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Factors Contributing to Stress on Custodial Officers of BJMP Manned Jail of Imus City Towards Stress Management Program

Erwin B. Breis^{1*}

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the key factors contributing to occupational stress among custodial officers assigned to the Imus City Jail, a facility managed under the national correctional framework. Given the vital role these officers play in ensuring order and safety within the correctional environment, the research seeks to identify the specific stressors that compromise their well-being and job performance. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered through field surveys and researcher-made questionnaire. The respondents included the total population of thirty-five (35) Jail Non-Commissioned Officers - ranging from Jail Superintendent to Jail Officers 1, 2, and 3 - as well as 264 Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), selected using Slovin's formula from a population of 780. The study assessed variables such as workload, exposure to violence, role ambiguity, administrative support, and the overall physical and psychological demands of the job. Findings reveal that excessive workload, unpredictable environments, lack of administrative backing, and poor work-life balance significantly contribute to heightened stress levels among custodial personnel. In response, the study proposes a targeted stress-management program to address these specific issues. Key components of the proposed program include stress reduction interventions, strengthened institutional support systems, regular mental health assessments, and work-life integration strategies. The implementation of such a program is expected to promote officer well-being, improve operational efficiency, and contribute to a more secure and humane correctional environment. This research emphasizes the urgency of addressing institutional stress and offers a framework for policy development and future studies in correctional management.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a psychological and physiological reaction to what is seen as demands or challenges which at the bottom line impacts on the overall mental and physical well-being of an individual. The occupational group that is especially vulnerable is that of correctional officers and jail personnel because there are several compounding stressors in their work environment and in their daily duties. These are the nature of the work done by these essential workers that expose them to emotional and physical demands that might result in causing large amounts of occupational stress and eventual burnout (Laureano-Morales *et al.*, 2024). Besides the underlying occupational pressure, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in unprecedented conditions that caused the level of stress to increase among the staff of the jail and correctional facilities, especially among those in the custodial and direct-supervision positions who were exposed to increased isolation and infected with COVID-19 in general.

Work-related stress among correctional officers is also very high due to a combination of some occupational hazards that are mutually dependent (Sahesti & Kaloeti, 2025). Such stressors are working in overcrowded and understaffed workplaces that require mandatory overtime and uneven rotating shifts, perceived and actual

risks of experiencing physical violence, and constant administrative pressures that cause interpersonal strains among workers and managers (Finn 2018). Consecutive impact of these stress factors in the workplace results in burnout, which is a persistent mental disorder that is defined by emotional fatigue, lacking emotional connection, and low personal achievement. Studies have also found that compared to correctional officers with relatively low stress exposure, highly stressed correctional officers have about eight times the probability of getting burnt (Laureano-Morales *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, the prevalence of mental health disorders is much higher among correctional officers than it is among the general population, with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbances being the most prevalent (Fusco *et al.*, 2021).

The COVID-19 brought another level of acute and chronic stress to an already weak workforce. In the context of lockdowns adopted in correctional facilities to ensure the absence of the spread of a disease, jail and prison staff members were subjected to unique problems, such as extended separation with family, distorted work schedules, a significant stay in facilities, and the risk of being exposed to infectious disease all the time (Burhanullah, 2022). All these pandemic-related conditions increased the occupational stress factors

¹ Graduate School Department, Philippine Christian University, Philippines

* Corresponding author's e-mail: ebreis@pcu.edu.ph

and formed an ideal storm of physical, emotional, and psychological needs. Additionally, elderly members of correctional facilities faced significant challenges in using new digital technologies and internet platforms required to conduct institutional-level operations, which further burdened an already heavy workload (Zheng *et al.*, 2023). The psychological effects of these compound stressors were more evident when cases of suicide and other extreme mental health crises started manifesting among the correctional staff.

There is a critical lack of knowledge regarding the role of the particular combination of the occupational stresses that the occupation of the correctional facilities demands and the issues of isolation and adaptation pressures caused by the pandemic on the mental health and well-being of the jail staff and especially custodial employees who have direct contact with incarcerated individuals. Although organizational and operational antecedents of stress in correctional facilities have been determined (Zhao *et al.*, 2024), less research investigates the interaction between the preexisting correctional occupational stress and pandemic-related stressor in jail facilities in developing countries or regions such as the Philippines. These dynamics are crucial in creating specific interventions and developing overall and long-term management policies that focus on the mental health and well-being of the correctional staff. This study aims to identify and address the specific stressors and challenges faced by jail personnel in a correctional facility context during the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular focus on developing evidence-based recommendations for policy formulation and intervention strategies that can reduce occupational stress and prevent burnout among custodial forces who bear direct responsibility for the supervision and management of persons deprived of liberty.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The researcher adopts a descriptive correlational research design to assess the relationships between work-related stress and PDL job-related stress. A descriptive form of research through the survey questionnaire was employed in gathering data.

