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**THE RELATION BETWEEN REMUNERATION  
AND JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY OF PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES IN POMERANIA REGION IN POLAND**

**ЗВ'ЯЗОК МІЖ ВІНАГОРОДОЮ І ЗАДОВОЛЕННЯМ ВІД РОБОТИ:  
ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ НА ПРИКЛАДІ СПІВРОБІТНИКІВ ДЕРЖАВНОГО  
УПРАВЛІННЯ В ПОМЕРАНІЇ В ПОЛЬЩІ**

## СВЯЗЬ МЕЖДУ ВОЗНАГРАЖДЕНИЕМ И УДОВЛЕТВОРЕНИЕМ ОТ РАБОТЫ: ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ НА ПРИМЕРЕ СОТРУДНИКОВ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ В ПОМЕРАНИИ В ПОЛЬШЕ

*Remuneration is considered one of the key factors encouraging people to work. However, its significance for the employee and its effect on job satisfaction remains unclear. The aim of this paper was determining how remuneration affects job satisfaction among public administration employees from one of Eastern-European countries. The study was conducted by carrying out a survey among employees of 10 public administration offices of the Pomerania Region in Poland. The analysis of the results allowed to draw conclusions on the significance of remuneration in the context of other satisfaction factors, and to assess how relative assessment of the amount of remuneration can affect the relation between remuneration and overall job satisfaction.*

*Винагорода вважається одним з ключових факторів, що заохочують людей до праці. Тим не менш, її значення для працівника і вплив на задоволеність роботою, залишається неясним. Метою даної роботи було визначення того, як винагорода впливає на задоволеність роботою серед співробітників державного управління в одній з країн Східної Європи. Дослідження було здійснено шляхом проведення опитування серед співробітників 10 відділень державного управління регіону Померанія в Польщі. Аналіз результатів дозволив зробити висновки про значення винагороди в контексті інших факторів задоволеності, а також оцінити, як порівняльна оцінка суми винагороди може вплинути на взаємозв'язок між винагородою і загальною задоволеністю роботою.*

*Вознаграждение считается одним из ключевых факторов, поощряющих людей работать. Тем не менее, его значение для работника и его влияние на удовлетворенность работой, остается неясным. Целью данной работы было определение того, как вознаграждение влияет на удовлетворенность работой среди сотрудников государственного управления в одной из стран Восточной Европы. Исследование было осуществлено путем проведения опроса среди сотрудников 10 отделений государственного управления региона Померания в Польше. Анализ результатов позволил сделать выводы о значении вознаграждения в контексте других факторов удовлетворенности, а также оценить, как сравнительная оценка суммы вознаграждения может повлиять на взаимосвязь между вознаграждением и общей удовлетворенности работой.*

**Keywords.** Job satisfaction, facets of job satisfaction, public sector, public administration, remuneration, compensation

**Ключові слова.** Задоволення від роботи, аспекти задоволеності роботою, державний сектор, державне управління, винагорода, компенсації.

**Ключевые слова.** Удовлетворение от работы, аспекты удовлетворенности работой, государственный сектор, государственное управление, вознаграждение, компенсации.

**Introduction.** Remuneration constitutes one of the factors affecting job satisfaction. However, its significance may differ, depending on the external factors (e.g. national culture) and the employees' characteristics (e.g. age or held position). Moreover, the effect of remuneration on job satisfaction might depend on the employees' subjective assessment of the amount of remuneration [see 36, 243-252]. Therefore, it is important to analyze the significance of remuneration in the context of other factors related to job satisfaction among employees in countries from different spheres of cultural influence. In particular, there is a lack of such studies conducted in Central and East European countries. Results of previous studies on the effect of remuneration on job satisfaction, conducted mostly in Anglo-Saxon and Asian countries, need to be verified due to the specific cultural, historical and economic conditions in Eastern European countries.

