

Demographic Variables As Moderators of Work Stress Among The Nigeria Police Officers

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ABSTRACT

Research on the issue of Police officers' stress has been extensive and two main categories of stressors have been identified – operational stressors and organizational stressors. These two categories were investigated in this study in addition to what demographic and personal variables may moderate actual levels of stress experienced by Police officers in Nigeria. To do this, a sample of 1000 (one thousand) Police officers serving in Edo state was surveyed. The study found that demographic and personal variables like marital status, level of physical exercise, use of alcohol, age, rank, satisfaction with job do not moderate the levels of operational and organizational stress experienced by Police officers. On the other hand, operational stress was moderated by years of service, satisfaction with leadership style, educational level and having children. While in terms of organizational stress, the study found that gender, years of service, main task, satisfaction with leadership style, educational level and having children were all moderators. Lastly, the study found that there is a significant relationship between the presence of health problems and operational stress in Police officers. The same finding was reached for organizational stress.

Keywords: Stress, Organizational and operational stressors, Police officer.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of stress has long gone beyond what people perceived in the past to be 'just in the mind' (Asmundson & Taylor, 2005). Recent advances in medicine and psychology have revealed that stress is implicated in many physical and psychological health disorders in man. (Clegg & Clegg, 1998)

While stress in itself is not all bad because a certain level of stress is required to achieve optimal performance, it becomes a problem when it is relentless and the individual is unable to cope effectively. (Violanti & Aron, 1995).

Police work can be separated into two major categories – operational and organizational or administrative activities. Ganster, Pagon and Duffy (1996), Taylor and Bennell (2006) and Finn and Tomz (1997) have established that there are stressors associated with these activities. Police work has been associated with a high level of stress in terms of what Police officers do (operations) and the Police organization. (Brown & Campbell, 1999; Anshel, 2000; Toch, 2002). Isolating stressors associated with Police work is important because they have the potential for lowering performance and negatively affecting the health of Police officers. Performance is regarded as an element of professionalism; hence determining specific stressors that can lower performance can improve organizational effectiveness, the image and reputation of the police.

It has been established that when a Police officer is under stress, the quality of his decisions is lowered, he becomes more prone to anger and aggression. (Park, 1987; Baldwin, 1997). A state of constant irritation can cause a Police officer to react negatively and aggressively to even the slightest provocation by misinterpreting the magnitude or seriousness of the event as potentially harmful. Police officers who resort to drug and alcohol use as ways of dealing with stress, may increase their risk of personal injury and liability. (Hillgren, Bond & Edstrom, 2008). They may also endanger public safety due to diminished cognition and sleep deprivation. Their reaction time may become slow, they may take unnecessary risks and be unable to listen to and interpret instructions properly

(Shane 2008, Finn & Tomz 1997, Toch 2002).

Studies by Taylor and Bennell (2006), Brown, Fielding and Grover (1999) and Violanti and Aron (1995) have revealed that organizational stressors create more stress for Police officers than operational stressors. The objective of this study is to identify the demographic and personal variables that are moderators of the work stress (both operational and organizational) associated with Police work in Nigeria.

THE STRESS CONCEPT

Stress can be either good or bad. When it is good, it is called Eustress, which is the pleasurable stress that accompanies positive events, and when bad, it is called distress, which is the unpleasant stress that accompanies negative events. Stress according to Gherman (2008) becomes distress when the stress response is too intense and/or lasts for too long. It is this type of stress that becomes damaging to human health and adversely affects organizational effectiveness when it is relentless.

Stress has been defined as the mental and physical condition that occurs when we adjust or adapt to the environment (Coon & Mitterer, 2009). A perceptual phenomenon arising from a comparison between the demand on the person and his ability to cope (Cox & Mackay, 1976), and a condition that occurs when the individual perceives a mismatch between the demands of a situation and the resources at his disposal based on his interaction with his environment (Idubor, 2013).

