



Development and Validation of Firearms Fantasy Inventory (FFI) (Police Version)

by

Mfon E. Ineme, Ifiok P. Okon, Otu O. Essien,
Manasseh N. Iroegbu and Gboyega E. Abikoye
Department of Psychology, University of Uyo, Nigeria
mfonineme@uniuyo.edu.ng; +2348028858803

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to develop and validate a psychological instrument with which to measure the tendency (fantasy or propensity) to engage the trigger or abuse firearms by the officers of Nigeria Police Force with intention of providing psychological interventions for those with high tendencies (fantasies). A total of 97 persons including psychologists and police officers were purposively selected for the study. The study started with item development using IDI with police officers of different ranks and extracts from the Force Order 237. The initial 78 items were presented to clinical, forensic, and social psychologists, a criminologist, and police officers for face/content validity. Further scrutiny and validation by another set of experts and police officers reduced them to 48, then 32 items. The 32 items were administered to 85 police officers who had had a minimum of 3 years of handling firearms and were working or had worked in the operational units. Their responses were subjected to reliability analysis using SPSS Version 23. This resulted in 25 reliable items, in a 4-point Likert format with the name "Firearm Fantasy Inventory (Police Version)". In conclusion, a 25-item psychological instrument has been developed to measure the likelihood to engage the trigger by police officers. It is recommended for use among police officers within and outside Nigeria. Also, it can be adopted for other armed forces.

Key words: Firearms, fantasy, police, brutality, violence

1. Introduction

In different parts of the world, police officers on operational duties in the 21st Century have shown fantasy hence, abuse of the firearms. Moore (2024) reported the unwarranted or excessive and often illegal use of force against civilians by United States police officers. Forms of police brutality have ranged from assault and battery (e.g., beatings) to mayhem, torture, and murder. Some broader definitions of police brutality in the United States also encompass harassment (including false arrest), intimidation, and verbal abuse, among other forms of mistreatment. Indeed, Americans of all races, ethnicities, ages, classes, and genders have been subjected to police brutality. But further

investigations revealed that within the United States specifically, many cases of police brutality result from racial discrimination by officers (Moore, 2024). Dodd (2022) reported that PC Steven Martin was suspended for punching a handcuffed black teenager while the teenager was on the ground. Martin also verbally abused the teen and called him a "scumbag". He was ultimately convicted of common assault and dismissed from the police force. Wiggins (2021) also reported that Officer Wayne Couzens kidnapped and murdered Sarah Everard as she was returning from shopping, detaining her for allegedly breaching Covid rules. Couzens was arrested and then sentenced to life in jail.

This has left the citizenry with a lot of questions about the recruitment process, training of police personnel, and deployments to operational departments/units, and the general competence of the officers. Police brutality appears more so in Nigeria and other developing and under-developed nations. In Kenya, police abuse of power is commonplace. Historically, police officers have had the freedom to bribe, abuse, falsely accuse and imprison, and even kill citizens with little fear of any consequences. An astounding number of citizens have disappeared or been murdered at the hands of the Kenyan police (International Justice Mission, 2024). This misuse of firearms by the Nigeria Police Officers has persisted over time and situation. Among other things, it undermines the laid down rules guiding the operations of the Nigeria Police Force as taught during the basic police training in Police Colleges/training centres and above all, as enshrined in Force Order 237. The Police Force is one of the most disciplined organizations which members are guided by rule of engagement like the Force Order 237. In Nigeria, the Force Order 237 guides a police officer when to use firearms and when not to use it, thus, behavioural orientations is one of the core programmes that police organization find necessary to qualify one as its members, who will be entrusted with the primary functions of maintaining peace and order in our society. The Force Order 237 stipulates specific situations at which a police officer is allowed to use firearms and police officers are expected to be familiar with and guided by the provisions of the Force Order 237.

