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Factors Influencing Employee Satisfaction in the Police Service: The Case of Slovenia

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Abstract

Purpose

The paper has two purposes – first, to examine the dimensionality of employee satisfaction and, second, to identify the impact of the groups of factors on employee satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach

The measurement of satisfaction of all employees in the Slovenian Police based on the comprehensive on-line questionnaire. Factor analysis was used to formulate the facets of satisfaction. Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to identify the predictors of three facets of employee satisfaction.

Findings

Three facets of employee satisfaction were determined and the influence of three types of factors (demographic, job-related and organizational-support-related factors) on them was investigated. The results show that worst assessed facet was (1) salary and security, whereas no significant differences were found between two other facets, namely (2) relationships and leadership and (3) tasks and working conditions. The three factors influenced employee satisfaction with different levels of intensity.

Research limitations/implications

The current economic situation in the state, especially in the public sector and in the police service, definitely impacts the results of the survey. The survey was conducted just before the announcement of savings measures in the Slovenian public sector. Since it was conducted online, we assume that for some employees this probably meant that anonymity could not be assured.

Practical implication

The survey was performed in order to identify the opportunities for improvements in police management. The results indicate the importance of leadership, communication and participation in the work of police officers, especially during a period of limited financial resources.

Originality/value

The far strongest influence on employee satisfaction is that of the employees' feeling that the police will support and protect them in case they are exposed while performing their legitimate and professional work. Trust in one's immediate superior also has a strong influence. Both could be an important signal to the management of the police to focus on activities to increase cohesiveness within the police and constantly promote the feeling of belongingness to the police among all its members.

Keywords: Employee satisfaction, Job, Police service, Salary, Leadership, Organizational support, Slovenia

Introduction

The significance of employee satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is vital for ensuring the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of organizations in both the public and private sectors. Nowadays comparable organizations use similar starting points to provide the inputs required for operations, such as financial and material resources, information etc. Nevertheless, organizations achieve different levels of efficiency and effectiveness in their operations. The main reason for the differences between organizations lies in how the management of an organization understands and implements their role in human resource management, and whether it shows commitment and sets an example to its employees. It is only in this way that they can ensure the satisfaction of their employees. Monitoring satisfaction has been one of the main tasks of management that should not serve its own purpose but should underpin the identification of opportunities to continuously improve human resources management processes.

Sakanovič and Mayer (2006) state that employee satisfaction has become an increasingly important category. A satisfied employee works more and better. Authors have delved into the factors that influence employee (dis)satisfaction and have been investigating their correlation with an organization's effectiveness. A positive correlation between employee satisfaction and an organization's effectiveness has often been proven. Other studies have proven that higher satisfaction (or work experiences and their antecedents – Meyer and Allen, 1991) contributes to a stronger commitment to the organization (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2003) and less fluctuation and absenteeism (Howard, Howard Donofrio and Boles, 2002). A satisfied person is more successful and performs his/her work more efficiently, achieves the goals of the organization and contributes to its effectiveness (Gorenak and Pagon, 2006).

According to Robbins (1991), employee dissatisfaction manifests itself in employees leaving the organization, their attempts to actively voice their opinions (proposals for improvements, activity in trade unions, conversations with superiors etc.), passive loyalty (waiting for the situation to improve and being confident that the management will take the right decisions) and negligence (absences, being late, a large number of errors etc.). Other areas influenced by low employee satisfaction include absenteeism, performance (Lambert, Edwards, Camp and Saylor, 2005), motivation and organizational commitment (Locke, 1997; Meyer, Becker and Vandenberghe, 2004) as well as burnout (Whitehead, 1989). All of the above-mentioned result in additional costs (Camp and Lambert, 2006) and lost time for the organization and, consequently, negatively affect its competitiveness and development opportunities. The consequences of dissatisfaction observed in employees include problems with their mental and physical health (Garland, 2002) as well as low morale (Lambert, 2001). Based on the above, we may assume that it is important for academics and practitioners to understand, analyse, develop and implement the concept of employee satisfaction in their work and thus contribute to the welfare of private and public sector organizations as well as to society as a whole.

Police service in Slovenia

Background and context of the police in Slovenia

In order to acquire a clear view of the circumstances in which the study was carried out, it is necessary to understand the situation facing the Slovenian public sector and the police service itself. Over the last two decades the Slovenian Police has undergone many changes, especially in the areas of goals, values, organization and infrastructure. Since 2008, when the public employee reward system was changed, the management of police service employees has become even more challenging. Since then, all uniformed professions have been classified in

the same salary brackets, which is why – according to police representatives and many experts in organization and payment systems – the police staff have been inappropriately rewarded. In subsequent years, as part of austerity measures in the public sector promotion was also abolished and additional measures were adopted in spring 2012 that have caused a radical deterioration in the financial position of the police service as an institution (in terms of both equipment and infrastructure) and its employees. The situation to date has been even worse compared to that in spring 2012 – due to the threat of new austerity measures in 2013 one of the two police trade unions has been on strike for months, while the second one is also prepared to go on strike.

