



**Investigating the Relationship between Personality Dimensions, Level of Self-Efficacy
and Perceived Performance Appraisal Satisfaction: A Case for Individualised
Performance Appraisals**

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree.
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Abstract

Orientation: For decades, organisations have implemented performance management systems in order to promote an environment focused on performance enhancement and employee development. Performance appraisals have consistently been at the centre of performance management systems. However, they are often perceived as being ineffective or unsatisfactory, resulting in dissatisfaction and contributing to financial and time losses. Performance Appraisal Satisfaction (PAS) amongst employees is, therefore, vital if organisations want to achieve desired outcomes. Limited research was found that explained or described methods which organisations can utilise to increase PAS amongst employees.

Research rationale and objectives: As organisations become more global, innovative and employee-focused, the need to cater to individual needs and desires has significantly increased. This study aimed to investigate ways in which PAS can be increased through the individualisation of three performance appraisal aspects namely; number of raters; method of feedback and frequency of feedback. In terms of the individualisation factors, this study has focused on; level of perceived self-efficacy and the Big Five personality dimensions.

Research approach: Given the limited pre-existing literature on this topic, the present study used an exploratory research approach to engage with the results in an in-depth manner. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected from employees and Human Resource practitioners in order to establish performance appraisal preferences and the viability of implementing individualised performance appraisals. Composite questionnaires consisting of Likert-type questions, choice-based conjoint tasks and open-ended questions, were distributed utilising a convenient and snowball methodology. Completed questionnaires were analysed by means of descriptive and inferential and statistics, conjoint analysis, as well as by means of a thematic analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Human Resource practitioners and analysed using a thematic analysis.

Main findings: Results from the descriptive and inferential statistics indicate that the level of self-efficacy and personality-type are significant in predicting certain performance appraisal preferences. For example, respondents with increased levels of perceived self-efficacy significantly preferred *face-to-face feedback from a manager* ($p < .05$) while respondents with low levels of perceived self-efficacy significantly preferred *impersonal feedback* ($p < .05$). Results from the composite questionnaire's open-ended items indicated that employees prefer performance appraisals which considered their personality type and level of self-efficacy.

However, the thematic analysis conducted on the HR practitioner interviews revealed that HR practitioners are hesitant to implement a novel performance appraisal system for reasons including; gaining top-management support and the additional time and administrative burden it would likely impose on the HR practitioners themselves.

Keywords performance appraisals, performance appraisal satisfaction, preference, individualisation.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Abstract.....	3
Table of Contents.....	5
List of Tables	8
List of Figures.....	10
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	11
Rationale for the Research Project	12
Research Initiating Question	14
Research Objectives	14
Summary and Structure of the Dissertation	15
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	16
The Changing World of Work	16
Performance Appraisal Satisfaction	18
Individualising Performance Appraisals	19
1) Individualising Performance Evaluations.	20
2) Individualising Performance Feedback.....	22
Individual Differences.....	24
Self-Efficacy and Individualising Performance Appraisals.	24
Personality Traits and Individualising Performance Appraisals.	26
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	32
Research Design.....	32
Research Approaches and Methods	32
Sampling.....	33
Realised Sample	34
Data Collection Procedure	35
Measurement Instruments	36
Likert-type Response Scale and Open-ended Items.	36
Choice-based Conjoint Tasks	40
Semi-structured Interviews.....	42
Data Analyses.....	42
Ethical Considerations.....	43

Data Handling Considerations	44
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	45
Assessing Unidimensionality and Internal Consistency	45
Generalised Self-Efficacy (GSE) Scale.	46
Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI) Scale.	47
Descriptive Statistics	49
GSE and Adapted BFI Scales.	49
Preference Item 1	50
Preference Item 2	53
Preference Item 3	56
Preference Item 4	58
Preference Item 5	61
Preference Item 6	64
Preference Item 7	67
Preference Item 8	70
Preference Item 9	72
Choice-Based Conjoint Task Questionnaire	77
Relative importance of performance appraisal options for overall sample	77
Relative importance of each of the selected individual difference variables	78
Perceived self-efficacy.....	79
Personality Dimension: Perceived Conscientiousness.	80
Personality Dimension: Perceived Agreeableness.	81
Personality Dimension: Perceived Neuroticism.	82
Personality Dimension: Perceived Extraversion.	83
Personality Dimension: Perceived Openness to Experience.	84
Open-ended items from the questionnaire	87
Qualitative semi-structured interviews with HR Practitioners.....	88
Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews.	89
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	91
Discussion of research question and research objectives	91
Number of Raters	93
Medium of Feedback.....	96
Frequency of feedback	99

Thematic Analyses	101
Questionnaire.....	101
Interviews with HR practitioners.....	103
Theoretical and Practical Contributions	103
Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research.....	105
Conclusion.....	106
References.....	108
Appendix A.....	115
Appendix B.....	122

List of Tables

Table 2.1. <i>Performance appraisal preference options</i>	23
Table 3.1. <i>Gender, Race and Education Level - Distribution of sample (n = 205)</i>	34
Table 3.2. <i>Age and Number of years in Organisation - Distribution of sample (n = 205)</i>	35
Table 3.3. <i>Attributes and levels to be used in the Choice-based Modelling Analysis of Performance Appraisal Preference</i>	41
Table 4.1. <i>Descriptive statistics for the overall sample (n=205)</i>	49
Table 4.2. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 1 (n = 205)</i>	50
Table 4.3. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 1</i>	51
Table 4.4. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 1 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	52
Table 4.5. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	52
Table 4.6. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 2 (n=205)</i>	53
Table 4.7. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 2</i>	54
Table 4.8. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 2 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	55
Table 4.9. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	55
Table 4.10. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 3 (n=205)</i>	56
Table 4.11. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 3</i>	57
Table 4.12. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 3 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	57
Table 4.13. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	58
Table 4.14. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 4 (n=205)</i>	58
Table 4.15. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 4</i>	59
Table 4.16. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 4(two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	60
Table 4.17. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	61
Table 4.18. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 5 (n=205)</i>	62
Table 4.19. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 5</i>	63
Table 4.20. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 5(two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	63
Table 4.21. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	64
Table 4.22. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 6</i>	65

Table 4.23. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 6</i>	66
Table 4.24. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 6 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	66
Table 4.25. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	67
Table 4.26. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 7 (n=205)</i>	68
Table 4. 27. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 7</i>	68
Table 4.28. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 7 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	69
Table 4.29. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	69
Table 4.30. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 8 (n=205)</i>	70
Table 4.31. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 8</i>	71
Table 4.32. <i>Cross-tabulation results for dichotomised self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 8</i>	71
Table 4.33. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	72
Table 4.34. <i>Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 9 (n=205)</i>	73
Table 4.35. <i>Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 9</i>	73
Table 4.36. <i>Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 9 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)</i>	74
Table 4.37. <i>Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results</i>	74
Table 4.38 <i>Summary of the Statistical Analyses for the Performance Appraisal Aspects and Individual Factors</i>	76
Table 4.39. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for the Overall Sample (n = 205)</i>	78
Table 4.40. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Perceived self-efficacy (n = 205)</i>	79
Table 4.41. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Conscientiousness (n = 205)</i>	80
Table 4.42. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Agreeableness (n = 205)</i>	81
Table 4.43. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Neuroticism (n = 205)</i>	82
Table 4.44. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Extraversion (n = 205)</i>	83
Table 4.45. <i>Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Openness to Experience (n = 205)</i> ...	84
Table 4.46 <i>Summary of the Conjoint Task – Ranked attributes per Individual Factor</i>	86
Table 4.47 <i>Summary of the Conjoint Task – Highest level within each attribute per Individual Factor</i>	86
Table 4.48. <i>“Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes your personality into account? Why do you say so? (n=205)</i>	87
Table 4.49. <i>“Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes into account your level of self-efficacy (self-confidence)? Why do you say so? (n=205)</i>	88

List of Figures

Figure 3.1. <i>Example item from the performance appraisal preference scale</i>	38
Figure 3.2. <i>Example of one choice-based conjoint analysis tasks</i>	42
Figure 5.1. <i>Pie charts showing respondents' responses for each item (n = 205)</i>	102

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Performance management has become a vital process in an organisation's pursuit of operational effectiveness and overall success, by creating an organisational culture that is focused on high performance standards and the delivery of quality products and services to clients (Ohemeng, Amoako-Asiedu, & Obuobisa-Darko, 2018). There has been extensive research into performance management which has, for the most part, been focused on establishing a meaningful relationship between employees and organisational performance (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Effective performance management systems and practices therefore require the implementation of performance evaluations that assess current job performance, an event usually referred to as a performance appraisal (DeNisi & Pritchard, 2006). A performance appraisal is defined as "... a procedure to evaluate how individual employees perform and how they can improve their performance and contribute to team/unit/division/function and overall organisational performance" (Grubb, 2007, p. 2). Despite extensive theoretical evidence that performance appraisals have a positive effect on employee productivity and organisational success, the cost-benefit of conducting performance appraisals is often questioned by academics and practitioners alike, with some even expressing doubt as to the usefulness of conducting performance appraisals at all (Dusterhoff, Cunningham, & MacGregor, 2014).

Studies have shown that performance appraisal satisfaction (PAS) is crucial to the successful adoption and/or acceptance of performance appraisal systems. Evidence suggests that PAS positively contributes to perceptions that appraisals are valid and fair (Keeping & Levy, 2000). Other studies have found positive organisational outcomes associated with PAS, including: increased job satisfaction and motivation (Kuvaas, 2006); lower levels of turnover (Gozukara, Hatipoglu, & Gunes, 2017); and higher levels of organisational commitment (Kadiresan, Selamat, Selladurai, & Mohamed, 2015). Ismail and Gali (2017) found a significant negative correlation between PAS and both job stress and work-family conflict. Given this empirical evidence, it is apparent that PAS is related to desirable organisational outcomes. It is therefore vital that organisations ensure high levels of PAS amongst its employees. A number of studies have documented the importance of PAS; however, limited studies were found addressing the ways in which organisations have attempted to increase the levels of PAS amongst its employees.

In particular, there is limited research explaining the effect of individual differences on the level of PAS. Only one study investigated the role of individual differences on performance appraisals. Based on the study's findings, Scott and Einstein (2001) recommended that a uniform performance management system, as is traditionally implemented in organisations, may no longer be effective given the increasing amounts of diversity within modern organisations. Scott and Einstein (2001) further proposed that performance appraisal systems would be viewed more positively if employees' individual differences and/or preferences were considered. No further literature relating to the effect of individual differences on PAS levels could be found.

Kinnie, Hutchison, Purcell, Rayton and Swart (2005) found that generally speaking, research into individual differences in human resource policies and practices is scarce. It is argued here that not enough attention has been given to the role of individual needs and preferences of employees in the design of human resource policies, practices and interventions. Kinnie et al. (2005) argued that as organisations employ a diverse range of employees, they should be managed through a more diverse set of human resource policies rather than those traditionally implemented.

Rationale for the Research Project

As suggested above, performance appraisals are implemented and utilised within organisations to assess performance and align employee effort and performance with strategic organisational goals. They are a tool used to make equitable decisions regarding salary increases and staff movements, including promotions and terminations (Longenecker, 1999). Performance appraisals are also fundamental in encouraging employee development and motivation (Kuvaas, 2006). Previous studies have found performance appraisals to be positively related to increased job satisfaction, employee performance and organisational commitment, as well as lower levels of intention to quit and actual employee turnover (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor 2000). Performance appraisals are therefore widely described as a necessary organisational process which positively contributes towards organisational success (Palaiologos, Papazekos, & Panayotopoulou, 2011). However, despite the overwhelming evidence of such benefits, studies have found that if performance appraisals are managed poorly, they may result in decreased performance and increased dissatisfaction amongst employees (Latham, Almost, Mann & Moore, 2005). Sarkar (2016) stated that organisations

face several performance appraisal challenges, most notably employee dissatisfaction with the appraisal processes, making performance management systems and performance appraisals less effective than what they could be (Sarkar, 2016).

As with many human resource practices and procedures, performance appraisals have traditionally been uniformly designed and implemented following a mostly standardised process (Scott & Einstein, 2001). More recently, as performance appraisal processes have received ever-increasing attention, they have undergone several changes. Some well-known global organisations controversially announced that, as a result of the numerous challenges associated with implementing performance appraisals, formal performance appraisals would be abandoned altogether (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016). However, many of these organisations subsequently faced a new set of challenges (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016) indicating that the complete abandonment of performance appraisals is equally ineffective. It would appear then that neither abandoning performance appraisals altogether, nor implementing uniformed performance appraisals is sustainable. Instead, there is a growing belief that performance appraisals should rather be tweaked in order to ensure that performance appraisal system challenges are addressed, employees are satisfied with the performance appraisal system (i.e. experience higher levels of perceived PAS) and lastly, that performance management and performance appraisals can be more effective in achieving the desired organisational outcomes.

Scott and Einstein (2001) suggested a shift from current performance appraisal systems towards greater individualism based on employee preferences. They also suggested that individualisation be introduced into organisational practices due to increased employee diversity and the changing nature of work during the last few decades.

Traditional career expectations and patterns have also shifted considerably over the last few decades and careers have become increasingly unpredictable, complex and boundaryless (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017). Organisations are also increasingly being guided by individual agency, career self-management, and shifts in individual values and attitudes (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017). According to Burke and Ng (2006), organisations are increasingly employing the most educated workforce in the history of the world, with employees demanding a greater say in their employment conditions including, salary and benefit structures. With the need to ensure greater diversity within organisations, employers must effectively manage a more diverse workforce that is multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-lingual (Burke & Ng, 2006). As

diversity within organisations continues to increase, so too does the myriad of individual differences and preferences of employees.

Over the last decade, organisations have increasingly begun responding to the changes described above and have begun offering more tailored approaches to the manner in which they recruit, engage and manage different cohorts of employees. This is most evident in the practice of numerous organisations offering employees customised reward and recognition offerings, flexible work arrangements and personalised salary structures (Hillebrink, 2006).

In the present study, it was argued that there is untapped potential to adapt performance appraisal systems in order to overcome some of the adverse outcomes associated with performance appraisals and to possibly increase levels of performance appraisal satisfaction amongst employees. As mentioned previously, the individualisation of performance appraisals is a novel concept as no previous studies could be found that empirically investigated this concept, despite the support for this notion being evident throughout performance appraisal literature.

Research Initiating Question

Based on the rationale for this research, the following research initiating question was proposed to guide the research study:

To what extent can, and should, organisations introduce individualised performance appraisal systems that are based on individual employee preferences, taking into account personality type and level of self-efficacy in such a manner that it may lead to higher levels of perceived performance appraisal satisfaction?

Research Objectives

As suggested in the above research initiating question, there were two primary objectives for this study. Firstly, to investigate whether the perceived level of performance appraisal satisfaction would be higher amongst employees if personality dimension, level of self-efficacy and appraisal preferences were considered in designing and implementing individualised

performance appraisals. Secondly, to investigate the extent to which various HR practitioners would support the notion of including employee preferences in the design and implementation of performance appraisal processes in an attempt to increase the effectiveness of the performance appraisal process.

Summary and Structure of the Dissertation

The current study was introduced in Chapter One and the overall research question and objectives were subsequently outlined. Specifically, the importance of performance appraisals and PAS was highlighted by explaining the effect of successful performance appraisals on desired organisational and employee outcomes. This chapter also provided a suggestion for organisations to possibly increase PAS amongst its employees – by considering individual factors and in turn, by individualising performance appraisals.

In the next chapter, Chapter Two, plausible propositions linking specific individual factors and traditional performance appraisal aspects are formulated and presented based on an in-depth review of current performance appraisal and individual differences literature. Thereafter, Chapter Three describes the study's research methodology, data collection procedure, measurement instruments and ethical considerations. The study's findings are subsequently presented Chapter Four. In the concluding chapter, Chapter 5, the findings are comprehensively discussed. The study's theoretical and practical implications, limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed are also presented in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literature review will focus on creating a better understanding of the current changing world of work and the need to shift from traditional performance appraisal approaches towards performance appraisals which consider individuals and their preferences. It also emphasises the importance of PAS and highlights the issues relating to current performance appraisal systems. This chapter concludes with a detailed review of the study's key variables from which the study's 20 plausible propositions are derived.

The Changing World of Work

Globalisation, technological advancements, shifts in business strategies and organisational structures, as well as changes in the employment relationship between employees and employers have radically changed the nature of the world of work (Heneman, Ledford Jr, & Gresham, 2002). Moreover, employee diversity has become much more than differences in race and gender, but also includes employees emanating from different countries and cultures, who have a broad range of interests, world-views, beliefs, values and norms. In addition, employees have distinct personalities and different (personalised) work and life experiences (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). As a result, there is an increasing emphasis on organisations to address individual choices and preferences and on incorporating career self-management throughout the workforce, all of which challenge the traditional way in which organisations have operated in the past (Heneman et al., 2002). The demand for employees who possess high-level and scarce skills has also increased and given the high demand and the limited supply of such individuals, organisations today need to do more to retain and engage highly skilled employees, colloquially referred to as human capital or talent (Heneman et al. 2002).

The changing nature of work is further evident as organisations become more multi-generational than ever before. Generational differences impact organisations worldwide as younger-age cohorts of employees enter organisations with very different expectations, attitudes and behaviours to those who are already in the organisation (Burke & Ng, 2006). Along with Generation X (typically individuals that were born between 1960 and 1976), there are around 6.5 million Net Generation (NetGen) employees (typically individuals that were born between 1980 and 1995) in the workplace. Unlike Generation X employees, NetGen

employees tend to be more vocal in asserting their values and beliefs and are typically considered to be more overtly ambitious than those belonging to the Generation X era (Burke & Ng, 2006). NetGens are also believed to be more eager to obtain career developmental opportunities, while also typically having higher salary and promotional expectations (Burke & Ng, 2006). As employees are increasingly demanding greater control over their employment situations and wanting to make their own career choices to best suit their preferred lifestyle, and as there is limited availability of highly skilled individuals, academics and practitioners have urged organisations to offer more customised or individualised options to different cohorts of employees. (Burke & Ng, 2006).

These changes in the world of work and shifts in the employee-employer relationship increasingly highlights that a traditional one-size-fits-all approach to human resource management (HRM) is no longer effective. Organisations are therefore progressively adopting offerings and employee experiences that cater for the varying interests, needs and preferences of different employee cohorts. As a result, recent decades have seen the widespread adoption of HRM policies and practices that have moved away from a one-size-fits-all approach. An example of this is the implementation of Employee Self-Service (ESS) modules (Margatama, 2017). Many employers give employees greater choice and control in managing their employee benefits to suit their own needs and life-stage. For example, employees being able to structure their remuneration package and choosing how much they want to save in, for example, a defined contribution pension scheme. The benefit to employees of being able to control various aspects of their employment conditions is related to higher levels of job satisfaction, improved employee engagement and higher levels of retention (Margatama, 2017).

Another way in which organisations are offering employees more freedom to make decisions is by allowing greater work-place and work-time flexibility, i.e. where and when work is done. It has become a common practice in organisations to accommodate the care-giving and/or family responsibilities of employees, and even to assist employees who face long commutes (Peretz, Fried, & Levi, 2018). As a result of these family-friendly policies and practices, organisations have experienced decreased levels of employee turnover and absenteeism, while employees reported experiencing a more balanced lifestyle (Peretz et al., 2018). Such examples of how employees choose to work, emphasises that there is no ideal mix of total reward elements that attract, engage and retain employees, but rather that when total reward elements are tweaked in such a manner as to appeal to a specific individual, they are more effective.

As has been suggested above, despite the evidence of desirable organisational outcomes associated with individualising or customising HRM interventions, for the most part, many organisations still typically implement general and/or textbook-like HRM practices across the board. Although Peretz et al. (2018) stated that universalistic human resource practices are now outdated. Therefore, despite the changing world of work and an understanding that organisations are more diverse than ever before, organisations still generally implement a one-size-fits-all approach to performance management practices, including performance appraisals (Scott & Einstein, 2001). However, many organisations continuously report low levels of PAS amongst employees, and performance management and appraisals are consistently viewed as being unfair and mostly ineffective.

