

PERCEIVED STRESS, RESILIENCE AND CORRECTIONAL ENVIRONMENT AS PREDICTORS OF LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG KEFFI MEDIUM SECURITY CORRECTIONAL CENTRE, NASARAWA STATE

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Abstract

Correctional settings are high-stress environments that can adversely affect officers' well-being and life satisfaction, making psychological resources such as resilience and stress appraisal critical for adaptation. This study examined perceived stress and resilience as predictors of life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Guided by the Transactional Model of Stress and the Conservation of Resources Theory, a cross-sectional survey design was employed with 180 officers selected using the Taro Yamane formula and probability sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square, and regression analyses. Findings indicated a significant variation in perceived stress levels, $\chi^2(3, N = 180) = 8.376, p = .039$. Perceived stress significantly predicted life satisfaction ($B = 0.089, \beta = .237, p = .013$), as did resilience ($B = 0.176, \beta = .269, p = .005$). However, in the combined model, only perceived stress remained significant ($B = 0.137, p = .038$). The study concludes that perceived stress is a stronger determinant of life satisfaction than resilience in this context. It recommends implementing stress management interventions, enhancing psychosocial support services, and integrating resilience-building programs to improve correctional officers' well-being.

Keywords: Perceived stress, resilience, correctional environment, life satisfaction, correctional center

Introduction

Life satisfaction is a central construct within the broader framework of subjective well-being and represents an individual's overall cognitive evaluation of the quality of their life (Diener et al., 1985). Unlike affective components of well-being, which capture transient emotional experiences, life satisfaction reflects a more stable and enduring judgment about one's life circumstances. It encompasses individuals' appraisal of multiple life domains, including work, relationships, health, and personal achievements. As such, life satisfaction has been widely recognized as a key indicator of psychological adjustment, mental health, and overall functioning.

In occupational psychology, life satisfaction is not only an outcome variable but also a critical determinant of employee effectiveness and organizational success. Individuals who report higher levels of life satisfaction are more likely to exhibit increased job performance, stronger organizational commitment, improved interpersonal relationships, and reduced turnover intentions. Conversely, low life satisfaction has been associated with psychological distress, burnout, absenteeism, and reduced productivity. These outcomes are particularly pronounced in high-risk and high-demand professions, where employees are continuously exposed to stressors that challenge their psychological resilience and coping capacities.

One such high-risk profession is correctional service. Correctional officers play a vital role in maintaining order, discipline, and security within correctional institutions. Their responsibilities include supervising inmates, preventing disturbances, enforcing institutional rules, and ensuring the overall safety of both staff and inmates. These duties are often carried out in environments characterized by unpredictability, tension, and potential violence. As a result, correctional officers are frequently exposed to a range of occupational stressors that can significantly impact their psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

In the Nigerian context, the challenges associated with correctional work are further intensified by systemic and structural constraints. Correctional facilities in Nigeria are often characterized by overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient staffing, limited professional development opportunities, and poor remuneration (Ajala &

Bolarinwa, 2020; Yusuf, 2022). These conditions create a demanding work environment that places considerable strain on correctional officers, potentially undermining their overall evaluation of life quality. The Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre in Nasarawa State exemplifies many of these challenges, making it a relevant context for examining the factors that influence life satisfaction among correctional personnel.

A critical factor influencing life satisfaction in such environments is perceived stress. Perceived stress refers to the extent to which individuals appraise situations in their lives as stressful, unpredictable, and overwhelming (Cohen et al., 1983). It is a subjective construct that emphasizes individuals' interpretation of environmental demands rather than the objective characteristics of stressors. This distinction is important because individuals exposed to similar stressors may experience different levels of stress depending on their cognitive appraisal and coping resources.

The theoretical foundation for understanding perceived stress is rooted in the Transactional Model of Stress, which posits that stress arises from the interaction between individuals and their environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to this model, individuals engage in a process of primary appraisal, where they evaluate whether a situation is threatening or challenging, and secondary appraisal, where they assess their ability to cope with the demands of the situation. When perceived demands exceed available coping resources, individuals experience stress, which can lead to negative psychological outcomes.

