

**NIGERIAN POLICE’S AGGRESSIVE TENDENCIES IN EASTERN NIGERIA (BIAFRA): ROLES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, EMPATHY, AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (“BLACK LIVES MATTER” CAMPAIGN IMPLICATIONS)**

**Okechukwu Dominic Nwankwo, PhD**

Department Of Psychology,  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, P.M.B. 6059,  
Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.  
Lead Researcher/Correspondence Author

**Chinenye Martha Fasugba**

Department Of Sociology and Anthropology,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, P.M.B. 5025, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Gift Chinagozim Ohakwe, PhD**

Institute Of Theology, Paul University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Aultima Ezichi Peters**

Department Of Psychology, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,  
Igbariam Campus, P.M.B. 6059, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Cyril Chukwuemeka Oborgu**

Department Of Psychology, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,  
Igbariam Campus, P.M.B. 6059, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

---

**ABSTRACT:** *The study examined Nigerian Police’s aggressive tendencies in Biafra (Eastern Nigeria). The objectives were to investigate whether psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence can reduce Police’s aggressive tendencies. Cluster and incidental sampled 230 Nigerian Police personnel participated. Valid/reliable aggression, psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence scales measured variables. Cross-sectional factorial design and multivariate regression were adopted. Findings were: Nigerian Police personnel possess very high aggressive tendency. Psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence of Nigerian Police personnel are very low, significantly leading to personnel’s high aggressive tendencies. Police personnel who are high in psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence will be low on aggressive tendencies. High level of psychological well-being significantly correlates with high empathy and emotional intelligence. Recommendations: Police personnel training, selection and development must strictly inculcate behavioural qualities of psychological well-being, empathy and emotional intelligence to reduce Police aggressive tendencies, implicated in the “**Black Lives Matter**” global campaign.*

**KEYWORDS:** Nigerian-police, aggressive-tendencies, psychological-wellbeing, empathy, emotional-intelligence, Biafra, “black lives matter”.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Several studies have been conducted on aggression and its tendencies/readiness, but the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has not been a major focus of objective empirical case. This is a gap in professional knowledge management of the Nigerian Police Force. The reasons for scarce empirical studies on the Nigerian Police Force are very obvious. Firstly, security organizations in Nigeria (like the Police, military, directorate of State security DSS, and others) and their performances are shrouded in secrecy. Secondly, the security organizations in Nigeria and their personnel hardly allow or cooperate with researchers carrying out studies on them. They (the security organizations) are more disposed to information that will give them political favour, and not otherwise. Thirdly, any outsider conducting a study on the security organizations, particularly the Police, military, and directorate of State security (DSS) which may be objectively unfavourable, risk being arrested or molested. Fourthly, Nigerian security forces have a reputation for brutality, and extrajudicial killings (BBC, 2020; Council on Foreign Relations, 2020; NHRC, 2020) which are scaring.

Personnel of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) are frequently accused of aggressive behaviours to Nigerians (NOIPOLLS, 2020), such as bullying, incivility, torture, and killing of the citizens. These aggressive conducts have been sources of worry to Nigerians. Aggressions and other forms of subjugation of citizens by the Nigerian Police Force is very common and habitual occurrences in Biafra (Eastern Nigeria) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2020). This gives semblance that the Nigerian Police Force is not attuned with up-to-date human behavioural performance best practices as a security organization. Nigerians have severally questioned the essence of the word “Force” being added to the name “Nigerian Police Force”. It is the belief among Nigerians that adding the word “Force” could be a compelling factor that energizes the Nigeria Police aggression against the citizens. This indicates that Nigerians are consistently seeking for explanations for the perennial Police aggressive tendencies in the country. The present study aims at providing empirical and objective answers to the persistent question why the existence of such very high and institutionalized aggressive tendencies exhibited by the Nigerian Police Force against Nigerians (citizens). In the course of this study, only the name “Nigerian Police” will be adopted without “Force”. This is to remove aggression perception from the study, and leave (present) it with its empiricism results. Implications analogy will be made from the findings of the study to the on-going global “**BLACK LIVES MATTER**” campaign.

### **Statement of the Problem.**

Nigerian Police’s aggression in form of brutality and wanton killings in Eastern Nigeria (Eze, 2020) are among the commonest news and incidents in Nigeria. Within a year, Nigerian Police and security agencies do kill at least 1,476 Nigerians on the average (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). It has been observed that the Nigerian Police killed more people than the Corona Virus within two weeks (14 days) of lockdown measure against COVID-19 spread (BBC, 2020). The Nigerian Police is noted with the performance of extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings equated with “killing at will” (Amnesty International, 2009). Reports on the aggressive

tendencies of the Nigerian Police are too numerous to be documented. As social, organizational and behavioural issues, the aggressive tendencies of the Nigerian Police have to be given empirical evaluations. The aim is to discover seasoned and sound knowledge paradigms that will help in the training, modelling and shaping the Nigerian Police organization and the personnel. The present study is a step towards investigating the influencing factors to the Nigerian Police's aggressive tendencies, from which knowledge paradigms will be put forward for modifying the Nigerian Police towards the international best practices. The study and its findings will make important implications analogy concerning Police aggression and lethal use of force against citizens that resulted in the global "**Black Lives Matter**" campaign.

### **Objectives (Purpose) of the Study**

The study aims at:

1. Understanding the extent of aggressive tendency possessed by the Nigerian Police.
2. Examining the role of psychological well-being in Nigerian Police officers' aggressive tendencies.
3. Investigating the role of empathy on the aggressive tendencies of the personnel of the Nigerian Police.
4. Ascertaining the influence of emotional intelligence on the aggressive tendencies of the personnel of the Nigerian Police.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the extent of aggressive tendency existing among the Nigerian Police personnel?
2. How does psychological well-being impact in Nigerian Police officers' aggressive tendencies?
3. What role does empathy play on the aggressive tendencies of the personnel of the Nigerian Police?
4. In what way does emotional intelligence affect aggressive tendencies of the Nigerian Police personnel?

