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## PREDICTORS OF JOB SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY NEEDED IN BOOSTING PUBLIC ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE

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**Abstract:** *The article examines the extent to which organizational dimensions influence the determining factors of organizational performance in public organization in the context of a crisis in proximity. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed by means of observation regarding staff relationships in the public organization in the period immediately after the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine, and by data collection and interpretation of results of the questionnaire applied to the participants in the case study, correspondingly.*

*In a crisis situation, professional satisfaction and loyalty required to ensure the performance of the public organization are determined particularly by leadership and connection/attachment to the organization.*

*Predictive factors of professional satisfaction and loyalty can provide the management of the public organization with a direction of action to ensure performance, but its success will be limited by the constraints on functional and material competencies imposed by the public legal framework.*

*This study can foster refinement in managers' behavior to ensure satisfaction and loyalty of public organization staff.*

**Keywords**—*job satisfaction, loyalty, leadership, attachment, performance, public organization.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The present study is an extension of some research started immediately after the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, event that had a significant impact on the eastern borders of Europe.

This specific context has led to the involvement of the public organization staff with responsibilities at the European Union border in an unprecedented way.

The sudden increase in traffic values, the multitude of atypical procedural situations, exposure to the human drama of refugees, the crisis of resources and personnel are just some of the difficulties faced by the members of the organization.

The previous study, "Staff motivation in crisis situations and management action to improve the organization's performance" [4] showed that the staff of the public organization

used successfully intrinsic motivational resources, explained by concepts such as the need for autonomy, the need for competence (improvement) and the need for a purpose superior to personal interests, having as potentiator the involvement and responsibility of the senior management.

This study aims at further analysis of how organizational factors such as career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership and organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management influence professional satisfaction and, implicitly, loyalty to the institution.

The results of this research can be considered as a basis for developing concrete strategies for optimizing the satisfaction and loyalty factors within the public organization with responsibilities at the EU border.

For this reason, we formulate 3 hypotheses:

1. Professional satisfaction (dependent variable) is influenced (predicted) by dimensions such as career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management (independent variables);
2. Loyalty (dependent variable) is explained by organizational factors such as career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management (independent variables);
3. There are statistically significant differences between respondents in management positions and those in executive positions in terms of the average obtained at the organizational parameters investigated (loyalty, satisfaction, career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management).

## **2. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (METHODS AND TOOLS)**

The random sampling method appointed by statistical step of five was used throughout the research. The sample consisted of 209 respondents from 5 units of the public border organization.

A balanced representation of the general characteristics of the participants in the study (categories of specialists, management and executive positions, men and women, into different age categories) was ensured. A 49-item questionnaire was administered, which contained explanations related to the purpose of the study and fill-in instructions. Anonymity and confidentiality of the application were guaranteed by record (Figure 1).

The organizational dimensions investigated (career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership and organizational support) were measured using an adaptation based on the scale [5], whereas trust in the intentions of colleagues and management was

assessed by adapting the scale of [1]. These 2 scales were employed in the research for at least 2 reasons.

Firstly, they were designed precisely to measure organizational factors with an impact on achieving professional satisfaction, therefore they are in agreement with the purpose of the study. Secondly, the scales were tested and had excellent psychometric properties (the Alpha Cronbach coefficients are shown in the Annex). Satisfaction and loyalty were measured by a scale of 6 items and 5 items respectively, adapted from scales [2].

The items of the entire questionnaire used a 5-step Likert scale ranging from no agreement to strong agreement.

## **3. RESULTS**

### **3.1. Hypothesis 1**

Professional satisfaction (dependent variable) is influenced (predicted) by dimensions such as career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management (independent variables).

To test this hypothesis, we used multiple stepwise regression, which allowed highlighting the main predictors of professional satisfaction.

Although all dimensions investigated have variable contributions to enhance the feeling of satisfaction, a prediction model composed of 2 factors (connection and leadership) explains more than 66% of the variance of professional satisfaction, ( $F_{1,182} = 0.54, p \leq 0.01$ ), therefore, we can talk about a partial confirmation of the research hypothesis (Table 1).

Explaining professional satisfaction through the connection factor is not incidental.

Pointed out in a study that an employee emotionally connected to the workplace [3], validated and valued for what he does, will be engaged, productive and with a high level of professional satisfaction at the same time.

Managers need to understand that these fine psychological mechanisms are not implicitly activated by salaries, training programs or other benefits, but by emotional intelligence which has a defining role in shaping the sense of connection.

