

The Cost of Working within the Criminal Justice System:

The Overlooked Impact on the Mental Health of Correctional
Officers

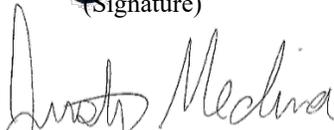
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The Cost of Working in the Criminal Justice System: The Overlooked Impact on the Mental

Health of Correctional Officers

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Introduction

Total institutions are locations of residence where a large number of individuals are excluded from society (Hillery, 1963). These institutions are meant to create a world of their own where total dependencies are established. Residents are isolated from society, and they are meant to adhere and adapt to certain totalistic features. For example, all aspects of life always occur at the same time in the same place on a daily basis. Daily activities occur in phases and freedom is limited. Finally, restrictions are placed on individuality. Those residing in total institutions are expected to complete tasks and daily activities amongst other residents in large groups (Latessa and Holsinger, 2016). These institutions are meant to exclude individuals within the facilities and separate them from society and the outside world. Therefore, a sense of total dependency is eventually created, causing employees within total institutions to become responsible for the residents' well-being and needs (Hillery, 1963).

Correctional officers and prison personnel are what keep prisons functioning. There is plenty of research discussing the effects correctional institutions have on inmates (Douglas et al., 2009; Sapsford, 1978). For example, Sugie and Turney (2017) investigate the different encounters of stressors that accompany an individual's contact with the criminal justice system. According to their analysis, incarceration is one of the most negatively impactful stressors on one's mental health. Not only is it a primary stressor due to the initial contact system, incarceration may cause secondary stressors and further deteriorate one's mental health. However, there is limited research regarding the extent to which correctional facilities impact the correctional staffs' health and overall well-being. Correctional officers influence the environment and atmosphere in which they work; however, the opposite applies as well. It is important to acknowledge the stressors within prisons. By doing so, negative impacts on those

maintaining order can be better understood and possible recommendations can be made to improve conditions.

One way to acknowledge said stress can be seen in this study. This research attempts to acknowledge stress levels experienced by correctional officers and the impact they pose on their overall well-being. By utilizing data collected from a survey conducted by Griffin and Hepburn (2020), this research allows for an examination of variables, such as stress levels, alcohol and drug use, and the mental, as well as physical, health of correctional officers. By examining these factors, this study attempted to uncover the effects of the correctional environment on the correctional officers' overall well-being. The study found that correctional officers witnessing assault and experiencing inmate-manipulation report poorer mental health. Additionally, the study found that correctional officers experiencing higher levels of stress illustrated poorer mental health, as well as poor physical health.

This study seeks understand the effects working in correctional facilities have on correctional officers' well-being. More specifically, this study aims to answer the following the question: what is the impact on the mental health of correctional officers who work within the criminal justice system? To do so, this study begins by providing background information and literature on correctional facilities, as well as their physical and emotional impacts on inmates and employees. Furthermore, the paper highlights the data and statistical tests used to analyze the hypotheses for the study and presents the findings. Finally, the paper concludes by discussing limitations, future research and recommendations.

Literature Review

Although there is much literature examining the extent to which the correctional environment affects inmates, little research examines the effects on correctional officers' mental

health in detail. The following literature review provides evidence and research supporting the negative impacts correctional facilities have on inmates. This includes the psychological effects, physical effects, and the impact of prison sexual misconduct. With that said, there is less literature examining the scope of consequences faced by correctional officers. Many studies neglect to explore potential correlations between stress, mental health, and physical health. However, the studies and research that focused on correctional officers and their mental health, do support the claim that correctional officers are more likely to suffer from poor mental health. One cannot ignore the effects correctional institutions have on its employees. Correctional officers and their environments require further examinations in order for their psychological health to be more adequately perceived.

Impact of Incarceration on Inmates

Incarceration is a form of punitive action taken against those who violate the law. In addition to incapacitating people, incarceration imposes many regulations and restricts the freedoms of inmates. Such effects can have negative, long-lasting consequences on those incarcerated (Haney, 2004). Inmates suffer psychological and physical consequences, and many struggle to adjust to life outside of a correctional facility (Haney, 2004). For example, Douglas et al. (2009) examined the impact of incarceration on female prisoners and found that the general experience of prison had an overall negative effect on their health, both physical and mental. For women in particular, one of the greatest struggles was the separation from their family (Douglas et al., 2009). In this case, prisoners who are still recovering from the idea of incarceration are faced with their first obstacle: isolation from loved ones. Generally speaking, research agrees that incarceration is likely to negatively impact the psychological health of inmates (Haney, 2004).

Other research has focused on the impact of serving a prolonged period of time inside of a maximum-security prison. The prisoners studied were those serving life-sentences and, over the course of four years, the researchers found that the inmates became more introverted, indecisive, and seemed to deteriorate (Sapsford, 1978). Kurki and Morris (2001) focus specifically on supermax prisons, concluding that “[prisoners suffering from mental health issues] in supermaxes are getting worse, more dangerous, and more psychologically disturbed” (p. 421).

In addition to researching the effects incarceration has on inmates, research has also explored the differences between mental illnesses among those in jails opposed to those who are incarcerated in prisons. Powell et al. (1997, as cited by Kurki and Morris, 2001) assessed and analyzed a random sample of 213 jail and prison inmates for the presence of mental illness. The researchers recognized that prisons are intended for those who have been processed by the courts and are serving their sentences. In contrast, jails serve as institutions for those awaiting trial and are a much more stressful environment as the population is constantly changing. The study concluded that inmates incarcerated in jails, as well as people who are admitted for probation violations, do not actually display a high rate of serious mental illness. This can be accredited to the environment and mental state that accompanies being incarcerated in such institutions. Those who are in jails are most likely not serving long sentences and many are often still waiting for hearings and sentencings. On the other hand, higher rates of mental disorders were found amongst prison inmates. This can be due to the fact that those incarcerated within prisons are “accepting their fate”. Prisoners acknowledge their assigned place in society, and they must come to terms with life behind bars. By coming to terms with one’s long (perhaps even *life-long*) sentence and punishment, inmates must learn to conform and accept their situation. Conforming

may lead to the feelings of loss of power and helplessness. Therefore, being in an environment where one is subjected to feeling hopeless may very well result in negative psychological impacts and mental health. Once again, the findings of this study, amongst many others, support the claims that prison institutions do in fact negatively impact prisoners.

In addition to researching the negative impact prisons have on inmates' mental health, there have also been studies that investigate sexual assault and misconduct among those incarcerated. Tawandra et al. (2014) surveyed 134 randomly selected incarcerated black men. The researchers found that 43% of the men surveyed reported hearing that their introduction to prison life included witnessing sexual assault and viewing it as the norm. Upon entry, the men expressed that part of getting accustomed and "welcomed" to the prison culture included getting sexually assaulted in some manner. This supports that sexual assault is much more prevalent in prisons among straight men than commonly thought. More specifically, this study draws attention to the fact that sexual assault is more prevalent in prisons than in jails. Man and Cronan (2001) discuss the fact that in men's prison, sexual assault is used as a means of escaping fights and other deadly prison violence that may not be as common among the female population. Men are often faced with situations in which they are forced to participate in some form of physical altercation in order to gain what they want. In prison, physical altercations can cause more punitive actions and repercussions to be taken against the inmates involved. So, rather than participating in these altercations, many male prisoners will turn to sexual assault as a means to settle the situation and avoid further punitive actions, or even death due to physical violence (Man and Cronan, 2001).

