

Impact of Positive Psychotherapy on Police Trainees' Prosocial Behavior: Evidence from Nigeria

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Prosocial behavior is a deliberate action that encourages people, particularly police trainees, to serve others without anticipating any reward or satisfaction. Research indicates that police recruits exhibit low prosocial behavior, particularly in Nigeria, which accounts for unfavorable behaviors, including corruption, impunity, and inhumanity in the years after training. Therefore, this study seeks to find out whether Positive Psychotherapy (PP) can influence police trainees' prosocial behavior in southwestern Nigeria. The study found that PP and interventions help promote prosocial behavior among police trainees.

Introduction

Prosocial behavior is defined as voluntary behavior done to help another person (Batson, 1998) without anticipating satisfaction or reward. These helpful behaviors, which are not done voluntarily or with the aim to benefit someone else, are not included in this definition. For instance, a man's helpful behavior would not be viewed as prosocial if a youngster barged into his home and threatened to kill him unless he helped him. This is due to the fact that the man would have no choice but to offer assistance. Similar to this, if a passerby dropped some money by accident along the side of the road and a boy traveling in the same direction picked it up to use, the passerby's actions would not be prosocial. This is due to the fact that he did not intend to help anyone else by dropping or losing the money. Every person has firsthand knowledge of both giving and receiving assistance from others.

According to Franzoi (2010), sometimes such prosocial behaviors are inexpensive, while at other times, the desire to help can require a lot of time, money, and even personal risk. This may help to explain why helpfulness is divided into two categories. The first is egoistic assistance, where the giver is motivated by egoism and expects a reward. Here, the helper's main objective is to improve his or her personal welfare. Altruistic aiding is the second form, which contrasts with the first. The person (helper) in this instance does not demand anything in return. Since the ultimate objective is

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to improve another person's wellbeing, this is said to be based on altruism (Franzoi, 2010).

People have always had to provide assistance in one way or another in all groups and societies, but some have been specifically assigned to provide certain types of assistance. The military, the police, the teaching profession, the medical field, and a myriad of other public services and professions all employ such people. This study is interested in the police force. This is due to the fact that effective and efficient policing, as well as protection and security of the public, depend on the prosocial behavior of the police across the board. It has a significant role in improving public perception of the police.

Self-esteem has been identified in the study as a factor that can be helpful in moderating prosocial behavior among police trainees. Self-esteem continues to be one of the key significant ideas in psychology and one of the connected aspects. It is a self-evaluation that satisfies a person's basic addiction to emotional evaluation of their unique value. According to Reasoner (2005), having self-esteem is the practice of believing that one is capable of handling challenges in life and deserving of happiness. It is an assessment made by a person of their perspective toward themselves using a constructive measurement (Baron and Byrne, 2003). Additionally, one's level of self-esteem simply refers to how they feel, how much they value themselves, and how committed they are to themselves. It is important to consider how self-esteem influences the development of prosocial behavior in this study as a moderating variable. According to Reasoner (2005), having self-esteem is the practice of believing that one is capable of handling challenges in life and deserving of happiness. It is the assessment that a person makes on their perspective toward themselves using a constructive measurement (Baron and Byrne, 2003). The prosocial behavior of helping others increases the helper's sense of value. Additionally, it is just a matter of how someone feels, their level of self-worth, and how committed they are to themselves. The research has made reference to the role self-esteem plays as a moderating variable in the promotion of prosocial behavior.

Statement of the Problem

One of the most varied professions one can imagine is police work. A police officer may be asked to do a variety of tasks, and each one of these demands specialized knowledge and abilities. Worryingly, the level of professional incompetence displayed by Nigerian police officers is rising. A typical Nigerian now has little faith in the police because of this. Even in situations where there is a need for the police, a respectable number of people might go their entire lives without ever coming into contact with them. The Nigerian police exhibit a variety of behaviors that cast doubt on the idea of the services they are intended to provide. Similar to this, the police are involved in a number of widely practiced bad behaviors, including corruption, complicity, and extrajudicial deaths.

The police's previous acts of brutality are clear indications that they do not exhibit prosocial behavior too often. The situation is concerning, and one wonders if the police are aware of the effects of the attitude being shown on the job of policing and society at large. In order to do this, researchers have studied the prosocial behavior of police officers (Adebayo, 2005 and Odedokun, 2015). However, these are descriptive rather than experimental studies. Some of these studies looked into things like organizational commitment, job ennui, intellectual level, and other things that might affect how well the police accomplish their duties. However, the current study chose to go a step farther because it emphasizes self-esteem as a moderating element. The study also looked at how well counseling therapy (positive psychotherapy) affected the prosocial behavior of Nigerian police recruits in the southwest. It also looked at how self-esteem affected the prosocial behavior of the police recruits.

