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# The personality profile of policemen and its impact on work mentality

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**Abstract.** In this research, you will find about the personality profile of policemen and its impact on work mentality differences of work mentality. The tests were applied to a group of 60 police officers from Brăila, the subjects being predominantly men. The group was divided into 30 borderline policemen and 30 forensic technicians, aged between 28 and 53, and with between 6 and 30 years of work experience. Given the presented, the objectives of the paper are: to find out the personality differences between the 2 specializations, from the point of view of the Big 5 facets and how they influence the work mentality. Following the statistical calculations, all objectives were achieved, all hypotheses being valid. There are significant differences in the dimensions of autonomy and fulfillment and determinations, border policemen having significantly higher scores. In terms of correlations, work mentality correlated positively with conscientiousness, scores obtained by both specializations.

**Keywords.** policemen, work mentality, personality profile

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Work Mentality**

A mindset is a view that oversees how people manage situations - how they will order out what is occurring and what they should do (Shamash, A., 2014). Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck (2006) spread the idea of mentality by comparing different beliefs concerning where our abilities come from. "If we have a fixed way of thinking, as our innate ability, then a failure can be unsettling because it makes us doubt how good we are. Instead, if we have a growth mindset, then we expect to be able to improve our ability - and a failure shows us what we need to work on. People with a fixed state of mind have to prove themselves and become very defensive when someone suggests they made a mistake - they are measured by their failures." (Dweck, C., 2006, p.60).

People with a growth mentality often show determination and resilience when they have made errors - become more motivated to work harder (Gary, K., Joseph, B., 2016). Gary Klein

has found through his study that people who focus on ways to lessen problems and mistakes are much different than people who, in addition to fretting about mistakes, are enthusiastic about the possibilities of making discoveries and earning experience (Gary, K., Joseph, B., 2016). While some people try to do as few assignments as possible, others have a commitment that causes them to perform at full capacity every day. People with a powerful work mentality integrate certain beliefs that guide their work performance, driving them to consistently deliver high-quality results (Meriac, J., 2014). They are responsible, dedicated, hardworking, supportive, and disciplined.

Max Weber is generally recognized for introducing the term work mentality, work ethic being imagined in many different ways in the last century. Miller, Woehr, and Hudspeth (2001) examined Weber's work on the theoretical foundations of construct and measurement and settled that the work mentality is best conceptualized as a multidimensional variable. More precisely, it is made of seven subcomponents, including:

1. Self-assurance - signifying an impulse towards autonomy in carrying out tasks. It can be especially unsafe for people who are not yet secure in their careers, as it is understandable that they will be respected less than authorized professionals (Miller et al., 2001). Even past studies seem to indicate the engagement of younger employees to self-assurance, as they show a strong inclination to prove themselves and a desire to be more reliable, to make important decisions, and to perform autonomously (Taylor, R., Thompson, M., 1976).

2. Morality/ethics - a will to engage in civil/moral behavior. Seldom, morality is used to explain how individuals act, while ethics is used to describe the research of norms of behavior, particularly the rules of right and wrong (Gbadamosi, G., 2004). Nevertheless, more often, the terms ethics and morality are utilized as a way of pointing to how people act or are presumed to act.

3. Free time - attraction for relaxation/hobbies. Some research implies that an individual who is extremely motivated to seek recreation activities would gain less satisfaction from the work he or she does, than a person with a low interest in recreational activities (Miller et al., 2001). Different studies reveal that a high leisure orientation and a high work ethic are not positively opposed to the end of the spectrum (Furnham, A., 1984). These studies propose that individuals who experience job satisfaction are not necessarily banned from gaining satisfaction from leisure pursuits and vice versa. Therefore, one might have a strong leisure ethic equally as a strong work ethic.

4. Hard work - the conviction that an enhanced level of efficiency is the key to the effective finishing of tasks. It is the belief that one can grow into a better person and accomplish one's goals through a dedication to the significance and importance of work (Miller, et al., 2001). A person engaged in hard work can surmount almost any impediment, can attain personal goals, and can become a better self (Miller, et al., 2001).

5. The significance of work - points to the value that a person adds to his chance to work. It exceeds the want and desire for a reward and is the main point of reference in self-identification (Hirschfeld, R., Field, H., 2000). Research by Pryor and Davies (1982) examined the original notion of work significance and concentrated on three conceptualizations. Firstly, it is the faith that work is good and grants dignity, secondly, the importance of work is a residual concept (i.e., the less involved it is in non-work activities the higher the importance of work) and

thirdly, the emotional investment we have in work, the passion for the process (Pryor, J., Davies, M., 1982).

