



Examining the Demographic Correlates of Physical Endurance for Joining Law Enforcement Agencies among Aspiring Youth of Pakistan

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: December 18, 2024 Revised: December 30, 2024 Accepted: January 03, 2025 Available Online: January 04, 2025	<i>Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) need a pool of applicants that can be hired for a rigorous training regime followed by life risk deployments that have physical challenges. Physical endurance has paramount importance in the job of law enforcement agent. To achieve this objective there are physical screening tests that have been adopted in the recruitment process to select the best fit for department. This study aimed to explore and find out what are the key Demographic factors that play significant role in building physical strength of those who passed the physical endurance task during recruitment. A purposive sample technique was used to collect data from 200 candidates who applied for LEA jobs. 100 candidates were able to pass the physical screening tests, and the rest of the samples have failed. Cross sectional survey research design was used. Results of independent sample t test showed that intelligence quotient, birth order, game preferences, hobbies, geographical background of passing candidates was different from those who failed. Whereas socioeconomic status does not account for difference between pass and fail candidates. This study has significance for future research and refining recruitment process for law enforcement agencies.</i>
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Introduction

In the jurisdiction of law enforcement, the physical demands placed upon personnel are undeniably rigorous and multifaceted. Whether it's chasing down suspects, scaling obstacles, or maintaining public safety in high-stress situations, the physical capabilities of law enforcement officers play a

pivotal role in their effectiveness and overall performance (Lockie et al., 2022). Knowing this critical feature, the application of physical entrance tests during the selection procedure for law enforcement agencies is not only needed but is crucial.

The importance of the physical test in the recruitment of personnel for law enforcement agencies cannot be overvalued. These tests possess the basic and fundamental milestone in the assessment of an individual's physical aptitude, to ensure that they have the requisite level of strength, agility, endurance and fitness required to effectively perform the assigned duties and tasks as a law enforcement officer (Lockie, Orr & Dawes, 2022). Moreover, these assessments also help in reducing probable risks related to one-job injuries, improving operational performance and eventually keeping safe both the officer himself and the community they serve.

In true spirit, physical screening tests are considered a critical tool for selectors of law enforcement agencies to recruit from the aspirants who are not only mentally well-fortified but also physically agile and confident to confront the expected challenges in the field (O'Neill et al., 2017; Firdaus et al., 2022). By implementing strict physical standards and steering systematic evaluations, agencies maintain a standard of excellence in the recruitment process, thereby nurturing a workforce that is resilient, capable, and ready to uphold the principles of justice and public safety.

Furthermore, after the initial recruitment phase, physical screening test also holds an important place in endorsing unending wellness and physical fitness among law enforcement personnel (Collins et al., 2018). By assessing regularly and going through fitness standards LEAs can induct a culture enriched with physical health and wellbeing, which also ensures that officers remain in ideal conditions physically as well as mentally throughout their stay in LEAs.

The integration of physical tests in the selection process for law enforcement personnel is not only a formality but a deliberate and tactical requirement. By recruiting personnel who are physically fit and possess an aptitude, LEAs can assemble a cadre of officers who are not only skillful but also show resilience while facing the odds in practical life. Ultimately adherence to the physical screening test upholds the integrity and efficacy of LEAs (Malik et al., 2025).

Physical Screening Tests in the Recruitment of Law Enforcement Personnel in Pakistan

In Pakistan LEAs are responsible to maintain law and order, public safety and upkeep of rule of law. Exaggerated requirement for law enforcement duties demands manpower that should not only be mentally fit but also hold good physical fitness standards to combat the challenges confronted in the line of duty. Sorting out the key elements, the integration of physical tests in selection process of LEAs in Pakistan has momentous importance (Khan, 2022).

Physical screening test holds most important position in the recruitment of LEAs across Pakistan. These tests are specifically designed to gauge the physical fitness level, physical endurance, resilience and agility including overall health of the aspirant. It also ensures that they possess requisite abilities to efficiently execute the duties as Law Enforcement Officer. Various kinds of law enforcement tasks, like patrolling, search and crowd control, physical fitness is imperative to ensure operational competence and wellbeing of the officer (Khan et al., 2021).