### **Significance of the Study.**

1. Recommending and implementing psychological well-being for the Nigerian Police will promote behavioural health of its personnel. Basically, psychological well-being enhances feeling good and functioning effectively (Huppert, 2009), which are very fundamental for every developed Police organization in the world.
2. The study is very significant because Police personnel with empathic skill can understand others better. Such Nigerian Police personnel is very likely to respect human (civil) rights.
3. Another significance of the study lies in the fact that emotional intelligence is relevant in the Nigerian Police becoming sensitive and highly concerned about the public's perceptions of them. This is very necessary for the Nigerian Police in curbing their extra-judicial killings and other anti-social behaviours very typical of the Nigerian Police.
4. Analogy of the study and its findings will be made to the global campaign against Police brutality. This is with particular reference to the "**Black Lives Matter**" campaign going

on in the USA and around the world to stop wanton killings of blacks and other citizens by the Police.

### **Operational Definition of Terms**

**Aggressive tendencies:** These are verbal or physical behaviours intended to hurt someone as measured with Aggression Questionnaire by Buss and Perry (1992).

**Psychological well-being:** The combinations of feeling good and functioning effectively as measured with Psychological Well-Being Scale by Riff (1995)

**Empathy:** It entails recognizing others' feelings, the causes of these feelings, and to be able to participate in the emotional experience of another individual without becoming part of it as measured with Empathic Response Scale by Afolabi (2017).

**Emotional Intelligence:** It is someone's ability to understand his feelings, listen to another and feel them, and express his emotions in a productive way as measured with Indigenous Emotional Intelligence Scale by Afolabi (2017).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Theoretical Review*

#### **On Aggressive Tendencies**

**Frustration-Aggression Theory** (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939): The theory was developed by an American social scientists John Dollard and his colleagues. Frustration always produces aggressive urge. Frustration is the blocking or prevention of a potentially rewarding or satisfying act or consequence of behaviour, while aggression is the emotional response to such hindrance. The authors observed aggression as a behavior whose primary motive is to injure another person whether physically or psychologically. Specter and Fox (2005) postulated that some behaviours are retaliatory in nature, that sometimes it is actions on someone that prompts reaction. Stimulus brings about response. Frustration produces aggression. Aggression is always the result of prior frustration.

#### **On Psychological Well-Being**

**Subjective Well-Being (SWB) Theory** (Diener, 1984) was developed by Diener (1984) in what is known as a tripartite model of subjective well-being. The theory which describes how people experience the quality of their lives and includes both emotional reactions and cognitive judgments. The theory brings out three distinct but usually related components of wellbeing. These include frequent positive affect, infrequent negative affect, and cognitive evaluations such as life satisfaction. SWB represents moods and emotions, as well as evaluations of an individual's satisfaction with general and specific areas of the person's life (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). SWB basically involves happiness, and tends to be stable over time. This makes SWB a strong personality traits. There is evidence that health and SWB may mutually influence each other, as good health tends to be associated with greater happiness. A number of studies have found

that positive emotions and optimism can have a beneficial influence on health (Diener, & Chan, 2011).

### **On Empathy**

**Simulation theory of empathy (Gordon, 2001, Goldmam, 2006):** This is a theory that holds that humans anticipate and make sense of the behaviour of others by activating mental processes that, if carried into action, would produce similar behaviour. This includes intentional behaviour as well as the expression of emotions. The theory states that children use their own emotions to predict what others will do. Therefore, people project their own mental states onto others. Simulation theory is not only a theory *of* empathy, but also a theory of how people understand others. This involves what others do by way of a kind of empathetic response.

### **On Emotional Intelligence**

**Four-Branch Theory of Emotional Intelligence by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004):** The theory is of the view that emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth. The paradigms of the theory can be explained thus: **Perception** - perceiving emotion in yourself, others and your environment; **Facilitation** - using emotion to interpret the world and changes in different ways; **Understanding** - conceptual knowledge of emotions, how they change and their impacts; and **Management/Regulation** - the ability to steer your emotions and those of your peers. Though these are all interconnected processes and abilities, they suggest that there is perhaps a hierarchy and higher levels such as regulation (where emotions and thinking are interconnected) require a greater level of emotional intelligence than the lowest level, perception.

### ***Empirical Review***

#### **On Aggressive Tendencies**

Intolerance which is highly characteristic of the Nigerian Police is associated with aggressive tendencies. This was well reflected in a study by Efrat-Treister, Moriah and Rafaeli (2020). They explored the effect of waiting times on care receivers' sense of procedural justice and aggressive tendencies, and showed the attenuating effects of providing explanatory information. Data were collected using survey responses in two studies, both conducted in the waiting area of a large hospital emergency department. Study 1 (n = 328) was a quasi-experiment involving an intervention in which care receivers were provided with information about wait times. Study 1 included three phases: (1) pre-test (week 1, n = 98), in which no information was provided; (2) information condition (weeks 2 & 3, n = 155), in which information was provided through large signs and pamphlets; and (3) post-test (week 4, n = 75), in which no information was provided. Study 2 (n = 99) was conducted a year later and involved the same information provision as the intervention stage of Study. The longer the wait duration, the lower care receivers' procedural justice perceptions and the greater their aggressive tendencies. Information provision moderated the association, such that receiving information reduced aggressive tendencies during shorter waits but increased aggressive tendencies during longer waits (Efrat-Treister, Moriah & Rafaeli, 2020).