Performance Appraisal Satisfaction

The PAS construct is one of the most frequently measured performance appraisal reactions, with empirical evidence suggesting that PAS is positively related to several desirable organisational outcomes (Keeping & Levy, 2000). Lai Wan (2007) found that PAS is positively related to increased profitability, productivity, customer satisfaction and employee retention. Thurston and McNall (2010) further found that PAS was linked to several desirable behavioural outcomes, such as organisational citizenship behaviour, while Mayer and Davis (1999) found PAS was related to higher levels of trust in leaders/management. Cawley, Keeping, and Levy (1998, p.615) stated that "...it seems reasonable to expect that subordinates' reactions to appraisal systems would have just as much impact on the success and effectiveness of an appraisal system as the more technical aspects of the system."

The importance of performance appraisal systems and employee reactions to an appraisal system (for example; PAS) has been researched in organisations across the world. Cook and Crossman (2004) found that approximately 80% of employees in a UK-based study expressed a degree of dissatisfaction with the performance appraisals utilised in their organisations. In a USA-based study conducted by Pulakos (2004), only 10% of employees reported that they believed the performance appraisal system in their current organisation helped to improve their job performance. There are wide-spread anecdotal and empirical reports of negative organisational outcomes associated with low levels of PAS. Aleassa (2014) found that employees who were dissatisfied with their performance appraisal, were less likely to use the evaluation feedback to improve their performance which, in turn, prohibits the long-term

effectiveness of the performance appraisal (Aleassa, 2014). Additionally, Sharma and Sharma (2017) found that improvements in employee performance were largely dependent on employees' attitudes toward their performance appraisals. These authors therefore expressed a need for more research to be undertaken to investigate and establish ways in which levels of PAS could be increased for employees.

Given the perceived benefits of PAS, extensive research has been conducted to investigate what constitutes a satisfactory performance appraisal system. Sumelius, Bjorkman, Ehtnrooth, Makela and Smale (2014) suggested that it is a combination of different factors which shapes PAS. In support of this notion, Keeping and Levy (2000) conceptualised PAS as satisfaction with; 1) the performance appraisal process; 2) the performance appraisal system; and 3) the perceived fairness of performance appraisal ratings.

Individualising Performance Appraisals

As suggested above, a uniform approach to performance appraisals may no longer be effective (Scott & Einstein, 2001; Peretz et al., 2018). Given the changing nature of work, organisations may also benefit by implementing an individualised performance appraisal system that is better tailored to specific employee cohorts, where it is practical to do so. As mentioned in Chapter One, Kinnie et al. (2005) agreed with the notion that HR practices should be diversified based on staff composition. The authors stated, "...complex organisations have different types of employees who may be managed successfully through diverse sets of HR policies" (Kinnie et al. 2005, p.9). Boice and Kleiner (1997) also argued against a one-size-fits-all approach to performance management, stating that performance appraisals are neither generic nor transferrable from one organisation to another and that their design and implementation should rather be tailored to take into account employee and organisational characteristics.

In more recent literature, Schmidt (2018) stated, it is well established that individual performance varies over time and that individual differences affect patterns of performance variability. However, Schmidt (2018) argued that little information is known as to how performance-raters could incorporate this variability into performance appraisals. Schmidt (2018) further stated that the lack of understanding in this regard could explain why a relatively low correlation between performance improvement and performance ratings, exists.

Emphasising the need to address the impact of individual factors on performance appraisal practices.

In the present study, it was therefore argued that by individualising performance appraisal practices, an increase in PAS amongst employees would emerge and ultimately assist organisations in achieving desired outcomes. Traditionally, performance appraisals consist of two stages, namely; 1) performance evaluations; and 2) performance feedback. Both of which, it was argued here, may be individualised in multiple ways.

It is argued in the following two sections that various performance evaluation methods and performance feedback options can be implemented by organisations that may lead to increased levels of PAS amongst employees.

1) Individualising Performance Evaluations.

The performance evaluation or assessment process aims to determine the extent to which desired and/or agreed-upon employee behaviours and outcomes have been achieved, i.e. whether the goals from the contracted performance plan have been reached (Aguinis, 2013). Measuring performance is crucial as level of performance is often tied to numerous organisational aspects, for example, salary and/or bonuses, goal setting as well as training and development (Maylett, 2009). Latham et al. (2005) argued that an appraisal is only effective if the performance rater is considered appropriate. Furthermore, Pichler (2012) explained that performance appraisals require information sharing and are considered effective when high-quality rater-ratee exchanges are present. These studies show that the performance appraisal rater is vital to the overall success of the performance appraisal.

A number of methods and approaches are utilised by organisations to evaluate performance. These include for example, self-evaluation, 360-degree evaluations that include a greater number of stakeholders, as well as evaluations solely performed by managers/supervisors. Manager/supervisor evaluations, typically referred to as, top-down appraisals are, according to Fletcher (2001) a traditional appraisal method. Oh and Berry (2009) stated that single-source ratings of performance from a manager/supervisor is the most common form of performance evaluation. Single-rater performance rating is well established but also has certain disadvantages, for example, Oh and Berry (2009) stated that performance is multilevel so

employees work with more than just their supervisor. This means that certain performance aspects could be better rated by other individuals, for example, by team members or subordinates of employees.

Boice and Kleiner (1997) suggested that organisations consider multiple-source (multi-rater) approaches as they typically reduce bias. In addition, the authors found that where multi-rater approaches are utilised, employees have increased support for the feedback given well as having greater confidence in the ratings awarded. However, multiple-rater evaluations can also lead to conflict between raters if rating disagreements occur (Latham et al., 2005). A multiple-rater approach to performance appraisals is considered to be a more modern rater format, which aims to encourage employees not to view the individual supervisor as a judge of character but rather as a performance coach who can assist an employee with their career development (Boice & Klein, 1997). Therefore, although single-source appraisals are most popular in practice, the use of multiple-rater performance evaluations is increasing and is utilised in various large organisations worldwide (Latham et al., 2005).

Limited literature could be found on the role of external stakeholders in performance appraisals, suggesting that this is not a popular performance evaluation rater method. However, Kenny (2016) stated that depending on the type of job, performance evaluation should take into account feedback from clients. Clark and Claise (2011) also stated the importance of customer evaluations.

Typically, organisations will consider the various approaches described above, choose an approach and then implement it across the organisation. This then becomes the foundation for the performance appraisal process. In the present study, it was argued that the evaluation process (i.e. number of raters) should be individualised for each employee in such a way as to address individual differences and preferences. As described above, three of the most common evaluation approaches to performance evaluation processes and practices, are; 1) a single evaluator/rater; 2) multiple internal evaluators/raters; and 3) multiple internal and external evaluators/raters (see Table 2.1). These three evaluator/rater options are utilised in this study and are referred to as rater preference options.

2) Individualising Performance Feedback.

Kluger and DeNisi (1996, p. 225) defined performance feedback as the “...actions taken by external agents to provide information regarding some aspect(s) of one’s task performance”. The performance feedback component is often referred to as the “Achilles heel” of performance appraisals (Aguinis, 2013, p.50). However, performance feedback is a vital part of the appraisal as it deals with an employee’s developmental progress; the extent of an employee’s contribution to organisational success; and allows an opportunity to discuss and agree on future performance goals and outcomes (Aguinis, 2013). When feedback is considered to be effective, it is believed to promote positive employee behaviours, e.g. desirable career development/ advancement and positive organisational outcomes (Archer, 2010). Feedback acceptance is also important as it has been shown to play a pivotal role in determining an individual’s attitude and behaviour (Anseel & Lievens, 2009). Therefore, feedback must be given by an appropriate individual and at an appropriate time.

In terms of the method and/or medium, face-to-face appraisal meetings are the most utilised and well-known feedback medium (Archer, 2010). However, performance feedback can take multiple forms, for example, it can be informal or formal, and besides face-to-face meetings, they may make use of technology or it may take the form of a written report. The report may be verbal or numerical and may either be shared via the use of technology or not (Archer, 2010). Lawler, Benson and McDermott (2012) identified a handful of organisations that had begun replacing their face-to-face performance appraisal meeting with an online system. Fletcher (2001) stated that impersonal feedback may be preferred as it brings about less evaluation apprehension and is also less emotive.

Archer (2010) argued that organisations utilise a feedback medium, not based on the individual but rather on the organisational context. However, the method in which performance feedback is delivered to an individual is extremely important as this feedback should reinforce job-relevant behaviours and allows for the awareness of discrepancies in performance goals (Motro & Ellis, 2017).

Based on the findings of the reviewed literature and emphasising the benefits of well-established, as well as more novel, medium approaches, the three feedback medium options utilised for the purposes of the present study are; 1) impersonal feedback; 2) face-to-face

feedback with a manager; and 3) face-to-face feedback with multiple individuals (see Table 2.1).

In terms of frequency of feedback, organisations typically conduct performance appraisals annually or bi-annually (Aguinis, 2013). However, it is often argued that conducting annual or even bi-annual performance appraisals might not provide the employee or supervisor with sufficient opportunity to discuss performance issues and development goals (Aguinis, 2013). Annual feedback is typically regarded as insufficient by researchers but it is arguably more convenient in practice, which is why it remains a popular feedback strategy (Lawler et al., 2012). Kuvaas (2006) argued that feedback immediacy is associated with a positive relationship between the feedback giver/s and the employee. Boice and Klein (1997) also suggested that ongoing feedback is more beneficial, stating that it prevents selective memory, which is a downfall of annual or bi-annual feedback meetings. Continuous feedback has grown in popularity although concerns have been raised about this method, with some arguing that constant feedback is unnecessary and/or disruptive (Archer, 2010).

Based on the literature presented above, three common feedback frequency options were selected for inclusion as performance appraisal frequency preference options in the present study; 1) annual feedback; 2) bi-annual feedback and; 3) continuous feedback (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1.
Performance appraisal preference options

Performance Appraisal Aspect to be Individualised	First Preference Option	Second Preference Option	Third Preference Option
Number of raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Multiple internal & external raters
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	Personally (face-to-face) feedback by manager	Personally (face-to-face) feedback by multiple stakeholders
Frequency of feedback	Annual (once a year)	Bi-annual (twice a year)	Continuous (i.e. weekly)

As was described previously, it was argued that performance appraisals can be individualised based on nine performance appraisal aspects (these nine aspects are summarised in Table 2.1 and represent the study's nine dependent variables). The question that arose then was, "How

do individual differences, such as personality type and self-efficacy level relate to these various performance appraisal aspects, and how would matching them lead to higher levels of PAS?”

Individual Differences

In the present study, it was argued that individual differences could be used to justify offering individualised performance appraisals and that doing so may be associated with high levels of PAS. For the purposes of this study, perceived self-efficacy and the Big-Five Personality model were chosen as independent variables and argued to be related to perceived PAS to a greater or lesser extent depending on the specific approaches to performance appraisals suggested (see Table 2.1). These individual factors were chosen for inclusion for a number of reasons. Firstly, a wide range of literature already exists for both, self-efficacy and the Big-Five Personality model. In addition, literature has extensively associated these variables with organisational performance and behaviours, as will be described in the sections below. Finally, the variables were included as they can be measured through various measurement instruments and, these traits are considered by researchers to be relatively stable. This is beneficial not only in terms of this research study but for future research as well as for organisational/in practice purposes.

Self-efficacy and the Big-Five Personality model as they relate to organisational behaviours, and in turn, to the various performance appraisals approaches, are described below.

Self-Efficacy and Individualising Performance Appraisals.

Perceived self-efficacy is defined as, “...peoples’ beliefs in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over events in their lives” (Wood & Bandura, 1989, p.364). Bandura (1982) found that self-efficacy affected individual choice, particularly in terms of activities and effort expenditure and, therefore, impacts one’s psychological well-being and performance. Lunenburg explained self-efficacy as a “...kind of self-confidence” (2011, p.1) and investigated three dimensions of perceived self-efficacy, including; 1) magnitude; 2) strength; and 3) generality.

Many studies have investigated self-efficacy and performance. However, studies regarding performance raters, performance feedback method and/or feedback frequency and the

relationship with self-efficacy could not be found in the literature. Using previous related arguments and research findings, an argument was made for these relationships.

Bandura (1982) stated that individuals with high self-efficacy tended to engage more often in task-related activities and persist longer with coping efforts. This is unlike those individuals with low levels of self-efficacy who tended to give up more quickly. Similarly, Lunenburg (2011) found that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy display characteristics of being more goal-orientated, having high levels of confidence, being persistent, as well as being eager to learn how to perform better. In relation to the choice of environment, Bandura (1982) suggested that employees with high levels of self-efficacy were more inclined to seek challenges in their environment while individuals with low self-efficacy were more inclined to exclude themselves from challenging or unfamiliar situations.

Similarly, Nielsen, Yarker, Randall and Munir (2009) found that individuals with increased levels of self-efficacy were more likely to take a proactive approach to difficult situations at work. On the other hand, individuals with low levels of self-efficacy typically display characteristics, such as being unsure of their abilities and therefore exerting less effort during tasks. They are also less confident in their abilities and often give up as a result of believing they are incapable of performing better (Lunenburg, 2011).

Lunenburg (2011) found that organisations received a higher return on investment when they sent employees who had high levels of self-efficacy, on training seminars. Furthermore, individuals with high levels of self-efficacy visualise success scenarios, whereas those with low levels of self-efficacy more frequently visualise failure scenarios. Either scenario influences an individual's need or desire to receive feedback (Wood & Bandura, 1989). It is therefore argued in this study that employees with high levels of self-efficacy would benefit more from, and prefer, face-to-face learning and feedback opportunities, than employees with low levels of self-efficacy.

Gist (1987) argued that self-efficacy affects the way in which individuals make choices. Gist (1987) stated that moderate to high levels of self-efficacy were associated with increased effort expenditure, engaging more often in task-related activities and persistently trying to cope in the face of obstacles. However, low levels of self-efficacy were related to poor coping strategies, leading individuals to give up more easily, as well as being associated with engaging

less in task-related activities (Gist, 1987). Based on the arguments informing the characteristics of self-efficacy, as well as the various performance appraisal aspects discussed in the sections above, the following propositions were formulated for this study:

Proposition 1.1: Individuals with high levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer a performance appraisal consisting of multiple performance raters.

Proposition 1.2: Individuals with low levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer a single-rater performance appraisal.

Proposition 1.3: Individuals with high levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer face-to-face performance feedback.

Proposition 1.4: Individuals with low levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer impersonal performance feedback.

Proposition 1.5: Individuals with high levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer continuous performance feedback.

Proposition 1.6: Individuals with low levels of perceived self-efficacy are more likely to prefer annual performance feedback.

Personality Traits and Individualising Performance Appraisals.

Personality has been conceptualised and researched by many academics and practitioners in the last few decades (Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002). Mayer (2007) described personality as a system of parts, for example, emotions or motives which develop are organised and expressed in a person's behaviour. Pervin, Cervone and John (2005, p.6) defined personality as "...characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of feelings, thinking, and behaving". Mayer (2007) explained that although there is more to be understood by personality than personality traits, most definitions use personality traits to describe an overall personality construct. In support of this thinking, Budaev and Brown (2011) defined personality as a broad range of behavioural individuality involving a wide range of consistent and fluid behavioural traits. They argued that, although personality is not absolutely stable over time or in various contexts, it consists of stable traits that mostly withstand time and situational change and, in turn, can be used to describe and predict trends, typical ways of acting, as well as behaviour over extended periods of time.

Tett and Guterman (2000, p. 398) define personality traits as "...intra-individual consistencies and inter-individual uniquenesses in propensities to behave in identifiable ways in light of situational demands." Based on this definition, Tett and Burnett (2003) highlighted five assumptions about personality and personality traits. Firstly, within-person consistencies allow predictions about future behaviour on the basis of past behaviour and secondly, between-person uniquenesses has created a need to identify and describe personality traits. Thirdly, traits may lie dormant within the individual, and various situations may trigger their manifestation. Fourthly, traits are understood and are inferences based on overt behaviour and finally, expressing one trait over another is context-dependent.

Personality has been a consistent focus area of organisational research for many reasons. Vakola, Tsaousis and Nikolaou (2004) explained that understanding individual differences allows for more successful change initiatives, better communication and commitment as well as facilitating organisations in remaining competitive. Additionally, Judge, Thoresen, Pucik and Welbourne (1999) stated that individual differences play an important role in employees' work attitude, for example, organisational satisfaction and/or commitment. Personality traits have been linked in many studies to various aspects of organisations, such as leadership ability (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002); organisational citizenship behaviours (Chiaburu, Oh, Berry, Li, & Gardner, 2011); job performance (Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski, 2002); and person-organisation fit (Chatman, 1989). Therefore, it is apparent that personality traits impact on many organisational aspects.

Personality research, as conducted within organisational contexts, has consistently made use of the Five-Factor Model of personality (Goldberg, 1990). The Five-Factor Model, or Big-Five Personality model, is considered an appropriate personality model. The model has been shown to be universal by being applicable in a wide variety of contexts, including across different cultures and languages (Vakola et al., 2004). It should, however, be kept in mind that the five-factor model does not suggest that personality differences are reduced to only five traits, but rather that these five traits consist of personality characteristics which represent broad personality tendencies (John & Srivastava, 1999). Benet-Martinez and John (1998) explained that these five factors, or dimensions, are broad level traits that each include several distinct personality characteristics.

Vakola et al. (2004) described the five factors of personality as follows:

- **Neuroticism** - a tendency to experience negative emotions, such as anxiety and psychological distress;
- **Extraversion** – an intensity of interpersonal interactions and activity levels;
- **Openness to Experience** - a proactive approach to finding and appreciating new experiences;
- **Agreeableness** - relates to the quality of interpersonal interaction, ranging from compassion to antagonism and
- **Conscientiousness** - continued persistence, organisation and motivation towards goal-driven behaviours.

In line with the above definition, Benet-Martinez and John (1998) summarised the relationship between the five factors and offer some related individual characteristics, as follows:

- Individuals with increased Extraversion display increased activity and energy, dominance and expressiveness and are more likely to be social and display increased positive emotions;
- Individuals with increased Agreeableness are seen as being pro-social and display traits of altruism, trust, modesty and mindfulness;
- Conscientious individuals are more likely to be social, task-orientated and goal driven;
- Neuroticism refers to a wide range of negative emotions, including irritability, sadness and nervousness and an overall tendency to lack emotional stability and;
- Individuals with increased Openness to Experience are more likely to be open-minded, interested in new experiences, mentally and experientially, and they may be more imaginative and open to change (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998).

As stated above, personality traits have been utilised in numerous models of organisation-related constructs, such as organisational motivation and job performance (Tett and Burnett, 2003). Conscientiousness has been shown to be statistically positively related to job performance through goal setting, emphasising that one can gain insight into personality through observing traits (Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1993). In a South-African based study, Rothmann and Coetzer (2003) analysed personality and job performance and specifically found

that certain traits, i.e. the trait of Low Neuroticism (Emotional Stability) was least associated with creativity, while Extraversion was related to creativity and increased task performance. Openness to Experience was related to creativity while Conscientiousness was associated with increased task performance (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). Furthermore, Low Neuroticism, Openness to Experience and Agreeableness were linked to increased management performance (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003).

In a New Zealand study, Furnham, Forde and Ferrari (1999) found that the five-factor personality traits accounted for between 20% and 30% of the variance in work performance. Chiaburu et al. (2011) found that personality traits were related to organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) with Conscientiousness being the best predictor of organisation-directed OCB; Agreeableness being the best predictor of individual-directed OCB, and Extraversion and Openness to Experience best predicting change-orientated OCB. It is apparent then that personality type is associated with various organisational aspects including, for example, task effort, making choices and job performance.

Based on the arguments of the various characteristics of each personality dimension and the various performance appraisal aspects discussed in the previous sections, the following propositions were formulated for this study:

Proposition 2.1: Individuals with high levels of perceived Agreeableness are more likely to prefer a performance appraisal consisting of multiple performance raters.

Proposition 2.2: Individuals with low levels of perceived Agreeableness are more likely to prefer a single-rater performance appraisal.

Proposition 2.3: Individuals with high levels of perceived Conscientiousness are more likely to prefer a performance appraisal consisting of a single-rater performance appraisal.

Proposition 2.4: Individuals with low levels of perceived Conscientiousness are more likely to prefer multiple performance raters.

Proposition 2.5: Individuals with high levels of perceived Extraversion are more likely to prefer face-to-face performance feedback.

Proposition 2.6: Individuals with low levels of perceived Extraversion are more likely to prefer impersonal performance feedback.

Proposition 2.7: Individuals with high levels of perceived Openness to Experience are more likely to prefer impersonal performance.

