

# How Performance Management Enhances Employee Job Performance? “Finding the Silver Lining”

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Received: August 13, 2024

Accepted: September 17, 2024

Online Published: September 30, 2024

doi:10.5539/ijbm.v19n6p125

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v19n6p125>

## Abstract

**Purpose of this paper:** Employees' job performance is considered essential to the survival and success of organizations. Building on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, this multilevel cross-sectional study aimed to examine the direct effects of performance management (PM) on employees' job performance, as well as the moderating role of PM practices in the relationship between recognition and employees' job performance and in the relationship between psychological well-being and employees' job performance.

**Design/methodology/approach:** Multilevel regression analysis was executed with Stata 16 software. The data were processed according to their hierarchical structure (i.e., 251 employees nested in 18 organizations).

**Findings:** Although PM do not directly influence employees' job performance in this study, it interacts with recognition and psychological well-being to accentuate their effects on job performance.

**Research limitations/implications:** This study is cross-sectional and relies on employees' self-report questionnaires. PM does not appear to be the cure for all ills, but still seem to be resourceful to employees, showing that every cloud has a silver lining.

**Practical implications:** Performance management should be considered by HRM professionals and promoted among managers and employees as an organizational tool for orienting and optimizing employees' resources that contribute to good functioning and goal attainment at work.

**Originality/value:** These results extend the literature by illustrating that performance management is still useful in organizations when combined with other organizational and individual resources, such as recognition and employees' psychological well-being. Specific practical implications for HRM professionals are discussed.

**Keywords:** Performance management, in-role performance, extra-role performance, recognition, psychological well-being, multilevel analysis

## 1. Introduction

Performance management (PM) represents an important organizational resource, as employees' motivation and job performance is essential to the survival and success of organizations (Murphy et al., 2018). Although some empirical evidence has shown that PM promotes employees' motivation and performance (Haines III & St-Onge, 2012; Van Waeyenberg et al., 2020), its effectiveness remains unclear and criticized (Schleicher et al., 2019; Sharma et al., 2016). Some have argued that more traditional approach focusing on performance appraisal, which consists of a one-year cycle, a bureaucratic process, an annual and structured approach to goal setting, and a formal performance appraisal, are unfit to the current business environment and employees' needs and reality (Deloitte, 2017; Levy et al., 2017). More specifically, research has shown that this more traditional PM approach is seen by managers and employees as time consuming and ineffective (Kubiak, 2020).

These criticisms have brought many researchers to promote performance management as an ongoing process based on clear and mutual expectations and continuous developmental feedback (Pulakos et al, 2015; DeNisi & Smith, 2014). Over the last decade, many organizations have rethought their performance management to move toward such a continuous approach to performance management (Kubiak, 2020; Pulakos, Mueller-Hanson, et al.,

2019; Schleicher et al., 2018). This approach, characterized by a balance between individual accountability and development and called by Cappelli and Tavis (2016) the “third way” or “hybrid” approach, represents an interesting avenue to deepen our understanding of employees’ performance.

This multilevel cross-sectional study has two objectives. First, building on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001), this study aims to test the direct effect of performance management on employees’ job performance. Considering inconsistent results regarding the direct and unique effect of PM (DeNisi & Smith, 2014; Van Waeyenberg et al., 2020), more research is needed to validate its capacity to promote employees’ job performance (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016; Schleicher et al., 2019; Sharma et al., 2016), especially when PM is seen as an ongoing process that promotes both individual accountability and development. Second, this study aims to examine the moderating role of PM on the relationship between recognition and employees’ job performance and on the relationship between psychological well-being and employees’ job performance. We posit that equivocal results regarding PM effectiveness may stem from the fact that PM effect on employees’ behavior should be considered in combination with other individual and organizational resources. In this sense, we aim to contribute to the literature by showing that PM can foster job performance in two alternative ways: 1) by directly influencing in- and extra-role job performance and 2) by enhancing the positive effects of other organizational (i.e., recognition) and individual resources (i.e., psychological well-being) on the performance of these roles. In doing so, this study attempts to contribute to the JD-R model by examining the role of organizational and individual resources, and their interaction, in helping employees achieve their work goals. Our reasoning highlights the need for organizations to identify the right resources to supply their teams. To achieve these objectives, this study is based on a sample of 251 employees from 18 organizations in the province of Québec, Canada.

