

The Effect of Job Involvement on Correctional Staff

Eric G. Lambert

The driving force of corrections is the staff of correctional facilities. It is important to understand how the work environment shapes the attitudes of correctional staff; yet, the effect of job involvement on correctional employees has received little, if any, attention. Most of the research to date has focused on job stress and job satisfaction among correctional staff. Only recently has there been research on other important work attitudes, such as job involvement. Job involvement may have important effects on salient work outcomes. Therefore, there is a need to explore how job involvement may influence correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, family-on-work conflict, and work-on-family conflict. By using data acquired from a survey of staff of a state-run correctional facility in the Midwest, the researcher examined the effects of job involvement on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, family-on-work conflict, and work-on-family conflict. After controlling for gender, age, tenure, position, educational level, race, and supervisory status, the researcher conducted a multivariate analysis, which indicated that job involvement had a statistically significant positive relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and both forms of work-family conflict. Job involvement was observed to have non-significant direct effects on correctional staff job stress, life satisfaction, and turnover intentions.

Work in corrections is often a hard, demanding job that usually holds little prestige in society, but it also can be a rewarding experience. "Few other organizations are charged with the central task of supervising and securing an unwilling and potentially violent population" (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004, p. 577). Armstrong and Griffin further contend that "correctional institutions are unique work environments in both context and purpose" (2004, p. 577). Further, corrections occupies an important place in the criminal justice system as well as in society (Goodstein & MacKenzie, 1989). Due to the importance of corrections in society and the criminal justice system, a growing body of research involves correctional officers.

This research is required to understand how correctional staff influence the organization and, in turn, how the correctional organization affects the workers. Correctional staff are the heart and soul of any correctional organization. Staff are responsible for myriad tasks and responsibilities that ensure that the organization meets its goals of providing a safe, humane, and secure environment. Correctional organizations succeed (or fail) based on their employees. Archambeault and Archambeault point out that "correctional workers represent the single most important resource available to any correctional agency or institution in attempting to accomplish its mission, goals, and objectives" (1982: xxii). Correctional staff are the driving force of any correctional organization.

The correctional staff literature to date has focused mainly on the effects of work environment on the attitudes and behaviors of correctional staff, particularly on the antecedents of job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. While many studies have focused on antecedents of work factors involving correctional staff, not all possible antecedents have been examined. The concept of job involvement has received very little attention in the correctional literature. This oversight is salient. Job involvement has been

theorized to be the force that helps shape many employee and organizational outcomes. Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, and Lord argue that job involvement is “a key factor influencing important individual and organizational outcomes” (2002, 93). Furthermore, Brown contends that “increasing job involvement can enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity by engaging employees more completely in their work and making work a more meaningful and fulfilling experience” (1996, 235).

Outside the field of corrections, job involvement is theorized to be an antecedent of job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, and work-family conflict (Brown, 1996). Nevertheless, due to a lack of empirical exploration in the correctional literature, there is a question of what, if any, effects job involvement has on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, and work-family conflict. This preliminary study examines an empirical void in the correctional literature: the effects of job involvement on correctional staff. Specifically, it examines the effect of job involvement by means of a multivariate analysis, while controlling for the personal characteristics of gender, age, tenure, position, educational level, race, and supervisory status, on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, and work-family conflict.

Literature Review

Job involvement is the degree of importance an individual assigns the job in his or her life (i.e., central life interest) (Dubin, 1956; Elloy, Everett, & Flynn, 1995; Kanungo, 1982a, 1982b; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). It is the psychological identification a person has with his or her job (Blau & Boal, 1987; Brown & Leigh, 1996; DeCarufel & Schaan, 1990; Kanungo, 1982a, 1982b; and Lawler & Hall, 1970).

An individual with a high degree of job involvement would place the job at the center of his/her life=s interests. The well-known phrase ‘I live, eat, and breathe my job’ would describe someone whose job involvement is very high. . . . Persons with low job involvement would place something other than their jobs (e.g., family, hobbies) at the center of their lives” (DeCarufel & Schaan, 1990, 86).

The opposite of job involvement is job alienation (Kanungo, 1979, 1982a).

Job involvement is a distinct concept that differs from the concept of work ethic (Kanungo, 1982a, 1982b), which refers to the belief that work is important, and people should engage in work to better themselves (DeCarufel & Schaan, 1990). Job involvement is also a distinct concept from job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Job involvement is the importance of the person’s job/work in his or her life, and job satisfaction is the degree of satisfaction an employee obtains from his or her job (Kanungo, 1982b). “[D]istinctions between emotional state of liking one=s job (job satisfaction) and the cognitive belief state of physiological identification with one’s job (job involvement) have been advanced for some time” (Brooke, Russell, & Price, 1988, 139). Furthermore, organizational commitment is a bond with the organization, while job involvement is an attachment to the specific job (Kanungo, 1982a). Moreover, by using factor analytic procedures, Brooke et al. demonstrated empirically that job involvement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are indeed separate, distinct concepts.

