

An Exploratory Study of Effects of Workplace Variables on Organizational Commitment of Mississippi Correctional Staff

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ABSTRACT

Correctional staff are an expensive and very valuable resource for any correctional organization, including the Mississippi Department of Corrections. Staff are responsible for a myriad of tasks to help ensure a safe, secure, and humane prison. The success or failure of correctional institutions are often linked to staff. Not only do staff effect correctional facilities, but workplace factors of institutions can effect staff. Workplace factors can help build or reduce organizational commitment, a salient concept for correctional organizations. High levels of organizational commitment can result in greater support for organizational goals, improved interaction with inmates, increased work production, raised prosocial behaviors, and greater efforts on behalf of the organization. Conversely, low levels of commitment can result in negative outcomes, such as higher levels of job burnout, more absenteeism, lower work efforts, and raised turnover intent/turnover.

The current study will explore how different dimensions of the workplace are associated with organizational commitment among staff at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, the largest facility in the Mississippi Department of Corrections. The survey data has already been collected and is now ready for use. The results of this study will be beneficial for staff, the Mississippi Department of Corrections, inmates, and society. Increasing commitment will benefit staff by allowing them to feel more connected with their employer. Resources are tight for the Mississippi Department of Corrections, and one way to effectively and efficiently use limited

financial resources is to improve organizational commitment. Committed staff generally have more positive and productive interactions with inmates, which can help create a more stable prison environment, which is conducive for treatment. The residents of the State of Mississippi will benefit from more efficient use of resources.