

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR OFFICERS OF THE POLICE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the significance of performance appraisal for officers of the Police of the Czech Republic. The specific detail of police service is given based on the fact that the police officers are in active service. The introduction states the legal definition of the Police of the Czech Republic, describes the current system for appraising individual officers, and defines the basic concepts of the appraisal methodology and the expected benefits the output of the appraisal will bring to the officers evaluated and, ultimately, to the police force as a whole. The second section of the paper focuses on acquiring feedback on the officer performance appraisal system in place.

There is a whole range of research directions in relation to this issue, and this paper addresses the assessment of the research prediction regarding whether there is a difference in opinions of respondents from the sample group on certain pages of the performance appraisal between regular and superior officers. The sample group consisted of students doing combined studies at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague. The questionnaire survey was carried out in 2011 and the sample group was composed of 502 respondents. The author studies the overall process of performance appraisal for members of the police force and has performed a number of research projects on this issue. The author has presented some of the findings from his research (*Šugár, Jedinák, 2010, p. 195 – 224*) in his published works (*Mládková, Jedinák, 2011, p. 98 – 107*).

Key words: officer of Police of Czech Republic, performance appraisal, appraisal methods, prediction.

Classification JEL: M12 – Personnel Management

1 Legal definition of the Police of the Czech Republic

The Police of the Czech Republic was established in 1991 by Act No. 283/1991, on the Police of the Czech Republic (*act No. 283/1991, on the Police of the Czech Republic, as amended*), and has undergone a number of reforms in its history. The first and also last major reform of all its activities took place in 1993 in connection with the division of the country and the creation of the Czech Republic. The legislation defines the police as a unified armed security force falling under public (government) administration and serving the public (*Čandík, Jedinák, Mládková, 2010, p. 30*).

Over the years the police had to react appropriately on many circumstances from within its ranks as well as from the outside environment to ensure it is still perceived as a respected modern institution in the eyes of the public. Veber states in this regard (*Veber, 2006, p. 350*): “The job of management is thus to try to isolate the factors that lead the organization to success, perfection and prosperity.” In this regard the police had to introduce many innovative changes into its work, which it defined in its strategy – the most important as follows:

- Introducing a new system for appraising officers' performance.
- Implementing the Excellence EFQM Model in the Police of the Czech Republic.
- Introducing the Community Policing project.
- Passing the Code of Ethics of the Police of the Czech Republic (*Chief of Police Order No. 1/2005 – Code of Ethics of the Police of the Czech Republic*).
- Passing Act No. 361/2003, on the service of security forces members (*act No. 361/2003, on service of safety forces officers, as amended*).
- Passing Act No. 273/2008, on the Police of the Czech Republic (*act No. 273/2008, on the Police of the Czech Republic, as amended*).

2 Appraisal system for officers of the Police of the Czech Republic

Appraising police officers means assessing their characteristics, attitudes, opinions, conduct, behavior and the results of their work performance with regard to the particular situation they are facing, the activities they are performing, and the people with whom they come into contact. Every officer has a certain job position within the police force. Superior officers have defined powers based on the position they hold. These activities are stipulated in the job description for the particular position held. In addition, police officers must have certain abilities, skills and special knowledge. Kovařík and Krejčí, for example, state that (2012, p. 7): “The difficulty of the fight against crime is increasing at an incredible rate, for instance in the area of economic, computer, and environmental crimes, as well as a result of growing migration and ethnic groups coexisting.”

Another aspect specific to police work is that in performing their duties police officers must discern between standard situations, which can usually be handled with the routine procedure, and situations involving conflict or stress requiring the officer to choose a different approach of dealing with the person while keeping professional ethics in mind. An important goal is to match the officer’s qualifications, professional knowledge and abilities with the demands of the job. Another critical component is the ability to make decisions quickly and correctly, i.e. to resolve the problem. We should also remember that while excessive workload has a negative impact on officers, insufficient workload is just as detrimental, where officers cannot put their knowledge or abilities to good use or cannot influence the results of their work. We must also take into account Kovařík’s hypothesis that (2010, p. 5):

“Job performance is mainly affected by people’s subjective assumptions, since in performing work-related tasks different people achieve different results, perform differently and the same employee’s performance often changes for various reasons. In fact job performance and results are always affected by a whole range of determining influences, assumptions or determinants.”

One of the most difficult tasks for superior officers (evaluators) in relation to the officers under appraisal is to create conditions for the evaluated officers’ development in order to increase their qualifications and flexibility, and thus also their position in the working process. For this reason all police officers and superior officers (evaluators) should be able to use their own judgment to understand the officer’s relationship to his or her profession and service. All superior officers in the Police of the Czech Republic should know the *basics of general psychology and personality psychology* and be able to apply this theoretical knowledge in practice, specifically in managing and leading subordinate officers.