Significance of Physical Screening Tests in Pakistan's context

Physical screening test also helps to ensure that the candidate who is recruited through this procedure is capable enough to meet the criteria of LEAs to perform duties in Pakistan's different terrains and diverse climatic conditions. While assessing agility, endurance and strength these tests denote to the recruitment of the candidates who are capable to perform their duties effectively (Masood et al., 2017).

Law enforcement personnel usually face difficult and potentially unsafe situations mentally as well as physically, during their duties. Officers who are physically fit and well prepared to deal with challenges, to reduce the risk of injuries and increase the overall safety and security of the officers. Physical screening test plays vital importance to identify the candidates who have the physical resilience essential to endure the severity of law enforcement jobs in Pakistan (Jamil et al., 2022). Law enforcement departments in Pakistan maintain professional standards and promote a culture of fitness among their workforce by emphasizing physical screening tests in the recruitment process, (Masood et al., 2017). A physically fit and capable law enforcement staff imparts confidence and trust in the public. Law enforcement departments demonstrate their commitment to recruiting competent and capable officers who can effectively serve and protect the community (Jamil et al., 2022).

Psychological Factors Related to Physical Endurance

Physical endurance often requires individuals to push through discomfort, fatigue, and pain. This aspect of endurance is closely linked to psychological resilience and mental toughness. Individuals who possess a strong sense of resilience are more likely to sail through challenging physical tasks, depending upon their psychological strength to continue even when encountered with adversity (Smith et al., 1990).

Endurance tasks can gauge an individual's perception of their own capabilities, known as self-efficacy. Success in physical endurance tests can increase an individual's confidence in their physical abilities, leading to increased self-efficacy not only in physical tasks but also in other areas of life. Conversely, failure to meet endurance test requirements related to doubts about one's capabilities and lower self-efficacy levels (Bandura, 1997).

Physical endurance screening helps to assess how individuals cope with stress being induced during tests. It is related to psychological factors such as coping mechanisms, emotional regulation, and stress tolerance. Those with effective stress management skills are better equipped to handle the demands of endurance tests and may perform better under pressure (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). They can stimulate a range of emotions, including anxiety, frustration, and even exhilaration. Effective emotional regulation skills are essential for managing these emotions and maintaining focus and composure throughout the test (Gross, 2015). Individuals who struggle with emotional regulation may find it challenging to cope with the stressors associated with endurance testing, potentially spoiling their performance.

The process of getting ready for endurance test involves planning and deliberating towards the goal, which also enhances determination and motivation (Locke & Latham, 2002). The level to which people are motivated by internal features, such as personal satisfaction and amusement, versus external gains or pressures, can affect their performance in endurance tests. Individuals are compelled by intrinsic motivation to approach the tasks with enthusiasm and consistency, because

they have genuine interest in performing the activity rather than external motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Physical endurance test demands harmonization between physical action and mental efforts. The capacity to maintain attentiveness, focus and concentration on the task while facing physical exertion is vital for success. This shows correlation of physical and psychological developments during physical endurance (Taylor et al., 2016).

An individual is required to use various cognitive approaches to increase performance during physical endurance tests, such as pacing, attention and positive self-talk. The capability to effectively use the cognitive tactics enhances performance and reduces the negative impact of fatigue and discomfort (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2008).

Research gaps to determine psychosocial factors contributing towards physical endurance

Research revealed that the relationship between birth order and physical endurance indicates exciting perceptions in familial inspirations on level of fitness. Sulloway's work in sibling order and personality traits opines that undercurrents can affect an individual's method of physical fitness, including physical exercises. Here more research is required to explain the exact and original mechanism of this relationship. The prevailing literature says the importance of keeping familial dynamics to understand disparities in physical capabilities (Sulloway, 1996).