We attempted to show how the assessment of the level of remuneration affects the level of job satisfaction among public administration employees in Poland. This relationship is all the more significant in the face of the need for reforms of public administration in post-socialist countries. During the 45-year long period of centrally planned economy, Polish public administration employees had developed a specific

approach to their clients, who were treated not as customers, but rather intruders. This attitude was reinforced by the dominant role of public officials, who were, at the time, the sole overseers of goods which were in great demand, but in very short supply [29]. This deeply rooted approach gave rise to the development of peculiar and inappropriate relationships between public administration employees and their clients. The negative view of public administration was corroborated by the results of a research by Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, which showed that many Polish citizens still object to working in public administration offices [33]. Only 42% of respondents believe that Polish administration officials operate efficiently and perform their tasks quickly and on time. More than half of public administration clients in Poland continue to evaluate staff of public institutions negatively. The fact that in 2006, 72% of Poles declared that their trust in EU administration was greater than in the national one provides further indication of continuing need for improvement in the functioning of public administration in Poland [4, 69].

Presently, Poland, as a member state of the EU and the EUPAN (European Union Public Administration Network), is implementing procedures aimed at increasing customer satisfaction, in order to determine the role it plays in public affairs. The underlying idea is, that the public sector should be constantly evolving to meet new challenges and respond to changing needs of the society. Therefore, customer satisfaction management in public institutions is essential for assessing whether the officials are indeed conducting their professional duties in a professional manner [8]. This is not possible without changing the work attitude of public sector employees by properly developed incentive systems, aimed at increasing job satisfaction. This paper discusses the results of a survey carried out among 272 public administration officials employed at 10 local public administration offices. Based on the data gathered in the survey, we assessed the effect of remuneration on job satisfaction. Moreover, we analyzed how subjective assessment of the amount of remuneration may affect the level of satisfaction from remuneration.

**The significance of job satisfaction and factors determining job satisfaction.** Job satisfaction was a subject of interest for researchers and practitioners for over 80 years. Judge et al. reported that it was the subject of over 7,000 studies, up until the year 2000 [22, 25-26]. Job satisfaction can be defined as the positive and negative feelings and attitudes that relate to the duties performed by employees. According to Locke, job satisfaction is «a pleasurable or positive emotional state that results from appraisal of one's job or job experience» [27, 1304]. Job satisfaction is characterized in more detail by definitions relating to its source, which define it as the distance between what a person feels at work and what he or she actually experiences (according to subjective assessment) [20, 1007].

Interest surrounding studies identifying the factors affecting job satisfaction is a result of the significance which is currently placed on employees. One of the directions of current research is the analysis of the relation between satisfaction and efficiency at work. Previous studies on job satisfaction put forth hypotheses that there is a direct link between an employee's level of job satisfaction and efficiency. Modern studies disprove this notion. Being content with one's job and satisfied with its particular elements do not always ensure better and more efficient work of particular employees [16, 57]. However, the researchers agree that there is a codependence between employee satisfaction and efficiency in the context of the entire organization [17, 523-540]. Moreover, studies on job satisfaction show a positive correlation between job satisfaction of the employees and the satisfaction of their clients [26,167; 16,57]. Furthermore, job satisfaction is perceived as one of the elements assisting and reinforcing the motivation system [25, 247]. It is due to the fact that satisfied employees

create positive atmosphere in the workplace. The level of job satisfaction is also connected with absenteeism [13, 135-141] and turnover [3, 223-242]. Furthermore, insufficient level of job satisfaction can lead to counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) [30, 598-599; 38, 30-41]. CWBs can be defined as any behavior detrimental to the objectives of the organization, violating organization's standards, or facilitating the decline of productivity [12, 291-292]. CWBs are harmful, because they are voluntary and conscious decisions of the employees, who revert to such behaviors despite of the fact that their detection may result in sanctions imposed by the employer.