As explained by Garcia (2000), descriptive research is a study that can obtain facts about existing conditions or detect significant relationships between current phenomena. It describes and interprets prevailing conditions or relationships that exist or do not exist, practices that prevail or do not, beliefs or points of view or attitudes that are held, processes that are going or otherwise, effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing. It includes all those studies that purport to present facts concerning the nature and status of anything, a group of persons, several objects, a set of conditions, a class of events of thought, or any other kind of phenomena that one may wish to study.

Population, Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The respondents were the thirty-five (35) total population of Jail Non-Commissioned Officers, consisting of the Jail Superintendent, Jail Senior Inspector, Senior Jail Officers 1 and 2, Jail Officers 1, 2, and 3, assigned in Imus City Jail, Cavite, and 264 PDLs respondents based from the Slovin formula used from the total population of 780. They were requested to answer the questionnaires. Through them, more appropriate insights were gathered that are more likely to drive this study forward.

The Research Instrument

Part 1. Work-related Stress Questionnaire. A researcher-made questionnaire that consists of 3 sub-areas: the threat of violence, role of ambiguity, and poor leadership with three (3) indicators each.

Part 2: PDL Jail-related Stress Questionnaire. A researcher-made questionnaire that consists of 3 sub-areas: family separation, financial problem, and leisure of both single and married Custodian guards.

Validity Test

To test the validity of the questionnaire, the responses of the five non-sample respondents were tested for significance using a one-sample T-test. When the test is not significant, the questionnaire is considered valid. When the test was significant, the items with significant tests were simplified. After the simplification, it was administered again to the five non-sample respondents.

Reliability Test

To test the reliability of the questionnaire, five non-sample respondents were requested to answer the questionnaire. Their answers were tested for reliability using the Cronbach α . An α that is at least 0.7 was considered to pass the reliability test. The α is less than 0.7, and the questionnaire where the non-sample respondents made significant differences, was simplified. After the simplification, the questionnaire was administered to the same five non-sample respondents.

Rubric

The items for evaluation used a Five-Point Likert Scale as follows:

5	Affected to a very high extent	4.50 – 5.00
4	Affected to a high extent	3.50 – 4.49
3	Affected to some extent	2.50 – 3.49
2	Affected to a low extent	1.50 – 2.49
1	Affected to a very low extent	1.00 – 1.49

Means that are at least 3.50 were considered strengths; means that are below 3.50 were considered as weaknesses.

Ethical Considerations

The title formulated by the researcher was checked by the adviser, approved by the chairman and four (4) members of the panel, research aims and research design were ethically acceptable and follow institution's code of conduct.

A letter of request to conduct data gathering was sent to appropriate officials of the Region or District and Imus City Jail. Upon receipt of the approved request, the researcher conducted the test personally on the selected samples. After sufficient time, he retrieves the filled-out questionnaire online as well.

After the approval, the researcher begin collecting data according to the approved procedures.

Statistical Tests

The data were processed using the following statistical tools: t-test significance of the means of the responses,

F-test of significant difference of the responses, and one sample test to develop a statistical model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The extent of Work-related Stress in terms of Threat of Violence

Table 1 presents the results of the paired t-test analysis measuring the extent of work-related stress experienced by custodial officers in terms of the threat of violence. Three indicators were assessed: anticipating conflict, addressing conflict, and acting promptly during violent incidents between Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs)

Table 1: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Work-related Stress in terms of Threat of Violence

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Threat of Violence					
1. Anticipate the possible conflicts/violence in the jail between PDL and custodial guards.	3.7611	2.7023	1.0588	.216	NS
2. Address the conflicts/violence between PDL and custodial guards.	3.5778	3.4134	.1644	.001	HS
3. Act promptly whenever violence happens between PDL and custodial guards.	3.8065	3.6513	.1552	.004	HS

NS - Not Significant, HS - Highly Significant

and custodial officers.

