

Forensic Psychology Chapter 2

Text book notes

- **Police Selection Procedures:** A set of procedures used by the police to either screen out undesirable candidates or select desirable candidates. These Characteristics may include but are not limited to; physical fitness, Cognitive abilities, Personality, and performance on various job related tasks.
- **Job analysis:** A procedure for identifying the knowledge, skills and abilities that make a good police officer. The following KSA's are typically viewed as essential: Honesty, reliability, sensitivity to others, good communication skills, high motivation, problem solving skills, being a team player. KSA are important because without the use of objective measures there is no standard for policing.
- **Predictive Validity:** Our ability to use a selection instrument to predict how applicants will perform in the future. The goal is to determine if there is a relationship between scores obtained from a selection instrument and measures of actual job performance. Involves collecting using a selection instrument, such as scores on a test of decision making under stress. The results are then compared with a measure of job performance. A selection instrument's predictive validity can be determined by calculating validity co-efficients. These range from (+1.0 to -1.0). A co-efficient of +1.0 would indicate that a very strong positive relationship exists indicating that as performance on the selection instrument increases, ratings of job performance also increase.

Police selection instruments

- **The selection interview:** The interviewer has a preset list of questions that are asked of each applicant, thus ensuring a more objective basis for comparing applicants. These interview questions are used to determine the extent to which an applicant possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities deemed important for the job. There are mixed results regarding the predictive validity of the selection interview.
- **Psychological tests:** These consist of 3 different criteria including; Cognitive Abilities, Personality tests, and assessment centres.
- **(1)Cognitive ability tests:** Used to measure verbal, mathematical, memory and reasoning abilities. In Canada the RCMP use a test called the RPAT (rcmp police aptitude test). Seven core skills are observed including ; written composition, comprehension, memory, judgement, observation, logic, and computation.

- **(2) Personality tests:** Two of the most commonly used personality tests used for police selection include the **Minnesota Multi-phasic Personality Inventory** and the **Inwald Personality Inventory** . The MMPI assessment instrument was developed as a general inventory for identifying people with psychopathological problems. Some research does suggest that the MMPI, can be associated with significant but relatively low validity co-efficients. The relatively low levels of predictive validity can be accredited to the fact that the MMPI was not developed to be used as a selection instrument.
- **The Inwald personality Inventory** was developed specifically for law enforcement. It is used to identify police applicants who are most suitable for police work by measuring their personality attributes and behaviour patterns. According to several researchers, the IPI appears to be more predictive of police officer performance than the MMPI. The MMPI could only predict one of the seven performance indicators (Supervisor ratings) while the IPI could predict three of seven indicators (Supervisor ratings, citizen complaints, and the overall composite of negative indicators).
Designed by Robert Inwald.
- **Assessment Centres:** this is a facility within which the behaviour of police applicants can be observed in a number of different ways by multiple observers. The primary selection instrument used within an assessment centre is the **situational test** which involves simulation of real-world policing tasks.
- **Situational tests** used in assessment centres attempt to tap into KSA's identified as part of a job analysis for the purpose of identifying candidates who will be successful police officers.

Police Discretion

- The freedom that a police officer often has for deciding what should be done in any given situation. Police discretion is necessary for a number of reasons; but moreover because it is impossible to establish laws or policies that adequately encompass all the possible situations an officer can encounter and therefore a degree of discretion is inevitable. Ex: legislatures pass laws that are vague, making it necessary for the police to interpret them and decide when to apply them. Officers must exercise discretion in a nondiscriminatory manor which does not always happen. Most commonly this is seen in cases relating to racial profiling.

Individuals with mental illnesses: When a police officer encounters an individual with a mental illness they typically have 3 options depending on the circumstances. (1) They can transport that person to a psychiatric institution of some sort, (2) they can

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arrest the person and take him/her to jail, or (3) they can resolve the matter informally. Hospitalization may sometimes not be an option if the individual is violent in nature and can result in individuals who would typically be treated within the mental health system being treated by the criminal justice system. According to a study by Hoch et al. People with mental illness were arrested, charged or both more often than those without mental illness. 72% of cases solved informally, 12% transported to hospital, 16% are arrested.

Use of Force Situations: The authority to use of force is outlined in section 25 of the criminal code which states “Everyone who is required by the law to do anything in the administration of enforcement of law is to do so if he acts on reasonable grounds and is authorized to use as much force as necessary”. Problems arise in use-of-force situations because of the ambiguity of terms such as *reasonable ground* or *as necessary*.

Controlling police discretion: One section of the police services act states that police officers commit misconduct if they fail to treat or protect a person without discrimination.

The use of force continuum; is a model that is supposed to guide police officer decision making in use-of-force situations by indicating what level of force is appropriate given the suspect's behaviour and other environmental conditions. The theory behind the use of force continuum is that in order to subdue a suspect the officer must be prepared to use a level of force that is ONLY one step higher than that used by the suspect. If the officer moves to a level of force that is disproportionate to the force offered by the suspect the officer is open to accusations of using excessive force.

National use of force model in Canada: In Canada police agencies have developed their own use-of-force model. There are 5 basic options: Officer presence is the least forceful option, followed by verbal and non verbal communication, physical control, intermediate weapons, and finally lethal force.

Police Stress

Occupational Stressors: In policing, stressors that relate to the job itself. EX: Irregular work schedule, human suffering.

Organizational stressors: In policing, stressors relating to organizational issues. EX: Lack of career development: In most police agencies, there is little room for advancement, regardless of the performance of the officer. This is reported the most.

Criminal justice: Investigations can often lead to ineffective corrections.

Public stress: Distorted media

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Psychological Debriefings: A psychologically oriented intervention delivered to police officers following exposure to an event that resulted in psychological distress and an impairment of normal functioning.

Additional in class Notes

RCMP: Selection instruments

Interview- Psychopathology and desirable qualities

Physical fitness test

Medical exam

Psychological tests- Personality, aptitude

Situational tests

Pre-employment polygraph

Areas where discretion is used

Youth Crime:

Mentally ill offenders:

Domestic Violence; Desecration is removed in some situation of domestic violence but is dependant is the case at hand warrants an arrest or not.

Use-of-force Situations: