

# Examining the Management of Job Engagement and Job Decisions' Impact on Local Government Officials' Perception of Prestige

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**Abstract** - This article delves into the multifaceted landscape of local government employees' job decisions (JD) and job engagement (JE) by investigating their tenure intentions. The study employs a novel perspective by examining the influence of prestige, differentiating between internal and external prestige, on local government officials' perceptions. Drawing on data from regression analyses, this research sheds light on the intricate relationship between JD, JE, and the perceived prestige of the local government. The findings of this research demonstrate that local government employees' job engagement and job decisions are indeed influenced by their perceptions of the government's prestige. The data obtained from regression analyses reveal the significance of this relationship. These results have profound implications for the management and leadership of local government agencies. Understanding the pivotal role of prestige in shaping employee behavior can assist in formulating strategies to enhance job engagement, promote job retention, and ultimately contribute to the effective functioning of local government organizations. Furthermore, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the factors driving the commitment and choices of public sector employees, offering valuable insights for policymakers, HR practitioners, and researchers in the field of public administration

**Key words** - human resource management, job engagement, local government, public officials, prestige perception, organizational prestige.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Within the intricate web of public administration, the heartbeat of local government institutions is the dedicated

workforce of civil servants. These individuals, serving as the bedrock of regional governance, wield considerable influence over the delivery of public services, the formulation of policy initiatives, and the socio-economic development of their communities. In acknowledging the indispensable role played by these civil servants, we are compelled to embark on a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted landscape that governs their job decisions and job engagement.

At the crux of our inquiry lies the notion of "perception of prestige." It is within this construct that we find the key to understanding the internal and external dynamics that influence regional Ukrainian civil servants. This perception is not merely an abstract judgment; it encapsulates the subjective evaluation of the prestige attached to their local government institutions. It is a lens through which they gauge the worth and reputation of their organizations, both within the insular confines of the institution itself and in the broader external context of governmental stakeholders, encompassing the public and fellow governmental bodies.

At the heart of this exploration is the concept of "local government job decisions". These decisions, permeating every aspect of civil service, encompass choices that civil servants make about their tenure, career trajectory, and commitment to their roles. Job decisions are not a solitary matter of personal preference; they are a fundamental underpinning of the very functionality of local government institutions. Whether a civil servant chooses to stay, motivated and satisfied, or to pursue alternative avenues, profoundly influences the institutional stability and operational efficacy of their local government.

This study not only examines the intricate relationship between the perception of prestige and job decisions but also takes into account the mosaic of demographic characteristics. Gender, age, educational attainment, position or rank within the organization, and the specific local government institution in which these civil servants serve are all variables that are carefully considered. They are not merely elements of background information; they are integral facets of the tapestry within which perceptions of prestige and job decisions unfurl.

By weaving together insights drawn from an array of academic disciplines, including public administration, organizational psychology, and human resource management, we endeavor to illuminate the complex dynamics that govern this realm of civil service. It is our belief that this understanding will contribute significantly to the enhancement of human resource management strategies and the evolution of public administration in the regional context.

This exploration, fueled by the desire to comprehend how civil servants perceive prestige and how demographic factors intersect with these perceptions to shape job decisions, is poised to offer valuable insights. In illuminating these dynamics, we hope to pave the way for strategies that not only augment the efficiency and stability of local government institutions but also ultimately advance the delivery of public services and the development of the communities they serve.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Study Design*

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively explore the relationships between the perception of prestige, local government job decisions, and the influence of demographic characteristics among regional Ukrainian civil servants. The study is cross-sectional in design, capturing a snapshot of data at a single point in time.

### *Participants*

The study involves a diverse sample of regional Ukrainian civil servants, including individuals from various local government institutions. Participants were selected through a stratified sampling method to ensure representation across different ranks, positions, and local government entities.

### *Data Collection*

For the quantitative component, data is collected through structured surveys. The survey instrument is tailored to measure the perception of prestige, local government job decisions, and relevant demographic variables. Specifically, it includes Likert-scale questions to assess participants' perceptions of local government prestige, engagement, and job decisions. Demographic information, such as gender, age, educational background, rank, and local government institution, is also collected.

To gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of prestige and job decisions, in-depth interviews are conducted with a

subset of participants. These interviews are semi-structured, allowing respondents to elaborate on their perceptions and decisions. Sampling for the qualitative phase is purposeful, ensuring diversity in terms of demographic characteristics and perceptions of prestige.

### *Data Analysis*

Quantitative data is analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. Hypotheses are tested using regression analysis to explore the relationships between perceptions of prestige, job decisions, and demographic variables. Correlation analyses are also performed to identify associations between variables.

Qualitative data from the interviews is transcribed and analyzed thematically. A systematic coding process is employed to identify recurring themes and patterns in participants' narratives. These qualitative insights complement the quantitative findings and offer a deeper understanding of the factors influencing job decisions.

### *Ethical Considerations*

This study adheres to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality. Additionally, the research is conducted with approval from the relevant institutional review board.

### *Limitations*

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations of the study. The cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of data at one point in time, limiting our ability to establish causation. Additionally, the findings may be specific to the regional context of Ukraine and may not be fully generalizable to other settings. However, the insights gained from this research can offer valuable guidance for regional Ukrainian local government institutions and may inform further comparative studies in the future.

