Behavioral Drivers of Performance in Public-Sector Organizations: A Literature Review

Aymen Asif and Kashif Rathore

Abstract
The main purpose of the article is to review performance management in the public sector through internal management of public employees by a micro-level approach to enhance the delivery of services by public-sector organizations. The study systematically analyses all the previous research that impacts public organizations through the behavior of public administrators. It aims to demonstrate that the behavioral aspect of public employees is as important as measurement aspects. The research methodology was based on a comprehensive and traditional literature review established on previous research studies. The literature surveyed in this article consists of peer-reviewed articles and research papers based on highly scientific databases. Thus, research finding uncovered that: leadership capacity along with management behavior toward the employee and integration of commitment-based Human Resource Management practices that build long-term commitment in which employees feel obliged toward their organizations, plays a major role in improving the performance of public-sector organizations, which in turn help in increasing the performance of the government.

Keywords
public sector, performance management, leadership, HRM practices, management behavior

Introduction
Performance improvement in public-sector organizations is a daunting challenge for the governments and public managers alike. Several strategies and techniques have been used. However, comprehensive literature on improving organizational performance through employees’ performance in public sector is rather scant. U.S. personnel department defined performance management as “the systematic process by which an agency involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and goals.” (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2020). However, most literature on performance management system is concerned with measurement models or strategic management models rather than with behavior-oriented models.

Moreover, there is no ambiguity about the broad horizon of performance management system in the public sector. Bouckaert and Halligan (2008) classified performance systems in public sector into three major domains: macro-, meso-, and micro-level domains. Macro-level performance of government deals with country wide or supranational aspects of performance. Meso-level deals with intraorganizational-level performance. Micro level is concerned with performance of individuals in the public-sector organizations.

However, managing performance at micro level, particularly at public employee and organization level, is a least explored arena in public-sector research (Dooren et al., 2015; Pulakos et al., 2019).

Significantly, performance management within a public-sector organization is one of the most important functions with which inefficiencies of employees and systems can be reduced to improve the overall effectiveness of the organization. In fact, not only does the effective management of performance may lead to minimal wastage of resources and increase the overall efficiency of the organization, it may also result in better outcomes in terms of citizen satisfaction with the government (Ma, 2017).

However, managing and improving the performance of a public-sector organization via its employees is a formidable challenge. Several studies have examined performance measurement (e.g., Arnaboldi & Azzone, 2010; Brignall & Modell, 2000; Micheli & Neely, 2010) and outcome-based approaches.
performance management within the public sector (Borgonovi et al., 2017; Heinrich, 2002) with the goal to improve organizational performance by setting standard and predetermined performance indicators for evaluating employees’ performance. Interestingly, though, few research studies have tried to address the effect of internal management on improving individual and organizational performance at micro level and the role of employee behavior as a determinant and regulator of performance. This study focuses on empirical studies that connect aspects of administrator behaviors toward performance such as leadership, management, and HR practices; and how these can act as drivers of performance at organizational level.

Performance management has been an important topic in public administration literature for the last three decades (Osborne, 2016) and improving the performance management system is still one of the most important tasks in a public-sector organization (Arnaboldi et al., 2015). To unravel the intricacies of performance management, research has been conducted in several national contexts (Goh et al., 2015; Ohemeng et al., 2018; Rimkutė et al., 2015). Recent studies focused on gaining an understanding of the issues surrounding the implementation, design, and use of performance management in different types of public organizations and the impact of performance on stakeholders. Although several studies have highlighted the need for organizations to “buy in” performance management and measurement systems if they are to be successful, relatively little literature is available that views performance from the perspective of behaviors of public administrators (BPAs).

Although BPA is emerging as a new area in Public Administration, literature on performance management at a micro behavioral level is scarce in the public sector (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). This article has reviewed the literature that seeks to improve the performance of public-sector employees and their organizations other than from purely a measurement point of view.

This study is intended to further the understanding of public-sector employees’ performance from the perspective of micro-level behavior management practices, that is, through understanding individual behavior processes, team processes and organizational processes. It is assumed that the “managing” aspect of public administrators aids in understanding the dynamics of employee behavior to improve the performance management system of the organization. The link between employee behavior and performance of public-sector organization is clarified by surveying the literature relevant to (a) the behavior, personality, and attitude-toward-work-of-individuals, (b) team processes and involvement, communication, and dynamics, (c) the way in which decisions are made, and (d) leadership behavior and style.

The management of performance is an important topic of public administration. While many studies have demonstrated that improvements in the measurement system will lead to improvements in the performance of a public-sector organization, the results are still mixed (Arnaboldi et al., 2015). The literature mostly discusses performance measurement issues, challenges, indicators, content, or performance management in terms of performance information, goal clarity, and budgeting (e.g., Gao, 2015; Kroll, 2015; Mauro et al., 2016; Pandey, 2015; Pulakos et al., 2019).

However, there is little literature that investigates the internal management practice related with human side of performance, that is, employee and management behavior, leadership behavior, and Human Resource Management (HRM) practices that are helpful for driving individual performance. Therefore, this study attempts to fill in the main lacuna in the literature by investigating the drivers of performance that have to do with behavioral aspect of public administrators and identify what needs to be focused in future research agenda. In other words, this study has looked at determinants of performance in public-sector organizations from the behavioral perspective.