### *1.1 Job Performance (In- and Extra-role)*

Individual job performance has been, and continues to be, the subject of numerous studies (Carpini et al., 2017). This is not surprising considering that it is probably the most important aspect of an employee’s responsibilities toward an employer (Jackson & Frame, 2018). Job performance can comprise in- and extra-role behaviors (Katz, 1964; Williams & Anderson, 1991). In-role job performance refers to the duties and responsibilities involved in the completion of an employee’s tasks (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). In other words, in-role job performance corresponds to meeting performance standards (Katz, 1978), and it is formally recognized as part of the job (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). However, job performance is not always limited to what is prescribed and formally expected. Job performance may also encompass behaviors that are not necessarily task-related and that may still be positive for colleagues and organizations (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). These behaviors are often referred to as organizational citizenship behaviors or extra-role job performance and correspond to individual behavior that is discretionary and not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system that promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). Assisting coworkers with job-related matters, putting forth extra effort on the job, spreading goodwill, making constructive suggestions, developing oneself, and being altruistic, conscientious, and courteous are good examples (Organ, 1988). In the present study, we focus on in-role job performance as well as extra-role job performance directed toward individuals, such as helping others who have been absent and taking a personal interest in other employees (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Given the current context linked to the pandemic with a significant proportion of employees working outside the organization, we did not consider extra-role performance directed at the organization, which includes, for instance, giving advance notice when unable to come to work (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

### *1.2 Theoretical Model*

The theoretical model of this study is based on the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) and conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). First, the JD-R model predicts that resources have a motivational potential, leading to a higher job performance level. Job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are, among others, functional in achieving work goals (Demerouti et al., 2001). According to the Individual, Group, Leader, and Organization (IGLO) model, resources may be located at different levels (e.g., individual, or organizational; Nielsen et al., 2017). This paper posits that PM can be considered as an organizational resource that facilitates employees’ goal achievement at work.

#### *1.2.1 The Roles of PM as Organizational Resources*

Assessing employees’ job performance (i.e., performance appraisal [PA]) has long been of interest to scholars and practitioners (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). PA refers to a formal event, which occurs sporadically, by which employees are evaluated (e.g., a formal rating assessment) according to a given set of dimensions that serve as a basis for certain decisions (e.g., promotion and rewards; (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Initial research on PA has

been mainly concern about 1) accuracy in ratings (e.g., scales' psychometric properties, rating formats) and 2) raters' competencies and motivations (e.g., bias and leniency of raters) (Pulakos, Mueller-Hanson, et al., 2019). Recently, research efforts have focused more on the process aimed at managing employees' performance (i.e., performance management) (Sharma et al., 2016) and its impacts. Performance management includes, but is not limited to, performance appraisal and refers to "a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization" (Aguinis, 2013). Performance management comprises various formal and informal activities, such as goal setting, appraisals, developmental feedback, as well as training and development (Ang et al., 2013; Arthur et al., 2016; DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). However, the impact of PM on individual performance remains unclear and criticized. If some research has shown positive effect of PM on employees (Van Thielen et al., 2018), others have advocated that those systems affect employees negatively or has no impact on individual performance (Pulakos & O'Leary, 2011). Some practitioners and scholars have also argued that a more traditional approach focusing on performance appraisal is unfit for the new organizational realities and is demotivating for employees (Cappelli & Conyon, 2018; Pulakos, Kantrowitz, et al., 2019). Nevertheless, along with other authors (Gnepp et al., 2020; Kubiak, 2020), we assume that it might not be the case with an approach to performance management that encompass activities promoting both employees' accountability and development (e.g., continuous feedback, employees support and coaching, and a participative approach to goal setting) (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016). Indeed, by simplifying the process and emphasizing on value-added activities (e.g., continuous feedback, coaching) (Pulakos, Mueller-Hanson, et al., 2019), PM might represent an important organizational resource that help and support employees' attainment at work.

Therefore, following the JD-R model, we considered PM as organizational resources that could be associated with a higher level of in- and extra-role performance. Consequently, the following hypotheses were postulated:

H1a. PM is directly associated with in-role job performance.

H1b. PM is directly associated with extra-role job performance.

### 1.2.2 The Moderating Role of PM

In this study, we argue that PM, as organizational resources, play a moderating role on the relationship between recognition and job performance and on the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. According to Conservation of resources (COR) theory, individuals strive to retain, protect, and build resources, and what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Environmental circumstances often threaten or cause the depletion of employees' resources, leading to stress (Hobfoll, 1989). In contrast, Hobfoll (1989) stated that a gain of resources could lead to "eustress." "Eustress" is a positive form of stress after which a person's adaptive capacity increases (Kupriyanov & Zhdanov, 2014). In other words, having an abundance of resources creates a "reservoir" (employees may employ other resources to offset the net loss) and is a predictor of employees' good functioning (Hobfoll, 1989).

