Police Organizational Culture and Job Satisfaction: A Comparison of Law Enforcement Officers’ Perceptions in Two Midwestern States in the U.S.

Kaan Boke, Mahesh K. Nalla

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This article examines the relationship between organizational culture, police enforcement strategies, and job satisfaction among police officers working in various cities in two Midwestern states in the United States.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Data for the study was gathered from 669 respondents in five medium and large sized police organizations in two adjacent Midwestern States. More specifically, police officers’ (supervisors and non-supervisors) perceptions about organizational factors of job satisfaction are examined. Independent variables included both individual and organizational characteristics.

Findings: Findings suggest that organizational characteristics are better predictors of job satisfaction than individual factors. Among the individual factors, in contrast to what was found by prior research, race was the only significant factor in predicting job satisfaction in state wide comparisons, whereas management support, social cohesion, and job challenges emerged as strong predictors of job satisfaction.

Research limitations/implications: Research is limited to mid-Western states. Given the decentralized nature of policing in the U.S. further research should examine variations between regions and states.

Originality/Value: Most research on police officers’ job satisfaction has been undertaken in relation to individual factors while ignoring the role of organizational culture and environmental factors. This research examines the determinants of individual,
organizational and environmental factors on law enforcement officers’ job satisfaction.

**UDK**: 351.741(73)

**Keywords**: job satisfaction, organizational culture, police, Midwest, motivation

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between work environment and job satisfaction has been recognized for over sixty years since Maslov (1943) first introduced his theory of the “hierarchy of needs”. In it, he posited that as humans’ basic needs are met they push hard to achieve higher needs in both the private and public sectors and, thus acknowledges the importance of human motivation. Herzberg and his colleagues (1959) expanded Maslov’s work and argued that whilst job factors such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and the nature of work do influence job performance, other factors such as work environment and relations with supervisors determine employee satisfaction. These contributions were stepping stones which influenced a large body of research in both the private and public sectors with well over 3,000 studies conducted on the determinants of job satisfaction (Mitchell, Larson 1987). In 1991, a key word index search on “job satisfaction” in the PSYCINFO database produced over 6,000 hits for articles and monographs (Jayaratne, 1993).

This enormous amount of research focus on both the private and public sectors has led to an adoption of reforms aimed at bringing about change in organizations to increase job performance and worker motivation. However, research on one sector of public organizations, namely, law enforcement agencies and police officers’ job satisfaction, has received very sparse attention. Buzawa and her colleagues (1994) identified about twenty articles that examine the determinants of police officers’ job satisfaction, making this field one of the most under-researched fields of criminal justice (Dantzker, 1994). Most of the earlier work focuses rather narrowly on the relationship between demographic characteristics such as gender on job satisfaction (Belknap, Shelley, 1992; Buzawa, 1984; Buzawa et al., 1994; Hunt, McCadden, 1985), ethnicity (Buzawa, 1984; Buzawa et al., 1994), rank (Dantzker, 1994; Buzawa, 1984; Hunt, McCadden, 1985) and education (Buzawa, 1984; Sherman, 1980; Dantzker, 1992). Research findings were mixed in terms of their potential to explain job satisfaction although significant relationships were identified by earlier work in relation to the positive impact of education on police work (Dantzker, 1994; Buzawa, 1984; Sherman, 1980). With the exception of a few more recent research studies that go beyond demographic variables and focus on work environment (Zhao et al., 1999), very little research addresses the important issues of organizational and community factors, including management support, job challenges, social networks, and citizen cooperation on job satisfaction. Further, most of the earlier studies focus on single city law enforcement agencies (e.g., Buzawa, 1984; Zhao et al., 1999).

The aim of this article is to advance the knowledge of determinants of police officers’ job satisfaction in two Midwestern states in the U.S. More specifically,
this article examines the impact of demographic, as well as organizational and environmental factors, on officers’ job satisfaction. Additional analyses of three major cities in these two states were conducted to examine for similarities and differences on the determinants of job satisfaction in the two states.