The next section of this article describes the methodology used to select the articles for the study. This is followed by the systematic analysis of the literature. Finally, conclusions are drawn, and suggestions for further research are made. So, the flow of this article is based on the steps of a systematic narrative review (Cooper, 2015; Jesson et al., 2011; Snistveit et al., 2012). This includes designing and planning the research problem, exhaustive searching of the literature, gathering of the data, evaluating the quality of the data, analyzing and synthesizing articles based on themes, and presenting the findings.

**Review Methodology**

The methodology of this article involved collating and reviewing the research carried out on the topic of performance management in the public sector from the internal management perspective. What constituted our research data were conceived from the emergence of the new public management (NPM) approach in public-sector organizations from 1998 to 2019. Although research papers on performance management in the public sector were available from as early as 1986, initial research focused on outcomes of early NPM interventions. As it took some time to fully implement NPM in public-sector organizations and research literature on NPM evaluation to mature, a start date of year 1998 was decided for the current review.

Research data were gathered from three databases: Scopus, ISI Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The main objective was to discover what has been investigated in the arena of performance management of public-sector organizations from behavioral perspectives. Specifically, the methodology adopted for this study involved the following queries: (a) What is the volume and nature of research undertaken on internal management practices as driver of performance in public-sector organizations from 1998 to 2019? (b) Which part of that research was from the employee...
behavioral perspective? (c) Which part of that research was from the leadership and HR perspective? (d) What tools were used to investigate the drivers of performance of employees and organization in public-sector organizations?

Searches of the three databases mentioned earlier were performed using the keywords: “performance management in the public sector,” “public-sector employees’ behavior,” and “performance management and leadership of public organizations.” Only articles written in English were extracted. Journals searched were those covering the subject areas of “human resource management,” “organization behavior,” “management,” “public administration,” and “public management.” All the literature extracted was from the internationally recognized list of Thomson Reuters—now Clarivate, including only peer-reviewed articles. “Grey literature” such as conference proceedings, research theses, government reports, and books were not included.

Figure 1 and Table 1 show how data on internal management practices were systematically gathered and what were the inclusion and the exclusion criteria set to reduce the data. Step 1 consisted of 261 peer-reviewed articles from 21 journals of public administration and management from JCR list gathered from the three databases, that is, Scopus, Google Scholar, and ISI Web of Knowledge, and entered into a spreadsheet. Step 2 filtered duplicate material, and articles with nonrelevant titles were removed from the spreadsheet, leaving behind 140 articles. Step 3 involved further scrutinizing by reading the abstracts of 140 articles to further refine the research relevance. The sudden drop of selected articles at this stage from 140 to 81 was due to exclusion of performance measurement articles which shows that a large body of literature focused on improving performance measurement systems. The remaining 81 articles were then read in detail to check for their relevance and quality in terms of design and methodology. This resulted in final selection of 46 articles for analysis that covered the behavioral and HRM aspects of performance management in public sector.
Moreover, another six articles were dropped at this stage because their conclusions were somewhat fuzzy and not clearly warranted by the evidence produced. Thus, an abstract and keyword search starting from 241 articles ended in final selection of only 40 articles that focused on internal management perspective for improving the performance of public employees and public-sector organizations.

**Findings: Themes of Research on Drivers of Performance in Public Organization**

Effective performance management is not only dependent on technical aspects such as the tools used to gather, measure, and analyze performance data, and a routinized design of performance evaluation. Merely measuring performance on a quarterly or monthly basis and using the information to aid in decision-making by public-sector managers may not be enough. A more dynamic and novel approach is required to cast a real impact on improving both employee and organizational performance in public sector. This could be achieved via an employee’s daily interaction with organizational behavior (OB) and management tools. Gao (2015) stated that better management of performance required a more dynamic view that goes beyond simple direct methods of task performance measurement and resultant performance evaluation tools toward the more “human side” of performance management methods.

The following sections delineate the narrative review of literature which shows that there are certain behavioral factors of managing public employees at a micro level that may improve their performance:

**Leadership and Performance**

Various studies have shown that leadership plays an important role in improving the performance of an organization by finding a positive link between leadership factors and job outcomes such as the “citizenship behavior,” “job performance,” and “creativity.” Leadership motivates individual employees by fulfilling their nonmaterial and psychological needs (Bouckenooghe et al., 2014; Burke et al., 2007; Hassan & Hatmaker, 2014; Zhu et al., 2013). Improving the performance of a public-sector organization can be achieved at the least cost by developing and providing the needed leadership. Therefore, research needs to focus on aspects of administrative leadership which are known to motivate followers/employers to perform their job that in turn drives organizational performance.