Proposition 2.8: Individuals with low levels of perceived Openness to Experience are more likely to prefer feedback face-to-face performance feedback.

Proposition 2.9: Individuals with high levels of perceived Conscientiousness are more likely to prefer continuous performance feedback.

Proposition 2.10: Individuals with low levels of perceived Conscientiousness are more likely to prefer bi-annual performance feedback.

Proposition 2.11: Individuals with high levels of perceived Neuroticism are more likely to prefer bi-annual performance feedback.

Proposition 2.12: Individuals with low levels of perceived Neuroticism are more likely to prefer continuous performance feedback.

Proposition 2.13: Individuals with high levels of perceived Extraversion are more likely to prefer continuous performance feedback.

Proposition 2.14: Individuals with low levels of perceived Extraversion are more likely to prefer bi-annual performance feedback.

In the above two sections, 20 plausible propositions were established based on the arguments made throughout the in-depth literature review. However, given that this study adopted an exploratory approach, the differences and associations of all the above-mentioned individual variables are investigated in relation to the nine performance appraisal aspects (see Table 2.1).

In summary, this study investigated whether or not there was a difference in preference for:

- 1) a single rater (e.g. employees' line-manager)
- 2) multiple internal raters
- 3) multiple internal and external raters
- 4) impersonal feedback

- 5) face-to-face meeting with a line-manager
- 6) face-to-face meeting attended with a line manager and other stakeholders
- 7) annual feedback
- 8) bi-annual feedback
- 9) continuous feedback

These preferences were assessed in relation to the following individual factors:

- 1) Level of self-efficacy
- 2) Personality dimension: Agreeableness
- 3) Personality dimension: Conscientiousness
- 4) Personality dimension: Extraversion
- 5) Personality dimension: Openness to Experience
- 6) Personality dimension: Neuroticism

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research methods utilised to address the aim of the research study and the empirical research objectives are presented. The research design, research approach, measuring instruments, target population, sampling strategy and the demographic details of the realised sample are also described. This chapter concludes with an overview of the various quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques that were utilised to analyse the collected data.

Research Design

It was decided to utilise two research designs to thoroughly investigate the research question and address the aim of the study. Firstly, an exploratory research design was chosen as it was believed to be appropriate, given the research objectives of the present study. Kothari (2004) suggested that an exploratory research design is warranted where more information on a topic is required, yet not readily available. An exploratory research design is also appropriate when researchers aim to emphasise the discovery of new ideas and insights (Kothari, 2004). As past research into the individualisation of performance appraisal approaches could not be found this approach was deemed appropriate for the present study. Secondly, a fractional experiment was used to assess individual preference, as it more realistically and appropriately simulates human decision-making.

Research Approaches and Methods

A cross-sectional, mixed-methods approach to data collection was followed in this study as primary qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analysed. Mixed-method research is a methodological approach where both quantitative and qualitative data is systematically collected, analysed and integrated (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Mixed-methods research offers the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It is argued that a mixed-methods approach may assist researchers in producing more convincing support for the research findings by utilizing data convergence, compared to only using one of these data types (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). A mixed-methods approach is further warranted when there is a lack of research available on a topic. Therefore,

it is particularly beneficial for the present study to adopt this approach, given the limited research reported in this field of study (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected employing an electronic questionnaire or field survey. These consisted of closed and open-ended questions, respectively. Further qualitative data was collected, using semi-structured interviews, from a sample of HR practitioners that were skilled and experienced in the design and implementation of performance management systems and performance appraisals. Choice-based modelling or choice-based conjoint analysis, as it is referred to in the present study, was also used to conduct the fractional experiment and to assess individual preferences.

Using these techniques, various cohorts of employees were identified using various individual difference variables, including the perceived level of self-efficacy and perceived personality type. Data from these were collected and compared with one another. The addition of qualitative data allowed the research questions to be explored in depth. (O’Cathain, Murphy, & Nicholl, 2007).

Sampling

A judgement or non-probability sampling strategy was utilised for the purposes of the present study in order to gather data from employees using the electronic questionnaire as well as to identify the HR managers that were included in the qualitative study. Respondents that received the invitation to participate in the study and complete the online questionnaire were also asked to forward the invitation to others that they believe would also be suitable for this study, hence making use of a snowball sampling strategy. Tansey (2007) suggested that non-probability sampling is a subjective sampling technique that occurs when researchers obtain samples from a given population without utilising random selection. The use of a judgement sampling strategy was deemed an appropriate sampling strategy given that the online questionnaire targeted a specific cohort; employees. In relation to the qualitative component, HR managers were specifically targeted based on their relevant experience, expertise and knowledge of performance appraisals, as well as, their willingness to participate.

Although longitudinal and random samples are highly desirable, allowing for generalisability of the results and assessing causality, time and cost constraints necessitated that a non-probable

sampling approach be used, as described above. To mitigate the limitations of convenient sampling, but still reap its benefits, judgement sampling was deemed an appropriate sampling technique. Following this approach, sampling was targeted at individuals who would comply with the requirements of the present study. The disadvantages of non-probability or convenient sampling approaches most notably include the inability for any results to be generalised. In addition, non-probability sampling methods increase the likelihood that bias may occur during sampling which is considered to be a threat to result validity (Tansey, 2009).

Realised Sample

Data was collected using the Preference Lab online survey platform. There were 205 respondents who fully completed the electronic questionnaire without missing data. The questionnaire took, on average, 13.4 minutes to complete. An overview of the realised sample's demographic information is presented in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2.

Table 3.1.
Gender, Race and Education Level - Distribution of sample (n = 205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Male	66	32.2%	32.2%
Female	139	67.8%	100.0%
White	134	65.4%	65.4%
African	26	12.7%	78.0%
Indian	11	5.4%	83.4%
Coloured	27	13.2%	96.6%
Other	1	.5%	97.1%
Prefer not to answer	6	2.9%	100.0%
High School Diploma	45	22.0%	22.0%
Trade Certificate	11	5.4%	27.3%
Bachelor's Degree	59	28.8%	56.1%
Honours Degree	75	36.6%	92.7%
Master's Degree	14	6.8%	99.5%
Doctorate	1	.5%	100.0%

The demographic statistics are indicative of a well-educated population. The education level of respondents can be explained given that the online questionnaire was distributed at a knowledge intensive organisation as well as by utilising a snowball effect. In other words, by

asking initial respondents to forward the questionnaire to individuals in their network, the average education level of respondents can be expected and understood.

The study's realised sample consisted mostly of female (= 67.8%) and white (= 65.4%) respondents. This is however not representative of the South African population as Statistics South Africa (2018) reported that 50.95% of the South African population is female and 40.05% is male. They also reported that 80.9% of the population is African, while 7.8% is white. This indicates that the study is not representative of the current population demographics and that results should be interpreted with this in mind.

Table 3.2.
Age and Number of years in Organisation - Distribution of sample (n = 205)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	20	76	31.57	10.602
Years in Organisation	.0	50.0	5.426	7.2338

The range in age and number of years in an organisation is large and this should also be considered when interpreting results. Although the realised sample does not represent the current population in South Africa (i.e. in education level or age of respondents), the realised sample is considered to be representative of the organisation's demographic profile and also probably those of similar organisations. As indicated in Table 3.1, the majority of respondents in this study have obtained a Bachelor's Degree, Honours Degree or Master's Degree. Post high school qualifications take a number of years to complete, hence the study's mean age which is 31.57 years old.

In total, 12 HR practitioners were approached to participate in the qualitative data collection component of the study. Of the 12, four HR practitioners agreed to participate, indicating a 33.33% response rate. HR practitioners were not asked to give their demographic information specifically. However, practitioners varied in terms of age, gender and industry.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect data, an online composite questionnaire consisting of four subscales was compiled using the Preference Lab online survey platform. Conjoint Analysis tasks were also included in order to collect data on performance appraisal preferences from each respondent.

To encourage participation, an incentive was used in the form of a draw for a gift voucher. Respondents were asked to give their email address if they wanted to participate in the draw for the gift voucher.

Respondents were obtained by approaching organisations with a request to distribute an e-mail to employees requesting participation in the present study. Respondents were also obtained through the use of social media. Respondents were asked to distribute the URL to the online questionnaire to their own networks in an effort to expand the sample population, i.e. through snowball sampling. It was made clear to the respondents that despite them providing their email addresses, their answers would remain anonymous and confidential and email addresses were removed from the data file before analysing the data. Therefore, email addresses were in no way linked to respondent answers.

For the qualitative component of this study, an interview guide for the semi-structured interviews was created. In addition, a covering letter with space for the respondent to provide written consent to participate was drawn up. In order to identify respondents for the qualitative interviews, HR practitioners were e-mailed and/or contacted face-to-face. Respondents were contacted using a snowball and convenience method, similar to the process of finding respondents for the quantitative component. Interviews were recorded and transcribed with the consent of HR practitioners.

Measurement Instruments

In this section the study's measurement instruments are discussed and example items from the composite questionnaire are provided.

Likert-type Response Scale and Open-ended Items.

The electronic questionnaire (see Appendix A) consisted of the following sections, each chosen to measure the selected constructs under investigation, as well as a demographics section:

- 1) General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE);
- 2) Adapted Big Five Inventory Scale (BFI);
- 3) Performance appraisal preference questions;

- 4) Open-ended questions
- 5) Demographic questions

General Self-Efficacy (GSE).

Perceived self-efficacy was measured using the ten-item General Self-Efficacy (GSE) scale by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). The items made use of a 4-point Likert-type response-scale where responses include 1 = “Not at all true” and 4 = “Exactly true”. An example item from this sub-scale is; *“If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want”*.

In previous studies, satisfactory Cronbach alpha coefficients were revealed for the GSE Scale that ranged between .76 and .90 (i.e. > .70, Field, 2013). Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) also found satisfactory Cronbach alpha coefficients of above .80 (i.e. >.70, Field, 2013) in the majority of the 23 samples when using the scale to measure the GSE construct.

Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI).

The original 44-item BFI scale was reduced by John and Srivastava (1999) to a ten-item BFI scale. In the present study, perceived personality traits were measured using the adapted version of the Big Five Inventory, which is referred to as the Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI-10) scale. The items of the Adapted BFI Scale made use of a 5-point Likert-type response-scale where 1 = “Disagree strongly” and 5 = “Agree Strongly”. Examples items from this sub-scale are *“I see myself as someone who is reserved”* and *“I see myself as someone who tends to find fault with others”*.

Rammstedt and John (2007, p.203) suggested that the ten-item BFI-10 scale be used when time is limited, as the scale was shown to be “...sufficient for research”. The BFI-10 was found to have captured 70% of the full-length BFI scale's variance and retained 85% of the retest reliability, while the discriminant and structural validity remained the same (Rammstedt & John, 2007). Rammstedt and John (2007) further suggested adding an 11th item pertaining to the Agreeableness construct in order to increase the validity and retest reliability of the scale. The item, *“Is considerate and kind to almost everyone”* was therefore added, based on this recommendation and the further adapted scale was named the Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI) scale.

Performance Appraisal Preference Questions.

Respondents were required to indicate their performance appraisal preferences in terms of the three categories as discussed above, i.e. 1) the number of raters; 2) the medium of feedback; and 3) performance appraisal frequency. Each category was further divided into three levels (see Table 3.3).

Nine performance appraisal preference items were included in the questionnaire in order to assess the perceived performance appraisal preferences of respondents. The performance appraisal preference sub-scale made use of a semantic differential response-scale with five different response options. The response scale that was used included the following responses: -2 = “Extremely prefer”, -1 = “Slightly prefer”, 0 = “Neutral” and +1 = “Slightly prefer”, +2 = “Extremely prefer” with the options on each end of the bipolar continuum. An example from this item is “*I would prefer to receive performance feedback annually*” at one end of the bipolar scale and “*I would prefer to receive performance feedback biannually*” at the other. Respondents were, therefore, forced to choose one of the two options, thus a forced-choice approach was used to assess preferences.

For each of the performance appraisal preference items, the two responses in respect of a choice; i.e. “Extremely prefer” and “Slightly prefer” on either side of the response scale was further collapsed into one categorical variable. An example item is provided below that indicates the conversion described above (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1.
Example item from the performance appraisal preference scale

	-2 = Extremely prefer	-1 = Slightly prefer	0 = Neutral	+1 = Slightly prefer	+2 = Extremely prefer	
I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by a single rater (e.g. my line-manager)	○	○	○	○	○	I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple raters within my department / function (e.g. line-manager/s, colleagues and subordinates)

Note. = Example of how variables were dichotomised/collapsed into one

Frequencies for each preference item were calculated and summarised in the individual discussion of the preference items (see results chapter). The preference item data was then analysed by means of several inferential statistics in order to examine differences and relationships within the data.

Three inferential statistical analyses were then conducted in order to establish both differences and associations between the variables. In order to establish whether there were statistically significant differences between the means of the five personality dimensions and perceived self-efficacy for each of the (dichotomised) performance appraisal preferences, independent samples t-tests were performed. According to Kothari (2004), t-tests utilise a *t*-distribution in order to assess the significant difference between the means of two samples and was therefore considered to be an appropriate statistical test for this study. Before performing the independent samples t-tests, the following assumptions were tested and met; normality (using a histogram and P-P Plot), linearity (using a scatterplot) and outliers (using a boxplot). Levene's test was utilised to test and meet the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Furthermore, to glean insights from comparing those respondents that perceived themselves to be at the opposite ends of the personality and self-efficacy scales, non-parametric statistics were used. These were used to assess whether the dichotomised personality and self-efficacy measures were statistically significantly associated with the nine performance appraisal preferences, by utilising cross-tabulation and calculating the Pearson Chi-Square statistic. Chi-square is therefore an appropriate statistical test for this study as it is utilised to test the significance of association between two variables or attributes (Kothari, 2004). In order to accurately present and interpret the chi-square statistic, the degrees of freedom were established and reported on in this study.

Binary logistic regression was further conducted to establish if variance in each of the nine dichotomous performance appraisal preferences could be statistically significantly predicted for the independent variables (self-efficacy and personality dimensions). Binary logistic regression is a model which predicts the relationship between multiple independent variables and a dichotomous dependent variable (Field, 2013). Given that this study consists of a dichotomous dependent variable (the categorical performance appraisal preference item) and multiple independent variables, Binary logistic regression was deemed an appropriate model for the analyses.

For all inferential statistical analyses, alpha values of .05 and .01 (i.e. 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively) were used to determine whether the null hypothesis should be rejected. The results of the statistical analyses are summarised below for each of the preference items.

Open-ended questions

Two open-ended items were included to collect qualitative insights and comments from respondents. These were:

- 1) *Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes your personality and preferences into account? Why do you say so?*
- 2) *Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes into account your level of self-efficacy (self-confidence)? Why do you say so?*

Choice-based Conjoint Tasks

Performance appraisal preference was further assessed using a fractional experiment by means of choice-based conjoint analysis. Choice-based conjoint analysis is a widely used marketing research method for understanding consumer choices (Green, Krieger, & Wind, 2001). This method is particularly suitable for preference studies but is not widely utilised in the field of human resource management or organisational psychology. Louviere (1988) stated that there is extensive evidence to support the notion that appropriately designed and implemented choice-based conjoint analysis, can accurately predict the behaviour of its participants in the real world.

Choice-based conjoint analysis requires respondents to make psychological trade-offs that are comparable to the way in which people make decisions in real-world situations. In a choice-based task, respondents are required to choose one option from a number of randomly generated options. The various options, from which a choice needs to be made, are random combinations of levels within each of the attributes. These random combinations are generated by statistical analysis software. The part-utility worths, obtained from the choice-based conjoint analysis, indicate an estimation of the relative importance of each attribute. Implementing conjoint tasks, therefore, involve the following five steps: 1) identifying

attributes and levels; 2) designing a conjoint task; 3) selecting a model form; 4) collecting data, and 5) estimating the conjoint model.

In the present study, choice-based conjoint analysis was conducted using software developed for this purpose by Preference Lab. The attributes were based on the nine selected performance appraisal options, and three levels for each attribute were chosen, resulting in nine distinct performance appraisal options (See Table 3.3).

Table 3.3.
Attributes and levels to be used in the Choice-based Modelling Analysis of Performance Appraisal Preference

Attribute	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Number of Raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Multiple internal & external raters
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	Personally (face-to-face) with a single rater	Personally (face-to-face) with a multiple raters attending
Frequency of feedback	Annual feedback (once a year)	Bi-annual feedback (twice a year)	Continuous feedback (weekly)

For this study, eight separate and random conjoint tasks were generated by the Preference Lab software. Within each conjoint task, a random combination of the levels within each of the three attributes, as well as a hold-out option was presented to respondents. Thus, respondents were asked to choose the one combination that was most appealing to them or to indicate that none of them were appealing, by selecting one option from the four presented (See an example of one of the eight random conjoint tasks in Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2.
 Example of one choice-based conjoint analysis tasks

	1	2	3	4
Number of Raters:	Multiple internal & external raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	None
Medium of feedback:	Personally (face-to-face) with a single rater	Impersonally (written)	Personally (face-to-face) with multiple raters attending	
Frequency of feedback:	Annual performance feedback (once a year)	Bi-annual performance feedback (twice a year)	Continuous performance feedback (weekly)	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Demographic information.

The questionnaire also included a section to collect demographic information from the sample. Items in this section included gender, race, age and educational level.

Semi-structured Interviews

For the purposes of collecting qualitative data, semi-structured interviews (see interview guide in Appendix B) were conducted with HR practitioners in order to gain their insights as to the extent to which they believe organisations would consider individualising and implementing performance appraisals. An example question from the semi-structured interview guide that was used included; “*Do you believe your organisation would implement performance appraisal methods based on employee preferences?*”.

Data Analyses

The measurement properties of the General Self-Efficacy (GSE) and Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI) scales were investigated before using the data in subsequent analyses. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was utilised to assess the construct validity of the sub-scales. The

reliability and internal consistency of the sub-scales were further assessed by means of the SPSS item-analysis procedure and Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated. Results are presented in Chapter Four.

The primary quantitative data was then analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The conjoint tasks were analysed using choice-based conjoint-analysis estimation techniques. Various parametric and non-parametric inferential statistical techniques were further utilised, including independent sample t-tests, calculating Pearson correlation coefficients, Chi-square statistics and binary logistic regression. The data collected in the conjoint tasks were analysed by estimating part-worth values or utilities.

The primary qualitative data collected by means of the open-ended items in the questionnaire, as well as the semi-structured interviews with the HR practitioners, were analysed using thematic analyses. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.77) identify a thematic analysis as a "...widely used qualitative analytic method". Thematic analyses are flexible in that it allows researchers to identify and analyse patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Ethical Considerations

Supino and Borer (2012) stated that research involving human participants should include signed informed consent and the commitment to comply with the ethical considerations of the Belmont Report, namely; beneficence, respect and justice.

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The American Psychological Association (APA) research guidelines were further adhered to. Participation in the present study was not believed to be deceptive or harmful to participants in any way. Respondents were able to opt out of the study at any time. The identity of all respondents was kept confidential throughout, and data was collected anonymously.

Before collecting data, permission from multiple organisations was obtained to distribute the online questionnaire. Ethics approval for the study was further granted by the UCT Commerce Faculty's Ethics in Research Committee.

Data Handling Considerations

Throughout the study, it was ensured that all research data collected was safely stored in order to keep it secure and confidential. A well-documented and thorough plan for the safe-keeping of all data to be collected and analysed for the purposes of this study, was developed. The questionnaire was distributed online using password-protected software. Once downloaded, the data was securely stored on a password protected flash drive which was securely locked away to protect its contents.

No data was linked to the identity of any respondent and this ensured anonymity of all respondents. Email addresses provided by respondents were removed from SPSS, prior to analysing the collected data. Semi-structured interviews with HR practitioners were transcribed and the information was stored on the same computer. HR practitioners are referred to as HR Practitioners 1 – 4, in order to also keep their identities anonymous and confidential.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter deals with the results of the study by addressing the unidimensionality and reliability of the sub-scales, providing the descriptive and inferential statistical results, assessing the relative importance of the performance appraisal preferences for the selected individual differences under investigation, and finally, presents the analysed information which was obtained from the semi-structured interviews with selected HR practitioners.

