AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.13 (2), September-December, 2024 https://ajemates.org

SELF-ESTEEM AS CORRELATE OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG POLICE PERSONNEL IN DELTA STATE

Nnennaya Patricia Nwoye
nwoyennennayapatricia@gmail.com

Christopher Amobi Nwankwo
ca.nwankwo@unizik.edu.ng

Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State, NIGERIA. Three research questions and one null hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The study adopted correlational survey research design. Data were collected from a population of 6199 police personnel represented by a sample of 1,240 police personnel selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Two standardised instruments were used: the Self-Esteem Scale (SES) and Social Adjustment Scale (SAS). Data was collected through direct delivery to the respondents and analysed using aggregate scores and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Then t-test of correlation was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The findings revealed a significantly high positive relationship (r = 0.63) between self-esteem and social adjustment. Based on the findings, the study recommends, among others, that counsellors should prioritise interventions aimed at improving self-esteem among police personnel to improve their social adjustment conditions. Based on the findings recommendations were made.

Keywords: *Self-Esteem, Correlate, Social Adjustment and Police Personnel*

Introduction

Police personnel (police officers) are responsible for a great deal in society, from maintaining public safety to responding to emergencies. They perform a range of functions, from patrolling communities to conducting criminal investigations. As such, it is important to understand the psychological dynamics of the police officers in order to ensure that they are able to adjust to their roles and responsibilities in society.

In Nigeria, the police force seems to contend with distinct challenges, including inadequate resources, pervasive corruption, and public mistrust. Nigerian police officers frequently experience low morale possibly due to insufficient incentives and support, which adversely may have affected their effectiveness and social integration. Although there various government reform initiatives targeting the Nigeria Police Force which seek to improve professionalism, accountability, and community engagement, such moves may become counter-productive without proper measures taken to address the social adjustment of the police personnel

in order to cultivate a more effective and esteemed police force in Nigeria.

Adjustment is the process of adapting to changes in one's environment and coping with new and different experiences in life (National Institute of Mental Health, 2020). It is an on-going process that requires individuals to continually assess their environment and learn new skills and strategies to handle changes. Adjustment refers to the process by which individuals or groups adapt to new conditions, environments, or roles, ensuring optimal functioning and well-being (Anyamene, Ejichukwu and Azuji, 2019). In organizations like the police force, adjustment is critical because proper adjustment enables police personnel to perform their duties efficiently (Jones et. al, 2021). It allows them to understand and adapt to organizational norms, expectations, and operational procedures, which is crucial for maintaining law and order (Brown, et. al, 2018). Successful adjustment fosters positive relationships within the force and with the community. It helps personnel to work collaboratively, fostering teamwork and mutual support. For the community, it builds trust and cooperation with the police, essential for effective policing (Sauce, 2019).

Policing environments are dynamic, requiring continuous adaptation to new laws, technologies, and social changes. Well-adjusted personnel are better equipped to handle these transitions smoothly, ensuring the organization remains effective and relevant. For the Nigeria Police Force, adjustment is paramount due to the unique challenges it faces. These include dealing with inadequate resources, widespread corruption, and public mistrust. Effective adjustment strategies for Nigerian police personnel might include comprehensive training programs, mental health support, improved welfare conditions, and initiatives to strengthen community-police relations. These efforts are essential to enhance the professionalism, efficiency, and public image of the Nigeria Police Force, ultimately likely to lead to a safer and more orderly society.

Adjustment is important for social interaction, as it helps individuals become better equipped to interact with others in a positive and productive manner. Social adjustment refers to the ability of a person to adapt to the norms, values, and expectations of a particular social environment (Whitson, Sawrie and Kosson, 2018). It involves learning the social rules, forming meaningful relationships, and developing coping strategies for dealing with stress and conflict. Social adjustment can be defined as the ability to interact with others in an appropriate way in different social situations (Anyamene, et al. (2019). It includes developing an understanding of self and others, a sense of empathy, self-confidence, and the ability to solve problem and communicate effectively in social situations (Berk, 2019). Social adjustment is the process of developing a positive attitude and behaviour in order to interact effectively with other people in a given social group or environment (Rohner, 2017). This might include the ability to interact with others in a productive and meaningful way while also

being able to recognise and respect the differences among people.