Literature Review

While there have been many studies on anti-social behavior, prosocial behavior as a concept is getting some traction in academia now (Bierrhof, 2002). The construct witnessed an exponential rise in research throughout the 1960s and 1970s. This idea focused on both bystander aid and impulsive interpersonal assisting (Dovidio *et al.*, 2006). The construct is still discussed within the research community. However, scientists did not pay much attention to prosocial development before the 1970s, maybe as a result of the increased significance that antagonism, guilt, and corruption had in society. It is a term that encompasses many different subgroups and is used in a variety of circumstances. As a result, the concept described earlier is merely gaining ground in academics. Unacceptable behavior is considered the polar opposite of prosocial behavior.

Prosocial behavior awareness and the rate at which it is growing are fascinating, as are scientific research and conceptualization in the expansion of its norm throughout the world. These factors contribute to the economic growth, national cohesion, and civic advancement of modern nations (Andrew *et al.*, 2011). According to a study, helping others and volunteering are often beneficial to the people who are doing the helping as well (Andrew *et al.*, 2011).

Prosocial behavior assists and guides individuals toward mastery of important needs, fulfillment, and a beneficial impact on wellbeing. The definition of prosocial behavior is broad. Prosocial behavior is a deliberate action intended to benefit another; it is obviously important to the level of interpersonal and collective collaboration. Literature has produced a variety of definitions of prosocial behavior, each of which focused on a distinct component of the term. Prosocial behavior has been highlighted by researchers like Dunfield and Kuhlfield (2013) as a subset of purposeful behavior that has to do with sharing a common goal to benefit another. It implies that prosocial behavior is a category of voluntary behavior that does not involve any form of external reward.

Positive Psychotherapy and Prosocial Behavior

According to earlier research (Aknin *et al.*, 2012), prosocial behavior is defined as behavior that has the intention of positively assisting or benefiting another person in achieving their goals or potentials (e.g., volunteering, giving, sharing, and comforting). As a result, encouraging prosocial behavior is crucial if we want to live lives with meaning. According to Lyubomirsky *et al.* (2006) and Aknin *et al.* (2012), cheerful people are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior and form fulfilling connections. Prosocial behavior is considered as a way to foster great relationships and as a way to find happiness. The more positive a person is, the more prosocial behavior they will exhibit. Studies on prosocial behavior have been conducted both inside and outside Nigeria (Cillessen and Rose, 2005; Holder and Coleman, 2008 and Afolabi, 2014); the first two studies, which used students in a classroom setting, discovered that socialized (i.e., sociometrically popular) pupils were also helpful, emotionally stable, and cooperative.

Aknin *et al.* (2014) demonstrated a significant correlation between prosocial behavior and happiness and that having the means to succeed in life is specific to happy people. According to Aknin *et al.* (2014), happiness is not primarily the result of creating positives, hoping for social approval, or forming social connections. By extension, people may not have a direct connection to or contact with the beneficiary, but the benefactor is still willing to help the needy. In addition, children and adolescents had received social skills training that boosted their wellbeing and had increased the act of gratitude and prosocial behavior, even though adults have been confirmed to possess happiness-increasing efficacy (Sin and Lyubomirsky, 2009; and Froh *et al.*, 2009). This study will hopefully close the gap by including more prosocial behaviors.

As prosocial behavior predicts social norms for a person, it has been claimed that as police continue to do their assigned duties, public and police collaboration will grow. Studies have demonstrated that being prosocial is strongly correlated with later acceptability by peers (Caprara *et al.*, 2000). According to Sandstrom and Cillessen (2006), it has been found that people who help others are more likely to be accepted as a group. As a result, in order to win over peers, one should make an effort to help others. A study that tested the degree of generosity in two groups of children aged seven to eight, found a correlation between prosocial behavior and beneficial treatment; it was discovered that the children of one group contributed generously to another group, indicating that positive feelings predisposed generous action, which is prosocial in nature (Aknin *et al.*, 2018). An intervention known as positive psychotherapy is thought to promote wellness and positive rather than correct weakness. Positive psychotherapy encourages prosocial behavior, according to studies done in different fields, particularly among children and adults (Weinstein and Ryan, 2010; and Zaki and Mitchell, 2011).

Methodology

The design used for the study includes pretest-posttest and control group quasi-experimental design with a 2x2 factorial matrix, treatment and control, and self-esteem

at two levels in fostering prosocial behavior. The two interventions—positive psychotherapy (A1) and the control (A3)—along with moderating variables (self-esteem that was divided into high and low levels), make up the row in its entirety.