### *Purpose*

The primary purpose of this article is to unravel the intricate nexus between the perception of prestige, local government job decisions, and the influence of demographic characteristics among regional Ukrainian civil servants. This endeavor seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics that govern the motivation, retention, and commitment of civil servants within their local government institutions.

### *Concepts and hypotheses*

This study uses the construct “perception of prestige” to conceptualize the internal and external prestige of the regional Ukrainian civil servants. A survey instrument includes particular questions to collect perceptions of the local government's professional prestige by Ukrainian public servants. The local government job decision (JD) is an essential concept for this study. The following variable has been used for this study: positive or negative local government job decision

(JD). Besides job-related variables, this study includes demographic variables as controls - gender, age, level of education, rank (position), and local government institutions. The literature findings helped formulate several hypotheses concerning the government employees' evaluations of local government prestige:

*Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of prestige will be positively related to employee engagement.*

This hypothesis posits a positive relationship, suggesting that as the perception of local government prestige increases, employee engagement also increases. A more prestigious perception of the local government may lead to higher employee commitment, motivation, and involvement in their roles.

*Hypothesis 2: The increased POP positively influences the incumbents' JD.*

This hypothesis suggests a positive relationship between an increased perception of prestige (POP) and local government job decisions (JD). If civil servants have a more favorable perception of their government's prestige, they are more likely to make positive job decisions, possibly related to retention or job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 3: The demographic characteristics of local government employees influence the incumbents' JD.*

This hypothesis explores the influence of demographic characteristics (gender, age, education, rank, and local government institutions) on local government job decisions (JD). It investigates how these demographic factors affect civil servants' decisions regarding their local government employment.

These concepts and hypotheses provide the foundational framework for the study, which seeks to understand how the perception of prestige, along with demographic factors, impacts the job decisions and engagement of regional Ukrainian civil servants. This research is crucial for enhancing knowledge of public sector employment dynamics in this context and can have significant implications for human resource management and public administration.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Local government employees play a vital role in the effective functioning of government organizations, and understanding the factors that influence their job decisions and job engagement is crucial for both human resource management and public administration. This literature review provides an overview of relevant studies, research findings, and theoretical frameworks that contribute to our understanding of how perceptions of prestige impact local government officials' job engagement and job decisions.

Kim's review in 2005 focused on examining the impact of the interpersonal relationships of government workers on their job satisfaction within the context of the Seoul Metropolitan government. The study likely explored how the quality of

relationships among colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates, as well as interactions with other stakeholders, influenced the overall job satisfaction of government representatives working in Seoul. Such findings are significant as they shed light on the importance of a positive and friendly workplace environment in promoting job satisfaction among public officials, which can, in turn, have implications for their performance and tenure intentions.

In 2010, Liu and colleagues conducted a study that delved into the constructive outcomes arising from two primary factors: individual-organization fit and job satisfaction in the context of Chinese public executives. The research likely examined how the alignment between an individual's values, skills, and goals with the organization's culture, mission, and job roles influenced their overall job satisfaction. Additionally, the study explored how job satisfaction affected the turnover intentions of Chinese public executives. Such research can offer valuable insights into the importance of matching employees' characteristics with the organization's values and goals to promote job satisfaction and, consequently, reduce the turnover intentions of public sector employees, which is vital for organizational stability.

Research in the field of organizational psychology and management has consistently highlighted the significance of job engagement as a crucial factor affecting employee performance and organizational outcomes (Saks, 2006). Job engagement is often characterized by an employee's emotional commitment to their work and the organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). In the context of local government, factors such as organizational culture, leadership, and job design have been identified as determinants of job engagement (Perry & Wise, 1990). Local government officials who are engaged in their work are more likely to be motivated, productive, and satisfied in their roles.

Employee job decisions, including decisions to stay or leave their current positions, have been a topic of considerable research in the context of local government. Factors influencing job decisions include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived opportunities for career advancement (Shields & Deng, 2001). The tenure intentions of local government officials are essential to understand, as they impact the stability of government organizations and the delivery of public services.

The concept of prestige in local government is a complex and multifaceted one. Researchers have differentiated between internal and external prestige. Internal prestige pertains to how local government employees perceive their organization's standing within its internal ecosystem, while external prestige focuses on how the organization is perceived by external stakeholders (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008). The level of prestige associated with a local government organization can be influenced by factors such as its reputation, performance, and interactions with the public (Poister & Streib, 1999).

Recent studies have explored the relationship between perceptions of government prestige and employee behavior. Findings suggest that when local government officials perceive their organization as prestigious, they are more likely to be

engaged in their work (Van Wart, 2009). This is consistent with the idea that a prestigious organization can inspire a sense of pride and motivation among its employees.

Moreover, perceptions of prestige have been found to influence job decisions. Employees who consider their organization prestigious may be more likely to have long-term tenure intentions (Brewer, 2018). This finding underscores the importance of managing and promoting prestige within local government organizations to retain talent and maintain stability.

#### IV. RESULTS

In this section the data analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, preferences, and sentiments of local government employees within the context of the civil service and public service sector in Ukraine. The data under examination has been gathered through a series of questions and responses, each of which offers valuable insights into the views and sentiments of these employees regarding various aspects of their work, career, and the public service profession as a whole.

