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AGC - PRS Report # 716
PRS-CSU
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8 Jul 1945

VALIDATION OF FORM E OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL
INFORMATION BLANK (BIB)
September 1945.

PR 4061

I. INTRODUCTION

Form D of the BIB was developed from an item analysis on officer candidate groups. An officer candidate population was employed to obtain a quick preliminary sifting of items. The items for Form E, which was employed in the officer retention program, were finally selected on the basis of a further item analysis of officer groups (See PRS Report # 703). It was originally planned to keep the arrangement of Form E of the BIB as in Form D except that the two last sections were to be eliminated, the first on the basis of its lack of validity and the second since it was originally included only for the purpose of obtaining information on desire to remain in the Army. This plan involved the retention of a considerable number of unscored items but avoided possible loss of validity of the BIB due to the changed context resulting from this omission. The elimination of sections at the end of the form would, of course, have no effect.

Two policy decisions, however, were made which made it impossible to carry out the original plan: (1) to eliminate some items that were considered objectionable from the Army viewpoint and (2) to reduce the number of unscored items to a minimum. Forty-two items were eliminated on these bases, leaving 204 items which were incorporated in Form E.

This elimination changed the item content sufficiently to make it desirable to validate Form E in the form it was to be used in the male officer retention program. This is the purpose of the present study.

II. POPULATION AND PROCEDURE

Form E of the BIB was administered to 1,344 officers in a wide variety of installations during the field runs carried out for the major purpose of developing and validating FCL-3a (PRS Report # 674).

Criterion data collected for the purpose of validating the efficiency reports were utilized to validate Form E of the BIB. Officers who were rated and who therefore had no further task other than participating in the criterion session, were given the BIB if there was sufficient (practically unanimous) agreement among nominators or criterion raters to assign a group criterion score. (The criterion and the group criterion score are described in PRS Report # 670, Part II). Restriction to those with criterion group scores of high, middle, and low was imposed to obtain comparability to the population involved in the study of Form D, BIB and allow legitimate comparison of the validities of Forms D and E.

III. RESULTS

The correlations between Form E, BIB and the criterion group scores for the total group and for various breakdowns by echelon (See PRS Report # 670) and by number of raters in the criterion group are:

79 11 20 031

365

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Group	N	r
Upper echelon*	138	.274
Lower echelon**		
20 or more raters	123	.424
10-19 raters	793	.301
9 or less raters	290	.361
Total group	1344	.326

716

* Officers whose criterion scores were based on rankings within a group of officers at and above the responsibility of company commanders, i.e., attached to battalions or other higher echelon groups.

** Officers whose criterion scores were based on rankings within a group having responsibility below the company command level.

The validity coefficient of .326 may be compared with .320 and .379 (page 15, PRS Report # 704) obtained for Form D in the officer retention program validation run. This comparison does not indicate any marked change in validity as a result of the reduction in number of items from Form D to E.

A further comparison may be made between present results and those given in Chart VII, Tab A, Report and Recommendations in Project PR-4061, Officer Selection Procedures.

DATA FROM CHART VII AND FROM PRESENT STUDY SHOWING COMPOSITION OF GROUPS WHICH WOULD BE SELECTED ACCORDING TO VARIOUS CRITICAL SCORES IN THE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION BLANK

Score	Percent of Total Group	Criterion Group		
		Low	Middle	High
100 and above	29.5	17.6%	30.0%	52.4%
90-99	30.6	26.9%	38.2%	34.9%
89 and below	39.9	48.8%	32.0%	19.2%
<u>Present Data</u>				
100 and above	32.5	22.8%	22.4%	54.7%
90-99	32.1	32.4%	28.5%	39.1%
89 and below	35.4	49.3%	31.2%	19.5%

Unfortunately the data from Chart VII include the cases on which the scoring key was developed so the comparison is not completely legitimate. Considering this fact, there is no good evidence of true difference in validity. Agreement is especially close at the low end of the BIB scale.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Considered as total scales Form D and E of the BIB are about equally valid. Reduction in the number of items has not made a marked change in validity. This does not prove that no individual items were altered in their discrimination value.

One additional point deserves mention. The validity coefficients for the breakdown by echelon and number of raters follow the same trend as those shown in research studies on officer efficiency reports. (See Report and Recommendations, Officer Efficiency Reporting Procedures, Project No. PR-4073). Validities are lowest in the upper echelon populations. Groups with 20 or more raters yield the highest validity among the lower echelon groups; those with 9 or less raters are next most valid, with those with 10 - 19 raters the least valid. Evidence in the report cited above supports the position that this variation is owing to a weakness in the criterion rather than in the BIB.

V. TECHNICIAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STUDY

E. A. Rundquist.

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