

**THE PERCEPTION OF POLICE OFFICERS TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT IN
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS IN UGANDA: A CASE OF KABALAGALA POLICE STATION,
MAKINDYE DIVISION**

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Abstract: Criminal investigations are complex in nature and hence an investigator must be of the sound psychological mind. The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of the police officers towards psychological assessments especially in criminal investigations. The study used a case study of Kabalagala Police Station hence the study area was in Makindye Division of Kampala District. The population of the study included the police officers especially those involved in criminal investigation. The selection of the sample followed the Morgan and Krejcie formula and will be 169 respondents. The study employed simple random sampling techniques. The researcher used questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. In order to obtain more classified information regarding the study objectives, the study used an interview guide and this was carried out with the Uganda Police Force's top brass. The researcher used coding sheets and simple descriptive analysis (bar charts, pie charts, frequency tables). Inferential analysis (the use of significance levels) was also used to investigate the significance of the relationships between the variables using cross tables.

The study results indicated that the police officers were less knowledgeable about the various standardized tools for psychological assessments before conducting criminal investigations. However, the study results indicated that the officers would welcome the aspect of these assessments as their

attitudes towards them in criminal investigations were positive. To this end, the perceptions of the police officers about criminal investigations can be improved by improving their knowledge of the same through improved training.

Keywords: *psychological assessments; Criminal investigations*

Introduction

It's miles believed that checks and checking out programs first got here into being in China as early as 2200 B.C.E. (DuBois, 1970) also exciting from an ancient angle are ancient Greco-Roman writings indicative of attempts to categorize humans in terms of persona kinds. A great deal of the nineteenth-century testing that would be described as mental in nature involved the size of sensory abilities, reaction time, and so on. normally, the public turned into inquisitive about such checking out. but there was no good-sized belief that checking out for variables together with reaction time had any implemented cost but all of that would trade in the early 1900s with the delivery of the first formal exams of intelligence, exams that might really be useful for reasons without problems comprehensible to everybody who had school-age children (Racheal et al., 2023). International conflict I had introduced with it not best the want to display screen the highbrow functioning of recruits however also the want to display for recruits' well-known adjustment. a central authority

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Committee on Emotional fitness chaired with the aid of psychologist Robert S. Woodworth turned into assigned the assignment of developing a degree of adjustment and emotional balance that would be administered speedy and efficiently to agencies of recruits (Emmanuel et al., 2023).

Theoretical underpinning

The Rasch model, Latent Trait concept, item response principle, object characteristic Curves, computer Adaptive checking out, and so forth. in famous psychological evaluation texts, check manuals, and journals had been utilized by a number of psychologists to research the relevance of the mental exams. Until currently, Classical check concept has been applied to psychological tests (Gulliksen, 1950). Despite the usefulness of Classical check idea and fashions in psychometric methods, shortcomings inside the simple concept underlying psychological assessment and measurement methods for check construction were recognized for over 50 years. Gulliksen (1950) wrote about a number of these troubles in his conventional check principle textual content, and it is not sudden that one among his very own college students turned into most of the first to enhance the technology of cutting-edge check idea (religion et al., 2023). One shortcoming of Classical check idea is that classical object information relies on the precise examinee samples from which they have been obtained. this is because test objects appearance easy while administered to shiny examinees, and tougher while administered to less successful examinees (Suzan & Kazaara, 2023).

The cause of item response idea (IRT) is to triumph over the shortcomings of classical test principle by

means of presenting a reporting scale on which examinee capacity (the assemble measured through the test) is impartial of the specific preference of take a look at items which can be administered. What started inside the Nineteen Forties and 1950s as a goal of psychometricians, have become truth 30 years later (Lord, 1980). with the aid of the early 1970s, the idea changed into developing well, pc software program changed into available, and applications of IRT have been starting to seem.

The IRT is getting used to address technical troubles along with the automated layout of exams, the look at of item bias, equating take a look at rankings, pc-adaptive checking out, and rating reporting (Hambleton and Pitoniak, 2002; Hambleton et al., 1991).