Possible effects of the changes on employee satisfaction among the Slovenian police

Work in the police service is characterized by many particularities that mostly negatively affect the satisfaction and morale of the employees. When dealing with criminal offences, police officers encounter violence, cruelty and indifference to the welfare of others. On one hand, they struggle to meet the conflicting demands of the public and, on the other, within their own organizations they face bureaucracy, internal politics and a militarist style of management (Blum, 2000; Crank, 1998). Given that the employees are vital for the efficient and effective implementation of police services, the measurement and improvement of police employees' satisfaction is important for both the police as an organization and for the public at large.

The public sector and therefore also police management have become aware of the importance of employee satisfaction but, regrettably, there are still too few examples of this issue being addressed systematically. Due to the changes in the country's economic situation and consequently due to the limited financial resources in the public sector since 2008, it is all the more important that employee satisfaction is promoted through non-financial measures and incentives such as strengthening relationships, team-building exercises, praise, offering the

possibility to participate in decision-making, psycho-hygienic care, trade unions' support, debureaucratization etc. Unfortunately, the scarcity of financial resources frequently serves as an excuse for a failure to act in the area of increasing employee satisfaction. Therefore, studies like the one presented in this paper might contribute to a greater understanding of the situation and the possible and necessary changes in the management of the police in Slovenia.

Employee satisfaction

Definition of employee satisfaction (and related constructs such as organizational commitment)

Employee (job) satisfaction represents one of the most widely studied constructs in industrial psychology (McShane and Von Glinov, 2007). Employee satisfaction has most often been defined as a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the perception of work, conception and assessment of the work environment, work experience and the perception of all elements of the work and workplace (Mihalič, 2008). Some authors (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail and Baker, 2010) have distinguished between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and seen the latter as a broader concept – in their opinion, organizational commitment refers to the bond formed between the worker and the employing organization. Organizational commitment reflects one's feelings toward an entire organization, not just a specific job (Garland, McCarty and Zhao, 2009) and consists of three factors (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982): a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. According to Meyer and Allen (1991), commitment is a psychological state that has three separate components reflecting the: (a) desire (affective commitment); (b) need (continuance commitment); and (c) obligation (normative commitment) to maintain employment in an organization. An employee can experience all three forms of commitment to varying degrees. Organizational commitment has also been conceptualized as a

force that binds an individual to a course of action that is relevant to a particular target and can be accompanied by different mind-sets that play a role in shaping behaviour (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001).

Spector (2003) defines job satisfaction as “the extent to which people like their job” (p. 210). According to Weiss (2002), job satisfaction is an attitude toward one’s job resulting from the net sum of the individual’s positive and negative emotions experienced at work. Job satisfaction is a pleasant feeling a person has when their expectations from work have been fulfilled.

Henceforth the term “employee satisfaction” will be used as it encompasses the notion of satisfaction with the job itself (duties, working conditions, salary) as well as other facets such as leadership, relationships, autonomy, the reward and promotion system, possibilities of professional development, trade union activities, job security, internal and external communications, possibilities of a work-life balance and the organization as an institution, sometimes also environmental facets like the attitude of the public towards the police etc..

Dimensionality of employee satisfaction: Global/overall vs. multi-dimensional construct

Studies of employee satisfaction vary regarding the dimensionality of the construct. Some studies are based on only one or two questions and have investigated overall employee satisfaction (Davey et al., 2001; Garland et al., 2009; MacKain et al., 2010, Nalla et al., 2011). Usually, the primary purpose of these studies has been to define and establish the intensity of the influence of various factors (demographic, job-related, organization-related) on overall employee satisfaction.

Another group of studies has focused on individual facets of employee satisfaction with concrete, narrower areas such as the work itself, salary, leadership, promotion, colleagues,

working conditions etc. (Balci, 2011; Boothby et al., 2002; Johnson, 2012; Noblet, Rodwell and Allisey, 2009; Verhaest and Omey, 2009).

Since the police management wanted to follow the trends from the previous research, the basis for our study represented the research on employee satisfaction and trust in the Slovenian police conducted by Umek et al. (2009). The questionnaire consisted of 24 items on employee satisfaction (besides demographic questions) which meant that employee satisfaction was studied as a multidimensional construct. The 2012 research project had many objectives and therefore the questionnaire for the 2012 study was also supplemented with a part where the employees assessed the enablers from the CAF model (Common Assessment Framework) (EIPA, 2013). This gave us a picture of how the employees assess the enablers that lead to results such as employee satisfaction.