Stressors are conditions or events that challenge or threaten a person. For a condition or event to be seen as a stressor, the individual must appraise the situation as threatening and that he lacks the resources and abilities to effectively deal with it. (Selye, 1982)

Auerbach and Gramling (2008) have grouped stressors into three major categories:

-Catastrophic events e.g. earthquakes wars, violent physical attacks etc,

- Major life changes e.g. the death of a spouse or close family member, divorce or losing job,

- Daily hassles e.g. work related irritations interpersonal relationships, financial workers etc.

This last group may seem the least disturbing but in reality many of the stresses individuals face in life arise from this category. They are experienced on a daily basis and thus add up to create a great deal of strain on the mind and body. Researchers have found that exposure to daily hassles is more predictive of illness than exposure to major life events (Auerbach & Gramling, 2008)

STRESSORS IN POLICE WORK IN NIGERIA

The Nigeria Police Force has been in existence since 1861 when it was set up in the Lagos colony. The Hausa paramilitary constabulary was set up in 1879. The Northern and Southern Nigeria Police Forces were merged in 1930 to become the Nigeria Police Force (Ahire, 1991). The present day Nigeria Police Force is set up under section 194 of the 1979 constitution of Nigeria and its functions include the protection of harbours, waterways, railways and airfields.

The size of the Nigeria Police Force is estimated to be between 300,000 to 390,000. An Inspector General of Police heads the Force. Several Deputy Inspector Generals (D.I.Gs), Assistant Inspector Generals (A.I.Gs) who are in charge of zones and a Police commissioner in each state, support him. The Nigeria Police Force is divided into zones, states commands, area commands and divisional commands. There are seven departments in the Nigeria Police force labeled A to G responsible for administration and finance, operations, logistics and supply, investigations and intelligence, training and command, research and planning, information and communication technology respectively.

Several challenges have been associated with the Nigeria Police by many authors and they include problems with recruitment, training, indiscipline and corruption,

ethnicity and culture, low level of confidence in the Nigeria Police force, poor interpersonal relationship with the public, poor funding and mismanagement of available funds, and creation of parallel security organizations. (Onyeozili 2005, Oditia 2005, Olatise 2001, Osayande 2008, Nwabueze 1992, Ilevbare 2003, Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003, Tamuno, Bashir, Alemika & Akano, 1993, Aremu & Adeyoju 1998, and Idubor 2012)

The Nigeria Police Force has also claimed that some of the reasons it is unable to perform effectively include lack of adequate logistics and communication, inaccessibility of roads, lack of signposts, information withholding by the public and inadequate workers.

Coon and Mitterer (2009) indicate that Police officers suffer from a high rate of stress related diseases. The threat of injury or death, confrontations with abusive, drunk or hostile citizens and other such events on an almost daily basis takes a toll. The major factor is the unpredictable nature of Police work.

Stressors in Police work can be divided into two categories: operational and organizational stressors (McCreary, 2004; Brown & Campbell, 1999; Constant, 2010.)

OPERATIONAL STRESSORS

Operational stressors are those stressors inherent in Police work and include:

The nature of Police work: Police officers are often in situations where they encounter stress especially for those who are involved in operational activities. Brown and Campbell (1994) state that duties required of law enforcement officers, such as delivering notice of death, or been fired upon while on the job are stressful events unique to being a Police officer. Having to participate in high-speed chases of criminals, responding to a felony in progress, especially in Nigeria where protective gears are not common and life insurance is not provided, create stress for Police officers.

Public Expectations: The public expects the Police officer to be polite and friendly at all times but hardly anyone thinks of the uncertainty the Police officer feels when he approaches a car at a checkpoint - is the

occupant of the car a law-abiding citizen or is he a psychopathic killer (Coon and Mitterer, 2009). A split second of letting down his guard may mean the difference between life and death. It is difficult to be on guard for your life and appear friendly at the same time. This is a dilemma for the average Police officer and this creates chronic stress for him

Risk of traumatic events: Spielberger, Westberry, Greer et al (2009) observed that the fear of killing someone in the line of duty, having your partner or member of your team killed on the job, the daily grind of dealing with the "stupidity" of the public, exposure to neglected, battered or dead children, and accident scenes are some other traumatic events inherent in Police work.