In this study, we argue that PM can increase the effect of recognition on employees' job performance by creating additional organizational resources that optimize and orient the impact of recognition on employees' behavior. Recognition is a non-financial compensation that refers to the esteem and respect obtained from significant others at work (e.g., colleagues or supervisors) and appreciation obtained related to achievement at work (e.g., positive recognition; Siegrist et al., 2016). Despite the growing need for recognition expressed by employees, this organizational resource has been overlooked in the literature (Brun & Dugas, 2008; Montani et al., 2020). Thus far, most research on recognition has focused on managerial-based recognition and its impact on in-role behaviors, neglecting other sources of recognition at work and other behavioral outcomes such as extra-role job performance (Montani et al., 2020). Even though PM encompassed some forms of informal managerial recognition (e.g., via informal and developmental feedback), we attempt to examine the modulating or structuring effect of its activities on the relationship between recognition and employees' job performance. More specifically, we assert that in an organizational context where a PM approach is taken, recognition received by employees from managers and colleagues is continuous and more aligned with organizational goals and values, which reinforces the link between this resource and employees in- and extra-role job performance.

Following the same line of argument, employees' psychological well-being, as an individual resource essential for good functioning at work, is likely to contribute even more to employees' performance when PM is put in place. Psychological well-being refers to optimal experience and functioning, which encompasses a positive mood, vitality, general interests, and a state of happiness or general life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Accordingly, we consider that psychological well-being is an individual resource (an individual and self-adaptive state of mind) that allows employees to meet formal job requirements and beyond (e.g., extra-role behaviors).

Thus, psychological well-being is a psychological aspect of the individual and not necessarily an aspect of the job, even if it can be enhanced or reduced by certain work organization conditions (Parent-Lamarche & Marchand, 2019), which improve good functioning. We posit that PM can contribute to orienting the resources created by the state of well-being toward behaviors that are valued by the organization and therefore, reinforcing the link between the employees' psychological well-being and in- and extra-role performance. We were unable to identify any studies that specifically examined the moderating role of PM in the relationship between recognition and employees' job performance or in the relationship between psychological well-being and employees' job performance.

Until now, researchers have mainly focused on identifying PM practices and their outcomes (see Schleicher et al., 2019 for a detailed review). Very few studies have considered the presence of PM as a contextual factor that can leverage and optimize employees' resources at work. That said, we were able to locate a study that showed that a performance management system (PMS) moderates the relationship between talent management and organizational performance (Almohtaseb et al., 2020). Another study found that a performance management system has a moderating influence between a firm's strategy and ethical and discretionary behaviors, thus demonstrating its contingent effect (Galbreath et al., 2020). Thus, we anticipate that performance management, as an organizational resource, makes it possible to accentuate the effects of recognition and psychological well-being, which are also resources from which employees can benefit in their "reservoir." Consequently, four additional hypotheses were postulated:

H2a. PM plays a moderating role between recognition and in-role job performance.

H2b. PM plays a moderating role between recognition and extra-role job performance.

H3a. PM plays a moderating role between psychological well-being and in-role job performance.

H3b. PM plays a moderating role between psychological well-being and extra-role job performance.

The complete hypothetical model is illustrated in Figure 1.

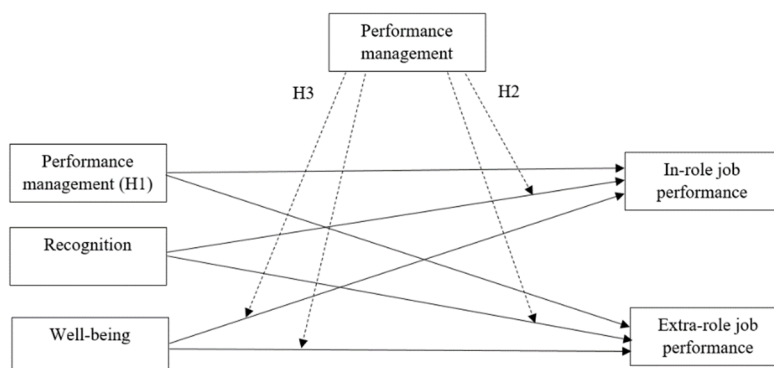


Figure 1. Hypothetical Model

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Procedures and Participants

The data were collected from June 1, 2020, to June 5, 2021. The final sample included 251 Canadian employees from 18 organizations. The public affairs department of the [Blinded for review] helped us to contact these organizations. Once in contact, we met with HR managers and company executives to explain the implications and objectives of the study. Participation in the study allowed organizations to receive a source of feedback in the form of a personalized profile ("HR Profile") of their employees' viewpoint regarding several organizational aspects (e.g., PM practices). The goal was to guide the organizations to adapt and readjust their practices (if needed) to be better aligned with the needs and perceptions of their employees. The study followed the strictest ethical rules for research, with the respect and agreement of all participants in the study. As a result, participants read the necessary instructions regarding confidentiality and signed an informed consent form before completing the questionnaire (hardcopy and online versions were available). Employees had a chance to win a \$50 gift card, but no other form of financial reward was granted. The 18 organizations in this study were from the secondary (n = 6) and tertiary (n = 12) economic activity sectors, and 22.22% (4/18) were unionized. The average size of the organizations was 26.83 employees. For each organization, all employees were eligible to fill out a questionnaire

(final response rate: 74.63%). The final sample was 50.20% female, with a mean age of 41.30 years.