Theoretical foundation of the development of employee satisfaction

A person's feeling of (dis)satisfaction at work is influenced by several factors that differ from one individual to another. According to George and Jones (1999), these factors include personality, the influence of society, the situation in the workplace and values. In the opinion of Sakanovič and Mayer (2006), the same things do not satisfy all employees. What may satisfy one person in their work may dissatisfy another. Satisfaction is a complex phenomenon as every individual enters an organization in their own unique fashion, with their own expectations, beliefs, values, views, endeavours and longings. However, the feeling of satisfaction being shared by a larger number of employees is undoubtedly to the advantage of any organization. Gorenak and Pagon (2006) claimed that a person is satisfied when their needs have been fulfilled, when their acts have been approved or commended and when they feel needed and important.

According to Možina (1998), employees are satisfied and contribute to the organization's effectiveness provided that the managers create an environment with which the employees can identify, which gives them a feeling of worthiness, trust, equity, fairness and compassion and also an environment which respects their values and recognizes their merits. Employee dissatisfaction is commonly associated with salaries, a lack of information, the reward system and insufficient commendations from the superiors (SiOK, 2001–2008) and is among the best predictors of turnover (Lee, 1988). When employees are not satisfied, they tend to look for satisfaction elsewhere – not necessarily with another employer but may look for other possible ways to escape or fill in time, e.g. not performing optimally, absenteeism, presenteeism, doing private business at work etc. Locke (1976) defined employee satisfaction as a positive emotional feeling, a result of one's evaluation of their job experience by comparing between what they expect from their job and what they actually get from it. The expectations are formed under the influence of different factors/antecedents, as described below.

Antecedents of employee satisfaction: Empirical studies conducted in police settings

As a consequence of the significance of the concept of employee satisfaction, it emerges that researchers, experts and managers are also interested in the main antecedents of employee satisfaction. Regardless of the delicate nature of the subject within police settings, there are some interesting studies where employee satisfaction has been discussed as a dependent variable. These studies have delved into the following antecedents of employee satisfaction.

The first group of studies investigated the influence of 'personal', i.e. (1) demographic factors (e.g. sex, age, education, race, length of service (tenure), years of work experience, etc.) and (2) psychological factors (e.g. personality characteristics, emotional intelligence, perception of the goal-setting process, etc.) on employee satisfaction (Abdulla, Djebarni and

Mellahi, 2011; Balci, 2011; Bipp and Kleingeld, 2011; Chiva and Alegre, 2008; Dantzker, 1992; Garland et al., 2009; Kakar, 2002; Ortega, Brenner and Leather, 2007; Zhao, Thurman and He, 1999), where the results of the studies differ regarding the direction of the correlation (positive or negative) and the size of the correlation coefficient. For example, Balci (2011) found that there is an association between education level and employee satisfaction with promotion and co-workers, but the association was in a negative direction. Significant attention has been paid to the association between gender and employee satisfaction, although the results reported are inconsistent (e.g. Tait et al., 1989).

The second group dealt with the influence of ‘external’, i.e. (1) organizational factors (e.g. work-related factors (tasks and their significance, variety of work, autonomy etc.), the promotion and reward system, leadership, training, relationships, working conditions, administration, organizational commitment, organizational support, organizational learning) and (2) environmental factors (e.g. public image, frustration with the judicial system) on employee satisfaction (Abdulla et al., 2011; Boke and Nalla, 2009; Carlan, 2007; Chiva and Alegre, 2008; Coman and Evans, 1988; Davey et al., 2001; Dick, 2011; Griffin and McMahan, 1994; Hwang, 2008; Johnson, 2012; MacKain, Myers, Ostapiej and Newman, 2010; Meyer and Allen, 1991, Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001; Miller, Mire and Kim, 2009; Morris, Shinn and Dumont, 1999; Nalla, Rydberg and Meško, 2011). Abdulla et al. (2011) and Carlan (2007) found that environmental factors (in our study they are listed among the organizational factors; “salary and incentive” was the most powerful determinant of employee satisfaction) are the key determinants of employee satisfaction compared to demographic ones and that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors can be a source of employee satisfaction. MacKain et al. (2010) established that salary, perceived organizational support and relationships emerged as being important to overall satisfaction and that the (general) facet “management” (i.e. a clear definition of roles, supervision, appropriate levels of responsibility) did not predict overall job

satisfaction. On the basis of his research, Johnson (2012) points out that job task characteristics are the principal source of an officer's employee satisfaction (besides organizational environment characteristics with a weaker yet still important role).

Opposite to the studies above, where employee satisfaction has been discussed as a dependent variable, there are some studies that have discussed employee satisfaction as an independent variable, e.g. in those investigating the comprehension of stress among police officers (Gershon, Borocas, Canton, Li and Vlahov, 2009). As mentioned above, one can also find some other studies where the independent and dependent variables have been replaced, e.g. a study on how job stress affects employee satisfaction (Griffin et al., 1994). In the case of professions similar to the police service (e.g. correctional staff) the relationship between facets such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a sense of reduced accomplishment at work and job satisfaction has been studied by Griffin et al. (2010).