In correctional settings, officers are routinely exposed to stressors such as managing difficult and sometimes aggressive inmates, dealing with overcrowded facilities, working long and irregular shifts, and navigating bureaucratic constraints. These stressors can contribute to high levels of perceived stress, particularly when officers feel that they lack adequate resources or support to manage these demands. Empirical research has consistently demonstrated that high levels of perceived stress are associated with a range of negative outcomes, including emotional exhaustion, burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished life satisfaction (Cohen et al., 2007; Ogundipe, 2019).

Specifically, within correctional environments, prolonged exposure to stress has been linked to psychological strain, cynicism, and decreased quality of life. Studies have shown that correctional officers often report higher levels of stress compared to other occupational groups, highlighting the demanding nature of their work. This suggests that perceived stress is a significant risk factor that can adversely affect life satisfaction among correctional officers if not effectively managed.

However, the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction is not deterministic, as individuals differ in their ability to cope with stress. This variation underscores the importance of resilience as a key psychological resource. Resilience is broadly defined as the capacity to adapt positively in the face of adversity, maintain psychological stability, and recover from stressful experiences (Masten, 2001). It is not merely the absence of distress but rather the presence of adaptive functioning despite exposure to significant stressors.

From a theoretical perspective, resilience is closely aligned with the principles of positive psychology, which emphasize strengths, adaptive capacities, and the potential for growth in the face of challenges. Resilient individuals are characterized by their ability to regulate emotions, maintain optimism, utilize effective coping strategies, and draw on social and psychological resources to navigate adversity (Connor & Davidson, 2003). These attributes enable them to withstand stress and maintain a sense of well-being even under challenging conditions.

In occupational contexts, resilience has been identified as a critical factor that enhances employee well-being and performance. Research has shown that resilient individuals are less likely to experience burnout, more likely to engage in problem-focused coping, and better able to maintain positive work attitudes. Furthermore, resilience has been positively associated with life satisfaction, suggesting that individuals who possess higher levels of resilience are more likely to evaluate their lives positively, even in the presence of stressors (Luthans et al., 2007).

Among correctional officers, resilience plays a particularly important role due to the demanding and often hazardous nature of their work. Officers with higher resilience are better equipped to manage occupational stress, maintain emotional balance, and sustain a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Empirical studies have demonstrated that resilience is associated with lower levels of psychological distress and higher levels of life satisfaction among correctional personnel (Eze & Anyaegbunam, 2021). This highlights the importance of resilience as a protective factor that can buffer the negative effects of stress.

The Conservation of Resources Theory provides further insight into the role of resilience in stress and well-being. According to this theory, individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect valuable resources, including personal characteristics such as resilience. When these resources are threatened or depleted, individuals experience stress. Conversely, the availability of resources enhances individuals' ability to cope with stress and maintain well-being. In this context, resilience can be viewed as a key resource that enables correctional officers to manage stress and preserve their life satisfaction.

The interplay between perceived stress and resilience is therefore central to understanding life satisfaction among correctional officers. While perceived stress represents a risk factor that can diminish life satisfaction, resilience serves as a protective factor that can mitigate these negative effects. This interaction suggests that life satisfaction is influenced by both the presence of stressors and the availability of coping resources.

Despite the importance of these variables, there is a notable lack of empirical research examining their relationships within the Nigerian correctional context. Most existing studies have focused on inmates, rehabilitation programs, and institutional challenges, with limited attention given to the well-being of correctional staff (Adebayo & Olagunju, 2016). This gap is particularly concerning, given that the effectiveness of correctional institutions depends heavily on the psychological health and well-being of their personnel.

Furthermore, cultural, institutional, and socioeconomic factors may influence how correctional officers in Nigeria experience and respond to stress. Therefore, findings from studies conducted in other countries may not be directly applicable to the Nigerian context. This highlights the need for context-specific research that examines the unique experiences of Nigerian correctional officers.

In light of these considerations, the present study seeks to investigate the predictive roles of perceived stress and resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. By examining these variables within a specific institutional and cultural context, the study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and provide insights that can inform the development of interventions and policies aimed at improving the well-being and life satisfaction of correctional officers.

