Criminology and Criminal Justice Faculty Publications

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

5-14-2015

The Relationship Between Work–Family Conflict, Correctional Officer Job Stress, and Job Satisfaction

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Balancing demands between work and family domains can strain even the most resourceful employee. When the tipping point of conflict between the two is reached, a negative impact on employee well-being can result. Within correctional environments, the psychosocial well-being of officers is critical given the potentially significant impact of having a "bad day on the job." This study examines work–family conflict as it relates to job stress and job satisfaction within a diverse sample of correctional officers (N = 441) employed at 13 public, adult correctional facilities in a Southern state. Findings indicate strain and behavior-based work–family conflict and family–work conflict were significantly related to both job stress and job satisfaction. Family and supervisory support were uniquely related to job stress, whereas supervisory support, education, and ethnicity were uniquely related to job satisfaction. Implications for correctional organizations are discussed.

Keywords: correctional officer; officer stress; work–family conflict; job stress; job satisfaction

Incarceration rates throughout the United States have remained high during the past decade (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011), increasing the pressure on those persons responsible for supervising the incarcerated population. Coinciding with high incarceration rates throughout the United States, organizational change and employee turnover in correctional facilities have become the norm (Humphrey, 2011). Already notorious for facing exceptional and unique challenges due to the nature of their job roles, a number of additional stressors on the correctional workforce are noteworthy. For most officers, workplace demands extend beyond their job roles to include a lack of career advancement, inadequate pay, demanding hours, shift work, interacting with a challenging offender population on a regular basis, and ongoing exposure to the potential for danger (Lommel, 2004). The com- bination of these stressors has deleterious effects that can spill over or manifest as poor job performance, low job satisfaction, and even elevated risks of social or family issues including divorce, mental health problems, and physical illness (Lambert & Paoline, 2008; Salami, Ojokuku, & Salami, 2010; Woodruff, 1993). As Shaw (2011) and others have noted, negative work experiences often extend beyond the individual condition to include proximal (e.g., safety, productivity, efficiency) and distal (e.g., organizational performance) negative outcomes. These negative outcomes in turn have a significant impact on prisons through organizational disruption, employee turnover (Mitchell, Mackenzie, Styve, & Gover, 2000), and job burnout (keinan & Malach-Pines, 2007; Lambert, Altheimer, & Hogan, 2010).

High rates of employee turnover and concerns for officer well-being have led to the development of organizational initiatives aimed at bolstering employee support structures for direct supervision staff. Peer-based critical incident debriefing when serious incidents occur in the workplace (Finn, 2000; Van Fleet, 1991), employee assistance programs including evidence-based stress-reduction programs (McCraty, Atkinson, Lipsenthal, & Arguelles, 2009), and increased sensitivity to the importance of supervisory support (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Auerbach, Quick, & Pegg, 2003) are among approaches used to reduce work- place stress.

The ramifications of workplace stress for both the individual *and* the organization under- score the need to consider additional job-specific correlates of job stress and

job satisfaction. Attentive to the negative effects of prison working conditions on correctional officers, less focus has been placed on the contribution of an imbalance between workplace demands and family life as it relates to job stress and job satisfaction (see Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Lambert et al., 2009; Mitchell et al., 2000). This imbalance, termed *work–family conflict*, has a strong foundation in the broader organizational literature (Michel, kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011; Nohe, Meier, Sonntag, & Michel 2015), with limited study in the correctional context (Lambert, Altheimer, & Hogan, 2010; Lambert, Hogan, Camp, & Ventura, 2006). It is particularly important to focus on work–family conflict within correctional officer populations due to the unique context and public safety mission of these officers, as well as the difficulty expressed by correctional organizations in hiring and retaining quality staff. A healthy and skilled correctional officer workforce is anticipated to increase organizational safety for fellow officers, while also ensuring a safe and secure prison environment for inmates.

This study seeks to better understand the interplay between work and family domains as it is related to correctional officer job stress and job satisfaction in the job-specific correctional environment. Here, we extend the limited correctional research to study a broader population of officers using a correctional officer workforce survey completed with employees from 13 different state-operated adult correctional facilities within a large state system. Unlike the majority of the existing literature on work–family conflict and job stress and job satisfaction, this study examines work–family conflict in a context rarely examined: the prison environment. Using this approach to understand important correlates of job stress and job satisfaction will strengthen the platform for policy recommendations and initiatives specific to correctional institutions.

