

ASSESSMENT OF MOTOR SKILLS IN THE SELECTION OF POLICE OFFICERS

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Abstract: The methods used in the selection of human resources potential for the police needs had been recognized in the remote past, however, those selection proceedings were founded on practical experience. The first selection proceedings founded on scientific facts are implemented in modern era, and they primarily relate to the motor, functional abilities, anthropological and cognitive characteristics, as well as specific police skills and knowledge. The elements that are currently utilized in practice for the personnel selection in police, but also for an initial classification of police officers, imply a degree of motor and functional abilities, health status (determined by the results of previous general health check up), as well as a certain educational level. The functional and motor abilities ensure an elementary safety in the candidate selection for certain duties, primarily relating to the description of their tasks. The goal of this work is to obtain scientific and empirical findings that will help to understand the specificities of development of the anthropological characteristics of the human resources in police, which will contribute towards introducing the new criteria, methods and techniques in the process of development i.e. education, training, planning and developing career in the police, thereby ultimately contributing towards increasing the efficacy and effectiveness of performing police jobs.

Key words: police officer; motor skills; classification procedure.

INTRODUCTION

Testing for police jobs encompasses the development and maintenance of general readiness programs, knowledge of martial arts, firearms handling skills, training in driving of official police vehicles, and other needed programs. The high degree of skills and knowledge that are developed and maintained through police testing are necessary for safe and successful work of police officer (Anderson, 2001; Beck, 2012; Bawah, 2013; Strating, 2010). General physical preparation implies the process of harmonized and versatile development of all functional, motor and morphologic characteristics. According to Milanović (2010), it is aimed at the improvement of physical abilities, preparedness of all topological body regions, increase of efficacy of all organs and organ systems, improvement of all functional and motor abilities, taking into consideration delicate development stages, and strengthening weak links of the locomotor system.

Diagnostics of general physical preparedness is one of the most important activities aimed at improvement of physical abilities of police officers. Physical preparedness of police officers is the basis for further developing of specific police skills and knowledge aimed at creating a quality individual (Jukić, Vučetić, Aračić, Bok, Dizdar, Sporiš and Križanić, 2008:8). Motor diagnostics produces the data on the basic and specific fitness abilities (strength, speed, agility, coordination, flexibility, precision and balance). The motor diagnostics through the degree of motor abilities determines motor capacity of a police officer, so we can argue that the police officers with a higher degree of general physical abilities will produce better, high-quality results i.e. that they will unconditionally display situational efficacy of higher quality when performing

all types of police jobs. Those abilities are developed through a variety of training methods and modalities in various conditions. General physical abilities are the condition for quality execution of tasks placed before police officers. During the implementation of general and specific physical preparations, it is necessary to carry out constant observation of the subject for the purpose of timely detection of any negative or positive developments relative to the desired model state. Model characteristics are the examples to follow and, if possible, achieve by planning and programming of a training for the police officers depending on their jobs. Taking into consideration the goals and training procedures, everything should be directed towards reducing the current differences of the present status of entity and degree of abilities defines in the desired model state. These indicators of the police and other success can be registered by evidencing the test results of the police officers from the field. The police exercise the legal authority, which includes the right to use the means of coercion. The interventions carried out by the police members of both sexes are performed in rather complex circumstances and can be within low value range, such as verbal warning, up to high and very high (the use of different levels of physical force), all the way to deadly force (Dopsay et al., 2012:172). The ability to solve such tasks in a legal and efficient way depends on educational and professional profile. Preparation and application of special security tasks can be presented as an equilateral triangle whose sides represent the equipment, engagement tactics, and general and specific physical abilities of the police officers (Vučković et al., 2011:390). On the basis of continued measuring of basic and specific motor skills of the police officers, we get the data about average values of the results of selected tests which show to the leaders of training process the current state of fitness of every individual. Having said that, it is

difficult to assemble and select a group of tests which could be deemed ideal considering different characteristics and abilities of the police officers. It would be worthwhile to draw a parallel with the sports where members of the same sports team may show different results of some variables (Milanović, 1997:50). During their professional career the policemen are expected to maintain adequate levels of physical abilities, either with expert assistance or on their own. Development level is determined through periodical testing, and results are evaluated relative to defined norms. In addition to determining police officer's work abilities, the results are also used as an information about the quality of educational process (Boyce et al., 2008; Strating et al., 2010; Dopsaj et al., 2012; Janković & Dimitrijević, 2012).