The findings show that the first measure, “Anticipate possible conflicts/violence in the jail had an expected mean of 3.7611 (high extent) and an actual practice of a lower value of 2.7023 (some extent). The difference in the number between 1.0588 is great, but the conclusion is not significant ($p = .216 > .05$), which means that the expectation of jail conflict did not significantly differ between officers in their expectation and practice.

Conversely, the second indicator, which is the resolution of conflict between PDLs and custodial officers, produced a very significant outcome ($p = .001 < .01$). Although the expectations were moderate ($M = 3.5778$), actual implementation was less ($M = 3.4134$), implying a definite difference between expected and actual response in conflict management. This difference may be attributed to the limitation in operations, lack of employee training, or the slowness in administration.

In the same way the third indicator, “Act promptly whenever violence occurs also had a statistically significant difference ($p = .004 < .01$). Though both the anticipated ($M = 3.8065$) and the practiced ($M = 3.6513$) values showed a high level of performance, the regular difference means that increased immediacy and readiness should work during a violent event.

In general, the total necessary mean ($M = 3.7151$) indicates that the custodial officers are of the opinion that an active and a reactive approach is required when handling threats of violence. But the practiced mean ($M = 3.2557$) shows

that the level of application is only moderate and the observed difference ($p = .0137$) is significant.

Such observations indicate a worrying divide in perfect practices and real reactions of violent jail setups. Correctional officers are always working under a lot of stress in conditions that are characterized by uncertainty and the risk of injuries. Cooper *et al.* (2018) state that correctional work is one of the most stressful work worldwide. This view is supported by Finn (2018), who adds that officers frequently complain high emotional strain, which is complicated by the inability to find organizational support, unsafe environment, and systematic understaffing. On the same note, Huckabee (2019) highlights the importance of organized interventions that can support psychological and environmental influences that cause stress in the correctional facilities.

Institutional risks are also in place due to the continuation of violence in jails. The United Nations Basic Principles on treatment of prisoners focus on the role of the state to uphold human rights and human treatment within the correctional centers. Poor working conditions not only pose a threat to the employees and inmates but also raise costs of operation, employee turnover and cases of misconduct (UNODC, 1990).

This research therefore confirms that the risk of violence is a strong factor leading to work stress among custodial officers. To reduce this factor, proper protocols, sufficient manpower, and training in crisis de-escalation, and a

psychologically friendly working environment should be provided. Without them, officers will not be safeguarded against long-term stress, which can negatively influence their health and management of the institution.

Extent of Work-related Stress in terms of Role Ambiguity

Table 2 presents the paired t-test results analyzing the

extent of role ambiguity as a work-related stressor among custodial officers. Three key indicators were evaluated: improving the problem-solving skills of leaders, making prompt decisions to reduce stress, and anticipating situations through future planning.

The initial indicator which was, Improve the problem-solving skills of the leader, had the mean value of 3.8987 as anticipated and 3.6331 as practiced which were

Table 2: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Work-related Stress in terms of Role Ambiguity

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Role Ambiguity					
1. Improve the problem-solving skills of the leader.	3.8987	3.6331	.2656	.000	HS
2. Make prompt decisions to lessen the stress in the workplace.	3.5815	3.3211	.2604	.145	NS
3. Anticipate things through planning for the future.	3.9278	3.8125	.1153	.000	HS

NS - Not Significant, HS - Highly Significant

interpreted to a high degree. Nevertheless, the statistically significant difference ($p = .000 < .01$) shows that there is a difference in performance. This implies that leadership may be seen as competent, though the practice of problem-solving may be below expectations, which is a source of stress among subordinates since no solution is given in the operational issues (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The second indicator, “Make prompt decisions to reduce stress in the workplace showed no significant difference ($p = .145$ greater than .05), meaning that the expectations and practice are similar. Being able to make decisions in a stressful situation is also one of the major leadership qualities, and when practiced efficiently, the role ambiguity and its negative impacts are reduced. The implication of the result is that there is relative satisfaction with the staff on the responsiveness of decisions.

The third indicator was, Anticipate things, plan ahead, the mean score was 3.9278 (if expected) and 3.8125 (practiced), the difference between them was significant ($p = .000 < .01$). This is an indication of irregularities in the implementation of strategic planning and this may result in operational instability and work insecurity- a known cause of occupational stress (Cooper *et al.*, 2018). The practiced mean ($M = 3.5889$) and expected mean ($M = 3.8027$) had overall ratings of high expected mean and high practiced mean on an aggregate level. Nonetheless, the difference of means (0.2138) is statistically significant ($p = .0483$ less than .05), which indicates a discrepancy between perceived and actual job roles and duties.