The issue of fantasy with firearms among police officers in Nigeria, evident in frequent misuse of the firearms, has been a major concern among Nigerians in recent past. The consequences have been enormous. For instance, Vanguard Newspaper January 13, 2018 reported that Lagos State Police Command dismissed three policemen for allegedly killing a youth on Ifelodun Street, in Amukako Area of the State during a scuffle. The policemen were tried for breaking the Rules of Engagement with reckless application of fire-arms. Daily Trust Newspaper of January 31, 2018 reported that a police corporal kills a mobile police sergeant over a verbal row. Shahara Reporters News of February 14, 2018 reported that over 50 angry youths attack police station in retaliation of shooting of colleague by a policeman. In the Vanguard Newspaper of February 20, 2018, a police sergeant killed a 20-year old tipper conductor at Okigwe-Owerri expressway in Imo State; he was tried and dismissed on the 26, March 2018. On April 17, 2018, the Punch Newspaper had it that, police officers on illegal escort from Ekiti State to Isiala Mbano Local Government Area in Imo State shot two persons during a traditional wedding ceremony. One of the police officers was said to have tried to show gallantry by using one hand to shoot into the air to entertain the guests but lose control of his AK-47 rifle, which is against the provisions of Force Order 237.

On the same day (April 17, 2018), the Punch Newspaper also reported that, a senior police officer (SPO) was attacked by a mob, who beat him to a pulp, after an argument

with a bus driver for driving recklessly. After the fight, the bus driver entered his bus, but the SPO opened fire at the bus. Eventually, a bullet caught one of the passengers inside the bus. On April 24, 2018, Daily Post Newspaper reported that mob lynched a police officer for killing hotel guest in Imo State. Information had it that fight broke out in a newly opened hotel close to a Divisional Police Headquarters which attracted the attention of policemen on duty. On arrival at the scene, a police sergeant was reported to have opened fire on the crowd, which led to the death of a hotel guest. All these happened within a short time. These are very many of such cases; many others abound with different names like accidental discharge, mistaken identity, etc.

The “End-SARS” demonstration by many Nigerians in 2020 demanding the Federal government to scrap the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was a clear indication that police brutality has become unbearable for Nigerians (Osha, 2020). Still during the said protest, the police opened fire and killed Nigerians in Lekki, Lagos State which attracted global condemnation (BBC News, 2020). Arotiba (2020) reported that SARS killed a boy in Ughelli by shooting him in the head. It was also reported that within few days of protest of the End-SARS protest, 56 people were killed (Amnesty International, 2020).

Oni, Momoh, and Nwadioha (2021) found that in Nigeria, police brutality has violated human rights and led to insecurity manifesting in different forms such as torture to extract confession and information, illegal detention, kick-back or bribery, corruption, intimidation, molestation, rape, extra judicial killings and disobedience of court orders. Within one year alone, Amnesty International (2023) documented the unlawful killing of at least six people by law enforcement officers. These include a 31-year-old Gafaru Buraimoh, who was killed in Lagos on 6 December 2022, and Onyeka Ibe, who was killed on 5 April 2023 in Delta State for refusing to pay N100 bribe. It has also been reported that at least 1,247 people were killed by police in 2023, 96% killed by shootings (Police Violence Report, 2023). Adekunle (2022) reported a summary of 10 victims of senseless police shootings in 2022.

Temitope, Abiodun, Oloyede, Ademola, Abah, & Kehinde (2020) reported that the spate of violent and unlawful killings by officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) Unit of the Nigeria Police in the South West region of the country queried the efficiency required by the police in discharging their responsibilities and also undermined human security. Recent reports show that Police Brutality Mars Peaceful Protest in Abuja. Eyewitnesses reported that the police used tear gas, batons, and water cannons to disperse the crowd, leaving several protesters injured. The forefront protester was beaten and arrested by the police, sparking widespread condemnation (Nairaland, 2024b).

In sum, the misuse of firearms among Nigeria police officers in recent time has been a recurring decimal, reported almost on daily basis, each with grievous consequences. Members of the public have been frequently provoked to attempt to lynch or actually lynch some police officers, many officers have sustained various injuries, and police property/facilities/installations have been destroyed. The police authority has incurred avoidable extra costs of buying bullets/ammunitions and faced avoidable litigations and other legal battles which often result in payment compensations to affected individuals and families, all as a result of misuse of firearms by their personnel. In addition, many police officers have been made to face different forms of penalties including demotion, dismissal, and imprisonment. Yet the behaviour has persisted and has become a great concern among Nigerian populace in general, researchers in the field of human right, and behavioural scientists, especially psychologists. It appears that all the

measures taken so far to curb these excesses are corrective and have not yielded the needed results. There is therefore a need to better understand the issue of police fantasy with firearms, especially among the Nigeria police officers. Being a behaviour, one primary, scientific, and reliable procedure to understanding and ascertaining the fantasy is to develop a psychological instrument to measure the behaviour (fantasy with firearms).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop and validate a psychological instrument [Firearm Fantasy Inventory (Police Version)] with which to measure and determine the level of the tendency (fantasy) to misuse the firearms by the officers of the Nigeria Police Force with the intention of helping those with problematic levels of fantasy to overcome such.