Significance of the current study

Despite a large number of studies of employee satisfaction in the private and public sectors, e.g. the health sector (Spence Laschinger, Finegan, and Shamian, 2001) or among correctional staff (Boothby and Clements, 2002; Garland et al., 2009; Griffin et al., 2010), there has been a paucity of studies in the area of employee satisfaction in the police (Davey, Obst and Sheenan, 2001). The relationship between work environment and employee satisfaction has been studied extensively in Western developed economies for decades, although relatively few studies have focused on the determinants of employee satisfaction among the police (Nalla et al. 2011). In the opinion of Nalla et al. (2011), studies that extend beyond the relationship between demographic characteristics and employee satisfaction are even harder to find (for example Boke and Nalla, 2009, Zhao et al. 1999). Any new research among police employees therefore brings important new insights into the personal, organizational and environmental

circumstances influencing their satisfaction and therefore has a direct or indirect impact on employees themselves and their environment (stakeholders).

Although job (employee) satisfaction has been the subject of more studies than other variables in organizations (Spector, 1997), the results of studies reveal variances across cultures (Diener, Oishi and Lucas, 2003; Spector, 2008; Vecernik, 2003). The study results obtained in Western developed countries cannot be directly compared and applied to countries in transition such as Slovenia. Nevertheless, such studies are important for scholars and practitioners in Central and Eastern European countries that share a different cultural context than other European Union countries or even in other parts of the world (Vecernik, 2003). The study presented in this paper offers important insights into the situation facing the Slovenian police service and can serve as a basis for further academic studies as well as for many operational and strategic measures that should be applied in practice.

In order to understand the background of the 2012 study and the reasoning behind the selected variables, we should mention the previous studies of the Slovenian police service that have been carried out. In 1993, 2002 and 2009 the Ministry of the Interior or the Police ordered different studies (by different researchers) on employee satisfaction in the Slovenian Police. Only some of them were suitable for comparison. The last comprehensive study had been conducted in spring 2009 (Umek, Meško, Areh and Šifrer, 2009). The survey included 1,649 questionnaires sent to police officers and the response rate was 60 percent. Of 24 available items of dissatisfaction, the most frequently selected were the reward system, the functioning of the police trade union and the promotion system. Demographic differences have also been investigated – among police directorates, in terms of gender, age, length of service, type of work tasks, type of job etc.

In autumn 2011 the management of the Ministry of the Interior decided to introduce a systematic employee satisfaction measurement at various hierarchical levels and in all police

directorates. Consequently, a survey questionnaire had to be designed and the surveying method determined so the survey could be used in several consecutive periods in the same way. It was decided by the researchers and the police management that the 2012 employee satisfaction survey would use the same questionnaire as the one in 2009. Following an analysis of the results the management of the police should define the indicators, responsible persons, deadlines and resources for the improvement measures that have been proposed based on the analyses. The approaches to increasing employee satisfaction and its measurement should be long-term and repeated on a regular basis.

The purpose of the study conducted in March 2012 was to assess employee satisfaction in the Slovenian police and to establish whether it is one- or multi-dimensional as well as to establish different factors which influence the satisfaction. The research questions were designed with that purpose in mind. The first research question is whether employee satisfaction in the police is one- or multi-dimensional, i.e. whether there are many facets of employee satisfaction. The second research question concerns how the overall employee satisfaction and the specific facets are influenced by demographic factors, job-related factors and organizational-support-related factors.

Method

Participants

The online survey “Study of employee satisfaction and trust in the Slovenian Police” was carried out in the period from 27 February to 23 March 2012. The authors of the study as well as the police management and trade unions invited all employees in the Police to fill out the questionnaire. They sent an e-mail briefly presenting the study and including a link to the online questionnaire. An instruction page explaining the purpose of the study and ensuring confidentiality preceded each survey when participants clicked on the link. Two reminder e-

mails were sent out to the employees. As at 31 December 2011 the Slovenian Police employed 8,808 staff (all of whom were invited) out of which 1,848 (21.0 percent) took part in the survey (Table 3). The share of males participating in the survey was 80.7 percent. Secondary school or a lower educational level had been completed by 44.8 percent of the participants, while 48.5 percent of them had a college, higher education or university education. The mean length of service in the police was 17.2 years. The majority of the participants held no leadership position (police officer – 53.5 percent), 42.9 percent of the participants worked in the field and 51.7 percent in the office.

Procedure

The questionnaire on employee satisfaction formed part of the broader “Study of employee satisfaction and trust in the Slovenian Police”. The collection of 24 items has been used to measure employee satisfaction (Table 1). The collection was based on the “Questionnaire on employee satisfaction in the Police” which has already been used for studying satisfaction in the Slovenian Police (Umek et al., 2009).