Correctional research has focused on specification of attenuating factors or conditions that augment a correctional officer's susceptibility to job stress and job satisfaction. Job stress is commonly understood as "harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker" (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1999, p. 6). Within criminal justice research, job stress is often operationalized as the manifestation of work-related hardness, worry, distress, tension, anxiety,

exhaustion, and frustration (Lambert & Paoline, 2008). Results stemming from studies that operationalize job stress or related outcomes with questions that ask about an emotional or psychological state of being as a result of one's job in the prison environment are most instructive to inform correctional policy and practice. Studies using this definition, including the current study, provide a more direct assessment of employee perceptions as it is related to their current employment. Job satisfaction has been commonly assessed with a similarly pointed question, and a similar approach is used here.

In determining factors related to job stress and job satisfaction, existing studies have examined demographic characteristics (Castle, 2008; Dial, Downey, & Goodlin, 2010; Griffin, 2006), job characteristics (Castle, 2008; Griffin, 2006; Lambert & Paoline, 2008), support structures (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Brough & Williams, 2007), and variations in prison working conditions (Brough, O'Driscoll, & kalliath, 2005; Brough & Williams, 2007; Castle, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2000; Taxman & Gordon, 2009). yet, the role of work– family conflict has not been extensively considered with respect to the job stress and job satisfaction of correctional officer populations.

Originating in the organizational literature, the work–family conflict concept measures excessive, conflicting, and sometimes incompatible demands on an individual employee that emanate from forces within the family and work domains (Boles, Johnston, & Hair, 1997; Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail, & Baker, 2010). Previously defined as "a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77), this general theoretical concept captures the reciprocal nature of family stressors affecting the employee in his or her workplace, as well as workplace stressors that affect an employee in his or her family domain.

Work–Family Conflict

The unique dimensions of a correctional officer's job role have led researchers to recognize the deleterious impact of the correctional work environment on the family domain, which may further manifest as job stress and job dissatisfaction. Given the

regimented, almost militaristic, tendency of work inside the prison walls, incongruence and conflicts between work and family domains may be more frequent or magnified for correctional employees. Indeed, prior studies have found a number of work–family conflict dimensions to be linked to job stress and job satisfaction (Lambert et al., 2006) as well as eventual job burnout (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010).

Building on Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian's (1996) work, Lambert et al. (2006) divided work–family conflict into three specific domains to better assess the mechanism associated with this conflict resulting in negative workplace outcomes. Lambert et al. (2006) defined time-based conflict as work demands that result in home conflict because the officer is spending insufficient time tending to family needs. For example, due to organizational turnover and a lack of qualified job applicants, it is not unusual for correctional officers to work overtime or pick up extra shifts. This source of workplace demand could result in time-based conflict in the family domain. Strain-based conflict was defined as occurring when "the demands and tensions from work negatively impact the quality of a worker's home life" (Lambert et al., 2006, p. 372). For example, the concerns for one's physical safety that may uniquely exist in a correctional workplace (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004) could result in the officer experiencing significant tensions that spill over into the family domain. Behavior-based conflict was defined as the incompatibility between the correctional officer's role in the workplace and their role at home. For example, Lambert, Hogan, and Altheimer (2010) suggested incompatible learned behaviors in the correctional environment could include "being suspicious and questioning the actions of others, [which] may not be appropriate when dealing with people, particularly family members and friends, and this can lead to conflict for the person" (p. 42).

Lambert and his colleagues (2006) found that although strain-based work–family conflict was related to job stress and job satisfaction, time-based work–family conflict was not. Interestingly, behavior-based work–family conflict was related to job satisfaction,   but not job stress (see also Lambert, Hogan & Altheimer, 2010). These findings parallel other job-specific studies of work–family conflict in traditional occupations as well as research that has included subsamples of firefighters and emergency response workers (Cowlishaw, Evans, & McLennan, 2010; Michel et al.,

2011; Shreffler, Meadows, & Davis, 2011).

