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Self-Concepts of Police Personnel in Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract

A person's self-concept contribute greatly in his or her react to the environment and act in it. The Nigerian police personnel are faced with enormous tasks in Anambra state and Nigeria in general. The present study investigated the self-concept of police personnel in Anambra state using a descriptive survey research approach. The study relied on primary data sources and a theoretical framework based on the self-concept theory. A research question and two hypotheses guided the study. A self-concept standardized questionnaire was adopted and used for data collection. The population of the study was 1569 police personnel in Anambra state as at 2020, and the sample size of 700 was determined using proportional stratified random sampling technique. Aggregate scores and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to answer the research question and test the null hypotheses. The findings suggest that majority of the police personnel in Anambra state over 98 percent have low self-concept. Male and female police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores. Also, police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores based on their educational attainment. The study suggests that those in-charge of police affairs should seek the services of professional guidance counsellors and organize conferences for the police personnel in the areas of self-concept aiming at increasing the self-concept scores of the police personnel. It will enable them work effectively in the society.
Keywords: Educational Attainment, Gender, Police Personnel and Self-concepts

Introduction

Police personnel are those empowered by government law to enforce the laws it creates. Responsibilities of police personnel are varied, and may differ to another. Typical duties relate to keeping the peace, law enforcement, protection of people and property and the investigation of crimes. Officers are expected to respond to a variety of situations that may arise while they are on duty.

Police personnel are a warranted law employees of a police force. A police officer is a serving member of a police force. Police personnel arrest criminals, prevent crime, protect and help the public, and keep public order. Officers have legally authorized powers, which in Britain are called warrant. The major role of the police is to maintain order, keeping the

peace through surveillance of the public, and the subsequent reporting and apprehension of suspected violators of the law. They also function to discourage crimes through high visibility policing and capability. The police have an investigative capability. Police have the legal authority to arrest and detain, usually granted by magistrate. Police personnel also respond to emergency calls, along with routine community policing (Aborisade & Oni, 2020). Police are often used as an emergency service and provide a public safety function at large gatherings as well as in emergencies, disasters, search and rescue situations, and road traffic collisions. Police are also responsible for reprimanding minor offenders by issuing citations which typically may result in the imposition of fines, particularly for violations of traffic laws. A person entrusted with these duties should have high self-concept. They should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses, reflective, self-assured and have good self-esteem among other things. For many years, the behaviours of many Nigeria police personnel have been the subject of serious public criticism. It has been alleged that the police are involved in graft, corruption, robbery and indiscipline among other vices (Aborisade & Adedayo, 2021). One would like to ask; what should these police personnel's self-concepts look like.

The self-concept is a general term used to refer to how someone thinks about, evaluates or perceives themselves. To be aware of oneself is to have a concept of oneself (Adigun, 2020). In context, self-concept of police personnel is the belief about him or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is. The self-concept is an important term for both social and humanistic psychology. Generally, self-concept embodies the answer to 'who am I'.Self-concept is made up of one's schemas and interacts with self– esteem, self-knowledge and the social to form, the self as a whole. It includes the past, present and future selves, where future selves (or possible selves) represent individual's ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become or what they are afraid of becoming. Possible selves may function as incentives for certain behaviour. The perception people have about their past or future selves are related to the perception of their current selves. The temporal; self – appraisal theory argues that people have a tendency to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from negative self and paying more attention to their positive one.

In addition, people have a tendency to perceive the past self-less favourable (e.g. 'I'm better than I used to be') and the future self-more positively (e.g. 'I will be better than I am now'). Entrance into law enforcement is often thought to be achieved by eager recruits who identify with the ethos of police work and are confident in their abilities to contribute to the good of society (Van Maanen, 2003). Moreover, professionals and academics in the field who write on the personality characteristic held by 'good police personnel' stress the importance of officers' self-confidence. For example Nowicki (2000) writes that 12 characteristics make up a good police officer, including; courage or being able to meet physical and psychological challenges, thinking clearly during times of high stress and ego or believing one is a good officer and having the self confidence that enables one solve difficult crimes. This means that if officers are struggling with mental, health issues, or a lack of confidence they may not be able to adequately to pursue suspects detain suspects, or perform other tasks such as operating their patrol cars. Therefore, true professionalism in policing requires high degree of self-concept.