---

**On Psychological Well-being**

A study was conducted by Fomina, Burmistrova-Savenkova and Morosanova (2020) to investigate the association between psychological well-being and self-regulation. The study contributes to the search of significant predictors of the students' psychological well-being. Moscow secondary schools pupils (N = 239) participated in a 2-wave longitudinal study. The procedure was carried out in the 4th grade and repeated in the 5th grade, 6 months after the first measurement. The results were presented describing the dynamics of manifestations of the psychological well-being and the conscious self-regulation of the schoolchildren during their transition from the primary to the middle school. Using the cross-lagged panel analysis allowed concluding that the level of conscious self-regulation of the learning activity of the 4th graders significantly predicts their psychological well-being not only in the 4th grade, but also in the 5th grade. The study revealed the specific regulatory predictors characteristic of different manifestations of the schoolchildren' psychological well-being. The obtained results highlight the significance of research on the conscious self-regulation of learning activities as a resource for pupils' psychological well-being, which is predictive for its maturation in the subsequent ages (Fomina, Burmistrova-Savenkova & Morosanova, 2020).

**On Empathy**

There was a study by Katsari, Tyritidou and Domeyer (2020) aimed to (i) translate, culturally adapt, and validate the Jefferson Scale of Patient Perception of Physician Empathy questionnaire for the Greek population (Gr-JSPPPE) and (ii) estimate physicians' self-assessed empathy and patients' perceptions of physicians' empathy, investigate their relationship, and assess their predictors. A total of 189 patients and 17 physicians from an internal medicine clinic took part in the study. A composite questionnaire was administered to the patients, consisting of (1) sociodemographic items, (2) hospitalization-related questions, (3) the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale, (4) the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), (5) the EQ-5D-5L Questionnaire, (6) the Gr-JSPPPE, and (7) the Visual Analog Scale for pain. The physicians' composite questionnaire comprised (1) sociodemographic items, (2) the EQ-5D-5L questionnaire, and (3) the Toronto Composite Empathy Scale (TCES). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to assess the psychometric properties of the Gr-JS PPPE. Univariate comparisons were performed between (a) empathy measures and (b) sociodemographic and health-related measures of both groups; multivariate regression analysis for the Gr-JSPPPE adjusting for baseline confounders was executed. Statistically significant negative correlations were found between the Gr-JSPPPE mean score and the TCES personal/cognitive, professional/cognitive, and professional/emotional subscales. Female sex, being married, duration of employment in current post, and physicians' EQ-5D index score emerged as important predictors of increased physician empathy. Patients' EQ-VAS "thermometer" scale was significantly associated with the Gr-JSPPPE total score at the multivariate level. The Gr-JSPPPE is a psychometrically sound tool to assess patient perceptions of physician empathy. Physician empathy assessed by the self-reported scale is inversely associated with patient perceptions (Katsari, Tyritidou & Domeyer, 2020).

### **On Emotional Intelligence**

According to a study by MacCann, Jiang, Brown, Bucich, Double, and Minbashian (2020), the concept of emotional intelligence as an area of academic research is relatively new, dating to the 1990s. Although there are other studies that suggest that social and emotional learning programs in schools are effective at improving academic performance, however, emotional intelligence plays a great role as well. The researchers therefore carried out a major comprehensive meta-analysis study on whether higher emotional intelligence generally relates to academic success. Associate Professor MacCann and her colleagues (2020) analysed data from more than 160 studies, representing more than 42,000 students from 27 countries, published between 1998 and 2019. More than 76% were from English-speaking countries. The students ranged in age from primary school to university. The researchers found that students with higher emotional intelligence tended to get higher grades and better achievement test scores than those with lower emotional intelligence scores. This finding held true even when controlling for intelligence and personality factors. What was most surprising to the researchers was that the association held regardless of age (MacCann, Jiang, Brown, Bucich, Double & Minbashian, 2020).

### **Hypotheses**

1. Aggressive tendency of the Nigerian Police will not be significantly high.
2. Psychological well-being will not significantly predict aggressive tendencies of Nigerian Police Personnel.
3. Empathy will not significantly predict aggressive tendencies of Nigerian Police Personnel.
4. Emotional intelligence will not significantly predict aggressive tendencies of Nigerian Police Personnel.

### **METHOD**

**Participants:** A total of 230 Police officers were drawn from a population of 450 personnel (NPF Nominal Roll, 2018). The participants were from Imo State Police Command, Nigeria (Eastern Nigeria/Biafra). The target divisions were Akokwa, Urualla, Orlu, Mbaitolu Area Commands all in Imo state. The sample consists of 174 males and 56 females. In educational qualification, 118 of the participants had WAEC/NECO/GCE O-level certificates, 46 of the participants had HND/BSc certificates, while 8 participants had PG/MSc/PhD qualifications. The rank range of participants was as follows: Police Constable (CP) = 32; Police Corporal (PCL) = 74; Police Sergeant (PSGT) = 74; Inspector (INSPR) = 30; Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) = 6; Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) = 8; and Superintendent of Police (SP) = 6. The religion distribution of the participants was as follows: Catholic = 80; Anglican = 70; Pentecostal = 74; Sunni Muslim = 2; and Shitte Muslim = 4. The distribution of the State of origin was as follows: Northern Nigeria (Arewa) States = 8; Eastern States (Biafra) = 186; Western States (Oduduwa) = 36. The age range was between 20-60 years. The sample methods were cluster and incident sampling methods. These methods were used because the population had educational, rank and regional clusters.

**Instruments:** The instruments for the study were aggression scale, psychological well-being scale, empathy scale, and emotional intelligence scale.