2 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND JOB SATISFACTION

Herzberg (1968) identified many factors that contribute to job satisfaction. He argued that apart from the importance of the work itself, other attributes such as the responsibility that comes with the job and the recognition one receives from work greatly influence job satisfaction. Using this perspective as a springboard, researchers developed a more comprehensive approach to understanding larger work environments, through the study of organizational culture and its impact upon human relations and work conditions. Organizational culture is a socially constructed phenomenon consisting of a set of values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns (Denison, 1983) which not only conveys a sense of identity to its members (Willmott, 1993) but is also shared by the members (Weick, 1979) and influences the commitment of its members to the organization beyond themselves (Willmott, 1993). Organizational culture consists of informal rules (Deal, Kennedy, 1982) with a, “set of symbols, ceremonies and myths that communicates the underlying values and beliefs of that organization to its employees” (Ouchi, 1981: 41).

A basic understanding of culture is essential to the understanding of formal and informal employee behaviors. Organizational culture influences employees both directly and indirectly. Research from mainstream business organizations suggests that organizational climate influences productivity, effectiveness, performance (Denison, 1990; Denison, Mishra, 1995; O’Reilly, 1989), job satisfaction, (Jackofsky, Slocum, 1987), innovativeness (Lorsch, 1985), and leadership and decision-making (Sapienza, 1985). Subcultures within larger organizations are shaped by conditions such as differential interaction based on structure, location, size, and division of labor; shared experiences, leading to similar personal characteristics and social cohesion (Louis, 1985; Trice, Beyer, 1993).

2.1 Police Organizational Culture

Police organizational culture in the U.S. and other developed countries has been studied for more than forty years (Paoline, 2004). The conception of culture in police literature is primarily drawn from anthropological and sociological research (Chan, 1997). Essentially, police culture is a set of ideas, customs, accepted practices, information and rules of conduct, and core skills that define ‘good police work’ and give meaning to police work (Manning, 1977, 1989; Kingshott et al., 2004). Most of this work relates to the relationship between police culture and police use of force, corruption, deviant behavior, discretion and management (Harrison, 1998).

McDonald, Gaffigan and Greenberg (1997) suggest that the concept of police culture includes the merging of two main elements: the image of objective and
professional crime fighters and a system of informal beliefs and behaviors. Skolnick (1966) argues that police develop a “working personality” as a consequence of their work environment, especially because of the essential elements of their work conditions—danger, authority, and efficiency. He states that the potential dangers of routine police work lead police officers to develop feelings of suspicion towards, and isolation from, the public. Further, Skolnick claims that when police exert authority, this action limits citizens’ liberty, which leads to some citizens resisting or challenging police officers’ authority and that this response reinforces the danger in police work.

Individual, organizational and environmental factors affect officers’ understanding of their organizational culture, which in turn helps shape their orientation towards police work and, subsequently, their satisfaction with the work itself. Most research on police officers’ job satisfaction has been done in relation to individual factors while ignoring the role of organizational culture and environmental factors. Following Herzberg’s (1968) theory that work environment is an important variable that explains job satisfaction, literature drawn from organizational studies showing the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction are also included in this study in order to examine the determinants of job satisfaction. This study thus attempts to fill the void by examining determinants comprising individual and organizational factors on police officers’ job satisfaction in two Midwestern states, namely Michigan and Ohio. Further, this article compares three major cities within these two states: Detroit (Michigan), and Columbus and Cleveland (Ohio) to examine how comparable these factors are in explaining job satisfaction in departments which are located in similar cultural contexts.

2.2 Methodology

Data were gathered from police officers in five Midwest (Michigan and Ohio) cities. More specifically, police officers’ (supervisors and non-supervisors) perceptions about organizational factors of job satisfaction are examined. Specifically, this study examines whether the dimensions of organizational culture, in addition to individual factors, affect police officers’ perceptions about job satisfaction.

2.3 Survey Instrument

This study intends to acquire a thorough understanding of the views of police officers. In this study Zeitz, Russell and Ritchie’s (1997) organizational culture index is used. Based on an extensive literature review, Zeitz et al. (1997) developed ten priori dimensions of organizational culture and a factor analysis of results from 866 respondents indicated five essential dimensions of organizational culture. The instruments developed by Zeitz et al. have been utilized in various studies (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2001; Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2005; Cameron et al., 2004; Carmeli, 2005; Chen et al., 2005; Douglas, Fredendall, 2004; Kayis et al., 2003; Korunka et al., 2003; Lee et al., 2003; Payne et al., 2002; Pool, 2000; Prajogo,
McDermott, 2005; Sridhar et al., 2004; Swaffin-Smith et al., 2002) and, “the scales have very acceptable psychometric properties in measuring culture attributes” (Pool, 2000: 375).