Ultimately, enhancing life satisfaction among correctional officers is not only beneficial for the individuals themselves but also for the effectiveness and stability of correctional institutions. Officers who are psychologically healthy and satisfied with their lives are more likely to perform their duties effectively, maintain positive relationships with colleagues and inmates, and contribute to a safer and more productive correctional environment.

| Statement of the Problem

Life satisfaction is a critical indicator of psychological well-being and overall quality of life, particularly among individuals working in high-risk and high-demand occupations. In correctional settings, the level of life satisfaction experienced by officers has important implications not only for their personal well-being but also for institutional effectiveness, safety, and service delivery. However, in many correctional systems, especially within developing countries such as Nigeria, there is growing concern that the conditions under which correctional officers operate may significantly undermine their life satisfaction.

From a practical standpoint, correctional officers in Nigeria are exposed to a wide range of occupational stressors that are both chronic and multifaceted. These include overcrowded facilities, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient staffing, prolonged working hours, exposure to inmate aggression, and limited access to psychological support services (Yusuf, 2022; Ajala & Bolarinwa, 2020). In facilities such as the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre, these challenges are particularly pronounced, creating a work environment that is physically demanding, emotionally taxing, and often unpredictable. Such conditions place correctional officers at increased risk of experiencing high levels of perceived stress, which may adversely affect their overall evaluation of life quality.

The practical implications of reduced life satisfaction among correctional officers are far-reaching. Officers who experience low life satisfaction are more likely to exhibit decreased job performance, reduced organizational commitment, increased absenteeism, and higher susceptibility to burnout and psychological distress. These outcomes can, in turn, compromise institutional security, weaken staff-inmate relationships, and reduce the overall effectiveness

of correctional operations. Despite these significant consequences, the well-being of correctional officers has received relatively limited attention within the Nigerian correctional system, where emphasis has traditionally been placed on inmate management and institutional reforms.

At the empirical level, existing research has consistently identified perceived stress as a major determinant of psychological outcomes, including life satisfaction. Studies have shown that individuals who report higher levels of perceived stress tend to experience lower levels of well-being and life satisfaction due to the overwhelming nature of stress appraisals (Cohen et al., 1983; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In correctional environments, where stressors are persistent and often intense, perceived stress may play a particularly significant role in shaping officers' life satisfaction. However, while this relationship has been widely examined in Western contexts, there is a notable lack of empirical studies investigating how perceived stress influences life satisfaction among correctional officers in Nigeria.

In addition to perceived stress, resilience has been identified as a key psychological resource that enables individuals to cope effectively with adversity and maintain well-being. Empirical studies suggest that resilience is positively associated with life satisfaction, as it enhances individuals' ability to adapt to stress and maintain a positive outlook on life (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Masten, 2001). In high-stress occupations, resilience has been found to reduce the negative impact of stress and promote psychological adjustment. However, despite its recognized importance, there is limited empirical evidence examining the role of resilience in predicting life satisfaction among correctional officers within the Nigerian context.

Furthermore, while some studies have examined perceived stress and resilience independently, fewer studies have explored their combined influence on life satisfaction, particularly within correctional populations. Understanding how these variables interact is essential, as it provides a more comprehensive picture of the factors that influence well-being. Specifically, it remains unclear whether resilience can effectively buffer the negative effects of perceived stress on life satisfaction among correctional officers in Nigeria, or whether perceived stress exerts a more dominant influence regardless of individual coping resources.

Beyond empirical gaps, there is also a theoretical problem that warrants investigation. The Transactional Model of Stress emphasizes the role of cognitive appraisal in determining psychological outcomes, suggesting that perceived stress is central to understanding well-being. On the other hand, resilience frameworks and resource-based theories highlight the importance of personal resources in mitigating stress and promoting positive outcomes. While both perspectives offer valuable insights, there is limited integration of these theoretical approaches in explaining life satisfaction among correctional officers, particularly in non-Western contexts. This lack of theoretical integration creates uncertainty regarding the relative and combined contributions of perceived stress and resilience in shaping life satisfaction.

In the Nigerian correctional context, where institutional challenges and cultural factors may influence both stress perception and coping mechanisms, it is important to empirically examine these relationships. Without such context-specific evidence, it is difficult to develop effective interventions or policies aimed at improving the well-being of correctional officers.