Role ambiguity has existed as a long term factor causing occupational stress especially in hierarchical organizations such as correctional facilities where roles, power, and delimitation are not clearly defined (Rizzo *et al.*, 1970). Lack of communicating well and set expectations by the leadership lead to confusion, decrease in job satisfaction and emotional strain (Spector, 1997). This vagueness in

relation to correction institutions adds pressure to the already existing pressure of ensuring safety and order (Finn, 2000).

To deal with this, organisations have to adopt systematic role description such as written policies, job descriptions and formal planning mechanisms. Motivation and engagement are facilitated by role clarity as affirmed by Hackman and Oldham (1976). Also, good performance should be rewarded and job security can strengthen the feeling of purpose and commitment to the organization (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2005). The results of the present research confirm the fact that attempts to explain the leadership expectations and strategic planning can eliminate the ambiguity and increase the coherence at the workplace.

The extent of Work-related Stress in terms of Poor Management

Table 3 presents the results of the paired t-test analysis comparing the expected and practiced levels of work-related stress indicators attributed to poor management among custodial officers during the pandemic.

The first indicator, which was called Maximum implementation of rules and regulations inside the jail during the pandemic, had a mean score of 3.8986 (expected) and 3.7123 (practiced), which were interpreted to a high degree. The high mean difference ($p = .004 < .01$) is an indication that there is a perceived deficiency in the implementation of the rules within the pandemic restrictions. In a prison, the level of institutional control is important to ensure unrest and order (Finn, 2000; Cooper *et al.*, 2018). The adjustments due to pandemic, however, could have undermined institutional discipline. The second indicator, which was the proper coordination of the line of duties between the warden and Jail Officer 1, also showed a statistically significant gap ($p = .002$ less than .01). Although these two scores were high (M

Table 3: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Work-related stress in terms of Poor Management

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Poor Management					
1. Maximum implementation of rules and regulations inside the jail during this time of the pandemic.	3.8986	3.7123	.1863	.004	HS
2. Proper coordination of the line of duties from the warden to the Jail Officer 1.	3.7677	3.5312	.2365	.002	HS
3. Full security and health protocols are observed and mandated within the jail vicinity.	3.9689	3.9047	.0642	.006	HS

NS - Not Significant, HS - Highly Significant

= 3.7677 and M = 3.5312), the difference shows that communication and delegation of responsibilities were not consistent. Poor coordination is one of the typical stress factors in the correctional setting where hierarchy and effective communication play a decisive role in terms of security and efficiency (Spector, 1997).

The third indicator, Full security and health protocols are followed and required in the jail area, also indicated a significant difference ($p = .006 < .01$) but the anticipated and actual scores were high. Comprehensive health measures in overcrowded and understaffed jails during the COVID-19 pandemic presented logistical and operational difficulties, which in most cases led to stress among employees (Tehrani & Yamini, 2020).

In general, the average score of all indicators was 3.8332, and the practiced mean was 3.6218. The resulting difference between the means of 0.2114 is also statistically significant ($p = .0483 < .05$), and there was a significant difference in the expected and actual management practices. The mentioned gap supports the view of ineffective administrative backing and leadership, which has been closely attributed to enhanced occupational stress and burnout among correctional officers (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014; Huckabee, 2019).

Previous studies have demonstrated the significant impact of workplace stress on employee well-being and organizational outcomes. For example, De Leon (2025) reported that elevated workplace stress among Filipino employees is negatively correlated with psychological safety and overall well-being, underscoring the importance of stress mitigation strategies and organizational support systems.

Correctional leadership entails working in an exceptionally

complicated environment. Leaders have to deal with a work force which is under-resourced and outnumbered by inmates and is often overwhelmed by emotional and physical exertions. Employees are normally under-trained, under paid, and they face inter-group tensions and violence threats (Liebling, 2011). In addition, in the crisis, such stressors are compounded by uncertainty about policy and unexpected changes in operations, which even put pressure on the management systems.

As a way of reducing stress due to poor management, there is the need to enhance institutional leadership, consistency in implementing protocols and enhance vertical coordination between the ranks. Moreover, employees ought to be included in the process of policy implementation on a regular basis so that they can develop a sense of ownership and adherence (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Sun & Wu, 2006). Organizational trust and morale i.e. when custodial officers think that management is effective and responsive- this will reduce the stress levels in the workplace and the level of operations.