**The effect of remuneration on job satisfaction.** Remuneration is one of the most significant variables used when explicating the overall level of job satisfaction [34, 357-367]. Satisfaction from remuneration is defined as the congruency between an employee's expectations and actual remuneration. Employees assess their remuneration based on the equity principle, which is defined as «a comparison between what people believe they deserve to be paid and what others deserve to be paid» [21, 401]. Employees use two assessment criteria: internal and external equity. The former allows to assess an individual's remuneration in the context of their services to the organization (cf. Adams' Equity Theory). The latter allows to assess the level of an individual's remuneration in the context of remuneration received by other members of the organization and in the context of remuneration offered on similar positions in other organizations. As a result of these comparisons, an individual may feel under-rewarded, which in turn can lead to decrease in satisfaction from remuneration and, finally, to decreased work-efficiency, decreased commitment to work and even to an increase in fluctuation [1]. Faulk [10] has divided different levels of satisfaction from remuneration into: scope of reference (directing the actions of the employees either on the entire organization, or on own work) and sources of consequences (employees' rational or emotional grounds for functioning). Employees show the following attitudes and types of behavior towards their organization: altruism, politeness, conscientiousness, initiative, positive attitude to work. From among the attitudes and types of behavior towards work, the most prominent one is individual efficiency at work. The sources of consequences can be either rational or emotional. In the latter case, the assessment of equity of remuneration, i.e. feelings towards remuneration, its components and means of assigning it, plays a significant role. The results of a study by Faulk [10], on 526 employees of a public sector company, corroborate this relation. The effect of satisfaction from remuneration is limited to the attitudes and behaviors connected to an individual's work, and is not significantly connected to efficiency at work, it may even lead to reinforcing standards of behaviors aimed at maintaining the status quo. Also Gaertner [14] reported a lack of relation between the amount of remuneration and job satisfaction. However, results of studies show that job satisfaction is affected by feelings of equity.

Moreover, results of comparative studies show that the significance of remuneration for total job satisfaction is not the same among employees from work-groups singled out based on demographic factors or country of origin [e.g. 28, 45-66; 11, 559-580; 9, 272-297]. Varying levels significance placed on remuneration in different countries are mostly the result of their cultural and economic differences. The effect of the economic environment on the needs of employees can be explained with Maslow's Theory of Motivation. The more base needs, which include remuneration, constitute a more significant motivator in countries with lower standards of living [more: 18, 159-179]. Studies conducted among Dutch employees show that wages do not significantly affect job satisfaction [15, 363-367]. Furthermore, the analysis of a survey research in five Western countries and Hungary show that employees place great importance on intrinsic rewards, such as doing an interesting job and having autonomy at work [39, 811-828].

In contrast, research conducted among employees from Hong Kong [2, 573-596] and China [9, 272-297] reported financial rewards as the most significant factor. Also Rafikul and Ahmad [35, 344-362] found «high wages» were the most significant for Malaysian employees in all distinguished groups.

Sex is one of the main individual characteristics taken into account by researchers analyzing the effect of particular factors on employee satisfaction, seeing as sex and age are the two most fundamental demographic groups a person belongs to. Study results show men and women clearly differ in preferred satisfaction factors. Previous studies suggest that women's job satisfaction is strongly affected by social factors, while for men, autonomy at work and the possibility of self-realization of tasks and pay are some of the most important factors [32, 49-58]. Kamdron [24, 1211-1240] research shows that for female higher officials, recognition and good relationship are of high importance, while men consider responsibility as more important. A research among Chinese employees revealed that for women good pay is not as important a factor as for their male counterparts [9, 272-297].

**Methodology and Results.** The survey was conducted in 10 local public administration organizations, which gave consent for participation in the study. The researched organizations were located in Pomerania region, which, according to National Heritage Board of Poland, is one of most culturally diversified in Poland. Moreover, they were located in cities with diverse populations and with different economic situations and labor markets. Thus, the subjects enrolled into the study came from diverse cultural and economic background. The surveys were conducted among civil servants at local administration offices. Local public administration employees are in more direct contact with the public than civil servants employed at national level institutions. Focusing on just one type of organizations did not allow a wider generalization of the research results, but also offered certain advantages, allowing to demonstrate effects specific for the chosen type of organizations [5, 7-27]. Some demographic questions were also included in the survey. The questionnaire was anonymous and distributed to the participants by their office managers.