ANALYSIS OF MOTOR MOVEMENT

Motor movements during regular daily tasks that the police members carry out, can be included in the category of complex polistructural activities, depending on the situation in which police officers take part. These activities can contain a big part of monostructural and acyclical activities. Complex activities constitute a complex of simple or more complex movement, in the conditions of cooperation among team members. In sports, this group of activities includes winter sports (soccer, handball, basketball, volleyball). Polistructural activities are movement structures performed in variable or changeable conditions. In sports, this activity group includes martial arts. Monostructural activities consist of successively repeated movement structures which can be of cyclical or acyclical character. In sports, those include running, swimming as cyclical activities, and athletic jumping and throwing, as well as weight lifting as acyclical activities (Milanović & Gabelica-Šupljak, 1997). If we compare the jobs of police members to these terms, we will realize that their work is mainly team work whereas every team member has his own task that contributes towards the main goal – successfully accomplished task, with necessary cooperation among team members. The movements of the entire team are of complex nature, requiring good coordination and cooperation, which can be achieved through tactical training. The activities of police members include monostructural cyclical and acyclical activities. Those include cyclical activities such as walking and running, with the possibility of prevalence of some activity, e.g. running during a chase, saving a drowning person when swimming is necessary, or the use of alpine equipment as a monostructural acyclical activity, which can also be only one part of an action, but perhaps also the main and only means in situations when it is required to climb or descend with such equipment in order to successfully accomplish the task (Šopar, 2004).

RECRUITMENT

Many requirements that make the work of police members more complex, are forcing the police organizations to reexamine the procedures of member selection. It is common to say that an organization functions as good as its personnel. Therefore, it is very important that police recruits for their needs the most capable and best qualified personnel that are not only good in task execution but also whose behavior will not discredit police service as a whole. The attention of police management is therefore directed to attracting and hiring talented and quality personnel members. Badly implemented recruitment can produce long term consequences for police organization considering that the majority police officers spend their entire career in one organization. Recruitment process is a direct way to influence both the quality and reliability of the police, and the social, ethnic and gender structure of the police members, and consequently the quality of relations between police and social community. It is generally considered that recruitment policy mustn't be discriminatory towards members of some classes, ethnic, religious, racial and other social groups. The recruitment proceeding has to be correct, and cannot be founded on any form of differentiating the candidates without legal and justified basis. Timely recruitment and hiring of quality personnel is considered one of the biggest challenges of modern organizations, as without such approach it is difficult to become competitive. It is a well known fact that many employers chronically lack talented and ambitious people. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that organizations remain interested in the ways to attract, hire and keep such personnel. For successful organizations that also have a good recruitment policy, such goals are not unachievable. However, for the others – they are practically unattainable (Kulić & Talijan, 2010). The recruitment process begins with making a decision about filling the vacancies and reviewing the requirements. Once the requirements are set, a search for potential candidates for the vacancies begins. It is necessary to secure fairly more candidates than required in order to end up with the candidates that entirely fulfill the requirements for the police jobs in question. Some researchers suggest that only one sixth of the applicants deserve to be called for an interview (Amidžić, 2009). The recruitment program should include the number of missing people, as well as the qualifications, knowledge, abilities and other criteria the candidates should meet. In addition, it should be clarified if the candidates will come from the internal or the external sources. The more important is the vacant position, the bigger is the need for quality candidates for it. Their qualities should be assessed responsibly and comprehensively, to reduce the possibility of mistakes to the minimum (Kulić & Talijan, 2010). Recruitment is a two-way process as two sides

participate in it. On one side is the organization with the need to fill the vacant position, and on the other side is a candidate interested in working for the organization. Both sides have a right to choose. As the organization has to be mindful of the candidate's qualities, so does the candidate has to ensure that the offered conditions are acceptable to him. Recruitment is the process in which the cooperation between the line staff and the HQ staff is of crucial importance. The HR experts, i.e. recruitment experts, have to have a clear vision about the vacant position for which the candidates are sought. Inter alia, it includes the need for their close cooperation with the line managers. The recruitment is an act of creating a large enough group of candidates from which the best will be selected in accordance with the previously set criteria, and a staffing plan (Ristović, 2006).

