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CHAPTER 2
Police Psychology

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Lewis Terman's attempt to assist with police selection in the early 1900s involved the assessment of:
   a. intelligence
   b. physical abilities
   c. personality traits
   d. criminal background

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 27

2. Which of the following police selection procedures is used by all U.S. police agencies when selecting officers?
   a. medical exams
   b. polygraph tests
   c. cognitive ability tests
   d. drug tests

Answer: a *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 28

3. According to Cochrane, Tett, and Vandecreek (2003), which of the following police selection procedures is most commonly used in the United States?
   a. physical agility tests
   b. drug testing
   c. selection interview
   d. background checks

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 28

4. In the context of police selection, what is meant by KSA?
   a. KSA is a physical ability test taken by all potential officers.
   b. KSA refers to sets of characteristics that define a "good" police officer.
   c. KSA is a police selection agency.
   d. KSA refers to characteristics that are undesirable in a potential police officer.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 28

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5. In the context of police selection, the term validation refers to:
   a. the development of a selection instrument to measure the abilities of potential police officers
   b. the need to ensure that certified individuals are administering police selection tests to applicants
   c. the need to ensure that the results of a police selection instrument are related to some measure of police performance
   d. a job analysis

Answer: c *Difficulty:* hard *Page:* 29

6. Which of the following is considered to be a serious problem with validation research in the area of police selection?
   a. There is disagreement on how to best measure the performance of police officers.
   b. There is no validity coefficient available for measuring predictive validity.
   c. Indicators of on-the-job performance do not exist in the policing field.
   d. Cognitive ability tests are characterized by relatively high validity coefficients.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* hard *Page:* 30-31

7. Which psychometric property is most important in the context of police selection?
   a. concurrent validity
   b. divergent validity
   c. predictive validity
   d. intrinsic reliability

Answer: c *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 29

8. The validity coefficient calculated for a selection instrument (when it is used to predict job performance) is +0.99. This means that:
   a. as performance on the selection instrument increases, so do ratings of job performance
   b. there is a strong relationship between the results of the selection instrument and ratings of job performance
   c. the coefficient is negative, so there is no relationship between the selection instrument and job performance ratings
   d. both a and b

Answer: e *Difficulty:* hard *Page:* 29-30

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9. Which of the following has been identified as a key problem with the police selection interview?
   a. The interview lacks any structure.
   b. The interview is too lengthy to be used by many police agencies.
   c. Interviewers often disagree on the ratings that should be assigned to various attributes of the interviewee.
   d. The interview has very high predictive validity.

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 31-32

10. You are applying to be a police officer within the United States. Which of the following tests would you expect to be administered in order to measure your cognitive abilities?
   a. IPI
   b. the situational test
   c. MMPI
   d. KSA

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 33

11. A common personality test used in police selection is the IPI. What does IPI stand for?
   a. Inbau's Personality Index
   b. Inwald Personality Inventory
   c. Inwald's Policing Index
   d. Iterative Policing Inventory

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 33

12. As a psychologist involved in police selection, which measure(s) would you be most confident in administering to an applicant if your goal was to accurately predict their future job performance?
   a. IPI
   b. SILS
   c. MMPI
   d. MMPI-2

Answer: a *Difficulty:* hard *Page:* 33-34

13. What is the most common police selection instrument used in assessment centers?
   a. personality tests
   b. cognitive ability tests
   c. situational tests
   d. selection interviews

Answer: c *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 34

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14. A police applicant is given a certain period of time to interview witnesses in a mock domestic disturbance case and complete an incident report. This scenario is most likely a component of:
    a. an IPI
    b. a situational test
    c. a selection interview
    d. an RPAT

Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 34

15. As a police selection instrument, research suggests that situational tests have:
    a. no predictive validity
    b. extremely high predictive validity
    c. moderate predictive validity
    d. no research has been conducted on the predictive validity of situational tests

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 35

16. According to Sheehan and Cordner (1989), which of the following are arguments for the use of police discretion?
    a. Law enforcement resources are limited and full enforcement of the law would overwhelm the criminal justice system.
    b. Most law violations are minor and do not require strict enforcement all the time.
    c. Some laws are vague and ill-defined, which makes discretion necessary.
    d. all of the above

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 36

17. Which of the following is used to deal with young offenders informally, outside the court system?
    a. de-institutionalization
    b. youth discretion
    c. incarceration
    d. family conferences

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 36

18. Which of the following statements is *NOT* true with respect to police discretion in cases of domestic violence?
    a. Historically, domestic violence by a man against his wife was often ignored.
    b. Historically, arrest rates have been reported to range from 75% to 100%.
    c. Police sometimes choose to mediate domestic disturbances in an informal manner.
    d. Community referrals and separation have been used in the past to deal with domestic disturbances.

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Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 40

19. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (2005), approximately what percentage of police–citizen interactions involve the actual or threatened use of force?
    a. 1.5%
    b. 10.5%
    c. 25.2%
    d. 50.4%

Answer: a *Difficulty:* hard *Page:* 42

20. As discussed in the textbook, the impact of the use-of-force policies put in place by the New York Police Department in 1972
    a. increased the number of police shootings.
    b. decreased the number of police shootings.
    c. increased the number of domestic disturbances involving police.
    d. increased the use of inappropriate police discretion in cases involving youths

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 42

21. The use-force-continuums
    a. have developed into a single model in the United States.
    b. vary from agency to agency in the United States.
    c. do nothing to deter crime.
    d. allow officers to use the level of force three steps higher than necessary.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 43

22. According to the use-of-force continuum, a police officer must be prepared to use a level of force that is _____ the amount of force used by the suspect.
    a. one step higher than
    b. one step lower than
    c. equal to
    d. two steps higher than

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 43

23. Which of the following is *NOT* true of the use-of-force continuum?
    a. It is an indirect method of helping to control the amount of force used by a police officer.
    b. It provides a dynamic guide that can potentially assist with use-of-force decision making.
    c. Following the continuum completely removes the need for police discretion in use-of-force situations.
    d. The continuum encourages officers to continually assess their surroundings.