Family–Work Conflict

Researchers find conflict between the work and family domains can be reciprocal, and thus Nohe et al. (2015) stated that it is important to account for both work–family conflict and family–work conflict effects when examining factors related to job performance. Family–work conflict exists when "employees' family responsibilities interfere with their work duties" (Nohe et al., 2015, p. 339). Researchers have frequently sought to determine whether conflict originating in one domain is affecting the other; however, Nohe et al. (2015) emphasized recent scholarship that counters this previous supposition in that conflict originating in one realm is more likely to have the greatest deleterious impact on strains within that same realm (Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011; Shockley & Singla, 2011). Here, we do not seek to disentangle this bidirectional relationship. Instead, given the cross-sectional nature of our survey, we rely on the suggestion of Nohe et al. (2015) to account for the cross-domain perspective by including a measure of family–work conflict as well as a work–family conflict measure.

In addition to conflict between work and family, other covariates are also known to influence job stress and satisfaction in correctional officers, including individual and vocational attributes (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987; Boles et al., 1997; Carlson, Anson, & Thomas, 2003; Dilworth, 2004; Fagan & Press, 2008; Higgins & Duxbury, 1992; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2002; Lambert & Paoline, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2000; Moen & yu, 2000).

Correlates of Correctional Officer Job Stress and Job Satisfaction

The influence of individual correctional officer attributes including gender and tenure is consistently associated with perceived levels of job stress in prior studies. Female officers as compared with male officers, and officers with greater tenure or "time on the job," tend to report significantly more job stress (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004;

Cullen et al., 1985; Dial et al., 2010; Lambert et al., 2002). An officer's race is inconsistently, or often insignificantly, related to an officer's work experiences. For example, although Lambert et al. (2002) found that correctional staff who were White reported significantly more job stress, other studies find no difference in job stress between officers of different racial backgrounds (Cheeseman & Downey, 2012; Taxman & Gordon, 2009). Here, we include measures of both officer race and ethnicity.

A number of contextual factors in the prison environment are consistently linked to correctional officer stress as well (Mitchell et al., 2000). For example, studies suggest job stress and satisfaction may be mediated for some officers by the perceived level of support from supervisors, peers, or family (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Auerbach et al., 2003; Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985). These important factors are considered in this study. Officers who perceive limited supervisory or peer support are more likely to report negative work experiences including high levels of job stress (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Cheeseman, kim, Lambert, & Hogan, 2011; Cullen et al., 1985; Dowden & Tellier, 2004; Lambert et al., 2002). Cheeseman et al. (2011) found supervisors are perceived to be an especially important resource for correctional officers. Supervisors assist officers in doing their job correctly, shape officers' views of inmates, and reduce the dangerousness of their job. Strong supervisory support appears to act as a protective factor for correctional officers in the prison environment.

Similar to job stress, job satisfaction has been consistently related to gender (Carlson et al., 2003), tenure, and supervisory support (Cheeseman et al., 2011; Cullen et al., 1985; Dial et al., 2010), although the degree of statistical significance varies (Cheeseman et al., 2011; Lambert & Paoline, 2008; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2004). Similar to job stress, an officer's race is also inconsistently related to job satisfaction across studies. For example, Cullen et al. (1985) found that non-White officers were more dissatisfied with their job; yet, Lambert et al. (2002) found no racial distinctions.

Current Study

Focusing specifically on individuals employed in the unique context of

the correctional environment, this study extends initial work examining the relationship between work– family conflict and job stress and job satisfaction. The current study builds on the limited but critical studies of work–family conflict in the correctional officer workforce (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010; Lambert et al., 2004; Lambert et al., 2006). We follow the rec- ommendation of Lambert, Hogan, and Altheimer (2010) to focus on precursory psychosocial states of job burnout by measuring job stress and job satisfaction among correctional officers. This study also builds on the prior work that focused on a single site, extending the sampling frame used here to include correctional officers employed in 13 different adult prison facilities.

Two hypotheses serve as the focus of this study:

hypothesis 1: Higher levels of work–family conflict are related to higher levels of perceived job stress.

hypothesis 2: Higher levels of work–family conflict are related to lower levels of perceived job satisfaction.

Method
Participants

Researchers surveyed correctional officers in a Southern state during mandatory in-ser- vice training in each of five administrative regions. Participants were allotted "class time" during the training sessions to voluntarily complete an anonymous survey described as measuring their work experiences as a correctional officer. Despite a lack of compensation for survey participants, a relatively high response rate of 83% was achieved for a total of 441 officers employed at 13 different adult prison facilities (currently, the state operates 111 separate prison facilities). As indicated in Table 1, the typical officer who completed the survey was a 41-year-old Caucasian correctional officer who had completed some college education. On average, participants were married without children and had almost 10 years of prior correctional experience. The sample was almost equally composed of males and females. Unfortunately, demographic characteristics for the entire population of correctional officers in this state were not publicly available.