Oluwafemi (2019) noted that professionalism in policing is further complicated by gender, since professions such as police are predominantly made up of men. Gender refers to the roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviour, and values that society ascribes to men and women. Gender also refers to the learned differences between men and women. They are generally universal and are not usually amenable to change. (NPF, UNWOMEN, UNFPA, 2010) The integration of gender issues in law enforcement is now recognized as a key to operational effectiveness and institutional credibility in Nigeria. Women often bring specific skills and strengths to police work, such as the ability to diffuse potentially violent situations and employ good communication skills to minimize the use of force. In certain contexts, female officers are necessary to perform the cordon and search of women, widen the net of intelligence gathering and assist victims of sexual exploitation. Notably, in the Nigeria Police Force (as in many other countries) is not only dominated by men but modelled as a masculine institution with masculinized values, behaviour and expectations which may have caused extreme hostility and mistrust between the police and the public as witnessed today in Anambra State.

Many of the early studies examined the impact of education on police officer efficacies. This body of literature also includes research that focuses on the impact of education on a variety of police performance measures including: the use of deadly force/non-lethal force, involvement in liability incidents and citizen complaints filed against the police. Academic attainment refers to the highest level of education that a police personnel has successfully completed (Paterson, 2011).

Nevertheless, one should know that officers' perceived self-concept may affect their 'pride and confidence' and ultimately 'such feelings of pride and confidence influence the officers' ability to function effectively and to maintain law and order in society. Although every police officer has a complex self-concept, there are nevertheless individual differences in self-complexity, the extent to which police officers have many different and relatively independent ways of thinking about themselves (Roccas& Brewer, 2002). Some selves are more complex than others, and these individual differences can be important in determining psychological outcomes. Having a complex self means that police officers have a lot of different ways of thinking about themselves. For those with high self-complexity, the various aspects of the self are separate, as the positive and negative thoughts about a particular self-aspect do not spill over into thoughts about other aspects.

Jansen, Scherer and Schroeders (2015) investigated students' self-concept and self-efficacy in the sciences by applying (multilevel) structural equation modelling to the German PISA 2006 data set. The study used data from the nationally representative sample of the PISA 2006 large-scale assessment in Germany. This sample included N = 4,891 high-school students (49.7% female, 80.7% native Germans) from 226 schools. Students' mean age was 15.9 years (SD = 0.3). Most of the students attended ninth grade (55.2%), but there were also students in 10th (28.6%), 8th (11.9%), 7th (1.4%) and 11th (.3%) grades. In the German school system, students change from elementary school to a tracked secondary school system. In the study, 39.2% of the participating students attended the high academic track (Gymnasium) whereas 60.8% attended the lower track, middle track or mixed-track schools. In two test sessions of 120 min each, assessments of mathematical, scientific, and reading literacy and a student background questionnaire were administered. For the scales

from the student questionnaire, the proportion of missing values varied between 5.9% and 7.2%. As test performance in science was strongly associated with missingness in students' science self-concept (d = 1.09, SE = .01) and self-efficacy (d = 1.13, SE = .02), it appeared reasonable to assume the missing-at-random mechanism. The study found a correlation of ϱ = .57 between self-concept and self-efficacy in science, advocating distinguishable constructs. Furthermore, science self-concept was better predicted by the average peer achievement (Big-Fish-Little-Pond Effect), whereas science self-efficacy was more strongly affected by inquiry based learning opportunities. There were also differences in the predictive potential for educational outcomes: Self-concept was a better predictor of future-oriented motivation to aspire a career in the sciences, whereas self-efficacy was a better predictor of current ability. The study provides strong evidence for the related but distinct nature of the two constructs and extends existing research on students' competence beliefs toward social comparisons and opportunities-to-learn.Though this research did not cover police personnel, the present study will derive from it because it studied self-concept and self-efficacy which are among the variables considered in the present study.