The extent of the PDL jail-related Stress in terms of Family Separation

Table 4 presents the results of the paired t-test analysis regarding the perceived and experienced levels of family separation stress among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The indicators evaluated include communication with family, emotional expression, and loyalty to family relationships.

In the initial indicator, The communication line is always open through the use of video calls, messenger and text,

Table 4: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Jail-related Stress in terms of Family Separation

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Family Separation					
1.1. The communication line is always open through the use of video calls, messenger, and text. (May malayang komunikasyon sa mga mahal sa buhay sa pamamagitan ng text, messenger at video call.)	3.8088	3.6943	.1145	.127	NS

1.2. Genuine with his love and care for the members of the family. (Naipapadama ng tunay ang pagmamahal sa mahal sa buhay.)	3.9091	3.8136	.0955	.231	NS
1.3. Loyal to his/her family. (Tapat sa pamilya.)	3.7277	3.6421	.0856	.147	NS

the anticipated mean was 3.8088, and the experienced mean was 3.6943, to the high degree. The t-test showed that the difference was not statistically significant ($p = .127 > .01$), which implies that the expectations with regard to communication were much similar to their actual practice in incarceration.

In the same manner, in the case of the second indicator, Genuine love and care to the family, the expected ($M = 3.9091$) and practiced ($M = 3.8136$) ratings were high and there was no significant difference ($p = .231 > 0.01$). This means that though separated by physical distances, PDLs were in a position to have emotional ties with their loved ones.

The consistency of perceptions was also indicated by the third indicator, which is Loyalty to family, where the expected and practiced mean are 3.7277 and 3.6421, respectively. The lack of significant deviation was proven by the t-test result ($p = .147 > .01$).

In total, the expected score was 3.8152 with the practiced score of 3.7167 which can be interpreted as high. The general mean difference (.0985) was not statistically significant ($p = .147$), which means that even incarcerated, PDLs believed that they could maintain meaningful family relationships.

This result is consistent with the literature that implies that although imprisonment restricts physical communication, emotional attachment and desire to stay in touch are high (Mostert & Joubert, 2020). As Michel *et al.* (2021) explain, family-related stress can be seen as a by-product of more general work or life disturbances, and in that regard, incarceration can be perceived as a major disturbance. The

technology that has helped in sustaining communication, however, seems to have alleviated some of the pain associated with the separation.

DeKlerk and Mostert (2020) also mention that the interaction between work and family or institutional and family is rather complicated because the marital and parental status might affect the level of family stress. Moreover, the stress in uniform services, such as police and correction institutions, is likely to be transferred to the family, and it tends to fuel the sense of guilt and disconnection, as well as role conflict (Sever & Cinoglu, 2020; Young *et al.*, 2022). Nevertheless, the PDLs in this research seem to be resilient by means of the regular emotional attachment and devotion to the family members that can be thoroughly mitigated by the interventions that may promote communication and bonding in the family, thus alleviating incarceration-related stress by a significant margin.

The extent of PDL Jail-related Stress in terms of Financial Problem

Table 5 presents the paired t-test results assessing the extent of jail-related stress among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in relation to financial challenges. Three indicators were analyzed: the inability to pay bills and loans, budget shortages for basic family needs, and insufficient funds for miscellaneous and extended family expenses.

The initial indicator, Unsettled bills and loans, had a practiced and expected mean of 3.8231 and 3.9178

Table 5: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Jail-related Stress in terms of Financial Problem

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Financial Problem					
2.1. Unsettled bills and loans (e.g. electric, water, internet connection, etc.) (Hindi sapat na pambayad ng mga bayarin kagaya ng tubig at kuryente.)	3.9178	3.8231	0.0947	.127	NS
2.2. Shortage of budget for basic needs of the family. (Kakulangan ng budget para sa mga pangunahing pangangailangan ng pamilya.)	3.8741	3.7522	0.1219	.004	HS
2.3. Additional needs for miscellaneous expenses of the family and extended family. (Kakulangan sa iba pang pangangailangan ng pamilya at ng mga kaanak.)	3.7223	3.6432	0.0791	.001	HS

respectively. Although both were understood as high extent, the t-test result was significant ($p = .002$), which shows that the results of expectations and lived experiences are statistically significant.