SELECTION

In the context of police organization, the personnel selection represents a set of designed criteria, methods and procedures which have for their purpose to provide the police management with the best possible selection of candidates interested in working for the police. The success of training and probation period, as well as the prospect for further development of abilities of the personnel members during their career, depend to a large extent on the quality of the selection, while the success of organization in executing its tasks depends on those exact abilities. Any oversights during the selection process may have serious, long term consequences given that most of policemen spend their entire career in one organization. Hence a faulty personnel selection usually means a certainty that police echelons will have weak employees for the next twenty years to come (or more). Also, the initial selection (the first reception of new personnel members) will determine the quality of additional selection for higher, managerial positions. An organization that does not care enough about timely and quality personnel regeneration, can almost certainly expect a decline and is likely to come across more hurdles to achieving its goals (Šarenac, 2020). Having said that, the selection is not merely a set of specific criteria, methods and procedures in function of regeneration of the police personnel, but also an issue of indisputable social consequences. Namely, the personnel selection directly impacts the quality and reliability of the police, as well as the social, ethnic and gender structure of the police personnel, and thereby the quality of relations between the police and social community. It is this other dimension of the personnel selection for the police that attracts a great deal of attention in every society. In principle, it is expected that the police structure will adequately represent the social structure, i.e. that police members should originate from all social layers. It is quite common that wider public shows special interest in certain social and political aspects of personnel selection for the police,

which is based on the belief that through this selection politically influential layers of the society can manifest their stance towards members of certain social groups whereas they make it easy for some, while for the others they make it difficult to enter the police service. In other words, it is believed that the selection politics can be discriminatory towards members of some classes, ethnic, racial, religious and other social groups, and that the basis for such discrimination is in a lack of confidence in the members of these groups by those social layers which have decisive influence on the personnel selection politics. Similarly, there is also the issue of discrimination of the candidates for police based on gender, age, education, political affiliation, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientation etc. The issue of personnel selection for police emerges as a question which has its inevitable sociopolitical context i.e. significance. The context and significance are partly expressed in the law which prescribes certain rules relevant to this area, primarily the rules against any kind of discrimination relating to the employment process. In this regard, we should remember the fact that the international documents about human rights, as well as the constitutions of most of the countries, contain a basic rule stating that the employment in public services is accessible to the members of all social layers and groups under the same conditions. As police is also a public service, it has the same obligation regarding the personnel selection process that is to ensure an equal treatment for all candidates who applied for the jobs, and to eliminate any kind of discrimination on the basis of their personal characteristics or affiliation to certain social and ethnic groups, as well as other proceedings that are likely to violate their equality regarding the access to the job for which they meet legal requirements. The selection proceedings have to be correct and, therefore, cannot be based on any form of differentiating between candidates without legal and justified basis. Certain countries have a special legislation which provides precise guarantees of an equal treatment for all candidates during the employment process, and which can prescribe instruments of control over police in that regard (Bahtijarević-Šiber, 1999).

ANALYSIS OF MOTOR ACTIVITY

The selection of human resources and potential, by application of motor tests as a selection instrument, is a procedure of selection of certain candidates for a certain police activity, whereby an assessment of possibility for realization of candidates' achievements in executing their duties for a certain police activity in the future is done based on four equal factors: the familiarity with the ultimate goal of the selection i.e. the model of police activities, the assessment of familiarity with motor skills and the candidates' skills, the assessment of familiarity with the procedure of transforming motor skills and the skills of future candidate, and the assessment of characteristics of the

candidates who take part in the selection process (Hadžikadunić et al., 2013:111). Speaking of applicability of the motor tests in the personnel selection for police, we have to point out that their applicability is insignificant, unless the police activity model is known. Without that model it is not possible to make an adequate selection of the potential candidates as it is now known what kind of 'material' should be taken into account in order to expect the police strategies to be implemented. For a personnel selection for the police needs, we have to perform a structural analysis of motor activity of the police members, and on that basis create a model of some organizational structures of the police. The structural analysis enables insight into the structure of activity performed by the members of certain police organizational units, as well as the movements performed during the process. On that basis alone we can create a quality battery of tests for assessing motor skills of the police members.

ASSESSING MOTOR SKILLS IN THE PERSONNEL SELECTION

The selection of human resources for police should be dominated by the tests which assess the motor abilities, motor habits (skills) i.e. the motor behavior of the potential candidates. Test-ing of the motor skills implies a systematic use of suitable tests in order to quantify motor behavior, abilities and skills (habits, motor stereo-type, motor knowledge) aimed at predicting motor performance of the examinees. Motor testing is utilized to assess very complex human characteristics. Measuring of motor skills manifestation includes a variety of procedures aimed at obtaining some quantitative data (Hadžikadunić & Turković, 2013). It should be noticed that this is an assessment of motor skills on the basis of appropriate manifestation indicators (motor tasks in suitable motor tests), as the motor abilities have latent nature which is why they cannot be measured. Such procedures imply indirect measuring, therefore, it is necessary to have more indicators (motor instruments, tests) about some motor ability (Malacko & Rađo, 2004). The motor measuring refers to various procedures of real measuring on the basis of motor tests. It is common to use the terms 'motor testing', 'motor test', or just 'test'. The term 'test' is equated with the term 'measuring instrument'. It relates to any means or way employed to provoke responses (reactions) which serve as the basis to link human behavior with anything that may create some relations (Hadžikadunić et al., 2013:112). Division of motor tests in relation to so-called basic and specific motor abilities, is in a more frequent use. Basic motor abilities imply the presence of the motor abilities that every person has, while the specific ones are the result of doing certain kinesiological activities for relatively long period. Consequently, the tests for assessment of motor abilities for the candidates meant to enter the