**Aggression Scale** was developed by Buss and Perry (1992), and it has 29 items, and rated at 5-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5. The scale measures four dimensions of aggression namely Physical Aggression, Verbal Aggression, Anger, and Hostility. The developers reported internal constituency total score ranging from .72 to .89. The scale had original a nine-week retest reliability with correlations ranging from .72 to .80. Aggression Scale had been given convergent validation in Eastern Nigeria (Biafra) using Terrorism Cognition Inventory at coefficient of .95 by Nwankwo, Aultima, Officha, Ezekwueme, and Fasugba (2020). The researchers revalidated the aggression scale for present study and the following initial consistency revalidation and norms were obtained; physical Aggression .85 (Norms = 21.86), Verbal aggression .73(Norm = 16. 86), Anger .88 (norms = 16.78), and Hostility .64 (Norms = 23.71). The high the participant scores from the norm, the higher his/her aggression.

**Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB-S)** was developed by Ryff (1995). It is a structured, self-report instrument based on the six dimension of psychological well-being: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal growth, Positive relationship with others, Purpose in life, Self-acceptance. This scale is 42-item scale. Each item is responded using a 6-point Likert scale format of Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Slightly disagree = 3, Slightly agree = 4, Agree = 5, Strongly agree = 6. The psychometric properties of the six dimension of PWB-S range from .86 to .93. This scale has been validated in Nigeria by Meforh (2016), in which the composite reliability was .87. The scale has a norm of 120. This means that individuals who score from 120 and above have positive to psychological well-being, while those who score below 120 have negative to it. The higher an individual scores above the norm, the higher the ranks in psychological well-being.

**Empathy Scale** was developed and validated in Nigeria by Afolabi (2017). Empathic scale is a sub-scale in the 40 item scale developed to measure Emotional intelligence. The scale has 5-point on Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Undecided = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5. This scale has the reliability of 0.73 and ( $\alpha = .82$ ). The scale has a norm of 12. Higher scores from 12 show that an individual was high in empathy.

**Emotional Intelligence Scale** was developed in Nigeria by Afolabi (2017). It has 40 items and seven dimensions. It was measured on the 5-point Likert format of Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Undecided = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5. The dimensions measure Inter-personal skills ( $\alpha=.88$ ), Empathy ( $\alpha=.82$ ), Stress tolerance ( $\alpha=.81$ ), Optimism ( $\alpha=.80$ ), Assertiveness  $\alpha=.77$ ), Problem solving ( $\alpha=.83$ ), Flexibility ( $\alpha=.85$ ), The scale itself has a reliability of .87. The dimensions have respective norms as follows Interpersonal skills = 14, Empathy = 12, Stress tolerance = 14, Optimism = 9, Assertiveness = 12, Problem solving = 16, Flexibility = 16. The general norm for the scale is 93. This shows that individual who score from 93 and above are high in emotional intelligence.



**Procedure:** Human participants were used for the study, instead of “substituted samples/participants”. “Substituted samples/participants” are credible information acquired from credible secondary sources of information or knowledge. “Substituted samples/participants” are often adopted in qualitative research like historical, reflective, descriptive, deductive and analytic (but not limited to them only) researches, where direct primary data cannot be collected directly from human participants. This is because direct human participants are either dead, inevitable or impossible to reach, but they are in positions or status for a credible information or data for being experts, professionals or authorities in an issue. Hence, the persons’ assertions, statements, opinions, documents and other secondary sources are referred to as “substituted samples/participants”, since such information sources are taken seriously or used for decision-making. To administer the instruments to the respondents in the present study, permission was obtained from the various divisional Police officers. The researcher introduced himself to the participants and his reason for coming to the organization. The instruments were administered and the respondents were guided on how to respond to them. The time of administration of the instruments was between 10am in the morning and 4pm in the evening. Respondents were reached in their duty posts, in which they responded to the instruments based on availability and willingness to participate in the study. Before administering the instruments, the consents of the participants were sought, obtained, and the confidentiality of their participation and responses assured to them. These insured the observance of ethical considerations of consent and confidentiality.

**Design/Statistics:** The study adopted a cross-sectional factorial design. It was cross-sectional design because the participants were sampled in their natural place of work across their various occupational cadres/levels (ranks). Again, it was factorial design because three of the instruments used for measurement had sub-factors, and they were cross-examined against one another. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis statistics was used to analyze data collected. This is a suitable statistic because of the following. There are three independent variables namely Psychological well-being, Empathy, and Emotional intelligence. There is only one dependent variable, aggression. The interaction effects of the independent variables will be accounted for.

## RESULTS

The results and findings of the study are presented below. The results, findings and the tested hypotheses are also briefly interpreted.

**Table 1:**

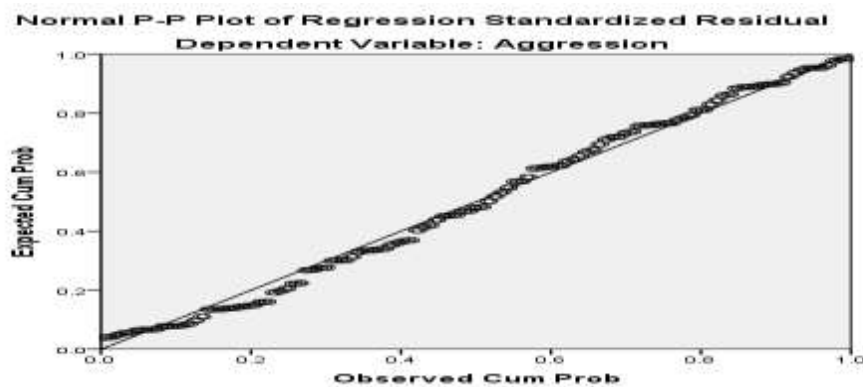
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	41.56	90.24	80.62	9.529	230
Residual	-17.241	21.068	.000	9.765	230
Std. Predicted Value	-4.098	1.010	.000	1.000	230
Std. Residual	-1.754	2.143	.000	.993	230

**Aggression Tendency Descriptive of the Nigerian Police Personnel**

**Source: Researchers’ collected primary data**

The table 1 above shows that the Nigerian Police personnel possess a very high aggressive tendency. The Nigerian Police personnel scored 80.62 of 90.24 aggressive tendency. Very unfortunately, the high aggressive tendency is uniform and seems to be possessed by most of the Nigerian Police personnel. This is predicated on the constrict nature of the Std Deviation (9.529), even the Std Predicted Value is 1.000, which indicates perfect characteristics of aggressive tendency. It implies that the very high aggressive tendency is possessed by all the Nigerian Police personnel.