Role conflict: Task related stressors in Police work might occur when Police officers find themselves with conflicting roles. Personal conflicts can develop when Police officer are put in situations where they have to choose between contradictory goals e.g. the notions of loyalty to fellow officers and honesty which includes conflicts arising from temptation, fear or inability to ease human suffering, conflict in belief with the law or authorities. Police officers must in addition cope with the tight controls of a quasi-military organizational structure combined with the often-unstructured working conditions of the individual officer. (Eisenberg 1985 1988, Cullen, Lerner, Link et al 1985, Violanti & Aron 1995, and Toch 2002)

Work Overload: Due to shortage of workers, many Police officers often have to work overtime. An emergency like a bank robbery, a terrible accident, fire outbreak, civil unrest, a visiting dignitary can totally upset the duty schedule of a Police officer. Many Police officers who are detailed as court duty men, orderlies and bank security are often also involved in other duties at the station.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRESSORS

Organizational stressors are those stressors associated with the how police work is organized, policies, welfare and

remuneration issues. (Crowe & Stradling 1993)

Studies by Brown, Fielding and Grover (1999), Violanti and Aron (1995), have indicated that organizational issues are the most common source of Police stress. Organizational stressors include poor pay, excessive paper work, inadequate training and equipment, changing shifts, limited promotional opportunities, unfair policies and procedures and lack of rewards for good job performance

Dwyer (1991) has also suggested that the effects of stress are exacerbated when people work in either extremely loosely or tightly structured organizations with the resulting rules and regulations that are imposed. These organizational dysfunctions create an undesirable work environment. Martin (1997) adds that among those elements that are considered "dominant" job stressors are role conflict, role ambiguity, organizational reward inequity and lack of participation in decision-making.

CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS ON POLICE OFFICERS' HEALTH

A large number of studies agrees that Police work creates or contributes to psychological and physical ailments for Police officers resulting in high incidents of high blood pressure, an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, insomnia, increased level of destructive stress hormone, increased risk of substance abuse, heart problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, high divorce rates, alcohol and substance abuse. (Selye 1982, Brown & Campbell 1984, Violanti & Aron 1995, Graves 1996, Brosnan 1999, Toch 2002, Anshel 2000, University of Buffalo 2008,)

Oshodi (2011) also reports that Police officers who have suffered some traumatic events may have some emotional reactions such as flash backs, nightmares, physical sensation of fear, excessive sweating and pain. He adds that the traumatic deaths of fellow officers could lead to numbing, being always on guard, hyper-vigilance, jumpiness insomnia, irritability, panic, irregular heart beats and alcohol/drug abuse.

These consequences indicate the importance of understanding stressors in Police work and how the effects of such stressors may be moderated.

HYPOTHESIS

Recent Police stress research has posited that demographic characteristics have some impact on moderating the levels of stress experienced by Police officers. (Taylor & Bennell, 2006; Violanti & Aron, 1995; Ayres & Flanagan, 1994.) This study therefore tests the hypothesis that: "Demographic characteristics of Nigeria Police officers have impact in moderating the levels of stress they experience.

METHODS

The research design was the survey type. Primary data was collected by means of the Operational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-Op) and the Organizational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ- Org) administered on 1000 Police officers serving across the 18 Local Government Areas of Edo State. These data collection instruments were selected because they were deemed the most suitable for obtaining information on both operational and organizational stressors among Police officers. The questionnaires were developed by McCreary (2004) and have been validated to be psychometrically sound.

The questionnaires were designed to investigate separately both operational stressors and organizational stress. The questionnaires consist of 20 items each and respondents were required to circle how much stress each item caused them within the last six months. The scale for each item ranged from 1 (no stress at all) to 7 (a lot of stress).

The official Police website claims that there are about 350,000 – 390,000 Police officers in Nigeria. On the assumption that on the average there may be about 10,000 Police officers or so in each of the 36 states of Nigeria, this study decided to use a sample size of 1000 (or one-tenth of assumed Police population in Edo State). The sample included constables, sergeants and

inspectors in the Nigeria Police force. Hence, the term "Police officer" was used to describe respondents in the general sample.