police structure, can be generally divided into two groups: the tests for assessing basic motor abilities and the tests for assessing specific motor abilities.

Upon completion of the general police training (which is, given its content, equally important for all candidates), follows the stage of classification or sorting the candidates into specific police specialities. The classification is nothing other than kinesiological orientation, and it is quite possible that it is the moment when kinesiology as a scientific discipline can take on (almost) the most important role. In the process of classification or sorting, specific, targeted batteries of tests are created which, through clearly defined normatives, ensure that the candidates are pointed towards those police duties in which their anthropological potential can be used and realized to the highest degree. In such delicate intervention, kinesiology can't and mustn't act in isolation as that procedure is interdisciplinary and as such requires involvement of other scientific disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Specific abilities are exceptionally important for the function of quality execution of a part of police work, and hence they are one of the basic criteria for the personnel selection. During education, SFO provides the conditions for increasing of BMS based on reliable scientific methods, measuring procedures, as well as normative parameters, during professional career. It is legally prescribed that the policemen maintain an appropriate level of those abilities, either with expert assistance or on their own. The level of development is determined through periodical testing, and results are evaluated relative to the defined norms. In addition to determining the police officer work ability, the achieved results are used as an information which reveals the quality of the educational process. Most important is to predict which abilities, characteristics and knowledge contribute most to performing police duties. Also, the importance of human capital increases, resulting in people possessing more information, thus making it more difficult to manage human resources. The cadet selection is very important in the process for the reason of future professional work of the service they are to enter. In the new ambiance of social changes characterized by new and/or significantly altered security challenges, risks and threats, the police training and professional development are facing new challenges. The guarantee such as formal education does not suffice any longer; what has become necessary are professional training and narrow specialization for specific police jobs and tasks. At the same time, one should be aware of the transformation of the police function, accompanied by appropriate legal, organizational and other changes. In that sense, changes to the training concept and professional

development are also necessary. Upon completion of formal education, the cadets accepted to the police agencies are additionally pointed towards acquiring the basic police and additional skills, knowledge and abilities, as well as developing competences for the purpose of their better work performance. This implies one continued process during the entire career which serves to direct and develop it (the career), while it enables the individual to progress in accord with the acquired knowledge and competences. At the same time, it allows for new challenges to be set, which are primarily reflected in the need for more dynamic approach to the training and development, as well as a more efficient transfer of required skills and knowledge, which will provide the police officers with the opportunity to have a suitable, continuous training throughout their career, which would in parallel serve as the basis for their further progression in the service. The use of motor tests as the instrument meant for the personnel selection for police, can help with determining degree of required skills and abilities in the personnel selection, and analysis of the tests that the cadets have to pass in order to be accepted. The selection of human resources and potential, by use of motor tests as the selection instrument, represents one of the ways to select certain candidates for certain police activity. The motor abilities assessments are exceptionally important for the selection of certain candidates for certain police activity - if the candidates do not meet the required minimum, then they mustn't be considered as they would only endanger lives of others as well as their own. Everyone can perform some moves (e.g. lift something, run a certain distance etc.). They have a series of qualitative and quantitative characteristics. It is common to consider the motor abilities as special forms of movement related human possibilities. The motor abilities defined as such differ from the motor habits and skills, although, of course, the manifestation of motor abilities is possible only through some concrete motor act. The motor movements that the police officers carry out daily during their regular tasks, can be categorized as complex polistructural activities, depending on the situation in which the police members take part. These activities can contain a large part of monostructural cyclical and acyclical activities. Complex activities constitute a complex of simple or more complex movements, in the conditions of cooperation among team members. The application of motor tests as an instrument in the process of personnel selection for police, enables us to determine a degree of required skills and abilities for the selection of human resources and potential. Similarly, the instruments utilized for the assessment of level of motor abilities can serve as starting point for creating procedures for improvement of the existing human resources and potential in police.

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