Choi (2005) examined whether self-constructs measured at an intermediate level of specificity better correspond with the criterion variable (course grades: an intermediate level of specificity) than general self-constructs or specific self-constructs. Self-constructs in this study included self-efficacy and self-concept at varying degrees of specificity: general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, specific self-efficacy, academic self-concept, and specific self-concept. Students of Tianjin International Chinese College (*N* = 230) in general education courses voluntarily completed the three self-efficacy measures and the two self-concept measures. Results of correlation and simultaneous multiple regression analyses indicated that the closer the level of specificity of self-efficacy and self-concept, the stronger the relationship between the two constructs. Both academic self-concept and specific self-concept were significant predictors of term grades. In addition, academic self-concept was also a significant predictor, whereas neither general self-efficacy nor academic self-efficacy was significant. Measurement issues and implications of the findings are discussed. The study under review is related to the present study because both studies are concerned about self-efficacy and the self-concept measures. But the studies differ in the sense that the study under review measured intermediate level of specificity, the present study will cover emotional intelligence, self-concept and self-efficacy belief of police personnel.

Bharathi and Sreedevi (2016) conducted this study to examine the self-concept of adolescents. Self-concept scale was used to analyze the self-concept of 40 adolescents of twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana State, India. The findings of the study revealed that higher percentage of adolescents had above average levels of self-concept in dimension of temperamental (85), intellectual (77.5), physical (60) and social (52.5). About 47.5percent of adolescents equally had high and above average self- concept in education. And 57.5 percent of adolescents had high moral self-concept. Adolescents overall Self-concept was found as 27.5 percent in high and 72.5 per cent have above average. Hence, the study may help the teachers and parents to maintain the optimum level of self-concept of adolescents.Although, this research does not deal with police personnel, the present study

will still derive from it because it recommended the provision may help the police personnel to maintain the optimum level of self-concept.

Edwin (2018) determined the association of self-concept and job satisfaction of registered nurses working at cross-cultural setting. A descriptive correlational study was conducted with 1061 registered nurses working in selected government hospitals using convenience-sampling method. The registered nurses self-concept and job satisfaction were surveyed using the standardized tool Nurses Self-Concept Questionnaire (NSCQ) and Mccloskey/Muller job satisfaction scale (MMSS). SPSS software version 20 was used to analyze the collected data to report descriptive and inferential statistics. The current study identified that there is a relationship between registered nurses self-concept and job satisfaction and the correlation coefficients were statistically very highly significant ($P <$ 0.001). The association of job satisfaction with sub component of self-concept reveals that Nurses General Self-Concept $r = 0.273$, $P < 0.001$, Care $r = 0.141$, $P < 0.001$, Staff relation $r = 0.320$, $P < 0.001$, Communication $r = 0.174$, $P < 0.001$, Knowledge $r = 0.218$, $P < 0.001$, and lower association with 'Leadership' ($r = 0.063$, $P < 0.05$). The results of this research demonstrated the importance of registered nurses self-concept and its effect on job satisfaction that is essential for nurses to provide effective care to the patients. The present research will still derive from the study because it deals with self-concept.

Sproesser, Engel and Kuntze (2016) examined strategies for fostering self-concept and interest for statistics through specific learning environments. Data from 450 German eighth graders (212 female, 238 male), who completed pre- and post-tests and participated in the intervention were the basis of the analysis. These students were between 12 and 15 years old (M 13.50; SD 0.62) and were recruited from 25 classes in eight German technical-track public secondary schools (so-called "Realschule"). In addition to the students participating in the intervention, a baseline group consisting of 53 students (32 male, 21 female) between the ages of 13 and 15 years (M 13.73; SD 0.72) from four other classes was included in the study. The students of this baseline group continued with their regular mathematics classes instead of the intervention. They completed, in identical time intervals (approximately 2 weeks between pre- and posttest), the same tests as the students in the intervention group. In each class, the particular class teacher and the first author were present for the testing and during the intervention. The results indicate that students perceived mathematics and statistics differently with respect to their self-concept and interest. Moreover, statistics-related self-concept and interest could be fostered through the domain-specific intervention, whereby a greater increase was found among students with higher prior achievement in the domain of statistics. However, there is need to further establish the extent to which self-concept of the police personnel differ in based on academic attainment and gender.

Purpose of the Study The main purpose of this study is to investigate self-concept of police personnel in Anambra state. Specifically, the study is designed to do the following: (a) Find out self- concept scores of police personnel in Anambra State (b) Determine the difference in the police personnel's self-concepts based on their academic attainment (c) Determine the difference in the police personnel's self-concepts based on their gender.