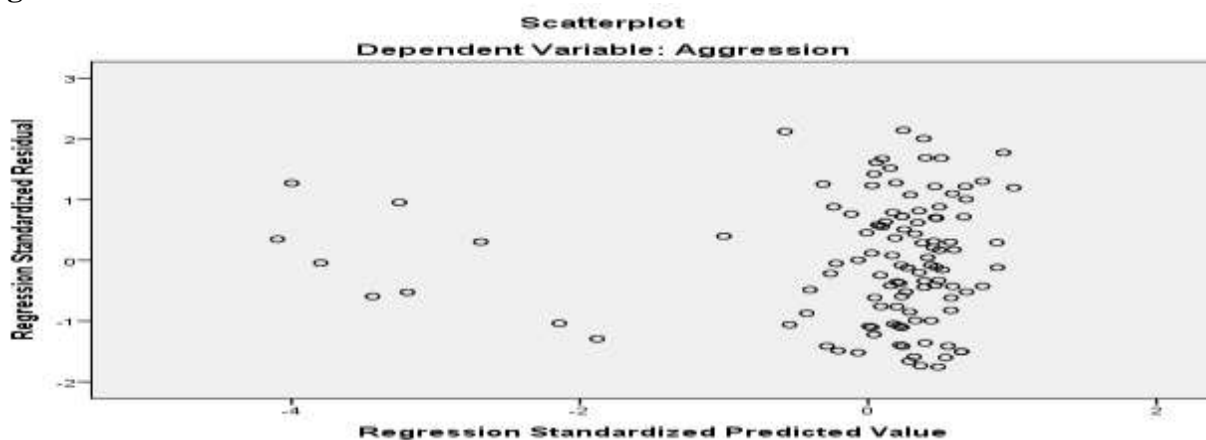
**Figure 1:**



**Source: Researchers’ collected primary data**

The figure 1 above is the regression standardized residual which shows the aggressive tendency plot of the Nigerian Police personnel. The plot is almost perfect on the straight line. This shows that the personnel’s aggressive tendency is very constrict. It further shows that almost all the Nigerian Police personnel possess very high aggressive tendency.

**Figure 2:**



**Source: Researchers’ collected primary data**

Figure 2 shows the scatterplot for the regression standardized predicted value, in which aggressive tendency of the Nigerian Police personnel has a high concentration of the positive side. This is a visible manifestation of the aggressive tendency of the Nigerian Police personnel.

**Table 2:**

Variables	Aggression	Psychological Wellbeing	Empathy	Emotional Intelligence
Aggression	1.000			
Psychological Wellbeing	-.68***	1.000		
Empathy	-.62***	.83***	1.000	
Emotional Intelligence	-.65***	.84***	.77***	1.000

Note:  $N = 230$ , \*\*\* $p < .0005$ .

### Correlation Analysis of Nigerian Police's Aggressive Tendency, Psychological Well-Being, Empathy, and Emotional Intelligence

Source: Researchers' collected primary data

A correlation analyses of the key variables used in the study is presented in Table 2 above. The results showed significant inverse correlation between aggression and psychological wellbeing ( $r = -.68$ ,  $n = 230$ ,  $p < .0005$ ), aggression and empathy ( $r = -.62$ ,  $n = 230$ ,  $p < .0005$ ) and aggression and emotional intelligence ( $r = -.65$ ,  $n = 230$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, a significant positive relationship was identified between psychological wellbeing and empathy ( $r = .83$ ,  $n = 230$ ,  $p < .0005$ ), psychological wellbeing and emotional intelligence ( $r = .84$ ,  $n = 230$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results imply that high scores in aggression results from low scores in psychological wellbeing, empathy and emotional intelligence while high levels emotional intelligence results to equally high level of psychological wellbeing and empathy.

**Table 3:**

<b>Aggression</b>			
Predictors	Step1 $\beta$	Step 2 $\beta$	Step 3 $\beta$
<i>Step 1</i>			
Psychological Wellbeing	-.68***	-.54***	-.40***
<i>Step 2</i>			
Empathy		-.17*	-.12
<i>Step 3</i>			
Emotional Intelligence			-.22*
$\Delta F$	197.72***	4.14*	6.06*
$R^2$	.46***	.47*	.49***
$\Delta R^2$		.01*	.01*
$Df$	1,228	1, 227	1, 226
Dublin Watson	1.58		

Note:  $N = 230$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .0005$ .