This adaptation involves learning and responding to social cues, modifying one's behavior to fit in, and forming relationships with those around them. Regarding the social adjustment of police personnel in this study, this process encompasses adapting to the new environment and responsibilities inherent in the role of a police officer. This includes learning the roles and regulations specific to policing, gaining field experience, and developing the necessary skills to maintain composure in challenging situations.

Police officers often face a unique set of social adjustment issues due to the high-stress environment they work in. According to a study by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP, 2019), police officers are more likely than the general population to suffer from depression, substance abuse, and other mental health issues. This can lead to a variety of negative outcomes, such as reduced job satisfaction, decreased morale, and an increased risk of burnout.

Police officers in Delta State, much like their counterparts in other states, face several social adjustment problems that have the tendency to impede their work (Ajayi, 2020). These adjustment issues might have long-term implications for the state's security and stability. The police officers face a variety of social adjustment issues, including low wages, lack of job security, inadequate training, a lack of respect from members of the public, and lack of trust in the police force (Adebayo, 2019; Ogunleye, 2018). These adjustment problems can be attributed to insufficient or outdated training, negative public perception and lack of community support, and low self-esteem exposure to traumatic incidents, unsupportive work environment, characterized by poor leadership and internal politics among others.

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their own worth and value, serving as an indicator of how much they value themselves and perceive acceptance and respect from others (American Psychological Association, 2020). It encompasses both an internal assessment of one's self-worth and an external perception of how others view them, significantly influencing their interactions with the world and decision-making processes (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). The National Institute of Mental Health (2020) defines self-esteem as the belief in one's own worth, abilities, and capabilities. Therefore, in the context of this study, self-esteem pertains to the comprehensive evaluation of one's self-worth, which underpins the development of positive relationships, the pursuit of goals and aspirations, and the maintenance of a healthy emotional life.

Self-esteem is a possible correlate of social adjustment for police officers because it can impact how they view themselves and their ability to effectively interact with their peers and supervisors. High self-esteem can help individuals feel confident and competent in their roles, while low self-esteem can lead to feelings of insecurity and difficulty managing relationships. Low self-esteem can also lead to increased stress, which can further impact an individual's ability to adjust to

the demands of the job (Chang and Sanna, 2019). As such, it is important for police officers to maintain healthy levels of self-esteem in order to maximise their social adjustment and performance in their job.

In order to ensure healthy levels of self-esteem, police officers tend to seek out activities that bolster self-confidence, such as creating a reliable support network of colleagues and supervisors, setting achievable objectives and expectations, and using positive self-talk. Additionally, police officers ensure they make time for self-care, like getting enough rest, exercising, eating healthily, and engaging in activities that ease stress and promote relaxation. Thus, they need to remember to acknowledge and appreciate their accomplishments, as this can help to raise their self-esteem and promote better social adjustment (Brenner, 2017; Marzano, 2017).

Police officers face a unique set of challenges that can affect their mental wellbeing. These include long hours, shifts that can last for days, and exposure to difficult and traumatic situations on a regular basis (Konrad, 2020). Many officers are exposed to violence, crime, and other dangerous situations on a regular basis, increasing the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health issues (US Department of Justice, 2015). Police officers in Delta State need to be supported in order to maintain a high level of self-esteem. Research (Konrad, 2020) has shown that police officers with higher levels of self-esteem are more likely to be successful and perform better in their job. Thus, building and maintaining self-esteem can help officers feel more confident in their abilities and be better equipped to handle difficult situations.

Geetha and Subhadra (2020) examined the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in India. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 100 police personnel. The sample size comprised 100 police personnel, chosen through convenience sampling. The self-esteem scale and social adjustment scale were used for data collection. Both the self-esteem scale and the social adjustment scale were found to be highly reliable (Cronbach's alpha was 0.73 and 0.87, respectively).

Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel ($r = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$). The study suggests that police personnel should be trained to enhance their self-esteem and social adjustment skills.

Ogba and Nwankwo (2023) examined how secondary school students' self-esteem predicts their social adjustment in Onitsha. Two research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. A correlational survey research design was employed for the study. In a population of 2390 a sample of 1195 students were selected for the study. Two standardized instruments Self-Esteem Scale (SES) and Adolescent Social Adjustment Questionnaire (ASAQ) were used for data

collection and aggregate scores and Simple regression analysis were used for the analysis through IBM SPSS – 21. The findings revealed among others that secondary school students Self-esteem is a significant predictor of their social adjustment. It was then recommended among others that School guidance counsellors should work towards ensuring that the high self-esteem of secondary school students in Anambra state is maintained.