6. Wasted time - an attraction for the fruitful use of time. Time lost in this setting points to a continuum, with one end describing a high dedication to time administration to maximize productivity, and the other defining a low engagement to time management(Herman, R., 2002). Proficient use and effective timing are compatible with a strong work ethic, and it has long been recognized that enhanced performance is linked to the effective use of time in the form of productivity(Mudrack, P., 1999).

7. Delay of gratification - the ability to postpone compensations until a later date. Delay of satisfaction shows the ability to give up short-term remunerations to gain some advantages in the future(Joy, V., Witt, L., 1992). A person can maintain a course of action taken to reach a long-term goal, even if there are alluring options that offer short-term satisfaction(Reynolds, B., Schiffbauer, R., 2005).

Victor Vroom is renowned for his research on the theory of expectation of motivation, in which he analyzes why people have decided to pursue a certain way of action. Vroom's theory of expectations refers to motivation and management and finds that behavior occurs from conscious decisions between alternatives whose objectives are to maximize pleasure and decrease pain(Miner, J., 1993). He considered that an employee's performance is based on individual constituents such as personality, skills, education, experience, and abilities. The theory asserts that, at the workplace, people have a mixture of goals and can be motivated if they assume that: there is a positive association between effort and execution; promising performance will conclude in a reward; the importance of the outcome for the employee can be defined; the desire to fulfill the need is strong enough to be deserving the effort(Victor, V., 1964). Victor Vroom (1964) demonstrated that the theory of expectations is based on the following three beliefs:

1. Valence - indicates the emotional adjustments that people have in terms of outcomes (rewards). The extent of an employee's desire for extrinsic rewards (money, praise, promotion, vacation, benefits), or intrinsic rewards (satisfaction).

2. Expectations - workers have diverse expectations and confidence levels about what they can do.

3. Instrumentality - employees' perception is revealed as the possibility that there will be compensation correlated with the achievement of the assigned task. It implies that an employee's opinions about expectations, instrumentality, and valence communicate psychologically to form a motivational force so that the worker acts in ways that produce pleasure and avoid pain.

## **1.2 Personality dimensions from the Big Five perspective**

Studies on the relationships between personality constructs and job satisfaction indicate that personality variables influence job satisfaction. These studies examined the relationship of job satisfaction with the Big Five dimensions of personality.

Theories about personality traits could have influenced the evolution of psychological assessment tools. This kind of theory is based on the fundamental affirmation that personality can be defined as a characteristic construction of the individual modes of behavior, knowledge, reaction, and feeling.

According to Allport (1991), a personality trait results from repeating certain behaviors following internal motivation, behaviors that are evaluated by themselves (intrinsic motivation),

or by the benefits they bring to the subject (extrinsic motivation). A personality trait can be understood as “any pattern of behavior (chaining reactions), common and lasting, that occurs in a variety of situations in which the individual is placed.”(Chaplin, 1985).

In 1988, Goldberg introduced the term "natural categories" based on the idea that if an attribute applies to a personality trait and is more significant, it will have more terms in its name, there will be more synonyms and terms subordinate to delimit the various facets of that attribute.

In 1936, Allport and Odbert extracted from the English dictionary a list of 17,953 terms referring to personality traits, which would later be analyzed by Cattell and reduced to only 171 words. The Big Five test was discovered by Tupes and Christal (1961) by reconstructing Cattell's data with sets of bipolar adjectives. The five major factors classified were extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, kindness, and autonomy. In 1990, Costa and McCrae added 6 facets to each of the top five to further show how they define a person's behavior.

Therefore, giving the purpose of this research, we will focus on defining only 2 of the 5 major factors, conscientiousness, and autonomy.

1. Conscientiousness - is an extraordinary level of self-discipline and the way a person restrains, regulates, and directs impulses(Thompson, E.R., 2008). These individuals prefer to follow a plan, rather than act spontaneously, their methodical planning and perseverance usually make them very successful in their chosen occupation(Thompson, E., 2008). Individuals with a high level of conscientiousness are good at formulating long-term goals and constantly work to achieve them (Ozer, DJ, Benet-Martínez, V., 2006). Conscious people tend to work fully towards the achievement; exhibit planned and not spontaneous behavior; and are generally reliable. It is manifested by characteristic behavior, such as neatness and being systematic; also including elements such as attention, thoroughness, and deliberation (the tendency to think carefully before acting)(Ozer, DJ, Benet-Martínez, V., 2006). When driven to extremes, they can be perfectionists and overscrupulous in their behavior(Carter et al., 2015).