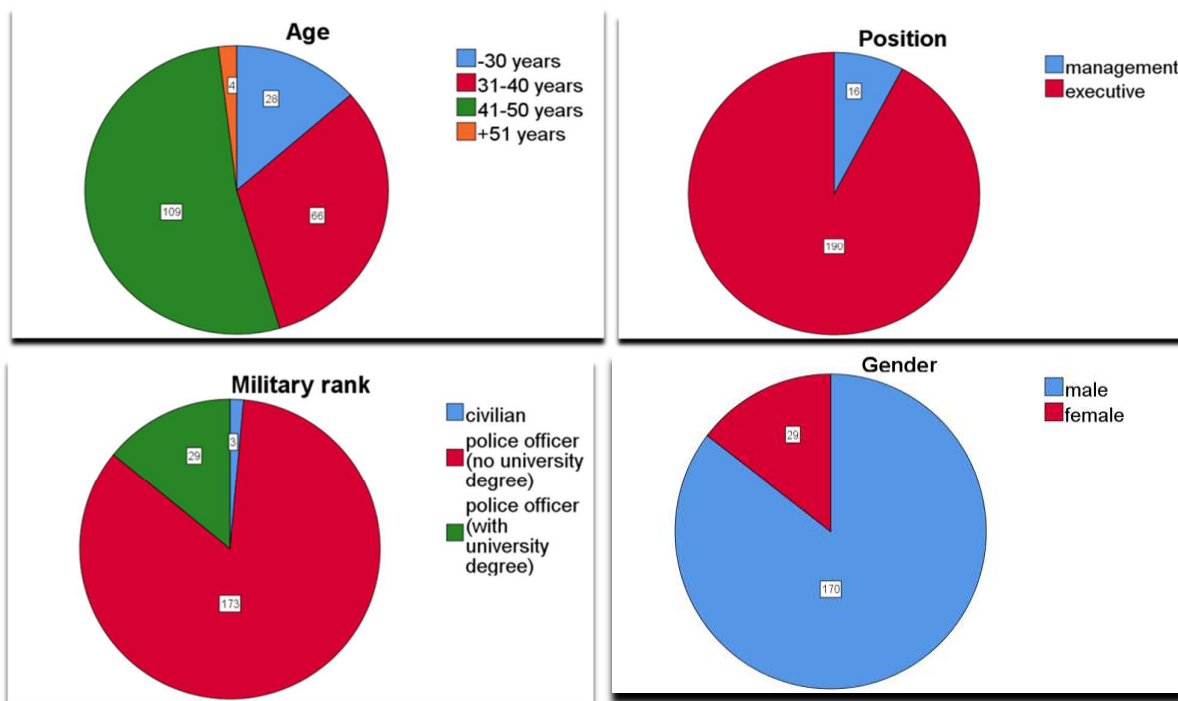


Fig. 1. Representation of the research sample

Leadership is the second organizational factor that influences professional satisfaction, as it provides a predictable and secure structure related to the performance of tasks and encourages personal and professional growth.

Unexpected for a highly hierarchical system – e.g. the Border Police, as a public organization – is the fact that, beyond clearly established and widely known working methodologies and procedures, professional satisfaction is influenced by the way the superiors know how to convey clear messages in relation to what is to be done and what is expected from employees, how it stimulates everyone to improve professionally and organize their time management well.

Therefore, the personal imprint of the leadership style, communication skills, the openness shown in relation to subordinate staff are levers that can be shaped in achieving professional satisfaction.

### 3.2. Hypothesis 2

Loyalty (dependent variable) is explained by organizational factors such as career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support,

trust in the intentions of colleagues and management (independent variables).

The second working hypothesis focused on predictors of job loyalty. Again, multiple stepwise regression allows the identification of a prediction model for loyalty composed of the same 2 factors, connection and leadership, which are responsible for the 61% dependent variable ( $F 1.186 = 0.30, p \leq 0.01$ ). The other organizational factors contribute to the crystallization of professional loyalty, but in a statistically insignificant manner, therefore the research hypothesis is partially confirmed.

If people are appreciated for their personal contribution to the achievement of the institution's fundamental goals, if they are validated for their involvement and proactive behaviors, then their loyalty to the organization will increase significantly.

In other words, the more the sense of connection is present, the more we can expect to strengthen the sense of loyalty among employees (Table 2). As the prediction model indicates, this is not possible without the involvement of the manager (assimilated to the leadership factor). Therefore, there is a direct causal relationship between professional loyalty

and the perception of leadership present at the level of the organization/work group.

The role of the manager becomes practically a complex one: he/she will no longer act only as a person who holds the “absolute truth” and adopt decisions that he will then impose on others, but will rather be a facilitator, a mediator that will offer the chance of manifesting personality, enhancing the employees’ knowledge acquisition and skills, whose loyalty is directly dependent on the degree of leadership presence in that organization.

