

Validity Study

Relationship between Personality and Law Enforcement Performance

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We investigated the relationship between the scores on the MMPI, California Psychological Inventory (CPI), Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI), Nelson Denny, and Shipley Institute for Living Scale and supervisor ratings of law enforcement performance after one year on the job. Participants in the study were 129 recently hired officers in a variety of small towns in New Mexico. The results indicated that neither personality nor cognitive ability were significantly related to job performance.

Sample

The sample consisted of 129 police officers in a variety of small towns in New Mexico. The officers were hired during the mid to late 1980s. The mean age of sample participants was 27.9 years, 95% percent were men, and 71% were white.

Predictor Information

The personality measures used included the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), California Psychological Inventory (CPI), and Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI). The cognitive ability measures included a test of general cognitive ability (Shipley Institute for Living Scale) and a test of reading ability (Nelson Denny). Clinical interpretations of the scales were made by a licensed clinical psychologist with extensive experience working with law enforcement populations.

Criterion Information

A supervisor provided ratings on the overall performance of each officer after one year on the job. The scale was a five-point Likert scale with a low rating indicting poor performance. The mean of the overall performance rating was 3.67, with a standard deviation of .875.

Validity Information

Tables 1-4 show the results of the study. As can be seen in the tables, only the Social Introversion scale of the MMPI and the Loner scale of the IPI were significantly related to performance. Although the clinical evaluation of the IPI was significantly related to performance ratings, it was in the opposite direction expected in that applicants who did poorly on the IPI were actually rated as being better officers after one year on the job. Contrary to most research on cognitive ability, neither the Nelson Denny nor the Shipley were related to performance ratings.

MMPI Scale	Mean MMPI Score		N	Correlation with Performance
	Raw Score	T Score		
L	4.40	51.20	129	-.02
F	2.50	49.00	129	-.08
K	17.61	60.22	129	.02
Hs	10.41	47.82	129	.06
D	17.02	51.04	129	.08
Hy	18.87	54.74	129	.02
Pd	21.43	55.86	129	-.08
Mf	23.07	55.14	129	.04
Pa	9.06	56.18	129	.14
Pt	22.32	48.64	129	-.01
Sc	21.70	48.14	129	-.03
Ma	19.41	56.23	129	-.05
Si	21.69	46.69	129	.18*
Clinical evaluation	2.98		129	.07

CPI Scale	CPI Mean Score		N	Correlation with Performance
	Raw Score	T Score		
Dominance	25.59	55	100	.00
Capacity for status	19.88	51	100	.03
Sociability	25.74	52	100	-.04
Self-presence	36.95	55	100	-.07
Self-assurance	21.00	55	100	.00
Well-being	39.03	54	100	-.09
Responsibility	30.56	49	100	.00
Socialization	39.00	54	100	-.04
Self-control	35.33	55	100	.12
Tolerance	24.04	52	100	-.11
Good impression	23.20	55	100	.06
Communality	26.67	56	100	.03
Ach via conformance	30.52	56	100	.07
Ach via independence	20.00	53	100	.02
Intellectual efficiency	40.75	54	100	-.05
Psych mindedness	12.50	56	100	-.01
Flexibility	8.19	47	100	.02
Femininity	15.11	47	100	.10
Law enforcement scale		51	100	.02
Clinical evaluation	2.86		96	.17

Table 3: Correlations between IPI Scores and Performance Ratings

IPI Scale	Mean	N	Correlation with Performance
Guardedness	47.47	30	-.23
Alcohol use	45.43	30	.30
Drug use	46.80	30	.12
Driving violations	54.87	30	.01
Job difficulties	43.33	30	-.21
Trouble with the law	47.46	30	.25
Absence abuse	41.10	30	-.17
Substance abuse	48.00	30	-.19
Antisocial attitudes	47.90	30	.03
Hyperactivity	47.83	30	-.02
Rigid type	49.50	30	.24
Type A	52.13	30	.08
Illness concerns	45.43	30	.06
Treatment programs	48.03	30	.20
Anxiety	47.50	30	-.06
Phobic personality	48.43	30	.10
Obsessive personality	50.13	30	-.06
Depression	44.13	30	.12
Loner	49.07	30	.40*
Unusual experiences	44.83	30	.25
Lack of assertiveness	50.90	30	.02
Interpersonal difficulties	47.93	30	.12
Undue suspiciousness	46.67	30	.09
Family concerns	43.23	30	-.03
Sexual concerns	46.87	30	.12
Spouse concerns	48.27	30	-.08
Clinical IPI evaluation		30	-.40*

Table 4: Correlations between Cognitive Ability and Performance Ratings

Cognitive Ability			
Shipley Institute for Living Scale	106.23	129	-.02
Nelson Denny Reading Ability	6.66	128	.05
Demographic Variable			
Sex (1=male, 2=female)	0.05	130	-.09
Race (1=white, 2=nonwhite)	0.29	130	-.03
Age	27.90	130	.03
Clinical Interview	3.40	125	.09

Author Notes

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