PERSONALITY PROFILE OF EFFECTIVE POLICE OFFICERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract:

This investigation was designed to examine the advantages and disadvantages of the current police officers selection practices at Abu Dhabi Police (ADP), to determine respondents' beliefs about the validity of using psychometric test for police officers selection, and to identify the personal characteristics of effective police officers as described by senior police managers. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 30 Executive Manager from ADP to answer these questions. Results show that: (1) the current process of police officers selection is ineffective and need several developments; (2) using psychometric tests such as personality and cognitive ability measures in selection process will play a great role in selecting best entry level police officer; (3) based on the five factors model of personality and by using the NEO Job Profiler Scale, ADP senior police managers believe that Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Extraversion are important dimensions for high performance police officers; and (4) acceptability or face validity of the 'Big Five' to predict work performance has been found to be high. Findings were discussed in terms of previous research, and practical advantages of using psychometric tests for personnel selection.

مـلخص:

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة الوضع الحالي لعملية اختيار وتعيين أفراد الشرطة في ابوظبي، معرفة مزايا وعيوب تطبيق الاختبارات النفسية في الاختيار والتعيين، و تحديد أبعاد الشخصية لأفراد الشرطة ذوي الفعالية والكفاءة. للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة قام الباحث بإجراء مقابلات مع ثلاثين مديرا من ضباط القيادة العامة لشرطة أبوظبي. تشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن: (1) العملية الحالية لاختيار أفراد الشرطة غير فعالة وتحتاج عدة تعديلات، (2) استخدام الاختبارات النفسية المقننة سوف يساهم في تطوير عملية الاختيار والتعيين، (3) استنادا إلى نموذج العوامل الخمسة الكبرى في الشخصية أشار المدراء إلى أن بعد يقظة الضمير، بعد الانبساط وبعد العصابية تعتبر أهم الأبعاد للعاملين في المجال الشرطي، وأخيرا (4) ارتفاع القبول والصدق الظاهري لاستخدام نموذج العوامل الخمسة الكبرى في الشخصية في الاختيار والتعيين. نوقشت النتائج في ضوء البحوث السابقة ومميزات وعوائق تطبيق الاختبارات النفسية في عملية الانتقاء الوظيفي.

Introduction

Psychological testing has been recognized around the world as an important factor in the selection procedure (Piotrowski and Armstrong, 2006). On the one hand, many police agencies use personality measures as an important part of their personnel selection procedures (Bannish and Ruiz, 2003; Barrett et al, 2003). For example, Cochrane, Tett and Vandecreek (2003) surveyed 155 personnel departments of municipal police agencies located throughout the United States. The researchers found that about 91% of respondents reported that they required psychological appraisal for all new police recruits. About 7 in 10 agencies (n = 94) viewed the data from psychological assessments as passing or failing the applicant. On the other hand, Varela et al (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of 78 studies to examine the overall validity of personality measures as predictors of police officer performance. Results showed a modest but statistically significant correlation between personality tests scores and officers' job performance. Therefore, personality measures are a vital component of many police agencies' personnel selection procedures (Bannish and Ruiz, 2003; Barrett et al, 2003). Moreover, a number of previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of the 'big five' dimensions, particularly Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Extraversion, in predicting police performance (Barrick and Mount, 1991; Cortina et al, 1992; Black, 2000).

In general, since some applicants are not suited to police work and may develop a number of psychological problems as a consequence of the pressures of police work, personality evaluations administered to applicants for a police officer position can provide significant evidence of psychopathology and personality traits that may play a key part in (1) affecting the psychological well-being of both the potential officers and the organization, (2) increasing public confidence in and support for the police and (3) improving the quality of police work (Barrett et al, 2003).

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Research Problem

Over the last decade in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), significant changes have been created by increases in its population, migration and terrorism and related changes in business, technology and crime (Abdel-Hamid, 2006). Thus, in 2004, Abu Dhabi Police (ADP) established a new strategy to enable it to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing environment and to implement community policing and crime-prevention plans to maintain the country as an internationally recognized safe and stable society. Although the selection of police officers has received substantial consideration in the ADP's new strategy, no research has been conducted into the efficacy of current police-officer selection practices.