To simplify the analysis and add to its transparency the items of employee satisfaction were defined relatively broadly (including the highest possible number of items). The respondents had to rate the degree to which they were satisfied with specific elements of their job on a five-point scale, ranging from “extremely dissatisfied” (1) to “extremely satisfied” (5).

Besides the questions on employee satisfaction, the questionnaire included issues underpinning the definition of the following independent variables:

- demographic questions (gender; education: secondary school and less, college, higher education and university, post-graduate; length of service in the police: years);
- job-related questions (job location: in the field, in the office; job position: police officer, senior police officer, leader of an organizational unit); and

- organizational support-related questions (support and protection of employees by the employer, trust in one's immediate superior)

The data were analysed using SPSS 19.0. An independent t-test was used to test the differences between the two sub-groups. A one-way ANOVA (F) test was used for the difference between three or more sub-groups. Pearson's Correlation test (r) was employed to measure the correlation between two continuous variables. Factor analysis was used to formulate facets of satisfaction. To explore the factor structure, principle components analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken. Based on the results of the factor analysis, the facets of satisfaction were designed and used as the dependent variables in our analysis.

Independent variables

The following three groups of factors supposedly influence individual facets of employee satisfaction: demographic, job-related and organizational-support-related. Of all demographic variables commonly used in the study of the influence on employee satisfaction, the following three were selected: gender, education and length of service in the police (e.g. Abdulla et al., 2011; Garland et al., 2009; Johnson, 2012).

Two variables were used in the measurement of job-related characteristics of the work environment: job location (in the field, in the office) and job position in the police hierarchy (police officer, senior police officer, leader of an organizational unit). Of all variables associated with organizational support the analysis included the following (Umek et al., 2009):

- an assessment of the support and protection offered to the respondent in the event of exposure due to their legitimate and professional work (complaints, civil actions, media pressure). Responses were made on a five-point Likert single-item scale from (1) "The police would not support me." to (5) "The police would always support me."; and

- an assessment of the level of trust in the immediate superior. We used five point Likert single-item scale from (1) “I do not trust.” to (5) “I trust completely”.

Results

Employees of the Slovenian Police are most dissatisfied with the reward and promotion systems as well as the payment of normal working hours and overtime (Table 1): Police employees are most satisfied with the place of work, belonging to the staff and the working time.

(Table 1)

Based on the answers to these questions a limited number of factors was defined using factor analyses that represent individual facets of employee satisfaction. The reliability of the entire scale using the Cronbach alpha reliability test showed a high level of internal consistency with a coefficient of 0.91.

The factor analysis revealed a three-factor structure accounting for 47.1% of the variance. In the continuation of the analysis the following three factors represent groups of facets of employee satisfaction: (1) relationships and leadership; (2) salary and security; and (3) tasks and working conditions. The level of reliability of the measurement instrument was tested for each of them. The Cronbach alpha reliability test showed high internal consistency with coefficients of 0.77 to 0.87 (Table 2). Based on the above factors, arithmetic means were calculated by individual group with higher values meaning a higher level of employee satisfaction.

(Table 2)

The satisfaction facet “salary and security” was assessed the lowest which is probably a consequence of the changes in the payroll system after 2008 and the resulting dissatisfaction of police employees with the reward and promotion systems. There were no substantial differences between the two other facets in terms of the assessment.

In the next phase of the study the intensity of the influence of the selected factors (demographic, job-related, organizational support-related) on three facets of employee satisfaction was analysed (Table 3).

(Table 3)

Men and women are equally satisfied with “relationships and leadership” (the first facet of satisfaction) as well as “salary and security” (the second facet of satisfaction). Statistically significant differences were observed in the satisfaction with “tasks and working conditions” ($t=4.8, p<0.001$) (the third facet), where women expressed higher satisfaction than men. In the groups formed based on education, statistically significant differences were identified in all three facets of satisfaction ($F=11.4, p<0.001$; $F=15.3, p<0.001$; $F=11.4, p<0.001$). The least satisfied were employees with a secondary school education, whereas there were no significant differences between the two other groups. Employee satisfaction increases with the length of service in the police. The length of service was most strongly associated with satisfaction with the tasks and working conditions ($r=0.21, p<0.001$).

The verification of the influence of job-related factors reveals statistically significant differences in all three areas in terms of the place the respondents occupy on the hierarchical ladder of the police ($F=66.1, p<0.001$; $F=28.0, p<0.001$; $F=17.2, p<0.001$). Satisfaction with

all three facets was highest among employees with the highest managerial positions. Even in those groups that were formed based on the main job location statistically significant differences occurred in all areas ($t=-9.6, p<0.001$; $t=-8.2, p<0.001$; $t=-9.3, p<0.001$). Those employees who perform the bulk of their work in the field are much less satisfied than those who mainly work in the office.