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses for Nigerian Police Aggressive Tendency on Psychological Wellbeing, Empathy and Emotional Intelligence. Source: Researchers' collected primary data

The result of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis as presented in Table 3 above tested the hypotheses of the study. The overall model of the three step hierarchical regression analyses was significant for the three model [ $R^2 = .46$ ,  $F(1, 228) = 197.72$ ,  $p < .0005$ ;  $R^2 = .47$ ,  $F(1, 227) = 102.29$ ,  $p < .0005$ ;  $R^2 = .49$ ,  $F(1, 226) = 71.73$ ,  $p < .0005$ ]. The overall fit of the model showed that 48.8% of the variation in Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies had been explained. Also, the Durbin-Watson of 1.58 falls within the accepted range ( $1.5 < D < 2.5$ ), indicating absence of autocorrelation in the data and proving the error term to be independent. In the first hypothesis, psychological wellbeing was regressed into the model and it explained 46.4% of the variations in Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies. The result showed that psychological wellbeing significantly predicted Police personnel's aggressive tendencies ( $\beta = -.40$ ,  $p > .0005$ ). This result implied that psychological wellbeing was inversely related to Police personnel's aggressive tendencies ( $t = -14.06$ ), such that low scores on psychological wellbeing resulted to higher scores on aggression. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected. Analysis of the second null hypothesis showed that empathy merely explained 1% of the variations in Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies. The result further showed that empathy did not significantly predict Police personnel's aggressive tendencies ( $\beta = -.12$ ,  $p > .05$ ;  $t = -1.36$ ). However, it should be noted that at the second step of the regression model, empathy showed significant negative relationship with Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies ( $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ;  $t = -2.03$ ) but was not significant at the third step. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected implying that though higher scores on empathy resulted in lower scores in aggression. Results of the third hypothesis showed that emotional intelligence explained 1.4% of the variation in Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies. Breakdown of the result further show that emotional intelligence is a significant and inverse predictor of Nigerian Police personnel's aggressive tendencies ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ ;  $t = 2.46$ ). The third null hypothesis was therefore rejected indicating that Police officers who are high in emotional intelligence will be low on aggressive tendencies.

## Summary of Findings

### Correlation findings

1. Nigerian Police personnel possess very high aggressive tendency.
2. Low psychological well-being of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies.
3. Low empathy of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies.
4. Low emotional intelligence of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies.

### Prediction findings

5. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in psychological well-being will be low on aggressive tendencies.
6. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in empathy will be low on aggressive tendencies.

7. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in emotional intelligence will be low on aggressive tendencies.

### **General psychological/behavioural findings**

8. High level of psychological well-being significantly correlates with high empathy.
9. High psychological well-being significantly correlates with high emotional intelligence.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study made some findings as follows: Nigerian Police personnel possess very high aggressive tendency. Low psychological well-being of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Low empathy of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Low emotional intelligence of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in psychological well-being will be low on aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in empathy will be low on aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in emotional intelligence will be low on aggressive tendencies. High level of psychological well-being significantly correlates with high empathy. High psychological well-being significantly correlates with high emotional intelligence.

The findings of the study could be attributed to the belief norms applicable in the Police. Generally, the Police sees itself as an organization of force. That is why Nigeria Police has the word "Force" ascribed to it, so that it has the name the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). This is a mindset which affects the psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence of the Police personnel (Keech, Cole, Hagger, & Hamilton, 2020), particularly in Nigerian, and plausibly globally. Again, the strictness and rigidity of control of the Police organization could be associated with burnout and stress. The Police job is such in which labour union and pressure group that could have moderated Police aggression are not allowed. The pressure of work, burnout, stress (Queirós, Passos, Bárto, Marques, da Silva & Pereira, 2020) and belief in superiority of Police that deserves maximum respect from the public could be some of the occupational characteristics and the disposing mindset (Keech, Cole, Hagger, & Hamilton, 2020) to the Police aggressive tendency.

Every occupation has its own job characteristics and adversity. So, the Police cannot use their own job characteristics to justify their culture of aggression. Even psychosocial factors like prejudice and ethnicity are predisposing factors to Police aggressive tendency in Biafra (Eastern Nigeria). No matter the predisposing factors to Police aggressive tendency, the factors can be ameliorated and improved upon with psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence. Inculcating psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence in the training of the Police personnel is surely the optimistic way (Padhy, Chelli & Padiri, 2015) of curbing the high aggressive tendency among Police personnel in Nigeria. It will also be an effective remedy or panacea to the global Police aggression, as implicated in the global "**Black Lives Matter**" campaign against Police aggression.

### **Implications of the Study and its Findings**

1. The findings of the study will assist the Nigerian Police respect the human (civil) rights of Nigerians. Basically, Police aggressions against Nigerians are blatant violations of the citizens' dignity of the human person.
2. The findings of the study will be very useful in the training of the Police. Psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence are major human behavioural solutions to the perennial aggressive tendencies exhibited by the Nigerian police personnel against the citizens.
3. The findings of the study will surely give insight into the possible causes of the Police aggressive tendencies against non-white Americans. The Police aggressive tendencies particularly against the African-American descents has generated the “**Black Lives Matter**” global protest.

### **CONCLUSION**

The findings of the study are priceless in curbing the Police aggressive tendencies all over the world. This is notwithstanding that the scope or focus of the study was Nigeria. The study made very crucial findings, which are highlighted as follows. Nigerian Police personnel possess very high aggressive tendency. Low psychological well-being of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Low empathy of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Low emotional intelligence of the Nigerian Police personnel significantly leads to the personnel's high aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in psychological well-being will be low on aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in empathy will be low on aggressive tendencies. Nigerian Police personnel who are high in emotional intelligence will be low on aggressive tendencies. High level of psychological well-being significantly correlates with high empathy. High psychological well-being significantly correlates with high emotional intelligence.

### **Limitations of the Study**

1. The hierarchical nature and rigidity of control of the Police organization, as well as status personality of very high Police officers were limitations. Hence, very high ranking Police personnel like the Commissioners of Police and above were very difficult to sample due to bureaucratic and other accessibility bottlenecks.

### **Recommendations.**

1. Personnel training, selection and development of Police personnel must strictly inculcate behavioural qualities of psychological well-being, empathy and emotional intelligence. This is because it has found in the study that the Nigerian Police personnel substantially lack these behavioural qualities. That is why the personnel exhibit very high aggressive tendencies.