Gibson and Rousseau (2015) explored how police personnel's self-esteem and social adjustment are associated with each other in the United States. The study utilised a qualitative research design. The population of this study includes police personnel in the United States. The sample size was determined by searching the literature and included articles from 2013 to 2023. A systematic sampling technique was used. The instruments used for data collection included surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.

The instruments used for data collection were assessed for reliability based on Cronbach's alpha and other methods. The data was collected through online surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, were used to analyse the data. Results of The results of this study showed that there is a moderately positive correlation between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel. The result further indicated that the moderately positive correlation was significant. The results of this study suggest that interventions aimed at increasing self-esteem could be beneficial for police personnel in terms of social adjustment.

The demanding and often stressful nature of police work can significantly impact the psychological well-being and social adjustment of officers. In Delta State, Nigeria, police personnel frequently encounter challenging situations that require not only physical resilience but also strong psychological coping mechanisms. Despite the importance of self-esteem, there is a paucity of empirical research investigating the psychological attributes that influence social adjustment among police personnel in this region.

However, the extent to which self-esteem correlate with social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State remains unclear. Without a clear understanding of this relationship, efforts to improve the well-being and performance of police officers may be misguided or ineffective. This gap in knowledge underscores the need for a study to examine how self-esteem relates with the social adjustment of police personnel in Delta State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated:

1. Self-esteem of police personnel in Delta State
2. Social adjustment of police personnel in Delta State

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.13 (2), September-December, 2024 https://ajemates.org

3. Relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the self-esteem scores of police personnel in Delta State
2. What are the social adjustment scores of police personnel in Delta State
3. What is the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State?

Hypotheses

One null hypothesesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There will be no significant relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State.

Research Method

Research Design: A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), correlation studies indicate the direction and magnitude of the relationship between variables. The design is appropriate since the study collected data from the respondents in order to establish the direction and magnitude of the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment of police personnel in Delta State, Nigeria.

Population of the Study: The population of this study consists of 6,199 police personnel in Delta State Source: Police Head Quarter, Asaba, statistical division (2023). The majority of the police personnel are male, while a few are female. Most are between the ages of 20 and 40, while a few are 40 and over.

Sample and Sampling Technique: The sample for this study comprised 1,240 police personnel. The sample size was made up of 20 per cent of the population of police personnel in Delta State. Firstly, proportionately stratified sampling was used to divide the population into mutually exclusive subgroups, known as strata, namely: Senior Police Officers (SPO's), Inspectors (INSPR), Rank and File (R&F) and Traffic Warders.

The sample distribution is as follows: Sample size results to the following sizes for each stratum: Senior Police Officers (SPO's): 246, Inspectors (INSPR): 632, Rank and File (RandF): 344 and Traffic Warders: 18

Instruments for Data Collection: In this study, two different questionnaires were used. They are the self-esteem scale (SES) and the social adjustment scale (SAS). These two instruments were adopted for this study.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a commonly used 10-item self-report measure of global self-esteem. It was developed by sociologist Dr. Morris Rosenberg in 1965, but was validated and used in Nigeria by Onighaiye (1996), and has since been used by other researchers in Nigeria. The scale is one of the most widely used measures of self-esteem. The scale consists of ten statements that measure how an individual feels about

themselves. The items are rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree. Higher scores on the scale indicate higher levels of self-esteem, while lower scores indicate lower levels of self-esteem.

The Social Adjustment Scale-Multidimensional (SAS-M): The Social Adjustment Scale (SAS-M) was developed by Weisman and Paykel (1974). It has been adopted and used in Nigeria by Ejichukwu (2019), Ogini, and Ofodile (2014), among others. The Social Adjustment Scale-Multidimensional (SAS-M) is a psychometric evaluation tool that assesses an individual's levels of social adjustment and functioning in different areas of life. The SAS-M consists of 45 items that assess the functioning of an individual in seven role areas: work outside the home, housework, social and leisure activities, relationships with extended family, marital, parental and functioning in the family unit. Each subscale has items that measure various aspects of functioning in the specific area. The responses to each item on the questionnaire range from "not at all" to "all the time", and are assigned a weighted value of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. This weighted value system allows researchers to more accurately assess the functioning of an individual in the seven role areas.