Sexual violence is a much larger problem among those who identify as gay or transgender. Some jails and prisons attempt to segregate prisoners depending on their sexual

identity for safety purposes. However, for men who do not embrace their identity inside of prison institutions, segregation policies can be harmful. Meaning, men who engage in sexual behavior aligning with their sexual orientation while keeping their sexual preference a secret, are less likely to be protected under segregation policies within prisons. Those who engage in sexual activity inside of prison are more likely to transmit or receive HIV, amongst other sexually transmitted diseases (Robinson, 2011). When gone undetected, HIV and other viruses can spread within correctional facilities and impose a risk on all individuals; both correctional officers and inmates.

Incarcerated women are also victims of sexual assault, however, the ways in which such assault occurs are quite different compared to men. Johnson and Johnson (2002) surveyed incarcerated women about sexual coercion. In one of the facilities that Johnson and Johnson surveyed, it was reported that 27% of the women experienced sexual misconduct. Among those who were raped, one-third reported being assaulted by only one person, while over 40% were assaulted by a group of two or more people. Most cases were the result of persuasion and bribery amongst inmates. In other cases, women were denied access to their cell and assaulted in order to gain access; others were pushed against the prison walls and assaulted (Johnson and Johnson, 2002). Given the instability of prison environments, prisoners will often be left to fend for themselves. The institutions are not a safe place for many inmates and sexual assault will oftentimes be used as means for survival¹.

Impact of Prison Environment on Correctional Officers

¹ Although it is not uncommon to hear of sexual misconduct inside of correctional institutions, most studies focus on sexual misconduct amongst inmates. While much research does not examine the experiences of the sexual assault and abuse of power among correctional officers, that is not to deny their existence.

Although prisons have been shown to have negative impacts on those incarcerated, research has also shown the same to be true for correctional officers and prison personnel. Correctional officers are surrounded by unsafe environments and other factors that may negatively affect them. The environment in which correctional officers work has the largest, most detrimental, impact on their well-being (Brodsky, 1977). Research on the psychological well-being and stress experienced by correctional officers is minimal, but the limited research does highlight the negative impact of working in a prison environment. Among the most famous example is the Stanford Prison Experiment. The Stanford Prison Experiment illustrated the impact of the prison environment on a person's behavior, including both the incarcerated person and the correctional officer. In this experiment, college students were paid to act as prisoners and prison guards in a mock prison scenario (Haney and Zimbardo, 1998). Those who were given the role of the officers were told to act as such. The participants were given uniforms appropriate to their role. The guards were supervising those who received the roles of the inmates, punishing and humiliating them, sometimes physically. The guards were in charge and had control over the inmates. As the experiment progressed, the power dynamic quickly shifted and became extremely mentally detrimental. Shortly after the experiment began, those acting as officers quickly took on more serious roles. This led to abuse of their power that caused the rapid deterioration of the mental health of the acting prisoners. The main purpose to the experiment was to highlight how social and structural hierarchy, specifically within a prison environment, can affect mental health (Haney and Zimbardo, 1998). This experiment demonstrated how institutional structures can heavily impact individuals' actions and self-awareness. The participants' self-perception greatly influenced their encounters and the overall hierarchy that was created throughout the experiment. This may have been one of the first times where research

has explored the effects prison environments have on correctional officers and how the institutions and their structure shape their overall behaviors and interactions.

Impact on Mental Health

Regehr et al. (2019) found that correctional officers have higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety. Links between PTSD and on-the-job violence, due to inmates lashing out and dangerous physical altercations experienced by correctional officers, were observed. Cases of depression and anxiety disorders were found to stem from a lack of support officers felt from their organization. Many officers and prison personnel feel isolated and unsupported. This may in fact be related to the physical environment in which they are present as well. Staff feel as though the organization has higher regards for completing a job rather than showing concern and accounting for the officers' well-being. PTSD and depression were associated with overall job dissatisfaction and a decreased perception of their roles as they stand in society. In addition, correctional officers have a negative perceived "social status" that comes with the occupation. This "social status" refers to the expected hostility between prison staff and inmates within society. Guards are expected to protect the public and enforce the law at any cost and they are not to share their emotions or opinions regarding certain aspects of their jobs. They are expected to maintain a certain social image and doing so may come at the expense of their mental health and overall well-being (Regehr et al., 2019).

One of the few first-hand accounts of correctional officers' experiences can be found in *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* by Ted Conover (2009), which explores the experiences of a reporter working undercover as a correctional officer. Conover was a curious journalist who underwent officer academy training and immediately began working inside of Sing Sing Prison as a correctional officer. The main reason the author became a correctional officer was due to the

Department of Corrections' refusal to allow him to enter the institution as a journalist. Conover was not permitted to gather data and observe the environment as a civilian; rather, he needed to enter the system before receiving any insight on the truths that live within prison institutions. Throughout the book, it is quite clear that he begins experiencing high levels of stress, which in turn ends up affecting his relationship with his wife and children. Already suffering from anxiety issues, he begins experiencing symptoms of depression. This first-hand account offers details on the experience of working inside of a prison and the impact it can have on an individual officer, making it a valuable case study to consider when evaluating the negative impact on correctional employees.

In addition to acknowledging how correctional officers are negatively impacted, it is also important to evaluate and note their overall job satisfaction. Dennis (1998) focused on identifying factors that influence job satisfaction within the prison environment. The research measured "job satisfaction" using a scale that consisted of 10 questions designed to measure staff self-perception of their ability to participate in and contribute to their organization. One of the measurements focused on the staff's perceived level of satisfaction with the institution while the other focused on job satisfaction. The research concluded that job satisfaction heavily relied on one's education, supervisory status, tenure, salary, as well as their age. The results also showed that there was a negative correlation between stress and how "empowered" the participants felt. Depending on the participant's stress levels, they may feel decreased levels of motivation and self-confidence. In turn, their overall self-satisfaction and job satisfaction were influenced, which may in fact play a role in their overall wellbeing. Among research, this study showed that there are many internal, as well as external, factors and stressors that may affect a correctional officer's job satisfaction and performance.