Hobbies, indoors and outdoors, have their own effect on physical strength, studies have proved that experience in nature and outdoor activities lead to progress in cardiovascular health, muscular forte and resilience. A study by Thompson Coon et al. (2011) revealed that having outdoor activities as hobbies such as hiking, jogging and gardening can lead to improved mood, which indirectly increase physical strength.

Daily routine plays an important role in defining differences in physical competence. People living in urban areas live fast paced lives along with extended working schedules and commitments, having no time for leisure activities or physical activities (Tropted et al., 2001). Despite that, people living in urban areas have many health-related facilities which can positively enhance their fitness level. Conversely, individuals from rural backgrounds may engage in physically demanding activities such as farming or hunting, which contribute to strength and endurance (Sallis et al., 2015).

Significance of Study

This study is kind of unique in nature as psychologists or social scientists did not pay attention to psychological determinants of physical endurance. The study will help law enforcement agencies to improve recruitment process by understanding psychological factors which influence physical endurance. It will also help to improve training outcomes by identifying psychological predictors of physical performance. This study will provide valuable insight for law enforcement agencies to enhance the effectiveness and wellbeing of law enforcement personnel by reducing attrition rate and optimized personnel development.

Objectives

The study was performed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the personality factors responsible for physical endurance of a candidate.
2. To find out that birth order has any impact upon physical endurance of candidate.
3. To find role of intelligence quotient in determining physical endurance of candidate.
4. To determine how socio-economic background can affect physical strength of candidate.
5. To find out how hobbies can lead towards building up physical endurance.
6. To rule out what types of sports can have more impact on physical stamina of candidate.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was developed to accomplish the objectives:

1. There will be difference in birth order of pass and fail candidates on tasks of physical endurance test.
2. There will be differences in intelligence quotient of pass and fail candidates undergoing physical endurance tests.
3. There will be differences in socio economic background of pass and fail candidate on physical endurance test.
4. There will be differences in preferences of hobbies of pass and fail candidate undergoing physical endurance test.
5. There will be differences in categories of sports of candidate on physical endurance test.
6. There will be differences in geographical background of pass and fail candidate on physical endurance test.

Method

Design, Participants and Procedure

The cross-sectional (questionnaire based) survey research design was used in the current study, which was quantitative in nature. Data was gathered employing the approach of purposive sampling. Overall, 200 participants who appeared in different physical endurance tests in law enforcement agencies and half of them failed to pass the task-oriented tests to qualify for further selection were selected for study. In the study, self-report measures were used to find out common factors of those failing in physical endurance tests.

Instruments

Data collection was carried out with the help of questionnaires that measure each study variable. These include demographic information sheets to get information about age, educational level, and place they live. Birth order, hobbies, sports and socio-economic status was also part of demographic sheet to study the correlations. Intelligence quotient was determined by gathering intelligence test grades received by recruitment records of each law enforcement agencies as secondary source.

Operational Definitions

Educational Background: Participant educational background operationally defined by three categories 1) Matriculation, 2) Intermediate, and 3) Graduation.

Geographical Background: It has been operationally defined by two main categories of urban and rural areas.

Socio Economic Background: Participants' SES operationally defined on basis if their family income class and categorized into working class, lower class, middle class, upper middle class and upper class.

Birth Order: Birth order includes first born, second born, middle born, second last born, last born and only child.

Hobbies: Operationally hobbies of participant defined by category of indoor and outdoor hobbies.

Sports: Sports are operationally defined by team play and solo play category.

Intelligence Quotient: It has been operationally defined by overall grade ranging from 1 to 4. 1 is highest grade a person attained on intelligence quotient test and 4 is lowest grade one has attained for passing the intelligence quotient test.