The influence of the factors related to organizational support was studied with two variables: (1) direct support and protection by the police in the event a police officer is exposed during their legitimate and professional work (complaints, civil action, media pressure); and (2) the level of trust in one's immediate superior. The level of support and protection most influences the respondents' satisfaction with salary and security relationships ($r=0.50, p<0.001$), whereas the influence of the level of trust in one's immediate superior is most important in the area of relationships and leadership ($r=0.67, p<0.001$). The influence of both factors on total satisfaction is equally intensive ($r=0.52, p<0.001$).

The ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression model was applied to test the intensity of the influence of individual factors on the three facets of employee satisfaction (Table 4). A preliminary analysis of the correlation of the variables showed that by far the strongest influence was that of the organizational-support-related factors (Table 3). Therefore, only two models were designed. The first model only includes variables associated with demographic characteristics of the respondent (gender, education, length of service in the police) and characteristics of the job (job location: in the field, in the office; job position: police officer, senior police officer, leader of an organizational unit). The second model includes all variables (demographic, job-related and organizational-support-related). For all eight OLS regression equations, multicollinearity was not a problem. For all eight equations, the highest variation inflation factor (VIF) value was 2.10 and the lowest tolerance statistic value was 0.49.

VIF values greater than 2.50 and tolerance values less than 0.25 indicate that multicollinearity may be a problem (Katz, 2011).

(Table 4)

Model I

The first model, which only included demographic factors and job-related factors, explains a relatively small part of variability (r^2 from 0.06 to 0.10; $p < 0.001$). Of all demographic variables, total satisfaction is influenced by gender (women are more satisfied than men), length of service in the police (older employees are more satisfied than younger ones), job location (those working in the office are more satisfied than those working in the field) and job position (leaders are more satisfied than non-leaders/implementers). The influence of education is not statistically significant.

In individual facets, the biggest share of the variability of satisfaction is explained in “relationships and leadership” which is statistically significantly influenced by all investigated factors ($r^2 = 0.10$, $p < 0.001$). In demographic variables, the strongest influence is observed in length of service in the police (positive) and education level (negative). A stronger influence on employee satisfaction with relationships and leadership is exerted by the job-related factors, especially job position (police officer, senior police officer, leader of an organizational unit). Length of service in the police and the gender of respondents influence most strongly the satisfaction with tasks and working conditions, whereas the influence of education and job position is not statistically significant.

Model II

The second model investigates the influence of all variables. The percentage of explained variability increases considerably (between 27.1 and 53.4 percent of variability). Compared to the first model, the influence of education and job position on the total satisfaction decreases considerably. The strongest predictors of total employee satisfaction are trust in one's immediate superior as well as organizational support and protection.

The highest share of variability is explained by satisfaction in the area of relationships and leadership ($r^2=0.53$, $p<0.001$). The strongest influence comes from trust in one's immediate superior. Support and protection by the police most strongly influence the respondents' satisfaction with salary and security, whereas in terms of tasks and working conditions a relatively strong influence of both organizational-support-related factors was observed, along with length of service and gender.

Discussion and conclusion

The findings reported above hold important practical and research implications. First, they support the theories where the construct of police employee satisfaction is multi-dimensional (the first research question). Similar findings have been established in other studies as well (Abdulla et al., 2011; Johnson, 2012). In our case the construct of employee satisfaction consists of three dimensions or facets that were defined based on the factor analysis (the first research question). The worst assessed facet was "Salary and security", whereas there were no significant differences in the assessments of the two other facets – "Relationships and leadership" and "Tasks and working conditions".

Second, when examining the direction and intensity of the influence of the three groups of factors (i.e., demographic, job-related, and organizational-support-related) on employee satisfaction (the second research question), we found that our findings support the

theory/concepts of the development of employee satisfaction, and that they are similar to those of previous studies, yet they also differ. The study revealed the great importance of organizational-support-related characteristics (supervisor support and trust) in determining employee satisfaction. Organizational support and protection had a major influence on the “Salary and security” facet, while trust in one’s immediate superior had a major influence on the “Relationship and leadership” facet. This corresponds to the findings of other studies examining this subject (Abdulla et al., 2011; Davey et al., 2001; Dick, 2011; Garland et al., 2009; Johnson, 2012). In his study, Johnson (2012) discovered the important influence of job-related factors. The results of our study also show a statistically significant influence of these factors, although the influence of factors related to organizational support is much stronger. Job location influenced all of the facets of employee satisfaction, while job position most strongly influenced the employee satisfaction facet “Relationships and leadership”.

In the group of demographic factors, only length of service in the police has a stronger influence on employee satisfaction. Length of service in the police is positively correlated with all facets of satisfaction, thus most strongly influencing the satisfaction with tasks and working conditions. The findings of some other studies are similar (Abdulla et al., 2011; Nalla et al., 2011). Conversely, Johnson (2012) established a negative influence of the length of service in the police on satisfaction. Our study shows that gender exerts a weak yet statistically significant influence on employee satisfaction.