Impact on Physical Health

In addition to mental health being a prominent issue amongst correctional officers, physical health also tends to follow the same negative trends. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), stress occurring as a result of poor mental health may result in physical stress being displayed in the body. External stressors directly impose stress on the heart and cause individuals affected to suffer from calcium buildup in the arteries, as well as heart disease. Risk factors include suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), other anxiety disorders, as well as experiencing chronic stress (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Correctional officers often suffer from PTSD, among other serious mental health illnesses (Regehr et al., 2019). As such, prison employees are at a higher risk for developing heart disease and other deadly physical illnesses that are a direct result of stress. Furthermore, individuals who are at a high risk of experiencing stress are often associated with more risky behavior. Risky behavior is associated with an increased chance of developing a physical injury and adopting destructive behaviors, such as smoking, inactivity, and failure to remain consistent with medication intake (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

Additionally, the nature of a correctional officer's work carries an intrinsic danger for physical harm (Fredrik and Smith, 2017). Such harms may be due to the fact that correctional officers are exposed daily to many inmates with infectious diseases. For example, prior to COVID-19, a random sample collected from California prisons showed that inmates were testing positive for infections such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, and tuberculosis (Ruiz et al., 2002, as cited by Fredrik and Smith, 2017). Correctional officers are in constant contact with individuals who may not even be aware that they carry an infectious disease. They may need to intervene in violent situations where they are involuntarily being exposed to inmate's bodily

fluids; other times, transmission can occur through sexual assault. The risks that accompany working within correctional facilities are great; deadly even. If such infections and diseases go undiscovered and untreated, the consequences can be extremely detrimental to the officers' lives and may even impose the risk of death (Fredrik and Smith, 2017).

Correctional officers face many other risks within their work environments. It is crucial that these risks are acknowledged and analyzed in order to better prepare and potentially combat the negative effects. Over the years, research has focused on the effects that prisons have on the mental health of inmates. However, seldom is it found and discussed how prison institutions affect correctional officers and other prison staff. Studies regarding correctional officers' overall health remain minimal. There has not been a study that has attempted to fully investigate the way in which job duties, experiences and tolls impact the overall well-being of officers. The studies that have been conducted instead investigate factors that play into job satisfaction, prison violence, stress, and home-life.

In order to better understand the impacts stress has on correctional officers, this study analyzes secondary data collected from a cross-sectional, quantitative study conducted by Griffin and Hepburn (2020). The goal of this examination is to better understand how correctional officers' stress levels, victimization, and overall negative experiences affect their mental and physical well-being. By understanding the relationship between these variables, one can better understand the true cost of working within a prison institution.

Criminological Theory

The environment in which correctional officers work can influence their behavior. Stress and other negative experiences are some of the many impacts that result from working within a prison institution. Correctional officers are expected to follow certain rules and regulations,

otherwise not required in other work fields. Correctional officers are instructed to wear specific uniforms, eat at specific times, speak in a certain manner, and sometimes refrain from exhibiting emotion. Given the demands of their occupation, correctional officers are exposed to an environment in which interactions are socially structured and many daily activities are prohibited. Their interactions are strictly monitored and it is difficult to experience social support and camaraderie. The oftentimes strict persona correctional officers are expected to adopt may greatly affect their socialization in the work environment and their overall mental health. In addition, it is difficult to determine how deprivation of social support and the adoption of different coping mechanisms may influence correctional officers. Furthermore violence, treatment by inmates, feelings of manipulation and disrespect, may cause their work environment to become more stressful. With that said, strain may begin exhibiting itself within their daily lives which may affect their feelings of stress and its impact on their lives.

Although multiple criminological theories can be applied for this research, the criminological theory that best explains the impact such social institutions and prisons have on correctional officers is Agnew's General Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992). This theory proposes that one's social and environmental factors drive them to participate in certain behaviors and actions (e.g., criminal behavior). If there are multiple factors increasing stress and pressure on individuals, then some will turn to criminal activity. The impact of strain differs according to its magnitude, recency, duration, and clustering (Agnew, 1992). Types of strain may include financial strain, victimization, and even discrimination. These strains may lead to negative emotions which may further evolve into criminal actions. Additionally, depending on the coping mechanisms and the level of social supports that individual correctional officers display, their feelings of stress and participation in certain behaviors outside of the institution varies (Agnew,

1992). Thus, the mental health of correctional officers will be impacted differently depending on their experiences, failure to reach personal goals, and their overall coping mechanisms.

Research Question and Hypotheses

This study aims to examine secondary data that was collected by Griffin and Hepburn (2020). By inspecting this data, this analysis aims to uncover whether there is a correlation between job experiences and officers' overall mental and physical well-being. This analysis aims to answer the following research question: What effect does employment at a correctional facility have on correctional officers' mental and physical well-being?

Correctional officers are often exposed to high stress situations that may negatively affect them. This stress may result in the excessive use of drugs and alcohol. In addition, officers may experience psychological side effects and physical pains due to stress. To elaborate, this study aims to understand the possibility of a relationship between the presence of employment stress and its effects on the correctional officers' overall well-being. These factors are examined using responses to questions regarding one's stress-levels, drug and alcohol use, and mental and one's physical well-being.

These research questions will be further examined by testing the following hypotheses:

H1) Correctional officers who had negative interactions with inmates, or heard of others who have had negative experiences, are more likely to experience higher stress levels.

H2) Correctional officers with high stress levels are more likely to use drugs and alcohol compared to officers with lower stress levels.

H3) Correctional officers with high stress levels have poorer mental health compared to officers with lower stress levels.

H4) Correctional officers who experience poor mental health are more likely to experience poor physical health as well.

These hypotheses were further examined by crosstabulations exploring possible differences by sex of correctional officers, security level of the institution in which they are employed, as well as the length of time officers have been working in the institution (in years).

Data and Methods

This secondary data is the result of a cross-sectional, quantitative study that included 515 correctional officers who were selected from state prisons in Texas and Massachusetts between the years 2017 and 2018. The correctional officers were surveyed and later interviewed, and the data collected was self-reported data from the survey answers (Griffin and Hepburn, 2020).

Ultimately, this study aims to analyze whether there is a relationship between the officers' stress levels, drug and alcohol use, and overall well-being.

Variables

Interactions/Victimization:

Interactions/victimization of correctional officers was analyzed through questions addressing physical assault, use of force, and manipulation that the officers may have witnessed or experienced. The negative interactions and vicarious victimization were utilized as the independent variable for the first hypothesis. This variable was measured using the following questions: *In the past year, have you witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate?* ; *In your work with inmates, have you ever had efforts by inmates to manipulate you?;* *Have you ever been physically assaulted (victimized) by an inmate?;* and *In your work with inmates, have you ever had threats from an inmate or group of inmates?* All questions had yes/no responses.

Within this sample, 58.6 percent witnessed the victimization of an officer by an inmate and 73.4

percent experienced manipulation by an inmate whereas, 39.6 percent report being physically victimized. (see Table 1).