Leadership change in public organization, both through leadership development and change in incumbency, affects the performance outcomes at employee and organization level, though internal or external constraints may cause hindrance in effects of leadership to influence employee performance (Boyne & Dahya, 2002; Seidle et al., 2016). Petrovsky (2014) explain the reason of leadership success in some organizations. The study identified leaders’ previous experience and competency among the few factors responsible for differences in performance accompanying leadership change. These factors are brought by the new leaders or better-trained leaders to bear on the situations in need of change through improved performance. New or improved leadership is justified in the eyes of both leaders and followers by a need for improvement in performance.

Nonetheless, top leader’s behavioral quality, which is directly related to organizational performance, may also be a function of basing executive compensation on personal characteristics and past performance of the leader (Meier & O’Toole, 2002). Poor performance record in service delivery is correlated with poor human resource decisions by the leaders. Although poor performance may also be attributed to external circumstance in some situations, the role of political and administrative leadership cannot be overlooked. In many cases, poor performance may have its origin in weak or nonleadership.

Alternatively, performance of government organizations can be improved by leaders fulfilling certain styles and role expectations that are not only appreciated but also motivate employees. For instance, past research suggests that political roles in public leadership may be more influential in bringing...
about organizational performance in public organizations than managerial roles (Bohte & Meier, 2001; Cook, 1998). Public organizations are generally larger than private organizations, and their employees feel comparatively fewer constraints on their behavior. Also, in contrast to private sector, political skills, and astuteness in their use are generally viewed positively and useful in creating public value. Thus, a politically savvy leader may be more important for improving organizational performance by enhancing leadership influence in public organizations than a leader who focuses only on managerial control (Hartley et al., 2019).

Research on public-sector management in times of changing role requirements and expectations from government shows that providing ethical, participative, and transformative leadership is a good way of improving individual task achievement as well as extra-role performance (S. Park et al., 2015; Potipiroon & Faerman, 2016) than a more authoritative, passive, submissive leadership style such as transactional leadership or servant leadership. According to Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010), transformational leadership in the public sector is not only useful in harnessing public service motivation (PSM) but also drives both individual and organizational performance. However, the direct relationship between these parameters may not always be clear due to changing role of government and new expectations from public leadership.

Some literature suggests that the style of leadership does not only influence the behavior of public-sector employees but also has the potential to boost the capacity of management as well. For example, Andrews and Boyne (2010) showed that leadership has the potential to influence financial, technological, and HR capacity in organizations if it provides the direction and support needed to accomplish the missing skills. However, literature is yet inconclusive in showing what kind of leadership style and attributes work best to generally improve capacity building in public organizations, or what other factors in an organization’s context (such as organizational politics and culture) influence capacity building.

Two key variables that have a positive influence on the relationship between leadership and performance are the level of trust that employees have in their organization and their supervisors (Cho & Lee, 2012; S. Park et al., 2015), and organizational justice (Potipiroon & Faerman, 2016). Conversely, negative perception of organizational politics has a suppressive influence on leadership–performance relationship (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Although ethical leadership was found to have a strong, positive association with organizational performance because it helps improve job satisfaction (Avey et al., 2012) and employees’ commitment to the organization (Hassan et al., 2014; Khaltar & Moon, 2019). The mediating roles of attitude toward job and organizational commitment linking various forms of leadership and organizational performance have found less support in public-sector research. However, the relationship between ethical leadership and performance in public organizations that have a general culture of corruption remains unexplored. In other words, the question whether ethical leaders improve performance of their subordinates by reducing the unethical behaviors remains unanswered.

Similarly, Fernandez et al., (2010) found that “integrative leadership” (which is based on the five leader orientations, namely: task orientation; relationship orientation; change orientation; diversity orientation; and integrity orientation), had a positive effect on the performance of employees in federal-level organizations. However, this impact was weak, which suggests that other factors may also be intervening between leadership and performance relationship. This latter suggestion is reinforced by the findings of Bellé (2013) showing that good leadership alone was not enough to improve performance; other factors such as job design may also be needed by good leadership to improve performance.

The literature suggests that transformational leadership has a large, positive effect on the performance of employees’ and public organizations under conditions of ambiguity and uncertainty during reform (Moynihan et al., 2011; Paarlberg & Lavigna, 2010; Purvanova et al., 2006; Wright et al., 2011). Moreover, “Empowering leadership” as a closely related concept has been shown to strongly influence the work behavior and performance of employees (Amunds et al., 2015; M. Kim et al., 2018; J. Park & Hassan, 2018). Although the role of leadership in empowering public employees has not yet been fully studied, some studies have suggested that positive intervention by managers symbolizing delegation of authority and display of trust in followers improves the work attitude of employees (Amunds & Martinsen, 2015; Hassan et al., 2019; M. Kim et al., 2018). However, how leaders exert influence through various empowerment practices to improve the job-related attitudes of employees and their job performance remains unexplored.

Overall, literature suggests that leadership has important role to play in driving employee and organizational performance in the public sector. Thus, public organizations should focus on developing transformational, ethical, and empowering leadership styles and a contingency approach toward leadership for boosting performance of public-sector employees and organizations. Research needs to focus on the processes that may lead various forms of leadership to performance in varied and dynamic environment of contemporary public sector.

