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Police Officers Perspectives on Migrations as a Security Threat

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Introduction

Research goals:

- To evaluate the personal perspectives of police officers on specific social groups as to whether they are seen as security threats.
- To assess whether there are differences in perspectives depending on the size of the police station where the officers are stationed.

Methods

- Factor analysis,
- Discriminant analysis.

Social groups: definitions

- **Refugees**: People who have escaped from their own country for political, religious, or economic reasons or because of a war.

- **Foreign worker**: A person who lives and works in a foreign country for a limited period of time, doing low-paid and usually unskilled work a.k.a. *Gastarbeiter (guest worker).*

- **Migrant**: A person that travels to a different country or place, often in order to find work.

- **Beggars** and **vagrants**: A person who is poor, does not have a home or job, and moves from place to place.

- **Members of other nationalities and cultures.**

Explanations for xenophobia (Sausdal, 2018)

- Cultural rationalizations: bad apple theory,
- Political rationalizations: scapegoat theory,
- They make work harder and unhappier: Language barriers, knowledge gaps, social gaps…

Factor Analysis

Security threat in the police precinct – Migration	F.L.*	M	S.D.**	Median	Mode
(M = 2,56; S.D. = 0.91; α = 0.83; KMO = 0.79; var. = 60.09%) [a]					
Refugees.	0.83	2.43	1.235	2.00	2
Foreign workers.	0.83	2.64	1.072	3.00	2
Migrants.	0.88	2.49	1.189	2.00	2
Beggars and vagrants.	0.69	2.64	1.154	3.00	3
Members of other nationalities and cultures.	0.60	2.66	1.098	3.00	2

Principal component factoring; rotation Varimax.
* F.L. – Factor loading.
** S.D. – Standard deviation.
[a] Scale: from 1 – No problem at all to 5 – Very big problem.

Discriminant analysis

Variable	Small police station n = 160		Medium police station n = 114		Large police station n = 244		Wilks' Lambda	F
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
Security threat in the police precinct – Migration.	2.57	0.84	2.07	0.77	2.78	0.19	0.90	25.88***
Refugees.	2.65	1.26	1.82	0.99	2.55	1.22	0.93	18.64***
Foreign workers.	2.66	0.97	2.32	1.08	2.78	1.10	0.97	7.43***
Migrants.	2.63	1.16	1.92	1.02	2.66	1.20	0.93	17.73***
Beggars and vagrants.	2.20	0.94	2.11	1.04	3.16	1.09	0.81	60.12***
Members of other nationalities and cultures.	2.68	1.07	2.26	0.95	2.84	1.13	0.95	11.17***
Wilks Lambda	0.74***							

* p < 0.05, ** p <0.01, ***, p < 0.001.

Similar studies and results

Krott E., Krott N. R. and Zeitner I. :Xenophobic Attitudes in German Police Officers: A Longitudinal Investigation form Professional Education to Practice (2018)

- Xenophobia increases in the first year BUT significantly decreases among young officers after their first 4 years of duty,
- Xenophobic attitudes do influence police procedures in combination with high work load and stress,
- Targeted recruitment and training modules.

Conclusions

- There are statistically significant differences between police officers depending on the size of the police station.
- Migrations are seen as a threat but not a serious one.

Thank you for your attention!