Knowing the needs of subordinate officers and knowing their value systems allows the superior officer to more easily fulfill the daily tasks of police service delegated to subordinate officers. This helps in determining incentives for each subordinate officer and choosing between many different motivational theories. Superior officers must subsequently evaluate the performance of their subordinates, which is a targeted process performed continuously. Armstrong states (2002, p. 442): “Going over the results of performance reviews and appraisal gives an overview of current performance levels and helps create a basis for future plans.”

“Job performance appraisal provides an opportunity to discuss the direction employees’ careers are headed, and what employees can do with the organization’s help to make sure they take the best career path for them and the organization” (Armstrong, 2009, p. 334). All superior officers should be well trained in appraisal methodology and respect the principles stated in the Code of Ethics of the Police of the Czech Republic in order to make their own appraisal of each subordinate officer.

The new appraisal system for officers of the Police of the Czech Republic, which was implemented across the board for the whole police force as of 2002, was conceived exclusively

as a communications system, among other things because the Police of the Czech Republic had long been run more on the principle of command than the principles of good management and leadership. The new appraisal system should by definition respect the following rules:

- Officers' performance appraisal contains an assessment of their professional skills, the quality of performing their official duties and their level of theoretical knowledge, including applying it to the performance of their duties.
- Performance appraisal for officers employed for a fixed term is carried out annually, always before the police service exam.
- Performance appraisal for officers employed for an indefinite period is carried out as needed, at least once every 3 years. They are also carried out at the officer's request (e.g. for tenders), however, at least 6 months after the previous performance appraisal.
- Performance appraisal is based on the average annual appraisal which is carried out by the officer's direct superior during the calendar year and approved by the evaluator.
- The same methodology applies to performance and on-going appraisal.

It should then be connected to each officer's career planning (prepared career system), in the sense of creating a personal development plan. Performance appraisal is conceived as a basic tool for deciding in matters of police service. However, it will play a decisive role in particular in promotions and advancement and will also be a tool for the service officer's HR work with the officer in relation to further professional growth. Officers who receive repeated unsatisfactory performance results may receive the disciplinary measure of demotion and be dismissed from service with regard to breaching their duties.

The special methodology for the officer performance appraisal process is regulated by internal management regulations valid within the Police of the Czech Republic. The internal management regulations are issued primarily in the form of Mandatory Instructions of the Chief of Police (ZP PP) due to the unified procedure in processing performance appraisal for individual police officers.

3 Defining basic terms for officers' appraisal methodology

Appraisal methodology used in described paper consists in following characteristics (*Jedinák, 2009, p. 68*): *appraised* = the police officer being evaluated; *appraiser* = the superior officer carrying out the performance appraisal and approving the on-going appraisal; *direct supervisor* = the nearest superior police officer or manager on the first and second management level from the evaluated who carries out the on-going appraisal; *priority* = the procedures and measures to achieve the stipulated target, which are given priority over others; *area* = the police officer's skill set and professional readiness for performing duties from the standpoint of abilities, skills and behavior in professional situations; *standard* = the standard required by the evaluator of performance and results achieved in the extent stipulated by the law and performance of other tasks in individual areas; *appraisal principle* – the rules and procedures that guarantee the objectivity of the appraisal.

The key **appraisal principles** used in the course of considered process of officers' appraisal are following:

1. Assessing performance from the standpoint of evaluating individual areas and any potential reports on important events.
2. Comparing the evaluated performance level with the standard.

4 Appraisal methodology

A major change in the way the officer performance appraisal system is viewed occurred when Act No. 361/2003, on service of safety forces officers, as amended, came into effect (as of

January 1, 2007). The officer appraisal is defined in Section 203 of the Act and is specified as a performance appraisal. The appraiser states in the conclusion of this appraisal what results the officer achieves in the performance of duties:

- a) Outstanding results.
- b) Very good results.
- c) Good results.
- d) Good results with reservations.
- e) Unsatisfactory results.

Officers wishing to receive a promotion could enter themselves in a tender for the relevant position, but only under the condition that their performance appraisal found their current job performance to be outstanding or if the appraised achieved very good results in the evaluated period. At this time many officers began to leave the Police of the Czech Republic for various reasons (primarily due to reaching the required number of years of service to be eligible for early retirement benefits, spurred by a reform of the entire Police of the Czech Republic. In relation to these officers leaving, many superior officer positions came open and tenders were opened to fill them. At this time regular police officers started becoming much more aware of the significance of their performance appraisal on their professional growth.

Officer performance appraisal of the Police of the Czech Republic – current situation

After thoroughly analyzing the output of the officer performance appraisal (conferences with top management of the Police of the Czech Republic and industry experts, seminars with guarantors of the appraisal and many other activities aimed at improving the quality of the officer appraisal process – structure, methodology, practical application), the new ZP PP No. 79/2009, currently in force, was developed for carrying out performance and on-going appraisal of officers of the Police of the Czech Republic. The *special appraisal methodology contains*:

1. Appraisal and self- appraisal in key areas.
2. Interview between the appraiser and appraised.
3. Evaluating special events or circumstances.
4. Appraisal conclusion.
5. Tasks for the police officer's continued professional development.