**Management Behavior and Performance**

Performance management in public-sector organization is not about just developing sophisticated measurement tools, gathering performance data, and then decision-making by both executives and politicians based on performance data analysis. Performance can be managed more directly and on a more regular basis by managing the behavior of employees. Moynihan and Pandey (2005) stated that a modern administrative state carefully nurtures a healthy relationship between management and employee performance. Research
studies have attempted to find the relationship between the management of public employees’ behavior and their subsequent performance. Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2016) stated that there is a link between the performance of a public-sector organization and the degree to which its managers are willing to psychologically empower employees and encourage them to innovate and take risks. The study also concluded that the degree of success or failure of the organization in turn affects the predilection of managers toward empowerment and decentralization.

Literature suggests that managers of public-sector organizations empower their employees, foster entrepreneurial behavior, and encourage innovation when they believe that the organization performance is poor, or is not meeting high performance targets (Meier et al., 2015; Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2016; Nielsen, 2013; Salge, 2010). Public manager’s inability to recognize poor performance may be one of the reasons for status quo and rigidity in public-sector organizations. Thus, creating a competitive and risk-taking work environment within a public-sector organization, where managers keep themselves updated about new ways of performing, is crucial for motivating public managers to perform (Bowen & Lawler, 2006; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011, 2013, 2015; Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003).

Another stream of literature focuses on how empowering practices may lead to success in public-sector organizations. Several research studies have shown that when employees are empowered, they become more innovative, efficient, and responsive (Bowen & Lawler, 2006; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011; Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003). The practice of empowering employees in government organizations gained momentum during the era of NPM in developed countries (Pollitt, 1990). The primary reason for increasing the autonomy of employees was the intense pressure on government to increase the efficiency of its organizations without increasing costs, and the only way to do this was to increase the involvement and autonomy of employees (Bowen & Lawler, 2006; Gao, 2015).

Empirical evidence from this stream of literature has indicated that the performance of government employees can be increased by adopting empowerment practices (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011). Performance of public-sector employees has been linked with high levels of job involvement (Coye & Belohlav, 1995; Qi & Wang, 2016); job satisfaction and commitment (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015); and innovative behavior (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013).

Moreover, research in public sector has identified two main dimensions of government employees' empowerment: psychological and managerial (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2012). Psychological dimension is defined as administrators’ feeling of deep inherent work motivation to perform, while managerial empowerment deals with how managers in authoritative position shares their authority and power with their subordinates for performing the task. Recent empirical research studies have investigated the impact of empowerment practice in public-sector organizations along four directions: does empowerment improve performance in public-sector organizations? (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011); what is its relationship with employee’s job-related attitudes, both directly and indirectly? (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013); does it encourage employees to innovate in their work to improve the efficiency and speed of service delivery? (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2012); and how does the organizational culture of an organization moderate the relationship between empowerment and performance? (Cho & Faerman, 2010).

Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2013) and Cho et al. (2012) showed that empowerment of employees has indirect effects upon job attitudes such as innovativeness and job satisfaction and also upon employee dispositional characteristics, including trust, self-esteem, and affective commitment, all of which in turn have a positive influence on employee performance. Fernandez and Moldogaziev, (2013) found that empowerment practices which encompass skill-based knowledge about jobs, and granting discretion to change work processes, independently affect performance as well as innovative behavior.

Similarly, Cho and Faerman (2010) investigated the effect of empowerment practice on individual performance with the mediating effect of organizational culture. They found an empirical link between collectivistic culture (in which employees’ experience team-based rewards, cooperative behavior and shared objectives) positively associated with the “extra-role” performance of employees. While, opposite was true of an individualistic culture where employee performance attitude positively correlated with personal development, competitive behavior, and an individually based compensation system.

Likewise, the way in which managers perform their duties has a significant impact on subordinates. West and Berman (2011) maintain that good managerial work habits, such as commitment to work, striving for high productivity, and civility toward employees, will improve the performance of an organization through a motivated and effective workforce. Conversely, inept management practices such as passivity in making decisions, judgemental or abusive attitude toward employees, and tardiness will adversely affect the performance of employees. In other words, management behavior can have an impact on the performance of employees and organization, and properly addressing employee performance issues will require good management behavior.

Research into the relationship between the managerial predilection toward decentralization of decision-making, participation, and performance of public employees has produced contradictory results (Boyne, 2003; Boyne & Chen, 2006). Pollitt (2005) stated that such contradictory results have arisen because of not having a fixed definition of performance and due to challenging measurement systems. Pollitt (2005) and Aubert and Bourdeau (2012) investigated three types of decentralization practices at departmental
level: HR, financials, and administrative. They empirically concluded that these practices led to increased employee participation and departmental performance in government sector. Involvement of public-sector managers in budgetary decisions has also been shown to increase not only their performance but also commitment to their jobs (Nor Yahya et al., 2008).

It can be argued that the performance of a public-sector organization can be improved by BPA without increasing the financial cost of government. To date, various elements of OB such as group dynamics, informal and horizontal communications, dynamics of informal social networks, and role of organizational politics have been investigated in the public-sector organizations. BPA research has aided in understanding and improving the performance of employees and their organization. Even though the previous literature has been somewhat fragmented, it does show that behavioral management tools can be used along side performance measurement tools to enhance public-sector organizations’ performance.