2. Study Area

The study was conducted at police formations within the Uyo Metropolis, being the capital of Akwa Ibom State. Uyo serves a dual purpose: first as the capital of Akwa Ibom State and second as the Headquarters of Uyo Local Government Area. As a capital of a state it has the highest in flocks of person in the State from the world and all works of life. Uyo is bounded by Itu, Ibiono Ibom, Uruan, Nsit Ibom, Abak, Etinan and Ibesikpo Asutan local government areas. It has an increasing population of 427,873 in 2006 population census (National Population Commission, 2006) and 1,393,000 in 2024 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024) with a tendency of corresponding crime (Nairaland, 2024), hence police activities. Uyo is a fast-growing city as it has witnessed some infrastructural growth in all areas in the past nine years. The study was research will be carried out within the Divisional Police Headquarters in the Uyo Metropolis, which include ('A' 'B' 'C' 'D' and 'E' Divisions), Uyo Area Command Headquarters, Police Mobile Base, at Idoro (Mopol 26) and the Police Headquarters at Ikot Akpan Abia in Akwa Ibom State.

3. Materials and Methods

The study was a survey, utilizing an ex-post facto design. The variables were not manipulated.

Participants: A total of 97 persons participated in the study. They were 5 senior police officers, 2 ranks-and-files who had served the operation unit of the Nigeria Police Force (involving handling of firearms) for not less than 3 years, 2 clinical psychologists, 1 clinical/forensic psychologist, 2 social psychologists, and 2 industrial/organizational psychologists (who participated in the initial item development), 1 superior officer (SPO), 2 Inspectors of Police, and 2 Police Sergeants for further scrutiny (validation), the Head, Operation Unit at Uyo Area Command, 2 Deputy Superintendents of Police, and 76 police officers of different ranks who had had a minimum of 3 years of handling firearms and were currently working or had worked in the operational units (Special Anti-robbery Squad [SARS], vehicular patrol teams, special protection units [SPU], escort and bank guard duties), who participated in the reliability study.

Instruments: The instruments used in the study were Force Order 237 and an In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide.

1. **The Force Order 237:** This is a document which contains the Rules of Engagement and stipulates specific situations at which a police officer is allowed to use firearms. All police officers in Nigeria are expected to be familiar with and guided by the provisions of the Force Order 237. The provisions of the Force Order 237 guided the initial item development for the Inventory.

2. **In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide:** This was developed in course of the study and validated by 1 clinical psychologist, 1 social psychologist, 1 criminologist, and 2 inspectors of police. It was used for in-depth interview with 5 police officers during which some of the initial items were developed.

Procedure

1. **Ethical consideration:** A letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Psychology, University of Uyo which also supervised the conduct of the study. The letter was presented at the 2/ic Area Command, Uyo. With this, permission was obtained and 2 police officers were assigned to assist.

2. **Item Generation/Development:** Using the provisions of the Force Order 237 and an in-depth interview (IDI) with 5 senior police officers, 2 ranks-and-files who had served the operation unit of the Nigeria Police Force (involving handling of firearms) for not less than 3 years, a total of 78 items were initially developed.

These initial items were presented to 1 clinical/forensic psychologist, 2 social psychologists, and 2 industrial/organizational psychologists, 1 superior officer (SPO), 2 Inspectors of Police, and 2 Police Sergeants for face/content validity. Following their independent assessments and judgments, a total of 48 items were found valid.