The following **conditions** must be met in the whole appraisal process in order to achieve the expected results:

- A. Defining the standard for individual appraisal areas and setting priorities for them; the evaluated officers should also participate in this (motivational effect).
- B. In setting standards take into consideration:
 - Priority tasks of the given police unit.
 - The overall “quality” of the officers evaluated in the given police unit (influencing factors, for example, officers' length of service with the police, knowledge and skills, specification of performing duties).
- C. The necessity of ensuring optimum conditions for officers performing the required actions (in the required material, technical and information-source quality). Superior officers (evaluators) must provide the evaluated officers with sufficient time to fulfill their duties.
- D. Constant, informal monitoring of the performance of duties on the part of superior officers (based on a relationship of mutual respect and trust, individual approach to the evaluated officers and carried out in such a way that the appraised does not perceive it as monitoring).

Table 1: Core set of research

Respondent's gender			Managing Positions		
Male	74.70%	375	Yes	80.28%	403
Female	25.30%	127	No	19.72%	99
Number of years served					
Up to 4	29.88%	150	9 to 13	23.11%	116
5 to 8	23.71%	119	14 and up	23.31%	117
Working in Region					
Central Bohemia	19.72%	99	Southern Bohemia	5.78%	29
Prague	40.64%	204	Karlovy Vary	3.98%	20
Pardubice	1.00%	5	Liberec	4.58%	23
Hradec Králové	3.59%	18	Southern Moravia	3.98%	20
Ústí nad Labem	4.58%	23	Zlín	2.79%	14
Plzeň	5.18%	26	Olomouc	1.20%	6
Vysočina	2.39%	12	Moravia-Silesia	0.60%	3

Source: own study

5 Output of research on officers' appraisal

Research was carried out at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague in order to acquire specific findings on the officer appraisal process in police practice (how it is implemented in practice and how the police officers themselves regard it). The sample group consisted of students doing combined studies at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague. The questionnaire survey was carried out in 2011 and the sample group was composed of 502 respondents, chosen based on availability. The Table 1 describes the composition of the sample group.

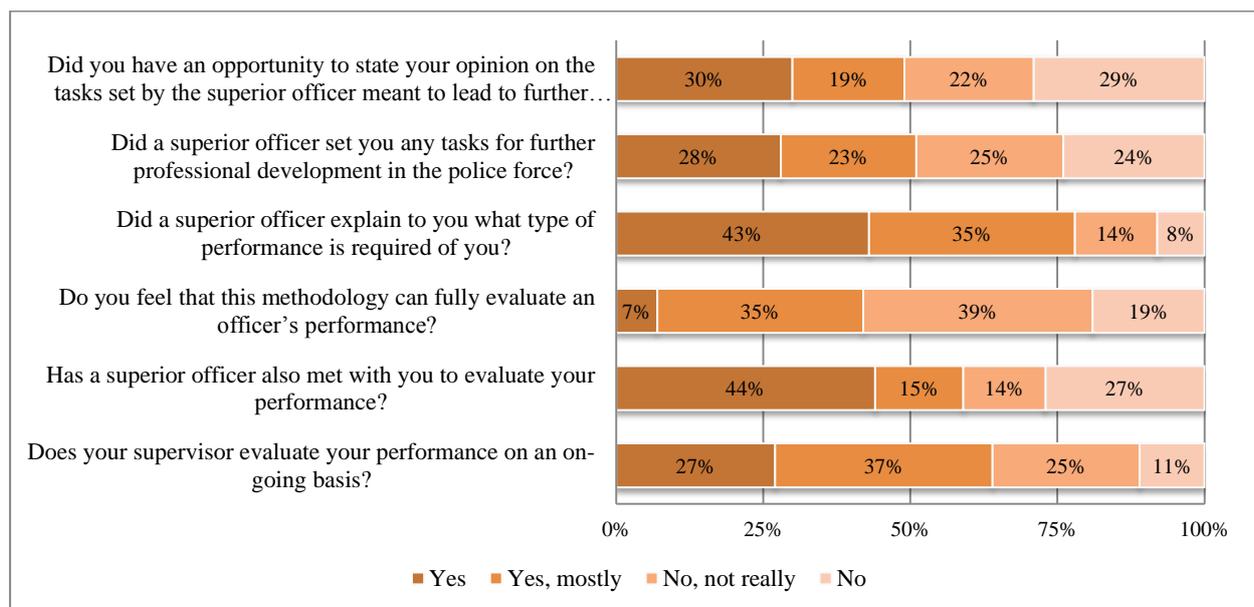


Figure 1: Outputs of the research

Source: own study

A research prediction (*Jedinák, Mládková, Kovařík, 2011, p. 62 – 66*) was set on the basis of the data acquired from the research performed, which we can assess using data analysis: “Assessment of the differences in opinions of respondents in the sample group on selected pages of the performance appraisal will not find a substantive difference between the opinions of regular and superior officers.”