Assessing Unidimensionality and Internal Consistency

The measurement properties of the General Self-Efficacy (GSE) and Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI) scales were investigated before analysing the data. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was utilised to assess the construct validity of the sub-scales. The reliability or internal consistency of the sub-scales were further assessed by means of the SPSS item-analysis procedure and calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients.

To assess the factorability of the data, i.e. to ascertain whether the data was suitable for Factor Analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were calculated. Field (2013) suggests that a KMO value close to 1 indicates that the item correlations are compact and are likely to yield distinct and reliable factors (Field 2013). As a guideline, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value greater than .5 is considered to be satisfactory (Field 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity establishes whether the variables are significantly different from zero, i.e. a significant result and is suggested to indicate that it would be appropriate to conduct factor analysis (Field 2013).

In order to establish the number of factors that should be retained, the Kaiser (1970) criterion and Scree-plot test were utilised. The guideline that was used, was to consider retaining factors with Eigenvalues above 1, the minimum criterion (Kaiser, 1970). Tabachnik and Fidell (2007) suggests that the number of data points that are above the point of inflexion (elbow) of the Scree plot minus one, indicates the number of meaningful factors that should be retained. In terms of inclusion criteria; items with factor loadings above .3 were retained as suggested by Cohen (1998).

A scale's internal consistency indicates the degree to which items of a scale measures the same underlying attribute. Internal Consistency is indicated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which provides the average correlation of the items in the scale (Pallant, 2011). A Cronbach's alpha coefficient above .7 is considered satisfactory and indicative of a sufficiently reliable scale (Pallant, 2011). Field (2013) further suggests that item-total correlations should be above .3 and items with item-total correlations below this cut off point be removed.

Generalised Self-Efficacy (GSE) Scale.

The GSE Scale consists of 10 items, which are designed to measure level of perceived self-efficacy. None of the items were reverse coded. The KMO statistic indicated that the strength of the relationships among the variables were satisfactory (KMO = .85, i.e. above the suggested guideline of 0.5; Field, 2013). Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 783.59$; $df = 45$; $p < .01$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was established and conducting PCA was deemed to be appropriate.

The scale's ten items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 4.52, i.e. > 1 ; Field, 2013) that explained 45.1% of the variance. In addition to Keiser's criterion, a one factor solution also seemed appropriate according to the Scree plot test (Field, 2013). All ten items of the sub-scale loaded satisfactorily on the factor ($.79 < r > .41$). Applying the inclusion criterion described above (i.e. factor loadings $> .3$) none of the items were removed.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the GSE Scale was further found to be satisfactory ($\alpha = .85$, i.e. $> .7$; Field 2013). As per Field's (2013) recommendation, adequate corrected item-total correlations were also revealed ($.33 < r > .69$; i.e. $> .3$, Field, 2013). Furthermore, the SPSS item-analysis procedure indicated that removing any of the items would not further increase the Cronbach alpha coefficient.

Based on the basket of evidence presented above, the GSE Scale was deemed to have demonstrated satisfactory measurement properties. The composite mean score for the 10 items of the GSE Scale was calculated (see Table 4.1) and based on the outcome above believed to be a valid and reliable measure of the perceived self-efficacy construct in the study.

Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI) Scale.

The adapted BFI Scale consists of 11 items, which are designed to measure five separate personality dimensions and these were therefore considered to be sub-scales, namely; 1) Agreeableness (3 items); 2) Conscientiousness (2 items); 3) Extraversion (2 items); 4) Neuroticism (2 items); 5) Openness to Experience (2 items). The sub-scales in the measurement model measuring each of the five dimensions were assessed separately for unidimensionality. Three of the items were reverse coded and the data was transformed to match the direction of the other items.

The *Agreeableness sub-scale* consisted of three items of which one item was reverse scored and therefore transformed. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Agreeableness sub-scale was found to be satisfactory (KMO = .58, i.e. > 0.5; Field, 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 24.25$; $df = 3$; $p < .01$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was confirmed. The three items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.41; i.e. > 1, Field, 2013) which explained 47% of the variance. The factor loadings of the three items further all met the inclusion criteria ($.62 < r > .73$; i.e. >.3, Field, 2013).

The *Conscientiousness sub-scale* consisted of two items, one of which was reverse scored and transformed. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Conscientiousness sub-scale was found to be satisfactory (= .5, i.e. > 0.5; Field, 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 30.83$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was confirmed. The two items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.38; i.e. > 1, Field, 2013) that explained 68.8% of the variance. The factor loadings of the two items further all met the inclusion criteria ($.83 < r > .83$; i.e. >.3).

The *Extraversion sub-scale* consisted of two items, one of which was reverse scored and transformed. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Extraversion sub-scale was found to be satisfactory (= .5; i.e. > 0.5, Field, 2013). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 30.73$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was confirmed. The two items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.38; i.e. > 1, Field, 2013) which explained 68.8% of the variance. The factor loadings of the two items further all met the inclusion criteria ($.83 < r > .83$; i.e. >.3).

The *Neuroticism sub-scale* consisted of two items, one of which was reverse scored and transformed. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Neuroticism sub-scale was found to be satisfactory ($= .5$, i.e. > 0.5 ; Field, 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 38.83$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was confirmed. The two items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.42 i.e. > 1) that explained 70.1% of the variance. The factor loadings of the two items further all met the inclusion criteria ($.84 < r > .84$; i.e. $>.3$).

The *Openness to Experience sub-scale* consisted of two items. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Openness to Experience sub-scale was found to be satisfactory ($= .5$, i.e. > 0.5 ; Field, 2013). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be significant ($\chi^2 = .45$; $df = 1$; $p < .05$). Based on these results, the factorability of the data was confirmed. The two items loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.05; i.e. > 1 , Field, 2013) that explained 52.4% of the variance. The factor loadings of the two items further all met the inclusion criteria ($.72 < r > .72$ i.e. $>.3$).

According to Eisinga, Grotenhuis and Pelzer (2013), as well as Cortina (1993), calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients is not suggested for scales with a small number of items as it tends to yield a low Cronbach's alpha that is often below the guideline, even if the scale is reliable. Eisinga et al. (2013) stated that calculating a Cronbach's alpha for a two-item scale is meaningless.

Based on the PCA results, each of the 5 sub-scales of the Adapted BFI Scale were deemed to have demonstrated satisfactory construct validity, as described above. Based on the recommendation made by Eisinga et al. (2013) reliability coefficients were not calculated. The BFI Inventory has shown satisfactory measurement properties in previous studies as a valid measure of the Big Five personality dimensions. Therefore, it was believed to be an appropriate measure of the personality construct for the purposes of this study to be utilised in the further descriptive and inferential statistics. The composite mean scores for the 5 sub-scales were calculated and are presented in Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics

Using the data collected from respondents, descriptive statistics were calculated for the GSE and the Adapted BFI scales and are summarised below. For both scales, items were responded to on a 5-point Likert-type response scale and mean scores should be interpreted with this in mind.

GSE and Adapted BFI Scales.

The descriptive statistics for the GSE and Adapted BFI scales for the sample ($n = 205$) are presented in Table 4.1. Tabachnik and Fidell (2007) suggest that skewness and kurtosis values that do not exceed 1 and -1 are indicative of normally distributed data. The skewness and kurtosis values reported below (see Table 4.1) fall within the acceptable range (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007).

Table 4.1.
Descriptive statistics for the overall sample (n=205)

Factors	Mean*	Std. deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
GSE	4.1	0.5	-.1	-.4
Agreeableness	4.0	0.7	-.5	-.2
Conscientiousness	4.1	0.8	-.5	-.9
Extraversion	3.1	1.1	.2	-.6
Neuroticism	2.8	1.0	.1	-.6
Openness to Experience	3.6	0.8	-.3	.2

* Based on 5-point Likert-type response scales where 1 = Disagree strongly and 5 = Agree strongly (BFI); and 1 = Not at all true and 5 = Exactly true (GSE)

The descriptive statistics for the composite (continuous variable) scores for the two sub-scales, summarised in Table 4.1 were further transformed into categorical/dichotomised variables using the SPSS visual binning procedure. Four groups were created for each variable based on cut-off points that were two standard deviations from the mean. This resulted in four groups of respondents, i.e. 1) respondents with extreme low scores, 2) respondents with moderately low scores, 3) respondents with moderately high scores and 4) respondents with extreme high scores. This was done to glean insights from respondents that were thought to be most different from one another on the measures and where one could argue that the phenomena being investigated, was most distinct.

In addition to dichotomising the independent variables, as described in Chapter 3, the variables were manipulated by creating dichotomised variables, before calculating descriptive and inferential statistics. The results are presented one at a time for each preference item that represents a choice between two performance appraisal approaches, as described previously.

Preference Item 1

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by a single rater (e.g. my line-manager).

versus

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple raters within my department/function (e.g. line-manager/s, colleagues and subordinates).

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 1, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 1 (n = 205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer single rater	71	34.6%	34.6%
Slightly prefer single rater	9	4.4%	39.0%
Neither	16	7.8%	46.8%
Slightly prefer multiple internal raters	19	9.3%	56.1%
Extremely prefer multiple internal raters	90	43.9%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Single rater	80	39.0%	39.0%
Multiple internal raters	109	53.2%	92.2%

As indicated in Table 4.2, few respondents (= 8%) chose the neutral response, suggesting that respondents had a distinct preference for either one of the two performance appraisal options, i.e. a *single rater* or *multiple internal raters*. In other words, frequencies indicated a bi-modal distribution. Furthermore, when the performance appraisal preferences were collapsed/dichotomised, (i.e. a two-category dichotomous split based on adding the extreme and slight preference scores), the frequencies revealed that more than half of the respondents preferred having *multiple internal raters* conducting their performance appraisal, compared to the preference for a *single rater* (53% vs 39%, respectively).

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five perceived personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two subsamples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 1

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Single rater	80	4.1	.51	1.17	187	.24
	Multiple internal raters	109	4.0	.47			
Conscientiousness	Single rater	80	4.3	.76	2.92	187	.004**
	Multiple internal raters	109	4.0	.73			
Agreeableness	Single rater	80	4.1	.73	1.93	187	.05*
	Multiple internal raters	109	3.9	.64			
Openness to Experience	Single rater	80	3.7	.87	2.02	187	.04*
	Multiple internal raters	109	3.5	.77			
Neuroticism	Single rater	80	2.7	1.0	-1.09	187	.28
	Multiple internal raters	109	2.9	1.0			
Extraversion	Single rater	80	3.1	1.1	-.07	187	.94
	Multiple internal raters	109	3.1	1.0			

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

As can be seen from Table 4.3, statistically significant differences in the means for three of the five personality dimensions, were revealed. Respondents who indicated a preference for a *single rater* performance appraisal, were found to have statistically significantly high levels of perceived Conscientiousness ($p < .01$); Agreeableness ($p < .05$); and Openness to Experience ($p < .05$). Conversely, respondents who indicated a preference for *multiple internal raters*, were found to have statistically significantly low levels of perceived Conscientiousness ($p < .01$), Agreeableness ($p < .05$) and Openness to Experience ($p < .05$).

For each of the nine performance appraisal preference items, six cross-tabulations were calculated, including the four levels of GSE and four levels of the five personality dimensions. For Preference Item 1, significant Pearson Chi-square statistics were found for two of the cross-tabulations (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4.

Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 1 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	5.03	3	.17	.16	.16
Conscientiousness	12.63	3	.005**	.26*	.26*
Agreeableness	7.03	3	.07	.19	.19
Openness to Experience	9.35	3	.03*	.22*	.22*
Neuroticism	2.85	3	.45	.12	.12
Extraversion	1.85	3	.61	.10	.10

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

As can be seen in Table 4.4, cross-tabulation analyses revealed significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics for performance appraisal preference 1, i.e. *single internal rater* vs *multiple internal raters* and Conscientiousness ($p < .01$); and Openness to Experience ($p < .05$). Respondents who were found to be in the perceived extreme high Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience groups, i.e. that had Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience scores greater than two standard deviations above the mean were more likely to prefer a *single rater* conducting their PA. Conversely, respondents that reported an extreme low level of perceived Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience, i.e. more than two standard deviations below the mean were more likely to prefer *multiple internal raters* conducting their performance appraisal.

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) was significant, i.e. $p < .05$, and explained an additional 9% variance in the dependent variable (see Table 4.5). Furthermore, in Regression Model 2, Conscientiousness (Wald = 4.72, $df = 1$, $p = .03$, i.e. $p < .05$) was found to explain unique variance in the dependent variable. The results hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis is summarised in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5.

Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	57.7%					
Regression Model 1	46.6%	17.00	3	.001**	11.5%	
Regression Model 2	70.9%	14.16	9	.000**	20.4%	8.9%

** $p < .01$

The results from the inferential statistics that assessed both association and differences between the study's independent variables (level of self-efficacy and personality dimension) and the performance appraisal preferences (single rater versus multiple raters) are reported above. Based on these results, support was found for Propositions 2.3 and 2.4 (see Chapter Two) i.e. individuals with high levels of perceived Conscientiousness, were statistically significantly more likely to prefer a performance appraisal conducted by a single-rater. Individuals with low levels of perceived Conscientiousness were statistically significantly more likely to prefer a performance appraisal conducted by multiple raters.

Support for the remaining propositions relating to preference in terms of number of raters (Propositions 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2), were not found. A summary of all of the significant results found for Preference Item 1 are presented in Table 4.38.

Preference Item 2

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple raters within my department/function (e.g. line-manager/s, colleagues and subordinates).

versus

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple internal and external raters (e.g. line-manager, colleagues, my subordinates, as well as clients/stakeholders and other managers/staff outside of my department).

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses for Preference Item 2, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 2 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer multiple internal raters	79	38.5%	38.5%
Slightly prefer multiple internal raters	33	16.1%	54.6%
Neither	21	10.2%	64.9%
Slightly prefer multiple internal and external raters	20	9.8%	74.6%
Extremely prefer multiple internal and external raters	52	25.4%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Multiple internal raters	112	54.6%	54.6%
Multiple internal and external raters	72	35.1%	89.7%

As can be observed in Table 4.6, few respondents (= 10%) chose the neutral response, suggesting that respondents had distinct preferences for either of the two performance appraisal options, i.e. *multiple internal raters* or *multiple internal and external raters*. When the performance appraisal preferences were dichotomised, the frequencies revealed that more than half of the 205 respondents indicated a preference for *multiple internal raters*, compared to *multiple internal and external raters* (54.6% vs 35.1%, respectively). Furthermore, the difference between the performance appraisal options was substantial, (19.5%), seemingly emphasising a preference for *multiple internal raters*.

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five perceived personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 2

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Multiple internal raters	112	4.0	.48	-1.12	182	.26
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	4.1	.49			
Conscientiousness	Multiple internal raters	112	4.2	.71	.56	134.86	.57
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	4.1	.82			
Agreeableness	Multiple internal raters	112	4.0	.70	-.49	182	.63
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	4.0	.64			
Openness to Experience	Multiple internal raters	112	3.7	.83	1.17	182	.24
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	3.5	.81			
Neuroticism	Multiple internal raters	112	2.8	.99	.18	182	.85
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	2.8	1.04			
Extraversion	Multiple internal raters	112	3.1	1.07	-.22	182	.83
	Multiple internal and external raters	72	3.1	1.06			

No statistically significant differences in the mean scores for perceived self-efficacy, nor for any of the five personality dimensions for the preference as split by the performance appraisal preferences *multiple internal raters* and *multiple internal and external raters*, were observed (i.e. $p > .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated using the two Preference Item 2 performance appraisal approaches, compared to the categorical variables for perceived self-efficacy and the five personality dimensions. The results are summarised in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 2 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	2.16	3	.54	.11	.11
Conscientiousness	5.32	3	.15	.17	.17
Agreeableness	4.89	3	.18	.16	.16
Openness to Experience	4.58	3	.21	.16	.16
Neuroticism	2.41	3	.49	.12	.12
Extraversion	.45	3	.93	.05	.05

As can be observed in Table 4.8, no statistically significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics were found for performance appraisal Preference Item 2, i.e. *multiple internal raters vs multiple internal and external raters* ($p > .05$).

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) explained an additional 3.3% variance in the dependent variable, but it was not significant (i.e. $p > .05$). The results from the hierarchical binary logistic regression are summarised in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	60.9%					
Regression Model 1	61.4%	8.00	3	.05*	5.8%	
Regression Model 2	64.1%	12.82	9	.17	9.1%	3.3%

* $p < .05$

Preference Item 3

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by a single rater (e.g. my line-manager).

versus

I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple internal and external raters (e.g. line-manager, colleagues, my subordinates, as well as clients/stakeholders and other managers/staff outside of my department).

The frequencies for both the Likert-type responses for Preference Item 3, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 3 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer Single Rater	80	39.0%	39.0%
Slightly prefer Single Rater	25	12.2%	51.2%
Neither	18	8.8%	60.0%
Slightly prefer Multiple Internal and External Raters	26	12.7%	72.7%
Extremely prefer Multiple Internal and External Raters	56	27.3%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Single Rater	105	51.2%	51.2%
Multiple Internal and External Raters	82	40.0%	91.2%

As can be observed in Table 4.10, few respondents chose the neutral response (= 9%). This suggests that respondents had distinct preferences for either one of the two performance appraisal rater options, i.e. *single rater* or *multiple internal and external raters*. The collapsed variable frequencies indicated that just over half of the 205 respondents preferred the *single rater* option in comparison to the *multiple internal and external raters* option (51.2% vs 40%, respectively).

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five perceived personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 3

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Single rater	105	4.1	.50	-.02	185	.99
	Internal and external raters	82	4.1	.49			
Conscientiousness	Single rater	105	4.2	.80	.43	185	.67
	Internal and external raters	82	4.1	.74			
Agreeableness	Single rater	105	4.0	.70	.47	185	.64
	Internal and external raters	82	4.0	.64			
Openness to Experience	Single rater	105	3.7	.88	1.79	185	.05*
	Internal and external raters	82	3.5	.78			
Neuroticism	Single rater	105	2.8	1.01	-.22	185	.83
	Internal and external raters	82	2.8	1.07			
Extraversion	Single rater	105	3.1	1.13	.38	185	.71
	Internal and external raters	82	3.0	.97			

* $p < .05$

A statistically significant difference in the means for Openness to Experience was revealed. Respondents who indicated a preference for a *single rater* performance appraisal, were found to have a statistically significantly high level of Openness to Experience ($p < .05$) compared to respondents who indicated a preference for *multiple internal and external raters* ($p < .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated, i.e. using the perceived self-efficacy and the five perceived personality dimension categories. A statistically significant Pearson Chi-square statistic was found for one of the cross-tabulations for Preference Item 3 (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 3 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	.19	3	.98	.03	.03
Conscientiousness	1.46	3	.69	.09	.09
Agreeableness	3.67	3	.30	.14	.14
Openness to Experience	8.42	3	.04*	.21*	.21*
Neuroticism	7.37	3	.06	.20	.20
Extraversion	.35	3	.95	.04	.04

* $p < .05$

The results summarised in Table 4.12 suggest that respondents that scored high on Openness to Experience were more likely to prefer a *single rater* conducting their performance appraisal ($p < .05$). Conversely, respondents low in Openness to Experience were more likely to prefer *multiple internal and external raters* conducting their performance appraisal ($p < .05$).

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) was significant (i.e. $p < .05$), and explained an additional 2% variance in the dependent variable (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	56.1%					
Regression Model 1	60.4%	18.24	3	.000**	12.5%	
Regression Model 2	63.1%	21.23	9	.01*	14.4%	1.9%

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

A summary of all of the significant Preference Item 3 results are presented in Table 4.38 below.

Preference Item 4

I would prefer to receive performance feedback electronically in the form of a written report (i.e. impersonally).

versus

I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of a face-to-face meeting with my line-manager (i.e. personally).

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses for Preference Item 4, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 4 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer impersonal feedback	26	12.7%	12.7%
Slightly prefer impersonal feedback	18	8.8%	21.5%
Neither	14	6.8%	28.3%
Slightly prefer face-to-face feedback from manager	16	7.8%	36.1%
Extremely prefer face-to-face feedback from manager	131	63.9%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Impersonal feedback	44	21.5%	21.5%
Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	71.7%	93.2%

As can be observed in Table 4.14, few respondents (= 7%) chose the neutral response, suggesting that respondents had distinct preferences for either of the feedback options; i.e. *impersonal feedback* or *face-to-face feedback from a manager*. Frequencies from the dichotomised variables indicated that the majority of the 205 respondents preferred receiving *face-to-face feedback from a manager* in comparison to receiving *impersonal feedback* (71.7% vs 21.5% respectively, i.e. 50.2% difference). This substantial difference seemingly emphasises a preference for *face-to-face feedback from a manager*.