In addition, previous research (e.g., Al-Muhaya, 2005; Qatan, 2003) indicated that generally in the Arabic speaking context there are no clear criteria for the process of personnel selection at police organizations particularly with regard to using psychological tests as an assessment tool prior to employ. Mediation (demonstrate that if the applicant have a good relation or connection with the committee of selection he or she will be more probably to get the work) play a great part in police hiring as a result of lack of clarity in conditions and criteria of selection. The available data showed that, although psychological testing has been used in many police organizations worldwide as an important part of selection process, there is a lack of research that examining the validity of psychological testing particularly tests of personality and cognitive ability in predicting job performance in Arabic speaking context in general and in the UAE in particular especially at police organizations.

Research Objectives

This research will aim to provide a review of the current police officers selection to explore its effectiveness and appropriateness, and to determine personality traits of effective police officers such as : (1) to examine the advantages and disadvantages of the current police officers selection practices at ADP; (2) to determine respondents' beliefs about the validity of using psychometric tests for police selection, and (3) to identify personality traits of effective police officers as described by senior police managers.

Literature Review

According to Arrigo and Claussen (2003), the importance of personality in human-resource selection should not be underestimated, and personality has three vital roles in employee selection, particularly within police organizations: (1) personality has the capacity to predict job performance; (2) personality is helpful in defining people who are able to work effectively together (i.e. characterizing effective teamwork) and (3) personality plays a role in identifying candidates who are able to deal successfully with the psychological and emotional stressors of police work.

Prior to the 1990s, the link between personality and workplace behaviour was to some extent weak, and the use of personality testing in employee selection was generally rejected by personnel selection specialists. This was mainly as a result of the pessimistic conclusions drawn by some researchers that personality tests did not show sufficient predictive validity to qualify their use in personnel selection (Hurtz and Donovan, 2000). In the last two decades, however, there have been a series of studies conducted into the link between personality and job performance. A considerable number of these studies have

shown clearly that personality is a valid and useful predictor of job and training performance (Piedmont and Weinstein, 1994; Salgado and Rumbo, 1997; Goodstein and Lanyon, 1999; Judge et al, 1999; Barrick et al, 2001; Tett et al, 2003; Ones et al, 2005; Vasilopoulos et al, 2007).

With respect to the relationship between personality and job performance at police, Black (2000) by using the NEO PI-R (Costa and McCrae, 1992) on a sample of 284 police recruits in New Zealand reported that the performance of police recruits was found to be significantly correlated to personality traits. In other words, Extraversion and Conscientiousness positively and Neuroticism negatively were found to be correlated with performance. Detrick and Chibnall, (2006) also found by using the NEO PI-R Form R (observer form) that field training officers described the "best" entry-level police officers they had supervised as generally notable for low Neuroticism, high Conscientiousness, and high Extraversion. They also found similar results by comparing the 'big five' profiles of very high- and very low-performing entry-level officers.

Moreover, Costa et al (1995) conducted a study to identify the personality requirements of police officers occupation from the perspective of experts in police and trained psychologists who work in the area of police selection. Results demonstrate the following: (1) the experts suggested that perfect entry-level police officer should score high on Conscientiousness and Extraversion, and score low on Neuroticism; and (2) candidates who are recommended by the psychologists for police officers position obtained significantly higher scores on Conscientiousness and lower scores on Neuroticism than the un-recommended candidates. Accordingly, many police agencies use personality measures as an essential part of their personnel selection process (Bannish and Ruiz, 2003; Barrett et al, 2003). The development of selection procedures and implementation of appropriate psychological testing instruments attempt to hire those highly qualified candidates who are mentally and psychologically fit for police occupation which described as difficult, stressful, challenging, complex, and dangerous work in modern civil society (Ainsworth, 2002).

Overall, it is clear from previous research regarding the correlation between personality and police performance that Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability play a large role in predicting police performance (Barrick and Mount, 1991; Cortina et al, 1992; Black, 2000; Detrick and Chibnall, 2006). Extraversion and Agreeableness was found in some studies to correlate significantly with police performance (Burbeck and Furnham, 1984; Barrick and Mount, 1991; Cortina et al, 1992).