The selected factors explain 44.3 percent of the variability of total satisfaction. The highest share of explained variability is seen in the facet “relationships and leadership” ($r^2=0.53$). We estimate that model II explains well all three facets of satisfaction as well as total satisfaction. The share of explained variability is similar to that in other studies in this area ($r^2=0.25$ – Johnson, 2012; $r^2=0.22$ – Noblet et al., 2009; $r^2=0.47$ – Abdulla et al., 2011; $r^2=0.51$ – Nalla et al., 2011).

Based on the findings presented above, both academics and practitioners should put more effort into looking for ways to improve organizational and environmental factors. The results of the current study imply that the theory should further develop in the direction of multi-dimensional studies of police employee satisfaction, i.e. by exploring new facets of employee satisfaction, examining the influence of new organizational and environmental factors (determinants) and structuring new models of employee satisfaction in connection with other constructs, such as organizational commitment, job stress, individual and organizational performance etc.

The police employees assessed their satisfaction the lowest in the area of salary and security. Contrary to the expectations, this facet is not statistically significantly influenced by education or job position (two variables associated with salary). The far strongest influence is that of the employees' feeling that the police management will support and protect them in case they are exposed while performing their legitimate and professional work. These findings are an important signal to the responsible persons in the police to focus on activities to increase cohesiveness within the police and constantly promote the feeling of belongingness to the police among all its members. Trust in one's immediate superior also has a strong influence, which means that in the future the police management will have to focus its attention on the selection and training of leaders so as to ensure good relationships among employees at different hierarchical levels and also on the same level. It is hence recommended to introduce joint trainings in areas such as teamwork, efficient communication and conflict management as well as common teambuilding events in order to enhance commitment and a feeling of security. The latter is also related to the functioning of the trade unions that, in these current times of crisis, are an important factor for ensuring the feeling of security among the employees.

The present study is subject to the following limitations. First, our results need to be interpreted with caution and understood in the framework of the situation that over the last few

years has strongly influenced the circumstances in the police service. The current economic situation in the country, especially in the public sector and in the police service, definitely impacts the results of the survey. The survey was conducted just before the announcement of savings measures in the Slovenian public sector and just before police service employees went on strike. The budget reductions of the last few years, caused by external factors, definitely have an impact on the results of the employee satisfaction survey. Second, the employee satisfaction survey was conducted on-line. We assume that for some employees this probably meant that anonymity could not be assured. The Ministry of Interior, the police management, as well as trade union representatives made an important effort to communicate and promote the survey among police service employees. Despite these limitations, our study provides important contributions at a practical and theoretical level. In future, it would be worthwhile conducting the surveys using the same questionnaire every two years in order to identify the differences and trends in the opinions of police service employees. In a two-year period it would already be possible to detect the results of improvement measures taken by the management – if they are not influenced by external factors.

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Table 1: Facets of Employee Satisfaction – Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviation and Factor Loadings

	N*	M**	SD	Factor loadings***
Relationships and leadership				
Relationships among the staff	1808	3.50	1.18	0.761
Feeling of belonging to the staff	1814	3.83	1.09	0.750
Possibility of participating in decision-making on organization	1804	2.93	1.19	0.747
Style of leading the organizational unit	1809	3.33	1.24	0.740
Possibility of realizing one's abilities	1811	3.07	1.09	0.680
Possibility of performing work autonomously	1781	3.07	1.07	0.587
Supervision over work	1796	2.91	1.07	0.413
Salary and security				
Reward system	1800	1.49	0.78	0.728
Salary	1815	2.11	1.00	0.693
Promotion system	1819	1.84	1.04	0.671
Payment of overtime	1757	2.10	1.14	0.633
Professional training system	1790	2.44	0.97	0.492
Public attitude to the police	1813	2.38	1.03	0.484
Psycho-hygienic care for police officers	1724	2.60	1.08	0.437
Functioning of the police trade union	1765	2.57	1.15	0.407
Security of employment	1805	3.12	1.07	0.406
Tasks and working conditions				
Volume of tasks	1808	3.27	1.15	0.665
Administrative tasks	1799	2.35	1.14	0.635
Volume of regulations, work guidelines	1807	2.29	1.10	0.623
Working conditions (equipment, premises)	1819	2.67	1.28	0.456
Job location	1787	3.85	1.19	0.452
Variety of tasks	1815	3.55	1.06	0.447
Work with people	1776	3.54	0.94	0.430
Working hours	1793	3.74	1.17	0.406

Note.*Number of answers. ** 1 – extremely dissatisfied, 5 – extremely satisfied. *** Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
Source: Questionnaire Survey, 2012; calculations by the authors.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and Coefficient Alpha Reliability Estimates for Three Facets of Satisfaction

Facets	M	SD	No. of facets	Cronbach alpha
Relationships and leadership	3.24	0.86	7	0.87
Salary and security	2.29	0.66	9	0.80
Tasks and working conditions	3.15	0.71	8	0.77

Source: Questionnaire Survey, 2012; calculations by the authors.