Table 1: Correctional Officer Demographic Characteristics (*N* = 441)

Demographic Characteristic	*M (SD)*	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Age	41.2 (11.9)	42	19	66
Tenure (years in corrections)	9.95 (8.3)	7.3	0	38.8
	%			
Male	54.9			
Race/ethnicity				
Caucasian, non-Hispanic	56.5			
African American	24.3			
Hispanic	13.6			
Marital status				
Single	33.6			
Married	52.8			
Separated/divorced/widowed	7.9			
Number of				
children 0	44.7			
1	19.5			
2	17.7			
3 or more	12.5			
Education				
High school or GED	31.5			
Some college	43.8			
College degree/graduate work	20.0			

Note. Missing data are shown in parentheses for each of the following variables: tenure in corrections (10.4%), male (3.6%), race/ethnicity (5.7%), marital status (5.7%), education (4.8%), and number of children (5.7%). GED = general education development.

Measures

Dependent Variables

Two dependent variables were examined: job stress and job satisfaction. Job stress was based on indicators previously utilized to measure this same concept (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Crank, Regoli, Hewitt, & Culbertson, 1995). A two-item index score that ranged from 2 (*low level of stress*) to 10 (*high level of stress*) measured a direct emotion–workplace connection by asking the participants the extent to which they agreed with the statements "My job makes me frustrated or angry" and "My job places me under a lot of pressure." The responses for each question ranged from *strongly disagree* (coded 1) to *strongly agree* (coded 5). A summed score of these two indicators comprised the job stress index score. Job satisfaction was measured with the question "On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your job?" Responses were anchored with an indicator of *not satisfied at all* (coded 1) to *very satisfied* (coded 10).[1]

Table 2: Univariate Scale Statistics

	No. of items	Cronbach's □	M (SD)	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Job stress	2	.79	7.1 (2.1)	7	1	10
Job satisfaction	1	—	6.7 (2.4)	7	2	10
Work–family conflict—Time	5	.77	12.4 (4.5)	12	5	25
Work–family conflict—Strain	10	.86	25.8 (8.2)	26	10	50
Work–family conflict—Behavior	3	.89	10.1 (3.2)	9	3	15
Family–work conflict	5	.78	11.4 (4.3)	11	5	25
Supervisory Support	4	.79	12.5 (4.0)	26	4	20
Peer support	4	.84	11.2 (4.0)	12	4	20
Family support	4	.73	15.5 (3.5)	16	4	20

Work–Family Conflict

The independent variable of interest is work–family conflict. Following the work of Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010; Lambert et al., 2004; Lambert et al., 2006), work–family conflict was operationalized using three scales: Time-, Strain-, and Behavior-Based Work–Family Conflicts (see Appendix A for the items and fac- tor loadings for each scale). Since items from the work of Lambert and his colleagues (2004, 2006) were utilized, this study utilized a confirmatory factor analysis approach. Reliability analyses were also completed. Univariate scale statistics are indicated in Table 2.

Time-Based Work–Family Conflict

Time-based work–family conflict measured in-home conflict resulting from the officer spending insufficient time tending to family needs due to workplace demands (Lambert et al., 2006). Items for this scale were adapted from Lambert et al. (2006). Answer options for this five-item scale ranged from *strongly disagree* (coded 1) to *strongly agree* (coded 5). Item scores were summed with higher scale scores reflecting higher conflict.

Strain-Based Work–Family Conflict

Strain-based work–family conflict was defined as occurring when "the demands and tensions from work negatively impact the quality of a worker's home life" (Lambert

et al., 2006, p. 372). This 10-item scale was coded similar to time-based work–family conflict such that higher scores reflected higher conflict.

Behavior-Based Work–Family Conflict

Behavior-based conflict was defined as an incompatibility between the correctional officer's role in the workplace and their role at home. This three-item summative scale was adapted from Lambert et al. (2006) and reflects the coding of the other work–family conflict scales, with higher scale scores indicating higher conflict.