Job involvement is a critical factor in shaping worker outcomes (Diefendorff et al., 2002; Lawler, 1986); for example, Hackman and Lawler (1971) theorize that job involvement is a salient factor in shaping the

motivation of individual workers. Yet, little research has been conducted on the effects of job involvement among criminal justice workers. Most of the criminal justice research on job involvement has been limited to the police. A study of police psychologists found no statistically significant correlation between job involvement and job satisfaction (Bergen, Aceto, & Chadziewicz, 1992). A study of Canadian police officers observed that job involvement correlated positively with both job satisfaction and organizational commitment (DeCarufel & Schaan, 1990). A study of Midwestern police officers observed that job involvement correlated significantly with organizational commitment and turnover intentions (McElroy, Morrow, & Wardlow, 1999). In a study of Southern police officers, Lord (1996) reported a relationship between job involvement and the stressors of role conflict and role ambiguity. A study of Midwestern police officers found that supervisory initiation of structure in the workplace correlated positively with the level of self-reported job involvement (Brief, Aldag, & Wallden, 1976). Another study of Midwestern police officers reported that job involvement decreased during the eight months after academy training (Hazer & Alvares, 1981). A study of New Zealand police officers found no difference in level of job involvement between male and female respondents (Love & Singer, 1988). Little, if any, published research exists on the effects of job involvement among correctional staff.

Job stress is generally defined in the correctional literature as a worker's feelings of job-related difficulty, tension, anxiety, and distress (Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985; Grossi, Keil, & Vito, 1996). The researcher predicted that job involvement has a negative effect on job stress: those who are not involved do not look forward to their jobs; they work in jobs they care little about. Further, employees alienated from the job find it frustrating to attend work, day after day, which ultimately leads to increased job stress. Conversely, people who identify psychologically with their jobs may look forward to work.

Locke defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (1976, 1300). Job satisfaction is an affective response by a worker concerning his or her particular job, and it results from an overall comparison of actual outcomes with outcomes the worker needs, wants, or desires (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992). Job satisfaction is the degree to which an individual likes his or her job (Spector, 1996). The researcher hypothesized that job involvement has a positive relationship with job satisfaction among correctional employees: people who are involved in work find it stimulating, which makes the job more satisfying.

Organizational commitment is loyalty to the organization, identification with the organization and its core values (i.e., pride in the organization and internalization of the goals of the organization), and a desire for involvement in the organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). A global concept, organizational commitment is much more than just a bond to the job or a work group. It is a commitment to the whole employing organization (Lambert, Barton, & Hogan, 1999). The researcher postulated that job involvement has a positive effect on organizational commitment: people who are not involved with their jobs are probably more likely to blame the organization for having a job they care little about, which means less likelihood of commitment to the organization. Conversely, people who are involved should form a greater bond with the organization from which the job originates.

Life satisfaction is the cognitive appraisal of the overall degree of satisfaction a person has with his or her life (Donovan & Halpern, 2002; Hart, 1999); it is a person's overall assessment of the quality of his or her life. The importance of work in a person's life might affect a person's overall satisfaction with life.

Therefore, the researcher predicted that job involvement has a positive relationship with correctional staff life satisfaction. Work is an important part of most peoples' lives and occupies a significant proportion of their waking day. Besides consuming a considerable amount of time, a person's job often shapes his or her identity (Lambert, Hogan, Paoline, & Baker, 2005). According to Terkel (1974), a job for many people provides "daily meaning as well as daily bread" (p. xi). If correctional staff have high job involvement, they should report greater satisfaction with life because they think they have purpose. Correctional workers who have low job involvement should report lower life satisfaction because they have a job they have little interest in doing.

Turnover intentions are the cognitive process of thinking, planning, and desiring to leave a job (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). Turnover intentions generally occur before actual turnover; moreover, turnover intentions are generally the best predictor of voluntary turnover (Steel & Ovalle, 1984). According to Fishbein and Ajzen, "The best single predictor of an individual's behavior will be a measure of his intention to perform that behavior" (1975, p. 369). The author hypothesized that job involvement is inversely linked with turnover intentions among correctional employees; people with high job involvement have little reason to leave the job. Conversely, correctional workers who are alienated from their jobs may, over time, develop a strong desire to leave their jobs.