## 2.2 Measures

### 2.2.1 Job Performance

The scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) was used to measure in-role performance with a scale that comprised four items (e.g., “I meet the formal performance requirements of my position”;  $\alpha = 0.92$ ) and extra-role performance with a scale that comprised four items (e.g., “I take the time to listen to the problems and concerns of my colleagues”;  $\alpha = 0.72$ ). Each item was scored on a 7-point Likert scale (“Do not agree at all”/“Very strongly agree”). In-role performance and extra-role job performance were treated as continuous variables, with a higher score indicating a higher level of job performance.

### 2.2.2 Performance Management

A scale was developed to measure PM with six items ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ). Items were developed in order to measure PM as an ongoing process (e.g. “I receive formal performance appraisals or evaluation on a routine basis”) including individual accountability (e.g. “My performance appraisal includes management by objective with a mutual goal setting?”) and development (e.g., “My performance appraisals include developmental feedback”). Each item was scored on a 7-point Likert scale (“Strongly disagree”/“Strongly agree”). Consult Parent-Lamarche et al. (2023) for the complete list of items as well as the results of the validation of this measurement scale. PM was treated as a continuous variable, with a higher score indicating a higher level of PM practices deployed in the organization, according to employees’ perceptions.

### 2.2.3 Recognition

The Effort-Reward Imbalance Questionnaire (ERI) was used to measure recognition with a scale that comprised six items (e.g., “Considering all my efforts and achievements, I receive the respect and prestige I deserve at work”;  $\alpha = 0.84$ ). Each item was scored on a 4-point Likert scale (“Strongly disagree”/“Strongly agree”). Recognition was treated as a continuous variable, with a higher score indicating a higher level of recognition.

### 2.2.4 Well-being

The World Health Organization (WHO) Well-Being Index (WHO-5) was employed to measure psychological well-being (Heun et al., 2001; Topp et al., 2015) with a scale that comprised five items (e.g., “My daily life has been filled with things that interest me”;  $\alpha = 0.84$ ). Each item was scored on a 6-point Likert scale (“At no time”/“All the time”). Psychological well-being was treated as a continuous variable, with a higher score indicating a higher level of psychological well-being.

### 2.2.5 Control Variables

Previous studies have pinpointed variables associated with job performance. These variables are gender and age (Ng & Feldman, 2008; Roth et al., 2012), educational level (Ng & Feldman, 2009), marital and parental status (Deeb et al., 2020; Morgan et al., 2021), teleworking (Groen et al., 2018; Parent-Lamarche, 2022; Parent-Lamarche & Boulet, 2021), stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic (Parent-Lamarche & Boulet, 2021), workload (Bruggen, 2015; Johari et al., 2018; Parent-Lamarche & Boulet, 2021), job insecurity (Parent-Lamarche et al., 2021; Schumacher et al., 2021; van Vuuren et al., 2019), and skill utilization and decision authority (Parent-Lamarche et al., 2021). To fully grasp the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables, we controlled for these variables in the statistical analysis. Data collection for this study took place during the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, we controlled for stress related to COVID-19 as well as teleworking. Several workers had to perform mandatory telework during this period, given the health restrictions in place. Gender was coded as either 0 (=male) or 1 (=female). Age was coded in number of years. Marital status was coded as 0 (=single) or 1 (=living as a couple). Parental status was coded as 0 (=No) or 1 (=Minor children [under 18 years of age] living with the respondent). Teleworking was measured with a single item (i.e., “Which statement best describes how you perform your work during the COVID-19 crisis?”), which was coded either as 0 (“I go to my usual place of work”) or 1 (“I work from home”). Stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic was measured with a single item (i.e., “How has the COVID-19 crisis affected your stress level?”) and was coded as 0 (=The COVID-19 crisis decreased my stress level or did not change my stress level) or 1 (=The COVID-19 crisis increased my stress level). The Effort-Reward Imbalance Questionnaire (Siegrist, 1996) was used to measure workload with five items (e.g., “I have a lot of responsibility in my job”;  $\alpha = 0.79$ ) and job insecurity (e.g., “My employment security is poor”;  $\alpha = 0.74$ ) The Job Content Questionnaire (Karasek, 1985) was used to assess decision authority with three items (e.g., “I have a lot to say about what happens on my job”;  $\alpha = 0.78$ ) and skill utilization with six items (e.g., “My job requires a high level of skill”;  $\alpha = 0.74$ ).