First we will state the results of the analysis using the Cohen’s coefficient “d” and then using a classification tree diagram. The following table (Table 2) shows two cases where, unlike superior officers, regular officers gave more positive responses.

Table 2: Substantively significant differences of mean values between regular and superior officers

Substantively significant differences of mean values between regular and superior officers					
Variables	Statistics				
	Average difference	Cohen’s d	Interpretation of average difference based on Cohen’s d (small)	Degree of correlation of the effect of the size of r (Y, lambda)	Square r (Y, lambda)
1. Managers put their own interests ahead of the police force’s goal in their decision making.	-.367	.35	Insignificant	.17	.03
2. Managers are afraid of making decisions for various reasons (HR, personal, professional).	-.227	.21	Insignificant	.10	.01

Source: own study

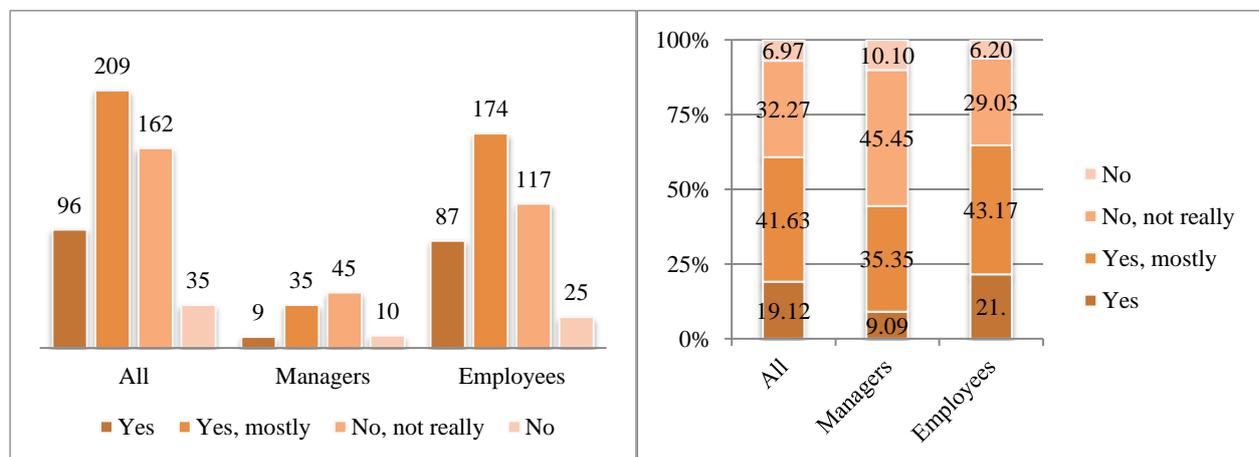


Figure 2: Managers put their own interests ahead of the police force’s goals in their decision-making

Source: own study

Regular officers are of the opinion that superior officers put their own interests ahead (21.6%), as compared to superior officers (9%). In the category “No, not really” were 29% of regular officers as opposed to more than 45% of superior officers. These results indicate that in both stated aspects a substantively significant difference does exist between regular officers and superior officers.

Table 3: Managers put their own interests ahead of the police force's goals in their decision-making

	All employees		Managers		Employees	
Yes	96	19.12%	9	9.09%	87	21.59%
Yes, mostly	209	41.63%	35	35.35%	174	43.18%
No, not really	162	32.27%	45	45.45%	117	29.03%
No	35	6.97%	10	9.09%	25	6.20%

Source: own study

Now we will look at the sorted, selected aspects of the evaluation (nine areas) where superior officers answer more positively. The following classification tree diagrams demonstrate that all nine cases show a substantively significant difference between the opinions of superior and regular officers. All stated cases show a difference of at least 10% in relative frequencies by row (Table 4, Figure 3 – 8).

Table 4: Substantively significant differences of mean values between regular and superior officers

Substantively significant differences of mean values between regular and superior officers					
Variables	Statistics				
	Average difference	Cohen's d	Interpretation of average difference based on Cohen's d (small)	Degree of correlation of the effect of the size of r (Y, lambda)	Square r (Y, lambda)
1. Do you believe that results of your performance appraisal were assessed fairly by your superior?	.440	.40	Insignificant	.20	.04
2. Managers consult their subordinate officers on solving decision making problems.	.320	.34	Insignificant	.17	.03
3. Your supervisor provides on-going appraisal of your performance (e.g. acknowledges task well performed).	.361	.30	Insignificant	.15	.02
4. Did a superior officer set you tasks for further professional development in the police force?	.395	.28	Insignificant	.14	.02
5. Did this appraisal interview meet your expectations?	.385	.28	Insignificant	.14	.01
6. Did your superior officer hold and interview with you to appraise your performance?	.370	.23	Insignificant	.12	.01
7. Managers inform officers of the nature of the problem before making a decision.	.215	.23	Insignificant	.11	.01
8. Did you have an opportunity to state your opinion on the task set?	.336	.22	Insignificant	.11	.01
9. Did a superior officer explain to you what type of performance is required of you?	.322	.20	Insignificant	.10	.01