Work-family conflict is "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by participation in the family (work) role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). Work-family conflict can be divided into two primary dimensions. One dimension occurs when family or social matters cause conflict at work. This type of work-family conflict is called family-on-work conflict. The second dimension of work-family conflict occurs when work matters affect family or social life, and this dimension is called work-on-family conflict (Netermeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Job involvement could be related to family-on-work conflict. Workers with low job involvement might not care when home issues cause distractions at work; however, employees who are highly involved with work may have greater family-on-work conflict. Job involvement could also be linked with work-on-family conflict. Brown argues that "high levels of job involvement could possibly lead to trading off family commitments in favor of job commitments" (1996, p. 239). Individuals too occupied with their jobs may experience problems at home when family members or friends push them to spend less time focused on the job. Thus, the researcher postulated that job involvement has a statistically significant positive correlation with both family-on-work conflict and work-on-family conflict among correctional employees.

Methods

Respondents

The researcher administered a questionnaire to the staff at a Midwestern state correctional institution that houses mainly medium to maximum security adult male inmates younger than aged 26 years. Staff were informed the survey was voluntary and their responses would be anonymous. Of the 400 surveys issued, a total of 272 useable surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 68%. Respondents represented all areas of the correctional facility, such as correctional officers, case managers, medical staff, industry staff, and food service workers. The respondents also represented various administrative levels of the correctional facility, from line staff to supervisors and managers. The respondents appeared to be

representative of the staff at the prison. Among the total prison staff, approximately 77% were male, 86% were White, and 53% were correctional officers. Among the respondents, about 76% were male, 81% were White, and 50% were correctional officers.

Variables

Control Variables. The personal characteristics of gender, age, tenure, position, educational level, race, and supervisory status were selected as control variables. Gender was measured as a dichotomous variable (0 = female and 1 = male); 76% of the respondents were male. Age was measured in continuous years and had a mean of 42.55 years, with a standard deviation of 8.32. Tenure at the correctional facility was measured in continuous years and had a mean of 9.64 years, with a standard deviation of 6.82. Position was measured according to whether the respondent worked in custody (coded as 1) or not (coded as 0); 50% were correctional officers. For this study, educational level represented whether a respondent had earned a college degree (1) or not (0); 41% of the respondents had earned some type of college degree (i.e., associate's, bachelor's, master's, or professional). Race was measured as a dichotomous variable (0 = Nonwhite and 1 = White); 81% of the respondents marked White. Finally, a variable representing whether the respondent was a supervisor of other workers (1) or not (0) was created; 24% of the respondents indicated they were supervisors.

Job Involvement. Job involvement was measured by using the response to three items ("I live, eat, and breathe my job," "The most important things that happen to me in my life usually occur at work," and "The major satisfaction in my life comes from work"). The items were adopted from Lawler and Hall (1970). Those surveyed responded to the three items by using a five-point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree, and the responses were summed together to form a job involvement index.

Dependent Variables. Job stress was measured by using five items (e.g., "During the past 6 months, how often have you experienced a feeling of being emotionally drained at the end of the workday" and "During the past 6 months, how often have you experienced a feeling of worry that the job is hardening you emotionally") from the Prison Social Climate Survey of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (Wright & Saylor, 1992). The response options for the job stress items were rarely occurs, seldom occurs, occurs somewhat, usually occurs, and occurs frequently.

Job satisfaction was measured by using five items (e.g., "Most days I am enthusiastic about my job" and "I find real enjoyment in my job") from Brayfield and Rothe (1951). Respondents answered the job satisfaction items by using a five-point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree.

Nine items from Mowday et al. (1982) were used to measure organizational commitment (e.g., "I really care about the fate of this prison," "I feel little loyalty to this prison" (reverse coded), and "I find that my values and the prison's values are very similar"). Respondents answered the organizational commitment items by using a five-point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree.

Life satisfaction was measured by using two questions from Quinn and Staines (1979). The first question was "Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are with your life?" (Response options were 1 = very happy, 2 = happy, and 3 = not too happy). The second question was "In general, how satisfying do you find the ways you're spending your life these days?" (Response: 1 = very satisfying, 2 = satisfying, 3 = not too satisfying).

The four parts of turnover intentions—1) thinking of quitting; 2) planning to stay or leave; 3) searching for alternative employment; and 4) a desire to leave current job—were measured by using items from Sager, Griffeth, and Hom (1998). The four items were as follows: “In the last 6 months, have you thought about quitting your current job?” (yes/no); “How likely is it that you will be at this job in a year from now?” (five-point Likert type of scale ranging from very likely to very unlikely); “How actively have you searched for a job with other employers in the last year?” (five-point Likert type of scale ranging from not at all to very actively); and “Do you desire to voluntarily leave/quit your job?” (yes/no).

