efforts for better appraisal systems. Insights from this study may also contribute to nationwide assessments of evaluation practices and standards for other police organizations.

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Notes

1. Basically captains and district captains are at the same rank but generally captains work under majors whereas district captains work independently. This means district captains are at the evaluator position while captains, like other officers, are evaluated by their superiors such as majors. However, being at the rater position does not mean the rater officers are not evaluated by their superior officers.

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