Contribution of internal communication in predicting job satisfaction among police officers

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Abstract

This paper has two objectives: first, to explore the level of job satisfaction and satisfaction with internal communication among police officers in the Republic of Croatia on the basis of respondents' self-assessment; and second, to determine the contribution of internal communication to the job satisfaction among police officers, determining the predictive power of each of the eight dimensions of internal communication in the process. The data were collected using a questionnaire, filled in by a sample of 1.249 respondents, and analysed using hierarchical regression analysis. The results show that police officers in Croatia are relatively satisfied with their jobs, and that internal communication is a statistically significant predictor of job satisfaction. Out of eight dimensions of internal communication, the most important predictors of job satisfaction are: satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with communication with superiors, satisfaction with communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of media of communications and satisfaction with corporate information knowledge.

Keywords: job satisfaction, internal communication, police, feedback, superiors, communication climate, media of communication

Introduction

Determinants and consequences of job satisfaction

Work is of central importance to most adults, with many identifying with it, an occurrence particularly prominent among police officers who often stress the point that what they do is more than a job, and rather a calling. Indeed, there are some particularities of police work. It is traditionally socially engaged (Brunetto et al., 2012) and necessarily includes a great deal of stress, as it involves working with people, making quick decisions that may have serious effects on the citizens and the public on the whole. Additionally, police work is a type of emotional work, making it exceptionally important that it is carried out by a person that is satisfied with the work he/she is doing.

The strong impact of job satisfaction on the police officers' work stems primarily from the nature of police work and the ways in which those who are unsatisfied may negatively affect the provision of services and the image and public perception of the police among the citizens. Positive attitudes concerning work, positive changes in the work environment, supervision, encouragement, and work itself may act to increase the productivity and quality of service. However, lack of job

satisfaction may lead to lower productivity and effectiveness, lower quality of service, lower efficiency, and poorer morale among the employees (Ercikti et al., 2011; Harter et al., 2010). There are thus multiple reasons why job satisfaction is important for police organizations. Negative attitudes towards work and negative experience in relation to it may adversely affect the job performance, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, which may in turn negatively affect the relationship between the police and the community (Ercikti et al., 2011). Job satisfaction significantly reduces the levels of stress, and accordingly reduces its consequences, such as absenteeism, burnout, and alcoholism. At the individual level, job satisfaction is strongly related to employee wellbeing and mental health, while it contributes to efficiency and reduces the costs of negative behaviors at the organizational level (Yang and Kassekert, 2010).

It is not easy to find a single definition of job satisfaction. Locke (1976, 1300) defines job satisfaction as a pleasant positive emotional state which results from assessing one's experience in work. Job satisfaction has also been defined as the degree to which the characteristics of work correspond to the employee's expectations (Tutuncu and Kozak, 2007, 4). It represents the interaction between the employee and their environment, with the note that the employee's work provides exactly what he or she wants from it (Wright and Davis, 2003). Job satisfaction refers to the extent to which the work environment fulfills the needs and benefits the employee, and positively affects her personal response to the work environment (Camp, 1994). Lambert (2004, 2010) defines this term as the extent to which a person loves her job.

Researchers also make the distinction between total job satisfaction and satisfaction with specific components of work, typically referred to as aspects of satisfaction. In that context, job satisfaction is defined differently across various studies, and is sometimes considered as a one-dimensional construct (job satisfaction per se, or total job satisfaction), and other times as a multivariate, composite phenomenon (Balgač, 2015). Balci (2011), for example, tests job satisfaction as a multivariate phenomenon, i.e. as satisfaction with colleagues or associates, satisfaction with one's superiors, satisfaction with the work itself, and satisfaction with job advancement. We may thus conclude that there is still no consensus when it comes to defining key components of job satisfaction.

Research on job satisfaction among police officers

Much of the existing research indicates that there is a multitude of factors that determine job satisfaction. An overview of the literature provides several groups of key determinants:

— *Individual* (socio-demographic: sex, age, work experience, education, and other personal characteristics of the employees)

— *Characteristics of the work and organization* (supervision, support, communication, fairness, pay, career development …)

— *Environmental* (cooperation with citizens, social support, exposure to danger…).