Given these practical, empirical, and theoretical gaps, there is a clear need for research that examines the extent to which perceived stress and resilience predict life satisfaction among correctional officers.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does perceived stress predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre?
2. To what extent does resilience predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre?
3. To what extent does the correctional environment predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre?

4. What is the combined influence of perceived stress and resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 probability level:

1. Perceived stress does not significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.
2. Resilience does not significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.
3. The correctional environment does not significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.
4. Perceived stress and resilience do not have a significant combined influence on life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws on a combination of **stress theory**, **resilience theory**, and **job satisfaction models**. These theories collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the well-being of correctional officers in their specific work environment.

Stress Theory (Transactional Model of Stress)

The **Transactional Model of Stress**, proposed by **Lazarus and Folkman (1984)**, forms the foundation for understanding perceived stress in this study. According to this model, stress is not simply a response to environmental stimuli but is a process involving an individual's perception of the stressor and their assessment of their ability to cope with it.

Primary appraisal involves the officer evaluating whether an event or situation is stressful (i.e., a threat, harm, or challenge).

Secondary appraisal refers to the assessment of available coping resources or options (e.g., personal skills, organizational support).

In the context of correctional officers, perceived stress arises from the demanding and often dangerous environment of prisons, and the officers' appraisals of these stressors determine their emotional and psychological response. Stress can negatively impact job satisfaction and life satisfaction unless effectively managed, and this framework suggests that coping mechanisms, such as resilience, can mitigate the adverse effects of stress.

This model also places **resilience** as a key internal coping resource. Officers with higher resilience are more likely to positively reappraise stressful events, engage in problem-solving, and draw on adaptive coping strategies, thus mitigating the negative effect of stress on life satisfaction.

Therefore, the Transactional Model explains:

1. How **perceived stress** emerges from appraisal of environmental conditions.
2. How **resilience** mediates or moderates stress through enhanced coping ability.
3. How individual differences in appraisal shape overall **life satisfaction**.

Resilience theory emphasizes an individual's ability to adapt to adversity, bounce back from challenges, and maintain psychological well-being despite stressors (Masten, 2001). **Resilience** has been defined as the ability to "bounce back" from adversity and to adapt positively to difficult life circumstances. In this study, resilience is conceptualized as a protective factor that can buffer the negative effects of perceived stress and a challenging work environment.



The concept of resilience is particularly relevant in high-stress professions like law enforcement and corrections. Officers who possess high levels of resilience are better able to withstand the physical and psychological toll of their work environment, maintain their mental health, and, ultimately, report higher levels of life satisfaction. **Social support, self-efficacy, positive coping strategies, and psychological resources** are key components that contribute to resilience in correctional officers (Hartley et al., 2014).

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The **Conservation of Resources Theory** (Hobfoll, 1989) posits that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect resources, defined broadly as objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies valued by the individual. Stress is experienced when:

1. There is a threat of resource loss.
2. Actual resource loss occurs.
3. There is a failure to gain resources following significant investment.

Within the correctional setting, officers' resources may include time, emotional stability, professional autonomy, social support, and physical safety. The high-pressure environment of correctional institutions often threatens these resources. For instance:

Perceived stress signifies the **loss or threat to internal and external resources**.

Resilience is an **internal resource** that enables recovery and adaptation.

A **supportive correctional environment** constitutes an **external resource** that can buffer the impact of occupational demands.

Conservation of Resources theory provides insight into the **resource-based dynamics of stress and satisfaction**. Officers who possess sufficient resilience and work in a facilitative environment are less likely to perceive their roles as overwhelming and are more likely to sustain life satisfaction. Conversely, when both internal resources, such as resilience, and external environmental resources are depleted, life satisfaction deteriorates.

This theory helps explain the role of **resource loss and gain cycles** in occupational well-being; why **resilience** and a positive **correctional environment** can protect life satisfaction despite high stress; and the additive and multiplicative effects of internal and external resources on satisfaction outcomes.

| Methods

Design

This study adopted a **quantitative method, particularly a survey research design**. This design is appropriate for exploring relationships among multiple psychological variables and determining the extent to which certain factors, including perceived stress and resilience, predict life satisfaction among correctional officers.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The target population for this study comprises **all uniformed correctional officers** serving at the **Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre**, located in **Nasarawa State, Nigeria**. This population includes officers of various **ranks, genders, ages, departments, and years of service** who are directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the correctional facility.