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five perceived personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two subsamples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 4

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Impersonal feedback	44	4.0	.60	-1.83	189	.05*
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	4.1	.43			
Conscientiousness	Impersonal feedback	44	4.0	.78	-1.11	189	.27
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	4.2	.75			
Agreeableness	Impersonal feedback	44	4.1	.72	.57	189	.58
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	4.0	.65			
Openness to Experience	Impersonal feedback	44	3.8	.77	2.12	189	.04*
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	3.5	.85			
Neuroticism	Impersonal feedback	44	2.9	1.12	1.06	189	.29
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	2.7	.98			
Extraversion	Impersonal feedback	44	2.8	.97	-2.11	189	.04*
	Face-to-face feedback from manager	147	3.2	1.08			

* $p < .05$

Statistically significant differences in the means for perceived self-efficacy and, two of the five personality dimensions, namely; Openness to Experience and Extraversion, were found. Respondents who indicated a preference for *impersonal feedback*, were found to have statistically significantly high levels of perceived Openness to Experience ($p < .05$); low levels of perceived self-efficacy ($p < .05$) and low levels of perceived Extraversion ($p < .05$). Conversely, respondents who indicated a preference for *face-to-face feedback from a manager*

were found to have statistically significantly high levels of perceived self-efficacy ($p < .05$); as well as perceived Extraversion ($p < .05$) and low levels of perceived Openness to Experience ($p < .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated using the two Preference Item 4 performance appraisal approaches, compared to the categorical variables for perceived self-efficacy and the five perceived personality dimensions. Significant Pearson Chi-square statistics were found for two of the cross-tabulations, see Table 4.16.

Table 4.16.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 4 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	8.02	3	.05*	.21*	.21*
Conscientiousness	1.46	3	.69	.09	.09
Agreeableness	3.67	3	.30	.14	.14
Openness to Experience	8.42	3	.04*	.21*	.21*
Neuroticism	7.37	3	.06	.20	.20
Extraversion	.35	3	.95	.04	.04

* $p < .05$

As can be observed in Table 4.16, statistically significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistic were found for performance appraisal Preference Item 6, i.e. *impersonal feedback vs face-to-face feedback from a manager* and perceived self-efficacy and Openness to Experience ($p < .05$). The results revealed that when given a choice, respondents with increased levels of perceived self-efficacy and Openness to Experience were more likely to prefer *face-to-face feedback from a manager*. Conversely respondents with low levels of perceived self-efficacy and perceived Openness to Experience were more likely to prefer *impersonal feedback* ($p < .05$).

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) was significant, i.e. $p < .05$, and explained an additional 9% variance in the dependent variable (see Table 4.17 below). Furthermore, in Regression Model 2, Extraversion (Wald = 3.71, $df = 1$, $p = .05$, i.e. $p < .05$) was found to explain unique variance in the dependent variable. The results hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis is summarised in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	77.0%					
Regression Model 1	77.0%	8.32	3	.04*	6.5%	
Regression Model 2	76.4%	20.00	9	.02*	15.1%	8.6%

* $p < .05$

Based on the results of the inferential statistics that assessed both association and differences between the study's independent variables and the different forms of feedback, support was found for Propositions 1.3, 2.5 and 2.8 (see Chapter Two), i.e. individuals with increased levels of perceived self-efficacy, increased levels of perceived Extraversion and low levels of perceived Openness to Experience, were statistically significantly more likely to prefer a face-to-face performance appraisal. Support was also found for Propositions 1.4, 2.6 and 2.7 (see Chapter Two), i.e. individuals with low levels of perceived self-efficacy, low levels of Extraversion and individuals with increased levels of Openness to Experience, respectively, were statistically significantly more likely to prefer to receive impersonal performance feedback.

A summary of all of the significant results found for Preference Item 4 are presented in Table 4.38.

Preference Item 5

I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of a face-to-face meeting with my line-manager.

versus

I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of face-to-face meeting attended by various respondents (e.g. my line-manager, colleagues, other managers etc.).

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 5, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 5 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer face-to-face manager feedback	127	62.0%	62.0%
Slightly prefer face-to-face manager feedback	30	14.6%	76.6%
Neither	13	6.3%	82.9%
Slightly prefer face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	7	3.4%	86.3%
Extremely prefer face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	28	13.7%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Face-to-face feedback from manager	157	76.6%	76.6%
Face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	35	17.1%	93.7%

As can be observed in Table 4.18, only 6.3% of respondents responded neutrally, indicating that respondents had a distinct preference for either one of the two performance appraisal options, i.e. *face-to-face feedback from a manager* or for *receiving face-to-face feedback from a manager and multiple stakeholders*. From the collapsed variable frequencies, a distinct one-sided distribution pattern was clear. Respondents indicated a preference to receive *face-to-face feedback from a manager*, compared to *receiving face-to-face feedback from a manager and other stakeholders* (76.6% vs 17.1% respectively, i.e. 59.5% difference).

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 5

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	4.0	.48	-1.07	190	.29
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	4.1	.51			
Conscientiousness	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	4.1	.72	.58	190	.57
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	4.1	.85			
Agreeableness	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	4.0	.67	.43	190	.67
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	4.0	.74			
Openness to Experience	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	3.6	.86	-.32	190	.75
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	3.7	.65			
Neuroticism	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	2.8	1.02	-.54	190	.59
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	2.9	.99			
Extraversion	Face-to-face manager feedback	157	3.1	1.07	-1.76	190	.08
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	35	3.4	1.03			

There were no statistically significant differences in the means scores for Perceived self-efficacy or for the five personality dimensions for the preference to *receiving face-to-face feedback from a manager* or *receiving face-to-face feedback from a manager and other stakeholders* (i.e. $p > .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated, including the categorical perceived self-efficacy and five personality dimensions (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.20.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 5 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	1.32	3	.72	.08	.08
Conscientiousness	2.00	3	.57	.10	.10
Agreeableness	4.52	3	.21	.15	.15
Openness to Experience	3.94	3	.27	.14	.14
Neuroticism	.58	3	.90	.06	.06
Extraversion	5.21	3	.16	.17	.17

As can be observed in Table 4.20, no statistically significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics were found for performance appraisal Preference Item 5, i.e. *face-to-face feedback from a manager* vs *face-to-face feedback from a manager and other stakeholders* ($p > .05$).

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) was significant, i.e. $p < .01$, and explained an additional 8% variance in the dependent variable (see Table 4.21 below). Furthermore, in Regression Model 2, Neuroticism (Wald = 4.28, $df = 1$, $p = .04$, i.e. $p < .05$) and Extraversion (Wald = 6.03, $df = 1$, $p = .01$, i.e. $p < .05$) were found to explain unique variance in the dependent variable. The results hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis is summarised in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	81.8%					
Regression Model 1	82.3%	14.84	3	.002**	11.9%	
Regression Model 2	84.4%	24.98	9	.003**	19.9%	8%

** $p < .01$

A summary of all of the significant results found for Preference Item 5 are presented in Table 4.38.

Preference Item 6

I would prefer to receive performance feedback electronically in the form of a written report (i.e. impersonally).

versus

I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of face-to-face meeting attended by various respondents (e.g. my line-manager, colleagues, other managers etc.).

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 6, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 6

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert-type Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer impersonal feedback	63	30.7%	30.7%
Slightly prefer impersonal feedback	35	17.1%	47.8%
Neither	23	11.2%	59.0%
Slightly prefer face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	28	13.7%	72.7%
Extremely prefer face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	56	27.3%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Impersonal feedback	98	47.8%	47.8%
Face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders	84	41.0%	88.8%

As can be observed in Table 4.22, 11.2% of the 205 respondents responded neutrally indicating that respondents had a distinct preference for either one of the two performance appraisal options, i.e. *impersonal feedback* or *face-to-face feedback from a manger and multiple stakeholders*. The collapsed variable frequencies results revealed a bi-modal distribution skewed to both ends. *Impersonal feedback* was slightly more preferred by respondents when compared to receiving *face-to-face feedback from a manger and multiple stakeholders* (47.8% vs 41% respectively, i.e. 6.8% difference).

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. Statistically significant differences in the means for one of the five personality dimensions, namely; Extraversion, were revealed. *Face-to-face feedback from a manager and other stakeholders* was preferred by respondents with increased levels of perceived Extraversion ($p < .05$). Conversely, *impersonal feedback* was preferred by respondents who were found to have significantly low levels of perceived Extraversion ($p < .05$). The results are summarised in Table 4.23.

Table 4.23.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 6

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Impersonal feedback	98	4.0	.50	-1.15	180	.25
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	4.1	.47			
Conscientiousness	Impersonal feedback	98	4.1	.77	-.44	180	.66
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	4.2	.73			
Agreeableness	Impersonal feedback	98	4.1	.68	1.61	180	.11
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	3.9	.66			
Openness to Experience	Impersonal feedback	98	3.6	.83	.98	180	.33
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	3.5	.81			
Neuroticism	Impersonal feedback	98	2.8	1.08	.58	180	.56
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	2.7	.92			
Extraversion	Impersonal feedback	98	2.9	1.00	-2.31	180	.02*
	Face-to-face feedback from manager and stakeholders	84	3.3	1.12			

* $p < .05$

As can be seen from Table 4.23, besides Extraversion, no statistically significant differences in the mean scores were observed for Preference Item 6 (i.e. $p > .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were then calculated using the two Preference Item 6 performance appraisal approaches, compared to the categorical variables for perceived self-efficacy and the five perceived personality dimensions.

Table 4.24.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 6 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	2.14	3	.54	.11	.11
Conscientiousness	1.49	3	.69	.09	.09
Agreeableness	5.32	3	.15	.17	.17
Openness to Experience	1.58	3	.67	.09	.09
Neuroticism	3.07	3	.38	.13	.13
Extraversion	4.81	3	.19	.16	.16

As can be observed in Table 4.24, cross-tabulation analyses revealed no significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics for performance appraisal Preference Item 6, *impersonal feedback vs face-to-face feedback from manager and other stakeholders*, i.e. $p > .05$.

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) was significant, i.e. $p < .05$, and explained an additional 8% variance in the dependent variable (see Table 4.25 below). Furthermore, in Regression Model 2, Agreeableness (Wald = 3.78, $df = 1$, $p = .05$, i.e. $p < .05$) and Extraversion (Wald = 5.66, $df = 1$, $p = .02$, i.e. $p < .05$) were found to explain unique variance in the dependent variable. The results hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis is summarised in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	53.8%					
Regression Model 1	59.9%	6.02	3	.11	4.3%	
Regression Model 2	62.1%	17.70	9	.04*	12.4%	8.1%

* $p < .05$

The results presented above support Propositions 2.5 and 2.6 (see Chapter Two), i.e. respondents with high levels of perceived Extraversion were found to significantly prefer impersonal feedback and respondents with low levels of perceived Extraversion were found to significantly prefer face-to-face feedback.

A summary of all of the significant results found for Preference Item 6 are presented in Table 4.38.

Preference Item 7

I would prefer to receive performance feedback annually
versus
would prefer to receive performance feedback biannually (twice a year)

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 7, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 7 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert-type Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer annual feedback	28	13.7%	13.7%
Slightly prefer annual feedback	4	2.0%	15.6%
Neither	12	5.9%	21.5%
Slightly prefer bi-annual feedback	23	11.2%	32.7%
Extremely prefer bi-annual feedback	138	67.3%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Annual feedback	32	15.6%	76.6%
Bi-Annual feedback	161	78.5%	94.1%

As can be observed in Table 4.26, few respondents chose the neutral response (= 5.9%). This suggests that respondents had a distinct preference for either one of the two performance appraisal frequency options, i.e. *annual feedback* and *bi-annual feedback*. When the performance appraisal preferences were collapsed, a distinct one-sided distribution pattern was revealed indicating that respondents overwhelmingly preferred *bi-annual feedback* compared to *annual feedback* (78.5% vs 15.6% respectively). The difference found between the performance appraisal options was substantial, i.e. 62.9% difference, emphasizing a preference for *bi-annual feedback*.

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test (see Table 4.27).

Table 4. 27.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 7

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value																																																								
Self-efficacy (SE)	Annual Feedback	32	4.0	.56	-.22	191	.82																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.1	.46				Conscientiousness	Annual Feedback	32	4.3	.76	1.06	191	.29	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.1	.78	Agreeableness	Annual Feedback	32	4.1	.73	.51	191	.61	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.0	.66	Openness to Experience	Annual Feedback	32	3.7	.79	1.20	191	.23	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.5	.84	Neuroticism	Annual Feedback	32	2.5	1.20	-1.58	191	.12	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	2.8	.97	Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25
Conscientiousness	Annual Feedback	32	4.3	.76	1.06	191	.29																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.1	.78				Agreeableness	Annual Feedback	32	4.1	.73	.51	191	.61	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.0	.66	Openness to Experience	Annual Feedback	32	3.7	.79	1.20	191	.23	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.5	.84	Neuroticism	Annual Feedback	32	2.5	1.20	-1.58	191	.12	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	2.8	.97	Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.1	1.05								
Agreeableness	Annual Feedback	32	4.1	.73	.51	191	.61																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	4.0	.66				Openness to Experience	Annual Feedback	32	3.7	.79	1.20	191	.23	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.5	.84	Neuroticism	Annual Feedback	32	2.5	1.20	-1.58	191	.12	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	2.8	.97	Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.1	1.05																				
Openness to Experience	Annual Feedback	32	3.7	.79	1.20	191	.23																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.5	.84				Neuroticism	Annual Feedback	32	2.5	1.20	-1.58	191	.12	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	2.8	.97	Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.1	1.05																																
Neuroticism	Annual Feedback	32	2.5	1.20	-1.58	191	.12																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	2.8	.97				Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.1	1.05																																												
Extraversion	Annual Feedback	32	2.9	1.16	-1.16	191	.25																																																								
	Bi-Annual Feedback	161	3.1	1.05																																																											

No statistically significant differences in the mean scores for perceived self-efficacy, nor for any of the five personality dimensions for the preference as split by the performance appraisal preferences; *annual feedback* or *bi-annual feedback*, were observed (i.e. $p > .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated using the two Preference Item 7 performance appraisal approaches, compared to the categorical variables for perceived self-efficacy and the five perceived personality dimensions. The results are presented in Table 4.28 below.

Table 4.28.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 7 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	1.77	3	.62	.10	.10
Conscientiousness	1.30	3	.73	.08	.08
Agreeableness	2.32	3	.51	.11	.11
Openness to Experience	2.62	3	.45	.12	.12
Neuroticism	5.57	3	.14	.17	.17
Extraversion	5.63	3	.13	.17	.17

As can be observed in Table 4.28, cross-tabulation analyses revealed no significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics for performance appraisal Preference Item 7 (*annual feedback* vs *bi-annual feedback*), i.e. $p > .05$.

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) explained an additional 5% variance in the dependent variable, but it was not significant, i.e. $p > .05$. The results from the hierarchical binary logistic regression are summarised in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R²	Change in R²
Constant Model	83.4%					
Regression Model 1	83.4%	7.86	3	.05*	6.7%	
Regression Model 2	83.9%	13.88	9	.13	11.7%	5%

* $p < .05$

Preference Item 8

I would prefer to receive performance feedback biannually (twice a year)

versus

would prefer to receive performance feedback continuously

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 8, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 8 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer bi-annual feedback	50	24.4%	24.4%
Slightly prefer bi-annual feedback	19	9.3%	33.7%
Neither	19	9.3%	42.9%
Slightly prefer continuous feedback	22	10.7%	53.7%
Extremely prefer continuous feedback	95	46.3%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Bi-annual feedback	69	33.7%	33.7%
Continuous feedback	117	57.1%	90.7%

As can be observed in Table 4.30, 9.3% of respondents indicated a neutral response, suggesting that respondents had a distinct performance appraisal preference for either one of the two performance appraisal frequency options, i.e. *bi-annual feedback* or *continuous feedback*. When the performance appraisal options were collapsed, the frequencies revealed that majority of the respondents indicated a preference to receive *continuous feedback* when compared *bi-annual feedback* (57.1% vs 33.7% respectively). Furthermore, the difference between the two options were substantial, (23.4%), seemingly emphasising a preference towards *continuous feedback*.

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 8

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Bi-annual feedback	69	4.1	.52	.66	184	.51
	Continuous feedback	117	4.0	.45			
Conscientiousness	Bi-annual feedback	69	4.3	.76	.36	184	.73
	Continuous feedback	117	4.1	.78			
Agreeableness	Bi-annual feedback	69	4.0	.68	-.24	184	.81
	Continuous feedback	117	4.0	.66			
Openness to Experience	Bi-annual feedback	69	3.7	.70	1.20	184	.23
	Continuous feedback	117	3.5	.92			
Neuroticism	Bi-annual feedback	69	2.8	1.02	.82	184	.42
	Continuous feedback	117	2.7	.97			
Extraversion	Bi-annual feedback	69	3.1	.96	.20	184	.84
	Continuous feedback	117	3.1	1.13			

No statistically significant differences in the mean scores for perceived self-efficacy, nor for any of the five personality dimensions for the preference as split by the performance appraisal preferences, *bi-annual feedback* and *continuous feedback*, were observed (i.e. $p > .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated, including the categorical perceived self-efficacy and five personality dimensions. A statistically significant Pearson Chi-square statistic was found for one of the cross-tabulations for Preference Item 8 (see Table 4.32).

Table 4.32.
Cross-tabulation results for dichotomised self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 8

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	4.60	3	.20	.16	.16
Conscientiousness	4.18	3	.24	.15	.15
Agreeableness	1.05	3	.79	.08	.08
Openness to Experience	2.90	3	.41	.13	.13
Neuroticism	5.49	3	.14	.17	.17
Extraversion	8.34	3	.04*	.21*	.21*

* $p < .05$

As can be observed in Table 4.32, cross-tabulation analyses revealed a significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistic for performance appraisal Preference Item 8, i.e. *bi-annual feedback* vs *continuous feedback* and Extraversion ($p < .05$). Results indicated that respondents in the moderate high and extreme high Extraversion cohorts (i.e. that had Extraversion scores greater than one standard deviation from the mean) were more likely to prefer *continuous feedback*. Conversely, respondents in the perceived moderate low and extreme low Extraversion cohorts were more likely to prefer *bi-annual feedback*.

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) explained an additional 1% variance in the dependent variable, but it was not significant, i.e. $p > .05$. The results from the hierarchical binary logistic regression are summarised in Table 4.33.

Table 4.33.

Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R²	Change in R²
Constant Model	62.9%					
Regression Model 1	62.9%	1.68	3	.64	1.2%	
Regression Model 2	64.5%	3.44	9	.94	2.5%	1.3%

Based on the results of the inferential statistics that assessed both association and differences for feedback methods, reported above, support was found for Propositions 2.13 and 2.14 (see Chapter Two) i.e. individuals with high levels of perceived Extraversion, were statistically significantly more likely to prefer continuous performance feedback, furthermore, individuals with low levels of perceived Extraversion were statistically significantly more likely to prefer bi-annual feedback. Support for the remaining propositions relating to preference in terms of frequency of feedback, were not found, i.e. Propositions 2.9, 2.10, 2.11 and 2.12 (see Chapter Two).

A summary of all of the significant results found for Preference Item 8 are presented in Table 4.38.

Preference Item 9

I would prefer to receive performance continuously

versus

I would prefer to receive performance feedback annually

The frequencies for the Likert-type responses to Preference Item 9, as well as for the dichotomised variables are summarised in Table 4.34.

Table 4.34.
Descriptive Statistics for Preference Item 9 (n=205)

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Likert Response Scale Categories			
Extremely prefer continuous feedback	122	59.5%	59.5%
Slightly prefer continuous feedback	27	13.2%	72.7%
Neither	18	8.8%	81.5%
Slightly prefer annual feedback	13	6.3%	87.8%
Extremely prefer annual feedback	25	12.2%	100.0%
Dichotomised into two preferences			
Continuous feedback	149	72.7%	72.7%
Annual feedback	38	18.5%	91.2%

As can be observed in Table 4.34, few respondents chose the neutral response (= 8.8%), suggesting that respondents had a distinct performance appraisal preference for either one of the two feedback frequency options, i.e. *continuous feedback* or *annual feedback*. When collapsed, a distinct one-sided distribution pattern was revealed. Frequencies indicated that respondents preferred receiving *continuous feedback* compared to *annual feedback* (72.7% vs 18.5% respectively). Furthermore, the difference between the two options was substantial, 54.2%), seemingly emphasising a preference towards *continuous feedback*.