Stress-Levels:

Stress levels among correctional officers were analyzed as independent and dependent variables. These statements targeted personal views on stress and the emotional well-being of the officer. Stress levels among correctional officers were analyzed using the following statements from the survey which had Likert scale responses: *My job is a stressful job (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree); When I'm at work, I often feel tense or uptight (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)* and *In the past month, how often have you felt anxious, worried or upset? (Never, Almost never, Sometimes, Fairly often, Very often)*. This sample illustrates 49.1 percent of participants who agree with the claim that their job is extremely stressful. Additionally, 45.2 percent of correctional officers disagree feeling tense and uptight at work and 23.5 percent report almost never feeling anxious or worried when at work (see Table 1).

Drug/Alcohol Use:

Drug and alcohol use was analyzed as a dependent variable. These questions targeted the correctional officers' use of alcohol, marijuana, and other illegal drugs. Drug and alcohol use were measured using the following questions from the survey: *Do you drink alcohol? (yes/no); Do you use marijuana? (yes/no); and Do you use illegal drugs? (yes/no)*. This sample indicates only 2.7 percent of participants use marijuana and 1.9 percent use illegal drugs², whereas 74 percent reported using alcohol (see Table 1).

² The percentage reported may be low due the nature of the occupation of correctional officers. Given that correctional officers are expected to abide the law, they may have felt uncomfortable reporting illegal drug use.

Physical Health:

Physical health among correctional officers is analyzed as a dependent variable. Physical health was measured using questions from the survey that target any major physical changes or illness. The dependent variable is measured using the following questions: *In the past month, how often have you experienced headaches?; In the past month, how often have you experienced stomach trouble or gastro-intestinal problems?; In the past month, how often have you experienced dizziness?; In the past month, how often have you experienced heartburn?; In the past month, how often have you experienced pain in the neck or lower back?* All of these questions were measured on a Likert scale: Never, Almost never, Sometimes, Fairly often, Very often, and Missing. These questions were combined in a scale using SPSS. The scale created examined the overall physical health questions. A low number on the scale represents good physical health, whereas a high number represents poor physical health. On average correctional officers reported having good physical health (mean of 1.4 respectively).

Mental Health:

Mental health among correctional officers is analyzed as both an independent and dependent variable. Mental health is measured using questions from the survey. Participants were asked questions regarding their feelings and emotional state. These questions were directly connected to their work experience and their interactions with inmates. This variable was measured using the following questions from the survey: *In the past month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?; In the past month, how often have you felt more stress when working directly with inmates?; In the past month, how often have you felt distant from others around you?; In the past month, how often have you felt depressed?; In the past month, how often have you felt fatigued when you get up in the morning*

and have to face another day on the job?; In the past month, how often have you felt burned out from your work? and In the past month, how often have you felt at the end of your rope? All of these questions were measured on a Likert scale: Never, Almost never, Sometimes, Fairly often, Very often, and Missing. These questions were combined in a scale using SPSS. The scale created examined the overall mental health questions. A low number on the scale represents good mental health, whereas a high number represents poor mental health. Similar to physical health, correctional officers report having good mental health (mean of 1.7 respectively).

Control Variables:

Other variables included the correctional officers' sex, prison security level (minimum/maximum), as well as the length of their employment time at the prison facility (in years). Within the same, 71.5 percent of participants were males and 28.5 percent were females. Additionally, 30.9 percent of correctional officers were working at a less than maximum security facility at the time the survey was conducted. It is also important to note that 29.3 percent of correctional officers in the sample report working at their respective facilities between 0-2 years. By accounting for these variables, this study was able to analyze the findings and determine whether the relationship between the correctional officers' interactions with inmates and officers' overall well-being varied based on these factors.

Analysis

This data was downloaded into SPSS and analyzed using Chi-Square Tests for Independence and Pearson's Correlation Test. For the Hypothesis 1, a Chi-Square Test for Independence was administered in order to assess officers' victimization and negative experiences and their relationship to stress levels. Hypothesis 2 was tested using a Chi-Square Tests for Independence as well. By analyzing the results, one is able to determine if a

relationship between increased stress levels and increased drug and alcohol use exists.

Hypothesis 3 was tested using the Pearson Correlation test in order to examine the relationship between high stress levels amongst correctional officers and the increase in poor mental health. Finally, Hypothesis 4 was analyzed using the Pearson Correlation test. For this hypothesis, the correlation test helped in determining the relationship between poor mental health among correctional officers and the increase in poor physical health. This analysis was intended to assess a correlation among officers to determine if there is a relationship between the variables.

Results

To test Hypothesis 1, multiple Chi-Square Tests for Independence were conducted. Negative experiences were defined by the following variables: *In the past year, have you witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate?*, *In your work with inmates, have you ever had efforts by inmates to manipulate you?*, *Have you ever been physically assaulted (victimized) by an inmate?*, and *In your work with inmates, have you ever had threats from an inmate or group of inmates?*. Stress levels were defined by the following variables: *My job is a stressful job*, *When I'm at work, I often feel tense or uptight*, and *In the past month, how often have you felt anxious, worried or upset?* The tests did not indicate a significant difference between correctional officers' negative experiences, more specifically, being physically victimized by inmates, and having felt anxious, worried, or upset within the last month. ($X^2 = 2.81, p = 0.59$). For example, only 6.4 percent of correctional officers who have been physically victimized by inmates claim to very often feel anxious, worried, or upset (see Table 3). On the other hand, 9 percent of correctional officers who have not been physically victimized by inmates, claim to very often feel anxious, worried, or upset.

Another Chi-Square Test for Independence was conducted to examine the association between officers' negative experiences, more specifically, having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate, and having felt anxious, worried, or upset within the last month (See Table 4). The test did not show significance between the two variables ($X^2 = 4.75, p = 0.31$). 6.2 percent of officers who have witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate, reported very often feeling anxious, worried, or uptight within the last month. Whereas 9.3 percent of correctional officers who did not witness an assault reported feeling anxious. Once again, more correctional officers who have not witnessed an assault are very often anxious compared to those who have witnessed an assault. Although there was a difference, the tests did not indicate a significance. With that said, it was unexpected that the findings illustrated correctional officers to show higher anxiousness levels when they have not been assaulted, compared to having been physically assaulted. This can be attributed to correctional officers knowing how to react after being assaulted or witnessing an assault. Whereas, if an officer has not been assaulted, they may anticipate inmates to react a certain way and thus their stress levels are increased because they do not yet know how to handle a potential assault situation.

However, there was a significant but weak association between correctional officers who have been manipulated by inmates and their agreement with the statement *My job is a stressful job* ($X^2 = 16.59, p < 0.01, \phi = .18$), indicating that there is less than a 1 percent chance that the differences are due to error (See Table 5). Specifically, 51.2 percent of correctional officers who have reported being manipulated by inmates agree with the statement *My job is a stressful job*, compared to 44.4 percent of correctional officers who have not reported being manipulated. Anxiety and stress appear to be occurring regardless of assault and negative interactions.