Family–Work Conflict

Following the argument of Lambert, Hogan, and Altheimer (2010) that reciprocal or simultaneous relationships exist between family circumstances and work experiences (see also Nohe et al., 2015), a five-item scale measuring family–work conflict was included. As noted earlier, family–work conflict follows Nohe et al.'s (2015) definition: employees who experience conflict due to family responsibilities that interfere with their work duties. Similar to the three work–family conflict scales, item responses for the family–work conflict scale ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater family–work conflict (*strongly disagree*, coded 1; to *strongly agree*, coded 5). A summative scale, confirmed through factor analysis, was created for these five items (see Appendix A for factor loadings).

In addition to work–family conflict, based on prior studies, control variables such as the working conditions, sources of support, and demographic characteristics of the participant were included in the analysis. Lambert, Hogan, and Altheimer (2010) recommended considering tenure as a totality of time that an employee had worked in corrections in lieu of time spent working in a particular position. Finally, existing studies have found stress levels vary by both gender and age of the individual suggesting these factors should also be accounted for in analyses (Cheeseman et al., 2011; Dial et al., 2010; Griffin, 2006; Lambert et al., 2004).

Sources of Support

Noted as important in studies examining job stress and job satisfaction is the extent to which an employee perceives that he or she has the social support of others, both internal and external to the work environment. Sources of support in this study measured three possible sources: supervisor support, peer support, and family support (see Appendix B for the support items).

Supervisory Support

Supervisory support was measured using a four-item summative scale where higher scores indicated a greater level of perceived supervisory support. Reflecting earlier work of Cullen et al. (1985), statements measured participant perceptions that their supervisors encouraged them, blamed others, or conducted themselves in a professional regard (Cheeseman et al., 2011; Triplett, Mullings, & Scarborough, 1999).

Peer Support

Items measuring peer support also replicated earlier studies in using a four-item summative scale that measured the participants' perceptions that their fellow officers complimented each other on a job well done, encouraged each other, or blamed each other when things went wrong. Higher scores on this scale indicated higher peer support (see Cheeseman et al., 2011; Cullen et al., 1985).

Family Support

A four-item summative scale was used to measure the extent to which a participant perceived that his or her family was a source of social support regarding his or her job based on the work of Cullen, Lemming, Link, and Wozniak (1985). Participants were given statements that queried whether their family understood how tough their job could be and whether they could seek support from their family (including their spouse or others) when they needed to talk about their job. They were asked to rate their level of agreement from *strongly disagree* (coded 1) to *strongly agree* (coded 5). Higher scale scores indicated a greater perception of support from their family.

Measures of participant demographics included age; gender (coded 1 for male and 0 for female); race/ethnicity categorized as Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American (coded 1 for each category and 0 for the contrast group of Caucasian); education level (coded 1 for high school or GED, 2 for some college, 3 for college or graduate work); marital status (coded 1 for married and 0 for other status including divorced, single, or widowed); and parental responsibility, measured as number of children for whom the participant was responsible (ranging from 0 to 9).

Results

Prior to completing the analyses, data were screened for outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and collinearity. Outliers for continuous variables were examined   using z scores. Cases with a z score greater than 3.29 or less than −3.29 are potential outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and to reduce the relative influence of these cases on subsequent analyses, these outliers were recoded such that the accepted minimum/maxi- mum value was used as the replacement values. Four cases of univariate outliers were discovered for number of children, and one case for the variable measuring years working in corrections. When examining multivariate outliers, two cases exceed the critical chi- square value of 32.91 and were deleted. All variables met the assumptions of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. No significant collinearity existed between independent variables to the extent that exclusion of variables from further multivariate analyses was necessary (all correlations were below .8 and all variance inflation factor [VIF] statistics were above .1).

Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 3 demonstrated that significant relation- ships existed between many of the independent variables and the two outcome measures of job stress and job satisfaction. Of interest to the current study, all work–family conflict measures were negatively correlated with job satisfaction and positively correlated with job stress.

Two separate ordinary least squares regression models were constructed for job stress and job satisfaction, respectively, which included the independent variables described earlier. In each of the models, almost half of the variation in the dependent

variable was explained; 40% in the job stress model and 44% in the job satisfaction model, respectively. Table 4 displays both the unstandardized and standardized beta coefficients for job stress and job satisfaction models.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Job satisfaction	1.0							
2. Job stress	−.38**	1.0						
3. Work–family conflict—Time	−.35**	.29**	1.0					
4. Work–family conflict—Strain	−.48**	.52**	.54**	1.0				
5. Work–family conflict—Behavior	−.28**	.19**	−.13**	.16**	1.0			
6. Family–work conflict	−.36**	.42**	.32**	.56**	.05	1.0		
7. Supervisory support	.47**	−.21**	−.29**	−.28**	−.23**	−.29**	1.0	
8. Peer support	.30**	−.15**	−.15**	−.13**	−.15**	−.10*	.44**	1.0
9. Family support	.17**	−.09	−.16**	−.28**	−.10*	−.32**	.26**	.07