The means for perceived self-efficacy and each of the five personality dimensions, as split by the two performance appraisal preference variables as a factor variable (i.e. two sub-samples), were compared using an independent samples t-test. The results are summarised in Table 4.35.

Table 4.35.
Mean scores for self-efficacy, personality dimensions and Preference Item 9

Perceived SE and Personality Dimensions	Performance Appraisal Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value
Self-efficacy (SE)	Continuous feedback	149	4.1	.04	.51	185	.61
	Annual feedback	38	4.0	.08			
Conscientiousness	Continuous feedback	149	4.1	.79	-1.44	185	.89
	Annual feedback	38	4.2	.72			
Agreeableness	Continuous feedback	149	4.0	.66	2.07	185	.04*
	Annual feedback	38	3.8	.74			
Openness to Experience	Continuous feedback	149	3.6	.86	.14	185	.89
	Annual feedback	38	3.5	.72			
Neuroticism	Continuous feedback	149	2.8	.96	-.78	185	.44
	Annual feedback	38	2.9	1.19			
Extraversion	Continuous feedback	149	3.0	1.07	-.43	185	.67
	Annual feedback	38	3.1	1.10			

* $p < .05$

A statistically significant difference in the means for Agreeableness was revealed. Respondents who indicated a preference for *continuous feedback*, were found to have statistically significantly high levels of perceived Agreeableness. Conversely, respondents who indicated a preference for *annual feedback*, were found to have statistically significantly low levels of perceived Agreeableness ($p < .05$).

Six cross-tabulations were calculated, including the categorical perceived self-efficacy and five personality dimensions. No statistically significant Pearson Chi-square statistics were found for one of the cross-tabulations for Preference Item 9 (see Table 4.36).

Table 4.36.
Cross-tabulation results for Preference Item 9 (two levels), self-efficacy (four levels) and each personality dimension (four levels)

Categorical Independent Variables	Pearson χ^2 statistic	df	Sig.	Phi	Cramer's V
Self-efficacy	3.30	3	.35	.13	.13
Conscientiousness	1.89	3	.60	.10	.10
Agreeableness	4.25	3	.24	.15	.15
Openness to Experience	2.62	3	.45	.12	.12
Neuroticism	2.62	3	.46	.12	.12
Extraversion	1.18	3	.76	.08	.08

As can be observed in Table 4.3, cross-tabulation analyses revealed no significant Pearson Chi-Squared statistics for performance appraisal Preference Item 9 (*annual feedback vs continuous feedback*), i.e. $p > .05$.

Finally, hierarchical binary logistic regression analysis revealed that when controlling for demographic variables in Regression Model 1 (gender, race and education level), Regression Model 2 (self-efficacy, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness) explained an additional 4.5% variance in the dependent variable, but it was not significant, i.e. $p > .05$. The results from the hierarchical binary logistic regression are summarised in Table 4.37.

Table 4.37.
Hierarchical Binary Logistic Regression results

Model	Prediction Rate	Pearson χ^2 Statistic	df	Sig.	Nagelkerke R ²	Change in R ²
Constant Model	79.7%					
Regression Model 1	79.7%	.38	3	.94	0.3%	
Regression Model 2	79.7%	5.82	9	.76	4.8%	4.5%

Based on the results of the inferential statistics that assessed both association and differences between the feedback methods reported in the section above, no support was found for Propositions 1.5, 1.6 (see Chapter Two), i.e. level of perceived self-efficacy was not associated with a preference for annual or continuous feedback, nor for Propositions 2.9 and 2.12 (see Chapter Two), i.e. level of perceived Conscientiousness and level of perceived Neuroticism were not associated with a preference for continuous feedback.

A summary of all of the significant results for each of the inferential and statistical analyses, found for Preference Items 1- 9 are presented in Table 4.38.

INVESTIGATING THE INDIVIDUALISATION OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Table 4.38

Summary of the Statistical Analyses for the Performance Appraisal Aspects and Individual Factors

Preference for:	Self-efficacy	Conscientiousness	Agreeableness	Openness to Experience	Neuroticism	Extraversion
Single rater		High ^{1**2,3*}	High ^{1*}	High ^{1,2*}		
Multiple internal rater		Low ^{1**2,3*}	Low ^{1*}	Low ^{1,2*}		
Multiple internal and external rater				Low ^{1,2*}		
Impersonal feedback	Low ^{1*}		High ^{3*}	High ^{1*}		Low ^{1,3*}
Face-to-face manager feedback	High ^{1*}			Low ^{1*}	Low ^{3*}	High ^{1,3*} ; Low ^{3*}
Face-to-face manager and other stakeholders' feedback			Low ^{3*}		High ^{3*}	High ^{1,3*}
Annual feedback			Low ^{1*}			
Bi-annual feedback						Low ^{2*}
Continuous feedback			High ^{1*}			High ^{2*}

¹ t-test * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$;

² Chi-square * $p < .05$;

³ Log Regression explained unique variance * $p < .05$,

Choice-Based Conjoint Task Questionnaire

A conjoint analysis was performed to determine the relative importance of performance appraisal preferences in relation to the selected individual difference variables; level of self-efficacy and the five personality dimensions. The conjoint analysis is presented in terms of utilities per level and based on the range of utilities within each of the three attributes (namely; number of raters, medium of feedback and frequency of feedback), the relative importance is determined.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the relative importance of each attribute is calculated by establishing the derived utilities in each attribute. In order to determine these utilities, the difference between the highest and lowest utility per attribute is divided by the sum of the range across the three attributes. These utilities are presented as percentages of the total sum of the utilities and represent the relative importance that employees attached to the various performance appraisal options. Utility values are scaled to sum to 100 within each attribute. Thus, when interpreting the utility values presented in Table 4.39 – Table 4.45, a utility value of, for example, 10 is greater than a utility of -10.

Relative importance of performance appraisal options for overall sample

The relative importance of each of the identified attributes was first calculated for the overall sample of respondents. Medium of feedback was overwhelmingly deemed to be the most important attribute (relative importance = 57%), in fact, more than twice as important than the other two attributes; frequency of feedback (relative importance = 25.9%) and number of raters (relative importance = 17.2%). The values of relative importance, utilities and ranking per attribute are presented in Table 4.39.

Table 4.39.
Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for the Overall Sample (n = 205)

Attribute	Level	Level Description	Utilities (Ranking in parentheses)	Relative Importance	Overall Ranking
Number of raters	1	Single internal rater	52.9 (1)		
	2	Multiple internal raters	49.1 (2)	17.2%	3
	3	Multiple internal & external raters	-102.0 (3)		
Medium of feedback	1	Impersonally (written)	-271.5 (3)		
	2	Face-to-face manager feedback	242.0 (1)	57.0%	1
	3	Face-to-face multiple stakeholder feedback	29.6 (2)		
Frequency of feedback	1	Annual feedback (once a year)	-78.23 (3)		
	2	Bi-annual feedback (twice a year)	153.78 (1)	25.8%	2
	3	Continuous feedback (weekly)	-75.56 (2)		

In terms of the attribute, number of raters, respondents indicated that being rated by a single internal rater was most preferred followed by being rated by multiple internal raters and least preferred was being rated by multiple internal & external raters (utilities = 52.9; 49.1 & -102.0, respectively).

In terms of the attribute, medium of feedback, respondents indicated that face-to-face feedback with a single rater was the most preferred option, followed by face-to-face feedback from multiple raters and least preferred was to receive impersonal feedback i.e. in a written report (utilities = 242.0; 29.6 & -271.5, respectively).

Within the final attribute, frequency of feedback, respondents indicated that they most preferred to receive bi-annual feedback, followed by, continuous feedback and the least preferred option within this attribute was annual feedback (utilities = 153.78; -75.56 & -78.23, respectively).

Relative importance of each of the selected individual difference variables

A conjoint analysis for performance appraisal differences between sub-samples, for each of the individual factors was performed. Sub-samples were created based on raw mean scores for each independent variable (see the raw mean scores in Table 4.1). Results from the conjoint analyses for each independent variable and sub-sample are presented in Table 4.40 – Table 4.45.

Perceived self-efficacy.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, perceived self-efficacy are presented below.

Table 4.40.

Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Perceived self-efficacy (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Self-Efficacy		High Self-Efficacy		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	29.6 (1)			77.1 (1)		
	Multiple internal raters	24.0 (2)	17.3%	3	-30.6 (2)	28.1%	2
	Multiple internal & external raters	-53.6 (3)			-46.5 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-143.5 (3)			-128.1 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	130.9 (1)	57.2%	1	111.0 (1)	54.3%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	12.5 (2)			17.0 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	-31.3 (2)			-48.4 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	76.8 (1)	25.5%	2	19.5 (2)	17.6%	3
	Continuous PA (weekly)	-45.5 (3)			28.9 (1)		

Table 4.40 presents the relative importance scores for the self-efficacy sub-samples (low levels of perceived self-efficacy and high levels of perceived self-efficacy). Results indicated a different order of preference between the sub-samples. Both sub-samples, in line with the overall sample, considered the medium of feedback to be the most important attribute. However, between the sub-groups, differences emerged in preference order for the remaining two attributes. Respondents in the low perceived self-efficacy sub-sample deemed frequency of feedback to be the second most important attribute followed by the number of raters (in line with the overall sample). In contrast, respondents in the high self-efficacy sub-sample deemed number of raters to be the second most important attribute, followed by frequency of feedback.

Between the two sub-samples, further differences emerged between the levels of one of the attributes. In terms of the frequency feedback, respondents in the low self-efficacy sub-sample, preferred to be rated bi-annually, whereas respondents in the high self-efficacy sub-sample preferred to be rated continuously.

Personality Dimension: Perceived Conscientiousness.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, Conscientiousness, are presented below.

Table 4.41.
Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Conscientiousness (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Conscientiousness		High Conscientiousness		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	34.1 (1)			18.7 (2)		
	Multiple internal raters	23.2 (2)	19.5%	3	25.9 (1)	15.6%	3
	Multiple internal & external raters	-57.3 (3)			-44.6 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-136.1 (3)			-135.4 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	122.4 (1)	55.2%	1	119.6 (1)	56.4%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	13.8 (2)			15.8 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	-28.9 (2)			-46.7 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	73.6 (1)	25.3%	2	80.2 (1)	28.0%	2
	Continuous PA (weekly)	-44.8 (3)			-33.5 (2)		

As is evident in Table 4.41, the relative importance scores for both sub-samples (i.e. respondents with high levels of perceived Conscientiousness and respondents with low levels of perceived Conscientiousness) were in line with the overall sample, i.e. medium of feedback was deemed the most important attribute, followed by frequency of feedback and the least important attribute for both of these sub-samples was, number of raters.

Between these two sub-samples, differences emerged within two of the attributes. For example, the majority of respondents in the low Conscientiousness sub-sample preferred to be rated by a single rater, whereas the majority of respondents in the high Conscientiousness sub-sample preferred to be rated by multiple internal raters. In terms of the frequency of feedback, respondents in the low Conscientiousness sub-sample least preferred to be rated continuously whereas respondents in the high Conscientiousness sub-sample, least preferred annual feedback.

Personality Dimension: Perceived Agreeableness.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, Agreeableness, are presented below.

Table 4.42.
Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Agreeableness (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Agreeableness		High Agreeableness		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	10.7 (2)			44.9 (1)		
	Multiple internal raters	28.1 (1)	13.8%	3	23.8 (2)	25.7%	2
	Multiple internal & external raters	-38.8 (3)			-68.7 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-147.2 (3)			-124.3 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	137.7 (1)	58.8%	1	104.3 (1)	51.7%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	9.5 (2)			20.1 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	-45.4 (3)			-33.7 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	87.3 (1)	27.4%	2	66.5 (1)	22.6%	3
	Continuous PA (weekly)	41.9 (2)			-32.8 (2)		

As is evident in Table 4.46, the relative importance scores indicated a different order of preference between respondents with low levels of perceived Agreeableness and respondents with high levels of perceived Agreeableness. While both sub-samples (in line with the overall

sample) considered the medium of feedback to be the most important attribute, the remaining two attributes differed in preference order. Respondents in the low Agreeableness sub-sample, deemed the attribute, frequency of feedback, to be the second most important attribute, followed by number of raters (in line with the overall sample). In contrast, respondents in the high Agreeableness sub-sample deemed the second most important attribute to be, number of raters, subsequently followed by, frequency of feedback.

Between the two sub-samples, differences emerged within one of the three attributes. Namely, in terms of the number of raters, the majority of respondents in the low Agreeableness sub-sample preferred to be rated by multiple internal raters whereas the majority of respondents in the high Agreeableness sub-sample preferred to be rated by a single rater.

Personality Dimension: Perceived Neuroticism.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, Neuroticism, are presented below.

Table 4.43.
Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Neuroticism (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Neuroticism		High Neuroticism		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	11.7 (2)			41.2 (1)		
	Multiple internal raters	26.9 (1)	15.0%	3	22.2 (2)	21.6%	3
	Multiple internal & external raters	-38.6 (3)			-63.4 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-138.1 (3)			-133.4 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	117.4 (1)	58.5%	1	124.6 (1)	53.3%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	20.7 (2)			8.9 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	40.5 (3)			-43.3 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	75.5 (1)	26.5%	2	78.3 (1)	25.1%	2
	Continuous PA (weekly)	-35.0 (2)			-35.1 (2)		

As can be seen in Table 4.43, the relative importance orders for both sub-samples (respondents with low levels of perceived Neuroticism and respondents with high levels of perceived Neuroticism) were in line with the overall sample i.e. medium of feedback was deemed the most important attribute, followed by frequency of feedback. The least important attribute for both sub-samples was, number of raters.

Between the two sub-samples, differences emerged within the number of raters attribute. The majority of respondents in the low Neuroticism sub-sample preferred to be rated by multiple internal raters, whereas the majority of respondents in the high Neuroticism sub-sample preferred to be rated by a single rater.

Personality Dimension: Perceived Extraversion.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, Extraversion, are presented below.

Table 4.44.
Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Extraversion (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Extraversion		High Extraversion		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	24.6 (2)			28.3 (1)		
	Multiple internal raters	29.8 (1)	15.3%	3	19.3 (2)	21.4%	3
	Multiple internal & external raters	-54.4 (3)			-47.6 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-175.0 (3)			-96.5 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	157.3 (1)	60.4%	1	84.7 (1)	51.0%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	17.7 (2)			11.9 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	-45.3 (3)			-32.9 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	88.7 (1)	24.3%	2	65.1 (1)	27.6%	2
	Continuous PA (weekly)	-43.4 (2)			-32.2 (2)		

Table 4.44 reports the the relative importance orders for the two Extraversion sub-samples. Both sub-samples, (i.e. respondents with low levels of perceived Extraversion and respondents with high levels of perceived Extraversion) were in line with the overall sample, i.e. medium of feedback was deemed the most important attribute, followed by frequency of feedback. The least important attribute for both sub-samples was, number of raters.

Between the two sub-samples, differences emerged within the number of raters attribute. The majority of respondents in the low Extraversion sub-sample preferred to be rated by multiple internal raters whereas the majority of respondents in the high Extraversion sub-sample preferred to be rated by a single rater.

Personality Dimension: Perceived Openness to Experience.

Results from the conjoint analysis conducted for the individual factor, Openness to Experience, are presented below.

Table 4.45.

Attributes and Levels for the Conjoint Analysis for Openness to Experience (n = 205)

Attribute	Level Description	Utilities	Low Openness to Experience		High Openness to Experience		
			Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking	Utilities	Relative Importance	Attribute Ranking
Number of raters	Single internal rater	34.2 (1)			14.9 (2)		
	Multiple internal raters	24.4 (2)	17.9%	3	28.5 (1)	18.0%	3
	Multiple internal & external raters	-58.6 (3)			-43.4 (3)		
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	-142.7 (3)			-128.9 (3)		
	Face-to-face manager feedback	139.0 (1)	54.4%	1	102.9 (1)	58.0%	1
	Face-to-face multiple stakeholders	3.7 (2)			25.9 (2)		
Freq. of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	-43.1 (3)			-35.2 (3)		
	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	93.1 (1)	27.6%	2	60.7 (1)	24.0%	2
	Continuous PA (weekly)	50.0 (2)			-25.6 (2)		

As is evident in Table 4.49, the relative importance orders for both sub-samples (respondents with low levels of perceived Openness to Experience and respondents with high levels of perceived Openness to Experience) were in line with the overall sample, i.e. medium of feedback was deemed the most important attribute, followed by frequency of feedback and the least important attribute for both sub-samples was found to be, number of raters.

Between the two sub-samples, differences emerged within the number of raters attribute. The majority of respondents in the low Openness to Experience sub-sample preferred to be rated by a single rater, whereas the majority of respondents in the high Openness to Experience sub-sample preferred to be rated by multiple internal raters.

In line with the overall sample, all sub-samples indicated that the most consistently preferred performance appraisal level/aspect was; face-to-face feedback from a manager (from the medium of feedback attribute). There were two performance appraisal options which were consistently least preferred by all respondents; multiple internal and external raters (from the number of raters attribute) and to receive feedback impersonally (from the medium of feedback attribute).

A summary of the results from the conjoint task analyses is presented in Table 4.46 and Table 4.47. In Table 4.46, the most preferred attribute is provided for each cohort. In Table 4.47, the most preferred level within each attribute is provided for each cohort.

INVESTIGATING THE INDIVIDUALISATION OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Table 4.46

Summary of the Conjoint Task – Ranked attributes per Individual Factor

Ranking	Overall	Low self-efficacy	High self-efficacy	Low Conscientiousness	High Conscientiousness	Low Agreeableness	High Agreeableness	Low Neuroticism	High Neuroticism	Low Extraversion	High Extraversion	Low Openness to Experience	High Openness to Experience
1	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback	Medium of feedback
2	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Number of raters	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Number of raters	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback	Frequency of feedback
3	Number of raters	Number of raters	Frequency of feedback	Number of raters	Number of raters	Number of raters	Frequency of feedback	Number of raters	Number of raters	Number of raters	Number of raters	Number of raters	Number of raters

Table 4.47

Summary of the Conjoint Task – Highest level within each attribute per Individual Factor

Ranking	Overall	Low self-efficacy	High self-efficacy	Low Conscientiousness	High Conscientiousness	Low Agreeableness	High Agreeableness	Low Neuroticism	High Neuroticism	Low Extraversion	High Extraversion	Low Openness to Experience	High Openness to Experience
Number of raters	Single internal rater	Single internal rater	Single internal rater	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Multiple internal raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Single internal rater	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters
Medium of feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback	Face-to-face manager feedback
Frequency of feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Continuous feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback	Bi-annual feedback

Open-ended items from the questionnaire

As explained in Chapter Three, the following two items were included at the end of the online composite questionnaire which allowed respondents to indicate whether or not they would prefer individualised performance appraisals. Respondents were asked to give reasons to support their answers;

1. *Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes your personality into account? Why do you say so?*
2. *Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes into account your level of self-efficacy (self-confidence)? Why do you say so?*

Responses from the two items were analysed utilising a thematic analysis approach. Here responses were considered and common themes identified and coded to categorise their agreement or disagreement with the two questions, or if they were neutral/uncertain (see Table 4.48 and Table 4.49). Thereafter, the reasons and/or explanations that were given were also coded per identified themes. Direct quotes are provided in support of the main theme, which is Agreement.

Table 4.48.
“Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes your personality into account? Why do you say so? (n=205)”

Responses	Number of respondents	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Agreement	181	88.3	88.3
Disagreement	16	7.8	96.1
Neutral or Uncertain	6	2.9	99
Excluded from analysis	2	1.0	100

As can be observed in Table 4.48 respondents overwhelmingly (181 or 88% vs 16 or 8%) indicated that they would prefer a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes their personality into account.

Respondents that were in agreement with the proposed question used words such as “definitely”, “absolutely” and “yes” in their responses. Two examples of responses received are:

“Yes! It will make a big difference overall. It will impact work performance in a better way as well as identifying ways of improving etc.”