Furthermore, Chi-Square Test for Independence was conducted to see if Hypothesis 1 differed by sex. Sex did not influence feelings of anxiousness or worry when witnessing the assault of an officer by an inmate. There was no significant difference. Additionally, 48.9 percent of female participants who have witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate agree with the statement, *My job is a stressful job*, compared with 51.5 percent of male correctional officers. Thus, the stress and anxiety from witnessing an assault of an officer affect the feelings of anxiousness, stress and overall worry. This in turn affects the perception of the occupation's stress levels.

In addition to sex, the security level (dichotomous variables of *maximum security* and *less than maximum security*) of the correctional facility was used to better understand the general stress level of correctional officers. Findings indicate that 54.2 percent of correctional officers working in a maximum-security prison facility reported agreeing with the statement, *My job is a stressful job*, after having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate within the last year, compared with 57.8 percent of correctional officers who work in a less than maximum-security prison facility. The findings indicated a difference; however, it was not significant.

Other demographics used to further analyze Hypothesis 1 were the age of the correctional officer and the years they have worked within their respective prison facility. The findings demonstrated that 31.6 percent of correctional officers between the ages of 19-28 strongly agree with the claim *My job is a stressful job* after having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate within the last year. In addition, younger correctional officers demonstrated only 18.9 percent of correctional officers between the ages of 47-72 who strongly agree with the claim *My job is a stressful job* after having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate within the last year. Simply stated, younger officers who have witnessed an assault believe that

their job is more stressful compared to older officers who have witnessed an assault. The findings indicated a difference; however, it was not significant.

Finally, the data also indicated the experience of being manipulated by an inmate was significantly associated with feelings of anxiousness and worry. The data indicated that length of time employed at the institution was significantly associated with feelings of anxiousness. Specifically, there is a significant association among officers who have worked in a correctional facility for less than two years ($X^2 = 18.33, p < 0.001, \phi = .35$). This indicates that there is less than 0.11 percent chance that the differences are due to error.

To test Hypothesis 2, separate chi-square tests were run to determine whether marijuana use, illicit drug use and alcohol use differed by correctional officer stress level. To test Hypothesis 2, a Chi-Square Test for Independence was conducted to examine the association between correctional officers' agreement with the statement *My job is stressful* and their marijuana use. There was no significant association between the two variables ($X^2 = 3.97, p = 0.41$), with 9.6 percent of correctional officers who strongly agree with the statement *My job is a stressful job* reporting using marijuana compared to 11.1 percent who strongly disagree that their job is stressful (See Table 6). Furthermore, results from a Chi-Square Test for Independence did not indicate a significant relationship between feeling tense or uptight at work and marijuana use ($X^2 = 3.37, p = 0.50$) There was no significant difference found between correctional officers who reported feeling anxious, worried, and upset within the last month and marijuana use ($X^2 = 7.55, p = 0.11$) (See Table 7).

The Chi-Square Test for Independence indicated a significant relationship between officers who reported feeling tense or uptight at work and their illegal drug use ($X^2 = 11.68, p < 0.02, \phi = 0.21$) (See Table 8). This means that there is less than a 5 percent chance the

differences are due to error. However, there was no significant difference between feelings of anxiousness and worry and illegal drug use or feeling their job was stressful and illegal drug use.

In addition, there was no evidence to support that stress levels among correctional officers were significantly associated with alcohol consumption. However, it is worth noting that 80.3 percent of correctional officers who strongly agree with the statement *My job is a stressful job* indicated consuming alcohol, compared to 63.2 percent of correctional officers who strongly disagree that their job is stressful report consuming alcohol (See Table 9). Although this does not indicate a causal relationship between stress levels among correctional officers and alcohol consumption, it is important to acknowledge this finding given the high numbers of correctional officers who claim to consume alcohol. Out of all the questions related to drug and alcohol use, correctional officers were more willing to answer the question regarding alcohol consumption. These findings provided the only insights regarding drug and alcohol consumption among correctional officers. Due to the small number of individuals that reported marijuana and illegal drug use, demographics differences using Chi-Square Tests for Independence were unable to be examined.

To test Hypothesis 3, a Pearson Correlation was conducted to determine whether there was an association between mental health, feelings of anxiousness and worry, feeling tense or uptight and belief that one's job is stressful (See Table 10). This hypothesis was supported and correctional officers who reported higher stress levels also reported poor mental health. There was a significant positive relationship between feelings of anxiousness, worry or being upset within the last month and poor mental health scores ($r = 0.662, p < .0001$). There was also a significant positive relationship between participants who agreed that their job was stressful and poor mental health ($r = 0.470, p < 0.001$). Another significant positive relationship was

illustrated between correctional officers who believed their job was stressful and those who have experienced feeling anxious, worried or upset within the last month ($r = 0.352, p < 0.001$). Furthermore, feeling tense or uptight at work was found to be significantly related to poor mental health and the relationship is strong and positive ($r = 0.587, p < 0.001$). Finally, there was a medium positive relationship between participants who reported agreeing with the statement *My job is a stressful job*, and feeling tense or uptight at work. The sex of the correctional officers was also examined; however, no differences were shown.

Similar to Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 4 was tested using a Pearson Correlation as well (See Table 11). This hypothesis was supported. Correctional officers' mental health was significantly related to their physical health. This means that correctional officers who displayed higher stress levels, also tended to display poor physical health. In addition, the relationship was strong and positively correlated ($r = 0.582, p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the sex of the correctional officers was examined. Females' mental health and physical health were shown to be strongly and positively correlated ($r = 0.559, p < 0.001$). Males showed a strong, positive correlation as well ($r = 0.576, p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The current study provides insight regarding the relationship between correctional officers' negative experiences and stress levels and their mental health and physical health. The study focused on the assessment of participants' mental health and, in doing so, relationships were drawn to negative experiences, stress levels, and overall physical health. These findings support the notion that the correctional facilities do in fact negatively impact employees.

Although the findings do not support Hypothesis 1, it is important to note that 51.2 percent of correctional officers who have experienced efforts by inmates to manipulate them

agree with the statement *My job is a stressful job*. Whereas, 44.4 percent of correctional officers, who in their work with inmates, have not had efforts by inmates to manipulate them, agree with the statement *My job is a stressful job*. This means that manipulation seems to have a stronger effect on stress levels compared to victimization. It was evident that job stress was not strictly related to physical victimization, but rather, manipulation created a great deal of stress as well. This supports prior research claiming that witnessing on-the-job violence negatively impacts correctional officers (Regehr et al., 2019). Perhaps manipulation while interacting with inmates creates further stress and anxiety. Participants did not need to directly experience physical victimization in order for their stress levels to increase. Rather, mental manipulation tends to increase the feeling of job-related stress. This can be due to feeling a lack of control. Given the nature of confinement and security measures within correctional institutions, correctional officers are more likely to diffuse and stop physical altercations and violence from occurring. However, it is very difficult to avoid manipulation efforts, hence cannot control the thoughts of another. With that said, increased levels of stress resulting from manipulation or violence, increases strain levels on correctional officers and in turn increases the likelihood of correctional officers committing criminal activities (Agnew, 1992).