The second indicator, Shortage of budget on basic needs also indicated a significant difference ($p = .004$) between the amount of budget ($M = 3.8741$) that was expected and the amount of budget ($M = 3.7522$) practiced. This is an indication of the current financial burden that PDLs experience when it comes to the day-to-day survival needs of their families.

The third indicator, "Additional needs of miscellaneous and extended family expenses was the least different ($M = 0.0791$) though it still gave a very significant outcome ($p = .001$) which means that even the discretionary and extended financial needs add to stress to some extent.

The average score concerning the financial related stress was found to be 3.8381 (as would be expected) and 3.7395 (practised), with both scores rated as a high extent. Nevertheless, the average of the differences of 0.0986 with a p-value of $p = .0003$ provides proof that finances are a stable and major stress factor among prisoners.

The findings are in line with what previous researches state that financial problems are a significant cause of psychological distress, particularly among the marginalized or limited groups. APA (2020) puts forward that financial strain is directly related to the occurrence of anxiety, depression and reduction in perceived quality of life. On the same note, Montes *et al.*, (2021) also note that a sense of powerlessness is exacerbated in prisoners

through the lack of control over their financial liability, especially in cases of dependent families.

Emotional burdens are amplified by the compounding effect of prison and outside economic liabilities, including unpaid bills and school fees or the healthcare expenses of dependents (Montes *et al.*, 2021). PDLs are also deprived of traditional provider roles that are a part of their income during imprisonment, which causes guilt and emotional distress (Geller *et al.*, 2009). The inability to take care of loved ones materially enhances the psychological effect of incarceration, even in the cases when there is communication with the family.

To summarize, the results indicate that in spite of high expectations, PDLs still face high levels of stress as a result of financial hardship, which is why the intervention programs, which can include livelihood support, financial literacy, or family assistance system, are needed to minimize the pressure.

The Extent of PDL Jail-related Stress in terms of Leisure Entailment

Table 6 presents the results of the paired t-test assessing the extent of jail-related stress among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with respect to leisure entailment. Three key indicators were analyzed: the ability to finance vacations, having time to spend with family, and the inability to enjoy holidays like others.

In the first indicator, Adequate budget to spend on family vacation, the means expected ($M = 3.9081$) and the

Table 6: Paired t-test of Significance of Difference of Means of Jail-related Stress in terms of Leisure Entailment

INDICATORS	As Expected	As Practiced	Difference	Significance	Remarks
Leisure Entailment					
3.1. Adequate budget for the family vacation expenses. (May sapat na budget pra sa bakasyon na pwedeng gawin ng pamilya.)	3.9081	3.8231	0.0850	.421	NS
3.2. Have time to spend vacation with the family. (May oras para maksama ang pamilya sa pagbabakasyon o pagpunta sa ibang lugar para maglibang.)	3.5903	3.4222	0.1681	.330	NS
3.3. Unable to avail the holidays like others. (Hindi magawang magbakasyon lalo na sa mga araw na may okasyon o bakasyon.)	3.9456	3.8341	0.1115	.271	NS

means practiced ($M = 3.8231$) were rated to a high level. But the calculated level of significance $p = .421$ does not indicate a statistically significant difference between the expected and actual conditions, implying that the PDLs financial expectations of family leisure were matched to the reality, which is probably because existing low leisure expectations in incarceration were already low.

The second indicator, Having time to spend vacation with the family, had the same situation of high expectations

($M = 3.5903$) and practiced experiences ($M = 3.4222$) but the difference was once again not statistically significant ($p = .330$). This implies that one of the expectations of PDLs was lack of family time when in prison and this was what they got.

In the same fashion, the third indicator, Unable to avail holidays like others displayed high meaning scores in regard to expectation ($M = 3.9456$) and practice ($M = 3.8341$) which have mean difference of 0.1115 and the

level of significance of $p = .271$. This finding also shows that there is no statistically significant difference.

The general analysis indicates that the expected ($M = 3.8147$) and practiced ($M = 3.6931$) mean scores were assumed to be high with a mean difference of 0.1215. The expectations were slightly more than the actual experiences, but the difference was not significant ($p = .271$), which shows that there is a relative consistency between what PDLs expected and experienced in terms of leisure.