2.4 Measurement of Variables

For this study, data was collected utilizing a questionnaire divided into two sections. The first section was designed to collect socio-demographic information on police officers, including age, gender, experience, rank, race, population of city of origin, and family and relatives’ occupations in specific fields, which allowed for a comparison of different groups of police officers. The second section of the study was designed to evaluate individual officers’ perceptions of the different dimensions of organizational culture.

Following Cooke and Rousseau’s (1988) suggestion, for this study organizational culture is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct with each dimension being an essential and significant element of the larger organization. The current study has adopted Zeitz et al.’s (1997) organizational culture index and also includes several different dimensions related to police work. The reliability and validity of these scales were extensively tested by Zeitz et al. (1997) and additional factor and reliability tests are also conducted in this study.

In addition to Zeitz et al. (1997), extensive studies of organizational culture dimensions were carried out by Berry (1991), Carr and Littman (1990), Crosby (1979), Dean and Evans (1994), Denison (1996), Gordon and DiTomaso (1992), Hunt (1992), Juran (1995), Lawler, Mohrman and Ledford (1995), McMillan (1989), O’Reilley, Chatman and Caldwell (1991), Payne and Mansfield (1973), Payne, Nielsen and Tyran (2002), Ross (1993), Rousseau (1990), Schmidt and Finnegan (1992), Scholtes (1988) and Xenikou and Furnham (1996). In this study, five dimensions of organizational culture are used to measure the self perceptions of police officers and their relationships to job satisfaction. These dimensions are: (1) management support, (2) job challenges, (3) loyalty, (4) social cohesion, and (5) citizen cooperation.

2.5 Research Sites, Samples and Administration of Questionnaires

**Michigan**: One large city and two medium sized cities in Michigan were chosen for this study. Law enforcement agencies comprised of more than 150 police officers were identified and contacted for permission to administer the survey. Detroit, Ann Arbor and Southfield Police Departments gave permission to administer the surveys. Detroit, with a population of approximately 952,000 people, is the biggest city in Michigan. Detroit PD is comprised of 4,804 employees (4,154 sworn officers) and is the sixth biggest local police department in the U.S. City police is divided into six newly structured police districts: (1) Northwest, (2) Southwest, (3) Eastern, (4) Northeastern, (5) Central, and (6) Western.
Table 1: Study Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full time Employees</th>
<th>Sworn Officers (Number &amp; Percent)</th>
<th>Officer Assigned to respond to calls (Number &amp; Percent)</th>
<th>City Population</th>
<th>Officers per 10,000 residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MICHIGAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>4,804</td>
<td>4,154 (%86)</td>
<td>2,186 (%53)</td>
<td>951,270</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Arbor</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>159 (%70)</td>
<td>72 (%39)</td>
<td>114,024</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southfield</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>157 (%89)</td>
<td>119 (%76)</td>
<td>78,296</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OHIO</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>2,114</td>
<td>1,787 (%84)</td>
<td>1,535 (%88)</td>
<td>763,351</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>2,386</td>
<td>1,822 (%76)</td>
<td>800 (%44)</td>
<td>478,403</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Reaves & Hickman (2004: 26, 28); U.S. census data (2000) and official websites of police departments.

Ann Arbor, with a population of approximately 114,000 people, is the one 'university city' in Michigan. Ann Arbor PD is comprised of 226 employees (159 sworn officers). Southfield, with a population of approximately 78,300 people, is a medium size city with 176 employees (157 sworn officers).

Because of the different sizes of the cities, different methods of survey administration were utilized. For Ann Arbor and Southfield, surveys were distributed (total three hundred) to the entire department. For Detroit, due to its size, the department authorized distribution of three hundred surveys to randomly selected officers in each of the six districts.