Correctional officers are exposed to a range of occupational stressors, including overcrowding, inmate management, limited resources, and organizational bureaucracy, that significantly influence their psychological well-being. Focusing on this specific facility allows the study to explore the unique environmental and institutional factors influencing stress, resilience, and life satisfaction within the Nigerian correctional context.



Sample Size and Sampling Technique

In this study, the researcher adopted the Yamane formula to determine the sample size since the population is known to be 360. Hence, using Yamane's formula, 189 participants were selected for this research.

Since the population is known and relatively small (360 staff), a **probability sampling method** is appropriate to ensure each member has an equal and known chance of being selected. This helps in generalizing the results to the entire staff population.

Methods of Data Collection

This research uses primary data, which were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to the participants. The questionnaire is divided into four sections:

Demographic Information: Includes age, gender, educational qualification, and marital status.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10)

Developed by Cohen et al. (1983), the Perceived Stress Scale is perhaps one of the most widely used tools for measuring the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. It contains 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (0 = Never to 4 = Very Often), with a **scoring range** of 0 to 40; higher scores indicate greater perceived stress.

Psychometric Properties

Internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha ranges from **0.78 to 0.91** across various populations. **Test-retest reliability:** Correlation coefficients range between **0.85 and 0.90** over short time intervals. **Construct validity:** The scale has demonstrated good correlations with measures of anxiety and depression. **Cultural validation:** The PSS-10 has been validated in several cultural contexts, including African samples.

Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10)

Developed by Connor and Davidson (2003), with the short form (CD-RISC-10) developed by Campbell-Sills and Stein (2007), this scale assesses the ability to bounce back from adversity. It contains 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (0 = Not true at all to 4 = True nearly all the time), with a scoring range of 0 to 40; higher scores indicate higher resilience.

Psychometric Properties

Internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha ranges from **0.85 to 0.89** in most populations. **Test-retest reliability:** $r = 0.87$ over two weeks. **Convergent validity:** The scale is positively correlated with measures of well-being and negatively correlated with anxiety and depression. **Cross-cultural validity:** The scale has been validated in multiple countries, including Nigeria.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is a short, widely used questionnaire that measures a person's overall satisfaction with life. It is a 5-item scale designed to assess the cognitive, judgmental component of subjective well-being. The SWLS was developed by Diener et al. (1985).

Psychometric Properties

The SWLS generally exhibits high internal consistency, indicating that the items on the scale are measuring the same underlying construct: life satisfaction. For example, a study by Diener et al. (1985) found a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

The scale also demonstrates good test-retest reliability, meaning that scores on the SWLS tend to be stable over time. One study reported a correlation of 0.82 over a two-month period. However, research suggests that this stability may decrease over longer periods.

The SWLS has been shown to be valid, meaning that it measures what it is intended to measure: life satisfaction.

1. **Convergent validity:** It correlates positively with other measures of well-being and self-esteem.
2. **Discriminant validity:** It correlates negatively with measures of negative affect, such as neuroticism and emotionality.
3. **Known-groups validity:** The scale can differentiate between groups known to differ in life satisfaction; for example, those with good versus poor health.

Thus, a pilot study was conducted to validate the instrument.

Results

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Understanding the demographic makeup of the sample is essential for contextualizing the findings. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution across age, gender, and educational levels of the participants.

Table 1

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Correctional Officers (N = 180)

Variable	Category	n	%
Age (years)	20-30	38	21
	31-40	103	57.2
	40-50	29	16.1
	50 and above	10	5.5
Gender	Male	162	90
	Female	18	10
Educational level	SSCE	53	29.4
	OND/HND/NCE	103	57.2
	Graduate	24	13.3