Results

Table 1: Mean difference between pass and fail candidates of physical endurance tasks on intelligence quotient, hobby, game, birth order, socio economic status and geographical background (N =200)

Variable	Pass Candidates		Fail Candidates		<i>t</i> (198)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
IQ	3.23	.97	2.91	.91	2.34	.02	.34
Hob	1.32	.51	1.16	.46	1.98	.049	.33
Gam	2.79	.96	2.45	.88	3.01	.003	.36
BO	3.55	1.70	3.01	1.50	1.99	.048	.33
SES	2.02	.98	2.32	1.03	-1.43	.153	.23
GB	1.22	.44	1.07	.34	3.13	.002	.38

Note. IQ= Intelligence quotient, Hob= Hobby, Gam= Game, BO= Birth order, SES= Socio economic status, GB= geographical background.

An independent sample t-test indicated physical endurance test passers and failure candidates' difference on intelligence quotient, hobby, game, and birth order and socio-economic status. Mean values showed that pass candidates (*M*= 3.23, *SD*= .97) have significantly high intelligence quotient $t(198) = 2.34$ than fail candidates (*M*= 2.91, *SD*= .91). In terms of sports Pass candidates (*M*= 2.79, *SD*= .96) play significantly more games $t(198) = 3.01$ than fail candidates (2.45, *SD*= .88). On birth order $t(198) = 1.99$ pass candidates (*M*= 3.55, *SD*= 1.70) has significantly middle birth order than fail candidates (*M*= 3.01, *SD*= 1.50). Pass candidates belong more to rural background (*M*= 1.22, *SD*= .44) than fail candidates (*M*= 1.07, *SD*= .34). Whereas, no significant difference found between pass and fail candidates on socio economic status $t(198) = 1.43$, $p = .15$.

Discussion

The study aimed to find out whether different psychological constructs play any significant role in determining the performance on physical endurance tasks. The first hypothesis confirmed in the light of data that those candidates who fall in middle birth order perform more in physical endurance tasks as compared to those falling in higher birth order. This is because of the research-based birth order insight that the elderly one is more pampered and secure than younger one by parents. The lethargic reflexes are more significant in elder siblings as everything is made

available by each care giver. Whereas no special treatment is provided comparatively to the middle sibling, and he must survive in his early age, which makes his reflexes sharp to perform physically better in challenging situations. Physical endurance tasks also need high working cognitions of an individual to understand and manipulate the task accordingly. Here come the second hypothesis of study proved by the data that passers have high intelligence quotient as compared to those who failed to understand and sort out physical challenges due to less IQ. Studies have revealed that sportsman and athletes has above average cognitive skills as compared to non-athletes. Socio economic status plays a key role in determining the environmental factors which can facilitate an individual to build up physical strength. For instance, those who belong to the upper middle class can afford fitness centers and dietary supplements to gain physical strength but those from lower and working class have limited access to such facilities, at time people from lower class prone to malnourishment issues. However, the data does not support the fourth hypothesis as there was no class difference found between passing candidates and failing candidates. This can be explained in term of job culture of Pakistan, as most of applicants of government and semi- government jobs belongs to middle and lower class as they need a secure career and lacks financial resources for entrepreneurship.

In the sample study most of applicants belong to the lower strata of society, so it is scientifically and statistically justified that hypothesis got disproved. Fifth hypothesis followed by sixth one is oriented towards physical lifestyle preferences as the couch babies and indoor type people lack physical stamina to physically demanding tasks. Both hypotheses are supported by data which provides insight that those who are more into sports and outdoor hobbies have more physical endurance as compared to their counterpart. The last hypothesis also added knowledge to the indigenous literature as most of the population of country resides in rural area, so they have a geographical advantage of living life in tough terrains and gathering resource to survive as compared to urban population. Data revealed that applicants belonging to rural areas have high performance on physical endurance tasks as they have built physical strength over a period.

Limitation

This study has small sample size, and it does not account for gender differences, so its results cannot be generalized on whole population and other gender. The inclusion criteria were also limited. Sampling technique was non probable, so sample is not true representative of population. Indigenous scale was not employed in study and more of data was from secondary source provided by different law enforcement agencies. Experimental design was not employed to consider a more scientific approach for study.

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