

Abstract

The presented rigorous thesis called "*Work Motivation of Police Officers at the Regional Police Directorate of the Ústí nad Labem Region: Motivation to Join, Stay, and Grow*" deals with the professional motivation of police officers throughout their career journey with the Police of the Czech Republic. The focus is primarily on the topic of professional motivation, as well as investigating the reasons and motivational influences that lead applicants to be interested in police work and the factors that lead officers to remain in service. The thesis highlights the path police officers may take and the psychological aspects that may affect them in terms of motivation to join, stay, and grow, or possibly leave the service.

The aim of the thesis is to accurately identify the important motivational factors that influence both the initial entry into the police service and continued service. Additionally, it aims to describe the circumstances that decrease the motivation of police officers in their duties and those that encourage them to remain. Finally, the thesis seeks to analyze the reasons why applicants and police officers terminate both the recruitment process and their service. This analysis can provide important answers to personnel questions in police work.

The literature review section therefore considers not only work motivation as such, its definition, and the factors that both enhance and diminish the level of motivation, but also selected processes related to the motivation to join and stay, such as the organizational police culture or identification with the role of a police officer. An integral part of the theoretical section is also the introduction of the Police of the Czech Republic and the circumstances associated with the commencement and termination of service. The chapters are supplemented with topics related to the system of the Police of the Czech Republic and the Regional Police Directorate of the Ústí nad Labem Region, where the author serves as a police psychologist and which provided the background for the research.

Three research groups contributed to achieving the goals of the exploratory research. The study included applicants interested in police service who, however, terminated the recruitment process after successfully passing the psychological examination. The second, main group consisted of a set of actively serving police officers. The last group included police officers who voluntarily decided to terminate their service.

The results provide a detailed insight into the issue of motivation from the perspective of the police officers and applicants themselves. A significant finding is that respondents apply for police work primarily due to an intrinsic conviction to help and protect, personal interest, and the diversity of the job. While they expect financial security and job stability, the lack of adequate financial compensation is perceived as a demotivating factor by 81,8% of respondents, along with insufficient rewards (80%) and additional salary components (76, 9%). In 78, 3% of cases, police officers also experience reduced motivation due to the absence of a humane approach; they miss praise, recognition, feedback, and respectful treatment. Conversely, 26,7% of police officers are motivated and helped to stay in service by a supportive work environment and good relationships among colleagues. This is a significant point for leaders to consider when fostering a positive workplace atmosphere.

I believe that this work could serve as a stepping stone for further research or internal police investigations. I also hope that the key findings will be of interest not only to the rank-and-file officers in active service but especially to their leaders and potentially the highest management, who are in a position to implement changes or steps to improve motivational processes.

Key words: work motivation of police officers; motivational factors of professional carrers; factors reducing motivation; Police of the Czech Republic; Regional Police Directorate of the Ústí nad Labem Region.