The 48 items were further presented to the Head, Operations Unit at Uyo Area Command, 2 Deputy Superintendents of Police, and 1 clinical psychologist for further scrutiny (validation). With their independent assessment, thirty-two (32) items were found valid. Independently, majority of validators agreed that proposed instrument (Firearm Fantasy Inventory [FFI]) should be presented in a Likert format, ranging 1=Disagree Strongly, 2=Disagree a little, 3=Agree a little, 4=Agree strongly

3. **Reliability Study:** The 32 items (in a 5-point Likert format) were then administered to a total of 85 police officers who had had a minimum of 3 years of handling firearms and were currently working or had worked in the operational units (Special Anti-robbery Squad [SARS], vehicular patrol teams, special protection units [SPU], escort and bank guard duties) for reliability study. Each participant used an average of 47 minutes to complete the instrument. In all, the administration and retrieval of the instruments lasted for 12 days and total of 76 were correctly filled and retrieved; their responses subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS. Six (6) were wrongly filled while three were not returned.

4. Results and Discussion

The results showed that of the 32 items, 7 items of the FFI were dropped having reliability co-efficient of $<.3$ each. This left the final version of the FFI with twenty-five (25) items. A Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.97 was obtained (**Appendix A**). A norm of 76 was established at two standard deviations above the mean. Scores from the norm and above indicated high fantasy with firearms (high eagerness to engage the trigger) while scores below the norm showed low fantasy with firearms (low eagerness to engage

the trigger). Scores below the norm indicated low fantasy with firearms and scorers could be allowed to handle firearms while scores from the norm and above indicated high fantasy with firearm and scorers may only be allowed to handle firearm after psychological intervention.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, police brutality which often climaxed with the arbitrary use of firearm has been a global concern. Different legal and administrative steps have taken to curb it but they did not seem to have yielded the desired result. It problem appeared to have been begging for psychological attention. Now, a 25-item psychological instrument has been developed to measure fantasy for firearm (the likelihood to engage the trigger) by police officers (in Nigeria). This feat was attained following scientific approach.

It is recommended that this instrument be used recruitment, deployment, and placement of police officers in Nigeria. It can also be revalidated for use among police officers in other countries. Furthermore, it can be adopted for other armed forces within and outside Nigeria.

References

- Adekunle, S. (2022). 10 victims of senseless police shootings in 2022. *Punch Newspaper* 31st December 2022. Available at <https://www.punchnewspaper.ng.org>. Retrieved on 24/07/24.
- Amnesty International (2023). *The unlawful killings of atleast 6 people*. Available at <https://www.amnesty.org>. Retrieved on 28/07/24.
- Amnesty International (2020). *SARS killing in Nigeria*. Available at <https://www.news.sky.com>. Retrieved on 28/07/24
- Arotiba, A. (2020). *SARS protests: Names of people wey dia deaths from "suspected" police brutality shake Nigeria*. BBC Pidgin News. Available at <https://www.bbc.com> Daily BBC News (2020). *Nigeria's Lekki shooting: What has happened so far at Lagos judicial panel*. Available at <https://www.bbc.com>. Retrieved on 24/07/24.
- BBC News (1984). *Maltby picket sparks violence*. Available on [news.bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk). Retrieved on 25/08/24.
- Bhatt Murphy Solicitors (2009). *Our Police cases-Critchlow and others v South Yorkshire Police*. Archived from the original on April 29, 2009. Available on web.archive.org. Retrieved on 25/08/24.
- Daily Post Newspaper (April 24, 2018). *Police Killing*. Available <https://dailypost.ng>. Retrieved on 28/07/24.
- Daily Trust (2018). *Daily Trust Newspaper of January 31, 2018. Mob lynched a police officer for killing hotel guest in Imo State*. Available at <https://dailytrust.com>. Retrieved on 28/07/28
- Dodd, V. (2022). *Met police officer sacked after punching handcuffed black child in the face*. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://amp.theguardian.com.uk-news>.
- Force Order 237. The Nigeria Police Force.
- Human Right Watch (2018). *World Report Book*. Available at <https://www.hrw.org/world-report>.
- International Justice Mission (2024). *Police abuse of power in Kenya*. Available at <https://www.ijm.org>. Retrieved on 25/08/24.
- Moore, L. (2024). *Police brutality in the United States*. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/police-brutality>. Retrieved on 25/08/24.