Method

The current research employed a qualitative methodology of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews have been used for several reasons: (1) this method is concerned with people's perceptions and experience of the situation (Coolican, 2004); (2) it is helpful in providing a detailed account of what happening in the setting being investigated; (3) it is also powerful in providing rich answers for questions start with why and what (Bryman and Bell, 2003); (4) interviews possess a certain amount of flexibility, which gives the researcher the opportunity to explain research objectives and questions more deeply to participants which help to clarify any misunderstand or ambiguity; (5) this method is useful when the situation is not clear (Collis and Hussey, 2003); and (6) it is also helpful to study more sensitive issues which cannot be easily searched in the public (Coolican, 2004).

Participants

Interviews were conducted with full time police officers from ADP in the UAE (n=30) including 28 males and 2 females. The participants were a senior group with an average age of 35.5 (SD = 5.4) (the minimum age was 28 years old and the maximum was 48 years) and an average experience of 15 years (SD = 4.8) in services in police (the minimum experience was 8 years and the maximum was 31 years). Officers' educational background varied: two of respondents had a PhD, five participants had masters' degrees, and the rest had Bachelors degrees. In order to gather data from different perspectives, and from samples that conscious and familiar with the research theme, officers were selected from four different grades including; three Colonel, six Lieutenant Colonels, Four Majors, and 17 Captains. In addition, the interviewees were 16 executive level officers, and 13 mid-level officers.

Measures

A semi-structured qualitative interview was developed to investigate the current police officer selection process. The interview mainly consisted of open-ended questions which gave participants the freedom to talk about the issues of particular significance for each topic. The purpose of using open-ended interviews in the data collection was to explore the goals of the current study in depth out of concern that closed ended questions might lead interviewees to provide socially desirable answers (Coolican, 2004).

In addition, the NEO Job Profiler which consists of a set of descriptions of the 30 traits measured by the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R; Costa and McCrae, 1992) in language clear for normal people was also used. It was developed by Costa, McCrae, and Kay (1995) to allow a comprehensive and standardized quantitative assessment of expert judgments (e.g. job analysts, supervisors, successful members of the occupation being profiled) of trait desirability for a particular job. These judges would represent their knowledge and experience of job requirements to evaluate the importance and desirability of each of the 30 personality traits for a particular job.

Since this measure was to be applied in the U.A.E, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic (the official language in the UAE) by a professional translator. However, this measure has translated back into English by the researcher to ensure the original translation into Arabic had been correct and the meanings of the items had not been changed.

Procedure

Data were collected face-to-face from the participants in their office in Abu Dhabi the capital of the UAE. In addition, recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher after the completion of each interview. The interviews were taped, in order to control bias and to obtain reliable data (Saunders et al., 2003). Each respondent was first informed with the nature of the study, importance of the research, clarification of how information was to be used, and finally what he or she wanted to keep confidential. Generally, interviews took place in relaxed and friendly atmosphere, and all interviewees were willing to provide truthful information, because the topic of the study is related to their work, and they also felt that the results could help to improve the ADP particularly in the light of new strategy.

Ethical considerations

Regarding the ethical considerations of the present research,

there were several steps to consider. First, before starting, the researcher obtained permission from the Executive Manager of the ADP to start collecting data. The research question and objectives were explained to the Executive Manager in order to give him a general perspective of the study. Second, given that the purpose of the study was to examine attitudes, values and feelings towards the current situation of ADP, it was assumed that some interviewees might give information about political or cultural factors which would require handling confidentially and carefully in order to avoid any negative consequences for participants in the future. Thus, all data was and will be handled confidentially and in line with Code of Conduct which published by Psychological Societies worldwide. Furthermore, it was stressed that participation was optional for officers, and they were free at any time to withdraw without giving any reason and without suffering any consequences.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed by content analysis method. The words, sentences, and paragraphs related to the given question were identified by the researcher. Categories were then developed to reflect the individual responses given by interviewees. This was completed by examining respondent statements separately for each interview question, and breaking down these statements into several possible elements (where an element suggests one particular, unique item of information). Some elements were then grouped together; merging those with similar meaning, despite different term. Each category was then given a number and gathered into a list. Once the list of categories was completed, answers to the interview questions were scored. Each individual response was separated into elements and scored according to which numbered group best represented it. Some categories were collected together to outline more general response categories. Finally, in some cases, more than one category was given to sufficiently reflect the complexity of responses (Saunders et al., 2003; Coolican, 2004; Gray, 2004).