“Yes. this would make me feel more comfortable with the process and more comfortable to ask questions and engage.”

Table 4.49.

“Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes into account your level of self-efficacy (self-confidence)? Why do you say so? (n=205)

Responses	Number of respondents	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Agreement	157	76.6	76.6
Disagreement	35	17.1	93.7
Neutrality or Uncertainty	8	3.9	97.6
Excluded from analysis	5	2.4	100

As can be observed in Table 4.49 respondents overwhelmingly (157 or 77% vs 35 or 17%) indicated that they would prefer a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes their level of abilities and/or competencies into account.

Respondents consistently used words such as “*strongly*”, “*definitely*” or “*absolutely*” in their responses. Two examples of responses received are:

“Yes. As people have different self-confidence levels and some may prefer to be in a one-on-one setting as compared to a group”

“Yes. You cannot change the feedback but the way it is presented can change the reaction and this would be helpful.”

It would therefore seem that the majority of respondents would indeed prefer an individualised performance appraisal experience, slightly more so where personality type was considered, in comparison to level of self-efficacy.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews with HR Practitioners

In addition to the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four HR practitioners. The objective of this exercise was to gain insights into what extent HR practitioners support the notion of individualised performance appraisals. In order to analyse

the information, a thematic analysis was conducted on the transcribed HR practitioner interviews where after common themes were identified and coded. See Appendix B for a list of the questions posed to HR practitioners.

Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews.

Across the four interviews, the main theme that emerged was the *perceived challenges* HR practitioners associated with the individualising of performance appraisals. These perceived challenges are reported below.

Perceived challenges.

The specific challenges which were perceived by HR practitioners were identified as follows; 1) challenges with practical implementation; 2) gaining support from top management; and 3) concerns regarding additional workload for HR practitioners themselves. Direct quotes are provided to support the identification of these challenges and findings are further discussed in Chapter Five.

In terms of ***practical implementation***; HR Practitioner 1 stated: “*in terms of practically implementing [individualised performance appraisals] ... I don't know, it is quite difficult to conceptualise... For me, I would need to see it working before I could or would implement it in my organisation...but, I believe this could work; it is up to the organisation... how would they implement it? I don't know... but it would be exciting if appraisals were not dreaded by every employee... and by management!*”

Similarly, HR Practitioner 4 said: “*we would only implement [individualised performance appraisals] if it could be demonstrated... I cannot see this practically working and being sustainable, to be honest*”.

HR Practitioner 2 stated: “*it [individualised performance appraisals] would be a huge adjustment.*”

In terms of ***gaining support*** from top-management, HR Practitioner 3 stated: “*top-management in my firm is still quite 'old school', they would probably not support a system which is so different to our current system... and would take up considerably more*

time, I presume. Although our current system is not working, nobody is complaining to them [top-management] about it so I know top-management would use the, 'if it isn't broken, don't fix it' approach... but, once there is more research which explains how they [individualised performance appraisals] impact organisations for example and, when major organisations are implementing them [individualised performance appraisals], I could propose it to our directors."

HR practitioners perceived an individualised performance appraisal system to be a **burden** to them, despite positives it may bring to the organisation and employees. HR Practitioner 2 said: *"in a big office like mine, the challenge would be the admin associated with something like that... I would need additional resources and... and, complete buy-in [from management]"*. While HR Practitioner 4 stated *"... people change their minds regularly; they don't stay at one job long enough to for it to be worth finding out what kind of appraisal system works for them."*

Despite the challenges mentioned above, there were also minimal positives mentioned by the HR practitioners, for example, HR Practitioner 2 stated, *"I would love to introduce a successful system which would increase engagement...it makes sense that appraisals consider the individual but, I'm really not sure to what extent this should or could be possible"*.

The thematic analysis conducted revealed that implementing an individualised performance appraisal system is certainly a novel concept which even HR practitioners are sceptical about for various reasons. All four HR practitioners showed by their responses that this approach would require a significant shift in the mindset of managers, top-level management and themselves. As all four HR practitioners had similar responses to the questions posed, these results should be considered seriously. However, the responses from the HR practitioners suggest that perhaps the problem with implementing new and novel appraisal systems is the hesitation of HR practitioners themselves. Given the excitement and level of agreement indicated by respondents regarding the idea of implementing such systems and the understanding that current systems are not sufficient to meet the perceived needs of employees, it is worrisome that HR practitioners are reticent to even attempt to embark on a novel system such as this.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the study's research question and the research objectives are comprehensively discussed. This is followed by a discussion of the results which were reported in Chapter Four. Data was collected using two divergent approaches, i.e. by means of a field-survey where items were responded to on a Likert-type response scale, as well as by utilising choice-based conjoint analysis, whereby a fractional experiment simultaneously investigates multiple manipulations. These data collection methods which are based on different assumptions, but that can address similar research objectives allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the research question. The findings are discussed in relation to the approaches that were employed. The theoretical and practical implications of this study are subsequently discussed, as well as the limitations and recommendations for future research.

Discussion of research question and research objectives

The importance and value of appraising employees is well-established. Latham et al. (2005) stated that organisations should implement performance appraisals to encourage and support continuous development and improvement, however, performance appraisals often fail in this regard. Latham et al. (2005) also list multiple challenges with traditional performance appraisals including, for example, the appraisal instrument itself as well as deciding who should be conducting appraisals. However, organisations cannot abandon appraisals given the important organisational and employee benefits which appraisals can bring forth (Fletcher, 2001). As shown above, the continuous development of an appraisal system is an important aspect of any viable organisation. Extensive research therefore exists highlighting both the importance of successful performance appraisals and on the multiple critiques associated with traditional appraisals. The literature extensively supports the notion that appraisals must shift from traditional approaches to more contemporary and innovative HRM practices, as illustrated for example, by Sarkar's (2016) proposed shift from annual feedback towards continuous feedback. However, this approach has neither been adopted nor supported across the board. Lam, DeRue, Karam and Hollenbeck (2011) argued that continuous feedback puts cognitive strain on employees and should only be implemented at certain times, like during the beginning phases of learning new skills.

Although there is conflicting research results on performance appraisals, the importance of performance appraisal satisfaction (PAS) has been irrefutable. Numerous studies have explained the benefit of conducting performance appraisals which are associated with PAS. Alessa (2014) argued that the long-term effectiveness of appraisals is dependent on the degree to which employees are satisfied with their performance appraisal. Sharma and Sharma (2017) agreed, stating that the degree to which employees are satisfied that performance appraisals are accurate and fair, is associated with employees' willingness to improve their performance. More in-depth evidence of the positive effects of PAS were presented in Chapter Two.

The acknowledgement of the importance of PAS in the literature means that an increase in PAS amongst employees should be seen as crucial in the goal of conducting successful performance appraisals within organisations. Sharma and Sharma (2017) suggested that more research is needed which provides organisations with practical ways in which can improve the quality of PAS. Limited literature could be found regarding organisational attempts to improve PAS or addressing the practicalities of attempting this process. DeNisi and Pritchard (2006, p.254) stated that practitioners and academics alike should not be surprised by the limited existing research of this nature as, "...there is no one simple answer."

Based on the arguments above, a gap in the literature was identified. Modern HRM literature, as well as current organisational trends have supported the notion of individualising various human resource practices. For example, Kinnie et al. (2005, p.9) argued that organisations should move away from "best practice" towards "best fit". Kinnie et al. (2005) argued that in response to the diversity within complex organisations, organisations should implement a diverse set of policies and practices. Mansfield (1996) stated that before implementing 'one-size-fits all' practices, organisations must identify the population to whom these practices will apply. In practice, some organisations have begun to move away from traditional HRM policies, mirroring the suggestions by Kinnie et al. (2005). As an example, Investec employees are able to structure their own number of leave days based on their set targets and organisationally required outputs (Mavundza, 2019). Seemingly further suggesting that as organisational diversity increases, so individuals' needs from their organisations will become more diverse.

It is apparent however, that performance appraisals have not yet been considered as an HRM practice which could also be individualised to better suit employees and, subsequently,

organisations as a whole. Very limited literature could be found which links individual characteristics and performance appraisals, despite the growing argument that HRM practices should be more tailored and employee-specific and that performance appraisals are often considered unsuccessful and out-dated.

This study argued that by taking individual factors into account, employees would be more satisfied with appraisals, leading to increased PAS and ultimately better achieving organisational goals and requirements. This study utilised two fundamental individual factors believed to be closely linked to individual preference; level of self-efficacy and personality dimension. Nine various performance appraisal aspects were considered for this study and both traditional and modern approaches were included (i.e. annual feedback and continuous feedback). Using an exploratory approach, level of self-efficacy and personality dimension were measured to determine whether the consideration of individualised factors during the appraisal process could improve PAS. Below is a discussion of the results in relation to each of the study's nine performance appraisal aspects.

Number of Raters

In terms of the first rater option, *single rater*, inferential statistics revealed that a number of individual variables were associated with a significant preference for this performance appraisal rater option. As proposed in Chapter Two, respondents with increased levels of Conscientiousness were found to significantly prefer a single rater option, when compared to multi-rater. In addition to this finding, results indicated that individuals with increased Agreeableness and increased Openness to Experience also significantly preferred the single rater option. Furthermore, conjoint-based task analysis also indicated that the single rater option was preferred by a number of sub-samples (see Table 4.47). Conjoint-based analyses results should be seriously considered by researchers and organisations as conjoint analysis allows respondents to indicate their preference given all three options (compared to inferential which compares only two options).

The apparent preference for a single rater appraisal, by multiple subgroups is in line with current literature and common practice. Maylett (2009) stated that single rater appraisals are a popular and traditional performance appraisal rater option. Single rater appraisals are also considered more straightforward, less complicated and more common, as well as being

typically associated with less conflict than multi-source rater appraisals (Fletcher, 2001). It is reasonable that certain personality dimensions

Individuals with increased Conscientiousness are typically perfectionists, are more detail orientated, dependable and are more inclined to be goal and target driven (Moerdyk et al., 2015). Rothman and Coetzer (2008) found Conscientiousness to be an appropriate predictor of job performance and stated that Conscientious individuals are typically top achievers and determined individuals. Conscientious individuals also consider performance ratings to be important as they are a measure utilised to confirm their achievements. Taking into account that conscientious individuals would generally avoid conflict, when compared to multi-rater appraisals, a preference towards a single rater is further understandable. Multi-rater appraisals may be seen as distracting, due to the potential of multiple different ratings contradicting each other (Fletcher, 2001). It is expected then that Conscientious individuals would typically dislike this option, preferring to avoid situations which may involve conflict or which hinder individual goal attainment, (i.e. by means of conflicting ratings). This literature further supports the finding that conscientious individuals preferred a single rater appraisal.

Individuals with increased levels of Openness to Experience are typically more creative, open to new ideas and are more inclined to take risks (Moerdyk et al., 2015). It would appear then that these individuals may prefer the multiple rater option. While single rater appraisals are typically associated with simplicity (in comparison to multi-source rater appraisals), Fletcher (2001) stated that single-rater appraisals utilise a top-down approach to ratings, they are less collaborative given that they depend on a single rating, namely a manager's rating of the candidate, without the opportunity for others to include their rating feedback. This may be considered a risky approach for some individuals. However, as stated above, individuals who are more Open to Experience typically enjoy taking risks, which could explain why a multi-rater appraisal is a more appealing performance option.

The results further indicated that respondents with increased Agreeableness significantly preferred a single rater appraisal. It was however proposed in Chapter Two, that individuals with increased Agreeableness would prefer a multi-rater appraisal based on its collaborative nature and the understanding that individuals with increased Agreeableness tend to work well in teams (Moerdyk et al., 2015). However, this study's finding can be explained by further understanding that individuals who are more Agreeable generally tend to avoid conflict

situations, as well as, being easy going (Moerdyk et al., 2015). Further, as single-rater appraisals are more straightforward, less complicated, more common, and are typically associated with less conflict than multi-source rater appraisals (Fletcher, 2001), its association with individuals who have an increase in Agreeableness can therefore be explained.

In terms of the second rater option, *multiple internal raters*, inferential statistics revealed that a number of individual variables were associated with this performance appraisal rater preference. Respondents with low levels of Conscientiousness (as proposed in Chapter Two), Agreeableness and Openness to Experience, all preferred this option when compared to a single rater. In terms of the third rater option, *multiple internal and external raters*, inferential statistics revealed that respondents with low levels of Openness to Experience were significantly related.

Maylett (2009) explained that multiple performance raters often allow for a more comprehensive understanding of an employee's performance by taking in multiple perspectives. Although the use of multi-rater performance appraisals is increasing in popularity and has been suggested by researchers as one way in which to modernise performance appraisals, it is not without its challenges (Maylett, 2009). Multi-rater performance appraisals can also lead to conflict and confusion between the raters and the ratee (Fletcher, 2001; Maylett, 2009). Maylett (2009) explained that multi-rater methods are an administrative burden and if not correctly implemented, can be time-consuming and complex. Fletcher (2001) argued that the use of multi-source ratings does not necessarily lead to more objective and accurate ratings and is generally terminated within two years of implementation. However, multiple individual variables were associated with this appraisal aspect and a deeper understanding as to why a preference for multiple-raters emerged (given its both positive and negatives reviews).

This study found that respondents with low levels of Conscientiousness significantly preferred a multi-rater option. Individuals low in Conscientiousness are generally less motivated and do not consider achievement to be a top priority (Maylett, 2009). Multi-rater appraisals consider the opinion of multiple individuals and these ratings are often presented in more of a coaching and development approach which ultimately may be more suited to individuals low in Conscientiousness (Maylett, 2009).

Individuals with low levels of perceived Agreeableness were also found to significantly prefer multi-rater appraisals. This finding is unexpected as it was proposed in Chapter Two that individuals with increased Agreeableness would prefer a multi-rater appraisal, i.e. prefer an option where ratings might differ as a result of multiple raters.

It is noteworthy, given the above findings, that an additional item was added to the Adapted BFI Scale, utilised to measure the Big Five personality dimensions. This item was added to the Agreeableness sub-scale in an attempt to make the measurement instrument more valid and reliable (as was recommended by Rammstedt and John, 2007). However, reliability was not tested because of the minimal number of items within the sub-scale (Eisinga et al., 2013; Cortina, 1993).

Respondents with increased Openness to Experience also significantly preferred multi-rater performance appraisals. This result was not proposed but was found to be significant. As per Benet-Martinez and John (1998), individuals with increased Openness to Experience are likely to be more open-minded, interested in new experiences, mentally and experientially, and in general they may be more imaginative and open to change. As multi-rater appraisals are the more modern approach, this finding is supported by literature. In terms of being rated by internal and external stakeholders, limited literature was found, further indicating its unusualness in both, literature and practice. It appears then that including external stakeholders in performance ratings is not a popular option. However, client feedback, for example, is a vital part of service-industry employees' performance ratings, such as for educators/teachers (Manatt, 1997). According to Manatt (1997) client feedback incurs little cost to an organisation but is a sophisticated performance indicator. Literature therefore supports this finding, as including external stakeholder feedback into performance appraisals is not a common practice. In addition to this, as individuals with increased Openness to Experience enjoy new experiences, an association with multi-rater appraisals is therefore supported by literature.

Medium of Feedback

The least common medium of feedback option presented to respondents was the *impersonal feedback* option. However, inferential statistics revealed that a number of individual variables were associated with this medium of feedback. Respondents with low levels of perceived self-efficacy, as well as respondents with low levels of Extraversion and respondents with increased

levels of perceived Openness to Experience, were found to significantly prefer impersonal feedback.

Impersonal feedback is not often implemented. However, Fletcher (2001) stated that impersonal feedback often leads to less evaluation apprehension for employees and because there are fewer emotions attached to the appraisal there is less bias from interpersonal cues. In addition, in the fast-paced lifestyle of current employees as well as the possibility that managers and employees are sometimes geographically dispersed (with many organisations allowing employees to work from home), impersonal feedback may become a more utilised and popular performance appraisal feedback medium (Appelbaum, Roy & Gilliland, 2011).

Literature supports the study's finding in terms of, individuals with low levels of self-efficacy and individuals with low levels of Extraversion significantly preferring the option to receive impersonal feedback. Impersonal feedback is less confrontational and in turn, it requires less self-confidence from the individual (Fletcher, 2001). Individuals low in self-efficacy tend to exclude themselves from challenging situations, are less engaging and overall have lower self-belief and confidence in their own abilities (Bandura, 1982). Lunenburg (2011) indicated that individuals low in self-efficacy tend to be less eager to learn how to improve their performance. Individuals low in Extraversion are often less talkative and are conventionally labelled as *introverts*. Introverts tend to be more reserved, more independent and less optimistic (Rothman and Coetzer). Further, introverted individuals value the skill of listening, are calm and tend to avoid being the centre of attention (Nobel, 2010). Given that impersonal feedback involves limited interpersonal interaction and less overall communication, the association between impersonal feedback and these two personality dimensions can be explained by literature.

In terms of the study's finding that individuals with increased levels of Openness to Experience preferred impersonal feedback, this can also be explained given literature. As stated, impersonal feedback is an uncommon approach, Goldberg (1993) stated that individuals with increased levels of Openness to Experience tend to gravitate towards options which are more uncommon and new. In this case, impersonal feedback. Furthermore, Rothman and Coetzer (2003) explained that increased Openness to Experience is associated with being more imaginative and individuals tend to be less emotional. This literature further explains the study's findings; impersonal feedback is a more unusual approach which relies on being more straightforward and less on emotional than face-to-face feedback.

However, in terms of the choice-based conjoint analysis, i.e. when comparing all three medium of feedback options, impersonal feedback was the least preferred medium of feedback option by all sub-samples. Fletcher (2001) explained that given that impersonal feedback provides limited opportunities to discuss ratings, it is associated with increased unhappiness amongst employees. It should also be noted that impersonal feedback is considered to be an unusual feedback strategy. It is therefore possible that respondents in this study have not been previously exposed to this methodology, so based their ratings only on assumptions.

In terms of *face-to-face feedback from a manager*, inferential statistics revealed that a number of individual variables were associated with this performance appraisal medium of feedback option. As proposed in Chapter Two, respondents with high levels of perceived self-efficacy, high levels of Extraversion and respondents with low levels of perceived Openness to Experience, indicated a preference for this feedback option. The final medium of feedback performance appraisal option, *face-to-face feedback from a manager and other stakeholders*, was found to be preferred by respondents with increased levels of Extraversion, when compared to *impersonal feedback*, as proposed in Chapter Two. These findings are in line with literature and organisational trends regarding the medium of feedback. Fletcher (2001) stated that face-to-face appraisal meetings are typically at the centre of any performance appraisal as they promote increased collaboration, are interactive, and are more development-focused than ever before.

Appelbaum et al. (2011) explained that unlike impersonal feedback, for example where IT systems are utilised, face-to-face feedback fosters a relationship of trust between the rater and ratee and provides more opportunity for explanation or deliberation between the rater and ratee. Face-to-face feedback is characteristically interactive and relies heavily on manager-subordinate relationships (Maylett, 2009).

Individuals who have high self-efficacy typically believe in themselves and their abilities, have high levels of confidence, are more engaging and do not give up easily (Wood & Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 1982). Extraverted individuals tend to be more outgoing and have good people skills. They are also less shy and are comfortable in social environments (Moerdyk et al., 2015). Individuals low in Openness to Experience are typically less imaginative, more conventional in behaviours and dislike change (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003).

Respondents with high levels of self-efficacy, high levels of Extraversion and respondents with low levels of Openness to Experience preferred to receive *face-to-face feedback by a manager*. Face-to-face feedback is more traditional and it offers more of a chance for interaction and discussion. It also relies on confidence and helps employees to be goal driven. Because they are more relationship and emotion driven, Appelbaum et al. (2011) stated that face-to-face appraisals build trust between appraisers and the appraisees, making these meetings very important. Given the characteristics of Extraversion and Openness to Experience and its association with face-to-face appraisals, the study's findings can therefore be supported by literature.

Across all sub-groups, results from the choice-based conjoint analysis revealed that face-to-face feedback with a single rater was deemed the most preferred medium of feedback (see Table 4.47). Given that inferential statistics required respondents to choose their preferred option against only one other performance appraisal aspect, while the conjoint analysis allowed respondents to compare all three options, these results should be seriously considered by academics and organisations alike. The results indicated that despite personality type and level of self-efficacy, the most satisfactory medium of feedback is, face-to-face feedback with a single rater and therefore could be implemented by organisations in contemporary performance appraisals.

