

# A VALIDATION STUDY OF THE HILSON RELATIONSHIP INVENTORIES: THE HILSON RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY OF PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL (HRI-P) AND THE HILSON SPOUSE/MATE INVENTORY (HSMI).

*The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health study in 1990 reported that 37% of police officers reported "severe" marital problems (Wolford, 1993).*

## INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement has unique stresses that can challenge a marriage. The significance of the Hilson Relationship Inventories is the inclusion of law enforcement related issues that affect marriages and are not addressed in other relationship inventories. This is a construct validation study of the Hilson Relationship Inventory of Public Safety Personnel (HRI-P) and the Hilson Spouse/Mate Inventory (HSMI) (Inwald, 1993). The HRI-P and the HSMI are both 50-item inventories which include three subscales: communication/relationship difficulties, somatic stress, and police issues. The investigation was designed to establish construct validity for the subscales by demonstrating correlations with established inventories.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

Participants consisting of sworn law enforcement officers and their mates (spouses or domestic partners) were recruited from a midsized northern California law enforcement department via interdepartmental e-mail and verbal presentations. Part 1 assessed the communication/relationship difficulties and somatic stress symptoms subscales. Part 2 assessed the police issues subscale.

### Method and Materials: Part 1

Questionnaires were distributed to approximately 240 Northern California law enforcement officers and their mates via interdepartmental mail and returned by US mail. The packet included the Hilson Relationship Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spainer, 1976) and Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983). All participants participated anonymously.

### Methods and Materials: Part 2

Participants were recruited in the participating department by a flyer posted within the department. Participant couples were given the Hilson Relationship Inventory and Bartlett Police Issues Interview during an in-person interview. Given the lack of established inventories specific to police issues, the author developed a structured interview, the Bartlett Police Issues Interview, to compare and validate the HRI-P and the HSMI police issues subscale. The Bartlett Police Issues Interview was also designed to further investigate and define the construct of law enforcement issues and its impact on law enforcement couples' relationships.

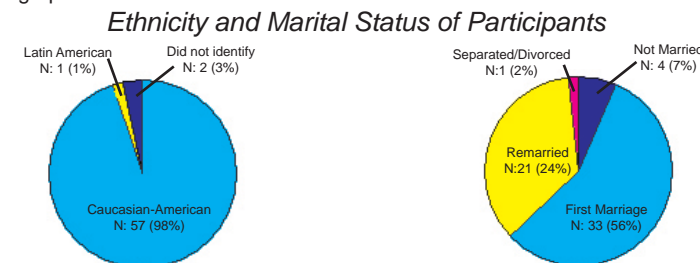
## RESULTS

Significant correlations were found in all three of the Hilson subscales and their respective comparison inventories.

Comparison Inventory	r	p
Comm./Relationship Difficulties and DAS	r = -.69	p < .0001
Somatic Stress and BSI	r = .54	p < .0001
Police Issues and Bartlett Police Issues Interview	Adjusted R squared = .55 R = .80	p < .05 F = 7.216

### Results: Part 1

Sixty participants, consisting of sworn law enforcement officers and their mates, from a northern California law enforcement department participated in the communication/relationship difficulties and somatic stress subscale portion of the study. The demographics are listed below:



	Officer	M	Spouse/Mate	M
Age (Range)		43.6 SD= 8.9 (31-64)	Age (Range)	41.3 SD = 8.7 (28 - 56)
Yrs Involved with Current Spouse		16	Yrs Involved with Current Spouse	15.3
No. of Children		1.6	No. of Children	1.5
Yrs in Law Enforcement		19.5	Spouse's Yrs in Law Enforcement	17.6

The communication/relationship difficulties subscale was compared to the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spainer, 1976) where a moderate negative correlation ( $r = -.69$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) indicated divergent validity. In other words, high communication/relations difficulties corresponded to low Dyadic Adjustment. The somatic stress symptoms subscale was compared to the Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983) and a moderate correlation ( $r = .54$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) indicated convergent validity.

Spainer, G. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 38, 15-28.  
Wolford, R. (1993). The relationship between police stressors, coping strategies, alcohol expectancies and drinking patterns for law enforcement officers., Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, IL.

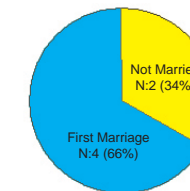
### Results: Part 2

Six participants, consisting of sworn law enforcement officers and their mates, 3 law enforcement officers (2 males and 1 female) and 3 spouses/mates (3 females), from a northern California law enforcement department participated in the police issues subscale portion of the study.

Demographics are listed below:

All were Caucasian and 66% were involved in their first marriage. The age of the participating officers ranged from 30 to 53 years ( $M = 39.3$ ,  $SD = 12.1$  years) and 31 to 53 years ( $M = 39$ ,  $SD = 12.2$  years) for their spouse/mates. Two of the participants had children and the average length of time the participants had been involved with their spouse was 15.5 ( $SD = 17$ ) years. These individuals were fairly experienced officers ( $M = 15.8$  years of service), who were involved in patrol related duties (66%) and had college degrees (50% had a 2 year degree or higher).

*Marital Status of Participants*



	M		M
Officer's Age (Range)	39.3 SD= 12.1 (30-53)	Spouse/Mate's Age (Range)	39 SD = 12.2 (31-53)
Yrs Involved with Current Spouse			15.5
Yrs in Law Enforcement			15.8

The police issues subscale was compared to the Bartlett Police Issues Interview score and a moderate correlation ( $R = .80$ ,  $F = 7.216$ ,  $\text{Adjusted R squared} = .55$ ,  $p < .05$ ) indicated convergent validity. This correlation indicates content validity of the police issues subscale.

## DISCUSSION

Overall, the results of the study offer additional evidence of validity and indicate that the Hilson Relationship Inventories (HRI-P and HSMI) are comparable to existing measures of relationship satisfaction and psychological stress. Preliminary implications drawn from the Bartlett Police Issues Interview data indicates it is assessing a common construct pertaining to issues in the lives of law enforcement personnel and their mates.

### FURTHER INFORMATION:

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### LITERATURE CITED:

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