Results

Interview results are organized in three main sections covering current police officers selection procedures at ADP, using psychometric tests for police officer selection, and results of the NEO Job Profiler analysis were reported.

Current police officers selection procedures at ADP

The current police officers selection procedures were examined in the interview by asking participants what are the advantages and disadvantages of current selection procedures.

Participants cited three main positive elements of the current police officers selection procedures. Firstly, the majority of respondents reported that the fastness and cheapness in the completion of selection process are two advantageous of the system particularly in the light of the large number of applicants each year. Typical comments were as follows:

"I think the preset police officers selection procedures have two important usefulness including the save of time and money particularity that selecting new police officers occur three times in the year and in the light of the large number of candidates" (Interviewee: male, Selection and Recruitment Department).

"Because of the large number of applicants, the current system considers suitable for low cost and time" (Interviewee: male, Traffic and Patrols Department).

Moreover, locally accepted method was identified most frequently by several participants as one of the advantage elements of the current police officers selection procedures. They believe that this system of selection not only apply at ADP but also at many other public sector organizations in the UAE. They also pointed out that making the procedures of selection easy and simple is important for the process of nationalization (i.e., the process of employing Emirates people). In the words of one respondent:

"There is a political trend toward the nationalization of the public sectors in the United Arab Emirates and for this I believe that the current system of employee selection at ADP is useful in making procedures easy and it is socially accepted in the community" (Interviewee: male, Department of Strategic and Performance Development).

There were, however, a number of serious comments of the current police officers selection procedures which raised some suspicions about its contribution to police officers selection. First, a large number of interviewed stated that the system is less valid in selecting best candidates because it is limited in comparing between individuals (i.e., less valid in clearly showing the characteristics of applicants) and has low quality in predicting future job performance. Second, according to numerous participants, many problems happen in distributing new recruitments on different departments since no special quality or different fetchers has been consider. Furthermore, many respondents indicated that loss of time, money and effort in the additional training (i.e., the rise of training costs) is another problem of the current selection process. They insisted that many new recruits lack of basic police skills that maximize the direct costs of training and replacement due to unwanted employees' turnover. In addition, a number of participants raised concerns about the fairness of the selection system. They claimed that the current police officers selection procedures do not treats all candidates equitably since there are no clear standards or structure process apply for all candidates. Typical comments were as follows:

"Certainly, the present system of selection does not participate in recruiting the best candidates particularly in the absence of clear criteria for preferable and the high performance police officer,…this can result in loss of time, money and effort in the training and can lead to poor distribution of new officers on different departments" (Interviewee: male, Ports and Airports Security Police Departments).

"The work of police officers is stressful and difficult and thus, needs specific skills and abilities..., unfortunately, the current selection procedures depends largely on the interview which it is not enough for the comparison between the applicants..., therefore, mostly unsuitable individuals are hiring in the way that does not matches with the rapid change happening in the ADP which leads to the rise of training costs" (Interviewee: male, Department of Strategic and Performance Development).

Using psychometric tests for selection:

In terms of procedures used to select police officers at ADP and how can be developed, respondents were asked about their opinion of the usefulness of using psychometric tests in selection process and whether it will enhance the quality of police officers that recruits or not. First of all, to be sure that police officers interviewed have an adequate knowledge about the theme of psychometric tests, they were asked the follows question: "*To what extent are you familiar with the term of psychometric tests?*" Criteria for sufficient information of

psychometric tests include: (1) knowing some of them; and (2) showing an understanding of the reliability and validity of psychometric tests. Of the 30 officers interviewed, 18 have shown an adequate understanding of psychometric tests.