A multi - stage technique was adopted in the study, the entire Police formation was purposively selected to give the study a wide scope. A random sampling method was later used to select 1000 Police officers from the total 10,000 officers of the Edo State Police command in both the Headquarters and Divisional commands.

Fifty respondents were selected from each Divisional Police command per Local Government Area and a hundred respondents from the State Police Headquarters. Due to the random sampling procedure that was used in this study, the ratio of Police officers in operations to those in administration could not be controlled. The data revealed that about 80% of the respondents were in uniformed policing while 20% were in administration. The uneven size of Police officers engaged in either operational or organizational activities may affect the results of this study to the extent that those in uniformed policing are

more likely to be more affected by operational issues than by organizational issues and vice versa. However, the effect of this may not be significant, as the Police officers who are now involved in either operational or organizational activities may have functioned in either area before; moreover, some of the functions overlap in certain areas. The response rate to the study's questionnaires was 90% with 100 questionnaires uncompleted or unreturned.

The study concentrated on operational and organizational stressors associated with Police work in Nigeria. Due to the exploratory nature and scale of the study as well as limited resources and time, the study was limited to police officers serving in Edo state only. The period of the study was 4 months, running from January to April 2014. The questionnaires were administered between 1 February and 12 March 2014.

One thousand questionnaires were distributed to the sample respondents and all questionnaires were collected by 12 March 2014. The data generated were aggregated and analyzed using data presentation and interpretation.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Table 1: Demographic and Personal Characteristics of Respondents

S/N	Variable	No.	%
1.	Gender		
	Male	480	53.3
	Female	420	46.7
2.	Age in years		
	18-29	302	33.6
	30-39	330	36.7
	40-49	178	19.8
	50-59	61	6.8
	60-69	3	0.3
	Missing	26	2.9
3.	Rank of Police Officer		
	Constable	437	48.6
	Sergeant	99	11.0
	Inspector and above	186	20.7
	Missing	178	19.8
4.	Years of Service		
	1-5	173	19.2
	6-10	260	29.9
	11-15	164	18.2

	16-20	92	10.2
	21-25	92	10.2
	26-30	59	6.6
	31-35	30	3.3
	Missing	30	3.3
5.	Main Task/Duties		
	Uniform policing	321	35.7
	Investigation	318	35.3
	Administration	183	20.3
	Missing	78	8.7
6.	No. of states served other than own state		
	1-3	661	73.4
	4-7	106	11.7
	8-11	3	.3
	Missing	130	14.4
7.	Understand language/culture of current station		
	Yes	635	70.6
	No	241	26.8
	Missing	24	2.7
8.	Satisfaction with job		
	Very dissatisfied	91	10.1
	Rather satisfied	61	6.8
	Fairly satisfied	245	27.2
	Very satisfied	480	53.3
	Missing	23	2.6
9.	Satisfaction with leadership method used by supervisor or HOD		
	Very dissatisfied	118	13.1
	Rather satisfied	73	8.1
	Fairly satisfied	264	29.3
	Very satisfied	416	46.2
	Missing	29	3.2
10.	Marital Status		
	Single	185	20.6
	Married	668	74.2
	Separated/Divorced	18	2.0
	Widowed	10	1.1
	Missing	19	2.1
11.	Educational level		
	SSCE	501	55.7
	OND	131	14.6
	NCE	58	6.4
	HND	49	5.4
	B.Sc.	93	10.3
	Masters	6	0.7
	Missing	62	6.9
12.	Have children		
	Yes	579	64.3
	No	71	7.9
	Missing	250	27.8

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

The respondents were asked to respond to a demographic/personal characteristics questionnaire dealing with issues like gender, age, year of service, educational level, marital status, and general health conditions among others. This was followed by an operational Police stress questionnaire (PSQ-Op) and an organizational Police stress questionnaires (PSQ-Org). Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are distributed as below.

Gender: From the data provided in Table 4.2, 53.3% of the respondents are male while 46.7% are female.