There is still no agreement among the researchers regarding the demographic variables that are significant predictors of job satisfaction. In a study of a sample of police employees in Slovenia,

Nalla, Rydberg and Meško (2011) find that the demographic characteristics of police officers explain a small portion of the variance in job satisfaction, while the introduction of organizational and environmental factors, such as the potential for innovation, perceived cooperation with citizens, and being challenged in work, significantly improve the performance of the model. According to Dantzker (1994), age significantly correlates with job satisfaction among police officers, while the effect of sex was found to be inconsistent. Such inconsistency was also found in analyses of the effects that race and ethnicity of police officers have on their job satisfaction. The years of police experience and organizational rank were also found to correlate with job satisfaction. The same was true for education and on-the-job training. Employees with more years of experience in the job are significantly more dedicated and attached to their respective organizations (Varona, 1996). Martin (1980) found that the years of service increase the sense of loyalty, belonging, and satisfaction, while the discriminatory analysis has shown that there are different levels of job satisfaction across the sexes. Finally, rank or position within the police system, as well as the years of service, affect the level of the feeling of belonging and loyalty to the organization, and by extension, affect job satisfaction as well. A study of the relationship between training and job satisfaction (Balci, 2011) has found that there is no statistically significant relation between the extent of training and the level of job satisfaction. This was confirmed in the study by Özel et al. (2008). Mire (2005) claims that the demographic variables can explain only up to ten percent of the variance in job satisfaction. On the other hand, the work by Benett (1997) and Ercikti et al. (2011) found that the individual-level socio-demographic variables, such as years of service, sex, or rank, do not have a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction. Alongside these socio-demographic variables, some other individual-level characteristics of employees, such as emotional intelligence, received attention in the studies of job satisfaction (Brunetto et al., 2012). The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction was found to be positive and statistically significant.

The second group of determinants that have been found significant for job satisfaction among police officers consists of those that can be categorized as organizational characteristics of the police system. Generally speaking, this has been the most commonly used set of independent variables in the study of job satisfaction among police officers, and has been found to be more relevant than the individual-level variables (Jo and Hoover, 2012).

The police, and the public sector in general, have in recent years suffered many reforms and drastic changes of context. Each new reform has been exposing police officers to increased pressure from their stakeholders, who expect the police to be more oriented towards their needs, and from the the general public, which expects their work to yield more success (Korunka et al., 2003). For this reason, it is important to question and scientifically research the organizational characteristics of the policing institutions, which have been undergoing continuous change, and their effects on job satisfaction of police officers.

The physical conditions of work in police stations and other services, and the availability and quality of personal policing equipment, may all relevant for determining the levels of job satisfaction. According to Benett (1997), these factors are important in developing states, where basic policing equipment, such as a firearm, handcuffs, telecommunication devices, vehicles, and similar, are aged and poorly maintained, but are not a factor in developed countries. It has been

found that the working conditions in the police facilities, unlike personal equipment, make for a significant predictor of job satisfaction.

Alongside the physical working conditions, there is also a whole range of other characteristics of police organizations that are considered significant determinants of job satisfaction. Working conditions, as measured by the perceived fairness regarding supervision, discipline and promotions, are also related to job satisfaction (Benett, 1997), as are the organizational support and the potential for promotion (Kuo, 2015). These three factors make up the core of the relationship between an individual police officer and the organization, his or her control, punishment or reward.

The results of the study conducted by Ercikti et al. (2011) also reveal that the characteristics of work, such as the diversity of necessary skills, identity of the assignment, meaningfulness of the task, autonomy, and feedback, may explain 18% (mid-level effect) of the variance in job satisfaction among police managers. The feedback from one's superiors is a significant predictor (Johnson, 2015), as it relates to the extent to which the work activities demand direct and clear information regarding the effectiveness of one's work in terms of achieving results. The literature suggests that the employees are more satisfied with their jobs when they receive adequate recognition for good performance and when they are able to contribute to the policies and processes within the organization. The characteristics of the tasks that the police officers get are also significant for job satisfaction (Johnson, 2012). Dick (2011) has shown that participation in decision-making in the workplace has a significant effect on job satisfaction, and on the sense of purpose in one's work. Further, those police officers who are exposed to less stress are also likely to exhibit more job satisfaction (Julseth, Ruiz, Hummer, 2011, Hassell, Archbold, Stichman 2011), and alternately, all work-related stress negatively correlates with job satisfaction (Lee and Lee, 2013).