All participants (n=18) who familiar with the subject of psychometric tests agreed that using psychometric tests such as intelligence and personality tests in selection process will enhance the quality of police officers that recruits, and will play a great role in selecting best entry level police officer. The most commonly cited goals for using psychometric tests in selection practice were to improve objectivity, validity, fairness, and to avoid potential police officer's problems such as absenteeism and resignations. Typical answers were as follows:

"Using psychometric tests in selection procedure will participate in recruiting best candidates through screening out inappropriate individuals such as high anxiety people who are extremely unsuitable for police works or selecting in fit people for police work such as individuals who have the ability to deal with stressful situations and interact positively with others" (Interviewee: male, Selection and Recruitment Department).

"Psychometric tests are applying in selection at numerous organizations around the world…; I believe that using valid tests in the UAE as selection tool will has great positive influence in developing the process of selection" (Interviewee: male, Ports and Airports Security Police Department).

All participants were finally asked about the obstacles of police officers selection in general, and the use of psychometric tests for selection in particular. First, a large number of participants pointed out that mediation or external interventions in the decision of hiring are the major obstacle of police officers selection. Nevertheless, some respondents believe that might because of the lack of clear and appropriate criteria for best entry level police officer.

As one participant put it: *"Tribal system plays a major role in the society of the United Arab Emirates, so mediation or (wasta) is one of the main obstacles that face selection process and it will be a major challenge in front of using psychometric tests in selection" (Interviewee: male, Selection and Recruitment Department).*

Another respondent expressed it this way: "… *external interventions in the decision of employing is one of the biggest problem that negatively influence police selection process, however, in light of the new strategy for the ADP in the UAE the issue of mediation will be controlled because of the fear of hiring incompetent individuals" (Interviewee: male, Department of Strategic and Performance Development).*

The second main difficulty may be faced using psychometric tests in selection is the lack of society acceptableness. It was identified most frequently, by many officers interviewed. This perhaps because psychometric tests culturally are not with the prevalent trend in the UAE society where there is generally an element of fear for these tools. Moreover, numerous interviewees reported that the large number of applicants for police officer position every year (over 5000) particularly in the light of high cost of applying psychometric tests in selection could hinder its use. Some other respondents believed that, since there are no clear criteria for best entry level police officer, the general administration conviction with the significance of psychometric tests will be low. Typical comments were as follows:

"Actually, there is mostly several difficulties face the applying of new policies particularity in some organizations such as the police…, with respect to psychometric tests I think the main

obstacle of using it in selection will be the refusal of community particularly there is lack of clarity in conditions and criteria of selection" (Interviewee: male, Prison Department).

"…in my opinion the expensiveness of applying psychometric tests in selection will hinder the general administration conviction with the significance of this practice" (Interviewee: male, Investigation Department).

Results of the NEO Job Profiler:

The NEO Job Profiler has been used to: (a) determine senior police managers' perceptions on what personality characteristics are essential or desirable for a police officer position; and (b) test acceptability or face validity of the 'big five' model of personality in predicting work performance. Thus, all participants (n=30) were asked at the end of the interview to complete the NEO Job Profiler to describe desirable characteristics of entry level police officers. Scored from +2 for very desirable to -2 for very undesirable.

Table 1 NEO job profiler weights for best entry level police officer as described by police supervisors (n=30).