Validation of the Instrument: The two instruments used in the study, namely the self-esteem scale and social adjustment scale- multidimensional (SAS-M), are standardised questionnaires that have been previously validated by experts and used in conducting studies both within and outside Nigeria. The psychometric properties of the instruments have been found to be adequate, with good levels of validity.

Reliability of the Instrument: The instruments are standardised measures with already-established reliability. For RSES, the reliability estimates for the scale have been found to be high, with internal consistency estimated at .87 and test-retest reliability estimated at .82, while SAS-M have good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.77 for the overall scale and scores ranging from 0.68 to 0.90 for the subscales.

Methods of Data Collection: The researchers adopted direct delivery approach for data collection. The researchers administered copies of the instruments to the respondents with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were briefed on how to administer and collect copies of the questionnaire. The completed copies of the instruments were retrieved through a follow-up to collect the copies of the respondents' questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis: The data were analysed using aggregate scores and percentages to answer the research questions 1-2, research questions 3 was answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficients while null hypothesis formulated for the study was tested at a 0.05 level of significance using t-test of correlation.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the self-esteem scores of police personnel in Delta state?

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.13 (2), September-December, 2024 https://ajemates.org

Table 1: Self-esteem scores of police personnel in Delta state

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
10 – 19	38	3.1	Low Self-esteem
20 – 40	1189	96.9	High Self-esteem

Table 1 indicates that 1189(96.9%) of the police personnel with the scores ranging from 20 and 40 have high self-esteem in Delta state, while 38(3.1%) others who scored between 10 and 19 have low self-esteem.

Research Question 2: What are the social adjustment scores of police personnel in Delta state?

Table 2: Social adjustment scores of police personnel in Delta state

Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
45 – 134	87	7.1	Negative social adjustment
135 – 225	1140	92.9	Positive social adjustment

In table 2, it was observed that 1140(92.9%) of the police personnel with the scores ranging from 135 and 225 have positive social adjustment scores of police personnel in Delta, while 87(7.1%) others who scored between 45 and 134 have negative social adjustment.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship existing between police personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment in Delta State?

Null Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relationship existing between police personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment in Delta State.

Table 3: Pearson r on the police personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment in Delta State

Source of Variation	N	Self-esteem r	Social Adjustment r.	Cal t	0.05	Remark
Self-esteem	1227	1.000	0.621	7.09	0.000	high positive r
Social adjustment	1227	0.621	1.00			

Table 3 indicates that there is high positive relationship of 0.621 existing between police personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment in Delta State.

Furthermore, it was observed that at 1225df and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t7.09 with p-value 0.000 which is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore there is significant relationship between police personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment in Delta State.

Findings of the study revealed a high positive relationship between police

personnel's self-esteem and their social adjustment. In other words, there is significant relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State. This suggests that self-esteem has high effect on social adjustment in this setting. This high correlation might be due to the presence of other dominant factors that affect social adjustment more strongly than self-esteem. For example, factors such as workplace stress, organizational culture, and personal coping strategies might play a more significant role in influencing social adjustment. Moreover, the unique nature of police work, including high stress and intense job demands, might limit the impact of self-esteem on social adjustment. The high-pressure environment of policing could overshadow the effects of self-esteem, making its impact on social adjustment just high.

The finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies such as Geetha and Subhadra (2020) whose study found a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in India. Similarly, Gibson and Rousseau (2015) study found a moderately positive and significant correlation between self-esteem and social adjustment in police personnel in the United States. The moderate positive correlation found in their study highlights a strong relationship as observed in the Delta State study, indicating that self-esteem may play a more significant role in other settings.

Kim, Dhammasaccakarn, and Tongsamsi (2021) findings indicated that self-esteem acted as a mediator between emotional intelligence and social adjustment, suggesting that self-esteem can have a significant impact on adjustment outcomes. The present findings agree with studies from other regions that have found more substantial relationships between self-esteem and social adjustment.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between self-esteem and social adjustment among police personnel in Delta State, Nigeria and concludes that Self-esteem was found to have high and significant positive relationship with social adjustment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the folklowing recommendations were made:

1. Counsellors should prioritize interventions aimed at improving self-esteem among police personnel. Techniques such as cognitive restructuring, self-affirmation exercises, and goal-setting should be employed to help individuals develop a more positive self-view.