$*p < .05.$ $**p < .01.$

As shown in Table 4, strain-based work–family conflict, behavior-based work–family conflict, and family–work conflict are significantly related to job stress. Similar to Lambert, Hogan, and Altheimer (2010), time-based work–family conflict was not significantly related to job stress. Supervisory support and family support are also related to job stress. Correctional officers who experienced higher levels of strain-based or behavior-based work–family conflict, or more family–home conflict, experienced more job stress. In addition, correctional officers who experienced greater supervisory support had lower levels of job stress. Interestingly, correctional officers who experienced greater family support regarding their job had higher levels of job stress. No significant gender-, race-, or age- based differences in job stress were found. Furthermore, neither marital status, number of children, education, nor tenure in corrections was significantly related to job stress.

The majority of the results pertaining to job stress paralleled the results in the job satisfaction model. Specifically, strain- and behavior-based work–family conflict, as well as family– work conflict, was significantly related to job satisfaction. Officers who experienced greater strain- or behavior-based work–family conflict were significantly less satisfied with their job. This finding offers support to Lambert and colleagues (2006) who also found that strain-based and behavior-based work–family conflict was related to job

satisfaction.

Officers who experienced higher family–work conflict were significantly less satisfied with their job. In addition, supervisory support was related to job satisfaction. Specifically, higher levels of supervisory support contributed to higher levels of job satisfaction. Important differences in job satisfaction existed between Hispanic and Caucasian correctional officers, as well as between officers with different education levels. Officers who were Hispanic were significantly more satisfied with their job than officers who were Caucasian. Furthermore, officers who attained a higher level of education reported lower levels of job satisfaction.

Discussion

Careers in corrections consist of exceptional and unique challenges given the duties assigned and the nature of the work environment (Lommel, 2004). Idiosyncrasies of working in direct contact with an incarcerated population in a confined space add challenges to achieving a successful balance between work and family demands, in turn influencing officer well-being (Lambert et al., 2006). Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010; Lambert et al., 2006) initially bridged the gap between broader organizational literature on the work–family conflict perspective (Michel et al., 2011) with corrections by trifurcating work and family domains conflicts by the dimensions of time-, strain-, and behavior-based work–family conflict. This study finds that incongruent or incompatible demands frequently exist between the work and family domains of correctional employees. Higher levels of strain- and behavior-based work–family conflict are related to lower levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of job stress. Simultaneously, a reciprocal association existed such that family–work conflict was also related to more job stress and less job satisfaction.

Table 4: Correlates of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction, Ordinary least Squares Regression Results

Outcome	Job Stress (n = 312)		Job Satisfaction (n = 290)	
	B	□	*B*	□
Constant	.967		9.415	
Officer demographics				
Male	.018	.004	−.048	−.010
Age	.012	.068	.013	.065
Race (vs. Caucasian, non-Hispanic)				
Hispanic	−.278	−.047	.737	.102*
African American	−.191	−.039	−.207	−.037
Marital status (1 = Married)	−.173	−.042	−.217	−.046
Number of children	.010	.007	.056	.038
Education	−.213	−.074	−.459	−.138**
Tenure (years in corrections)	.013	.051	.022	.079
Sources of conflict				
Work–family conflict—Time	.005	.012	−.004	−.008
Work–family conflict—Strain	.114	.455***	−.089	−.312***
Work–family conflict—Behavior	.101	.160**	−.121	−.166**
Family–work conflict	.087	.185**	−.065	−.117*
Support mechanisms				
Supervisory support	−.058	−.113*	.164	.284***
Peer support	.024	.048	.018	.031
Family support	.102	.176**	−.027	−.040
R^2	.40		.44	
Adjusted R^2	.37		.41	
F (*df*)	13.34 (15,296)		14.45 (15,274)	