Throughout the analysis, we will explore several key themes, as follows:

1. **Perceptions of Prestige (POP):** In this section, we delve into how local government employees perceive the prestige of the public service profession. Respondents have expressed a range of perceptions, from very high to very low, providing insights into the reputation and standing of public service roles in the Ukrainian context.
2. **Job Decision (JD) 1:** We explore the preferences of local government employees regarding their children's potential career choices. This section helps us understand to what extent these employees encourage or discourage their children from pursuing a career in civil service.
3. **Job Decision (JD) 2:** Here, we assess the willingness of local government employees to see their children work in the civil service within the same field. This section provides insights into whether employees believe their own field is a suitable career path for the next generation.
4. **Qualification Gap (QG):** We examine respondents' self-assessment of how well their qualifications align with the realities of their work. This analysis allows us to gauge how employees perceive the match between their qualifications and job requirements.
5. **Material Satisfaction (MS):** The level of satisfaction with current salary levels is explored in this section. We aim to understand how local government employees perceive their financial well-being and satisfaction with their compensation.
6. **Perceived Career Perspectives (PCP):** Respondents' career expectations are evaluated, ranging from achieving great success to having no expectations. This analysis helps us understand the professional aspirations and outlook of employees in the public service sector.

7. **Rank Confidence (RC):** This section focuses on respondents' confidence in the stability of their official positions within the civil service. Understanding the level of job security and confidence among employees is a central theme.

Let's analyse control variable measures (survey 2019). Table 1 provides information on gender distribution, with corresponding codes, counts, and percentages.

TABLE 1: GENDER (1, 2)

Gender	Code	Count	Percentage
Man	1	107	26.0%
Female	2	296	72.0%

The data reveals a clear gender distribution within the sample. "Female" respondents significantly outnumber "Man" respondents, with "Female" accounting for 72.0% of the sample, while "Man" represents 26.0%. This gender disproportion highlights the need to consider gender-related factors in the subsequent analysis and interpretation of study results. Understanding the gender composition of the sample is crucial for assessing potential gender-based differences or trends that may be relevant to the research objectives and outcomes. Table 2 summarizes the data on age groups, with corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each group.

TABLE 2: AGE (1-4)

Age Group	Code	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 years	1	65	15.8%
31-40 years	2	150	36.5%
41-50 years	3	117	28.5%
51 years and more	4	79	19.2%

The data illustrates a diversified age distribution within the sample. Respondents are categorized into four distinct age groups, namely "20-30 years" "31-40 years" "41-50 years" and "51 years and more

The most prominent age group in the sample is "31-40 years" representing 36.5% of the respondents. Following closely, the "41-50 years" group makes up 28.5% of the sample, while "20-30 years" accounts for 15.8%. The "51 years and more" age group, while the smallest in terms of percentage, still comprises a significant 19.2% of the respondents.

This diverse age distribution is of considerable importance for subsequent analyses and research interpretations, as it enables the exploration of potential age-related factors and generational influences on the study's outcomes. Understanding the composition of age groups within the sample is essential for gaining insights into the dynamics and perspectives of different generational cohorts. Table 3 summarizes the data related to living place, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each category.

TABLE 3: LIVING PLACE (1-6)

Living Place	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Regional center	1	1,200	48.7%
City of more than 50,000	2	76	18.5%
City of less than 50,000	3	65	15.8%
SMT (Small Urban-Type Settlement)	4	31	7.5%
Village/rural area	5	32	7.8%
Other	6	2	0.5%

The data on living places reveals a diverse distribution among the respondents. Regional centers emerged as the most common living place, with nearly half of the sample residing there. The dominance of urban areas (including cities and regional centers) is apparent, accounting for 81% of respondents. This urban concentration has implications for various aspects of the study, such as lifestyle, access to services, and local government preferences. Table 4 summarizes the data related to education levels, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each category.

TABLE 4: EDUCATION (1-5)

Education Level	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Base average	1	2	0.5%
Full average	2	6	1.5%
Professional technical education	3	3	0.7%
Higher	4	388	94.4%
Scientific degree	5	10	2.4%

The data on education demonstrates a varied educational landscape among the respondents. The majority hold "Higher" education degrees, comprising 94.4% of the sample. While scientific degree holders are a minority (2.4%), their presence is notable and may bring specialized expertise to their roles. A small percentage of respondents have attained lower educational levels (ranging from 0.5% to 1.5%). Understanding this educational diversity is pivotal for assessing the qualifications and expertise of respondents within the context of the study. Table 5 summarizes the data related to the various institutions that respondents are associated with, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each institution.

TABLE 5: INSTITUTIONS (1-16)

Institution	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Regional Council	1	9	2.2%
Universities	2	19	4.6%
Public body-I	3	2	0.5%
State enterprise	4	16	3.9%
Armed forces	5	8	1.9%
City Executive Committee	6	59	14.4%
ODA (Oblast State Administration)	7	58	14.1%
Private enterprise	8	6	1.5%
Village Council	9	28	6.8%
District Council	10	13	3.2%
RDA in the city	11	17	4.1%
RDA (Regional Development Agency)	12	55	13.4%
Fiscal service	13	8	1.9%
Ter. podr. TsOVV	14	50	12.2%
TsOVV (Territorial Center of Common Administrative Services)	15	40	9.7%

The "City Executive Committee" and "ODA" (Oblast State Administration) are among the most prominent categories, each representing over 14% of the respondents. These entities play significant roles in regional governance. "RDA" (Regional Development Agency) is also well-represented, with 13.4% of respondents associated with it. "Universities" and "Village Council" show moderate representation, with 4.6% and 6.8% of respondents, respectively. "Ter. podr. TsOVV" (Territorial Center of Common Administrative Services) and "TsOVV"

(Territorial Center of Common Administrative Services) have notable representation, comprising 12.2% and 9.7% of the sample, respectively.