2.3 Data Analysis

Multilevel regression analysis was executed with Stata 16 software. The data were processed according to their hierarchical structure (i.e., 251 employees nested in 18 organizations). Note that missing data has been handled with listwise deletion. Performance management, recognition, psychological well-being, and control variables were introduced in two different initial models to determine their specific contribution to in- and extra-role job performance (in-role performance and extra-role performance were considered different outcomes in the analyses). Before the analyses were conducted, continuous predictors (including independent and moderating variables) were centered on the mean. That is, the mean was subtracted from each variable to obtain a mean of zero and reduce multicollinearity (Aiken et al., 1991; Dawson, 2014). After this adjustment, both interaction variables were separately introduced (i.e., one at a time in two distinct models) with the additional variables (i.e., PM, recognition, psychological well-being, and control variables) included in each analysis. These interaction variables refer to 1) recognition combined with PM and 2) well-being combined with PM. Note that the same was tested for both outcomes (i.e., in- and extra-role job performance). The significance threshold used for the interactions was  $p \leq .025$  after Bonferroni’s correction. To reject the null hypothesis, a two-tailed probability established at  $p \leq .05$  was used. This allows determination of the significance level of the combined variables as well as that of each individual regression coefficient. The random coefficients were examined based on halved p values (Aiken et al., 1991).

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics (mean/proportion, standard deviation) and correlations for the main variables of the study.

Table 1. Descriptive and correlational statistics

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	
1.	25.18	2.38	1																
2.	23.50	3.56	.38**	1															
3.	25.10	9.36	.09	.16*	1														
4.	16.54	4.28	.26**	.14*	.11	1													
5.	16.65	2.57	.33**	.22**	.39**	.22**	1												
6.	11.93	3.04	.02	.18**	-.07	-.19**	-.17**	1											
7.	3.06	1.21	-.22**	-.10	-.19**	-.19**	-.39**	.19**	1										
8.	17.99	2.90	.14*	.23**	.17**	-.03	.29**	.21**	-.10	1									
9.	9.33	1.73	.28**	.19**	.18**	.13*	.40**	.06	-.23	.48**	1								
10.	41.30	12.65	.01	.01	-.12	.25**	-.11	-.04	-.09	-.13*	.03	1							
11.	0.50	-	.09	.11	.18**	-.10	.16**	.08	-.10	.07	.11	-.15*	1						
12.	0.75	-	.02	.06	-.01	.16*	.08	.02	-.03	.01	.02	.11	.11	1					
13.	0.44	-	.10	.07	-.01	.05	.01	.09	.03	.19**	.09	-.03	.14*	.23**	1				
14.	5.20	1.96	-.10	.01	.10	-.05	.02	.01	.01	.18**	.09	-.19**	.11	.07	-.05	1			
15.	0.55	-	-.01	.05	.01	-.35**	.02	.13*	.13*	.15*	-.02	-.13*	.26**	.02	.03	.11	1		
16.	0.61	-	.03	.01	.15*	-.04	.15*	.08	-.05	.26**	.12*	-.20**	.33**	-.01	.08	.19**	.14*	1	

Notes. a: \* $p \leq 0.05$  (coefficients  $\geq 0.05$ ); \*\* $p \leq 0.01$  (coefficients  $\geq 0.05$ ).

b: M = Mean or proportion; SD = Standard deviation.

c: 1. = In-role performance; 2. = Extra-role performance; 3. = Performance management; 4. = Well-being; 5. = Recognition; 6. = Workload; 7. = Job insecurity; 8. = Skill utilization; 9. = Decision authority; 10. = Age; 11. = Gender; 12. = Marital status; 13. = Parental status; 14. = Educational level; 15. = Stress related to COVID-19; 16. = Teleworking.

3.2 Multilevel Regression Analysis

3.2.1 In-role Job Performance Results

Model 1 presented in Table 2 shows that in-role job performance does not vary significantly between organizations ( $\sigma\mu^2 = 0.074$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), but does vary between employees ( $\sigma\epsilon^2 = 5.582$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Model 2 presents the main effects of PM, recognition, and psychological well-being on in-role job performance.

Table 2. Main effects of performance management, well-being, and work organization conditions on job performance

	In-role performance		Extra-role performance	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<b>Fixed part</b>				
Constant	25.194**	24.132**	23.467**	17.740**
<b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT RECOGNITION</b>				
Performance management		-0.015		0.032
Recognition		0.201**		0.178
<b>WELL-BEING CONTROL VARIABLES</b>				
Well-being		0.133**		0.124*
Workload		0.068		0.233**
Job insecurity		-0.200		-0.047
Skill utilization		-0.016		0.170
Decision authority		0.212*		0.032
Age		-0.008		-0.002
Gender		0.203		0.378
Marital status		-0.322		0.024
Parental status		0.358		0.166
Educational level		-0.130		-0.038
Stress related to COVID-19		0.408		0.392
Teleworking		-0.139		-0.795
<b>INTERACTIONS</b>				
<b>Random part</b>				
$\sigma^2$ (organizations)	0.074	0.000	1.000**	0.392
$\sigma^2$ (employees)	5.582**	4.455**	11.744**	10.434**
<b>Fit</b>				
$\chi^2$	—	67.80	—	39.25
Df	—	(14)**	—	(14)**

Notes. a: \* $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* $p \leq .01$

b: The following variables were controlled for in Model 2: workload, job insecurity, skill utilization, decision authority, age, gender, marital status, parental status, educational level, stress related to COVID-19 pandemic, teleworking. (Unstandardized coefficients).