Although incarceration inevitably limits individual freedoms, such as free time, PDLs attach importance to free time, especially the opportunities to establish contact with the family and experience psychological relief. The existing literature already proves that leisure activities are important aspects of maintaining the mental and emotional health even in institutionalized facilities. According to Orthner and Mancini (2020), emotional

ties and feeling of attachment through shared leisure experiences are promoted even in limited settings. Leisure too is a coping medium, emotional control as well as retention of social roles in confinement.

Nonetheless, this analysis indicates that the expectations and experiences of the PDLs in this study are relatively similar, and possibly, they have learned to live with the constraints of the custodial setting. Although it might be a sign that there are no high expectations about leisure in jail facilities, the fact that no noticeable differences are detected must not undermine the opportunities that postulating organized recreational programs may have. Even the smallest amount of leisure time can alleviate the dullness of imprisonment and provide rehabilitation and reintegration objectives (Zabriskie, & McCormick, 2020). The findings showed that the three work-related stressors significantly affect jail-related stress, as all the p -values are

Table 7: Effect of Work-related Stress on Jail-related Stress

Test Value = 3						
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	T	Df	Sig: (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Threat of violence	3.8129	34	.017	.3120	.086	.844
Role Ambiguity	3.2214	34	.023	.2140	.762	.745
Poor Management	2.7174	34	.021	.1400	.024	.687

Level of significance was $\alpha = .05$

less than .05; threatening violence ($p = .017$), role ambiguity ($p = .023$), and ineffective management ($p = .021$). The null hypothesis is rejected in all cases because all the p -values are lower than the alpha level (0.05). Hence, it can be concluded that work stress plays a significant role in the jail related stress of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs).

The largest mean difference was found in threat of violence ($M = .3120$), which means that the exposure to potential conflict and violence in correctional facilities has a certain impact on the stress level of the custodial officers and, consequently, on the capability to handle PDL welfare (Finn, 2018; Cooper *et al.*, 2018). In situations where officers are facing regular threats, their interactions with PDLs might be tense, which would lead to poor communication, uneven rule application, and tension within the facility (Huckabee, 2019).

Role ambiguity appeared to be a factor as well ($M = .2140$), which corresponds to the research findings that indicate unclear job expectations, a lack of responsibilities, and irregular leadership behavior leads to stress and decreased the quality of services in correctional facilities (Michel *et al.*, 2021). This ambiguity may weaken the effectiveness of the custodial services and diminish the rehabilitation outcomes.

The mean difference in poor management was slightly lower, but significant ($M = .1400$) and it means that

organizational inefficiencies, lack of support systems, and ineffective coordination between staff members of the jail can negatively influence the work of the officers and well-being of inmates. Correctional facilities with weak leadership and organizational coverage tend to be more susceptible to breakdowns in operations and safety procedures due to stress (Atkin-Plunk *et al.*, 2013; Hendrix, 2023).

All in all, these results contribute to the statement that the work pressure associated with the job does not affect only jail staff but also has a spill over to inmates. The correctional setting is a closed system and once the custodial officers are overworked or not supported, the system indirectly impacts on the treatment, communication and general environment that the PDLs will go through. This means that any of the stress management interventions should be systems based dealing with individual and organizational stressors. These findings are further reinforced by post-pandemic research emphasizing how prolonged stress, institutional pressure, and limited psychosocial support exacerbate emotional strain in structured environments (Cahapin *et al.*, 2022). In a post-pandemic perspective, similar patterns of stress spillover and adaptive fatigue were observed among institutional populations, highlighting the necessity of holistic, system-based interventions that address both individual coping mechanisms and

organizational practices. This alignment strengthens the basis for proposing a comprehensive Stress Management Program tailored to the needs of custodial officers and Persons Deprived of Liberty.

Stress Management Program

The correctional environment on its own is a stressor, overcrowded, with limited mobility, a never-ending security threat, and long-term exposure to psychological and emotional stressors of Jail Officer and Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). Results of the current research indicated that job stress factors, including threat of violence, role ambiguity, and bad management substantially contribute to jail-related stress that manifests as familial separation, monetary hardships, and inability to have time to enjoy. Unaddressed, these stressors can result in burnout, worsening mental health, poor relationships and even institutional safety.

This Stress Management Program is based on a holistic and preventive model of intervention at physical, mental, emotional, and relational levels of stress in the jail environment. Physical exercises like Zumba and formal

exercise are also provided to improve the health of the body, relieve the tension, and socialization. Livelihood programs are incorporated to give the PDLs gainful occupation, mitigate violence due to idleness and inculcate self esteem by creating skills and generating income.