**Ohio**: Two large cities, Columbus and Cleveland, were selected. Columbus, with a population of approximately 763,351, is the capital city of Ohio. Columbus PD, comprised of 2,114 employees (1,787 sworn officers), is the second biggest local police department in Ohio, and is the twenty fourth biggest local police department in the U.S.

Cleveland, with a population of approximately 478,403, is the second biggest city of Ohio. Cleveland PD is comprised of 2,386 employees (1,822 sworn officers) and is the biggest local police department in Ohio, and is the twenty first largest local police department in the U.S. In total, seven hundred surveys were distributed to Cleveland and Columbus police departments (three hundred and fifty for each).

### 2.6 Dependent Variable

In this study, officers’ job satisfaction was used as a dependent variable. Job satisfaction was measured by using four questions which were designed on a five point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ = 1 to ‘strongly agree’ = 5 (see Appendix). A high score reflects higher levels of job satisfaction. Questions relating to satisfaction with being a police officer, looking forward to going to work every day, and
if they had a choice to restart their careers would they choose to become a police officer were among the questions included in this scale. All the items were loaded in their intended scale, with item loadings ranging from .72 to .92 and communalities were greater than .50. The job satisfaction factor explains 69 percent of the common variance and has a Cronbach’s alpha of .84.

2.7 Independent Variables

Independent variables are divided into individual or demographic characteristics and organizational and environmental dimensions.

Individual and Demographic Factors: These micro-level variables dominate the police organizational culture literature (e.g. Crank, Payn, Jackson, 1993; Davis, 1984; Fielding, Fielding, 1987; Shernock, 1992; Sun, Payne, 2004; Worden, 1993; Walker, 1983) and police job satisfaction literature (Belknap, Shelley, 1992; Buzawa, 1984, Buzawa et al., 1994; Hunt, McCadden, 1985; Dantzker, 1992, 1994; Sherman, 1980; Zhao et al., 1999). This study includes the following variables: gender, education, experience, population of city of origin, and officer rank.

Organizational culture and environmental dimensions: Management support, job challenges, loyalty, social cohesion, and citizen cooperation are included in this study. Each of the dimensions is evaluated with between three and five items/questions (see Appendix). The answer to each question is coded on a five point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ = 1 to ‘strongly agree’ = 5. The scales are reliable, with all six scales having a Cronbach’s alpha of greater than .70, and the lowest alpha being .70, associated with both ‘job challenge’, and the highest alpha of .86 associated with ‘improvement’ scale.

Overall, and drawing from previous literature, this article assumes that individual, organizational and environmental factors have significant effects on police officers’ perceptions of job satisfaction. Also this study believes that police officers’ environment (in particular, State and City differences) has the largest effect on police officers’ perceptions given the decentralized nature of police organizations in the U.S. It can also be assumed that dimensions of the organizational culture and orientation to police work explain more variance in the police officers’ perceptions than individual and organizational factors do.

3 FINDINGS

Seven hundred questionnaires (350 in each city) were administered to randomly selected police officers and supervisors in Ohio’s two police departments, out of which 350 useable surveys (50 percent response rate) were received. Six hundred questionnaires were distributed in Michigan and 319 useable surveys were returned (53 percent response rate).
3.1 Characteristics of the Respondent

The demographic characteristics of the police officers in Michigan and Ohio are presented in Table 2. In Michigan nearly a quarter of all the respondents are 30 years or younger, 43 percent are in the age group of 31 to 40 years of age, and the remaining 34 percent are 41 years or older. From the Ohio group, only 6 percent of the officers are in the age group of 30 years or younger, while 42 percent are in the 31-40 years age group, and the remaining half of all officers are 41 years or older. A little over two-thirds of all respondents in Michigan and Ohio are male. A larger percentage of officers in Michigan have University degrees (43 percent) compared to Ohio (29 percent). Michigan respondents are nearly equally distributed in the experience categories of 10 years or less and 11 years and more. However, over two-thirds of the respondents from Ohio have 11 or more years experience and nearly 85 percent of the respondents from Michigan are line officers compared to Ohio's 70 percent. Finally, 50 percent of Michigan respondents are non-white compared to 28 percent from Ohio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Michigan (n = 319)</th>
<th>Ohio (n = 350)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 years or less</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 years and more</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police School</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University or above</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years or less</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 years or more</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of city of origin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250,000 or less</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250,001 or more</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rank</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Officers</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Comparison of Organizational Characteristics