NEO PI-R facets	Mean	SD	Median	Range
Anxiety (N1)	-1.7333	.4498	-2.0000	1.00
Angry Hostility (N2)	-1.8000	.4068	-2.0000	1.00
Depression (N3)	-1.9333	.2537	-2.0000	1.00
Self-Consciousness (N4)	-.5333	1.1059	-1.0000	3.00
Impulsiveness (N5)	-1.5333	.6288	-2.0000	1.00
Vulnerability (N6)	-1.7000	.4661	-2.0000	1.00
Warmth (E1)	1.0333	1.0662	1.0000	4.00
Gregariousness (E2)	1.6333	.4901	2.0000	1.00
Assertiveness (E3)	1.5667	.5040	2.0000	1.00
Activity (E4)	1.9333	.2537	2.0000	1.00
Excitement-Seeking (E5)	.0000	1.2034	1.0000	3.00
Positive Emotions (E6)	1.2333	.8976	1.0000	3.00
Fantasy (O1)	-1.1667	.9129	-1.5000	2.00
Aesthetics (O2)	.1667	.5307	.0000	2.00
Feelings (O3)	-.4000	1.1919	-1.0000	4.00
Actions (O4)	.5000	1.3326	1.0000	4.00
Ideas (O5)	.9667	1.0334	1.0000	4.00
Values (O6)	.7000	1.1188	1.0000	4.00
Trust (A1)	-1.0333	.9994	-1.0000	3.00
Straightforwardness (A2)	.8667	.9371	1.0000	3.00
Altruism (A3)	1.3667	.6687	1.0000	3.00
Compliance (A4)	1.3000	8367	1.0000	3.00
Modesty (A5)	-.1000	1.1250	.0000	3.00
Tender-mindedness (A6)	.8667	1.0417	1.0000	4.00
Competence (C1)	1.9333	.2537	2.0000	1.00
Order (C2)	1.8667	.3457	2.0000	1.00
Dutifulness (C3)	1.9333	.2537	2.0000	1.00
Achievement striving (C4)	1.9667	.1826	2.0000	1.00
Self-discipline (C5)	1.9667	.1826	2.0000	1.00
Deliberation (C6)	1.8000	.4068	2.0000	1.00

Table 1 displays the scores and profile of the personality characteristics of the best entry-level police officers. Respondents reported that effective police officers were thought to be characterized by low scores on N1: Anxiety, N2: Angry Hostility, N3: Depression, N5: Impulsiveness and N6: Vulnerability and high scores on E2: Gregariousness, E3: Assertiveness, E4: Activity, Cl: Competence, C2: Order, C3: Dutifulness, C4: Achievement striving, C5: Self-Discipline, and C6: Deliberation.

Based on the Five Factors Model of Personality (Costa and McCrae, 1992; Costa et al, 1995) police managers identify the characteristics of effective police officer on the NEO Job Profiler Scale such as follows:

Firstly, has high level of Emotional Stability including: calmness, comfortable, unworried, not sensitized to potential difficulties or problems (low Anxiety); easygoing and slow to anger (low Angry Hostility); happy, imperturbable, confident, predisposed away from depressive influence (low Depression); high self-control, resists temptation (low Impulsiveness); and self-sufficient, copes well with crises and stress (low Vulnerability). Secondly, Extraverted person including: friendly and sociable (high Gregariousness); likes to be in charge, forceful and assertive (high Assertiveness); and energetic, lively, and active (high Activity). Thirdly, Conscientious individual who is capable, well-prepared, prudence (high Competence); organized, tidy, meticulous; demanding and fastidious (high Order); scrupulous, moralistic, a stickler for rules (high Dutifulness); goal setters with high ambitions and purpose to meet those goals (high Achievement-Striving); self-motivators who persevere and do not procrastinate (high Self-Discipline); and finally precautious, thoughtful, makes cautious plans (high Deliberation).

Discussion:

The primary purpose of this research was to investigative the current police officers selection practices at ADP and to identify the personality profile of effective police officer as described by senior police managers. Results indicated that although the current process of police officers selection is simple and cost efficient, there are several criticisms leveled it such as less valid and less fairness. Therefore, it is more likely to lead to negative outcomes such as poor selection and low level of performance. These findings corroborate past research (e.g. Cortina et al, 1992; Cochrane et al, 2003; Detrick et al, 2004; Al-Muhaya, 2005) that emphasis on developing effective selection procedures of new police officers for some significant reasons such as: (1) the harmful impacts of having unqualified officers; and (2) selecting best applicant provide considerable improvements in productivity and reduce the direct costs of training.