Eleven items measured work-family conflict, which were adapted (and reworded for the correctional arena) from studies of work-family conflict outside the field of corrections (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conley, 1991; Bohlen & Viveros-Long, 1981; Higgins & Duxbury, 1992). Both dimensions of work-family conflict were measured. Family-on-work conflict was measured by using the response to two items (e.g., “My family life interferes with work” and “My social life interferes with my job”). Work-on-family conflict was measured by using nine items (e.g., “My job keeps me away from my family too much,” “Work makes me too tired or irritable to fully enjoy my family and/or social life,” and “I find that I frequently bring home problems from work”). Respondents answered the family-on-work conflict and work-on-family conflict items by using a five-point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree. The researcher created all the dependent variable indexes by summing the specific items together.

Results

Descriptive statistics for the measures this study used appear in Table 1. There appeared to be significant variation in the measures. All the indexes had a Cronbach’s alpha value higher than .60, a level which is generally viewed as acceptable (Gronlund, 1981).

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models were estimated with the job involvement and the seven personal characteristics as independent variables and job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, family-on-work conflict, and work-on-family conflict as the dependent variables. Tables 2 and 3 present the results of the OLS regression models with job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, turnover intentions, family-on-work conflict, and work-on-family conflict as the dependent variables.

In the OLS model with job stress as the dependent variable, job involvement had non-significant effects. In fact, none of the independent variables had a statistically significant effect on job stress. For the job satisfaction model, gender, supervisory status, and job involvement had significant effects. Women and supervisors, in general, tended to report higher levels of job satisfaction than men and non-supervisory employees. Job involvement has a positive effect: those with more job involvement reported higher levels of job satisfaction. In the organizational commitment equation, tenure, supervisory status, and job involvement all had significant effects. Tenure had an inverse association, which meant as age increased, organizational commitment decreased. In general, supervisors were more committed to the organization than were non-supervisory staff. Job involvement had a positive relationship. For the life satisfaction regression model, job involvement had a non-significant effect. Education level had a positive relationship.

Job involvement did not have a significant effect on turnover intentions. Education was the only variable to have a significant association with turnover intentions; it had a positive effect. For the family-on-work conflict, job involvement had a significant positive effect. None of the control variables had a significant

relationship with the family-on-work conflict index. For the work-on-family model, position and job involvement had significant effects. Custody staff generally reported greater levels of work-on-family conflict than did non-custody workers. Job involvement had a positive relationship: increases in the job involvement measure were associated with increases in the work-on-family conflict index. Finally, the R^2 values, although modest, were the largest for the organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and work-on-family regression models. R^2 represents the amount of variance in the dependent variable explained/accounted for by the independent variables.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Variables*

Measure	Description	Min	Max	Mean	SDev.
Gender	0 = Female, 1 = Male	0	1	0.76	0.43
Age	Measured in continuous years	20	61	42.55	8.32
Tenure	Measured in years at the facility	0	26	9.64	6.82
Position	0 = Noncustody, 1 = Custody	0	1	0.50	0.50
Education	0 = No college degree, 1 = College degree	0	1	0.41	.49
Race	0 = Nonwhite, 1 = White	0	1	0.81	0.39
Supervisory Status	0 = Not a supervisor 1 = Supervisor of staff	0	1	0.24	0.42
Job Stress	5 item index, $\alpha = .80$	5	25	12.61	4.30
Job Satisfaction	5 item index, $\alpha = .89$	5	25	17.50	4.29
Organizational Commitment	9 item index, $\alpha = .88$	9	45	29.75	6.64
Life Satisfaction	2 item index, $\alpha = .87$	2	6	4.11	1.09
Turnover Intentions	4 item index, $\alpha = .61$	2	11	3.80	2.03
Family-on-Work Conflict	2 item index, $\alpha = .77$	2	10	3.66	1.37
Work-on-Family Conflict	9 item index, $\alpha = .79$	10	37	21.74	5.41
Job Involvement	3 item index, $\alpha = .74$	3	12	4.75	1.70

Note. Min = minimum value, Max = maximum value, and SDev. = standard deviation. α represents Cronbach's alpha. The Turnover Intentions has a minimum value because the two questions with no/yes response categories were coded as 0 and 1, and the two questions measured with a five-point Likert type of scale were 1 to 5.

Table 2. OLS Regression Results for the Effect of Job Involvement on the Dependent Variables of Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Life Satisfaction

Variables	Job Stress		Job Satisfaction		Org. Commitment		Life Satisfaction	
	B	β	B	β	B	β	B	β
Gender	0.01	.01	-1.52	-.15*	-1.19	-.08	-0.22	-.08
Age	0.01	.02	-0.01	-.02	-0.05	-.06	-0.02	-.15*
Tenure	0.02	.03	-0.07	-.11	-0.13	-.14*	0.01	.08
Position	0.35	.04	-0.81	-.09	-0.79	-.06	0.01	.01
Education	-0.17	-.02	-0.01	-.01	0.23	0.2	0.27	.12
Race	-0.73	-.06	0.040	.04	1.32	.08	-0.27	-.09
Supervisor	0.86	.08	1.86	.19**	3.82	.25**	-0.06	-.02
Job Involv.	0.01	.01	0.46	.18**	0.91	.18**	-0.05	-.08
R ²		.01		.15*		.16*		.06

Note. For a description of the variables, see Table 1; Org. = organizational, Involv. = involvement.