*Scope of the Study*This study is delimited to assessing self-concept of police personnel in Anambra State. The subjects of the study are all police personnel working in the various police formations in Anambra State which includes Mopol base Agu-Awka, State Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Divisional police headquarters, Anambra state police Area commands and Nigeria Police Force Zone 13, Ukpo. Police posts will not be covered in the present study.

*Research Questions*The study was guided by a research question and two null hypotheses: What are the self-concept scores of police personnel in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

H_{o1}: Self-concept scores of police personnel in Anambra State will not differ significantly due to their academic attainment

H_{o2} Self-concept scores of police personnel in Anambra State will not differ significantly due to their gender

Method

Research Design The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The design is a sort of quantitative study that entails gathering quantitative scores that may be tallied in numerical form along a continuum. Because the human mind is incapable of fully comprehending a vast amount of raw data, descriptive statistics are employed to gain insight into the actual situation of things on the focus of the study.

*Area of the Study*The study was carried out in Anambra State. Anambra State is one of 36 states in Nigeria, and it is located in the south-eastern part of the country. Anambra State was picked because of the relatively high crime rate in it. There is poor public perception of the police in terms of crime prevention due to poor police/public relations. The masses accuse the police of extortion, corruption, cruelty, and incivility, which erode public cooperation that might have improved police efficiency.

Populations of the Study The population of this study consists of 1569 police personnel in Anambra state. Police formations in Anambra State comprises of the Area Command Awka, CPS Awka, B; Division Awka, Achall Division, Anaocha, Ojoto, Nnobi, Awada, Obosi, Ogidi, Dunukofia, Abagana, Leopard Base (PMF 29), CPS Onitsha, Nzam, Inland Town Onitsha, Ogbaru, Okpoko, Fegge, Otuocha, Anaku, Oyi, 3-3 Onitsha, O/C Marine, Ihala, CPS Nnewi, Uli Division, Nnewi Division, Ochi Amichi, Ihala Division, Umunze, Ukpor, Ichi Division, Otolo Division, Amichi, Ezinifite, Aguata, Ajalli Division, Okija, Ozubulu and Oko.

*Sample and Sampling Technique*The sample is made up of 700 police officers from Anambra state that were chosen via proportional stratified random sampling. The researchers chose a proportion of 44.6% police personnel from each division within the population.

*Instruments for Data Collection*Self Concept Scale (SCS) (Adopted from Rastogi, 1979). Self-concept Scale developed and standardized by Rastogi (1979) was used to measure self-concept of the police personnel. It is a five points scale having 51 items. The

scale was based on Likert's scaling technique. Each statement are given five responses (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree).

Validation of Instrument Self-Concept Scale (SCS) (Adopted from Rastogi, 1979) is a standardized instrument. The current researchers therefore adopted the instruments and did not have need to do any further validation.

Reliability of the Instrument The instrument was trial tested using 30 police officers from Enugu State who were not involved in the main study. They were given copies of the questionnaire to complete, which were then collected and analysed using Crombach alpha reliability method. It gave a reliability coefficient of 0.81 which shows very high level of reliability.

Method of Data Collection In administering the instrument the researchers made us of eight research assistants to enable them get to a good number of the subjects in the field. They used direct administration and retrieval approach. The research assistants were members of the police command in Anambra state.

Method of Data Analysis To answer the research questions, the data was analysed using range of scores for research question and t-test was used to test null hypothesis 1 while analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test null hypothesis 2 all at 0.05 level of significance.

The decision on research question 1 was guided by the norm of the instrument which states that scores below 178 indicate low self-concept while scores from 178.5 indicate high self-concept.

Results

Research Question 1 What are the self-concept scores of the police personnel in Anambra state?

Table 1: RANGE OF SCORES ON SELF-CONCEPT OF POLICE PERSONNEL IN ANAMBRA STATE

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
51 – 178	683	98.8	Low self-concept
179 – 255	8	1.20	High self-concept

Table 1 indicates that 8(1.2%) of the police personnel in Anambra state police formation who scored between 179 and 255 have high self-concept, while 422(61.1%) others who scored between 51 and 178 have low self-concept.