Quality of internal communication as a predictor of job satisfaction

One of the central issues when it comes to organizational determinants significant for job satisfaction is certainly the issue of quality of internal communication. The research findings point to a strong and positive correlation between the high level of satisfaction with communication and job satisfaction, which ultimately correlates with high-quality and productive execution of work tasks.

There is a range of different definitions of internal communication, and thus Skoko (2006) notes that internal communication comprises all activities of public relations with the aim to inform, motivate, and educate the employees in the organization. Dowl and Taylor (2008) note that internal communication is a process of creating and exchanging messages in a network of mutually dependent relationships, with the aim of resolving uncertainty in the environment. Additionally, internal communication is also defined as the planned use of communication activities in order to systematically affect the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of the employees (Strauss and Hoffmann, 2000, 142). Satisfaction with communication assumes the existence of support that is provides when a communication process or event fulfills the positive expectations (Hecht, 1978), i.e. the level of satisfaction among the employees which exists between the total communication flow and the factors determining mutual relationships within the organization (Kandlousi, Ali, Abdollahi, 2010). Communication within an organization denotes a transfer of information, ideas, attitudes, or emotions, from one person or group to another person or group, most commonly with the aim

to influence behavior (Bahtijarević-Šiber and Sikavica, 2001, 218). The focus on the importance of internal communication in an organization is the feature common to all these definitions, and it is particularly noted that the most important relationship an organization takes part in is that with its own employees, at all levels (Broom, 2010). Furthermore, these definitions also share the assertion that successful internal communication leads to the success of the organization. We can thus state that internal communication is one of the key activities that increase the success of the organization.

Most of the research approaches internal communication as a complex multi-dimensional construct, made up of different segments, such as horizontal and vertical communication, communication climate, informal communication, and other. According to Verona (1996), the most common predictors from the area of communication are organizational integrity and horizontal communication. Other communication factors that appear as significant predictors include the quality of the medium, organizational perspective, inter-departmental communication. Gülnar (2007) has also confirmed that there is a positive, strong, and significant relationship between total satisfaction with communication and job satisfaction. A significant relationship has been found between nearly all factors of communication and those of job satisfaction.

According to Sheashore and Taber (1975), two of the five most significant determinants of job satisfaction are relationship with middle management and communication between employees and senior management. A nearly identical finding was reported by Kuo (2015), whose work has confirmed that the relationships with colleagues and superiors have the same effect.

Along with the individual factors and the characteristics of work and organization, the contextual factors are also strong and consistent predictors of job satisfaction (Nalla, Rydberg and Meško, 2011). This category of predictors includes such variables as the perception of support on the part of the citizens and perceived intensity of problems related to criminality the police are dealing with (Lee and Lee, 2013). Social support includes respect, information support, emotional support, and instrumental support. Respect assumes a cycle of affirmation and feedback that contributes to the improved self-respect, while information support means assistance in overcoming problematic events through the provision of advice, recommendations, and information. Emotional support comprises the provision of attachment and trust, while instrumental support refers to the time, labor, money, or changes in the environment that are an assistance in police efforts. The primary sources of social support include family and friends, while the secondary sources are those that the person is less close to. The research conducted by Benett (1997) has shown that support from the citizens contributes to job satisfaction.

Most of police work consists of the interaction between the recipients and providers of police services. The citizens' support is a variable that is construed by the perception of respect and support provided by the citizens, the recognition, support, and assistance that they are willing to show to the police officers. The results indicate that, even though the police officers believe that an increase in crime and related problems is going to make their jobs more difficult and more dangerous, this has no effect on the level of job satisfaction they display. While it is not surprising that the perceived support on the part of the citizens significantly correlates with the level of satisfaction, it does suggest that police reform ought to focus on the mechanisms that increase this support. The available literature suggests that police activities which are community-oriented

enhance the support that the community provides to the police (Borovec, 2013, Ercikti et al., 2011). We may thus conclude that, of all the groups of job satisfaction determinants, the environmental ones, which we may also think about as the context of policing, are the least researched.

