



# The Problem of Invalid MMPI-2 Profiles in an LEO Selection Test Battery

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# The Research Question

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What impact does MMPI-2 invalidity have on selection?

**P** The MMPI-2 L Scale consists of 15 items which gauge the respondents willingness to admit to normal human weaknesses in character, behavior and temperament. Given an unusual reluctance to do so, individuals with scores at or above 80 pose a problem for selection officials. How should such a score be interpreted, and what other signs of impression management are present ?





# The Sample

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Applicants to OCSO, 1993-1999

- P** Over a five and a half year period, 985 applicants took the standard assessment battery for positions in law enforcement which included the MMPI-2.
- P** Out of 985, seventy-two (72) applicants produced an invalid MMPI-2 profile due to L Scale elevation equal to or greater than a T score of 80. This represents 7.3% of the population.





# Demographics

What does the sample look like?

**P** The following matrix depicts the sample studied:

	W	B	H	O	Sum
M	13	13	20	1	47
F	10	10	5	0	25
Sum	23	23	25	1	72





# The Measures

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What other validity measures are in the battery?

**P** In addition to the MMPI-2 L Scale, three other measures are of interest to the present study:

IPI Guardedness (GD) Scale

HPP/SQ Candor (CA) Scale

MMPI-2 Superlative (S) Scale





# The Findings

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Within the 72 L Scale applicant sample, analysis found:

**P** Pearson correlation co-efficients for GD, CA, S:

GD	CA	S
n=43	n=22	n=49
r=.234	r=-.245	r=.057





# The Conclusions

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What do the findings reveal?

**P** The L Scale in the present sample is:

- ▶ Positively correlated with Guardedness
- ▶ Negatively correlated with Candor
- ▶ Positively, but only slightly, correlated with S Scale

**P** Impression management appears to be attempted by certain applicants in a systematic way.





# The Implications

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How do we handle this problem?

**P** Impression management as a factor in non-selection:

- ▶  $L > 80$  Cause for Concern
- ▶  $GD > 60$   
or Added cause for concern  
 $CA < 40$

**P** Any other indicator of reluctance to acknowledge negative qualities -- non-select.







# Future Research

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## Tracking Invalid Hires

- P** Inevitably, some candidates for law enforcement positions who have produced an invalid MMPI-2 profile will be selected.
- P** Data will be gathered to track performance over the first year or so of employment in an attempt to obtain better validity of selection protocols.





# Postscript to this Study

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## The PERSEREC Project

**P**In a nationwide study examining correlates of corruption-prone law enforcement officers, the Defense Personnel Security Research Center (in a sample of more than 800 officers from 80 police agencies) found that an L Scale score greater than 60 correlated significantly with “violators” of the public trust.