Age: The highest percentage of the respondents feels within the age range of between 30-39 years with 36.7%, followed by those in the 18-29 years age bracket with a percentage of 33.6%. The lowest age range was that of 60-69 with just 0.3%.

Rank of Police Officer: The ranks of the respondents were divided into three, i.e., constable, sergeants, inspectors and above. Constables made up 48.6% of the respondents, sergeants 11.0% and inspectors and above made 20.7%.

Years of Service: 29.9% of the Respondents have served for between 6-10 years, 19.2% have served for 1-5 years while those who have served for 26-30 years were 6.6%.

Main Tasks/Duties: Of the 822 Police Officers who responded to the question of their main task 35.7% were in uniformed policing, 35.3% in investigation and 20.3% in administrative work.

No. of States served other than own state: The majority of the respondents (73%) have served in one to three other states other than their own state.

Understand Language/Culture of current station: The majority of the respondents

understand the culture/language of their current station; which is good for effective policing in Nigeria.

Satisfaction with Job: On the issue of job satisfaction, 11.66% claimed they were very dissatisfied with their jobs, 28.33% were fairly satisfied while 49.77% averred that they were very satisfied with their jobs.

Satisfaction with HOD and Supervisor's Leadership Methods: A majority of the respondents (71%) are satisfied with the leadership methods of their supervisors/HODs.

Marital Status: 20.6% of the respondents were single, 74.2% married, 2.0% separated or divorced and 1.1% widowed.

Educational Level: The question on the educational level of the respondents revealed that the highest percentage of them possessed the basic entry qualification into the Police Force i.e. SSCE with a 55.7% while 14.6% had OND, University degree holders including Post Graduate degree were just 11.0%.

Having Children: A majority of the respondents (63%) have children, and this goes along with a lot of family commitments; thus the balancing of work life and the family

Table 2: Inter-correlations, Means and Standard Deviations of Researched Scales for Police Officers

S/ N	Scale/Moderator	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Operational Stress	4.38	1.53	1													
2.	Organizational Stress	4.43	1.17	.68**	1												
3.	Health outcomes	4.06	1.63	.78**	.48**	1											
4.	Gender	1.47	0.50	.05	.09*	.00	1										
5.	Age	2.12	1.13	-.02	.06	-.02	.06	1									
6.	Rank of Police Officer	2.12	1.21	-.11**	-.06	.00	.07*	.28*	1								
7.	Years of Service	3.13	1.87	-.01	.07*	-.01	-.01	.54*	.39**	1							
8.	Main Task	2.02	0.97	.05	.00	-.01	.18**	.06	.03	.10*	1						
9.	Understanding of Culture	1.31	0.52	.04	.07*	.03	.06	.09*	.13**	.20*	.07*	1					
10.	Satisfaction with Job	3.31	1.00	-.07*	.01	-.10**	.17**	.13*	.09**	.11*	.16**	.00	1				
11.	Satisfaction with Leadership	3.18	1.08	-.13**	-.09*	-.12**	.00	.16*	.06	.11*	.09**	.05	.41**	1			
12.	Marital Status	1.90	0.67	.05	.04	.05	.11**	.30*	.19**	.36*	.02	.10*	.04	.03	1		
13.	Educational Level	2.30	1.89	.03	.04	-.02	-.12**	.05	.10**	.27*	.02	.10*	.10**	-.11**	.11**	1	
14.	Having Children	2.36	1.85	-.04	.00	-.02	.02	.29*	.18**	.38*	-.14**	-.05	-.05	.03	.31**	.11	1

Note: *p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01 (N = 900).
Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 3: Fisher's F-Test for the effect of Demographical/Personal variables on Operational and Organizational Stressors in the Nigeria Police Force