The study population comprised of 272 employees. The response rate was 31%. The respondents' respective positions in their organization were as follows: 14.12% held managerial positions, 49.8% were administration employees, 11.76% were blue-collar workers, and 24.31% — specialists. The majority of the respondents were female (64.34%) who held a university degree (74%). This sample, especially in respect to sex and age, reflects the composition of Polish public administration organizations where highly educated middle-aged women are overrepresented. According to statistics provided by Polish government in 2012, women employees made up about 69.4% of the workforce. Civilian workforce in Poland is mostly comprised of people in the age between 31-50 years old (55.3%). Employees under 30 years old comprise only 14.1% [6].

The survey consisted of a questionnaire with questions about the significance of particular factors comprising satisfaction for the employees (How important is each of the following things to you?) and, in the case of remuneration, assessment how common they are in the employees' organizations (How likely is it that each of these things would happen at your workplace?). The responses were given on a rating Likert scale, with 1 corresponding to completely not important/does not happen and 5 to very important/happens frequently. Moreover, the questionnaire contained questions about overall job satisfaction. The employees assessed their level of job satisfaction on a 1-4 scale, with 1 corresponding to really not satisfied and 4 to really satisfied. The questionnaire also contained question about their absolute income, i.e. which pay group

they are in, and about their relative income, i.e. how they assess their current income compared to remuneration offered in other public organizations.

A comparison of the significance of remuneration, such as basic pay, performance bonuses, employee benefits and 13 factors affecting job satisfaction allows to conclude that respondents indicated non-material factors affecting job satisfaction as more significant. Two factors, good relationship with co-workers (mean 4.7) and job security (mean 4.59), were named as most significant for the level of job satisfaction. The respondents rated basic salary (mean 3.91, item 13 among 16 factors listed in the questionnaire) as having low significance for their wellbeing at work, compared with other factors. They placed more significance on other types of remuneration, such as bonuses (significance at 4.44, item 5) and employee benefits (4.12, item 9).

We have also compared how male and female respondents assessed the significance of different elements of remuneration. The results are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1*

**DIFFERENCES IN HOW MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS ASSESS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF REMUNERATION**

	Females	Males
Basic Remuneration	4.01	3.71
Performance Bonuses	4.59	4.20
Employee Benefits	4.20	3.95

Pearson's correlation was used to analyze the relationships between job satisfaction and level of satisfaction from remuneration, bonuses, employee benefits and relative and absolute value of income. The results are presented in Table 2.

*Table 2*

**PEARSON'S CORRELATION BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION AND DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF REMUNERATION**

	Total Satisfaction	Assessment			Relative Income
		Basic Remuneration	Bonus	Employee Benefits	
Total Satisfaction					
Assessment :					
Basic Remuneration	0,36				
Bonus	0,35	0,55			
Employee Benefits	0,18	0,36	0,38		
Value of Income:					
absolute	0,05	0,10	-0,20	-0,31	
relative	0,32	0,38	0,21	0,08	0,35

$p < 0.05$

Analysis shows that absolute income was not significantly correlated with job satisfaction ( $r=0.05$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). There is a correlation between subjective assessment of received remuneration, compared with remuneration offered by other public organization, and total job satisfaction ( $r=0.32$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

We also tried to determine the level of satisfaction from remuneration, defined as the difference between expectations (assessed on a 5-level scale) and actual amount of particular elements of remuneration (also assessed on a 5-level scale). The smaller the difference, the higher the assessment of satisfaction from particular elements of

remuneration. The table below presents overall satisfaction of the study population and separate results for males and females.