IRT postulates that (1) underlying examinee performance on a take a look at is a unmarried capacity or trait, and (2) the connection among the possibility that an examinee will offer a accurate solution (or agree to a statement, within the case of a persona or mind-set survey) and the examinee's capacity may be described via a monotonically growing curve or function.

Mental exams within the security forces, mental tests are used in many approaches, perhaps most significantly in choice making approximately the careers of protection personnel. Evidence proves that there exists a extensive variety of fulfillment, flair, interest, motivational, and other exams can be hired inside the selection to rent in addition to in associated choices regarding promotions, transfer, activity satisfaction, and eligibility for in addition schooling.

For a potential air traffic controller, a hit performance

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on a check of sustained interest to detail may be one requirement of employment (Oliver et al., 2023). For merchandising to the rank of officer inside the navy, a success overall performance on a sequence of management duties can be crucial. Mental checks were used by those departments to layout of environments wherein the safety official's function. Engineering psychologists appoint a selection of existing and mainly devised checks in studies designed to assist humans at home, within the place of job, and in the navy.

Problem Statement

To ensure effective crook investigations, cops are meant to use mental exams before they're simply assigned to take at the identical duties. this is so because those tests are regarded to be reliable gear for decreasing the duration of the crook investigations while enhancing the great thereof (Christopher et al., 2022). However, the insufficient use of psychological exams makes officers inn to

using torture which compromises the standard requirement of criminal investigations. In Kampala on my own, over 200 human beings are arrested and put to police cells each day (UPF, 2023). In addition, proof indicates that out of all of the people arrested and positioned to the cells each day, 38.2% are Truly criminals, 41.6% witnessed the crime and the relaxation have no concept about the crime in query (UHRC, 2016). Whereas some law enforcement officials are ignorant about these checks, other law enforcement officials seem to have negative ideas approximately them. To this give up, the applicability of psychological tests in Uganda's crook investigation tactics is confined and this has raised extreme troubles as to the success of the crook investigations (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Basing on the above justifications, the have a look at sought to research the perceptions of the police officers toward the usage of psychological exams in criminal investigations.

Objectives of the study

- To model the use of psychological assessments in criminal investigation basing on police officers' knowledge
- To examine the significance of police officers' attitudes towards the use of psychological assessments in criminal investigations
- To analyze the relationships between knowledge, attitudes and psychological assessments in criminal investigations

Psychological assessment in Police recruitment

In the military as well as security agencies, psychological assessments are becoming an important tool for screening and selecting the best candidates from a pool of eligible candidates (Lievens & De Soete, 2011; Krause et al. (2006). This tool is of ultimate importance in police departments since the police officers face a host of emotional and psychological issues when performing the assigned tasks (Oliver et al., 2023)

The basic assumption underlying the use of psychological assessment in recruitment, appointing and promoting police officers is that no two officers are alike. In police recruitment, psychological assessments

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are being increasingly used (McDermott, 2012) to obtain better results because of the fact that it permits the use of an array of tools which capture different abilities to improve the precision of choice. However, this is mainly emphasized by the developed countries but less in the context of the developing countries, a gap the current study was out to bridge.

Ceschi et al. (2019) have indicated that an adequate psychological assessment is primarily the one that is complete with a number of tests and a number of assessors. This means that it is an assessment that respects a basic psychological fact: that people are complex and complete beings, that is, that any dimension that is measured by a test or instrument is observed in the context of the whole personality (Sartori & Ceschi, 2013).

In the police recruitment, appointment and promotion context, psychological assessment is key to inform human resource management (HRM) including personnel selection, career development, talent management. That is, psychological assessment represents a key component of HRM that can be used to assist employee-related decision-making, from officers' hiring to retirement (Sartori et al., 2013a, b, 2018). However, the issue of assesses role in improving the validity of these tests is seldom discussed by the scholars.