In addition to the individual and demographic characteristics, this study also compares the mean scores of the organizational dimensions included in the study. The findings are presented in Table 3. On each of the five organizational dimensions included in our study Ohio’s police officers rate their perceptions favorably towards each factor relative to Michigan’s respondents. For example, on the issue of management support, Ohio’s mean score was 24.43 compared to Michigan’s 19.09. This finding suggests that Ohio’s respondents are slightly more positive about their management support and this mean difference is found to be statistically significant. Similarly, Ohio’s respondents indicate that their jobs are slightly more challenging, have a stronger social cohesion, and enjoy more positive citizen cooperation. All these mean differences are found to be statistically significant. On the issue of loyalty, there appears to be no strong evidence of loyalty to their fellow officers in both states. This finding is not statistically significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALES</th>
<th>Michigan (N = 319)</th>
<th>Ohio (N = 350)</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Support (8-40)</td>
<td>19.09 8.04</td>
<td>24.43 6.66</td>
<td>**87.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Challenges (5-25)</td>
<td>17.76 4.11</td>
<td>18.42 3.72</td>
<td>*4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Cohesion (4-20)</td>
<td>13.06 2.98</td>
<td>13.55 3.09</td>
<td>*4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Cooperation (3-15)</td>
<td>9.17 2.88</td>
<td>10.04 2.35</td>
<td>**18.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty (3-15)</td>
<td>6.73 2.50</td>
<td>7.07 2.19</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean scores: 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree on each of the items in each scale. p < .05, ** p < .01 (two-tailed)

3.3 Determinants of Job Satisfaction in Michigan and Ohio

Findings on police officers’ perceptions of job satisfaction are presented in Table 4. This model suggests (R².312) a combined variance of 31 percent of the variation in job satisfaction as explained by these variables. Police officers’ perceptions regarding the challenging nature of the police job is the strongest (Beta .261) predictor of officers’ job satisfaction in Michigan. Diagnostics for multi-colinearity are performed to make sure that the independent variables are not correlated. The statistical significance of the regression coefficients indicates that individual and organizational factors have significant effects on perceptions of job satisfaction. In Michigan, non-white officers, as compared to white officers, are less satisfied with their job. Officers who perceive a high level of management support and positive citizen cooperation are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Finally, the challenging nature of the police job positively contributes to the officers’ satisfaction with their jobs in the Michigan group.
In Ohio, police officers who perceive a high level of management support and social cohesion in their work are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The challenging nature of policework positively contributes to officers’ satisfaction with their job in the Ohio group. Individual factors do not significantly contribute to the model in Ohio. The R squared (.333) value indicates that 33 percent of the variation in job satisfaction is explained by these variables. Police officers’ perceptions about the challenging nature of the police job is the strongest (Beta .400) predictor of officers’ job satisfaction in the Ohio group.

### 3.4 Determinants of Job Satisfaction in Detroit (MI), Columbus (OH), and Cleveland (OH)

The findings in Table 5 indicate the relationship between various independent variables and job satisfaction in three big police organizations in two Midwestern U.S. states. Statistical significance of the regression coefficients indicates that individual and organizational factors have significant effects on perceptions of job satisfaction.