The police trainees in the police training schools in South-West Nigeria were the sample population for this study. The institutions are located in Eleyele in Oyo state and Ikeja in Lagos state. The police force is diverse regardless of state and command. In order to choose the two police training institutions, this study used a straightforward random sampling technique. Of the two police training institutions chosen, one served as treatment group and the other as control group. Fifty (50) participants were randomly chosen from each of the training institutions using a simple random sampling technique (see Appendix). The participants were split into two groups at random: experimental group and control group.

One police training school (police training school, Iperu-Remo) served as positive psychotherapy (PPT), while the other training school (police college Ikeja, Lagos) served as the control group.

Additionally, only 37 of the 50 individuals assigned to each training school were able to finish the program for the experimental group, while 40 participants were selected for the control group. 77 people in total took part in the study. The study was carried out in the year 2017.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated:

H_{01} : *There is no significant effect of treatment on the prosocial behavior of police trainees.*

H_{02} : *There is no significant effect of self-esteem on prosocial behavior of police trainees.*

H_{03} : *There is no interaction effect of treatment and self-esteem on the prosocial behavior of police trainees.*

Results and Discussion

The ANCOVA results showing the main effect of treatment groups on prosocial behavior of police personnel is shown in Table 1.

The results reveal a significant effect of treatment on prosocial behavior of police personnel ($F(1; 112) = 1.347, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.985$). This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the prosocial behavior of the police trainees exposed to positive psychotherapy (PPT) when compared with the control group. The adjusted R^2 is 0.99; this is an indication that the independent variable accounted for 99% variance in the dependent variable (Prosocial behavior). Hence, H_{01} is not accepted, and it is concluded that there is a significant effect of treatment on enhancing the prosocial behavior of police trainees.

Table 1: Summary of ANCOVA Showing the Main Effect of Treatment Groups on Prosocial Behavior of Police Personnel

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	25120.558	5	5024.112	302.715	0.000	0.791
Intercept	1061.180	1	1061.180	169.826	0.000	0.631
Prescore	1113.437	1	1113.437	257.411	0.000	0.722
Treatment	16379.705	1	16379.705	1.347	0.000	0.985
Self-Esteem	93.714	1	93.714	10.811	0.000	0.180
Treatment Self-Esteem	12.736	2	6.368	1.646	0.198	0.032
Error	428.227	108				
Total	637104.325	114				
Corrected Total	49050.105	113	4.326			

Note: $R^2=0.991$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.990$).

Further, the results also showed a significant effect of self-esteem on prosocial behavior of police trainees ($F_{(1,112)} = 10.811, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.180$). This means there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the prosocial behavior of police trainees at the low and high self-esteem level when compared with each other. Hence, H_{02} is not accepted. Using the t -test comparison, the results indicate that the prosocial behavior of the police trainees with high self-esteem (mean = 92.847) was higher compared to the prosocial behavior of police trainees with low self-esteem (mean = 80.405). This is an indication that the police trainees with high self-esteem benefited more from the treatment packages than those with low self-esteem trainees.

The results from Table 2 show that there is a significant difference between post mean scores of participants in low self-esteem and high self-esteem, with $t = 3.20$, $df = 112$ and $p = 0.002$. Since $p < 0.05$, the study concluded that there is a significant difference between post mean scores of participants in the high and low self-esteem. The participants with high self-esteem benefited more than those with low self-esteem.

Table 2: Difference in the Prosocial Behavior of High and Low Self-Esteem Subjects

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	t	Df	p	Remark
LSE	42	80.405	21.27	3.20	112	0.002	Sig.
HSE	72	92.847	19.28				

Also, the results (Table 1) show that there is no significant interaction effects of treatment and self-esteem on the prosocial behavior of police trainees ($F_{(2,111)} = 1.646, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.032$). This means there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and self-esteem on the prosocial behavior of police trainees. Hence, H_{03} is accepted.

In this study, police trainees in the south-west of Nigeria were evaluated to see how positive psychotherapy and prosocial behavior affected them. The fact that the first hypothesis was not accepted suggests that positive psychotherapy (PP) was successful in fostering prosocial behavior among Nigeria's south-west police recruits. The results of this study support the hypothesis put forth by Akinin *et al.* (2012) that prosocial behavior is enhanced by positive psychotherapy, namely, that a happier individual exhibits greater prosocial behavior. In a similar vein, Seligman *et al.* (2006) demonstrated the efficacy of a positive psychotherapy intervention in boosting positive behavior and emotions as well as developing people's character, strength, and sense of purpose.

The fact that the second hypothesis was rejected suggests that the treatment packages were more beneficial to the police trainees who had high self-esteem than to the trainees who had poor self-esteem. The results of this study concur with those of Comila *et al.* (2011) who discovered that persons with high self-esteem can be more active at work and spend more time in extracurricular activities than people with low-esteem. The third hypothesis was accepted, which suggests that the influence of treatment on the prosocial behavior of police trainees was not significantly moderated by self-esteem. The results are in agreement with those of Twenge *et al.* (2007) who discovered that prosocial behavior is significantly less likely when one has high self-esteem, as well as the consequences of their interactions. This result, however, conflicts with that of Gupta and Geeta (2015), who discovered a substantial relationship between self-esteem and other characteristics, as well as the prosocial behavior of police cadets.