* p # .05

** p # .01

Conclusion

Many, but not all, of the predicted relationships were observed in this study. Job involvement appears to be important in helping shape the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of correctional employees. Employees who are involved with their jobs are much more likely to find satisfaction from the job than those who are alienated from their jobs. The psychological identification with the job ultimately leads to an affective response of a person liking his or her job. This relationship is probably due to the fact that greater job involvement leads to increased chances of the job meeting an employee's needs and desires. Correctional workers who are alienated from the job will probably put forth less effort at work, ultimately leading to an even smaller chance that the job will meet their emotional needs.

Table 3. OLS Regression Results for the Effect of Job Involvement on the Dependent Variables

Variables	Turnover Intentions		Family-on-Work Conflict		Work-on-Family Conflict	
	<u>B</u>	<u>β</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>β</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>B</u>
Gender	-0.34	-.07	0.01	.01	0.60	.05
Age	-0.01	-.02	-0.01	-.05	-0.02	-.04
Tenure	-0.03	-.11	0.02	.10	-0.04	-.05
Position	0.00	0.00	0.13	.05	3.48	.33***
Education	0.52	.13**	0.14	.05	-0.54	-.05
Race	0.06	.03	0.23	.06	-1.21	-.08
Supervisor	-0.14	-.03	-0.09	-.03	0.43	.03
Job Involvement	-0.05	-.04	0.18	.22***	0.36	.11*
R ²		.05		.06*		.14***

Note. For a description of the variables, see Table 1. Invol. = involvement.

* $p \leq .10$ ** $p \leq .05$ *** $p \leq .01$

Furthermore, higher job involvement leads to greater commitment with the organization. This relationship is probably due to the fact that the person identifies with the job and the organization that created and controls the job. The organization needs to succeed in the long-term for the job to remain; therefore, it is in the best interest of a person with high job involvement to be committed to the organization. In the end, it is a win-win situation. The employee has a job he or she identifies with and the organization has a committed worker. Writing about employees in general, Blau & Boal (1987) refer to people with high levels of job involvement and organizational commitment as “institutionalized stars” who are critical to the long-term success of the organization. They refer to workers with low job involvement and organizational commitment as “apathetic employees” who may actually impede the long-term success of the organization. Thus, not only does the individual correctional employee benefit from increased job involvement, but the organization benefits as well.

It is in the best interest of correctional organizations to have satisfied and committed employees. Among correctional staff, higher levels of job satisfaction have been linked to positive work outcomes, such as greater support for rehabilitation, satisfaction with life, and compliance with organizational rules and goals (Fox, 1982; Kerce, Magnusson, & Rudolph, 1994; Lambert, Hogan, et al., 2005) Conversely, lower levels of job satisfaction have been found to lead to negative outcomes, such as burnout, absenteeism, turnover Intent and turnover (Byrd, Cochran, Silverman, & Blount, 2000; Dennis, 1998; Jurik & Winn, 1987; Lambert, Edwards, Camp, & Saylor, 2005; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1986; Wright, 1993). Similarly, organizational commitment has been linked to positive correctional staff behaviors, such as higher levels of job

performance (Culliver, Sigler, & McNeely, 1991) and negatively related to negative outcomes, such as absenteeism and turnover (Camp, 1994; Lambert, 1999, 2006; Stohr, Self, & Lovrich, 1992). The results of this study suggest that job involvement may lead to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment among correctional workers.

Job involvement was also linked with both dimensions of work-family conflict. There was a positive correlation between job involvement and family-on-work conflict. It could be said that those employees with high identification with the job place too much importance on the job and become upset when their home life spills over into work. It is reasonable to expect that at times an employee's home life will affect him or her at work. It appears that those with high job involvement become more aware of this spillover and experience more stress from it. It also appears that placing too much importance on the job means that home life may suffer, as work-on-family conflict was also affected. A person with high job involvement may not have the time left to be with family and friends. Likewise, high levels of identification with the job may mean that the person spends too much time thinking about the job. Moreover, when problems occur on the job, a person with high job involvement may take out his or her frustrations at home on family and friends. In the end, it is possible that very high of job involvement may lead to the person becoming a workaholic.

As stated previously, high job involvement benefits both employees and the employing organization because it is linked with higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It also appears that negative effects may result from high job involvement such as increased work-family conflict. Work-family conflict has been found to be positively linked with increased job stress among correctional staff (Triplett, Mullings, & Scarborough, 1999). Thus, high job involvement may have negative consequences for correctional workers and the organization.