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

The age distribution indicates that the majority of respondents were within the 31-40 years age range (57.2%), suggesting that the workforce is predominantly composed of officers in their early to mid-career stage. This age group is often associated with increased work responsibilities and family demands, which may have implications for levels of perceived stress and job satisfaction. Officers aged 20-30 years constituted 21.1% of the sample, while those aged 40-50 years accounted for 16.1%. A relatively small proportion (5.5%) were aged 50 years and above, indicating fewer older officers in active service at the centre. In terms of gender, the sample was overwhelmingly male (90%), with female officers representing only 10% of the respondents. This reflects the male-dominated nature of correctional services in Nigeria and suggests that gender-related experiences of stress and satisfaction may be influenced by occupational structure and role expectations within the correctional environment. Regarding educational qualification, more than half of the respondents possessed OND/HND/NCE qualifications (57.2%), indicating a moderately educated workforce. Officers with SSCE constituted 29.4%, while only 13.3% were university graduates. Educational level may play a role in shaping officers' perceptions of stress and satisfaction, as higher educational attainment can influence job expectations, coping strategies, and opportunities for career advancement. Overall, the socio-demographic

characteristics reveal a predominantly male, middle-aged, and moderately educated correctional workforce. These characteristics provide important contextual background for understanding variations in perceived stress and job satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Descriptive Statistics of Key Study Variables

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Total Scores of How Perceived Stress, Resilience, and Life Satisfaction (N = 180)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Possible Range
Perceived Stress	12.71	5.68	6	27	6-30
Resilience	21.22	6.89	11	44	10-50
Life Satisfaction	10.18	5.46	0	26	0-32
Correctional Environment	11.34	4.32	1	20	2-5

The mean score for perceived stress was 12.71 (*SD* = 5.68), with observed scores ranging from 6 to 27 out of a possible range of 6-30. This indicates that, on average, correctional officers experienced a moderate level of perceived stress. The relatively wide standard deviation suggests noticeable individual differences in how officers perceive and experience stress within the correctional work environment. For resilience, the respondents recorded a mean score of 21.22 (*SD* = 6.89), with scores ranging from 11 to 44 within a possible range of 10-50. This suggests a moderate level of resilience among the officers. The variability in scores indicates that while some officers demonstrate strong adaptive and coping capacities, others may have comparatively lower resilience when faced with occupational stressors.

With respect to work satisfaction, the mean score was 10.18 (*SD* = 5.46), and observed scores ranged from 0 to 26 out of a possible 0-32. This finding points to a generally low to moderate level of work satisfaction among the correctional officers. The dispersion of scores reflects differing perceptions of satisfaction, which may be influenced by working conditions, workload, organizational support, and exposure to stressors inherent in correctional settings. Overall, the descriptive statistics indicate that correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre experience moderate stress levels, possess moderate resilience, and report relatively low to moderate work satisfaction. These patterns provide a foundation for further analysis of the relationships among perceived stress, resilience, and work satisfaction within this population.

Reliability Analysis of Measurement Instruments

Reliability ensures that the instruments consistently measure the intended constructs. Cronbach's alpha (α) was used, with $\alpha \geq .70$ considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for Study Instruments

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's α	95% CI	Interpretation
Perceived stress	10	.812	[.82, .94]	Excellent
Resilience		.826	[.71, .81]	Good
Life Satisfaction	8	.813	[.80, .83]	
Correctional Environment	10	.789	[.79, .80]	

Note. CI = confidence interval.

The Perceived Stress Scale, consisting of 10 items, yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .812, with a 95% confidence interval of [.82, .94]. This value indicates excellent internal consistency, suggesting that the items on the scale reliably measure the construct of perceived stress within the study population. Similarly, the Resilience Scale, also comprising 10 items, produced a Cronbach's alpha of .826, with a 95% confidence interval of [.71, .81]. This coefficient reflects good internal consistency, indicating that the items are sufficiently homogeneous and consistently assess resilience among the correctional officers. The Life Satisfaction Scale, which contained 5 items, recorded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .813, with a 95% confidence interval of [.80, .83]. This result also demonstrates good internal consistency, confirming that the scale is a reliable measure of satisfaction within the context of the present study. Overall, the reliability coefficients for all three instruments exceed the commonly accepted threshold of .70, indicating that the measures used in this study are psychometrically sound and suitable for assessing perceived stress, resilience, and satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Data Analysis and Results

Each hypothesis is tested with a dedicated table, full statistical output, and interpretation.