Understanding the wide range of institutional affiliations is essential for appreciating the breadth of experiences and perspectives that respondents bring to the study. These affiliations influence their roles, responsibilities, and interactions within their respective institutions and the broader context of regional governance. These conclusions serve as a foundational understanding for the subsequent analyses and research interpretations related to the study's objectives and outcomes. Table 6 summarizes the data related to different positions or statuses of the respondents, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each position.

TABLE 6: POSITION (STATUS) (1-5)

Position (Status)	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Above, kerivnyts.org.	1	12	2.9%
Senior manager	2	35	8.5%
Head of middle level	3	61	14.8%
The head of the lower level	4	99	24.1%
Specialist	5	203	49.4%

Notable categories such as "Head of the lower level" and "Head of middle level" account for 24.1% and 14.8% of the sample, respectively. This highlights the substantial representation of individuals in management and leadership roles within their organizations. While smaller in percentage, "Senior manager" and "Above, kerivnyts.org." categories represent individuals in higher managerial and executive positions, comprising 8.5% and 2.9%, respectively.

These findings underscore the diversity of roles and responsibilities within the sample, with a significant presence of specialists and notable representation in management and leadership positions. Understanding the distribution of positions provides valuable context for interpreting the insights and perspectives of respondents in the context of their respective roles and responsibilities. Table 7 summarizes the data related to the various regions represented in the sample, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each region.

TABLE 7: REGION (1-25)

Region	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Vinnitsia	1	5	1.2%
Volyn region	2	2	0.5%
Dnipropetrovsk	3	43	10.5%
Donetsk region	4	8	1.9%
Zhytomyr Region	5	1	0.2%
Zacarpathian region	6	1	0.2%
Zaporozhye region	7	3	0.7%
Ivano-Frankivsk	8	37	9.0%
Kirovohrad region	9	6	1.5%
Kyiv region	10	5	1.2%
M. Kyiv	11	49	11.9%
Lviv region	13	12	2.9%
Mykolayiv region	14	3	0.7%
Odesa region	15	57	13.9%
Poltava region	16	3	0.7%
Rivne region	17	1	0.2%
Kharkiv region	20	139	33.8%
Kherson region	21	3	0.7%
Cherkasy region	23	2	0.5%
Chernivtsi region	24	2	0.5%

Notably, "Kharkiv region" stands out as the most prominent category, representing 33.8% of the sample. "Odesa region" is another notable category, accounting for 13.9% of respondents. "M. Kyiv" also holds a significant share, with 11.9% of respondents. The data includes both regions with relatively larger and smaller representations, with percentages ranging from 0.2% to 33.8%. This diversity underscores the multi-regional nature of the study. The geographic diversity of respondents' regions has implications for understanding the varied perspectives, experiences, and contextual factors that may influence their roles within local government and public service. Table 8 summarizes the data related to the length of service of the respondents, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each category. The "Total" row represents the overall percentage for all categories combined.

TABLE 8: LENGTH OF SERVICE

Length of Service	Code	Frequency	Percentage
up to 1 year	1	17	4.1%
from 1 to 3 years	2	25	6.1%
from 3 to 5 years	3	25	6.1%
from 5 to 10 years	4	38	9.2%
from 10 to 20 years	5	60	14.6%
more than 20 years	6	23	5.6%
Total	-	278	67.7%

Notably, the categories "from 10 to 20 years" and "from 5 to 10 years" stand out, representing 14.6% and 9.2% of the sample, respectively. These categories indicate a significant presence of respondents with mid to long-term service. The data includes categories with varying levels of representation, with percentages ranging from 4.1% to 14.6%. This diversity underscores the multi-level tenure within the study sample. The range of work experience has implications for understanding the varying levels of expertise, institutional knowledge, and seniority among respondents. Let's analyse latent variable measures. Table 9 summarizes the data related to respondents' agreement levels regarding their physical engagement in performing well on their jobs. It provides the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 9: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT 1 (PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT - PE), (18. I TRY MY HARDEST TO PERFORM WELL ON MY JOB)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Completely agree	1	174	42.3%
Rather agree	2	206	50.1%
Rather disagree	3	21	5.1%
Difficult to answer	5	9	2.2%

The majority of respondents express a positive level of engagement in this aspect. Specifically, 92.4% (comprising "Completely agree" and "Rather agree" categories) acknowledge that they try their hardest to perform well on the job. A substantial 42.3% "Completely agree," and 50.1% "Rather agree." These high agreement levels indicate a strong commitment to job performance among the majority of respondents. A smaller proportion, 5.1%, "Rather disagree" with the statement, indicating a slight level of disagreement or uncertainty regarding their physical engagement. The "Difficult to answer" category, at 2.2%, represents a relatively minor portion of respondents who find it challenging to provide a clear response to the statement. Table 10 summarizes the data related

to respondents' pride in their jobs (emotional engagement) and provides the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 10: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT 2 (EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT - EE), (9. I AM PROUD OF MY JOB)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely yes	1	180	43.8%
Rather so	2	167	40.6%
Rather not	3	21	5.1%
Definitely not	4	5	1.2%
It is difficult to say	5	32	7.8%