Furthermore, numerous previous studies (see Robertson et al, 2002; Smith and Smith, 2005) showed that criterion-related validity of interview particularly unstructured interview is low. This has also been supported by the findings of the present study in that interview has been reported to be less effective in selecting best candidates. In addition, results of the present research show that psychometric tests (e.g. cognitive ability and personality tests) appear to be valued in the selection process. More specifically, acceptability or face validity of using psychometric tests for police officers selection was found to be high among the sample. This result supports findings of some previous studies that support the validity and reliability of psychometric tests in personnel selection (e.g., Goodstein and Lanyon, 1999; Cochrane et al, 2003; Piotrowski and Armstrong, 2006; Furnham, 2008).

Moreover, consistent with findings from some earlier studies in Middle East (e.g., Al- Muhaya, 2005), data of the current study show that mediation or external interventions in hiring decision is the major obstacle of police officers selection. This result is in line with Whiteoak et al (2006) argument in that the use of mediation is widespread throughout the Arab world and is

claimed to play a role in many significant decisions (e.g. employee selection). Nevertheless, this as some respondents reported might because of the lack of clear and suitable conditions for best entry level police officer. Therefore, one solution for that is by determining the knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics required for a high performance police officer. In addition, the lack of society acceptableness for using psychometric tests in selection can be solved by identifying and clearing the importance and usefulness of psychometric tests for both organization and applicants.

One of the major aims of this study was to identify the traits of effective officers as described by police managers. Data show that low scores on Anxiety, Angry Hostility, Depression, Impulsiveness and Vulnerability; and high scores on Gregariousness, Assertiveness, Activity, Competence, Order, Dutifulness, Achievement Striving, Self-Discipline, and Deliberation are very desirable characteristics of entry level police officers. This result confirms similar previous research that used observer rated profiles (e.g. Costa et al, 1995; Detrick and Chibnall, 2006) in that Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Extraversion play a great role in predicting police performance and they are advantageous personality characteristics of police officers. There is possibly a different among police departments in terms of specific functions, responsibilities and the amount of time and effort invested in performing different tasks. However, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Extraversion have determined by senior police managers as a basic dimension for effective police officers based on that police job: (1) is primarily involves dealing with people (high Extraversion needed); (2) is one of the most stressful job (high Emotional Stability desired); and (3) need a high amount of discipline, obligation and hard work (high Conscientiousness required) (Burbeck and Furnham, 1984; Ainsworth, 2002).

In conclusion,, results of this study illustrate that: (1) the current process of police officers selection is less valid and need several developments; (2) using psychometric tests such as intelligence and personality tests in selection process will play a great role in selecting best entry level police officer; (3) ADP senior police managers believe that Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Extraversion are important dimensions for effective and high performance police officers; and (4) acceptability or face validity of psychometric tests namely measures of the 'big five' to predict work performance has been found to be high. Therefore, future studies should aim to test criterion-related validity of the Five Factors Model of Personality in Arabic context in general and at police organizations in particular.

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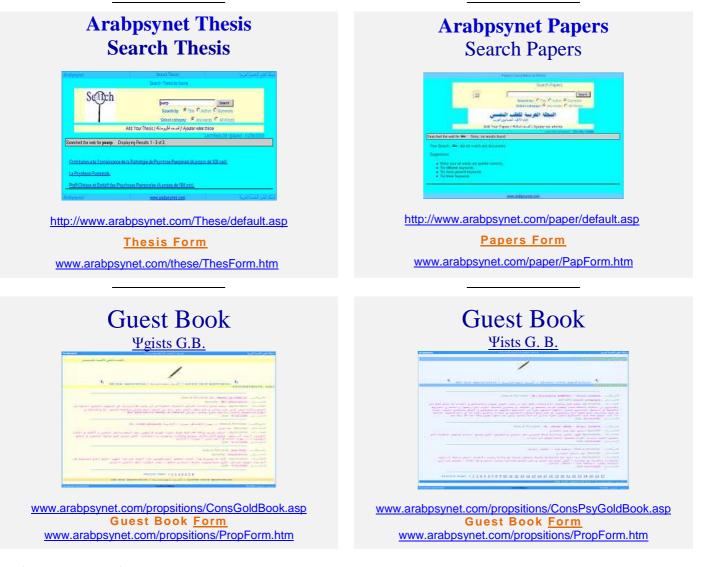
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