Yet, despite the centrality of psychological assessment for HRM, a gap exists between how the assesses perceive of the relevance of these assessments, whether psychological instruments are rarely, if ever, employed.

It is even not known whether the Uganda Police force ever extensively uses these assessments in selecting recruits and whether Internal Response Theory forms a critical aspect in as far as the success of the psychological assessments is concerned.

Likely, research shows that when it comes to personnel selection, unstructured interviews are still the most common tool used to make hiring decisions despite abounding evidence on their lower validity and reliability compared to structured and standardized instruments (Sartori, 2010; Cubico et al., 2010).

Despite the fact that results showed that psychological assessments were perceived by the assesses as lacking a fit with specific organizational needs or too time-consuming with regard to administration and analysis of results, the study respondents cannot be treated as homogeneous and hence the view of Ugandan recruits is a gap that must be filled.

Overall, while generally larger organizations make more extensive use of psychological assessments compared to small enterprises, evidence shows that the recruits, for which the assessments are carried, have no power to determine the proceedings but its effect on the quality of the results is seldom investigated.

From the above literature, it is evident that the effectiveness of psychological assessments in criminal investigations is heavily dependent on the perceptions of those being assessed and assigned. However, most of the studies were carried out in the context of the military and the other private sectors rather than the police agencies in criminal investigations, a gap the current study was out to bridge.

Methodology

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This study adopted a case study with mixed approaches. The study targeted the Divisional Police leaders, that is to say, the Divisional Police Commander, Divisional CID officer, Divisional Crime Intelligence officer, Divisional Community Liaison Officer and other officers. Purposive sampling technique was used.

The study employed primary and secondary sources. The researcher used a self-administered questionnaire, interview guide and document reviews.

The responses for qualitative analysis were summarized in narrative form. Quantitative data, on the other hand was analyzed in SPSS (22) using descriptive and inferential analyses. For the descriptive analyses, conclusions were based on the percentages and frequencies (Nelson et al., 2022). For inferential analyses (correlation and regression), conclusions were based on comparing the p-values to the level of significance.

Results

These results were run using correlation.

Correlating knowledge about psychological assessments in criminal investigations

		Assessment in Investigations	Knowledge
Investigations	Pearson Correlation	1	.268**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	160	160
TOOL	Pearson Correlation	.268**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	160	160

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data

Correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.268$, $p < 0.01$) between police officers' knowledge about use of psychological assessments and the effectiveness of their use in criminal investigation (Nelson et al., 2023). This means that improving the police officer's knowledge of psychological assessments will improve the results obtained from criminal investigations in Kabalagala Police investigation. The significance of these findings is that the management and administrators of the police station are provided with a scientific basis to improve the knowledge about psychological assessments in order to improve the effectiveness of criminal investigations (Nelson et al., 2022).

Correlating attitudes about psychological assessments in criminal investigations

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		Assessment in Investigations	Attitudes
Investigations	Pearson Correlation	1	.458**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	160	160
TOOL	Pearson Correlation	.458**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	160	160
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.458$, $p < 0.01$) between police officers' attitudes towards use of psychological assessments and the effectiveness of their use in criminal investigation.

This means that improving the attitudes of the police officers about the use of psychological assessments will improve the results obtained from criminal investigations in Kabalagala Police investigation. The significance of these findings is that the management and administrators of the police station are provided with a scientific basis to predict the officers' attitudes towards psychological assessments in order to improve the effectiveness of criminal investigations.

Conclusions

Regarding the first objective, the results indicated that the knowledge of the police officers about psychological assessment was poor without any background to the officers about these assessments (Isaac et al., 2023).

Regarding the second objective, the results indicated that the attitudes of the police officers towards psychological assessment in criminal investigations were negative because most of them had insufficient knowledge about it.

Regarding the third objective, the results indicated that the relationships between knowledge and attitudes of the police officers towards psychological assessment in criminal investigations were significant but weak.

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