Additionally, sex is also one of many factors affecting one's intake and perception of stress, with a slightly higher percentage of females than males reporting feelings of stress (17.6 percent versus 5.0 percent, respectively). Although correctional officers face stress on a daily basis, it is important to highlight that there was a small percentage of both males and females who reported feeling overall anxiousness, worried, or upset very often when responding to having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate. This can be attributed to other stressors that females experience compared to males. Although not related to the work

environment, female correctional officers may experience stressors relating to family life, pregnancy, children, and general sexism. This can further increase stress amongst female correctional officers.

Stress was also shown to be perceived by correctional officers differently depending on their age. One surprising finding indicated that 31.6 percent of correctional officers between the ages of 19-28 strongly agree with the claim *My job is a stressful job* when responding to having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate within the last year. On the other hand, only 18.9 percent of correctional officers between the ages of 47-72 strongly agree with the claim *My job is a stressful job* after having witnessed an assault of any officer or staff by an inmate within the last year. In this instance, it is essential that that one considers the claims of Social Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992). More specifically, how or what individuals use to cope with their strain. For example, throughout the years, older officers may have developed coping skills to help with their stress. Whereas younger officers, may feel overwhelmed and unable to cope with stress. Unlike older correctional officers, perhaps younger correctional officers simply lack life experience and are unable to digest certain traumas. Correctional officer training may also impact how they cope with stress. This may differ depending on the correctional officers' age at the time of training and form of training they experienced. It is also important to note that there is a high possibility for correctional officer turnover. This can contribute to newer correctional officers experiencing higher levels of stress if they chose to stay. Meaning, that if newly employed correctional officers find the job to be unbearably stressful then they can simply leave and "opt-out" of this level of stress. However, those who remain in the occupation may have reported the stress levels demonstrated in the study.

Hypothesis 2 was in not supported by the data. This can be attributed to the simple fact of *who* the study was actually examining. Although correctional officers reported extremely low percentages for marijuana and drug use, the nature of their work and the repercussions they may face, may have heavily influenced their responses. Correctional officers are expected to protect the public, therefore partaking in illegal activity may damage their social image and overall perception (Regehr et al., 2019). In addition, they fear losing their job if they were to disclose their use of illegal drugs. However, more participants reported engaging in alcohol use. With that said, 80 percent of correctional officers who were strongly agreeing with the statement *My job is a stressful job* indicated consuming alcohol. However, this is the only indicator of a correlation between alcohol consumption and stress levels. Drug and alcohol use were not good indicators for the participants' predicted coping mechanisms and findings were not significant.

Both Hypothesis 3 and 4 were supported by the findings. The results clearly illustrated the strength and significance of relationships between stress levels and poor mental health. In addition, findings also support the relationship between poor mental health and its effects on poor physical health. It is a known fact that stress affects one's physical health (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). With this in mind, this study has shed light on the depth of the damage caused by stress and the negative interactions that occur. Granted, the study focused on four separate hypotheses. However, upon a closer examination, this research has alluded to the connections found between stress, drug and alcohol use, poor mental health, and poor physical health.

Although these variables may not be directly related, together, they create a toxic cycle that can detrimental to individuals' lives. More specifically, correctional officers are exposed to instances where stress and violence are likely to be experienced. Although total institutions

restrict physical violence, that is not to say that manipulation and other forms of stress are not experienced. Such stress and anxiety-filled inmate interactions are not common in other work environments. Concentrated stress in correctional facilities create high levels of anxiety that negatively impact correctional officers. Such stress affects correctional employees more compared to the average occupation. In addition, officers feel unable to express emotion and seek the necessary help given the social stigma following their occupation (Regehr et al., 2019). They are expected to remain unaffected which may lead to further feelings of anxiety and stress.

Limitations

Although there is prior research examining the effects the correctional environment has on correctional officers (Sugie and Turney, 2017), this research is limited. The current study places the participants' mental health as the focus of the research. With that said, this study was faced with limitations, some of which were unavoidable. The main limitation of this study lied in the roots of its data collection. This study took place in Texas and Massachusetts, only two of fifty states in this nation; this does not create an accurate representation of correctional officers and correctional facilities within the United States. Not only does conducting the research in two specific states limit the exploration of the different prisons, but it also overlooks the diversity and correctional officer training. This also overlooks the possible mental health programs that some prisons may have for correctional officers. The answers to the survey may have differed depending on the state and the resources offered to correctional officers by their employers.

Furthermore, the survey was only given to correctional facilities in two states. The environments of said correctional facilities are unknown and the overarching culture of the state is also unknown. Given that the study was a small-scale study, the data collected does not account for representation of the diverse correctional officers and correctional facilities found

within the United States. In addition, it was difficult to conduct certain analysis using certain variables given the proportion missing data. The sample size was fairly small and little analysis could be performed. For example, it was difficult to conduct a proper analysis for drug and alcohol use given the large amounts of missing data and the already limited number of participants.

In addition, given that this study was conducted using secondary data, there was limited actions that can be taken to adjust the data when needed. The data was collected to fit the original researcher's study and purpose. With that said, given that most of the data coding was done by the primary researchers and it was quite difficult to readjust when needed. Creating categorical and continuous variables proved challenging given the method in which the variables were coded. Similarly, some of the questions present on the initial survey created further obstacles throughout the analysis of this study. Some questions were very difficult to interpret and analyze as a researcher, particularly questions relating to change of behavior over time.

Other limitations may include the inability to further explore reasons behind stress. Given that the questions were designed to serve another study's purpose, this study lacked the ability to explore stress variable through different questions. The survey inquiries about stress through categorical questions. However, given the restricted number of questions, research is unable to answer for the *why*. Simply put, there are very specific questions asked and these questions allude to certain stressors that may present themselves in the lives of correctional officers. However, other environmental stressors and other factors are very difficult to explore and interpret; especially given that this research was conducted using secondary data. It is important that future research explores questions focusing on the environment of a correctional facility.

Such questions may provide Intel regarding how a correctional facility and its environment aids or contributes to the stress and anxiety experience by correctional officers.

With that said, this study analyzed the data using multiple Chi-Square Tests for Independence and Pearson Correlations. This may have limited the information received from the dataset. Future research might want to analyze the data using statistical tests such as Multiple Regressions and ANOVA tests. This may provide further intel regarding the data. In addition, when analyzing the data, the study overlapped questions in the stress levels variables in the mental health variables. There was an overlap in constructs and it is important to note that an overlap in these questions may have affected the results of the data. Other research may want to focus on different variables rather than having some questions overlap.

This study was able to shed light on the stress levels of correctional officers and their overall mental health. In addition, the study explored the effects of stress and mental health on correctional officers' physical health. Rather than simply discussing general health amongst inmates, this data allowed for the study at present to explore correctional officers' well-being and expose some of the detrimental side effects of working within a correctional institution.