In conclusion, the findings of the extant literature warn us of the correlation between low levels of job satisfaction and a series of negative behaviors, such as absenteeism, inefficiency, low quality of performed tasks, greater likelihood of departure from the organization, resistance to change, and other. Based on the review of the existing research concerning the impact of quality of internal communication on total job satisfaction among police officers, it is justified to continue the research that would provide deeper knowledge concerning the nature of the correlation between communication within the police system and job satisfaction.

Research on the contribution of internal communication to the prediction of job satisfaction among police officers in Croatia

Research aims

The aim of this project is to investigate the level of job satisfaction and the level of satisfaction with internal communication among the police officers in Croatia, and to determine the extent to which satisfaction with internal communication contributes to job satisfaction. More precisely, this study was conducted with the aim of defining how much the satisfaction with internal communication can explain the level of job satisfaction, and which aspects of internal communication matter the most for job satisfaction.

In that sense, the following hypothesis has been set:

H1 – The satisfaction with internal communication contributes to job satisfaction, with those police officers that are more satisfied with the internal communication are also more satisfied with their jobs, and different dimensions differently contributing to this level of job satisfaction.

Given that the previous research has not yielded consistent findings on the links between the dimensions of satisfaction with internal communication and job satisfaction, we do not propose hypotheses concerning the strength of relationships between individual dimensions of satisfaction with internal communication and job satisfaction.

Methodology

Sample

The sample used in this project was taken from a population of 26 352 employees, 91% of which are in non-managerial positions, and 9% are in managerial or senior positions. Further, 42% are part of the uniformed police, with 17% in the crime units, 1% in the SWAT units, 6% in rapid response units, 4% in CP officers, and 30% from among other employees. In this study, we used a sample of 1 249 respondents, who comprise 5% of the total employee population. The sample was stratified, and the sampling process took the proportionality on the criterion of different police units into account (thus encompassing all 20 police departments, the police headquarters, and the

Ministry of the Interior). The fieldwork was conducted in the September - October 2010 period, by administering the survey in 22 locations, based on the prior decision and approval from the Ministry of the Interior. The surveys were fielded by our associates who had received prior training. The respondents filled in the questionnaires in groups, during their working hours. The participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, and the respondents were able to refuse to participate at any point in the process.

Questionnaire

For this project, we used a questionnaire that was developed for scientific research in the area of satisfaction with internal communication in the workplace (Tkalac Verčić, Pološki Vokić and Sinčić Ćorić, 2007). It consisted of eight dimensions of satisfaction with communication at work, on top of questions regarding the respondents' socio-demographic information. Each of the dimensions of satisfaction with communication in the workplace comprised four items/claims, i.e. questions. The respondents assessed their degree of satisfaction on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 7 (very satisfied).

Substantively, the dimensions of satisfaction with internal communication in the workplace refer to the following:

— *Satisfaction with feedback* – concerns one's own success and one's organization's success, and the communication aspects at both the personal and organizational levels .

— *Satisfaction with communication with one's superior* – the items in this factor concern the level of satisfaction with the formal communication with one's immediate superior, satisfaction with the informal communication with one's superior, the extent to which the superior listens and is attentive to the subordinate, the extent to which the superior assists the subordinate, and similar.

— *Satisfaction with horizontal communication* – the items that represent this factor are satisfaction with communication with one's colleagues, the lack of obstacles in communication with colleagues, the colleagues' readiness to accept criticism.

— *Satisfaction with informal communication* – the content of this factor refers to types of informal communication.

— *Satisfaction with corporate information* – refers to the formal information concerning the work and success of the organization.

— *Satisfaction with the communication climate* – concerns the level of satisfaction regarding the promotion of organizational values and aims.

— *Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media* – this factor reflects the satisfaction with the communication media that are used.

— *Satisfaction with communication in meetings* – refers to the level of satisfaction with the communication at meetings, and provided by meetings.