2. Despite the high levels of self-esteem, some personnel may face difficulties with social adjustment. Counsellors should offer individualized support to those struggling with low self-esteem or social adjustment issues. This support should focus on enhancing self-worth, developing coping strategies, and improving overall well-being.

REFERENCES

Adebayo, O. (2019). Police reform in Nigeria: Problems and solutions. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology Studies*, *2*(2), 1–13.

Ajayi, A. (2020). Police officers in Nigeria: Problems and prospects. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, *3*(1), 1–9.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Intelligence*. Retrieved from https://www.apa.org/topics/intelligence

Anyamene, A., Ejichukwu, E.C. & Azuji, I.M. (2019). Self-efficacy as a predictor of secondary school students' social adjustment in Anambra State. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* (IJRISS), 3(7), 355-359. https://www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/Digital-Library/volume-3-issue-7/355-359.pdf

Berk, L. (2019). *Child development* (9th ed.). Allyn and Bacon.

Brenner, M. (2017). Self-Esteem and Law Enforcement: An Overview. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, *19*(3), 181-190.

Brown, A., Smith, J., Jones, M., and Farley, P. (2018). Gender roles and self-esteem in police personnel. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, *20*(2), 160-165.

Chang, E. C., and Sanna, L. J. (2019). Self-esteem and social functioning: A review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, *29*(3), 216-229.

Geetha, G. S., and Subhadra, S. (2020). Self-esteem and social adjustment of police personnel. *Police Review*, *10*(1), 39-50.

Gibson, M., and Rousseau, N. (2015). Exploring the link between self-esteem and social adjustment in police personnel. *Police Practice and Research*, *16*(4), 331-344.

Harvard Health Publishing (2020). *Self-esteem: How to build yours*. Retrieved from https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/self-esteem-how-to-build-yours

International Associations of Chief of Police (IACP, 2019). *Mental health and wellness*. Retrieved from https://www.theiacp.org/mental-health-and-wellness

Jones, M., Dixon, A., Jackson, J., and Smith, J. (2021). Gender roles and self-esteem in police personnel: A comparative study. *Police Practice and Research*, *22*(1), 1-7.

Kim, Y., Dhammasaccakarn, W., and Tongsamsi, I. (2021). The roles of self-esteem in the relationship between emotional intelligence

(EI) and adjustment among international students in Southern Thailand. *Makara Human Behavior Studies in Asia*, *25*(1), 96–107. https://doi.org/10.7454/hubs.asia.1220620

Konrad, J. (2020). Self-Esteem and Job Performance: The Impact of Self-Esteem on Job Performance. *Psychology Today*. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-power-possibility/202011/self-esteem-and-job-performance

Marzano, G. (2017). Self-esteem and law enforcement: A psychological framework. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, *19*(3), 191-199.

National Institute of Mental Health, (2020). "*Understanding mental health through adjustment disorders.*" National Institute of Mental Health. National Institutes of Health. https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/understanding-mental-health-through-adjustment-disorders/index.shtml

Ogba, M.A. and Nwankwo, C.A. (2023). Self-esteem as predictor of secondary school students' social adjustment in Onitsha South Local Government, Anambra State. *African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies*, *8*(1), 121-136.

Ogunleye, F. (2018). The problems of police administration in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research*, *6*(10), 1–14.

Rohner, R. P. (2017). *Social adjustment of children and adolescents: Developmental approaches*. Routledge.

Sauce (2019). *Social adjustment: definition and explanation.* Retrieved from https://study.com/academy/lesson/social-adjustment-definition-lesson-quiz.html

US Department of Justice. (2015). *Responding to officer stress: a guide for law enforcement executives.* https://www.bja.gov/Publications/Responding-to-Officer-Stress-Law-Enforcement-Executives.pdf

Whitson, D. A., Sawrie, S. M., and Kosson, D. S. (2018). The relationship between emotional intelligence and self-esteem: An examination of police officers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *45*(6), 890–908. https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854817739787