The mental and emotional wellness seminars, such as yoga and laughter therapy, will also be considered as equipping the Jail Officers as well as the PDLs with coping mechanisms to handle work pressure and emotional disturbances. Discipline, clarity, and mutual understanding are also reinforced through regular orientation on rules and regulations of the jail- and in this way conflict and role-related stress is minimized. Jail Officers are taught the value of work-life balance in the family-related symposiums to reduce the effect of spillover stress to family relationships. Lastly, team-building exercise will be aimed at enhancing trust, collaboration, and communication with all the stakeholders.

The table below provides an overview of the Stress Management Program:

STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Objectives	Activities	Stress Areas being Addressed	Time Frame	Person Involved	Expected Outcome
1. To enhance physical strength and reduce physical stress among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)	Zumba Exercise	Physical Body Human Relation	Whole year round	Jail Officer PDL Trainer	100% of the PDL, and even Jail Officers will be physically fit and socially comfortable.
2. To make every PDL aware on how to use their time productively through participation in the livelihood program	Livelihood programs like bag making, ladies' accessories making, simple house décor, wall clocks made from wood, etc.	Physical Body Mental Health Emotional Health	Whole year round	Jail Officer Trainers PDL	100% of the PDL will be busy, lessen the violence between PDL and custodian guards, and have a productive time at the same time they will earn from it.
3. To conduct training/seminars relative to mental and emotional health.	Seminar-Workshop in yoga laughter.	Physical Body Job Pressure Mental Health Emotional Health	Every quarter of the year	Jail Officer Trainer/ Resource Speaker PDL	95% of the Jail Officers and PDLs will be emotionally healthy and will have a positive outlook in life.
4. To regularly orient the PDL on the rules and regulations inside the jail for them to be aware of the dos and dont's.	Orientation every start of the week.	Human Relation Job Pressure	Whole Year Round	Jail Officers PDL	95% of the PDL will be well versed in the rules and regulations that would lessen the violence or any other untoward incidents inside the jail.

5. To make the Jail Officers aware of the value of family leisure through symposiums.	Symposium about family leisure to Jail Officers.	F a m i l y Relationship Job Pressure	Middle of Fiscal Year	Jail Officers HRD	100% of the Jail Officers will become aware of the time to be allotted for their family leisure and bonding.
6. To improve the relationship among the entire stakeholders.	Team building inside the premises	Job pressure H u m a n Relation Physical Body	Once a year	Jail Officers PDL	Stakeholders will have improved relationships with each other.

CONCLUSION

The paper has explored the scope and impact of work-related stress among custodial officers and implications on the jail-related stress among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The findings of various dimensions, such as threat of violence, role ambiguity, and poor management, showed statistically significant differences between expectations and actual practices indicating systemic stress in the custodial operations. These results substantiate the statement that the correctional officers are under high stress, and the lack of responsiveness to crises, leadership clarity, and coordination between the institutions become the factors that lead to high levels of stress. Particularly, the mean difference of threat of violence was the highest, which highlights its prevalence in occupational stress and downstream consequences of jail stability and officer well-being.

Furthermore, the research determined that there is a significant correlation between work stress of custodial officers and PDLs on jail related stress in the context of family separation, financial burden, and entailment of leisure. Stress among officers gives a ripple effect on the way officers handle and deal with the inmates, further increasing the emotional and psychological burden of being in prison. Though PDLs were resilient, especially when it comes to preserving family relationships, financial hardship and lack of coping mechanisms are major stress factors.

The proposed stress management program is aimed at alleviating such compounding effects by providing specific, holistic interventions to help alleviate them, such as physical and livelihood interventions, mental health seminars, and family reintegration programs. Those are the steps that are taken to decrease the level of custodial and inmate stress, achieve institutional harmony, and improve the overall correctional environment. A systems oriented approach is also critical in promoting sustainable well being in custodial set ups.

In line with findings, it is recommended that the correctional institutions should consider adopting systems-based approach to stress reduction with emphasis on the custodial officers as well as PDLs. This involves the introduction of organized leadership training, frequent mental health seminars, role definition, and policies enforcement. Jail operations need to include livelihood programs and leisure-based programs to offer emotional relief and eliminate idleness. In addition, institutionalization of psychological support services

should be adopted particularly among officers who have been subjected to high-risk situations. Enhanced institutional coordination, and increased investment in staff will enhance resiliency, burnout, and eventually make the correctional environment more humane and secure.

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