Behaviorally, low conscientiousness is linked with an incapacity to motivate oneself to perform the tasks that the individual wants to perform(McCrae, R., 2004). People who have a low level of conscientiousness tend to be withdrawn, less goal-oriented, and less successful; they are also more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behavior(McCrae, R., 2004).

2. Autonomy / Openness - indicates the level of the individual to act according to his own laws, the confidence to be inventive, and to act independently and it also shows how open-minded, imaginative, and curious a person is(McCrae et al. 1992). People with a high level of autonomy have a wide appreciation for unusual ideas and are more imaginative than practical(McCrae et al. 1992).

At the other end of the spectrum are people who are closed-minded, methodical, and who like to have a routine and order(Malouff et al. 2005). People who score lower on autonomy are more resistant to change and analytics; they tend to be conventional and traditional in their perspective and behavior, preferring routines to new experiences, and generally have a narrower range of interests(Steel et al. 2008).

Openness to experience has both motivational and structural elements(Connelly et al. 2014). People with a high score are motivated to seek new experiences and engage in self-examination, have a changeable style of consciousness that allows them to make new correlations between remotely connected ideas(McCrae, Tobert R., 2004). Closed people, in opposition, are more content with familiar and traditional activities(Steel et al. 2008). Although the Big Five

factors are assumed to be independent, autonomy and extraversion, as assessed in NEO-PI-R, have a substantial positive correlation(Aluja et al. 2002). Despite this, it has been argued that autonomy is still an independent dimension of personality from these other traits, as most of the variation in a trait cannot be explained by its overlap with these other constructs. A study comparing temperament and inventory character with the five-factor model found that autonomy had a strong positive correlation with self-transcendence (a "spiritual" trait) and to a more inferior extent with the search for novelty (conceptually similar to the search for sensations)(De Fruyt et al. 2000).

## **2. The research**

### **2.1 Objectives and hypotheses**

This research was conducted to discover the personality profile of policemen and its impact on work mentality. The aim is to find out the personality differences between the 2 specializations, from the point of view of the Big 5 facets and how they influence the work mentality.

Hypothesis 1: It is assumed that there is a significant difference in the autonomy scores between border policemen and forensic technicians.

Hypothesis 2: It is assumed that there is a significant difference between the scores of fulfillment and determination between border policemen and forensic technicians.

Hypothesis 3: It is assumed that the work mentality correlates positively with conscientiousness.

### **2.2 Lot of participants**

The tests were applied on a group of 60 police officers from Brăila, the subjects being predominantly men. The group was divided into 30 border policemen and 30 forensic scientists, aged between 28 and 53 and with between 6 and 30 years of work experience.

### **2.3. Description of the used methods**

To gather data for the study, the research tools that were used the Work Mentality Questionnaire (MM), and the FFPI questionnaire.

The work mentality questionnaire measures 3 scales, these being fulfillment and determination (to what extent work is perceived as a factor of fulfillment or a condition of existence), obligation and avoidance (to what extent work is perceived as a tiring obligation) and the mentality towards work overall.

The FFPI questionnaire is designed to evaluate the five super factors of the Big Five model (Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Kindness, and Autonomy). It contains five scales of 20 questions for each factor. The Romanian version is used for personality diagnosis.

## 2.4 Data analysis and processing

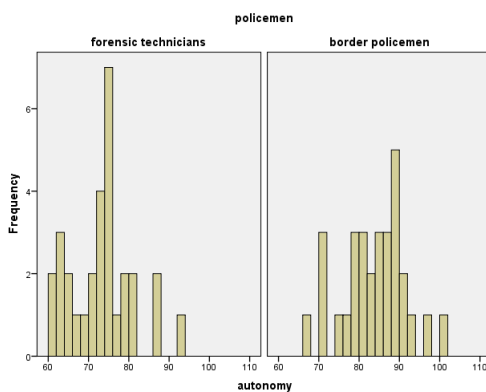
**Hypothesis 1: It is assumed that there is a significant difference in the autonomy score between border policemen and forensic technicians.**

Table 1. The difference between the scores of forensic technicians (mean = 72.90) and border policemen (mean = 83.13) in autonomy.