**HRM Practices and Performance**

HRM practices are known to influence employees’ behavior in public organizations (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). For instance, HRM practices aimed at building high involvement and commitment of employee shape the development of psychological links between administrative behavior and organizational mission and goals (Arthur, 1994). Such commitment-based HRM practices build long-term commitment in which employees feel obliged toward their organizations. This in turn nurtures a culture of mutual support and reciprocity between employees and organization and act as driver of employee performance (DeGeest et al., 2015). Several other studies have shown that commitment-based HRM practices have a positive impact on individual as well as organizational performance (Boon & Kalshoven, 2014; Haines & St-Onge, 2012), in-role and extra-role behaviors (Uen et al., 2009) and turnover (Allen et al., 2013).

However, despite the finding that commitment-based HRM practices are making difference in behaviors geared toward performance improvement of public sector organizations (PSOs), there is a dearth of comprehensive reviews in this area. Thus, HRM practices which regulate and influence BPA and lower-level employees for leveraging better service delivery need to be further explored and made a focus of future research.

Literature highlights that certain HR practices, more than being just HR measures of good performance appraisal system, are being used that support and drive performance improvement in public-sector organizations (Arnaboldi & Azzone, 2010; Goh, 2012). Compared with a vast body of literature linking performance appraisal and compensation and benefits systems with performance of public-sector employees and PSOs, scant literature is available on employee commitment and motivation-based HRM practices that may make a difference in employee work behaviors. Thus, HRM practices which regulate and influence BPA for leveraging the better service delivery need to be identified and made a focus of future research.

According to J. Kim (2010), effective strategic HRM practices such as career advancement and tailoring autonomy at different levels of organization aid in improving organization performance. Similarly, recruiting, retaining, and placing high-quality and diverse workforce in PSOs is correlated with organizational efficacy and performance (Melton & Meier, 2016; O’Toole & Meier, 2008). Giauque et al. (2013) suggested that HRM practices are better predictors of public-sector performance than PSM. Moreover, “stimulating” leadership style of HR managers and soft HRM practices (including job enrichment, employee participation, and professional development) may lead to superior organizational practices and public employee performance through higher job satisfaction (Vermeeren et al., 2014).

The literature provides some evidence that a diverse workforce, that is, differences in gender, race, ethnicity, multiculturalist, and representative bureaucracy, also influences performance in public organizations when it is valued and well managed, though the overall results are mixed (Andrews et al., 2006; Moon, 2016; Pitts, 2005). Andrews et al. (2014) provided evidence that representative central bureaucracy led to better performance than nonrepresentative bureaucracy, though these results had not been supported in local government context of England (Andrew et al., 2005). Similarly, workforce diversity showed positive impact on public organization performance (Meier et al., 2006; Pitts, 2009).

However, studies on women inclusion in decision-making showed negative correlation with organizational performance in public health sector (Wegge et al., 2008). Other research concluded that diversity management alone is not enough to improve performance. A comprehensive approach is required which incorporates diverse workforce with conducive environment for autonomy and inclusivity backed up by leadership support (Jin et al., 2017; Sabharwal, 2014). Thus, literature concludes that diversity in PSOs may be correlated with performance, but other factors such as leadership behavior and empowerment may also interact with diversity in different ways to directly and indirectly impact performance outcomes (Jin et al., 2017; Sabharwal, 2014). Table 2 summarizes the themes and areas of research on drivers of performance in public-sector organizations detailed in the above sections.

**Potential Way Forward for Public Organization Performance Practices**

In reviewing the literature on performance management from the behavioral side of public administration, it has been argued that leadership, management behavior, workforce diversity, and HRM practices are able to play significant part
Table 2. Themes and Area of Research on Drivers of Performance in Public Organization.

| Key themes                        | Areas of research                      | Main findings                                                                 | Authors                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership                        | Need fulfillment                       | Leadership MOTIVATES individual followers by fulfilling nonmaterial, psychological needs | Bouckenooghe et al. (2014), Burke et al. (2007), Hassan and Hatmaker (2014), and Zhu et al. (2013)                                     |
|                                   | Leadership development and incumbency change | Leadership development and leadership change is seen as a reason for need for performance improvement | Boyne and Dahya (2002), Petrovsky et al. (2014), Seidle et al. (2016), and Meier and O’Toole (2002)                                     |
|                                   | New style and role expectations         | Shift from authoritative, transactional, passive, submissive leadership styles toward more political, inclusive, transformative, ethical, and empowering style |  Amundsen and Martinsen (2015), Andrews and Boyne (2010), Bohte and Meier (2001), Cook (1998), Hartley et al. (2019), M. Kim et al. (2018), Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010), Potipiroon and Faerman (2016), S. Park et al. (2015), Khaltar and Moon (2019), Hassan et al. (2019), and J. Park and Hassan (2018) |
| Management behavior               | Empowering and entrepreneurial behaviors | Empowered and entrepreneurial behaviors improve performance through offering innovative solutions, necessary risk-taking, increasing involvement and autonomy, and improving job satisfaction and commitment | Salge (2010), Nielsen (2013), Meier et al. (2015), Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2016), Bowen and Lawler (2006), Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2011, 2012, 2013, 2015), Stajkovic and Luthans (2003), Cho and Faerman (2010), Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2013), and Cho et al. (2012) |
|                                   | Work habits and predilection toward power-sharing and involvement | Positive work habits motivate workforce by building their self-worth and morale. Decentralization/delegation, employee participation and involvement increases performance by increasing commitment and ownership | West and Berman (2011), Boyne (2003), Boyne and Chen (2006), Pollitt (2005), Aubert and Bourdeau (2012), Nor Yahya et al. (2008), etc.                  |
| HRM practices                      | HRM practices in recruitment, talent and career management, diversity management, and job design | Building high involvement and commitment through HRM practices leads to higher employee and organizational performance | Paré and Tremblay (2007), Uen et al. (2009), Haines and St-Onge (2012), Boon and Kalshoven (2014), O’Toole and Meier (2008), Melton and Meier (2016), DeGeest et al. (2015), Giauque et al. (2013), and Vermeeren et al. (2014) |