Recommendation and Future Research

Based on this study, findings support that correctional officers suffer from poor mental health, increased levels of stress, and display a correlation between poor mental health and physical health. With that said, this research can offer further evidence for the need to implement mental health programs inside correctional institutions. For example, correctional institutions can begin offering staff monthly therapy sessions, annual mandatory psych examinations, and counseling resources. This allows employees the opportunity to take the time and evaluate their mental health and perhaps pinpoint specific work stressors. In addition, correctional staff can

benefit from personal time off. Furthermore, perhaps better pay, better insurance, more time off and general time away from correctional facilities can provide individuals with the opportunity to destress and avoid work-related stressors. These recommendations may be especially beneficial to correctional officers with less work experience. This study suggests that correctional officers who have worked between 0-2 years within a correctional facility tend to exhibit higher stress levels. These individuals may indeed benefit from further support within their work environment. Such support can decrease their stress levels and allow for the development of coping mechanisms. This may in turn prevent criminal activity from occurring as a result of strain (Agnew, 1992).

In addition, future research can better highlight the possible influence education has on perceived job stress. Researchers can further examine how the educational background of correctional staff influences their overall stress levels, and potential long-term physical health. Education may play a role in what correctional officers perceive as stressful based on their background knowledge on the matter. In addition, education can provide solution and gateways to coping mechanisms. Furthermore, given that this study utilized secondary data, information was limited to the answers collected. Although this survey was conducted face to face, future research can benefit from conducting more in-depth interviews and gathering more in-depth information regarding correctional officers' mental health. Moreover, by conducting in-depth interviews, researchers can gain better insight on work stressors beyond manipulation and physical assault. There may in fact be further work stressors that go undetected due to lack of information provided. By potentially implementing these recommendations, correctional institutions can benefit from improving their environment, officer-inmate interactions, and the overall well-being of correctional staff.

Conclusion

Although there is research examining the impacts correctional institutions have on inmates and correctional officers, it is evident that the focus is not on the correctional staff. Rather, most research focuses on how correctional facilities impact inmates. This study is beneficial due to the findings and information that it highlights. The current study contributes to existing literature by examining the mental health of correctional staff. Statistical analysis has illustrated significant relationships that further highlight the extent to which correctional officers are impacted. This research also speaks to general well-being of correctional officers. Findings of the research demonstrate that correctional officers display a significant relationship between stress levels and attempts at being manipulated. Additionally, this research also concluded that poor mental health has a significant relationship with poor stress levels and poor physical health. The statistical findings indicate that correctional officers display poor mental health, high stress levels, and relatively poor physical health. With that said, this study did not find any significance or association between stress levels and drug and alcohol use. This can be attributed to the nature of the study and correctional officers may not have been willing to disclose such information.

Furthermore, this research was supported by the Social Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992). The findings did in fact demonstrate that younger correctional officers were more likely to display higher stress levels compared to older officers. This can be attributed to older correctional officers developing coping mechanisms and learning to disperse tension better. This can occur as a result of years of exposure and learning to adapt to their environment.

This research is further evidence of the stressful impact suffered by correctional staff. This may be attributed to the nature of working within a total institution. Correctional staff are expected to behave in a certain way in order to be perceived by the public in a specific manner

(Regehr et al., 2019). With this knowledge in mind, this study serves as evidence for the need to improve the environments in which correctional officers work and the interactions that occur within correctional facilities. It is important to address poor mental health and pinpoint stressors that may lead to negative, life-altering consequences. By improving the correctional facilities, stress levels and overall strain may begin decreasing as well. This can lead to correctional officers experiencing more manageable stress and learning healthy coping mechanisms. According to social strain theory, by decreasing overall strain and stress, correctional officers will be less likely to commit criminal behavior (Agnew, 1992). Thus, by improving correctional institutions and their environments, stress levels are likely to decrease among employees. This can improve stress levels, improve mental health, and decrease potential criminal activity.

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Appendix

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N=515)				
Variables	%	N	Mean	S.D.
Witnesses an assault of an officer or staff by an inmate in past year				
<i>Yes</i>	41.4	213.0		
<i>No</i>	58.6	302.0		
Manipulated by inmates in past month				
<i>Yes</i>	73.4	378.0		
<i>No</i>	26.4	136.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.2	1.0		
Have you ever been physically assaulted				
<i>Yes</i>	39.6	204		
<i>No</i>	60.4	311		
Had threats from an inmate or group of inmates				
<i>Yes</i>	68.3	352		
<i>No</i>	31.3	161		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2		
Feel job is stressful				
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	3.7	19.0		
<i>Disagree</i>	12.4	64.0		
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	10.7	55.0		
<i>Agree</i>	49.1	253.0		
<i>Strongly agree</i>	23.7	122.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		
Tense or uptight when at work				
<i>Strongly agree</i>	5.0	26.0		
<i>Disagree</i>	45.2	233.0		
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	19.2	99.0		
<i>Agree</i>	25.0	129.0		
<i>Strongly agree</i>	5.0	26.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N=515)				
Variables	%	N	Mean	S.D.
Felt anxious, worried, or upset at work in past month				
<i>Never</i>	5.6	29.0		
<i>Almost Never</i>	23.5	121.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	41.7	215.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	20.8	107.0		
<i>Very often</i>	8.0	41.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		
Angered due to things outside of control during past month				
<i>Never</i>	5.4	28.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	21.9	113.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	47.0	242.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	16.5	85.0		
<i>Very often</i>	8.5	44.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.6	3.0		
Felt more stress when working directly with inmates during past month				
<i>Never</i>	20.6	106.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	29.9	154.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	30.3	156.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	13.0	67.0		
<i>Very often</i>	5.4	28.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.8	4.0		
Felt distant from others around				
<i>Never</i>	15.1	78.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	30.9	159.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	35.0	180.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	13.6	70.0		
<i>Very often</i>	4.9	25.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.6	3.0		

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N=515)				
Variables	%	N	Mean	S.D.
Felt depression in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	23.1	119.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	34.4	177.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	26.2	135.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	10.5	54.0		
<i>Very often</i>	5.4	28.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		
Fatigued in the morning when thinking about another day at work				
<i>Never</i>	7.8	40.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	22.9	118.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	37.5	193.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	18.1	93.0		
<i>Very often</i>	13.4	69.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		
Felt burned out from work				
<i>Never</i>	7.4	38.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	19.2	99.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	40.4	208.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	19.4	100.0		
<i>Very often</i>	13.2	68.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.4	2.0		
Felt at the end of your rope in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	37.1	191.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	29.1	150.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	18.8	97.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	9.3	48.0		
<i>Very often</i>	5.0	26.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.6	3.0		