Frequency of feedback

In terms of the feedback option, *annual feedback*, one proposition was postulated in Chapter Two, but it was not supported. Instead, this study's inferential results revealed that the one individual factor associated with a preference for annual feedback (when compared to continuous feedback), was; low Agreeableness. Individuals low in Agreeableness tend to be less trusting and more hostile (Goldberg, 1993). In addition, Witt, Burke, Barrick and Mount (2002) explained that individuals low in Agreeableness are typically less co-operative. It was also found that, compared to individuals with high Agreeableness, individuals with low Agreeableness tended to be rated lower on job performance (Witt et al., 2002). Lam et al. (2011) explained that annual feedback is less cognitively demanding to individuals than more frequent feedback. It is plausible then that individuals who generally score lower in terms of performance (i.e. low Agreeableness) would favour the less cognitively demanding option.

The conjoint-based analysis further indicated that across all sub-groups, annual feedback was deemed the least preferred frequency of feedback option. This is also in line with current literature and organisational trends; Latham et al. (2005) stated that there has been a shift from the traditional annual performance appraisals towards more frequent feedback, often involving coaching. Latham et al. (2005) also stated that annual appraisals often do not lead to an improvement in an employee's performance. Given the empirical literature surrounding continuous feedback, annual feedback systems appear to be outdated and lack the effect desired by employees and organisations, namely; support for increased performance and development. Thus, organisations should take note of this finding, that employees are likely to prefer to be rated more than just on an annual basis.

In terms of *bi-annual feedback*, the results revealed that as proposed in Chapter Two, individuals with low levels of Extraversion significantly preferred bi-annual feedback, when compared to *continuous feedback*. Introverted individuals value the skill of listening, are calm and tend to avoid being the centre of attention (Nobel, 2010). Performance appraisals are inherently personal and focussed on the employee which could make introverted employees uncomfortable. The preference towards bi-annual feedback in this regard seemingly confirms that introverted individuals would prefer to be appraised less, i.e. by means of annual feedback, if given the option.

In terms of the final frequency option, *continuous feedback*, inferential statistics revealed that, as proposed in Chapter Two, respondents with increased levels of Extraversion preferred continuous feedback when compared to bi-annual feedback. In addition, when compared to annual feedback, results indicated that respondents with high levels of Agreeableness also preferred continuous feedback. Individuals with increased Agreeableness are generally more intuitive and are focussed on task-completion and relationship building (Oh & Berry, 2009). Goldberg (1993) explained that individuals who are more Agreeable tend to be more trusting of others. As continuous feedback hinges on relationships, as well as having a developmental focus, it is reasonable that highly Agreeable individuals would prefer this feedback option. In addition, extraverted individuals tend to be more outgoing, with good people skills. They are also less shy and are comfortable in social environments (Moerdyk et al., 2015). Extraverted individuals are generally more talkative and assertive (Goldberg, 1993). Therefore, it is apparent, based on the literature, results from this study are supported by literature.

However, in terms of the choice-based conjoint analysis, i.e. where all three frequency options were presented to respondents, continuous feedback was the most preferred frequency option for only one of the subgroups; respondents with high levels of self-efficacy (see Table 4.47). This finding is supported by the notion that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to enjoy engaging with others more frequently (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Additionally, Nielsen et al. (2009) explained that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to be more motivated and proactive. Considering the benefits of continuous feedback, this relationship is understandable, as continuous feedback is inherently more proactive and it is utilised to increase employee motivation and learning (Lam, et al., 2011). The relationship between respondents with high self-efficacy and continuous feedback was not, however, supported by the inferential statistics of this study.

Inferential and conjoint analysis findings indicate that multiple individual factors are associated with the preference to receive continuous feedback. Continuous feedback is becoming an increasingly popular feedback frequency option. Kuvaas, Buch and Dysvik (2017) suggested that organisations should implement more immediate and more frequent feedback to assist employees in improving their performance more timeously. The choice-based conjoint analyses also indicated that, except for, as reported above, respondents in the high self-efficacy sub-sample, bi-feedback was the most preferred option across the sub-samples.

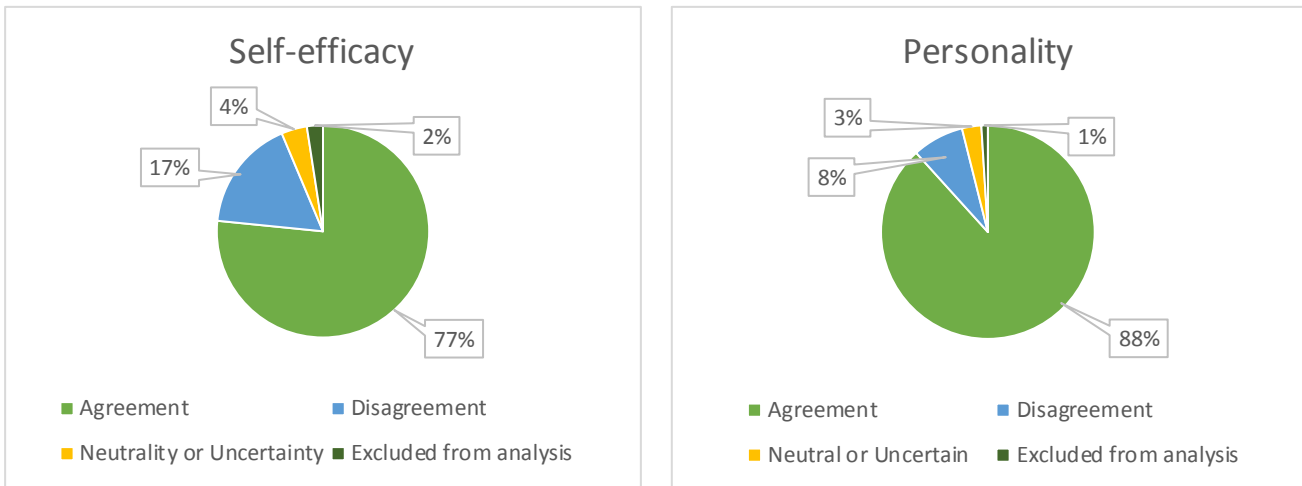
Thematic Analyses

Two thematic analyses were conducted. First a thematic analysis was conducted on the two short-answer responses from the questionnaire and secondly, a thematic analysis was conducted on the transcribed semi-structured interviews.

Questionnaire.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal which took their personality into account and secondly, which took their level of self-efficacy into account. Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that they would prefer performance appraisals which consider their level of self-efficacy and personality types. As can be seen from Figure 5.1, personality has a larger impact on satisfaction with a performance appraisal, compared to level of self-efficacy.

Figure 5.1.
Pie charts showing respondents' responses for each item (n = 205)



The extent to which respondents agreed with the inclusion of these individual factors into the performance appraisal process, is in line with current employment trends. Whereby individual factors in day-to-day organisational practices have become more common and there is a shift from generic human resource practices towards those that are employee-specific (Peretz et al., 2018).

In addition to current employment trends, this study was conducted in South Africa, a country which is argued to have a Western culture. Goncalo and Staw (2004) argued that in Western countries, individualism is sought after and valued. Individualism is understood as a culture which emphasizes independence and uniqueness. Further, in individualistic cultures, conformity is viewed negatively (Goncalo & Staw, 2004). This could further explain why respondents strongly agreed with individual factors being considered during performance appraisals.

Employees have consistently expressed their dissatisfaction with current performance appraisals which are typically generically implemented. Therefore, it is also possible that respondents agreed to the idea of including individual factors (namely personality factors) in their performance appraisals, as they are particularly interested in an alternative approach to performance appraisals.

Interviews with HR practitioners.

A thematic analysis was conducted based on the semi-structured interviews conducted with HR practitioners. In line with literature and common practice, the HR practitioners expressed their concerns with their organisations' current performance appraisal processes. However, simultaneously, they were apprehensive about the idea of an individualised performance appraisal system, which has not yet been tested in practice and which places an extra burden on the HR practitioner. For example, one of the HR practitioners mentioned that this system would be a challenge, based on the additional administrative requirements, compared to the current appraisal system.

Literature has supported the in-practice failures of performance appraisals for decades. Performance appraisal literature has been published several times highlighting the multiple reasons as to why performance appraisals fail (such as psychometric errors) (Applebaum et al., 2011). Despite decades of research, performance appraisals have not changed very much in the last few decades and many organisations still implement traditional performance appraisals (Maylett, 2009).

Based on the contradictory feedback between HR practitioners and employees, it appears that while employees would prefer more innovative performance appraisal systems, their biggest obstacle in this regard may be the HR practitioners themselves.

Interestingly, the HR practitioners who were supportive of the idea that performance appraisals could be individualised, were unable to envision the practical implementation of individualised performance appraisals. Therefore, this scepticism from the HR practitioners could stem from the fact that the current system is entrenched in the organisation, as well as, that change is often feared. However, as Applebaum et al. (2011) explained, it is important to move towards modern processes in line with globalisation.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This study makes multiple contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study has contributed by adding to the content of knowledge relating to performance appraisals. No previous empirical research of this nature could be identified by this researcher.

Specifically, this research has contributed to: 1) empirical research on performance appraisal preferences and 2) PAS literature, by identifying ways in which PAS could be improved amongst employees.

By utilising a mixed-methods approach, this study has provided literature on both a quantitative and qualitative level. As a result, the data collected is of a broader nature, as well as being more in-depth and provides a holistic approach to the subject of performance appraisals, through gathering data from employees and HR practitioners.

In addition to a mixed methods data collection approach, a novel methodology for collecting quantitative data was utilised. Supplementary to Likert-type responses, which analysed performance appraisal preferences on an individual level, conjoint-based analysis tasks were used in order to measure preferences using a trade-off approach. These two methodologies created a dual level of analysis. This study shows that the use of conjoint-analysis, which is typically implemented in consumer research, is a successful method to establish employee preferences and could be utilised in a number of ways.

On a practical level, this study has provided organisations with a possible way in which to increase PAS amongst employees and ultimately achieve desired outcomes. Conjoint tasks mimic real-life choice-making, so therefore, these results could beneficially inform organisations.

This study has also provided a guideline to organisations regarding which performance appraisal aspects should be individualised and which aspects should remain consistent and implemented in a generic manner. The results have also indicated that certain performance appraisal aspects should be implemented with caution. For example, conjoint analysis revealed that annual feedback, as when compared to all three feedback options, was the least preferred feedback option across all sub-samples. In addition, the study has provided organisations with confirmation that employees would in fact prefer it if organisations consider individual factors such as personality dimension and level of self-efficacy, during performance appraisals.

Lastly, the study has provided organisations with a deeper understanding of the concerns of HR practitioners regarding implementing novel performance appraisal systems, For example, their concerns around ensuring appraisals are still considered fair and that they do not become

an administrative burden. These insights can be utilised by any organisation that wishes to implement an individualised performance appraisal system.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The following section acknowledges this study's limitations and makes suggestions and recommendations for future research.

As explained by Price and Murnan (2004) a study must contain both internal and external validity. In terms of the study's sampling methodology, a non-probability, convenient sampling methodology was utilised. As a result, the study's findings cannot be generalised to the population and therefore the study's external validity is limited (Price & Murnan, 2004). This study utilised an abridged version of the BFI Scale which was adapted based on a recommendation by Rammstedt and John (2007). Reliability was difficult to assess as there were only two to three items for each personality dimension sub-scale, which affects the study's internal validity. The questionnaire was only offered in English and given that South Africa has 11 national languages, there may have been some participants who struggled to understand certain aspects of the questionnaire. This could possibly have led to some guessing which would reduce the internal validity of this study.

Furthermore, limitations of the study's measurement tools must be acknowledged. In terms of the limitations associated with Likert-type and semantic differential scale formats, Eutsler and Lang (2015) explained that researchers must be conscious of the various forms of response-bias associated with these scales. These forms of bias include extreme response bias and central tendency bias (Eutsler & Lang, 2015).

There are also limitations associated with choice-based conjoint analyses. Typically, conjoint-based analysis is used in consumer-based, marketing research fields. Although the use of conjoint analysis is increasing in popularity, there is limited guidance as to its use in other fields. There are benefits and limitations associated with the use of conjoint tasks. Conjoint task analysis merely mimics real-life situations and therefore has no impact on actual real-life situations. This implies that the reliability of respondents' choices may be questionable.

Other limitations of this study include that there was limited pre-existing research to guide the present study. As no literature could be found which investigated the effect of individual factors on performance appraisal preferences and as this study has multiple limitations, it is apparent that there are avenues for future research of this kind. This study only considered three performance appraisal aspects which allows future researchers an opportunity to investigate preference in terms of other performance appraisal aspects; for example, rating scales, self-reviews and types of incentives.

Another limitation of this study which researchers should consider is that respondents were offered an incentive to participate in the study, in the form of the opportunity to win a shopping voucher. According to Hsieh and Kocielnik (2016), offering a reward to respondents significantly increases response bias whereby respondents may exert minimal effort in completing the task, in this case the composite questionnaire.

This study did not measure the impact of demographic variables, i.e. age, on performance appraisal preferences. Particularly, in the South African context, one factor which could be investigated is culture and the effect cultural norms might have on performance appraisal factors. It also did not take into account the respondents' job levels. It is therefore recommended that future studies consider these variables.

This study utilised an abridged and adapted version of the BFI scale as per Rammstedt and John (2007) and it is recommended that, if time allows, this study is conducted again using a full-scale personality assessment in order to confirm the results of the present study or to add to this study's findings.

Arguably the most significant suggestion following on from this study relates to the way in which individualised performance appraisals could be practically implemented in organisations. More comprehensive information from top management, HR practitioners and employees would be required by means of in-depth interviews and focus groups.

Conclusion

Performance appraisals have for decades been a source of conflict and have been feared by employees. However, typically, their fundamental and primary purpose is to drive continuous

learning and promote the development of employees. This is why it is crucial that organisations establish ways in which to implement appraisals which employees are satisfied with and which achieve desired organisational outcomes. Therefore, the objectives of the present study were to investigate the ways in which individual factors could influence the preference of certain performance appraisal aspects, as well as to find out from HR practitioners to what extent individualised performance appraisals could be implemented. Using multiple tools of analyses and a mixed methods approach, this study has investigated performance appraisals preferences in depth.

Results indicated that personality dimensions and the level of self-efficacy play a significant role in the way in which individuals would prefer to be appraised. In some regards, standard performance appraisal practices can be implemented. For example, considering the conjoint-based analysis, face-to-face feedback with single raters could be implemented, as results indicated that employees would be satisfied with this. In terms of the remaining performance appraisal aspects, it is evident from the statistical analyses that in order to increase levels of PAS, various individual factors should be considered when conducting performance appraisals.

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Appendix A

Individualised Performance Appraisal Questionnaire

Dear respondent

I am currently studying towards my Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of Cape Town. You are invited to participate in a research study, that I am conducting as one of the requirements of the Masters Programme, under the supervision of Professor Anton Schlechter. The focus of the research is to investigate performance appraisal preferences of difference people.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and your responses will remain anonymous as you are not required to disclose your name anywhere on the questionnaire. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time. All data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research.

By completing this questionnaire, you stand a chance of winning a R300 Woolworths gift voucher. To participate in the lucky draw, you need to enter your e-mail address at the end of the questionnaire. To ensure your anonymity, your e-mail address will in no way be linked to your responses in the questionnaire.

This research project has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee at the University of Cape Town.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me; mlsjod001@myuct.ac.za or my research supervisor Anton Schlechter; anton.schlechter@uct.ac.za

Thank you for your assistance

Kind regards
Jodi Milosevich

Sub-scale 1: Performance Appraisal Preferences

Organisations have different approaches to designing and implementing performance appraisals. Consider each of the bi-polar scales below and indicate the direction and also the strength of your preference.

Based on the statements below, indicate your performance appraisal preferences;

	Strong preference	Weak preference	No preference	Weak preference	Strong preference	
I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by a single rater e.g. my line-manager.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple raters within my department/function (e.g. line-manager/s, colleagues and subordinates).
I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by

multiple raters within my department/function (e.g. line-manager/s, colleagues and subordinates).						multiple internal and external raters (e.g. line-manager, colleagues, my subordinates, as well as clients/stakeholders and other managers/staff outside of my department).
I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by a single rater e.g. my line-manager.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer that my performance appraisal be conducted by multiple internal and external raters (e.g. line-manager, colleagues, my subordinates, as well as clients/stakeholders and other managers/staff outside of my department).
I would prefer to receive performance feedback electronically in the form of a written report (i.e. impersonally).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of a face-to-face meeting with my line-manager (i.e. personally).
I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of a face-to-face meeting with my line-manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of face-to-face meeting attended by various individuals e.g. my line-manager, colleagues, other managers, etc.
I would prefer to receive performance feedback electronically in the form of a written report (i.e. impersonally).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive my performance feedback in the form of a face-to-face meeting with my line-manager (i.e. personally).
I would prefer to receive performance feedback annually	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive performance feedback bi-annually (twice a year)
I would prefer to receive performance feedback bi-annually (twice a year)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive performance feedback continuously
I would prefer to receive performance feedback continuously	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I would prefer to receive performance feedback annually

Sub-scale 2: Generalised Self-Efficacy Scale

Indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 = Not at all true and 5 = Exactly true), the extent to which the following statements are true

	Not at all true	Hardly true	Neutral	Moderately true	Exactly true
I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can usually handle whatever comes my way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sub-scale 2: The Adapted Big Five Inventory (BFI)

On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 = Disagree strongly and 5 = Agree strongly) indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

I see Myself as Someone Who...

	Disagree strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree Strongly
Is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is generally trusting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to be lazy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has few artistic interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is outgoing, sociable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gets nervous easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has an active imagination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is considerate and kind to almost anyone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes your personality and preferences into account? Why do you say so?

Do you think you would be more satisfied with a performance appraisal that is designed and implemented in such a way that it takes into account your level of self-efficacy (self-confidence)? Why do you say so?

Choice-based Modelling - Performance Appraisal Preferences (example of one of eight combinations)

Attribute	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	None
Number of Raters	Single internal rater	Multiple internal raters	Multiple internal & external raters	
Medium of feedback	Impersonally (written)	Personally (face-to-face) with a single rater	Personally (face-to-face) with a multiple raters attending	
Frequency of feedback	Annual PA (once a year)	Bi-annual PA (twice a year)	Continuous PA (weekly)	

Demographic Information

The following information will be solely used for research purposes.

Please select or fill in the appropriate information

Specify your age

Specify your gender from the options below (Male/Female/Transgender/Prefer not to answer)

Race

- White
- African
- Indian
- Coloured
- Asian
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Please select from the options below, your highest level of education

- High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Bachelor's degree
- Honours degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate

Specify your industry from the options below (Agriculture / Pharmaceutical industry / Computer industry & Software industry / Construction industry / Education industry / Energy industry / Entertainment industry / Financial services industry / Insurance industry / Food industry / Health care industry / Hospitality industry / Manufacturing / Publishing / Mining / Transport industry / Other)

Number of years in organisation

Select your job level from the options below (Executive management/ Management/Supervisor/Non-management/Specialist)

If you would like to stand a chance at winning a R300 Woolworths voucher, please enter your email address below

Thank you for your participation in this research

Appendix B

Informed Consent and Interview Guide for HR practitioners

The aim of the proposed research project is to investigate whether the perceived level of performance appraisal satisfaction would be higher among employees if employee preferences are considered when designing and implementing individualised performance appraisals.

The interview will be recorded and transcribed for the purposes of this research only. The data collected will further not be used in any manner as to identify a specific individual. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. All responses will be treated confidentially and will be stored securely.

This research has been approved by the Ethics in Research Committee of the Faculty of Commerce, University of Cape Town.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email the researcher; mlsjod001@myuct.ac.za or my supervisor Anton Schlechter; anton.schlechter@uct.ac.za

I hereby consent to participating in this research and know that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I give the researcher permission to electronically record the interview and to utilise the data collected from the interview for this research project.

Full Names of Participant

Signature of Participant

Questions for Human Resource Management:

1. Should the performance appraisal system be individualised to address employee preferences?
2. Do you believe your organisation would implement performance appraisal methods based on employee preferences?
3. Do you believe it would be practical to implement performance appraisal methods based on employee preferences?
4. What challenges do you foresee in implementing individualised performance appraisal methods?