Alongside the 32 questions related to internal communication, the respondents were also asked about their overall job satisfaction (How satisfied are you with your job?). The respondents assessed their level of satisfaction on a Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 – very dissatisfied, to 7 – very satisfied). Thus, this project approached the matter of job satisfaction as a one-dimensional construct that assesses job satisfaction per se (total job satisfaction), while it approached the satisfaction with internal communication as a complex construct with 8 dimensions. The measurement instrument we used has displayed favorable metrics, with a high reliability coefficient, which was higher than 0.8 on all measured components of internal communication.

Table 1. Questionnaire reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) in the original study and in the presented data

Subscale	Cronbach's alpha in the original study	Cronbach's alpha in this study
Satisfaction with feedback	0.86	0.88
Satisfaction with communication with one's superior	0.86	0.92
Satisfaction with horizontal communication	0.83	0.88
Satisfaction with informal communication	0.76	0.82
Satisfaction with corporate information	0.83	0.90
Satisfaction with the communication climate	0.94	0.94
Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media	0.90	0.92
Satisfaction with communication in meetings	0.87	0.89

In order to test the relationship between the dimension of satisfaction with internal communication, which make up the independent variables, and job satisfaction, which is our dependent variables, we have utilized the hierarchical regression analysis. This type of analysis proceeds in steps: first, the model is constructed with only socio-demographic variables as predictors, while the second step introduces the factors that define the level of satisfaction with internal communication. In this study, the socio-demographic variables have been used as controls, in order to test for the ability of the satisfaction with internal communication variables to explain the variation on the dependent variable when socio-demographics are accounted for.

Results

Descriptive analysis

The key results of the descriptive analysis may be seen in Table 2, and they do lead one to conclude that the police officers in Croatia are generally satisfied with their jobs. A relative majority of the respondents stated that they are mostly satisfied (32.5%), satisfied (35.6%), and very satisfied (10.5%), while a much smaller proportion expressed dissatisfaction (1.9% were very dissatisfied, 1% dissatisfied, and 5.2% mostly dissatisfied). The remaining 12.7% stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Further, we may state that there is a certain level of satisfaction with internal communication, with employees singling out horizontal communication and communication with their immediate superior as those with which they are most satisfied. The lowest level of satisfaction with internal communication was recorded for the employees' assessment of informal communication, which included socializing with colleagues, decision-making based on informal communication, gossip within the organization, and accuracy of information transmitted via informal routes. The second poorest scoring type of communication was satisfaction with feedback,

as reflected in satisfaction with the information about the aims of the organization, organizational successes and failures, the information about the demands of their own jobs, and the quality with which they do their work. Descriptive statistics for both of the scales can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the main dependent and independent variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Job satisfaction (DV)	5,22	1,23		
1. Satisfaction with communication with one's superior	0,01	0,99	-3,28	2,13
2. Satisfaction with horizontal communication	0,01	0,99	-4,33	1,70
3. Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media	0,00	0,99	-2,78	1,74
4. Satisfaction with informal communication	0,00	0,99	-3,47	2,64
5. Satisfaction with the communication climate	0,00	1,00	-1,94	3,23
6. Satisfaction with corporate information	0,00	0,99	-3,13	1,89
7. Satisfaction with communication in meetings	0,00	1,00	-2,76	7,93
8. Satisfaction with feedback	0,00	0,99	-1,82	6,42

The individual binary correlations of the components are significant with a $p < .01$, indicating that the independent variables are mutually related, with the highest correlations existing between the variables of "Satisfaction with corporate information" and "Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media", "Satisfaction with corporate information" and "Satisfaction with the communication climate", then between "Satisfaction with communication in meetings" and "Satisfaction with the communication climate, "Satisfaction with communication in meetings" and "Satisfaction with corporate information". Finally, "Satisfaction with feedback" most strongly correlated with "Satisfaction with the communication climate" and "Satisfaction with corporate information". The full correlation matrix is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Correlation matrix of independent variables

Components	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Satisfaction with communication with one's superior	1.000	0.367	0.372	0.292	-0.470	0.430	0.448	0.465
Satisfaction with horizontal communication		1.000	0.348	0.405	-0.495	0.398	0.354	0.385
Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media			1.000	0.358	-0.485	0.501	0.469	0.406
Satisfaction with informal communication				1.000	-0.426	0.391	0.372	0.442
Satisfaction with the communication climate					1.000	-0.555	-0.526	-0.543
Satisfaction with corporate information						1.000	0.547	0.520
Satisfaction with communication in meetings							1.000	0.497
Satisfaction with feedback								1.000