Note. Both unstandardized (*B*) and standardized (□) regression coefficients are presented.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Initial findings of Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010; Lambert et al., 2004; Lambert et al., 2006) were supported. Recall that the work of Lambert and his colleagues focused on work–family conflict experienced by officers working in a single correctional facility. The current study included correctional officers from 13 state- operated adult correctional facilities located in multiple regions of a large state. The replication of these findings underscores that conflict between the work and family domains emanates from both sources. Furthermore, these sources of conflict covary with higher levels of job stress and job dissatisfaction. Specifically, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were both sup- ported. Correctional officers who perceived that their work life resulted in arguments and increased irritability at home, as well as family expressions of unhappiness about the time spent away from home as a result of their job, experienced higher levels of job stress and lower levels of job satisfaction. It is interesting that correctional officers who perceived that behaviors learned at work were

detrimental to being a good parent, spouse, or friend (behavior-based conflict) were significantly more likely to have higher job stress and lower job satisfaction.

A reciprocal relationship was also found such that aspects of a correctional officer's family domain negatively affected his or her work domain (family–work conflict). This relationship was significantly related to perceptions of both higher job stress and lower job satisfaction. Although the same items were used in both studies, Lambert et al. (2006) did not find a statistically significant relationship between family–work conflict and job satisfaction or job stress. Lambert and colleagues did find family–work conflict to be significantly related to job burnout in a subsequent study (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010); unfortunately, job burnout was not measured here. Finally, this study found that time-based strain was not an essential contributor to job stress or job satisfaction. This finding indicates a high likelihood that officers are not overly stressed or dissatisfied from working overtime when they did not want to, from feeling a lacking time spent with their families, or from instability in their work schedules within this sample of correctional officers.

Important work environment correlates of job satisfaction also emerged as potential protective factors that could serve as the impetus for stress-reduction strategies in correctional institutions. In line with previous research, officers who perceived higher levels of supervisory support experienced less job stress and were more satisfied with their jobs (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). yet, family support of the officers regarding their job was not statistically related to either outcome as measured in this study. In summary, for some correctional officers, the correctional workplace and their family domain can be incongruent. This incongruence is associated with higher levels of job stress and limited job satisfaction, but may be offset by supervisory and/or family support for some officers.

Implications

It is incumbent upon correctional organizations to seize the opportunity to reduce incongruences that exist between work and family domains for some correctional officers given the association of such conflict with job stress and job satisfaction. Actions on the part of organizations that could assist with these efforts may take many

forms, including evidence- based training of supervisory staff to maintain open, yet professionally driven, lines of communication between supervisors and their subordinates regarding family matters and work demands. As a matter of facility security, it is critical for supervisors to take notice of the emotional and cognitive state of their subordinates to ensure a high level of job performance and professionalism. Not only are desperate or unhappy employees likely to exhibit emotional distress via job burnout (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010), the odds of compromised decision making due to cynicism or decreased efficacy may also arise (Egyed & Short, 2006; Leiter, Gascon, & Martinez-Jarreta, 2010).

Although instances of poor decision making such as corrupt behavior are seemingly rare, documented forms within the correctional environment have included transportation of illegal goods such as drugs and cell phones (Bouchard, 2012; Gillespie, 2005), as well as engaging in sexual misconduct with inmates (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2006). Equally important are the ramifications of poor decisions on an officer's safety and the safety of those around him or her. Whether a correctional officer's decision to ignore or circumvent policy stems from stress, dissatisfaction, manipulation, or coercion, improved training for correctional officer supervisors that enables an increased recognition of an imbalance or conflict between an officer's personal and professional lives could at minimum reduce, and at best prevent, incidents of officer misconduct or officer behaviors that pose a safety hazard.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study benefitted from a reasonable response rate and seemingly representative sample of correctional officers from throughout the state, yet limitations remain. Specifically, data on the composition of correctional officers from within the state were not publicly available. Although our sample appears to be relatively similar to earlier studies conducted in the same state, we cannot be certain of the extent to which it is representative. Second, the current study was cross-sectional in nature, which is an approach that has been previously criticized. A methodological approach that includes a panel design to track officers' work experiences and well-being over

time would be an improvement in job-specific tests of work–family conflict. A recent meta-analysis of panel studies on this topic suggests a reciprocal relationship between work and family conflicts does indeed exist (Nohe et al., 2015). Furthermore, this reciprocal relationship significantly predicted higher levels of job strain. This finding lends an added level of confidence to a suggestion of a causal relationship for job stress and job satisfaction, while opening a direct avenue for future research.