	policemen		Statistic	Std. Error
autonomy	Forensic technicians	Mean	72.90	1.424
		Median	73.50	
		Variance	60.852	
		Std. Deviation	7.801	
	Border policemen	Mean	83.13	1.423
		Median	84.50	
		Variance	60.740	
		Std. Deviation	7.794	

Table 2. The normality test shows if the distribution is normal. The results of both samples indicate a normal distribution because Sig exceeds the value of 005 in both cases, which leads us to apply a parametric method.

	policemen	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
autonomy	Forensic technicians	.127	30	.200*	.960	30	.303
	Border policemen	.095	30	.200*	.978	30	.778



Histogram 1

Histogram 2

Table 3. The Group Statistic table shows the difference in the scores of forensic technicians (mean = 72.90) and border policemen (mean = 83.13) on the autonomy dimension.

	policemen	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
autonomy	Forensic technicians	30	72.90	7.801	1.424
	Border policemen	30	83.13	7.794	1.423

Table 4. Following the statistical calculations, the hypothesis is confirmed, there is a significant difference in autonomy between border guards and criminals, at a significance threshold  $p = 000$ .

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lo wer	Upper
autonomy	.079	.779	-5.083	58	.000	-10.233	2.013	-14.263	-6.203
			-5.083	58.000	.000	-10.233	2.013	-14.263	-6.203

Autonomy is the ability to manage oneself within a larger organization. Related to the human mind, it shows how open-minded and imaginative a person is, not letting himself be led by others, acting differently and being creative. Structurally, they have a fluid style of consciousness that allows them to make new associations between remotely connected ideas, allowing them to easily adapt to different situations.

Closed people, by contrast, are more comfortable with familiar situations, which follow a protocol and a set of strict rules to be achieved.

Border policemen have scored significantly higher because they frequently interact with different types of people (from tourists, and diplomats to criminals) and need to keep an open mind to adapt to the situation. They need to be creative in communicating with people or potential stakeholders (suspects, human traffickers, or smugglers) to get them to cooperate.



On the other hand, forensic technicians are at the bottom in terms of scores, because they have a predisposition for meticulousness and compliance with working procedures. They work alone at the crime scene, as well as in the laboratory while analyzing or reconstructing evidence, following the necessary steps strictly.

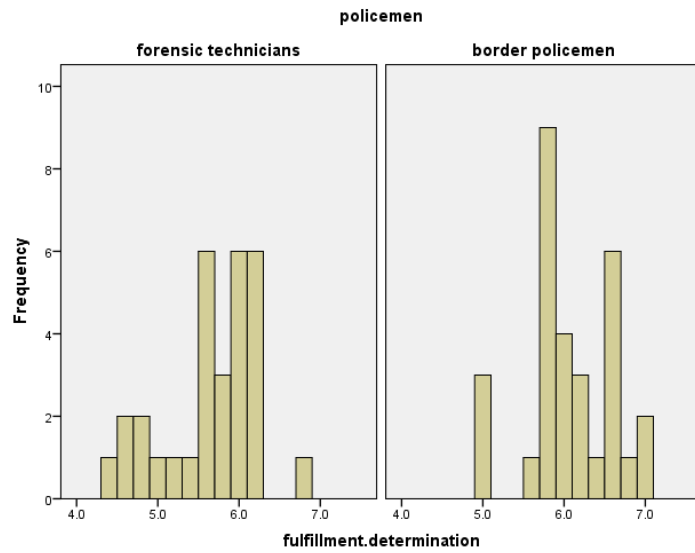
**H2: It is assumed that there is a significant difference between the scores of fulfillment and determination between border policemen and forensic technicians.**

Table 5. The table shows the difference between the scores of forensic technicians (mean = 5,620) and border policemen (mean = 6,023) regarding to the level of fulfillment and determination.

		policemen	Statistic	Std. Error
fulfillment.determination	Forensic technicians	Mean	5.620	.1105
		Variance	.366	
		Std. Deviation	.6054	
	Border policemen	Mean	6.023	.0974
		Median	6.000	
		Variance	.285	
		Std. Deviation	.5335	

Table 6. The normality test shows if the distribution is normal. The results of the forensic technicians do not respect the normal distribution because the value of Sig is less than 0.05, which leads us to apply a non-parametric method.

		policemen	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
			Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
fulfillment.determination	Forensic technicians		.168	30	.030	.921	30	.028
	Border policemen		.139	30	.145	.950	30	.166