HRM = Human Resource Management.

in improving the performance of public-sector organizations.

There are various other aspects of behavior in organizations which can play a part but which currently are not being widely researched. There appear to be some gaps in the literature: First, there has been too much research focus on “hard” and “objective” drivers and measures of performance. The present research has tried to fill in this gap by showing that “behavioral” and “subjective” drivers and “measures” of performance (both employee and organization) may be equally important and are required to improve the performance system from micro-level perspective. More research is required to clarify how BPA benefits the public-sector performance and how to incorporate these behavior strategies into formal organization systems.

Second, most available literature is based on cross-sectional data from individual organizational or national contexts. A variety of research designs and methodologies are needed to properly investigate and understand the relationship between leadership, management, and HR behavior, and their effect on individual-, group-, and organization-level performance in varied contexts over a longer time horizon. Third, the majority of contemporary research studies on performance of public sector are carried out on PSOs in the developed countries. Comparatively, little research has been undertaken on organizations in less-developed countries. Some other areas for further research include the impact of an organization’s political environment on lateral and vertical communication between employees and how this affects the performance of employees.

Another potential way to give more depth to the literature is by inclusion of gray literature for understanding the drivers of performance. Present research was conducted through a systematic literature review approach which used language and peer-review filters in article selection. Hence, the non-peer-reviewed articles, or articles written in languages other than English were excluded from the study. Future research can be made more comprehensive by including these resources.
Conclusion

Behavioral side performance management in the public sector is not well studied. Most contemporary research into performance management of government organizations is based on refining and improving objective goal setting, information-gathering, performance measurement and feedback, and performance-based budgeting. This article shows that the performance of an organization can be enhanced from micro perspective of administrator and employee behaviors in public organizations. It is concluded that psychological (in addition to structural) management of behavior, effective leadership style, workforce diversity and HRM practice may all help in improving the performance of individual and organization in the public sector. However, research studies have tended to focus more on technical aspects of performance management rather than behavioral aspects. Better behavioral management, along with leadership behavior and commitment-based HRM practices are other ways to improve performance at the “micro” employee level, which are then expected to ascend and improve performance at the “macro” organizational level. In contrast to a model of performance, improvement based on the setting and implementation of performance goals from the top level to the bottom level, this article argues for improving performance from the ground level. It is thus concluded that performance can be improved at both individual and organizational level via internal management of behavioral side of public employees.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Aymen Asif https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8587-3892

References

Allen, M., Ericksen, J., & Collins, C. (2013). Human resource management, employee exchange relationships, and performance in small businesses. Human Resource Management, 52(2), 153–173. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21523

Amundsen, S., & Martinsen, Ø. (2015). Linking empowering leadership to job satisfaction, work effort, and creativity. Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 22(3), 304–323. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051814565819

Andrews, R., Ashworth, R., & Meier, K. (2014). Representative bureaucracy and fire service performance. International Public Management Journal, 17(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2014.874253

Andrews, R., & Boyne, G. (2010). Capacity, leadership, and organizational performance: Testing the black box model of public management. Public Administration Review, 70(3), 443–454. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02158

Andrews, R., Boyne, G., & Walker, R. (2006). Workforce diversity in the public sector: An evaluation of the performance of English local authorities. Policy & Politics, 34(2), 287–306. https://doi.org/10.1332/030557306776315868

Andrews, R., Boyne, G. A., Meier, K. J., O’Toole, L. J., Jr., & Walker, R. M. (2005). Representative bureaucracy, organizational strategy, and public service performance: An empirical analysis of English local government. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 15(4), 489–504. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui032

Arnaboldi, M., & Azzone, G. (2010). Constructing performance measurement in the public sector. Critical Perspectives on Accounting, 21(4), 266–282. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2010.01.016

Arnaboldi, M., Lapsley, I., & Steccolini, I. (2015). Performance management in the public sector: The ultimate challenge. Financial Accountability & Management, 31(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/faam.12049

Arthur, J. (1994). Effects of human resource systems on manufacturing performance and turnover. Academy of Management Journal, 37(3), 670–687. https://doi.org/10.5465/256705