Table 3: Three Facets of Employee Satisfaction and Demographic, Job-related and Organizational Support-related Factors

			Relationships and leadership				Salary and security				Tasks and working conditions				Total satisfaction				
	n	%	M	SD	t, F or r*	Sig.	M	SD	t, F or r*	Sig.	M	SD	t, F or r*	Sig.	M	SD	t, F or r*	Sig.	
Gender																			
Women (=1)	312	16.9	3.24	0.83	0.00	0.980	2.32	0.70	0.80	0.436	3.33	0.74	4.8	0.000	2.95	0.65	2.60	00.010	
Men(=2)	1491	80.7	3.24	0.86			2.29	0.65			3.12	0.69			2.85	0.63			
Missing	45	2.4																	
Education																			
Secondary school and less (=1)	828	44.8	3.13	0.85	11.40	0.000	2.20	0.69	15.30	0.000	3.07	0.75	11.4	0.000	2.77	0.66	15.90	0.000	
College, higher education and university (=2)	896	48.5	3.32	0.84			2.37	0.63			3.22	0.66			2.93	0.60			
Post-graduate (spec., master's and doctor's degree) (=3)	108	5.8	3.35	0.98			2.41	0.67			3.28	0.67			2.98	0.65			
Missing	16	0.9																	
Length of service in the police (years)	1834	99.2	17.20	8.08	0.17	0.000	17.20	8.08	0.14	0.000	17.2	8.08	0.21	0.000	17.2	8.08	0.20	0.000	
Missing	14	0.8																	
Job position																			
Police officer (=1)	988	53.5	3.08	0.87	66.10	0.000	2.20	0.70	28.00	0.000	3.08	0.74	17.2	0.000	2.76	0.67	44.30	0.000	
Senior police officer (=2)	535	29.0	3.27	0.82			2.34	0.60			3.20	0.65			2.90	0.57			
Leader of an organizational unit (=3)	299	16.2	3.71	0.71			2.51	0.60			3.34	0.61			3.14	0.55			
Missing	26	1.4																	
Job location																			
In the field (=1)	793	42.9	3.04	0.86	-9.60	0.000	2.15	0.66	-8.20	0.000	2.99	0.68	-9.3	0.000	2.69	0.63	-10.60	0.000	
In the office (=2)	955	51.7	3.43	0.81			2.41	0.65			3.30	0.69			3.01	0.61			
Missing	100	5.4																	
Support and protection by the	1747	94.6	2.57	1.06	0.460	0.000	2.57	1.06	0.498	0.000	2.57	1.06	0.388	0.000	2.57	1.06	0.518	0.000	

police**																		
Missing	101	5.4																
Trust in one's immediate superior***	1774	96.0	3.72	1.05	0.669	0.000	3.72	1.05	0.307	0.000	3.72	1.05	0.363	0.000	3.72	1.05	0.517	0.000
Missing	74	4.0																

Note. *An independent t-test was used for testing the differences between the two sub-groups. A one-way ANOVA (F) test was used for the difference between three or more sub-groups. Pearson's Correlation test (r) was employed to measure the correlation between two continuous variables. **1 – The police would not support me; 5 – The police would always support me. *** 1 – I do not trust, 5 – I trust completely.
Source: Questionnaire Survey, 2012; calculations by the authors.

Table 4: Standardized Coefficients – Beta, Adjusted r^2 and Degrees of Significance for Facets of Employee Satisfaction

	Standardized Coefficients – Beta			
	Relationships and leadership	Salary and security	Tasks and working conditions	Total employee satisfaction
Model I				
(Constant)	2.82**	1.97**	2.91**	2.55**
Gender	-0.05*	-0.06*	-0.16**	-0.12**
Education	-0.08**	0.03	0.03	-0.01
Length of service in the police	0.09**	0.11**	0.20**	0.16**
Job location (in the field, in the office)	0.12**	0.11**	0.12**	0.14**
Job position	0.24**	0.09**	0.03	0.14**
Model II				
(Constant)	0.80**	1.16**	1.69**	1.31**
Gender	-0.02	-0.05*	-0.14**	-0.09**
Education	-0.04	0.02	0.04	0.01
Length of service in the police	0.09**	0.09**	0.19**	0.15**
Job location (in the field, in the office)	0.06**	0.06**	0.07**	0.08**
Job position	0.10**	-0.01	-0.06*	-0.01
Support and protection by the police	0.22**	0.43**	0.28**	0.36**
Trust in one's immediate superior	0.57**	0.15**	0.26**	0.38**
	Adjusted r^2	Adjusted r^2	Adjusted r^2	Adjusted r^2
Model I	0.099**	0.059**	0.094**	0.104**
Model II	0.534**	0.290**	0.271**	0.443**

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Source: Questionnaire Survey, 2012; calculations by the authors.