Results of hierarchical regression for the dependent variable of "job satisfaction"

In order to answer the main research question this article is addressing, i.e. the extent to which the satisfaction with internal communication is related to overall job satisfaction, we applied the method of hierarchical regression. The results (Table 4) show that socio-demographic variables have a statistically significant contribution to explaining job satisfaction, with $R^2 = 0.031$, meaning that this set of variables only explains 3% of the variance of the dependent variable. However, none of the socio-demographic variables is statistically significant. After controlling for the socio-demographic variables in the first step of hierarchical regression, we have introduced the components of satisfaction with internal communication in the second step. The inclusion of these variables

increased the proportion of explained variance to 28.5% (R^2 = 0.285). During the analysis we have also tested for the colinearity of the predictors, but no significant linear relationship was found.

Table 4. Results of multivariate hierarchical regression for the dependent variable of job satisfaction

Dependent variable: Job satisfaction Step 1[a] R=0.176; R^2=0.031; corrected R^2=0.021; F=3.185*	
Dependent variable: Job satisfaction **Step 2[b]** **R=0.534; R^2=0.285; korigirani R^2=0.273; F=48.403***	
Independent variables	**Beta**
Satisfaction with communication with one's superiort	.125*
Satisfaction with horizontal communication	.032
Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media	.099**
Satisfaction with informal communication	.042
Satisfaction with the communication climate	.120**
Satisfaction with corporate information	.072***
Satisfaction with communication in meetings	.023
Satisfaction with feedback	.185*

[a] *Independent variables: number of children, educational attainment, type of municipality, police unit, years of job experience, sex, managerial status, marital status, age, title.*

[b] *Independent variables: number of children, educational attainment, type of municipality, police unit, years of job experience, sex, managerial status, marital status, age, title, satisfaction with communication with one's superior, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with the quality of the communication media, satisfaction with informal communication, satisfaction with the communication climate, satisfaction with corporate information, satisfaction with communication in meetings, satisfaction with feedback*

*$p<0.001$; **$p<0.01$; ***$p<0.05$

Table 4 shows that *Satisfaction with feedback* is the factor which is most successful in predicting job satisfaction, with the regression coefficient of β = 0.185. Further, when it comes to predicting job satisfaction, the second most relevant variable is that of *Satisfaction with communication with one's superior,* with a regression coefficient of β = 0.125, followed by *Satisfaction with the communication climate* (β = 0.12) and *Satisfaction with the quality of the communication media* (β = 0.099). The results thus indicate that police officers are more satisfied with their jobs when they are satisfied with the feedback they receive, when there is good communication with their immediate superiors, when they are happy with the overall communication climate in their organization, and when the media used for internal communication are satisfactory. The variable of *Satisfaction with corporate information* is also statistically significant, but weaker than the above listed predictors (β = 0.062; p < 0.05). The least successful in explaining the variation on the dependent variable are *Satisfaction with horizontal communication* (β = 0.032), *Satisfaction with informal communication* (β = 0.042), and *Satisfaction with communication in meetings* (β = 0.023), none of which reach statistical significance.

Based on these results, we may assert that the hypothesis set in this research project has been confirmed, as we have shown that the police officers' satisfaction with internal communication statistically significantly contributes to their overall job satisfaction. However, it should be clarified that not all of the dimensions of internal communication have been found relevant. For the sake of comparison, it should also be noted that the regression results using the standard model have been very similar, with 28% of explained variance.

Discussion

The results of this study provide an insight into the issue of job satisfaction and satisfaction with internal communication among police officers, and they identify the connection between satisfaction with internal communication and overall job satisfaction. Further, the results find the dimensions of internal communication that are more relevant for the stated relationship.