Aubert, B., & Bourdeau, S. (2012). Public sector performance and decentralization of decision rights. Canadian Public Administration, 55(4), 575–598. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-7121.2012.00238.x

Avey, J., Wernsing, T., & Palanski, M. (2012). Exploring the process of ethical leadership: The mediating role of employee voice and psychological ownership. Journal of Business Ethics, 107(1), 21–34. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1298-2

Bellé, N. (2013). Leading to make a difference: A field experiment on the performance effects of transformational leadership, perceived social impact, and public service motivation. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 24(1), 109–136. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui033

Bohte, J., & Meier, K. J. (2001). Structure and the performance of public organizations: Task difficulty and span of control. Public Organization Review, 1(3), 341–354.

Boon, C., & Kalshoven, K. (2014). How high-commitment HRM relates to engagement and commitment: The moderating role of task proficiency. Human Resource Management, 53(3), 403–420. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21569

Borgonovi, E., Anessi-Pessina, E., & Bianchi, C. (2017). Outcome-based performance management in the public sector. Springer.

Bouckaert, G., & Halligan, J. (2008). Managing performance: International comparisons. Routledge.

Bouckenooghe, D., Zafar, A., & Raja, U. (2014). How ethical leadership shapes employees’ job performance: The mediating roles of goal congruence and psychological capital. Journal of Business Ethics, 129(2), 251–264. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2162-3

Bowen, D. E., & Lawler, I. I. I. E. E. (2006). The empowerment of service workers: What, why, how, and when. Managing Innovation and Change, 33, 155–169.

Boyne, G. (2003). Sources of public service improvement: A critical review and research agenda. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 13(3), 367–394. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mug027
Khaltar, O., & Moon, M. (2019). Effects of ethics and performance management on organizational performance in the public sector. *Public Integrity*, 22(4), 372–394. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2019.1615163

Kim, J. (2010). Strategic human resource practices: Introducing alternatives for organizational performance improvement in the public sector. *Public Administration Review*, 70(1), 38–49. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2009.02109

Kim, M., Beehr, T., & Prewett, M. (2018). Employee responses to empowering leadership: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 25(3), 257–276. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051817750538

Kroll, A. (2015). Drivers of performance information use: Systematic literature review and directions for future research. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 38(3), 459–486. https://doi.org/10.1080/15309576.2015.1006469

Ma, L. (2017). Performance management and citizen satisfaction with the government: Evidence from Chinese municipalities. *Public Administration*, 95(1), 39–59. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12275

Mauro, S., Cinquini, L., & Grossi, G. (2016). Insights into performance-based budgeting in the public sector: A literature review and a research agenda. *Public Management Review*, 19(7), 911–931. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1243810

Meier, K., Favero, N., & Zhu, L. (2015). Performance gaps and managerial decisions: A Bayesian decision theory of managerial action. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 25(4), 1221–1246. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muu054

Meier, K., Mastracci, S., & Wilson, K. (2006). Gender and emotional labor in public organizations: An empirical examination of the link to performance. *Public Administration Review*, 66(6), 899–909. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00657

Meier, K., & O’Toole, L. (2002). Public management and organizational performance: The effect of managerial quality. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 21(4), 629–643. https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.10078

Melton, E., & Meier, K. (2016). For the want of a nail: The interaction of managerial capacity and human resource management on organizational performance. *Public Administration Review*, 77(1), 118–130. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12611

Micheli, P., & Neely, A. (2010). Performance measurement in the public sector in England: Searching for the golden thread. *Public Administration Review*, 70(4), 591–600. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02180

Moon, K. (2016). Examining the relationships between diversity and work behaviors in U.S. federal agencies: Does inclusive management make a difference? *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 38(2), 218–247. https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371x16660157

Moynihan, D., & Pandey, S. (2005). Testing how management matters in an era of government by performance management. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(3), 421–439. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui016

Moynihan, D., Pandey, S., & Wright, B. (2011). Setting the table: How transformational leadership fosters performance information use. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(1), 143–164. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur024

Nicholson-Crotty, S., Nicholson-Crotty, J., & Fernandez, S. (2016). Performance and management in the public sector: Testing a model of relative risk aversion. *Public Administration Review*, 77(4), 603–614. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12619

Nielsen, P. (2013). Learning from performance feedback: Performance information, aspiration levels, and managerial priorities. *Public Administration*, 92(1), 142–160. https://doi.org/10.1111/Padm.12050

Nori Yahya, M., Nazli Nik Ahmad, N., & Hamid Fatima, A. (2008). Budgetary participation and performance: Some Malaysian evidence. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 21(6), 658–673. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513550810896523

Ohemeng, F. L. K., Asiedu, E. A., & Obuobisa-Darko, T. (2018). Giving sense and changing perceptions in the implementation of the performance management system in public sector organisations in developing countries. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 31(3), 372–392.