Third, we limit our examination to the impact of work–family conflict on job stress and job satisfaction. Future research should consider additional measures of correctional officer mental and physical health. The growing literature on mindfulness could be particularly instructive in programs and training that could be developed to reduce employee complacency and in turn increase officer and organizational safety (Michel, Bosch, & Rexroth, 2014). Measures of physical health may lead to organizational modifications that reduce use of sick time and rates of employee absenteeism (Magnavita & Garbarino, 2013).

A fourth area of limitation in the current study is a failure to adequately capture other organizational-level factors that may affect the work experiences examined. Certainly, significant organizational change is underway within the field of corrections with the increased attention to, and expansion of, evidence-based practices. It is unclear what effect the organizational flux in correctional practice has on the staff employed in such a dynamic environment. Further work is needed to capture the psychosocial effects of being "on board" with a culture of change within a correctional organization, as compared with being run over by it.

In closing, the well-being of the proverbial gatekeepers to enhance public safety necessitates continued investigative efforts to improve the working conditions and associated dynamics for correctional officers to ensure the safety and security of staff, inmates, and our communities. This study extended the limited literature in the prison environment on the contribution of work–family conflict to job stress and job satisfaction. Findings indicated that conflict among the work and family domains, regardless of the source from which the conflict emanates, is related to higher levels of job stress and lower levels of job satisfaction. Furthermore, officers who felt supported

by their supervisors reported lower levels of job stress and higher levels of job satisfaction.

Appendix A: Items on Work–Family Conflict Scales

Factor Loadings	
Time-based work–family conflict	
1. My job allows me adequate time to be with my family. (r)	.775
2. My time off from work works well with my family members' schedules and/or my social needs. (r)	.787
3. I frequently have to work overtime when I don't want to.	.367
4. My work schedule is stable enough to allow me to plan my family and/or social life. (r)	.824
5. I am able to participate in important family or social activities/events outside of work. (r)	.847
Strain-based work–family conflict	
1. My work allows me to still have the energy to enjoy my family and/or social life. (r)	.607
2. I frequently argue with my spouse/family members about my job.	.642
3. I am able to leave my problems from work at work rather than bringing them home. (r)	.506
4. With all my work demands, sometimes I come home too stressed to do the things I enjoy.	.722
5. Because of this job, I am often irritable at home.	.806
6. My job has a bad impact on my home life.	.788
7. I am able to relax away from work, no matter what is happening in my job. (r)	.568
8. I am easily able to balance my work and home lives. (r)	.626
9. My family/friends express unhappiness about the time I spend at work.	.677
10. My family/friends dislike how often I am preoccupied with work.	.733
Behavior-based work–family conflict	
1. The behaviors I learn at work help me to be a better parent.	.896
2. The behaviors I learn at work help me to be a better spouse.	.932
3. The behaviors I learn at work help me to be a better friend.	.896
Family–work conflict	
1. My family and/or social life interfere with my job.	.645
2. I sometimes have to miss work due to pressing family/social issues or problems.	.710
3. Because of stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.	.824
4. I'm often tired at work because of the things I have to do at home.	.814
5. I feel that the demands placed upon me at work are unreasonable.	.660

Note. (r) = reverse coded.

Appendix B: Items on Support Scales

	Factor Loadings

Supervisory support

1. My supervisors encourage us to do the job in a way that we really would be proud of. — .846
2. My supervisors encourage the people I work with if they do their job well. — .846
3. My supervisors blame others when things go wrong, even when it's not their fault. (r) — −.710
4. If my supervisors have a dispute with an officer they supervise, they handle it professionally. — .743

Peer support

1. My fellow officers often compliment someone who has done his or her job well. — .793
2. My fellow officers don't blame each other when things go wrong. — .764
3. My fellow officers encourage each other to do the job in a way that we would be proud of. — .902
4. My fellow officers encourage each other to think of better ways of getting the work done. — .844

Family support

1. Members of my family understand how tough my job can be. — .724
2. When my job gets me down, I know that I can turn to my family and get the support I need. — .795
3. There is really no one in my family that I can talk to about my job. (r) — −.779
4. My spouse (or significant other) can't really help me much when I get tense about my job. (r) — −.672

Note. (r) = reverse coded

Note

1.   A four-item satisfaction scale was also created; however, there were no statistical or substantive differences in the results. Therefore, for ease of interpretation and replication, we have chosen to use the single-item indicator for job satisfaction.

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