Source: own study

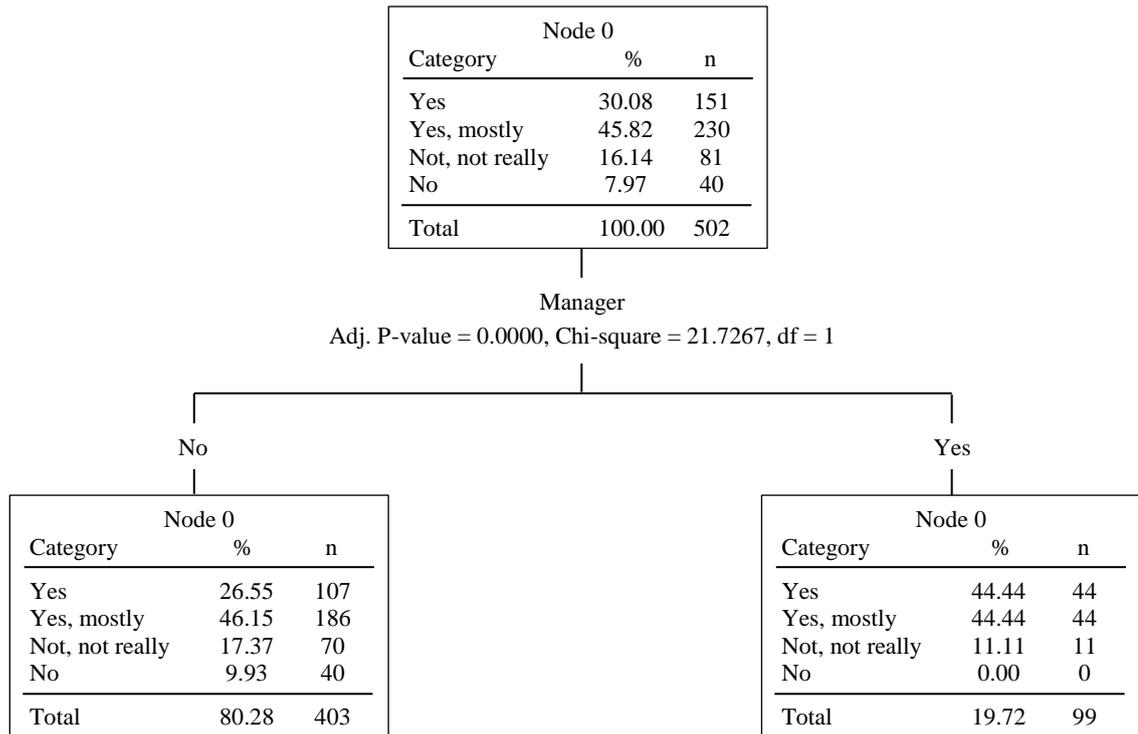


Figure 3: Outputs of the research: Answer to question “Do you believe that the results of your performance appraisal were assessed fairly by your superior?”