*Table 3*

**SATISFACTION FROM REMUNERATION**

	Participants in Total	According to Sex	
		Males	Females
Basic Remuneration	1,36	-1,01	-1,58
Performance Bonuses	2,19	-1,88	-2,38
Employee Benefits	1,08	-0,81	-1,26

Moreover, we analyzed the relation between satisfaction from particular elements of remuneration and overall job satisfaction. The results are presented in Table 4.

*Table 4*

**CORRELATION BETWEEN SATISFACTION FROM PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF REMUNERATION AND OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION**

	Overall Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction from Basic Remuneration	Satisfaction from Performance Bonuses
Overall Job Satisfaction	1,00		
Satisfaction from Basic Remuneration	0,25	1,00	
Satisfaction from Performance Bonuses	0,32	0,62	1,00
Satisfaction from Employee Benefits	0,22	0,5	0,59

$p < 0.05$

The results presented in the Table above show that performance bonuses are the element of remuneration with the most significant effect on overall job satisfaction. The respondents indicated employee benefits as the least important element.

**Conclusions.** The results of this study show that public administration employees in Poland place less importance on material remuneration in achieving job satisfaction, than on other factors. This is contrary to the results of previous studies conducted among Polish employees of retail companies [19, 383-392]. This inconsistency may be the result of different types of studied organizations or, what is more probable, the result of changes in the attitudes and expectations of employees in the span of the last 15 years. On the other hand, the results of this study are consistent with the results of studies on satisfaction in West European countries and the USA, where remuneration is not indicated as the main factor affecting job satisfaction [39, 811-828].

Correlation between the amount of remuneration and job satisfaction confirmed that subjective assessment of remuneration is much more significant than the assessment of absolute remuneration (in case of current study, comparison with remuneration offered in other public organizations, not gross remuneration).

Vast discrepancies in the significance of particular elements of remuneration for men and women are mostly the result of different needs of these two groups, determined mainly by cultural and society factors and the resultant roles assigned to the sexes. The results of the study on the amount of remuneration of men and women show that these discrepancies still exist. Women, despite their education, work experience, sector of economy they work in or position they hold, earn 20% less than men [37]. Similar discrepancies are reported by the Supreme Audit Office (NIK). An audit carried out in 2013 in public administration offices in Poland showed an almost 11% discrepancy in



remuneration between male and female employees [7]. Differences in remuneration are caused by many factors, however the attitude of female employees towards remuneration and resulting job satisfaction is mostly the result of women's awareness about their position on the job market, which is strongly determined by the periods of inactivity caused by maternity. Still, previous studies show that these discrepancies disappear in countries which offer opportunities for men and women (such as Scandinavian countries) [see 23, 75-94].

The results on satisfaction from remuneration show that the employees of Polish public administration are the least satisfied with performance bonuses (the greatest difference between expected and actual amount). It is noteworthy, this factor had the strongest positive correlation with overall job satisfaction. The significance of performance bonuses in job satisfaction is corroborated by the results of previous studies [17, 523-540]. The large disproportion between expectations and actual situation can be caused by the relatively low bonuses received by the employees from the public sector, in comparison with the private sector [37]. This discrepancy is the result of the inability to calculate work productivity on some public administration positions. Therefore, performance bonuses are not as diversified as the employees expect.

The major role of the current study is supplying information on how material factors contribute to overall job satisfaction among Polish employees, in order to provide a better understanding of job satisfaction and better insight into job-related attitudes. This knowledge is vital for achieving the desired level of employee satisfaction and, in consequence, improve the efficiency and quality of public service. This research also expanded earlier findings in this field. A comparison of the obtained results with previous research constitutes a material for cross-cultural comparison.

The main limitation of this study was limiting the study population to public sector employees. On the one hand, it allowed for a better understanding of their attitudes, which is significant in the context of previous studies reporting differences in levels of job satisfaction between public and private sector employees [more: 31]. On the other hand, focusing on just one type of organizations did not allow a wider generalization of the research results. Future studies should include employees from the private sector.

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