### 3.3. Hypothesis 3

There are statistically significant differences between respondents with management positions and those with executive positions in terms of the average obtained at the organizational parameters investigated (loyalty, satisfaction, career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management).

The results show that the level of loyalty to work is higher for respondents in managerial positions ( $t = 2.90$ ,  $DF = 22.24$ , two tailed,  $p \leq 0.05$ ). The result can be explained, on the one hand, by the fact that in respondents in management positions, the predictors of loyalty (leadership and connection) mentioned previously are represented to a much greater extent in relation to the execution staff.

On the other hand, it is expected that those who enjoy professional success (they evolve hierarchically, are supported to develop, achieve results, contribute to the development of harmonious relationships at the level of the working team, are validated by recognition of professional merits) would manifest a higher level of loyalty and their desire to remain in the institution should be greater (Table 3).

Also, the career development factor registers a higher average of scores for those in managerial positions compared to respondents in executive positions ( $t = 2.90$ ,  $DF = 26.95$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ).

This fact indicates that the heads of units of public organization recognize more support

from their superiors in career development than their subordinates. More specifically, they appreciate more the way the institution has created opportunities for professional development and has responded to their evolving needs (Table 4).

Managers appreciate to a greater extent than their subordinates that the organization has contributed significantly to maintaining their professional motivation ( $t = 3.93$ ,  $DF = 25.06$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) through constructive feedback received, fostering a sense of belonging and creating good working conditions. It is possible that at the level of executive positions, motivation is shaped by other types of organizational behaviors, not investigated in this research.

Average differences in the "motivation" factor between management and execution positions represent an organizational risk that requires supplementary reflection. Otherwise, failure by middle management to provide elements that enhance professional motivation can lead to a decrease in professional performance or even to giving up the job (Table 5).

This study shows differences between the average scores obtained by the superiors and subordinates to the safety factor, the presence of a sense of safety in the management functions being stronger ( $t = 3.19$ ,  $DF = 24.43$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ).

Management staff are more likely than executive staff to believe that the institution they work in is reliable, able to promote a transparent attitude, reward loyalty and performance, and provide high-quality service quality (Table 6).

Similarly, the leadership factor has a higher average score for management positions than for execution ones ( $t = 6.22$ ,  $DF = 33.50$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), which means that decision-makers at the level of middle management appreciate their superiors more than they are appreciated by their subordinates, especially in terms of the clarity of tasks and responsibilities associated with the position, support in ensuring effective time management, as well as ensuring a favorable context in the performance of the specific duties of the border police (Table 7).

Table 1

Model Summary 1

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.782 <sup>a</sup>	.611	.609	.42655	.611	287.911	1	183	.000
2	.816 <sup>b</sup>	.665	.661	.39704	.054	29.210	1	182	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), CONECTmedia									
b. Predictors: (Constant), CONECTmedia, LIDmedia									
c. Dependent Variable: Smedia									

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Std. coef. Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error				Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	.902	.197		4.588	.000			
	CONECTmedia	.805	.047	.782	16.968	.000	.782	.782	.782
2	(Constant)	.576	.193		2.987	.003			
	CONECTmedia	.509	.070	.495	7.254	.000	.782	.474	.311
	LIDmedia	.362	.067	.369	5.405	.000	.754	.372	.232
a. Dependent Variable: Smedia									

Table 2

Model Summary 2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.764 <sup>a</sup>	.584	.582	.42923	.584	262.634	1	187	.000
2	.784 <sup>b</sup>	.614	.610	.41457	.030	14.456	1	186	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), CONECTmedia									
b. Predictors: (Constant), CONECTmedia, LIDmedia									
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Std. Coeff. Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error				Zero-order	Partial	Part
	(Constant)	1.180	.198	-	5.971	.000	-	-	-
	CONECTmedia	.772	.048	.764	16.206	.000	.764	.764	.764
	(Constant)	.942	.201	-	4.691	.000	-	-	-
	CONECTmedia	.555	.073	.550	7.580	.000	.764	.486	.345
	LIDmedia	.265	.070	.276	3.802	.000	.703	.269	.173
a. Dependent Variable: Lmedia									

Table 3

**Group Statistics Lmedia**

Lmedia	Function		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
	Management		16	4.6500	.41633	.10408				
	Execution		190	4.3158	.67304	.04883				
Independent Samples Test Lmedia										
Lmedia	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Equal variances assumed		4.180	.042	1.952	204	.052	.33421	.17118	-.00329	.67171
Equal variances not assumed				2.907	22.24	.008	.33421	.11497	.09593	.57249