Histogram 3

Histogram 4

Table 7. The Ranks table shows the difference in the scores of forensic technicians (meanrank = 24.87) and border policemen (mean rank = 36.13) regarding fulfillment and determination.

	policemen	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
fulfillment. determination	Forensic technicians	30	24.87	746.00
	Border policemen	30	36.13	1084.00
	Total	60		

Table 8. From the data presented in the table, the hypothesis is confirmed, it is observed that there is a significant difference, at a significance threshold  $p = 0.012$  in terms of fulfillment and determination of the categories of police officers.

	fulfillment. determination
Mann-Whitney U	281.000
Wilcoxon W	746.000
Z	-2.512
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.012

a. Grouping Variable: policemen

Fulfillment and determination represent the perception of the workplace. The higher it is, the more positive is the workplace perceived, it brings satisfaction and it is considered as a condition of personal existence. Otherwise, work is perceived as a chore to be avoided, "a necessary evil" to survive. The level of fulfillment and determination is influenced in this circumstance by 3 factors: environment, entourage, schedule, and salary.

1. Environment

Border policemen work in a clean and organized environment, which also requires a uniform, being the first people of the state with whom foreign citizens interact. Instead, the forensic environment is represented by the morgue, on-site research (which includes examinations of corpses, biological samples (blood, semen, saliva), the use of toxic substances for sampling, and laboratory.

2. Entourage

The border policemen work in 4 shifts of 18 people each, who mix regularly (to fight corruption), which leads all individuals to know each other and which results in a friendly working atmosphere. Forensic technicians work alone, throughout the evolution of the case, from the call to come at the crime scene to handing over the examined evidence to the case officer. This is due to the strict working procedure to avoid contamination or destruction of samples.

3. Schedule and salary

The work schedule of the border policemen is carried out in shifts of 12-12 and 12-48 which provide a higher salary, and also night, weekend, and overtime bonuses. In addition, the fixed schedule offers the freedom to relax and a comfort zone given by routine, working in shifts excludes the required around-the-clock availability of forensic technicians. The spontaneity of a criminal act can induce a constant state of stress and prevent the possibility of relaxation.

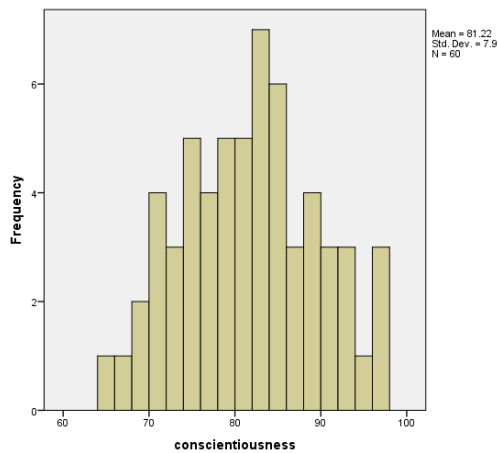
**Hypothesis 3: It is assumed that the work mentality correlates positively with conscientiousness.**

Table 9. The table shows the scores obtained by both sample of subjects at the dimensions of conscientiousness (mean = 81.22) and work mentality (mean = 5.511).

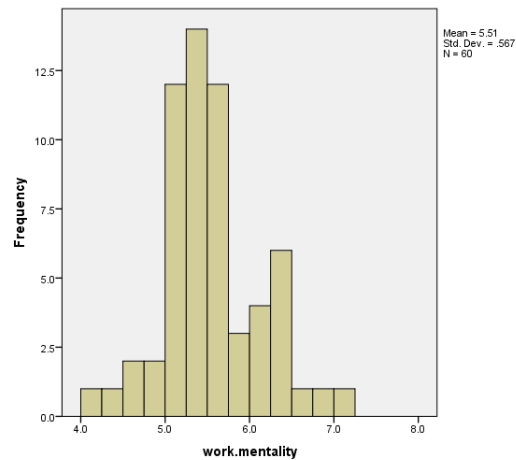
		Statistic	Std. Error
conscientiousness	Mean	81.22	1.020
	Median	81.50	
	Variance	62.410	
	Std. Deviation	7.900	
work.mentality	Mean	5.511	.0732
	Median	5.400	
	Variance	.322	
	Std. Deviation	.5672	

Table 10. The normality test shows if the distribution is normal. The results of the border guards do not respect the normal distribution because the value of Sig is 005, which leads us to apply a non-parametric correlation method.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
conscientiousness	.062	60	.200*	.981	60	.492
work.mentality	.141	60	.005	.964	60	.077