- Ineme, M. E., Okon, I. P., Essien, O. O., Iroegbu, M. N. and Abikoye, G. E.
- Nairaland (2024). Available at <https://www.nairaland.com>. Retrieved on 24/07/2024.
- Nairaland (2024b). *Police Brutality Mars Peaceful Protest in Abuja*. Available at <https://www.nairaland.com>. Retrieved on 02/08/2024.
- National Bureau of Statistics (2024). Available at <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng> › pdfuploads › Retrieved on 24/07/2024.
- National Population Commission (2006). National Census Report, 2006. Available at <http://www.population.gov.ng>. Retrieved on 12/06/14.
- Oni, O., Momoh, A. U., Nwadioha, E. (2021). Insecurity: Police Brutality and Human Rights Violation in Nigeria. In Ochigbo, Beetseh, and Abubaka (Eds.). *Global Insecurities: Challenges and the Ways Forward (1st ed.)*. Akure: Science and Education Development Inst., Nigeria, 154-164.
- Osha, S. (2020). EndSARS): *A brief history of police brutality in Nigeria*. Available at <https://www.africaportal.com>
- Police Violence Report (2023). *Mapping Police Violence* Available at <https://www.mappingpoliceviolence.us>. Retrieved on 24/07/24.
- Punch Newspaper (2018). Punch Newspaper of April 17, 2018. *Terror Reign*. Available at <https://punchng.com> . Retrieved on 28/07/24
- Shahara Reporters (2018). Shahara Reporters News of February 14, 2018. *Over 50 angry youths attack police station in retaliation of shooting of colleague by a policeman*. Available at <https://saharareporters.com>. Retrieved on 24/07/24.
- Temitope, F., Abiodun, T. F., Oloyede, A. O., Ademola, O. E., Abah, O., & Kehinde, O. S. (2020). Unlawful killings of civilians by officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) Unit of the Nigeria Police Force in Southwest Nigeria: Implications for national security. *African Journal of Law, Political Research and Administration*, 3(1), 49-64.
- Vanguard Newspaper (2018). Vanguard Newspaper January 13, 2018. *Lagos State Police Command dismissed three policemen for allegedly killing a Youth*. Available at <https://www.vanguardngr.com>. Retrieved on 28/07/24
- Vanguard Newspaper (2018). Vanguard Newspaper of February 20, 2018. *Police sergeant killed a 20-year old tipper conductor*. Available at <https://www.vanguardngr.com>. Retrieved on 28/07/24.
- Wiggins, D. (2021). “Inside max security ‘prison within prison’ where Wayne Couzens on suicide watch”. *My London*. Available at <https://www.mylondon.news>. Retrieved on 25/08/24.
- Worden, R. E. (1996). The ‘Causes’ of Police Brutality: Theory and Evidence on Police Use of Force. *Police Violence*, 23-51. Available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258835334>. Retrieved on 13/08/24

Appendix A

Firearms Fantasy Inventory (FFI) (Police Version)

Instruction: Read each statement carefully and indicate the extent to which it applies to you at present by ticking any one of the numbers (1-4) corresponding to your opinion in front of each statement. Please note that it is not a test, so there is no right or wrong answer.

1=Disagree Strongly, 2=Disagree a little, 3=Agree a little, 4=Agree strongly

S/N	ITEMS	1	2	3	4
1	I feel secure when I am with fire arms				
2	I can help others when I am with fire arms				
3	To disperse rioters, fire arms cannot be avoided				
4	I will shoot only when I am asked to do so				
5	I do not like resistance				
6	To me fire arms must be used when helping people at risk.				
7	Carrying arms raises my morale				
8	I hate seeing blood				
9	When in operation, the law does not really matter				
10	I notice that I am easily upset				
11	I often feel that I could be overpowered when I am without a rifle.				
12	I often feel that most criminals do not deserve to live				
13	I feel incomplete without ammunition				
14	I can control my emotions when handling arms				
15	I can kill				
16	I am not afraid of firing rifle				
17	I love people to notice my presence with arms				
18	Bad thought always come to my mind sometimes				
19	Some persons have cautioned me against excessive use of firearm before				
20	I feel stressed with arms				
21	I think nobody can predict me when handling arms				
22	When provoked, I feel like shooting				
23	I do not like carrying riffle without bullet				
24	I have told someone “I will shoot you” before				
25	As a security officer, when in danger, shooting is the first and best option.				