S/ N	Demographical/Personal variables											
		Gen der	Age	Ran k of Offi cer	Year s of Serv ice	Ma in Tas k	Underst and Culture	Satisfac tion with Job	Satisfac tion with Leaders hip	Mari tal Stat us	Educati onal Level	Havi ng Child ren
A. OPERATIONAL STRESS												
1. Nature of Job												
	F	1.41	2.72	4.38	9.80	2.4 5	.59	3.42	1.58	5.79	3.37	5.14
	Sig	.23	.03	.01	.00	.09	.44	.02	.19	.00	.00	.00
	Statu s	NS	S	S	S	NS	NS	S	NS	S	S	S
2. Disruption of Family/Social Life												
	F	3.3	.43	5.55	6.73	7.5 7	1.57	12.80	8.73	2.70	3.00	2.21
	Sig	.07	.79	.00	.00	.00	.21	.00	.00	.04	.01	.01
	Statu s	S	NS	S	S	S	NS	S	S	S	S	S
3. Negative Health Outcomes												
	F	.00	1.35	4.54	4.73	.33	.02	3.76	5.74	.67	6.23	3.21
	Sig	.98	.25	.01	.00	.72	.88	.01	.00	.57	.00	.00
	Statu s	NS	NS	S	S	NS	NS	S	S	NS	S	S
4. External Interference and disparaging public attitude												
	F	1.2	1.01	7.10	5.13	2.7 7	.38	11.97	11.04	.15	3.37	4.63
	Sig	.27	.40	.00	.00	.06	.54	.00	.00	.93	.00	.01
	Statu s	NS	NS	S	S	NS	NS	S	S	NS	S	S
Total												
	F	1.62	.18	6.66	7.71	3.5 2	.76	8.17	9.06	.44	5.22	4.22
	Sig	.20	.95	.00	.00	.03	.35	.00	.00	.72	.00	.00
	Statu s	NS	NS	S	S	S	NS	S	S	NS	S	S
B. ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS												
5. Frustration with Criminal Justice System												
	F	.88	1.41	.43	2.52	.31	3.93	.48	10.53	2.07	5.03	2.51
	Sig	.35	.23	.65	.02	.73	.05	.70	.00	.10	.00	.01
	Statu s	NS	NS	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	S
6. Lack of Admin. Support												
	F	20.5 1	1.34	.13	4.04	2.00	.00	1.19	7.97	1.23	5.85	3.28
	Sig	.00	.25	.88	.00	.14	.99	.31	.00	.30	.00	.00
	Statu s	S	NS	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	S	NS	S	S

7.	Role Conflict											
	F	3.60	4.15	.03	6.34	5.51	.32	5.94	11.43	1.36	12.57	3.01
	Sig	.06	.00	.97	.00	.00	.57	.00	.00	.25	.00	.00
	Status	NS	S	NS	S	S	NS	S	S	NS	S	S
8.	Wages and Compensation											
	F	2.11	6.29	1.05	6.99	.74	.58	10.76	8.02	3.62	1.06	5.90
	Sig	.15	.00	.35	.00	.50	.45	.00	.00	.01	.38	.00
	Status	NS	S	NS	S	NS	NS	S	S	S	NS	S
9.	Lack of Modern Equipment											
	F	.00	1.86	3.85	9.51	7.13	.96	3.68	1.83	.49	.43	3.79
	Sig	.93	.11	.02	.00	.00	.33	.01	.14	.69	.83	.00
	Status	NS	NS	S	S	NS	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	S
10.	Interpersonal Relationships											
	F	3.33	1.86	4.28	4.86	6.60	1.18	1.89	9.70	.80	10.61	4.68
	Sig	.07	.11	.01	.00	.00	.28	.13	.00	.49	.00	.00
	Status	NS	NS	S	S	S	NS	NS	S	NS	S	S
	Total											
	F	8.1	.96	.68	10.05	5.87	1.04	1.73	10.13	1.18	4.81	2.62
	Sig	.00	.43	.50	.00	0.00	.31	.16	.00	.32	.00	.00
	Status	S	NS	NS	S	S	NS	NS	S	NS	S	S

Note: (1) F= Fisher's F-Statistic; (2) $p < 0.05$; (3) S= Significant, NS=Not significant.

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 3 also shows that with job, satisfaction with job, satisfaction with leadership style were significantly related or moderated operational police stress while gender, years of services, understanding of language and culture of current station, and satisfaction with leadership were found to moderate organizational police stress.