Interestingly, job involvement had no relationship in this study with job stress. It is possible that a relationship exists between the two variables that the study did not observe. It is also possible that there is no direct relationship between job involvement and job stress. Psychological identification with a job may not lead to either increased or decreased job stress for correctional workers. Research indicates that most stress for correctional staff comes from role stress, particularly in terms of role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, perceived dangerousness of the job, and work-family conflict (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Cullen et al., 1985; Dowden & Tellier, 2004; Griffin, 2006; Hepburn & Albonetti, 1980; Hepburn & Knepper, 1993; Lambert & Paoline, 2005; Triplett et al., 1996, 1999; Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link, & Wolfe, 1991; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1986). Job involvement is not a type of role stressor; it is a psychological phenomenon. It would be expected that apathetic (i.e., low job involvement) employees would experience less stress because they have less interest in the job. The lack of a relationship might result because job involvement is linked with job satisfaction, and job satisfaction has been found to be inversely related to job stress among correctional staff. Thus, it is possible that job involvement is not directly linked with correctional job stress. While it may not have direct effects, job involvement likely has indirect effects on job stress among correctional staff. Job involvement probably indirectly helps shape correctional staff job stress through work-family conflict. As previously indicated, job involvement was associated with both forms of work-family conflict. In turn, other research has found work-family conflict to be a stressor for correctional workers.

Job involvement also had non-significant relationships with both life satisfaction and turnover intentions. It could be that job involvement affects both life satisfaction and turnover intentions but the current study failed to observe an effect. It is also possible that there is no direct link between job involvement and either life satisfaction and turnover intentions among correctional staff. This does not mean that job involvement has no effect on either outcome. The effects of job involvement on turnover intentions and life satisfaction are probably indirect through job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to Brown, "Proximal outcomes of job involvement mediate indirect relationships with more distal outcomes" (1996, 239). In other words, the immediate effects of job involvement are on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and, in turn, job satisfaction and organizational commitment effect turnover intentions and life satisfaction. Past research has found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are important factors in helping shape life satisfaction and turnover intentions among correctional staff (Camp, 1994; Lambert, 2006; Lambert, Hogan, et al., 2005; and Stohr et al., 1992).

As with most research projects, this study has limitations. The findings are based on a single survey. Correctional employees at other correctional institutions need to be studied to determine whether the results reported here can be replicated. Without this additional research, it is impossible to conclude what, if any, effects job involvement has on correctional staff. Future research should use a more in-depth measure of job involvement. This study used three items to create the index for job involvement. The relationship with job involvement and other outcomes, such as absenteeism, job performance, and relations with coworkers, needs to be explored. In addition, future research should determine whether job involvement influences perceptions of the work environment. There is also a need to examine how job involvement is formed among correctional staff. Research among non-criminal justice employees has found that job involvement is generally shaped by work environment factors more than personal characteristics (Elloy, Everett, & Flynn,

1991, 1995). Clearly a need exists for much more research on job involvement among correctional employees.

In closing, correctional employees are the lifeblood of any correctional facility. Working in corrections is an experience like working in few, if any, other organizations. Because correctional staff are critical elements in any correctional organization, it is important to understand how the work environment affects them. According to Poole and Pogrebin, "We should be asking what the organization means to the worker instead of what the worker means to the organization" (1991, 170). The knowledge and understanding of factors that shape outcomes for correctional workers is critical for all parties involved, including correctional administrators, correctional employees, inmates, academicians, and society in general. In an era of increasing inmate populations, rising costs, shrinking budgets, and personnel shortages, this knowledge is paramount. Much more research is required on the effect of job involvement on correctional staff. This important area should not be ignored by either researchers or correctional administrators. Brown points out that "a deep understanding of job involvement and its antecedents and consequent influences has the potential to enrich a fundamental aspect of human experience (i.e., work) and contribute to heightened productivity in organizations and society by fostering greater use of human potential" (1996, 253). It is hoped that this study will generate more interest in job involvement among correctional staff.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks Janet Lambert for editing and proofreading the article. The author also thanks the anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.

References

- Archambeault, W., & Archambeault, B. (1982). *Correctional supervisory management: Principles of organization, policy, and law*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Armstrong, G., & Griffin, M. (2004). Does the job matter? Comparing correlates of stress among treatment and correctional staff in prisons. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 32*, 577–592.
- Bacharach, S., Bamberger, P., & Conley, S. (1991). Work-home conflict among nurses and engineers: Mediating the impact of role stress on burnout and satisfaction as work. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 12*, 39–53.
- Bergen, G., Aceto, R., & Chadziewicz, M. (1992). Job satisfaction of police psychologists. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 19*, 314–329.
- Blau, G., & Boal, K. (1987). Conceptualizing how job involvement and organizational commitment affect turnover and absenteeism. *Academy of Management Review, 12*, 288–300.
- Bohen, H., & Viveros-Long, A. (1981). *Balancing jobs and family life: Do flexible work schedules help?* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Brayfield, A., & Rothe, H. (1951). An index of job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 35*, 307–311.