Source: own study

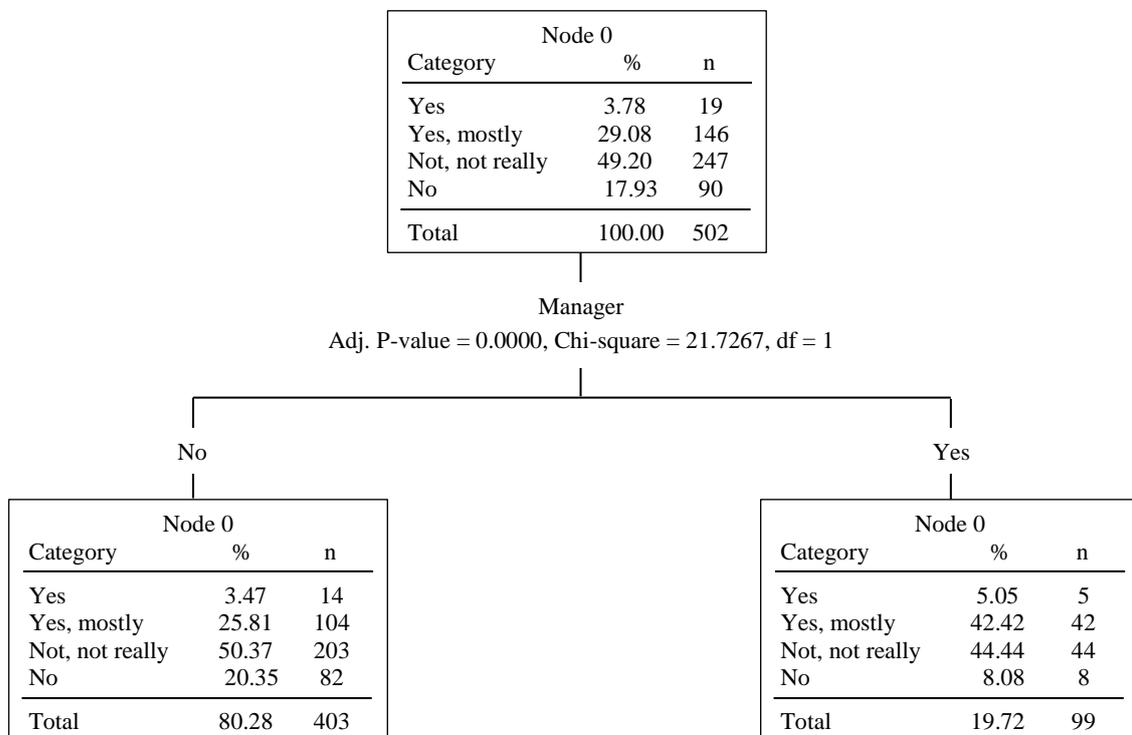


Figure 4: Outputs of the research: Managers consult their officers on solving decision making problems

Source: own study

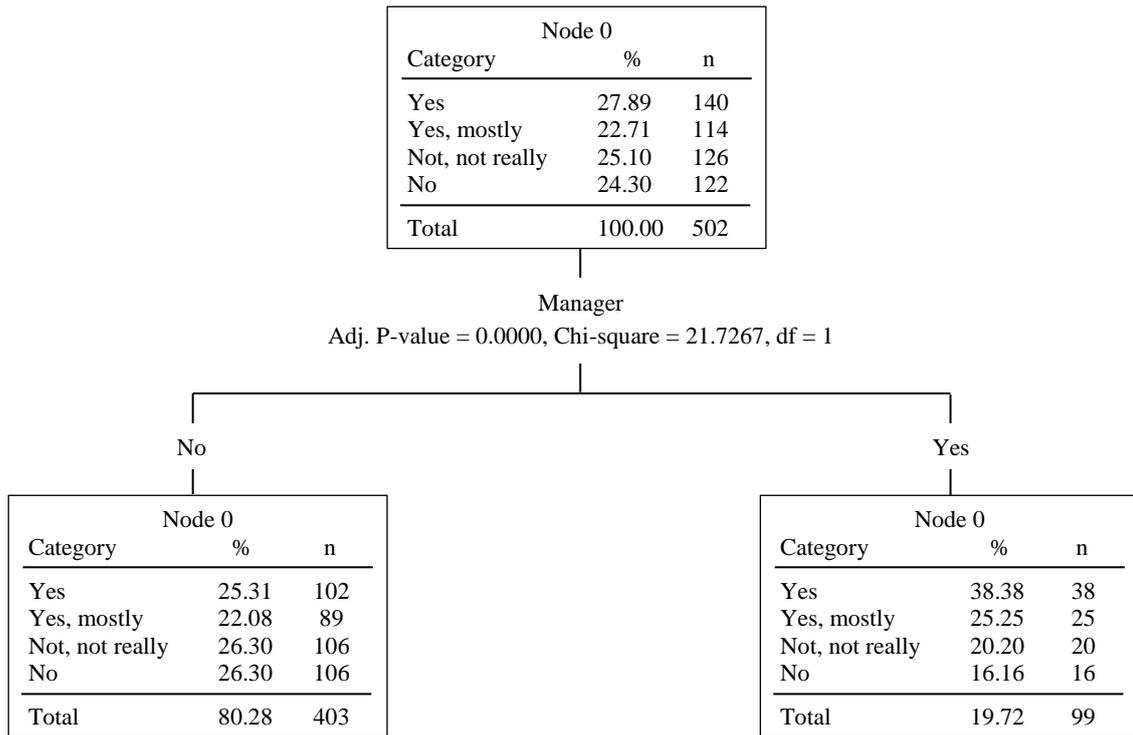


Figure 5: Outputs of the research: Answer to question “Did a superior officer set you tasks for further professional development in police force?”