In Table 3, we also observe that operational stress is significantly related to: organizational stress, health outcomes, rank of Police officers, and satisfaction with leadership ($p < 0.01$); and satisfaction with job ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, organizational stress is significantly related to: health outcomes ($p < 0.01$); gender, years of service, understanding of culture, and satisfaction with leadership ($p < 0.05$). Other relationships at p-levels of 0.01 and 0.05 are presented in Table 3.

The effect of a number of demographic/personal characteristics on the research variables were examined using the F-test (or Analysis of Variance). This research therefore tests the below proposition/hypotheses of the study.

Demographic characteristics of Nigeria Police officers have impact in moderating the levels of stress encountered by Police officers.

Table 3 shows the Fisher's F-test or Analysis of Variance for the effect of demographical/personal variables on operational and organizational Stresses in the Police Force.

The result of the analysis of variance test of the effect of demographics/personal data on the Police officers' operational and organizational stresses in Table 3 reveal the pattern below.

Operational stress was moderated by:

- Rank of Police officer
- Years of service
- Satisfaction with leadership
- Satisfaction with job
- Educational level
- Having children

The above listed variables were found to be statistically significant i.e. these variables act as moderators of operational police stress.

Organizational-stress was moderated by:

- Gender
- Main task
- Years of service
- Satisfaction with leadership

CONCLUSION

This study examined the stressors that are specific to Police work in terms of operations and the Police organization itself. This study attempted to replicate the study done by Taylor and Bennell (2006) in Ontario Canada with a sample of Nigerian Police Officers.

This study also examined if there were certain demographic/personal characteristics that could influence the level of stress felt by Police officers in Nigeria.

Results indicated that the instrument used by Taylor and Bennell (the PSQ – Org and the PSQ – Op) was indeed a reliable measure of Police officers' stress in Nigeria. Although the findings of this study did not fully confirm the findings of Taylor and Bennell (2006) and indeed this is to be expected giving the different climates in which the two studies took place; there are however certain similarities.

Secondly, the difference in the result may also be attributable to the problems inherent in self-report questionnaires. Zerbe and Paulhus (1987) states that self-report questionnaires have a strong potential of response bias, the desire to conform to the acceptable norm (by not being overly critical of the system, wanting to appear strong and resilient and not admitting any weaknesses)

- Having children
- Educational level

The above listed variables were found to be statistically significant i.e. these variables act as moderators of organizational Police stress.

From the above analysis, it has been shown that there are certain demographic variables that moderate the levels of stress (operational and organizational) experienced by Police officers.

and the inherent distrust and cynicism associated with the Police.

These findings indicate the need as well as direction for further research. For example, it will be important to establish the extent to which the scores reported for operational and organizational stress agree with scores from other states of the Federation comparisons can also be made between male and female Police officers and between officers at different levels of the Police hierarchy.

We expect future research to follow up on these related themes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The review of the literature, findings of the study and subsequent conclusions led the researcher to make the following recommendations for future research.

i. This study took a sample of Police officers in Edo State alone, although many of the officers had served in other states, a complete reflection of Police stressors may not have been captured. Future studies should take samples from across the six geographical zones of the country at least if not from all the states in order to have a better picture of Police stressors in Nigeria.

ii. This study relied on the use of self-report questionnaire and as a result had some contradicting results. Future research may include in addition to the self-report questionnaire – a subjective measure, an objective measure for example cortisol levels measurement to get the actual levels of stress among police officers. Actual measurement of blood pressure may be more accurate than just asking police officers to state if they had high blood pressure or not especially in a society as ours where many people are in denial over even obvious health problems.

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iii. The demographic questionnaire used in this study may have been inadequate in dealing with some important moderators of Police stress. Job satisfaction for instance was measured by a single question; future research can use a more systematic measure like the 20 item Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire – short form by Weiss et al (1967) or any other sophisticated measure. Although the time required in filling out the questionnaire and its complexity may increase, the results would be more accurate.

iv. This study found that there was a relationship between gender and organizational stress but could not determine its direction. Future research should investigate the direction of the significance between gender and stress in the Nigeria Police Force in terms of both organization and operations.

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