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Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 42-43

24. Police officers are exposed to a wide range of stressors. Experiencing shift work and being exposed to human suffering are examples of:
    a. public stressors
    b. organizational stressors
    c. criminal justice stressors
    d. occupational stressors

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 45

25. The press has been distorting the facts of a particular case on which a police officer is working. This is an example of:
    a. an organizational stressor
    b. an occupational stressor
    c. a criminal justice stressor
    d. a public stressor

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 45

26. A police officer witnesses a fellow officer being killed in the line of duty. This is an example of:
    a. an organizational stressor
    b. an occupational stressor
    c. a criminal justice stressor
    d. a public stressor

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 45

27. According to Taylor and Bennell (2006) _____ stressors are often ranked as the most stressful among police officers.
    a. public
    b. criminal justice
    c. organizational
    d. extrinsic

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 45-46

28. Possible consequences associated with police stress fall into three general categories. These are:
    a. physical health problems/psychological problems/job performance problems
    b. occupational/organizational/criminal justice
    c. adaptive/maladaptive/neutral
    d. proactive/reactive/inhibitory

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 47

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29. Recent research conducted by McCoy and Aamodt (2010) has compared the divorce rate amongst law enforcement personnel to the divorce rate in the general population. What did they find?
    a. The divorce rate amongst law enforcement personnel is higher than the divorce rate in the general population.
    b. The divorce rate amongst law enforcement personnel is lower than the divorce rate in the general population.
    c. The divorce rate amongst law enforcement personnel is equal to the divorce rate in the general population.
    d. Differences in divorce rates between the two groups existed, but only for people over the age of 50.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 48

SHORT ANSWER

30. In general, there are two stages involved in developing a valid police selection process. Name these stages and explain them briefly.

Answer:

    a. *The job analysis stage*: the police agency must define the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that characterize a "good" police officer
    b. *The construction and validation stage*: The police agency must develop instruments to measure the degree to which applicants possess these KSAs (i.e., construction) and determine the extent to which the applicants' scores on these instruments correspond to actual police performance (i.e., validation).

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 28-30

31. Name and describe two of the three most common types of police selection procedures.

Answer:

    a. *The selection interview*: This is a semi-structured interview intended to determine the degree to which an applicant possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that characterize a "good" police officer.
    b. *Psychological tests*: These include tests of cognitive ability that tap into skills like memory and logic and personality tests that attempt to identify stress reactions, interpersonal styles, and psychopathological problems (e.g., MMPI).
    c. *Assessment centers*: This refers to facilities in which police-related behaviors can be observed by multiple raters usually in the context of simulated tasks (i.e., situational tests).

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The student needs only to provide two of the three procedures to receive full marks.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 30-34

32. Define "police discretion" and name three areas of policing in which discretion is often used.

Answer:

- Police discretion is the quality that enables officers to discriminate between those situations that require strict adherence to the law and those in which a certain amount of latitude is justified.
- Typically, police officers are called upon to use a degree of discretion when dealing with cases of youth crime, mentally ill offenders, domestic disturbances, and cases involving the potential use of force.

Difficulty: easy *Page*: 35-38

33. List four reasons why police discretion is necessary, as indicated by Sheehan and Cordner (1989).

Answer:

- A police officer who attempts to enforce all the laws all the time would be in the police station and in court all the time and thus of little use when serious problems arise in the community.
- Legislatures pass some laws that they clearly do not intend to have strictly enforced all the time.
- Legislatures pass some laws that are vague, making it necessary for the police to interpret them and decide when to apply them.
- Most law violations are minor in nature, such as driving slightly over the posted speed limit, and do not require full enforcement of the law.
- Full enforcement of all the laws all the time would alienate the public and undermine support for the police.
- Full enforcement of all the laws all the time would overwhelm the criminal justice system, including the prisons.
- The police have many duties to perform with limited resources; good judgment must therefore be used in establishing enforcement priorities.

The student need only provide four of the above reasons to receive full marks.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 36

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34. You are a police officer who has encountered a mentally ill person causing a disturbance. What are the three main options available to you in this situation? Identify a disadvantage associated with each.

Answer:

a. The individual can be arrested and taken to jail.
   - This approach may result in the mentally ill offender being "criminalized" (i.e., dealt with by the criminal justice system when it may actually be more useful for this person to be treated in the mental health system).

b. The individual can be taken to a psychiatric/mental health institution
   - Due to legal difficulties and/or bureaucratic obstacles, the mentally ill offender may be refused admittance.

c. You can attempt to resolve the matter in an informal fashion.
   - This may only be a short-term solution given that the individual will likely not receiving the mental health care he or she requires.

Difficulty: hard *Page:* 38

35. Name four main sources of police stress and provide an example of each.

Answer:

a. Organizational stressors (e.g., excessive paperwork)
b. Occupational stressors (e.g., exposure to human suffering)
c. Criminal justice stressors (e.g., ineffectiveness of the courts)
d. Public stressors (e.g., media distortions regarding certain cases)

Difficulty: easy *Page:* 45

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