Communication is one of the key aspects of every organization, and by extension, a key aspect of police organization, as effective communication is vital for success of any endeavor. Police organizations that are not focused on communication or taking their employees into account when communicating are likely to face a lower level of trust among their employees, lesser cooperation, lack of engagement in doing police work (particularly those tasks that require initiative), i.e. they will likely be less effective in fulfilling their role. On the other hand, one ought not neglect the fact that the quality of communication, as well as job satisfaction, is related to the perception of external reputation (Kamaşak and Bulutlar 2008), which is particularly important for the police, as a user-oriented organization. In that context, the results of this research, stating that satisfaction with internal communication explains nearly a third of the total job satisfaction among police employees, have a particular importance. If we take into account the various predictors of job satisfaction that have been identified in existing research, as well as the fact that internal communication forms only a part of this broad spectrum of variables, the results presented here lead one to conclude that internal communication makes up a large and significant portion of what defines job satisfaction among police officers. This may be explained by the fact that all working processes within the police system are imbued with the need to communicate, and the fact that police work cannot be effectively performed without good quality communication at all levels and at all phases of task fulfillment. Communication is an essential part of the preparation for policing, of assigning of tasks, of directions and guidelines for work. It is also a key factor in the execution of police work, in terms of communication with one's associates and with the immediate superiors. Finally, it is also vital after the bulk of police work is completed, as means of sharing information about what was achieved and how that may be evaluated.

In this research, the satisfaction with internal communication was tested as a complex, multidimensional construct, with the highest predictive power associated with the dimensions of satisfaction with feedback, communication with one's superiors, communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of communication media, and satisfaction with corporate information. This largely confirms the findings of existing research in this area. Ercikti et al. (2011) have also confirmed the predictive significance of satisfaction with feedback on job satisfaction. One may assert that it is important for police officers to know how much appreciation there is for the work they do, and that they are keen to receive information about how they are doing. This feedback will assist them in making changes in the way they work, if necessary, or to continue their work with the same standard. When there is no feedback, the police officers are lacking the ability to adjust their work to the expectations of their managers, they feel more insecure, and thus less satisfied with their jobs.

The relationship of the employees with their superiors is the central element of the employee's sense of belonging to the organization, and this research has also confirmed the importance this relationship has for job satisfaction. In that sense, this research supports the earlier detected

relevance of communication with superiors for job satisfaction (Johnson, 2015; Varona, 1996). One of the components of a good relationship is effective communication. When communication is open, the superiors can more effectively respond to the needs and problems of their employees. Further, recognizing the work that has been done on the part of the managers, by means of rewards and remuneration is a way to boost employee morale which pays off, by means of higher productivity and competitiveness. It is thus not surprising that the employees point out that their relationship with the mid-level management is more important for their job satisfaction than profits and pay they get for their work. The behavior of most of the employees depends on the way that they are treated by their superiors, and managerial style is an important factor in explaining job satisfaction (Getahun, Sims and Hummer, 2008), which can have a significant impact on the behavior of police officers when on patrol (Ashcroft, Daniels and Hart, 2003). All of this confirms that communication with the superiors is important. It also implies that the police managers should also have social competences as well as the professional ones, so that they may be able to guide and manage the employees. It is the social qualities and communication skills that allow them to have empathy and understanding for their employees, for the problems they are facing, and which may ultimately affect the employees' work motivation (Borovec, Balgač and Karlović, 2011).

Satisfaction with the communication climate is also a significant predictor of job satisfaction among police officers. It refers to the satisfaction with the promotion of organizational values and aims, and ought to assist the individuals in the police system to feel an important part of the organization they work in and whose values they are promoting. This means that key organizational values and aims ought to be effectively and immediately transferred to the employees.They will, in turn, be more satisfied with their jobs when they are able to recognize their own role and relevance. In a sense, Lee and Lee (2013) have also found this to be the case, when stating that job satisfaction increases when the employees understand their roles, and are receiving appropriate information regarding the aims of the organization and the employee's role in fulfilling them. Given the content of the satisfaction with communication climate construct, the importance of a sense of purpose or aim in doing police work cannot be ignored, as the police officers are very unfavorably affected by a lack of purpose to the tasks that are assigned to them, and by the related lack of knowledge about what their work will contribute to the aims of the organization (Balci, 2011).

Of all the statistically significant predictors of job satisfaction identified in this study, the lowest predictive value is held by satisfaction with the quality of the communication media and satisfaction with the corporate information. As expected, these dimensions of internal communication have been found significant in determining job satisfaction, due to the fact that modern organizations rely more and more on the contemporary media and various communication tools that are more and more commonly replacing the immediate, *face to face* type of communication. This is also the case for the modern police organizations, which are also making use of the contemporary means of communication. This trend is likely to continue in the future, given the e-police projects that are already under way. We should also consider the importance of corporate information in this context, as it also refers to the information regarding the rules and laws that are important to police work, the successes and results, and the changes within the organization. Police organizations are undergoing continuous changes which, in turn, reflect on their members, making it commonplace that corporate information seeks to relate to the employees the organizational changes and

procedural and normative novelties, which in turn plays a significant role in the employee's sense of job satisfaction.

This study is important as its results clearly indicate what is needed in order for police officers' job satisfaction to be increased, i.e. there ought to be improvements in internal communication. Internal communication has a strategic role, as it builds the two-way relationships of trust with the employees, with the aim of improving police effectiveness. Communication with the police organization is also exceptionally important due to the fact that, unlike other organizations or firms, the police does not have a tangible product that they can build their success or recognition on. Their product is, instead, a service provided by a person, the police officers, making the success of police as a whole dependent on the success of each of its employees. Taking this into account, it is imperative that police organizations create an environment of effective communication, so that they may contribute to the important relationship with their employees.

The results suggest at least three strategies that the police organizations should choose if they are to enhance the job satisfaction among their employees. First, they should be developing an organizational culture in which an employee has good contacts with others, primarily her superiors, and should be developing a supportive organizational culture that strengthens the employees' affection for the organization. Second, there should be increased employee perception of their roles. Police managers must explain the working procedures to the employees, as well as clearly state the expectations and provide effective feedback on the meaning and importance of the police officer's work for the fulfillment of the organizational aims. Finally, third, more attention is to be given to the development of new communication media, the culture of their use, particularly in line with the expectations of the new generations of employees, who enter the system with more knowledge and experience of new technologies. Given the role and relevance of police managers in creating the total communication environment, particular attention should be given to their education and training.

Finally, some of the shortcomings of this study should be noted. First, the conducted survey is not only a self-assessment on the part of the respondents, but it also simultaneously collects data on both the dependent and the independent variables, i.e. these data are not collected in separate contexts. This may lead to more relation between them than there really is (the common-method variance). More research is needed to further test the results presented here, so that the respondents could assess the dependent and independent variables in separate circumstances/context. Further, job satisfaction among police officers has been assessed here by utilizing a univariate construct, as total job satisfaction. The results should thus be further tested in the context that considers job satisfaction as a complex, multidimensional construct. Additionally, given the fact that satisfaction with internal communication only partially explains the variance of job satisfaction, future research should go in the direction of more complex research designs that will include the individual-, organizational-, and environmental-level predictors.

Conclusion

The conducted study has confirmed the relevance of internal communication for job satisfaction among police officer, demonstrating a statistically significant role of satisfaction with internal communication in total job satisfaction. This confirms the stated hypothesis that those police officers who are more satisfied with internal communication are also more satisfied with their jobs, with different dimensions of internal communication differently contributing to this dependent variable. On the other hand, the study has shown that the socio-demographic characteristics of the police officers themselves explain only a small portion of variance in job satisfaction, and that none of the socio-demographic variables have a statistically significant effect in predicting job satisfaction. From among the tested dimension of internal communication, the greatest predictive power was had by satisfaction with feedback, with communication with one's superiors, with the overall communication climate, with the media of communication, and with the corporate information.

Those police organizations that are not focused on communication or giving enough regard to their employees when it comes to communication, are also more likely to face dissatisfied employees, lower trust among the employees, poorer communication, and higher level of burnout. They may also be more likely to face lesser levels of engagement in conducting police work, and higher rates of turnover. While many police officers are grateful for their work, they also expect that their effort and loyalty be recognized and properly respected. These results, which indicate the importance of internal communication for the functioning of the police system, should be taken into account by those that are in charge of running the police organization and are making important decisions for their functioning.

These results should serve to guide the design of future communication strategies within the police organization, by clearly recognizing the key components of a complex communication relationship, all with the aim of increasing the total job satisfaction, and motivation and effectiveness of police officers.

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