- Brief, A., Aldag, R., & Wallden, R. (1976). Correlates of supervisory style among policemen. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 3*, 263–271.
- Brooke, P., Russell, D., & Price, J. (1988). Discriminant validation of measures of job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 73*, 139–145.
- Brown, S. (1996). A meta-analysis and review of organizational research on job involvement. *Psychological Bulletin, 120*, 235–255.
- Brown, S., & Leigh, T. (1996). A new look at psychological climate and its relationship to job involvement, effort, and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*, 358–368.
- Byrd, T., Cochran, J., Silverman, I., & Blount, W. (2000). Behind bars: An assessment of the effects of job satisfaction, job-related stress, and anxiety of jail employees inclinations to quit. *Journal of Crime and Criminal Justice, 23*, 69–89.
- Camp, S. (1994). Assessing the effects of organizational commitment and job satisfaction on turnover: An event history approach. *The Prison Journal, 74*, 279–305.

- Cranny, C., Smith, P., & Stone, E. (1992). *Job satisfaction: How people feel about their jobs and how it affects their performance*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Cullen, F., Link, B., Wolfe, N., & Frank, J. (1985). The social dimensions of correctional officer stress. *Justice Quarterly*, 2, 505–533.
- Culliver, C., Sigler, R., & McNeely, B. (1991). Examining prosocial organizational behavior among correctional officers. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 15, 277–284.
- DeCarufel, A., & Schaan, J-L. (1990). The impact of compressed work weeks on police job involvement. *Canadian Police College*, 14, 81–97.
- Dennis, G. (1998). Here today, gone tomorrow: How management style affects job satisfaction and, in turn, employee turnover. *Corrections Today*, 60, 96–102.
- Diefendorff, J., Brown, D., Kamin, A., & Lord, R. (2002). Examining the roles of job involvement and work centrality in predicting organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23, 93–108.
- Donovan, N., & Halpern, D. (2002). *Life satisfaction: The state of knowledge and implications for government*. Retrieved December 9, 2007, from <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/upload/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/paper.pdf>
- Dowden, C., & Tellier, C. (2004). Predicting work-related stress in correctional officers: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 32, 31–47.
- Dubin, R. (1956). Industrial workers= world: A study of the central life interests of industrial workers. *Social Problems*, 3, 131–142.
- Elloy, D., Everett, J., & Flynn, W. (1991). An examination of the correlates of job involvement. *Group & Organization Studies*, 16, 160–177.
- Elloy, D., Everett, J., & Flynn, W. (1995). Multidimensional mapping of the correlates of job involvement. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*. Retrieved December 9, 2007, from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3717/is_199501/ai_n8726804.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitudes, intention, and behavior*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Fox, J. (1982). *Organizational and racial conflict in maximum-security prisons*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

- Goodstein, L., & MacKenzie, D. (1989). *The American prison: Issues in research and policy*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Greenhaus, J., & Beutell, N. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, *10*, 76–88.
- Griffin, M. (2006). Gender and stress: A comparative assessment of sources of stress among correctional officers. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, *22*, 4–25.
- Gronlund, N. (1981). *Measurement and evaluation in teaching*. New York: MacMillan.
- Grossi, E., Keil, T., & Vito, G. (1996). Surviving 'the joint': Mitigating factors of correctional officer stress. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, *19*, 103–120.
- Hackman, J., & Lawler, E. (1971). Employee reactions to job characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *55*, 259–286.
- Hart, P. (1999). Predicting employee life satisfaction: A coherent model of personality, work and nonwork experiences, and domain satisfactions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *84*, 564–584.
- Hazer, J., & Alvares, K. (1981). Police work values during organizational entry and assimilation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *66*, 12–18.
- Hepburn, J., & Albonetti, C. (1980). Role conflict in correctional institutions. *Criminology*, *17*, 445–459.
- Hepburn, J., & Knepper, P. (1993). Correctional officers as human service workers: The effect of job satisfaction. *Justice Quarterly*, *10*, 315–335.
- Higgins, C., & Duxbury, L. (1992). Work-family conflict: A comparison of dual-career and traditional-career men. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *13*, 389–411.
- Jurik, N., & Winn, R. (1987). Describing correctional security dropouts and rejects: An individual or organizational profile? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *24*, 5–25.
- Kanungo, R. (1979). The concepts of alienation and involvement revisited. *Psychological Bulletin*, *86*, 119–138.
- Kanungo, R. (1982a). Measurement of job and work involvement. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *67*, 341–349.
- Kanungo, R. (1982b). *Work alienation: An integrative approach*. New York: Praeger.