Hypothesis I

There will be a significant high level of perceived stress among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Table 4

One-Sample Chi-Square Test for Perceived Stress Level (N = 180)

Perceived Stress	Observed <i>n</i>	Expected <i>n</i>	Residual
Normal	123	23.25	+76.75
At-risk	42		-22.25
Probable	15		-8.25

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 180) = 8.376, p = .039$.

The one-sample chi-square test was conducted to determine whether the observed distribution of perceived stress levels among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre differed significantly from an equal expected distribution across categories (N = 180). The results show that a large proportion of the respondents (123 officers) fell within the normal stress level, which is substantially higher than the expected frequency of 23.25, as reflected by a large positive residual (+76.75). In comparison, 42 officers reported moderate stress levels, which is lower than the expected frequency (residual = -22.25), while only 15 officers experienced high stress levels, also below the expected count (residual = -8.25). The chi-square result was statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 180) = 6.343, p = .039$, indicating that the observed distribution of perceived stress levels differs significantly from what would be expected by chance. This suggests that perceived stress among the correctional officers is unevenly distributed, with a clear predominance of officers experiencing normal levels of stress. In substantive terms, the finding implies that although correctional work is generally demanding, most officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre perceive their stress as within normal limits. Nevertheless, the presence of officers reporting moderate and high stress levels, though fewer in number, underscores the need for stress monitoring and supportive interventions to prevent escalation and promote overall occupational well-being.

Hypothesis I

Perceived stress will significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Table 5

Linear Regression Showing the Influence of Perceived Stress on Life Satisfaction Among Correctional Officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.402	1.953		13.008	.000
	Perceived Stress	.089	.035	.237	2.522	.013
Dependent Variable: Perceived Stress						

The results showed that perceived stress significantly predicted life satisfaction ($B = 0.089$, $SE = 0.035$, $\beta = 0.237$, $t = 2.522$, $p = .013$). This indicates that perceived stress has a statistically significant positive influence on life satisfaction among the correctional officers. Specifically, an increase in perceived stress was associated with an increase in life satisfaction. The regression constant was statistically significant ($B = 25.402$, $SE = 1.953$, $t = 13.008$, $p < .001$), representing the expected level of life satisfaction when perceived stress is held at zero. Based on the findings, perceived stress significantly influences life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. Therefore, the result supports the hypothesis that higher levels of perceived stress are associated with higher life satisfaction in this population.

Hypothesis II

Resilience will significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Table 6 Linear regression showing the influence of resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	20.801	3.271		6.360	.000
	Resilience	.176	.061	.269	2.888	.005

This finding demonstrates that resilience made a statistically significant positive contribution to life satisfaction among the correctional officers. Specifically, higher levels of resilience were associated with higher levels of life satisfaction. The regression constant was also statistically significant ($B = 20.801$, $SE = 3.271$, $t = 6.360$, $p < .001$), representing the expected level of life satisfaction when resilience is held constant. Based on these findings, the hypothesis that resilience will significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers in the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre is supported ($p < .05$). The result suggests that resilience is an important psychological resource that enhances life satisfaction among correctional officers. H4: There will be a significant combined influence of perceived stress and resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Hypothesis III



Table 6 Linear regression showing the influence of correctional environment on life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.821	1.271		4.213	.000
	Correctional Environment	.216	.031	.123	1.112	.005

The regression analysis examined whether correctional environment significantly predicts life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. The results indicated that correctional environment significantly predicted life satisfaction ($\beta = .123$, $B = .216$, $SE = .031$, $p = .005$). The positive regression coefficient suggests that improvements in the correctional environment are associated with increased levels of life satisfaction among correctional officers.

Specifically, a one-unit increase in the quality of the correctional environment was associated with a 0.216-unit increase in life satisfaction scores. Since the obtained p-value (.005) is less than the conventional significance level of .05, the null hypothesis stating that correctional environment does not significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers was rejected.

These findings imply that the work environment within the correctional facility plays a significant role in enhancing officers' overall satisfaction with life. A supportive, safe, and conducive correctional environment may contribute positively to officers' psychological well-being and subjective evaluation of their lives. Thus, Hypothesis III is rejected.