Source: own study

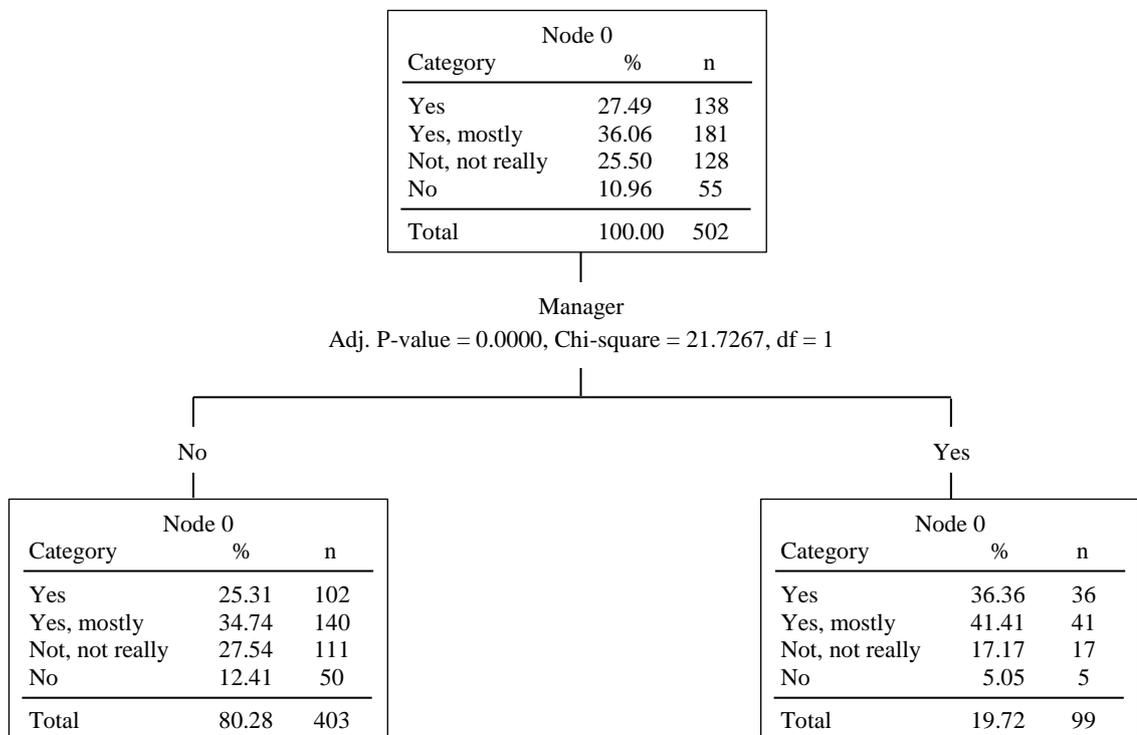


Figure 6: Outputs of the research: Answer to question “Does your superior provide on-going appraisal of your performance?”

Source: own study

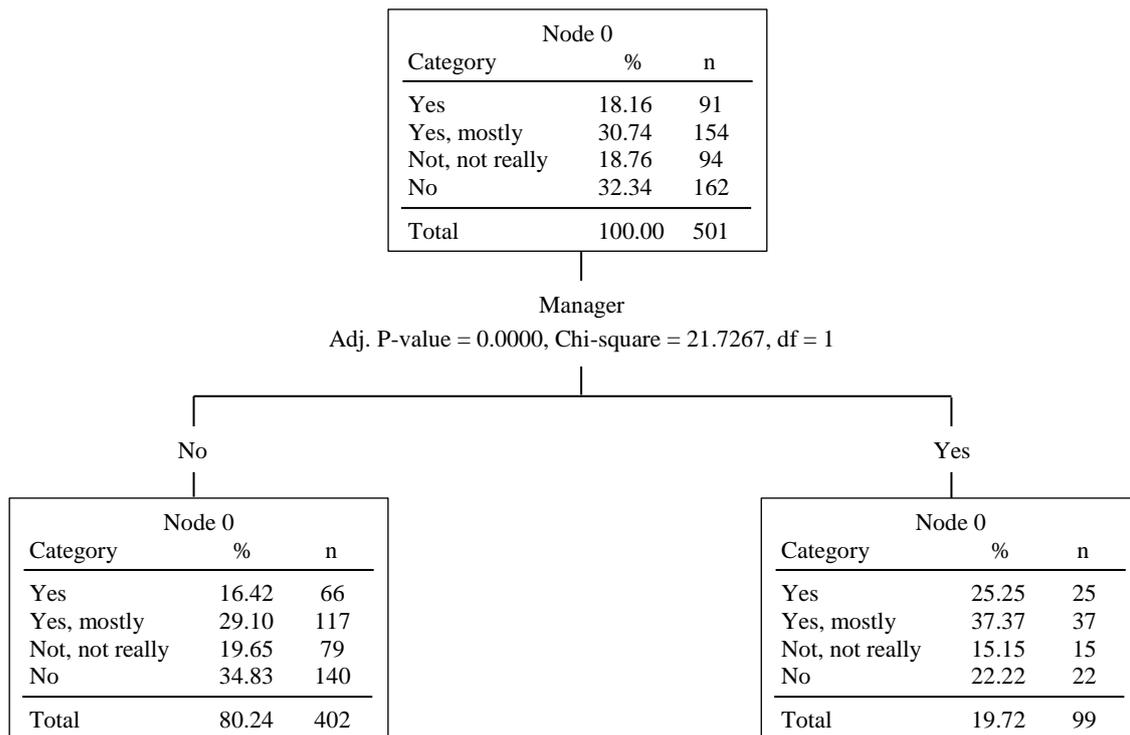


Figure 7: Outputs of the research: Answer to question “Did appraisal interview meet your expectation?”