A significant proportion of respondents express a strong sense of pride in their jobs. Specifically, 84.4% (comprising "Definitely yes" and "Rather so" categories) indicate that they are proud of their job. "Definitely yes" (43.8%) and "Rather so" (40.6%) categories both represent a strong positive sentiment, suggesting that the majority of respondents take pride in their roles. A relatively small percentage, 5.1%, falls into the "Rather not" category, indicating a modest level of disagreement or uncertainty regarding their job-related pride. The categories "Definitely not" and "It is difficult to say" collectively represent a small proportion of respondents (8.2%) who either lack pride in their jobs or find it challenging to articulate their emotions. Table 11 summarizes the data related to respondents' cognitive engagement in their work and workplace, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 11: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT 3 (13. I FULLY INVOLVED IN, ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT AND COMMITTED TO MY WORK AND WORKPLACE) COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT (CE)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely yes	1	109	26.5%
Rather so	2	217	52.8%
Rather not	3	45	10.9%
Definitely not	4	9	2.2%
It is difficult to say	5	21	5.1%

A significant majority of respondents express a strong cognitive engagement in their work and workplace. Specifically, 79.3% (comprising "Definitely yes" and "Rather so" categories) indicate that they are fully involved, enthusiastic, and committed to their work. "Definitely yes" (26.5%) and "Rather so" (52.8%) categories both represent a high level of positive sentiment, reflecting the dedication and enthusiasm of the majority of respondents. A relatively small percentage, 10.9%, falls into the "Rather not" category, indicating a modest level of disagreement or uncertainty regarding their cognitive engagement. The categories "Definitely not" and "It is difficult to say" collectively represent a small proportion of respondents (7.3%) who either lack cognitive engagement or find it challenging to express their level of involvement. Table 12 summarizes the data related to respondents' confidence in the stability of their official positions, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, percentages, and cumulative percentages for each response category.

TABLE 12: RANK CONFIDENCE (RC) (10. HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN THE STABILITY OF YOUR OFFICIAL POSITION?)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Absolutely confident	1	69	16.8%	16.8%
Rather so	2	203	49.4%	66.2%
Rather not	3	49	11.9%	78.1%
Not sure at all	4	37	9.0%	87.1%
It is difficult to say	5	44	10.7%	97.8%

A significant portion of respondents, 66.2% (comprising "Absolutely confident" and "Rather so" categories), express a moderate to high level of confidence in the stability of their official positions. The "Rather so" category, at 49.4%, represents a substantial proportion of respondents who are confident in the stability of their positions, indicating a positive sentiment regarding job security. A relatively small percentage, 11.9%, falls into the "Rather not" category, indicating a modest level of disagreement or uncertainty regarding their rank confidence. The categories "Definitely not" and "It is difficult to say" collectively represent a small proportion of respondents (11.9%) who either lack confidence in the stability of their positions or find it challenging to express their level of confidence. Table 13 summarizes the data related to respondents' satisfaction with their current salary levels, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, percentages, and cumulative percentages for each response category.

TABLE 13: MATERIAL SATISFACTION (MS), (20. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE CURRENT SALARY LEVEL?)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Definitely ok.	1	12	2.9%	2.9%
Rather yes	2	98	23.8%	26.7%
Rather not	3	149	36.3%	63.0%
Of course, it didn't suit.	4	134	32.6%	95.6%
It is difficult to say	5	16	3.9%	99.5%

Respondents' satisfaction with their current salary levels varies across categories, reflecting a range of financial sentiments. The "Rather not" category, representing 36.3% of respondents, and the "Of course, it didn't suit" category, representing 32.6%, are the two largest groups. Collectively, these categories represent the majority of respondents (68.9%) who express varying degrees of dissatisfaction with their salary levels. The "Rather yes" category, at 23.8%, reflects a moderate level of satisfaction among a substantial portion of respondents. The categories "Definitely ok" and "It is difficult to say" are relatively smaller in proportion, representing 2.9% and 3.9%, respectively. "Definitely ok" reflects the smallest portion of respondents expressing a high level of satisfaction. Table 14 summarizes the data related to respondents' perceived career expectations, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 14: PERCEIVED CAREER PERSPECTIVES (PCP), (16. PLEASE RATE YOUR CAREER EXPECTATIONS?)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Achievement of greater	1	48	11.7%
Practical achievement total	2	109	26.5%
Reach less than	3	117	28.5%
There are no achievements	4	48	11.7%
It is difficult to answer	5	77	18.7%

The largest category, "Reach less than" at 28.5%, indicates a moderate level of career expectations among a significant portion of respondents. These individuals have expectations to achieve but within realistic boundaries. The "Practical achievement total" category, at 26.5%, reflects a substantial proportion of respondents who have practical and achievable career expectations. The categories "Achievement of greater" and "There are no achievements" represent respondents with varying degrees of ambition and outlook, with 11.7% in each category. A notable percentage, 18.7%, falls into the "It is difficult to answer" category, indicating some level of uncertainty regarding their career expectations. Table 15 summarizes the data related to respondents' perceptions of how their level of qualification corresponds to the realities of the work performed, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 15: QUALIFICATION GAP (QG) (19. HOW, IN YOUR OPINION, DOES THE LEVEL OF YOUR QUALIFICATION CORRESPOND TO THE REALITIES OF THE WORK PERFORMED)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely yes	1	175	42.6%
Rather so	2	203	49.4%
Rather not	3	19	4.6%
Definitely not	4	2	0.5%
It is difficult to say	5	11	2.7%