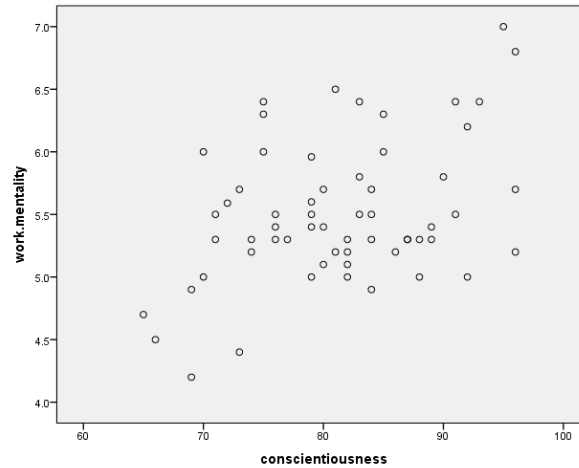
Histogram 5



Histogram 6

Table 11. Following the statistical calculations, the hypothesis is confirmed, work.mentality correlates positively with conscientiousness, the significance threshold being  $p = 0.022$ .

	conscientiousness	work.mentality
conscientiousness	Spearman Correlation	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.294*
	N	60
work.mentality	Spearman Correlation	.294*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022
	N	60



Scatter dot 1

A mindset is a belief that leads to how people manage situations, how they will sort out what is happening and what they should do. A high work ethic mentality and conscientiousness are predictors of workplace performance and persistence in solving tasks. These results show that police officers with a high work mentality are more likely to work in situations of pressure and stress, especially in unsupervised environments. A high level of conscientiousness ensures a high quality of the activities carried out. Also, police officers with a high level of conscientiousness and work mentality, have a better adaptive social functioning, which results in easily adapting to different cases and situations. Both border policemen and forensic technicians work without the supervision of superiors, which requires a high level of conscientiousness to comply with orders and regulations, because otherwise, it can lead to dismissal from the police, with repercussions on both the individual as well as the family.

In the study “Work ethic as a predictor of task persistence and intensity”, conducted in 2015 by John P. Meriac et al., it was revealed that the work mentality influences the motivation with which tasks are performed (conscientiousness). Individuals with an increased work mentality do not need to be supervised to perform the tasks correctly. Due to conscientiousness, they will work on assignments with the same intensity during their life, and are more inclined to choose a more difficult solution when experiencing difficulties.

### Conclusions

As you can see from the statistical results above, all three hypotheses have been confirmed. Of the five dimensions of the FFPI personality questionnaire, conscientiousness correlated positively with the work mentality, which shows that police officers perform their tasks from a higher qualitative point of view when not supervised. The job of a police officer requires a high level of conscientiousness, to ensure compliance with orders and directions, certain situations requiring strict procedures. No other profession requires a stronger mentality towards work and conscientiousness than those of the police. The police profession is a career that requires maximum dedication to do the right things. It unquestionably and understandably places a huge degree of expectation on officers, leading to police standards of ethics being some of the highest in any profession. When officers fail to do what is right, and especially when they

do what is wrong, it violates police ethics, erodes public confidence, and further degrades law enforcement's ability to work within the community and to fulfill the mission. That is why it is imperative that police officers score high on both work mentality and conscientiousness dimensions, as they are vital to achieving the overall goal of patrolling, like any other practice or training.

The border policemen had higher scores in the autonomy dimension of the FFPI questionnaire. Autonomy is the ability to work in an unstructured environment with minimal guidance or supervision, which implies the quality of being innovative and able to make decisions without consulting others. This may be due to the fact that forensic technicians must follow a strict procedure when examining the crime scene and further evidence, which leaves no room for creativity, while border policemen must be creative and adapt to the situations and people they interact with. They need to be able to discover important information about a problem through conversation, questions, or interrogations in order to understand the situation and to obtain information effectively from others. Autonomy also involves the ability to adapt and understand situations quickly, to establish and take appropriate action. The ability to "sift" information to extract what is relevant and important and, once identified, to use that information effectively.

These situations also influenced the scores of fulfillment and determination at work, with border policemen scoring significantly higher. Border policemen benefit from a fixed schedule, a clean environment, and a friendly organizational climate, while forensic technicians can be called at any time to a crime scene, where they come into contact with all sorts of substances (both biological and chemical) and odors while working alone and following the same strict procedures every time.

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