Source: own study

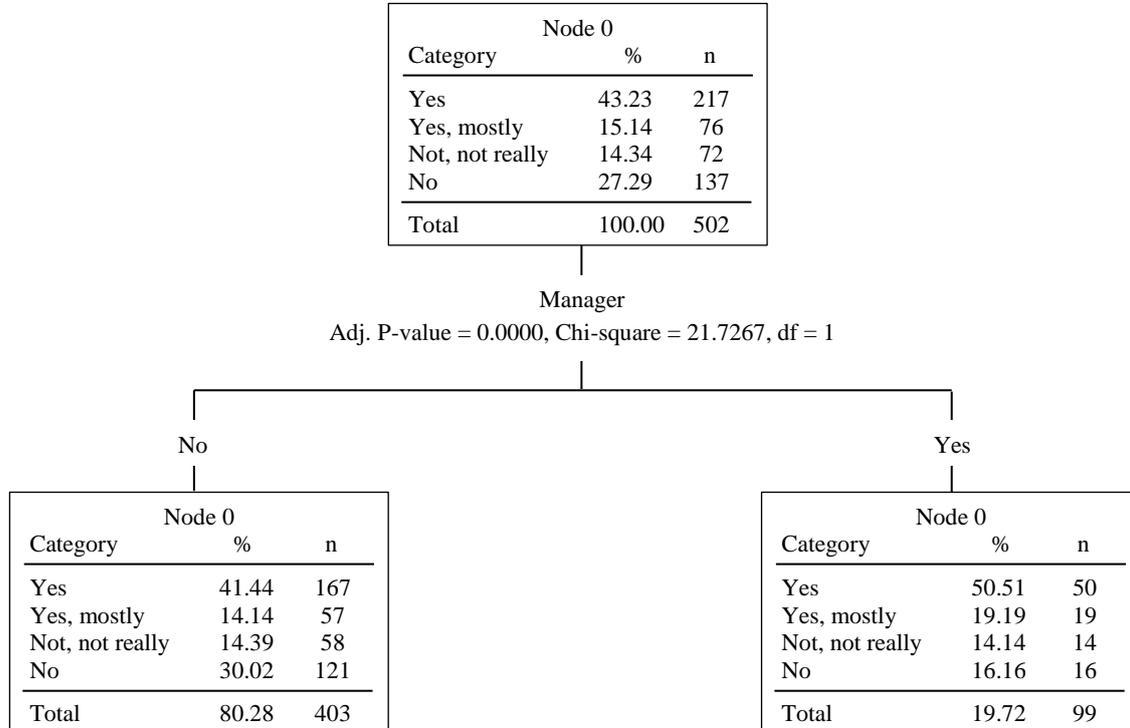


Figure 8: Outputs of the research: Answer to question “Did your superior hold and interview with you to appraise your performance?”

Source: own study

Conclusion of research prediction

The defined research prediction in comparing the results of regular and superior officers can be rejected. Specific resolutions, however, must be divided into two parts:

In the two stated cases:

- A.
 1. Managers put their own interests ahead of the police force's goals in their decision-making.
 2. Managers are afraid of making decisions for various reasons (HR, personal, professional). These statements are substantively significantly more preferred by regular officers than superior officers.
- B. For the other nine aspects of the evaluation, positive answers are substantively significantly more preferred by superior officers.

6 Conclusion

The first part of the paper describes the current officer evaluation system of the Police of the Czech Republic, which is conducted with the goal of acquiring objective and indisputable material for:

- Assessing the quality of performance of the Police of the Czech Republic and officer motivation to such performance.
- Assessing whether officer behavior is in compliance with the Code of Ethics of the Police of the Czech Republic.
- Managing and inspecting officer performance of duties.
- Making decisions in disciplinary and service matters.
- Assessing officers' expertise, professional knowledge and abilities.
- Setting a potential plan for further professional development for police officers.

The independent evaluation indicates two significant conclusions (*Mládková, Jedinák et al., 2009, p. 98*) for evaluated police officers, namely their remuneration and further development in the police force. The evaluation system falls under the concept performance management, which, as Koubek states, integrates (*2006, p. 191*): "agreed-upon improvements in individual performance within the organization, developing employees' professional abilities and adapting them to the organization's values." If this concept of performance management is properly implemented in an entire organization, it provides a number of advantages (*Koubek, 2004, p. 33*) for employees, managers and, by extension, the organization as a whole and contributes to making the organization more competitive. For our police force this means primarily improving its services to citizens.

The second section provides an analysis of the data from the research conducted on the issue in 2011 in the form of a questionnaire survey. The respondents were police officers doing combined studies at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague. It was essential to acquire indisputable data from the independent research regarding how police officers themselves perceive the evaluation process. In order to contribute to the overall development of the Police of the Czech Republic as an organization, the officer evaluation process must meet a number of requirements. One of the most important requirements is adoption of the whole evaluation system, including the stipulated methodology, by all police officers.

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