### **Suggestion for further studies**

1. There is need to replicate the study in other cultures to know whether similar results will apply. This is because cultures vary in their socializations and training in psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence, which can be carried over into the Police duties.
2. Further studies on this topic need to increase the samples substantially beyond the samples of the present study. This will be good in enhancing the robustness of the future studies.
3. In future studies efforts should be made to sample very high ranking Police officers. This will aid a lot in comparative analysis of various cadres of the Police personnel on psychological well-being, empathy, and emotional intelligence.

### **REFERENCES**

- Afolabi, O.A. (2017). Indigenous emotional intelligence scale: Development and validation. *Psychological Thought*, 10(1), 138–154.
- Amnesty International (2009). *Killing at will extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings by the police in Nigeria*. London: Amnesty International Publication
- BBC (2020). Coronavirus: Security forces kill more Nigerians than Covid-19. *BBC, News*. Retrieved 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52317196>
- Buss, A. H., & Perry, M. (1992). The Aggression. Questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(3), 452-459.
- Council on Foreign Relations (2020). Coronavirus: Security forces kill more Nigerians than Covid-19. *BBC, News*. Retrieved 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52317196>
- Diener, E., & Chan, M.Y. (2011). Happy people live longer: Subjective well-being contributes to health and longevity. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 3 (1), 1-43.
- Diener, E.D. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95 (3), 542-575.
- Diener, E.D. Suh, E.M., Lucas, R.E., & Smith, H.L (1999). Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125 (2), 276-302.
- Dollard, J., Miller, N.E., Doob, L.W., Mowrer, O.H., & Sears, R.R. (1939). *Frustration and aggression*. New Haven, CT, US: Yale University Press
- Efrat-Treister, D., Moriah, H. & Rafaeli, A. (2020). The effect of waiting on aggressive tendencies toward emergency department staff: Providing information can help but may also backfire. *PLOS ONE* 15(1), 1-18 e0227729. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0227729>
- Eze, J. (2020). Police kill one, injure another in Onitsha. *Premium Times*, April, 15. Retrieved 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2020. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-east/388068-police-kill-one-injure-another-in-onitsha.html>
- Fomina, T., Burmistrova-Savenkova, A. & Morosanova, V. (2020). Self-regulation and psychological well-being in early adolescence: A two-wave longitudinal study. *Behavioural Sciences*, 10(67), 1-10.
- Goldman, A. (2006). *Simulating minds: The philosophy, psychology and neuroscience of mindreading*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Gordon, R.M. (2001). Simulation and reason explanation: The radical view. *Philosophical Topics*, 29 (1-2), 175-192.
- Huppert, F. (2009). Psychological well-being: Evidence regarding its causes and consequences. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 1(2), 137-164.
- Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2020). *Nigeria: Availability and effectiveness of state and police response in both urban and rural areas of southern Nigeria, for people who refuse to participate in ritual practices (2014-October 2016)*, 14 November 2016, NGA105659.E, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5843ff5f4.html> [accessed 13 April 2020]
- Katsari, V., Tyritidou, A. & Domeyer, P.R. (2020). Physicians' self-assessed empathy and patients' perceptions of physicians' empathy: validation of the Greek Jefferson scale of patient perception of physician empathy. *Hindawi BioMed Research International*, February 12, 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/9379756>
- Keech, J.J., Cole, K.L., Hagger, M.S. & Hamilton, K. (2020). The association between stress mindset and physical and psychological wellbeing: Testing a stress beliefs model in police officers. *Psychology & Health*, March, DOI: 10.1080/08870446.2020.1743841
- MacCann, C., Jiang, Y., Brown, L.E.R., Bucich, M., Double, K.S., & Minbashian, A. (2020). Emotional intelligence predicts academic performance: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 146(2), 150–186. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/bul0000219>
- Mayer, J.D, Salovey, P. & Caruso, D.R (2004). Emotional intelligence: Theory, findings, and implications. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(3), 197-215.
- Mefoh, P. (2016). Department Psychology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- NHRC (2020). Coronavirus: Security forces kill more Nigerians than Covid-19. *National Human Rights Commission*. Coronavirus: Security forces kill more Nigerians than Covid-19. *BBC News*. Retrieved 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52317196>
- NOIPOLLS (2020). *Nigerian Police are the worst violators of human rights*. Retrieved 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2020. <http://venturesafrica.com/nigerian-police-are-the-worst-violators-of-human-rights-noipolls/>
- NPF Nominal Role (2018). *Nigerian Police Force (NPF) nominal role*. Imo State Command, Owerri, Nigeria
- Nwankwo, O.D., Aultima, E.P., Officha, P.K., Ezekwueme, A.C., & Fasugba, C.M. (2020). Terrorism cognition and violent extremism as influenced by cultural orientation and social anxiety: A cross-cultural study of Eastern and Northern Nigerian samples. *International Journal of African Society, Cultures and Traditions*, 8(1), 38-73
- Padhy, M., Chelli, K, & Padiri, R.A. (2015). Optimism and psychological well-being of police officers with different work experiences. *Sage Open*, April-June, 1-7, DOI: 10.1177/2158244015580852
- Queirós, C., Passos, F., Bártolo, A., Marques, A. J., da Silva, C.F., & Pereira, A. (2020). Burnout and stress measurement in police officers: Literature review and a study with the operational police stress questionnaire. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 587, DOI=10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00587



- Ryff, C. (1995). Psychological well-being in adult life. *Current Directory of Psychological Sciences*, 4, 99-104.
- Ryff, C. (1995). Psychological well-being in adult life. *Current Directory of Psychological Sciences*, 4, 99-104.
- Spector, P., & Fox, S. (2002). The stressor emotion model of counterproductive work behaviour and organizational citizens behaviour. *Human Resources Management Review*, 121, 269-292.