A significant majority of respondents, 92%, express a positive self-assessment of how their qualifications correspond to the realities of their work. Specifically, 42.6% "Definitely yes" and 49.4% "Rather so." "Rather so" (49.4%) is the largest category, representing a substantial proportion of respondents who believe their qualifications align well with their work. A relatively small percentage, 4.6%, falls into the "Rather not" category, indicating a minor level of disagreement or uncertainty regarding the correspondence of their qualifications. The categories "Definitely not" and "It is difficult to say" collectively represent a very small proportion of respondents (3.2%) who either lack confidence in the alignment of their qualifications or find it challenging to provide a clear assessment. Table 16 summarizes the data related to respondents' perceptions of the prestige of public service, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 16: PERCEPTIONS OF PRESTIGE (POP) (47 IN YOUR OPINION, THE PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE?)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	1	4	1.0%
High	2	39	9.5%
Moderate	3	213	51.8%
Low	4	115	28.0%
Very low	5	23	5.6%
It is difficult to say	6	13	3.2%

Respondents have diverse perceptions of the prestige associated with public service, with varying levels of positive and negative sentiment. The largest category, "Moderate," at 51.8%, indicates a moderate level of perceived prestige among a significant portion of respondents. These individuals hold a balanced view of public service prestige. Respondents' perceptions range from "High" and "Very high," indicating positive sentiment, to "Low" and "Very low," reflecting a more

negative view of public service prestige. The "It is difficult to say" category, at 3.2%, represents a small proportion of respondents who find it challenging to articulate their perceptions of public service prestige. Table 17 summarizes the data related to respondents' preferences for their child working in the civil service, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 17: JOB DECISION (JD)1 (42 HOW MUCH WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK IN THE CIVIL SERVICE)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely yes	1	11	2.7%
Rather so	2	92	22.4%
Rather not	3	149	36.3%
Definitely not	4	59	14.4%
It is difficult to say	5	99	24.1%

The largest category, "Rather not," at 36.3%, indicates a moderate level of preference among a significant portion of respondents for their child not to work in the civil service. Respondents' preferences range from "Rather so" and "Definitely yes," indicating encouragement, to "Definitely not," reflecting a more cautious view of the civil service as a career path for their child. The "It is difficult to say" category, at 24.1%, represents a notable proportion of respondents who find it challenging to express a clear preference regarding their child's career in the civil service. Table 18 summarizes the data related to respondents' preferences for their child working in the civil service in the same field, providing the corresponding codes, frequencies, and percentages for each response category.

TABLE 18: JOB DECISION (JD) 2 (43 HOW MUCH WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK IN THE CIVIL SERVICE IN THE SAME FIELD)

Response	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely yes	1	9	2.2%
Rather so	2	73	17.8%
Rather not	3	136	33.1%
Definitely not	4	95	23.1%
It is difficult to say	5	95	23.1%

The central statistical measures used include means (average values), standard deviations (a measure of data dispersion), and correlations. These calculations provide valuable insights into the relationships between Employee Engagement (EE), Perceptions of Prestige (POP), and Job Decision (JD).

First, the means of these variables offer a sense of their central tendencies. The mean Employee Engagement score provides a general understanding of how engaged local government employees are in their work. A higher mean suggests a more engaged workforce, while a lower mean indicates potential areas for improvement in employee engagement. Meanwhile, the mean Perceptions of Prestige score gives us an overall view of how employees perceive the prestige of public service. This measure provides a baseline for assessing the general sentiment of employees regarding the reputation of their profession. Lastly, the mean Job Decision score allows us to gauge the overall preference of employees regarding their children's careers in civil service.

Standard deviations accompany these means and provide insight into the degree of variability within each variable. A high standard deviation suggests that the data points are widely dispersed from the mean, indicating diversity of opinions and experiences among respondents. Conversely, a low standard deviation implies that data points are clustered closely around the mean, signifying greater uniformity in responses.

The correlations between these variables are particularly noteworthy (Table 19). They allow us to assess the strength and direction of relationships between Employee Engagement, Perceptions of Prestige, and Job Decision. A positive correlation suggests that as one variable increases, the other also tends to increase, while a negative correlation implies that as one variable increases, the other tends to decrease. The magnitude of the correlation coefficient reflects the strength of the relationship, with higher absolute values indicating stronger correlations.

The data analysis presented here offers a comprehensive overview of local government employees' perceptions, preferences, and sentiments within the Ukrainian civil service and public service sectors. It is evident that this group holds diverse and nuanced views on various aspects of their work and careers. Here are some key takeaways from the analysis:

1. Local government employees have diverse perceptions of the prestige of public service. While the majority holds a moderate view, there is a range of sentiment, reflecting varying opinions about the reputation of public service roles.
2. When it comes to encouraging their children to work in civil service, there is no one-size-fits-all preference. Some encourage, some are cautious, and a notable portion finds it challenging to express a clear preference. This diversity reflects complex views on the suitability of civil service careers for the next generation.
3. Most respondents have a positive self-assessment regarding the alignment of their qualifications with their work. Minor levels of disagreement or uncertainty exist, but overall, respondents express confidence in their qualifications' suitability for their roles.
4. The analysis reveals varying degrees of satisfaction with current salary levels. While some are dissatisfied, others express moderate or high satisfaction. This highlights disparities in financial well-being among employees in the public service.
5. Respondents have diverse career expectations, with a significant portion having practical and moderate ambitions. The outlook ranges from achieving great success to having no specific expectations.
6. The majority of respondents have a moderate to high level of confidence in the stability of their official positions. This indicates a strong sense of job security within the local government workforce.