Conclusion

According to the study, prosocial behavior can be promoted by positive psychotherapy. Eight-week training was given to the study participants. The analysis was done using the pertinent data gathered throughout training. The following conclusions were drawn in light of the findings: positive psychotherapy encouraged prosocial behavior in the police trainees; and effective policing between the police and the public depends on police prosocial behavior.

The study found that the moderating variable's use significantly influenced the police trainees' prosocial behavior. Therefore, it is determined that psychotherapy training should be included in the curriculum of the trainees during traineeship in order for them to be effective, productive, and deliver all-around policing.

The following recommendations are also provided: Police officers need to work on their attitude toward the public since the public perceives them negatively. Due to

the fact that the training sessions and the intervention increased understanding of prosocial behavior, it is now more important than ever to act with positive and attitude in order to be accepted by the general population. After receiving the training, police recruits should behave more positively and practice community policing, which involves being proactive and bringing policing to the local level. The government should make sure instructors at police academies get psychological training that will benefit both the students and society as a whole. The national police training institutions should receive more support from the government in terms of housing, educational resources, and up-to-date classrooms.⊙

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Appendix

Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to elicit information on psychotherapeutic treatments on prosocial behavior among police trainees in Nigeria. The questionnaire is research oriented and high level of confidentiality is guaranteed.

Section A: (Personal-Data)

Gender: Male Female

Age: Below 18 19-21
 22-24 Above 25

Religion: Christianity Islam
 Traditional Others

Tribe: Yoruba Hausa
 Igbo Others

Academic Qualification: SSCE NCE/OND
 B.Sc/HND Others

Multidimensional Prosocial Scale

Items	Always	Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Never
If someone is sad, I try to make that person laugh.					
If someone is upset, I do something funny with that person.					
When people are fighting with each other, I try to help them get along.					
I do physical acts of service for others.					
If I see someone hurt, I help that person.					
I would enter a risky situation in order to help someone.					

Appendix (Cont.)

Items	Always	Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Never
I accept others for who they are, even if they are different.					
I help people in an emergency.					
I share my personal belongings with people.					
If someone is sad, I try to make that person laugh.					
I am nice to others, even if I do not like them.					
If someone is upset, I help that person let off steam.					
I break up fights.					
When people are fighting with each other, I try to help them get along.					
If someone is new to a group, I make an effort to include that person.					
If I notice someone who is lonely, I try to include that person.					
I do physical acts of service for others [lifting heavy things, yard work, cleaning].					
I am nice to others, even if I do not like them.					
I share my personal belongings with people.					
I share with people [food, clothes, car].					
I help people in an emergency.					
If someone is upset, I listen to that person.					

Appendix (Cont.)

Section B: (Prosocial Behavior Scale)

INSTRUCTION: For each of the following statements, please read carefully and indicate with (✓) which response best describes you. Please give only one response to each item and respond to all items. Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
I can help others best when people are watching me.					
It is most fulfilling to me when I can comfort someone who is in distress.					
When people are in distress, I like to help.					
I think that one of the best things about helping others is that it makes me look good.					
I get the most out of helping others when it is done in front of others.					
I tend to help people irrespective of their gender when they are in a real crisis or need.					
When people ask me to help them, I do not hesitate.					
I prefer to donate money anonymously.					
I tend to help people who hurt themselves badly.					
I believe that donating goods or money works best when it is tax-deductible.					
I tend to help needy others most when they do not know who helped them.					

Appendix (Cont.)

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
I tend to help others particularly when they are emotionally distressed.					
Helping others when I am in the spotlight is what I like best.					
It is easy for me to help others when they are in a dire situation.					
Most of the time, I help others when they do not know who helped them.					
I believe I should receive more recognition and fame for the time and energy I spend on charity work.					
I respond to helping others best when the situation is highly emotional.					
I never hesitate to help others when they ask for it.					
I think that helping others without them knowing is the best type of help.					
One of the best things about doing charity work is that it makes me happy and fulfilled.					
When people are in emotional situations I want to help.					
I often make anonymous donations because they make me feel good.					
I feel that if I help someone, they should help me in the future.					

Appendix (Cont.)

Section C: (Rosenbern Self-Esteem Scale)

KEY: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.					
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.					
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.					
I am able to do things as well as most people.					
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.					
I take a positive attitude toward myself.					
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.					
I wish I could have more respect for myself.					
I certainly feel useless at times.					
At times I think that I am no good at all.					

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