In Detroit, police officers who perceive a high level of social cohesion in their work are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The challenging nature of police work positively contributes to the officers’ satisfaction with their jobs in the Detroit group. Individual factors do not significantly affect officers’ job satisfaction in the Detroit group.
### Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Detroit (N=201)</th>
<th>Columbus (N=187)</th>
<th>Cleveland (N=163)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience (Experienced =1)</td>
<td>-.732/.585</td>
<td>-.413/.431</td>
<td>-.523/.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (Male=1)</td>
<td>-.356/.578</td>
<td>.259/.452</td>
<td>-.298/.455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (University or more=1)</td>
<td>.014/.582</td>
<td>.325/.350</td>
<td>-1.172/.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (Non-White=1)</td>
<td>-.400/.595</td>
<td>.234/.469</td>
<td>.301/.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer from larger population</td>
<td>.028/.604</td>
<td>.403/.333</td>
<td>.198/.437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank (Supervisors =1)</td>
<td>.416/.920</td>
<td>- .095/.391</td>
<td>1.116/.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Culture Dimensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Support</td>
<td>.046/.037</td>
<td>.069/.030</td>
<td>.049/.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Cooperation</td>
<td>.178/.098</td>
<td>.004/.079</td>
<td>.020/.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Challenges</td>
<td>.247/.063</td>
<td>.268/.048</td>
<td>.338/.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>-.004/.106</td>
<td>-.035/.085</td>
<td>-.007/.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Cohesion</td>
<td>.193/.090</td>
<td>.120/.057</td>
<td>.216/.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R^2</strong></td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.302</td>
<td>0.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>4.032</td>
<td>6.658</td>
<td>7.639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The R square (.213) value indicates that 21 percent of the variation in the job satisfaction is explained by these variables. Police officers’ perceptions about the challenging nature of their work is the strongest (Beta .289) predictor of officers’ job satisfaction in the Detroit group.

In Columbus, officers who perceive a high level of management support and social cohesion in their work are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The challenging nature of their work positively contributes toward officers’ satisfaction with their jobs in the Columbus group. On the other hand, none of the individual factors significantly contributes to the model. The R squared (.302) value indicates that 30 percent of the variation in job satisfaction is explained by these variables. The police officers’ perceptions about the challenging nature of their work is the strongest (Beta .396) predictor of officers’ job satisfaction in the Columbus study.

In Cleveland, supervisors compare to line officers and less educated officers compare to educated officers and are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Officers who perceive a high level of social cohesion in their work are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The challenging nature of the police job positively contributes to officers’ satisfaction with their jobs in the Cleveland study. The R squared (.387) value indicates that almost 39 percent of the variation in job satisfaction is explained by these variables. Police officers’ perceptions about the
The challenging nature of policework are the strongest (Beta .426) predictor of officers' job satisfaction in the Cleveland sample.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the determinants of police job satisfaction in two U.S. Midwestern states, Michigan and Ohio. Additionally, it compares the determinants of police job satisfaction in three major cities in the Midwest: Detroit, Columbus, and Cleveland. Among the individual factors, and in contrast to the findings of previous research, race was the only significant factor in predicting job satisfaction in statewide comparisons. More specifically, in Michigan, non-white officers were less likely to be satisfied with their jobs. With regards to the organizational dimensions, in Michigan, officers who perceive positive management support, citizen cooperation and job challenges experience satisfaction with their jobs while in Ohio, officers who perceive greater management support, job challenges, and social cohesion are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. In a citywide comparison, at the individual level, some subtle differences are found. Officers who are more educated and non-supervisors (Cleveland) express less satisfaction with their jobs. At the organizational level, Columbus officers are the only group who feel job satisfaction as a result of management support. However, in all three cities, officers who feel their jobs are challenging and where strong social networks exist, express greater job satisfaction.

The findings suggest that organizational factors are stronger predictors of job satisfaction among officers than individual and demographic variables. Clearly, contrary to earlier findings on the positive relationship between education and job satisfaction, this study's findings challenge the conventional wisdom that better educated officers have greater job satisfaction. The Cleveland sample was the only exception to this rule. This is in some ways an interesting finding in itself despite the fact that Cleveland and Columbus are two of the biggest cities in Ohio and are located within close proximity of each other. More research is needed in this area to tease out the differences between education and job satisfaction whilst holding other environmental factors constant. Similarly, the notion that senior officers have greater cynicism is also not apparent from this study. As Niederhoffer (1967), and other later studies established, the notion that length of service is related to diminished job satisfaction and increased cynicism has not been supported by the findings of this study. Thus, contrary to earlier work, individual level variables appear to have less impact on job satisfaction.

Overall, the findings suggest a multifaceted explanation of job satisfaction amongst police officers and an absence of uniform findings across police agencies situated in similar situational and cultural contexts. This is apparently due to the political nature of police organizations in decentralized bureaucracies such as in the U.S. The findings, however, suggest that the organizational culture of police departments plays a significant role in influencing job satisfaction. Clearly, those police organizations that do a good job of listening to the feedback of officers and encourage open channels of communication between line officers and supervisors
appear to have a positive impact on job satisfaction. Social cohesion, a factor representing a police culture with strong bonds and networks among the officers has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction within all three cities. The presence of strong and cohesive police departments is not only reflective of the police culture in general but also of the strong organizational culture that promotes social networks and camaraderie among its cadres.