The results indicate that a significant variation in the level of in-role job performance does not vary significantly across workplaces/companies ( $\sigma\mu^2 = 0.000$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), but does across employees ( $\sigma\epsilon^2 = 4.455$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In addition, even if no specific hypothesis was formulated in this regard, the results indicate that recognition and psychological well-being are positively associated with in-role job performance. Finally, fit indices ( $\chi^2 = 67.80$ ;  $Df = 14$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) showed that the model met the recommended criteria (Snijders & Bosker, 2011).

### 3.2.2 Extra-role Job Performance Results

Model 1 presented in Table 2 shows that extra-role job performance varies significantly between organizations ( $\sigma\mu^2 = 1.000$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as between employees ( $\sigma\epsilon^2 = 11.744$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Model 2 presents the main effects of PM, recognition, and psychological well-being on extra-role job performance. (See Table 2.)

The results indicate a significant variation in the level of psychological distress across individuals/employees ( $\sigma\epsilon^2 = 10.434$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and but not across organizations ( $\sigma\mu^2 = 0.392$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Psychological well-being is positively associated with extra-role job performance. Last, fit indices ( $\chi^2 = 39.25$ ;  $Df = 14$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) showed that the model met the recommended criteria (Snijders & Bosker, 2011).

## 3.3 Interaction Analysis

### 3.3.1 In-role Job Performance Results

After a Bonferroni correction ( $p \leq 0.025$ ) was applied to both interaction tests, PM seemed to interact with

recognition ( $\chi^2 = 75.49$ ;  $Df = 15$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and well-being ( $\chi^2 = 74.88$ ;  $Df = 15$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) in explaining employees' level of in-role job performance. As shown in Figure 2, PM ( $\beta = 0.014$ ;  $p \leq 0.025$ ) plays a moderating role between recognition and in-role performance. When the recognition level is high, PM seems to increase in-role performance. Inversely, when recognition is low, inadequate performance management seems to decrease in-role performance. Figures were plotted using a pre-programmed template showing high and low values of the X, and high and low values of Z corresponding to one standard deviation above and below the mean (Dawson, 2014). Note that interactions' results are presented in the text because they were tested in models after those used to verify the direct effects of the variables under study (also see explanation in "Data Analysis" section). To avoid confusion, we present these results in the text only.

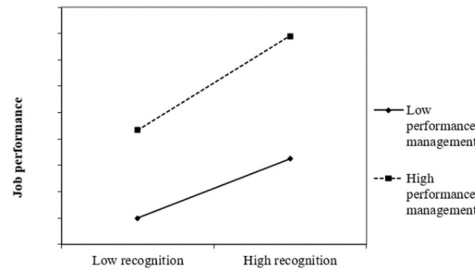


Figure 2. Interaction between performance management and recognition on in-role performance

In addition, and as shown in Figure 3, PM ( $\beta = 0.008$ ;  $p \leq 0.025$ ) plays a moderating role between well-being and in-role job performance. When the well-being level is high, PM seems to increase in-role performance. Inversely, when well-being is low, inadequate PM seems to decrease in-role performance.

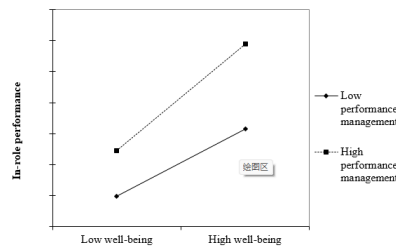


Figure 3. Interaction between performance management and psychological well-being on in-role performance

### 3.3.2 Extra-role Job Performance Results

After a Bonferroni correction ( $p \leq 0.025$ ) was applied to both interaction tests, PM seemed to interact only with well-being ( $\chi^2 = 47.44$ ;  $Df = 15$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) in explaining employees' level of extra-role job performance. As shown in Figure 4, PM ( $\beta = 0.012$ ;  $p \leq 0.025$ ) plays a moderating role between well-being and extra-role performance. When the well-being level is high, PM seems to increase in-role performance. Inversely, when well-being is low, inadequate PM seems to decrease in-role performance.