Null Hypothesis 1 There is no significant difference in self-concept mean scores of male and female police personnel in Anambra State.

Table 2: t-test ON THE SELF-CONCEPT MEAN SCORES OF MALE AND FEMALE POLICE PERSONNEL IN ANAMBRA STATE

Source of variation	N	Mean	Sd	Cal.	df	Pvalue	Remark
Male	462	120.24	21.29				
				1.31	689	0.190	NS
Female	229	126.92	21.29				

In table 2, it was observed that at 689df and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t=1.31 with Pvalue=0.190 which is greater than the 0.05, the third null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, male and female police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores.

Null Hypothesis 2 There is no significant difference in self-concept mean scores of police personnel in Anambra State based on the educational attainment.

Table 3: ANOVA ON THE SELF-CONCEPT MEAN SCORES OF POLICE PERSONNEL IN ANAMBRA STATE BASED ON THEIR EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Source of variation	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	Cal. F	Pvalue	Remark
Between Groups	2855.698	3	951.899	1.996	.113	NS
Within Groups	327560.502	687	476.798			
Total	330416.200	690				

Table 3 shows that at 0.05 level of significant, 3df numerator and 687df denominator, the calculated F2.00 with Pvalue 0.113 which is greater than the 0.05, the fourth null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores based on their educational attainment.

From the analyses, it was discovered that majority of the police personnel have low self-concept. Also male and female police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores. The finding on the insignificance of gender on self-concept of police however contradicts the one reported by Kadam and Ubhe (2014) in which a significant gender difference was found on physical self-concept, social self-concept and intellectual self-concept among police officers at 0.05 level of significance. However, the same study by Kadam and Ubhe (2014) reported no gender difference on temperamental self-concept and moral self-concept among police officers. Nevertheless, the present study suggests the insignificance of gender on self-concept of police, which by inference means police irrespective of gender, do not differ on how they think about, evaluates or perceives themselves.

It was observed that police personnel in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores based on their educational attainment. Basically, police personnel are primarily responsible for implementing the law of the land and fighting crime; hence, Tankebe (2019) noted that as law enforcers, it is expected of police personnel to be knowledgeable on the law simply because it is their job and profession. This is because, giving a consideration to law violators is a matter of discretion on the part of police officer but police discretion cannot be invoked in criminal process (Tankebe, 2019). This act will result to favoritism, injustice or unfair treatment especially to those who are law-abiding citizen. These findings are consistent with, and extend, those reported by Navarro-Abal, López-López, Gómez-Salgado and Climent-Rodríguez (2020) that highly educated, experienced and senior officers demonstrate acceptable professional choice, efficacy, productivity in professional performance and a higher degree of self-concept that promotes power motivation to face life changes.

It is not surprising that a high number (98.8 %) of the police personnel studied had low self-concept. Moon (2018) noted that in terms of justice and fairness, the treatment of criminals is the parameter of the police officer. Mishandling of criminal during the arrest indicates low self-concept; this is because, under the Criminal Justice System, the accused is presumed innocent unless proven guilty (Tómasson, 2012) by the court and the government must utilize all the machinery to uphold this principle. The low self-concept of the police personnel studied can be interpreted from the perspective of Igbo (2017) who studied the use and abuse of police powers and extrajudicial killings in Nigeria. It was argued that extrajudicial killing is the most serious abuse of power and violation of victims' rights to life and fair hearing and this situation could influence the actions of the police personnel.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study makes contribution to knowledge as it highlights the extent of self-concept possessed by the Nigerian Police personnel amidst their efforts to combat crime in the country. Consequently the findings of this study revealed that higher percentage of police personnel studied had low self-concept, however, they do not differ significantly in their self-concept scores based on gender and on educational attainment.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: (a) Developing successful police personnel is not just the task of the human resources department rather the entire organization should be involved in areas such as mentoring, coaching, role modelling, assessment, education, and providing experience. (b) The Nigerian Police Force should employ the services of professional guidance counsellors for the self-concept of their personnel and the psychological wellbeing of the officers. (c) Nigerian Police Force as an organization should do everything possible to provide a healthy psychological environment to make policing an interesting career, as modern policing is not determined by only physical capabilities.

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