Table 4

**Group Statistics CARmedia**

CARmedia	Function		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
	Management		16	4.4792	.35070	.08768				
	Execution		182	4.1832	.69695	.05166				
Independent Samples Test Lmedia										
CARmedia	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval		
Equal variances assumed		4.488	.035	1.677	196	.095	.29602	.17647	-.05200	.64403
Equal variances not assumed				2.909	26.955	.007	.29602	.10176	.08720	.50484

Table 5

**Group Statistics MOTmedia**

MOTmedia	Function		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
	Management		16	4.2500	.42895	.10724				
	Execution		187	3.7701	.79944	.05846				
Independent Samples Test Lmedia										
MOTmedia	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval		
Equal variances assumed		4.558	.034	2.369	201	.019	.47995	.20263	.08040	.87949
Equal variances not assumed				3.930	25.062	.001	.47995	.12214	.22843	.73146

Table 6

Group Statistics SIGmedia										
SIGmedia	Function		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
	Management		16	4.1875	.46993	.11748				
	Execution		187	3.7634	.85065	.06221				
Independent Samples Test Lmedia										
SIGmedia	Levene's Test f		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval		
Equal variances assumed		5.690	.018	1.966	201	.051	.42413	.21575	-.00130	.84956
Equal variances not assumed				3.191	24.43	.004	.42413	.13293	.15003	.69824

Table 7

Group Statistics LIDmedia										
LIDmedia	Function		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
	Management		16	4.7344	.28090	.07023				
	Execution		187	4.1971	.68938	.05014				
Independent Samples Test Lmedia										
LIDmedia	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval		
Equal variances assumed		7.032	.009	3.090	203	.002	.53729	.17387	.19446	.88011
Equal variances not assumed				6.226	33.50	.000	.53729	.08629	.36182	.71275

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims at identifying the predictors of professional satisfaction and loyalty. The prediction model consists of 2 organizational variables (connection and leadership) that explain over 60% of the variance of both dependent variables. This result indicates that an engaged employee, emotionally connected to the institution where they work, has a higher level of professional satisfaction and, implicitly, will be willing to invest more effort and psychological energy in achieving the employer's overall goals (he will be less likely to change his job.)

The mediator of this type of subjective relationship is leadership itself, namely, the way in which managers at the level of each unit know how to stimulate the attachment of subordinated staff to their job, as it is known that financial

rewards or other types of benefits do not have a unique effect on job satisfaction and loyalty. The role of the manager is one of facilitator, catalyst for personal and professional growth processes of the team.

For this reason, we have further investigated the differences between management and execution factors from the perspective of eight organizational factors (career development, motivation, connection, job security, leadership, organizational support, trust in the intentions of colleagues and management) but also from the perspective of professional satisfaction and loyalty, in general.

The results indicate that middle management respondents feel more supported in developing their own career, believe that the institution contributes more to supporting their professional motivation, consider the employing institution to

be reliable and appreciate their superiors more than their subordinates.

With a view to ensuring the performance of public organization at the time of the study, in the sphere of influence of a regional crisis of armed conflict, predictors of job satisfaction and loyalty necessary to achieve the objectives are connection to the organization and leadership.

To maintain determining predictive factors for professional satisfaction and loyalty, the management of the organization should focus its attention and efforts towards execution, involving the middle-management in direct contact with the staff at the basic level. Directions of action, in terms of ensuring connection and leadership, must target the elements of culture, organizational climate, and leadership styles.

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## FACTORII PREDICTIVI AI SATISFACȚIEI PROFESIONALE ȘI LOIALITĂȚII NECESARE ÎN STIMULAREA PERFORMANȚEI ORGANIZAȚIEI PUBLICE

Articolul examinează în ce măsură dimensiunile organizaționale influențează factorii determinanți ai performanței organizaționale în organizația publică în contextual unei crize în proximitate. Au fost utilizate atât abordări calitative cât și cantitative prin observare privind relațiile de personal din organizația publică în perioada imediat după declanșarea conflictului armat din Ucraina precum și prin colectarea datelor și interpretarea rezultatelor chestionarului aplicat participanților la studiu de caz. În situație de criză, satisfacția profesională și loialitatea necesare în asigurarea performanței organizației publice sunt determinate în special de leadership și de conectarea/atașamentul față de organizație. Factorii predictivi ai satisfacției profesionale și ai loialității pot asigura conducerii organizației publice o direcție de acțiune în vederea asigurării realizării performanței însă succesul acesteia va fi limitat de constrângerile privind competențele funcționale și materiale impuse de cadrul juridic public. Acest studiu poate asigura o perfecționare a comportamentului managerilor în vederea asigurării satisfacției și loialității personalului organizației publice.

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