

Validity Study

Relationship between Personality and Academy Performance

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We investigated the relationship between scores on the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and police academy performance for 74 cadets. The results indicated that scores on the values and trust subscales were positively related to academy academic performance and scores on the assertiveness subscale were negatively related to academy academic performance.

Sample

The sample consisted of 74 cadets enrolled in three consecutive police academy classes in the St. Louis, Missouri area during the year 2001. The mean age of sample participants was 25.13 years ($SD = 3.7$). The majority of the officers were white (79.0%) or African American (19.6%) with a small percentage of Hispanics/Latinos (1.6%). Men comprised 80.6% of the sample. The academy was 26 weeks long.

Predictor Information

Personality was measured using the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R). The NEO PI-R, developed by Costa and McCrae (1992), contains 240 items and is a measure of the five-factor personality model: Openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Test-retest reliabilities for the scales are .78, .76, .81, .58, and .82 respectively (Caruso, 2000). For each of the five personality factors, there are six sub-factors.

Criterion Information

Five measures of academy performance served as the criteria in this study: Academy graduation (0 = no, 1 = yes), class average, firearms performance, physical

performance (physical training, defensive tactics), disciplinary memos received, and absenteeism. Of the 74 cadets starting the academy, 62 graduated.

References

- Caruso, J. C. (2000). Reliability generalization of the NEO personality scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 60*, 236-254.
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). *NEO PI-R professional manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Detrick, P., Chibnall, J. T., & Luebbert, M. C. (2004). The Revised NEO Personality Inventory as a predictor of police academy performance. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 31*(6), 676-694.

Editor Note

An earlier version of this study was published in *Criminal Justice and Behavior* (Detrick, Chibnall, & Luebbert, 2004). Because the original publication did not contain the correlation coefficients for each of the scales, the authors were invited by the Editor to submit their findings as a Validity Study so that all correlations in the study would be available for future meta-analyses.

Table 1: Correlation matrix

| Variable | Performance Criteria | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | Graduation | Class average | Firearms score | Physical | Disciplinary Memos | Absenteeism |
| Demographic | | | | | | |
| Age | -.09 | -.15 | .15 | -.21 | -.02 | -.12 |
| Sex (0=male, 1=female) | .03 | -.01 | -.56 | -.06 | .21 | .05 |
| Race (0=minority, 1=white) | .11 | .39 | .19 | .12 | -.45 | -.23 |
| Personality | | | | | | |
| Neuroticism | -.24 | -.03 | -.02 | .06 | -.16 | -.05 |
| Anxiety | -.04 | .07 | -.11 | -.19 | -.15 | -.12 |
| Angry hostility | -.15 | -.17 | .02 | .06 | -.12 | .05 |
| Depression | -.25 | .00 | -.02 | .01 | -.07 | .03 |
| Self-consciousness | -.04 | -.04 | .04 | .10 | -.08 | -.25 |
| Impulsiveness | -.27 | -.12 | .08 | .21 | -.03 | .00 |
| Vulnerability | -.28 | .07 | -.03 | .12 | -.19 | .05 |
| Extraversion | .10 | -.12 | .01 | .06 | .14 | .03 |
| Warmth | .20 | .01 | .04 | .00 | .03 | -.06 |
| Gregariousness | .02 | -.22 | .05 | .06 | .11 | .01 |
| Assertiveness | .00 | -.25 | -.13 | -.05 | .16 | .25 |
| Activity | .01 | .17 | .18 | .31 | .05 | .02 |
| Excitement seeking | -.08 | -.10 | .09 | .17 | .17 | .07 |
| Positive emotions | -.05 | .02 | -.11 | -.12 | -.03 | -.11 |
| Openness | .08 | .06 | -.15 | -.28 | -.01 | -.03 |
| Fantasy | .13 | .05 | -.23 | -.27 | -.07 | -.06 |
| Aesthetics | -.07 | -.06 | -.04 | -.23 | -.12 | -.06 |
| Feelings | .14 | -.02 | -.17 | .00 | -.01 | .08 |
| Actions | .00 | -.13 | .08 | -.16 | .05 | -.07 |
| Ideas | .01 | .04 | -.11 | -.22 | .11 | .07 |
| Values | .19 | .29 | -.05 | -.06 | .09 | -.08 |
| Agreeableness | .17 | .10 | .16 | -.01 | -.03 | -.25 |
| Trust | .13 | .30 | .11 | .17 | -.11 | -.12 |
| Straightforwardness | .11 | .08 | .15 | -.02 | .11 | -.14 |
| Altruism | .12 | -.14 | -.03 | -.11 | .01 | -.19 |
| Compliance | .18 | .14 | .10 | -.03 | -.02 | -.20 |
| Modesty | .03 | .11 | .05 | .02 | -.23 | -.20 |
| Tender-mindedness | .08 | -.12 | .11 | -.21 | .13 | -.02 |
| Conscientiousness | .23 | .00 | -.02 | -.11 | .05 | -.01 |
| Competence | .28 | .06 | -.15 | -.15 | .07 | -.04 |
| Order | .11 | .06 | .24 | .15 | -.05 | .14 |
| Dutifulness | .20 | -.07 | -.03 | -.06 | .00 | -.09 |
| Achievement-striving | .17 | .10 | -.11 | -.10 | .05 | -.02 |
| Self-discipline | .13 | -.01 | -.04 | -.06 | .06 | -.01 |
| Deliberation | .20 | -.01 | -.03 | -.28 | -.02 | -.06 |
| Criteria | | | | | | |
| Graduation | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Class average | | 1.00 | | | | |
| Firearms scores | -.11 | .06 | 1.00 | | | |
| Physical scores | -- | .27 | .21 | 1.00 | | |
| Disciplinary memos | .18 | -.36 | -.07 | -.12 | 1.00 | |
| Absenteeism | -.44 | .04 | -.04 | -.13 | .04 | 1.00 |

Author Note

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