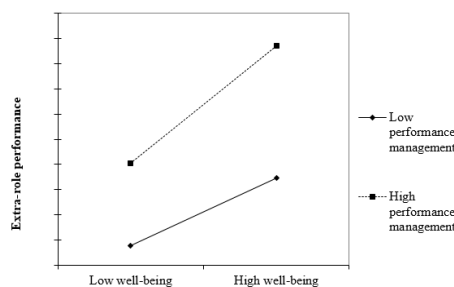


Figure 4. Interaction between performance management and psychological well-being on extra-role performance

## 4. Discussion

This multilevel cross-sectional study aimed to examine the direct effects PM on employees' job performance, as well as the moderating role of PM in the relationship between recognition and employees' job performance and



in the relationship between psychological well-being and employees' job performance. The hypotheses were tested on a sample of 251 Canadian employees from 18 organizations.

The first pair of hypotheses (H1a and H1b), which postulated that PM is directly associated with in-role and extra-role job performance, were not supported. We found that PM is not significantly associated with in- and extra-role job performance. These results are not consistent with the JD-R model and previous empirical studies (Van Waeyenberg et al., 2020; Verbeeten, 2008). We expected PM to be an important organizational resource that fosters employees' job performance. This unexpected result may suggest that the effect of PM is indirect and probably involves underlying motivational mechanisms. Furthermore, it is true that the effectiveness of performance management systems has been, and continues to be, the subject of debate (Pulakos, Kantrowitz, et al., 2019; Schleicher et al., 2019).

The second pair of hypotheses (H2a and H2b) postulated that performance management plays a moderating role on the relationship between recognition and in- and extra-role job performance. H2a was supported, but H2b was not. Specifically, we found that PM plays a moderating role in the relationship between recognition and in-role job performance but does not play a significant role in the relationship between recognition and extra-role job performance. Although the moderating role of performance management in the relationship between recognition and employees' job performance was not a subject of previous studies, we anticipated that it would play such a role. The confirmation of H2a is in accordance with COR theory, which postulates that having an abundance of resources is a predictor of employees' good functioning at work (Hobfoll, 1989). In this study, performance management was an additional organizational resource that increased the effect of other organizational resources such as recognition on "employees' in-role job performance. Specifically, we anticipated that PM could enhance the effect of recognition on in-role employees' job performance by orienting managers' and colleagues' recognition toward task-related behaviors that are formally valued and reinforced by the organization. The present results confirm this line of thought by showing that PM is resourceful to employees by orienting recognition at work, and making it clearer to employees what behaviors are valued by their organization. However, the rejection of H2b might be explained by the fact that behaviors that are not necessarily task-related are not directly or explicitly recognized (Organ, 1988). On the contrary, formal task-related behaviors and explicit responsibilities are more easily recognizable (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). Recognition often refers to appreciation related to achievement (Siegrist et al., 2016). We assume that achievement must be obvious and formal to be recognized. Even if we did not formulate a specific hypothesis in this regard, we found no direct association between recognition and extra-role job performance, which we argue is because formal task-related behaviors and explicit responsibilities are more easily recognizable than discretionary behaviors. This result can also reflect a reality where PM in the organizations surveyed are neglecting voluntary efforts that go beyond job expectations, which also translated in the recognition practices. Therefore, the present results showed that PM combined with recognition is not powerful enough to be associated with extra-role job performance. In any case, these results seem to indicate that recognition programs should be extended to include extra-role job performance as well. Discretionary behaviors are still positive for colleagues and organizations and should be formally recognized as such.

The third pair of hypotheses (H3a and H3b) postulated that performance management moderates the association between psychological well-being and in- and extra-role job performance. H3a and H3b were supported. We observed that PM significantly moderates the relationship between well-being and in-role job performance and between well-being and extra-role job performance. Therefore, and in coherence with what was anticipated, employees' psychological well-being, an individual resource, and a self-adaptive state of mind, contributes even more to employees' performance when PM is in place. In other words, PM can be seen resourceful to employees by aligning with and optimizing the positive effect of employees' well-being on in- and extra-role performance. We were unable to identify any studies that specifically examined the moderating role of performance management on the relationship between psychological well-being and employees' job performance to support the present results. That said, the results are in accordance with COR theory and confirm that PM, an organizational resource, increases the effect that psychological well-being has on in-role job performance and extra-role job performance.

In sum, we found that performance management accentuates the positive effects of recognition and psychological well-being on job performance but does not directly influence employees' job performance. These results shed some light on criticism and mixed results regarding PM effectiveness (Sheilds et al., 2023; Schleicher et al., 2018) by showing that PM alone can probably not explain employees' performance but must be considered in combination with other resources. Consequently, our results extend the theoretical models (i.e., JD-R and COR) employed in this study by demonstrating that performance management amplifies the positive

impact of other resources, such as employee psychological well-being and recognition, on job performance. In terms of theoretical contribution, this study advances the JD-R and COR models by providing empirical evidence of the role that performance management plays as a key organizational resource. By demonstrating the interaction between performance management, employee psychological well-being, and recognition, we introduce a new perspective on how organizations can optimize resource deployment to improve job performance. This contributes to a deeper understanding of resource orchestration within the workplace. Considering these results, adopting a PM appears to be an important step for organizations that aspire to make sure that recognition and psychological well-being play their role in employees' job performance at their full potential. In other words, even if performance management does not seem to directly influence job performance on its own, it appears to be resourceful by reinforcing the effect of other resources to boost employees' job performance.