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N=515)				
Variables	%	N	Mean	S.D.
Felt sad in past month				
<i>Never</i>	8.3	43.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	34.6	178.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	42.1	217.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	11.1	57.0		
<i>Very often</i>	3.3	17.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.6	3.0		
Headaches experienced in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	18.8	97.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	22.3	115.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	30.7	158.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	16.1	83.0		
<i>Very often</i>	10.9	56.0		
<i>Missing</i>	1.2	6.0		
Stomach/gastro-intestinal problems in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	30.7	158.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	26.0	134.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	25.2	130.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	9.5	49.0		
<i>Very often</i>	7.4	38.0		
<i>Missing</i>	1.2	6.0		
Dizziness experienced in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	54.6	281.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	19.6	101.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	16.5	85.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	5.4	28.0		
<i>Very often</i>	2.7	14.0		
<i>Missing</i>	1.2	6.0		

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N=515)				
Variables	%	N	Mean	S.D.
Heartburn experienced in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	42.7	220.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	20.2	104.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	21.2	10.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	6.4	33.0		
<i>Very often</i>	8.3	43.0		
<i>Missing</i>	1.2	6.0		
Neck/lower back pain in the last month				
<i>Never</i>	19.0	98.0		
<i>Almost never</i>	13.0	67.0		
<i>Sometimes</i>	32.0	165.0		
<i>Fairly often</i>	18.6	96.0		
<i>Very often</i>	15.9	82.0		
<i>Missing</i>	1.4	7.0		
Do you drink alcohol?				
<i>Yes</i>	74.0	131.0		
<i>No</i>	25.4	381.0		
<i>Missing</i>	0.6	3.0		
Do you use marijuana?				
<i>Yes</i>	2.7	14.0		
<i>No</i>	46.8	241.0		
<i>Missing</i>	50.5	260.0		
Do you use illegal drugs?				
<i>Yes</i>	1.9	10.0		
<i>No</i>	48.0	247.0		
<i>Missing</i>	50.1	258.0		
New Mental Health Scale			1.7	0.8
New Physical Health Scale			1.4	0.9

Table 2. Demographics (N=515)

Variables	%	N=	Mean	S.D.
Gender			0.71	0.45
<i>Male</i>	71.5	368.0		
<i>Female</i>	28.5	147.0		
Security level of facility (dichotomous)				
<i>Less than maximum security</i>	30.9	159.0		
<i>Maximum</i>	19.4	100.0		
<i>Missing</i>	49.7	256.0		
Years employed at same facility				
<i>0-2 years</i>	29.3	151.0		
<i>3-6 years</i>	19.4	100.0		
<i>7-13 years</i>	20.0	103.0		
<i>14-47 years</i>	24.5	126.0		
<i>Missing</i>	6.8	35.0		

Table 3. Crosstab of Victimization and Feelings of Anxiousness

	In the past year, have you ever been physically assaulted by an inmate?		
	No	Yes	Total
<i>Never</i>	15 (4.8%)	14 (6.9%)	29 (5.7%)
<i>Almost never</i>	76 (24.4%)	45 (22.3%)	121 (23.6%)
<i>Sometimes</i>	131 (42.1%)	84 (41.6%)	215 (41.9%)
<i>Fairly often</i>	61 (19.6%)	46 (22.8%)	107 (20.9%)
<i>Very often</i>	28 (9.0%)	13 (6.4%)	41 (8.0%)
<i>Total</i>	311 (100%)	202 (100%)	513 (100%)

Table 4. Crosstab of Witnessing the Assault of an Officer and Feelings of Anxiousness

	In the past year, have you witnessed the assault of any officer staff by an inmate?		
	No	Yes	Total
<i>Never</i>	20 (6.6%)	9 (4.3%)	29 (5.7%)
<i>Almost never</i>	74 (24.5%)	47 (22.3%)	121 (23.6%)
<i>Sometimes</i>	117 (38.7%)	98 (46.4%)	215 (41.9%)
<i>Fairly often</i>	63 (20.9%)	44 (20.9%)	107 (20.9%)
<i>Very often</i>	28 (9.3%)	13 (6.2%)	41 (8.0%)
<i>Total</i>	302 (100%)	211 (100%)	513 (100%)

Table 5. Crosstab of Manipulation by Inmates and Stress of Job

	In your work with inmates, have you ever had efforts by inmates to manipulate you?		
	No	Yes	Total
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	5 (3.7%)	14 (3.7%)	19 (3.7%)
<i>Disagree</i>	28 (20.7%)	36 (9.5%)	64 (12.5%)
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	19 (14.1%)	35 (9.3%)	54 (10.5%)
<i>Agree</i>	60 (44.4%)	193 (51.2%)	253 (49.4%)
<i>Strongly agree</i>	23 (17.0%)	99 (26.3%)	122 (23.8%)
<i>Total</i>	135 (100%)	377 (100%)	512 (100%)

Table 6. Crosstab of Marijuana Use and Job Stress

	My job is stressful					Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
<i>No</i>	8(88.9%)	24 (96.0%)	26 (100%)	136 (95.1%)	47 (90.4%)	241 (94.5%)
<i>Yes</i>	1 (11.1%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (4.9%)	5 (9.6%)	14 (5.5%)
<i>Total</i>	9 (100%)	25 (100%)	26 (100%)	143 (100%)	52 (100%)	255 (100%)

Table 7. Crosstab of Feelings of Anxiousness and Marijuana Use

	When I'm at work, I often feel tense or uptight					Total
	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Fairly often	Very often	
<i>No</i>	12 (100%)	62 (100%)	98 (91.6%)	63 (94.0%)	14 (87.5%)	240 (94.5%)
<i>Yes</i>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (8.4%)	3 (5.3%)	2 (12.5%)	14 (5.5%)
<i>Total</i>	12 (100%)	62 (100%)	107 (100%)	57 (100%)	16 (100%)	254 (100%)

Table 8. Crosstab of Illegal Drug Use and Feelings of Anxiousness

	My job is stressful					Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
No	15 (100%)	114 (100%)	50 (92.6%)	62 (91.2%)	6 (100%)	247 (96.1%)
Yes	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (7.4%)	6 (8.8%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (3.9%)
Total	15 (100%)	114 (100%)	54 (100%)	68 (100%)	6 (100%)	257 (100%)

Table 9. Crosstab Job Stress and Alcohol Consumption

	My job is stressful					Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
No	7 (36.8%)	20 (31.3%)	16 (29.1%)	64 (25.4%)	24 (19.7%)	131 (25.6%)
Yes	12 (63.2%)	44 (68.8%)	39 (70.9%)	188 (74.6%)	98 (80.3%)	381 (74.4%)
Total	19 (100%)	64 (100%)	55 (100%)	252 (100%)	122 (100%)	512 (100%)

Table 10. Pearson correlations between: Mental Health and Stress Levels

	1	2	3	4
1. Mental Health Scale	-			
2. In the past month, how often have you felt anxious, worried or upset?	.662**	-		
3. My job is a stressful job	.470**	.352**	-	
4. When I'm at work, I often feel tense or uptight.	.587**	.430**	.542**	-

**p < 0.001 (2-tailed)

Table 11. Pearson correlations between: Mental Health and Physical Health

	1	2
1. Physical Health Scale	-	
2. Mental Health Scale	.582**	-

**p < 0.001 (2-tailed)