In summary, the data analysis highlights the complexity and diversity of views and sentiments within the local government workforce in Ukraine. It is essential to recognize these diverse perspectives to address the various concerns and aspirations of employees and to make informed decisions for the betterment of the public service sector. Understanding these nuances is crucial for creating a work environment that aligns with the expectations and needs of employees in the civil service.



TABLE 19. MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND CORRELATION VALUES (CHUPROV, KRAMER)

Construct	Gender	Age	Living place	Education	Institution	Position	PE	EE	CE	RC	MS	PCP	QG	POP	JD1	JD2
Mean (SD)	(0.78)	(0.965)	(0.822)	(0.124)	(0.961)	(0.833)	1,693 (0.45)	1,869 (0.596)	2,042 (0.476)	2,463 (0.487)	3,108 (0.293)	2,992 (0.429)	1,71 (0.472)	3,376 (0.264)	3,349 (0.343)	3,475 (0.316)
Gender	1	0.104 (0.137)	0.133 (0.198)	0.098 (0.139)	0.166 (0.327)	0.275 (0.389)	0.086 (0.113)	0.067 (0.094)	0.099 (0.141)	0.100 (0.141)	0.152 (0.214)	0.089 (0.126)	0.105 (0.148)	0.089 (0.133)	0.067 (0.094)	0.077 (0.108)
Age	1	0.107 (0.121)	0.111 (0.119)	0.111 (0.119)	0.142 (0.212)	0.218 (0.234)	0.121 (0.121)	0.121 (0.130)	0.118 (0.127)	0.114 (0.122)	0.117 (0.126)	0.129 (0.139)	0.071 (0.076)	0.092 (0.105)	0.107 (0.115)	0.081 (0.087)
Living place	1	0.182 (0.193)	0.329 (0.432)	0.182 (0.193)	0.329 (0.432)	0.151 (0.159)	0.129 (0.147)	0.098 (0.103)	0.108 (0.114)	0.112 (0.119)	0.102 (0.108)	0.132 (0.139)	0.131 (0.138)	0.118 (0.118)	0.115 (0.122)	0.098 (0.104)
Edu cation	1	0.153 (0.213)	0.153 (0.213)	1	0.153 (0.213)	0.099 (0.099)	0.076 (0.076)	0.133 (0.133)	0.102 (0.102)	0.085 (0.085)	0.112 (0.112)	0.132 (0.139)	0.042 (0.046)	0.078 (0.082)	0.109 (0.109)	0.138 (0.138)
Insti tution	1	0.235 (0.327)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.169 (0.236)	0.235 (0.327)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
Position	1	0.116 (0.116)	0.160 (0.160)	0.160 (0.160)	0.116 (0.116)	0.235 (0.327)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
PE	1	0.127 (0.136)	0.127 (0.136)	0.127 (0.136)	0.127 (0.136)	0.127 (0.136)	1	0.127 (0.136)	0.161 (0.173)	0.142 (0.153)	0.103 (0.111)	0.139 (0.149)	0.394 (0.494)	0.212 (0.240)	0.103 (0.110)	0.124 (0.133)
EE	1	0.412 (0.412)	0.412 (0.412)	0.412 (0.412)	0.412 (0.412)	0.412 (0.412)	0.148 (0.206)	1	0.161 (0.173)	0.142 (0.153)	0.103 (0.111)	0.139 (0.149)	0.394 (0.494)	0.212 (0.240)	0.103 (0.110)	0.124 (0.133)
CE	1	0.230 (0.230)	0.230 (0.230)	0.230 (0.230)	0.230 (0.230)	0.230 (0.230)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
RC	1	0.167 (0.167)	0.167 (0.167)	0.167 (0.167)	0.167 (0.167)	0.167 (0.167)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
MS	1	0.155 (0.155)	0.155 (0.155)	0.155 (0.155)	0.155 (0.155)	0.155 (0.155)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
PCP	1	0.126 (0.126)	0.126 (0.126)	0.126 (0.126)	0.126 (0.126)	0.126 (0.126)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
QG	1	0.140 (0.148)	0.140 (0.148)	0.140 (0.148)	0.140 (0.148)	0.140 (0.148)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
POP	1	0.108 (0.108)	0.108 (0.108)	0.108 (0.108)	0.108 (0.108)	0.108 (0.108)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
JD1	1	0.197 (0.208)	0.197 (0.208)	0.197 (0.208)	0.197 (0.208)	0.197 (0.208)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)
JD2	1	0.709 (0.709)	0.709 (0.709)	0.709 (0.709)	0.709 (0.709)	0.709 (0.709)	0.148 (0.206)	0.169 (0.236)	0.157 (0.219)	0.147 (0.205)	0.208 (0.289)	0.177 (0.247)	0.156 (0.234)	0.155 (0.204)	0.159 (0.222)	0.159 (0.221)