#### *4.1 Practical Implications*

As the results previously discussed indicate, HRM professionals should rethink performance management as an ongoing process involving both individual accountability and development to ensure employees' job performance. To do this, adopting an approach that encompassed activities such as continuous and developmental feedback, employee support and coaching, and participative and flexible approach to goal setting appear to be a good avenue. First, although the results show that PM is not directly related to job performance, organizations should not underestimate their positive impact on employees' motivation and performance. The results reveal PM should be considered by HRM professionals and managers as an organizational tool for orienting and optimizing employees' resources that contribute to good functioning and goal attainment at work. This is especially true in a telework environment, where traditional PM practices can be seen by employees as a tool mainly intended to closely monitor their performance. Second, the results emphasize the need to optimize and broaden recognition practices by encouraging and reinforcing task-related results and voluntary effort, the latter being too often neglected in current recognition programs (Brun & Dugas, 2008; Montani et al., 2020). This also implies that HRM professionals should work to raise managers' and employees' awareness about the importance of recognizing and reinforcing extra effort and job dedication, such as taking initiatives and helping others at work.

#### *4.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research*

The present study has several limitations. First, the common variance bias possibility should be noted, as all variables were collected from the same source. Indeed, the fact that the measurements originated from the same source raises concerns about potential common method bias, which could affect the validity of the findings and introduce systematic errors in the results. That said, we believe that the possibility of bias was low considering the design of the study which involved a diverse sample in terms of organizations ( $n = 18$ ). In fact, the organizations included in the sample were in the secondary and tertiary economic sectors, and only some had unions. Second, another limitation of this cross-sectional study is that it captures data at a single point in time, making it difficult to establish causal relationships between variables. As a result, the findings may reflect correlations rather than cause-and-effect dynamics, limiting the ability to draw comprehensive conclusions about the temporal order of events. Third, employees self-report questionnaires were used to collect the data. Complementing self-reported data with interviews with managers could have limited response bias. Furthermore, interviewing managers could have allowed us to combine their impressions with those of employees with respect to the PM, for example. Fourth, the possibility of selection bias due to the organizations that decided to participate should be recognized. Participating organizations are surely very sensitive to their employees' needs and good employers. The simple fact of voluntarily participating in such a study to receive a personalized "HR Profile" to improve their practices was a sign of goodwill and commitment. Fifth, although we controlled for gender in the statistical analysis, HRM practices could affect men and women differently. Future studies should examine these specific associations with gender. Additionally, future studies should attempt to further investigate the direct and moderating effect of PM on job performance to provide additional evidence of their effectiveness. In doing so, researchers will contribute to bridging the current gap between practice and research as the landscape of performance management has radically changed over the last 10 years. Moreover, considering that PM aims to promote employees' commitment, empowerment, and development, future research should examine the role of these variables in explaining the impact PM has on employees' job performance. More research is also needed to better understand the interaction effects of PM with other organizational and individual resources. In that respect, investigating how PM can enhance the effect of employees' individual resources, such as resilience and tenacity, on job performance could be an interesting avenue of research. Last, it would be pertinent to reproduce the present study with diverse samples in terms of the organization's size and countries, as well as

after the pandemic context.

## 5. Conclusion

This study's objectives were to examine the direct effect of PM on employees' job performance, as well as the moderating effect of PM on the relationship between recognition and job performance, and psychological well-being and job performance. Although new performance management does not directly influence employees' job performance in this study, it interacts with recognition and well-being to accentuate their effects on job performance. Considering the results, performance management does not appear to be the cure for all ills, but still seems to be resourceful to employees. This shows that every cloud has a silver lining. Despite this study's limitations, we wish to contribute to the current debate on the importance and effectiveness of performance management within organizations. The present results extend the literature by illustrating that recent approach to performance management has brought interesting results in terms of employees' motivation and performance, when combined with other organizational and individual resources, such as recognition practices and employees' psychological well-being. Moreover, we suggested specific practical implications of these results for HRM professionals.

**Data availability statement:** The data are not available due to confidentiality.

**Acknowledgments:** The author thanks all the organizations and employees who participated in this study. The author would also like to thank Kim Simard for her invaluable assistance during data collection.

**Ethics approval statement:** The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (protocol code: CER-20-270-08-02.37; date of approval: January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

**Funding statement.** This study was supported by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et Culture under Grant [number 267581], by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council under Grant [number 430-2020-00674], and by the UQTR Junior Research Chair on HRM practices, Well-being, and Performance at Work.

**Declaration of interest statement.** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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