## **APPENDIX**

### **AGGRESSION SCALE**

		<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Undecided (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (5)</b>
	<b>Anger</b>					
1)	Some of my friends think I am a hothead					
2)	I am an even- tempered person					
3)	I flare up quickly but get over it quickly					
4)	I have trouble controlling my temper					
5)	When frustrated, I let my irritation show					
6)	I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.					
7)	Sometimes I fly off for no good reason					
	<b>Physical Aggression</b>					
8)	If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will					
9)	I have become so mad that I have broken things					
10)	Once in a while, I can't control the urge to strike another person					
11)	I have threatened people I know					
12)	Given enough provocation, I may hit another person					
13)	I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person					
14)	If somebody hits me, I hit back.					
15)	There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows					
16)	I get into flights a little more than the average person.					
	<b>Hostility</b>					
17)	When people are especially nice to me, I wonder what they want.					
18)	I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things					

19)	I am suspicious overly friendly strangers					
20)	I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy					
21)	At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life					
22)	I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back					
23)	Other people always seem to get the breaks					
24)	I know that “friends” talk about me behind my back					
	<b>Verbal Aggression</b>					
25)	I Tell my friends openly when I disagree with them					
26)	I can’t help getting into arguments when people disagree with me					
27)	When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them					
28)	I often find myself disagreeing with people.					
29)	My friends say that I’m somewhat argumentative.					

**Developed by Buss and Perry (1992)**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING SCALE**

		Strongly disagree = 1	Disagree = 2	Slightly disagree = 3	Slightly agree = 4	Agree = 5	Strongly agree = 6
	<b>Autonomy</b>						
1)	I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they in opposition to the opinions of most people.						
2)	My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing						
3)	I tend to worry about what other people think of me						
4)	I tend to be influenced by people think of me						
5)	I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus						
6)	It’s difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.						
7)	I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.						
	<b>Environmental Mastery</b>						

**Developed by Ryff (1995).**

8)	In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live						
9)	The demands of everyday life, I am pleased with how things have turned out						
10)	I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me						
11)	I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life						
12)	I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities						
13)	I have difficulty arranging my life in a way is satisfying to me						
14)	I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.						
	<b>Personal Growth</b>						
15)	I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons						
16)	I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.						
17)	When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.						
18)	I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.						
19)	I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things						
20)	For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.						
21)	I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.						
	<b>Positive Relations</b>						
22)	Most people see me as loving and affectionate.						
23)	Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.						
24)	I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.						
25)	I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends						
26)	People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.						
27)	I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.						

28)	I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.						
<b>Purpose in Life</b>							
29)	I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.						
30)	I have a sense of direction and purpose in life						
31)	My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.						
32)	I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.						
33)	I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.						
34)	Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.						
35)	I sometimes feel as if I done all there is to do in life.						
<b>Self-Acceptance</b>							
36)	When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.						
37)	In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.						
38)	I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.						
39)	I like most aspects of my personality.						
40)	In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.						
41)	My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.						
42)	When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.						

**EMPATHY SCALE**

		<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Undecided (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (5)</b>
1)	I always try to create positive relationship with people every time					
2)	I care about others					
3)	I always identify myself with those in need					
4)	I am usually enthusiastic when I communicate my feelings to others					

5)	I prefer face to face discussion of disagreement to sending messages.					
----	---	--	--	--	--	--

**Developed by Afolabi (2017)**

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCALE**

		<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Undecided (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (5)</b>
	<b>Interpersonal Skill</b>					
1)	I am good at reading people’s feelings.					
2)	I find it difficult relating with other people					
3)	I can tolerate negative social interactions form another person.					
4)	I have the social skills to handle interpersonal discomfort					
5)	I am consciously aware of both positive and negative feelings from other people.					
6)	I enjoy the company of my friends.					
	<b>Empathy</b>					
7)	I always try to create positive relationship with people every time.					
8)	I care about others					
9)	I always identify myself with those in need.					
10)	I am usually enthusiastic when I communicate my feelings to others.					
11)	I prefer face to face discussion of disagreement to sending messages.					
	<b>Stress Tolerance</b>					
12)	I do not allow nervousness to take charge of me.					
13)	I know how to control my anxiety in the public					
14)	I am always calm at every situation.					
15)	I am easily irritated when people I don’t know call on phone					
16)	Occasionally, I worry about little things					
17)	I am easily disturbed when I hear negative comments about my person.					
	<b>Optimism</b>					
18)	I do not believe one can achieve all things					

19)	Everything is working well for me					
20)	I can see positive aspects of any problem					
21)	I believe I can achieve any goal I set for myself					
	<b>Assertiveness</b>					
22)	I take time to listen to every opinion					
23)	I can complain without making it an issue					
24)	I express myself easily whenever I feel marginalized					
25)	I asked people reasons for their actions without offending them					
26)	I find it difficult to complain about things that bother me so as not to offend others					
	<b>Problem Solving</b>					
27)	I try to find solutions to my life challenges					
28)	I always plan before I embark on anything					
29)	I try to solve my problems as well as that of my neighbours.					
30)	When I am in a fix, I look for a way out of it.					
31)	Whatever I do I prepare for any outcome either with anyone.					
32)	Under adverse circumstance, I avoid conflict with anyone.					
33)	I resolve my challenges easily.					
	<b>Flexibility</b>					
34)	I relate with anyone					
35)	I explore all situations to make them enjoyable					
36)	When changes come I adapt easily					
37)	I am open to new ideas					
38)	I am easy going and make friends easily					
39)	I am rigid and do not accept changes					
40)	I am ready to learn new ideas					

**Developed by Afolabi (2017)**