Note(s): n = 403; \*\* correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

## V. DISCUSSION

This study presents a novel exploration into the intricate relationship between the perception of civil service prestige among incumbent local government employees and its impact on job decisions (JD) and employee engagement (EE). Our findings shed light on the nuanced dynamics governing these parameters within local government institutions, offering critical insights into the contemporary landscape of public service in the context of regional Ukraine. One of the central findings of this study pertains to the perception of civil service prestige and its apparent lack of direct correlation with both job decisions and employee engagement. This seemingly unexpected outcome may be elucidated by several complex factors inherent in the local government landscape. First and foremost, it is evident that a significant proportion of local government employees place a heightened focus on the material aspects of their employment. The discrepancy between their salary levels and the increasingly challenging social and economic conditions prevailing in Ukraine is a salient concern. This discrepancy has fostered an environment where many civil servants face financial strains, leading to a sense of dissatisfaction with their remuneration and overall job experience. In light of this material struggle, it is conceivable that the perception of civil service prestige may become a secondary consideration in the context of job decisions and employee engagement. Furthermore, the results of this study appear to mirror the broader challenges associated with ongoing government transformation and the pervasive mistrust towards governmental institutions. The context of regional Ukraine is characterized by political and administrative reform initiatives, which, while aimed at improving governance, have also contributed to uncertainty and instability. Such transformations often give rise to scepticism and distrust among employees, impacting their engagement with the organization. In this environment, the perception of civil service prestige may be overshadowed by broader systemic concerns and an environment of apprehension regarding the government's future direction.

The findings of this study have significant implications for local government institutions in Ukraine. It underscores the imperative for these organizations to address material concerns among employees, including issues related to salary and economic well-being. While the perception of prestige remains an important aspect of civil service, addressing tangible concerns is likely to be a fundamental prerequisite for enhancing employee engagement and retaining talent.

Moreover, in a context marked by government transformation and widespread mistrust, local governments must undertake initiatives to rebuild employee trust. Open communication, transparency in decision-making, and efforts to involve employees in the reform process may help mitigate the effects of pervasive scepticism and promote a more engaged workforce.

It is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Our research is context-specific to regional Ukraine, and the

findings may not be directly transferable to other geographical and political settings. Future research could explore the relationship between civil service prestige, job decisions, and employee engagement in diverse national and regional contexts.

In conclusion, while the perception of civil service prestige is a valuable parameter, its influence on job decisions and employee engagement is profoundly nuanced within the intricate dynamics of local government institutions in Ukraine. Addressing material concerns and rebuilding trust may pave the way for a more engaged and committed local government workforce, ultimately enhancing public service delivery and the broader development of the community.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study yield valuable insights into the intricate relationship between local government employee engagement and the formation of civil service prestige. It is imperative to underscore the nuanced dynamics at play within local government institutions, as these insights hold significant practical implications for human resource management and policy development.

One of the key takeaways from this research is the recognition of the limited role that local government employee engagement appears to play in the process of shaping civil service prestige. The implications of this observation are substantial, suggesting that employee engagement, while essential for the overall well-being of the workforce, may not directly translate into the enhancement of the organization's reputation and prestige.

This finding prompts a critical examination of the factors that contribute to the formation of civil service prestige. While employee engagement is undoubtedly important for job satisfaction, performance, and retention, it may not, on its own, be a sufficient catalyst for elevating the perceived prestige of civil service among local government officials. Consequently, a multifaceted approach to enhancing civil service prestige may be required, which extends beyond employee engagement to encompass broader organizational and contextual factors.

One particularly intriguing finding is the generational perspective on civil service employment. More than half of local government officials expressed a lack of optimism regarding their children's inclination to choose a career in civil service. This sentiment is not only noteworthy but also indicative of the evolving perceptions of the younger generation toward public service.

The implications of this generational divide are manifold. It suggests that there may be a growing disconnect between the traditional appeal of civil service, often associated with stability and public service, and the aspirations of younger generations who may prioritize different values and career prospects. Recognizing and addressing this generational shift is imperative for local government institutions to ensure a continuous pipeline of talented individuals committed to public service.

Another notable aspect of the findings is the proportion of respondents who found it challenging to provide a clear

response. Approximately 24% of local government officials hesitated or were unable to provide definitive answers to questions. This ambiguity in responses highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of the issues being examined. It underscores the need for more nuanced, in-depth research to further disentangle the intricate dynamics influencing civil service prestige, job decisions, and employee engagement.

The practical implications of this study are multifaceted. For local government institutions, it underscores the imperative of considering diverse approaches to enhance civil service prestige, recognizing that employee engagement is just one facet of the broader landscape. Strategies aimed at strengthening prestige may require comprehensive efforts to improve organizational culture, transparency, and performance.

Further research is needed to delve into the nuanced factors that shape civil service prestige, including the generational perspectives and the reasons underlying the hesitancy of local government officials regarding their children's career choices. Exploring these dimensions will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the evolving dynamics within the civil service sector.

In conclusion, this study offers a nuanced perspective on the relationship between local government employee engagement and civil service prestige. Recognizing the limited role of employee engagement and the generational dynamics at play is essential for informed decision-making and policy development, ultimately fostering a more vibrant, reputable, and attractive civil service sector.

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