A factor that is found to be strongly associated with job satisfaction among officers in all three cities was the challenge offered by a particular role. That is, officers who find their job challenging also find greater satisfaction in going to work. This further supports the earlier finding that management and supervisory support is crucial in creating positive work environments. Perhaps, the most interesting findings are the lack of relationship between citizen cooperation and loyalty with job satisfaction. Regarding citizen cooperation, one can assume that given that most police work relates to interacting with citizens, their perception of cooperation has no impact on job satisfaction. Similarly, the perception of loyalty to the group is not related to job satisfaction. These findings are interesting given that most of the cities in the study group (with the exception of Detroit) have a formal organizational mandate of community policing. Given these formal arrangements for establishing closer ties with the community, future research should address whether or not departments with formal community policing programs perceive greater citizen cooperation and if such relationships positively impact upon job satisfaction.

**LITERATURE**


**About the Authors:**

*Kaan Boke*, Ph.D., Turkey, Ankara, bokekaan@msu.edu or kaan_boke@yahoo.com.  
*Mahesh K. Nalla*, Ph.D., School of Criminal Justice, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824, USA. Email: nalla@msu.edu.

**Appendix**

**Job Satisfaction:** Intended to measure officers’ job satisfaction. Items loadings ranged from .72 to .92 and communalities were greater than .50. Job satisfaction scale had Cronbach’s alpha of .84.

1. I am satisfied with being a police officer.
2. If I had the opportunity to go back to the day I decided to become a police officer, I would choose to become a police officer again.
3. I really look forward to coming to work every day.
4. I measure up to the job’s standards.

**Management Support:** Intended to measure officers’ perceptions about management support. Items loadings ranged from .64 to .84 and communalities were greater than .45. Management support had Cronbach’s alpha of .92.
1. There is a strong commitment to quality at all levels of this organization.
2. Members of this organization show concern for the need for quality.
3. Continuous quality improvement is an important goal of this organization.
4. Top police managers in this organization follow up on suggestions for improvement.
5. Our top management tries to make this organization a good place to work.
6. Top police managers in my department set clear goals for quality improvement.
7. Police managers here try to plan ahead for changes that might affect our performance.
8. People in this organization are aware of its overall mission.

**Job Challenges:** Intended to measure the extent to which police officers feel that police job demanded them to use a variety of abilities and provided them with new challenges. Items loadings ranged from .55 to .73 and communalities were greater than .30. Job challenges had Cronbach's alpha of .70.

1. The job requires me to use a number of complex or high-level skills.
2. I have new and interesting things to do in my work.
3. My work challenges me.
4. The job is simple and repetitive (Reverse Coded).
5. I am never bored at work since I have many different things to do.

**Loyalty:** Intended to measure loyalty amongst the officers. Items loadings ranged from .82 to .88 and communalities were greater than .67. Loyalty factor had Cronbach's alpha of .82.

1. If my fellow officer makes a mistake at work, it is my responsibility to protect him.
2. I will never report against my fellow officer even if he has violated rules.
3. If I violate a rule, I expect my fellow officer to protect me.

**Citizen Cooperation:** Intended to measure officer’s perception about the citizen cooperation with police. Items loadings ranged from .73 to .88 and communalities were greater than .53. Citizen cooperation factor had Cronbach’s alpha of .72.

1. Citizens would often call the police if they saw something suspicious.
2. Citizens would often provide information about a crime if they knew something and were asked by police.
3. Citizens are willing to work with the police and try to solve neighborhood problems.

**Social Cohesion:** Intended to measure officers’ perceptions about the social cohesion in the organization. Items loadings ranged from .67 to .88 and communalities were greater than .40. Social cohesion scale had Cronbach’s alpha of .79.
1. Officers in my work unit enjoy their co-workers.
2. Co-workers in my work unit are like a family.
3. Problems exist here between co-workers. (Reverse Coded)
4. I trust my fellow officers to do what is in the best interests of the organization.