Osborne, S. (2016). Public management research over the decades: What are we writing about? *Public Management Review*, 19(2), 109–113. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1252142

O’Toole, L., & Meier, K. (2008). The human side of public organizations. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 39(5), 499–518. https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074008323805

Paarlberg, L., & Lavigna, B. (2010). Transformational leadership and public service motivation: Driving individual and organizational performance. *Public Administration Review*, 70(5), 710–718. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02199

Pandey, S. (2015). Performance information use: Making progress but a long way to go. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 39(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/15309576.2016.1071158

Paré, G., & Tremblay, M. (2007). The influence of high-involvement human resources practices, procedural justice, organizational commitment, and citizenship behaviors on information technology professionals’ turnover intentions. *Group & Organization Management*, 32(3), 326–357. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601106286875

Park, J., & Hassan, S. (2018). Does the influence of empowering leadership trickle down? Evidence from law enforcement organizations. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 28, 212–225. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mux047

Park, S., Miao, Q., & Kim, M. (2015). The role of leadership behaviors for enhancing organizational effectiveness in the Chinese public sector. *International Review of Public Administration*, 20(2), 153–176. https://doi.org/10.1080/12294659.2015.1040204

Petrovsky, N., James, O., & Boyne, G. (2014). New leaders’ managerial background and the performance of public organizations: The theory of publicness fit. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 45(5), 39–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/15309576.2016.1071158

Pitts, D. (2005). Diversity, representation, and performance: Evidence about race and ethnicity in public organizations. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(4), 615–631. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui033

Pitts, D. (2009). Diversity management, job satisfaction, and performance: Evidence from U.S. federal agencies. *Public Administration Review*, 69(2), 328–338. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2008.01977
Pollitt, C. (2005). Performance management in practice: A comparative study of executive agencies. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 16*(1), 25–44. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui045

Potipiroon, W., & Faerman, S. (2016). What difference do ethical leaders make? Exploring the mediating role of interpersonal justice and the moderating role of public service motivation. *International Public Management Journal, 19*(2), 171–207. https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2016.1141813

Pulakos, E., Mueller-Hanson, R., & Arad, S. (2019). The evolution of performance management: Searching for value. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 6*(1), 249–271. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-org-psych-012218-015009

Purvanova, R., Bono, J., & Dziewczynski, J. (2006). Transformational leadership, job characteristics, and organizational citizenship performance. *Human Performance, 19*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327043hup1901_1

Qi, F., & Wang, W. (2016). Employee involvement, public service motivation, and perceived organizational performance: Testing a new model. *International Review of Administrative Sciences, 84*(4), 746–764. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852316662531

Rimkutė, E., Kirstukaite, I., & Šiugždinienė, J. (2015). Public Sector Performance Management in Lithuania: Progress and Challenges Implementing Results-based Management. *Public Policy and Administration, 14*(1), 9–24. https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.ppaa.14.1.11412

Sabharwal, M. (2014). Is diversity management sufficient? Organizational inclusion to further performance. *Public Personnel Management, 43*(2), 197–217. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026014522202

Salge, T. (2010). A behavioral model of innovative search: Evidence from public hospital services. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 21*(1), 181–210. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muq017

Seidle, B., Fernandez, S., & Perry, J. (2016). Do leadership training and development make a difference in the public sector? A panel study. *Public Administration Review, 76*(4), 603–613. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12531

Snistveit, B., Oliver, S., & Vojtkova, M. (2012). Narrative approaches to systematic review and synthesis of evidence for international development policy and practice. *Journal of Development Effectiveness, 4*(3), 409–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/19439342.2012.710641

Stajkovic, A., & Luthans, F. (2003). Behavioral management and task performance in organizations: Conceptual background, meta-analysis, and test of alternative models. *Personnel Psychology, 56*(1), 155–194. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00147

Uen, J., Chien, M., & Yen, Y. (2009). The mediating effects of psychological contracts on the relationship between human resource systems and role behaviors: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 24*(2), 215–223. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-009-9101-9

U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (2020). *Overview & history*. https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/performance-management/overview-history/

Vermeeren, B., Kuipers, B., & Steijn, B. (2014). Does leadership make a difference? Linking HRM, job satisfaction and organizational performance.” *Review of Public Personnel Administration, 34*(2), 174–195.

Vigoda-Gadot, E. (2007). Leadership style, organizational politics, and employees’ performance. *Personnel Review, 36*(5), 661–683. https://doi.org/10.1108/00483480710773981

Wegge, J., Roth, C., Neubach, B., Schmidt, K., & Kanfer, R. (2008). Age and gender diversity as determinants of performance and health in a public organization: The role of task complexity and group size. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(6), 1301–1313. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012680

West, J., & Berman, E. (2011). The impact of management work habits on public sector performance: A study of local government managers. *Public Personnel Management, 40*(1), 63–87. https://doi.org/10.1177/00910260104000105

Wright, B., Moynihan, D., & Pandey, S. (2011). Pulling the levers: Transformational leadership, public service motivation, and mission valence. *Public Administration Review, 72*(2), 206–215. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02496

Zhu, W., Newman, A., Miao, Q., & Hooke, A. (2013). Revisiting the mediating role of trust in transformational leadership effects: Do different types of trust make a difference? *The Leadership Quarterly, 24*(1), 94–105. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.08.004