- Kerce, E., Magnusson, P., & Rudolph, A. (1994). *The attitudes of Navy corrections staff members: What they think about confinees and their jobs*. San Diego: Navy Personnel Research and Development Center.
- Lambert, E. (1999). *A path analysis of the antecedents and consequences of job satisfaction and organizational commitment among correctional staff (turnover and absenteeism)*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Albany.
- Lambert, E. (2006). I want to leave: A test of a model of turnover intent among correctional staff. *Applied Psychology in Criminal Justice*, 2, 57–83.
- Lambert, E., Barton, S., & Hogan, N. (1999). The missing link between job satisfaction and correctional staff behavior: The issue of organizational commitment. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 24, 95–116.
- Lambert, E., Edwards, C., Camp, S., & Saylor, W. (2005). Here today, gone tomorrow, back again the next day: Absenteeism and its antecedents among federal correctional staff. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 33, 165–175.
- Lambert, E., Hogan, H., Paoline, E., & Baker, D. (2005). The good life: The impact of job satisfaction and occupational stressors on correctional staff life satisfaction—An exploratory study. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 18, 1–26.
- Lambert, E., & Paoline, E. (2005). The impact of jail medical issues on the job stress and job satisfaction of jail staff: An exploratory study. *Punishment and Society: The International Journal of Penology*, 7, 259–275.
- Lawler, E. (1986). *High involvement management: Participative strategies for improving organizational performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lawler, E., & Hall, D. (1970). Relationship of job characteristics to job involvement, satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 54, 305–312.
- Locke, E. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Chicago: Rand-McNally.
- Lord, V. (1996). An impact of community policing: reported stressors, social support, and strain among police officers in a changing police department. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 24, 503–522.
- Love, K., & Singer, M. (1988). Self-efficacy, psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and job involvement: A comparison of male and female police officers. *Police Studies*, 11, 98–102.
- McElroy, J., Morrow, P., & Wardlow, T. (1999). A career stage analysis of police officer commitment. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 27, 507–516.
- Mobley, W., Griffeth, R., Hand, H., & Meglino, B. (1979). Review and conceptual analysis of the employee turnover process. *Psychological Bulletin*, 86, 493–522.
- Mowday, R., Porter, L., & Steers, R. (1982). *Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. New York: Academic Press.

- Mowday, R., Steers, R., & Porter, L. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 14*, 224–247.
- Netermeyer, R., Boles, J., & McMurrin, R. (1996). Development and validation of work-family conflict and family-work conflict scales. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*, 400–410.
- Paullay, I., Alliger, G., & Stone-Romero, E. (1994). Construct validation of two instruments designed to measure job involvement and work centrality. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 79*, 224–228.
- Poole, E., & Pogrebin, M. (1991). Changing jail organization and management: Toward improved employee utilization. In J. Thompson & G. Mayo (Eds.), *American jails: Public policy issues* (pp. 163–179). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Quinn, R., & Staines, G. (1979). *The 1977 quality of employment survey*. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Sager, J., Griffeth, R., & Hom, P. (1998). A comparison of structural models representing turnover cognitions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 53*, 254–273.
- Spector, P. (1996). *Industrial and organizational psychology: Research and practice*. New York: John Wiley.
- Steel, R., & Ovalle, N. (1984). A review and meta-analysis of research on the relationship between behavioral intentions and employee turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 69*, 673–686.
- Stohr, M., Self, R., & Lovrich, N. (1992). Staff turnover in new generation jails: An investigation of its causes and preventions. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 20*, 455–478.
- Terkel, S. (1974). *Working*. New York: Pantheon.
- Triplett, R., Mullings, J., & Scarborough, K. (1996). Work-related stress and coping among correctional officers: Implications from organizational literature. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 24*, 291–308.

- Triplett, R., Mullings, J., & Scarborough, K. (1999). Examining the effect of work-home conflict on work-related stress among correctional officers. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 27*, 371–384.
- Van Voorhis, P., Cullen, F., Link, B., & Wolfe, N. (1991). The impact of race and gender on correctional officers' orientation to the integrated environment. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 28*, 472–500.
- Whitehead, J., & Lindquist, C. (1986). Correctional officer burnout: A path model. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 23*, 23–42.
- Wright, K., & Saylor, W. (1992). Comparison of perceptions of the environment between minority and nonminority employees of the Federal Prison System. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 20*, 63–71.
- Wright, T. (1993). Correctional employee turnover: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 21*, 131–142.