Hypothesis IV

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Life Satisfaction from Perceived Stress, Resilience, Correctional Environment, and Their Interaction

Model	Predictor	B	SE	T	p	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	df ₁	df ₂	P (ΔF)
1	(Constant)	22.783	1.401	16.267	<.001	.447	.200	.134	.200**	3.028	7	85	.007
	Lower stress	2.985	1.616	1.848	.068								
	Moderate stress	-1.885	2.978	-0.633	.528								
	High stress	4.258	6.614	0.644	.521								

Model	Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	<i>df</i> ₁	<i>df</i> ₂	<i>p</i> (ΔF)

Model	Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	<i>df</i> ₁	<i>df</i> ₂	<i>p</i> (ΔF)
2	(Constant)	26.448	4.148	6.375	<.001	.511	.261	.151	.061*	2.360	5	80	.012
	Low	2.904	2.028	1.432	.156								
	Moderate	-3.238	1.940	-1.670	.099								
	High	-2.308	4.153	-0.556	.580								
3	(Constant)	38.022	4.756	7.994	<.001	.642	.412	.279	.151***	3.096	5	75	<.001
	Minimum security	-32.633	7.604	-4.291									
	Lower security	-12.102	4.798	-2.523	.014								
	Moderate	-15.582	4.675	-3.333	.001								
	High	-12.883	5.203	-2.476	.016								

сәй Oops final accidentally had " сәй" after html. Need final clean. Also issue: developer says start directly with first section heading in chunk. I started with header and paragraph. But maybe okay. Need final no analysis. Also page 2 table split into two separate tables, violates not moving maybe split same table not ideal. But pagination. Maybe better

one table wrapper can span page? They require distribute across sheets. Splitting table might alter table. Could keep same table in one sheet. But source has big table perhaps fits. We can use one sheet only? Better content all in one paper-sheet with header. Avoid duplicate table header. But pagination with huge table maybe one sheet overflow okay? paper-sheet simulate. They expect multiple blocks. But not physically measured. Could use one block maybe too large. But "as many as needed". Splitting table into continuation duplicate header changes content. Still okay? Yet "every element" - two tables not source; could be considered altering. Let's produce one paper-sheet for chunk? It includes all content. If overflow no actual page discipline but content there. Header at top. This is safer for table integrity. Could include one

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The results showed that perceived stress significantly predicted life satisfaction ($B = 0.089$, $SE = 0.035$, $\beta = 0.237$, $t = 2.522$, $p = .013$). This indicates that perceived stress has a statistically significant positive influence on life satisfaction among the correctional officers. Specifically, an increase in perceived stress was associated with an increase in life satisfaction. The regression constant was statistically significant ($B = 25.402$, $SE = 1.953$, $t = 13.008$, $p < .001$), representing the expected level of life satisfaction when perceived stress is held at zero. Based on the findings, perceived stress significantly influences life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. Therefore, the result supports the hypothesis that higher levels of perceived stress are associated with higher life satisfaction in this population.

Hypothesis II

Resilience will significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Table 6 Linear regression showing the influence of resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	20.801	3.271		6.360	.000
	Resilience	.176	.061	.269	2.888	.005



Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

This finding demonstrates that resilience made a statistically significant positive contribution to life satisfaction among the correctional officers. Specifically, higher levels of resilience were associated with higher levels of life satisfaction. The regression constant was also statistically significant ($B = 20.801$, $SE = 3.271$, $t = 6.360$, $p < .001$), representing the expected level of life satisfaction when resilience is held constant. Based on these findings, the hypothesis that resilience will significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers in the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre is supported ($p < .05$). The result suggests that resilience is an important psychological resource that enhances life satisfaction among correctional officers. H4: There will be a significant combined influence of perceived stress and resilience on life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Hypothesis III

Table 6 Linear regression showing the influence of correctional environment on life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.821	1.271		4.213	.000
	Correctional Environment	.216	.031	.123	1.112	.005

The regression analysis examined whether correctional environment significantly predicts life satisfaction among correctional officers in Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. The results indicated that correctional environment significantly predicted life satisfaction ($\beta = .123$, $B = .216$, $SE = .031$, $p = .005$). The positive regression coefficient suggests that improvements in the correctional environment are associated with increased levels of life satisfaction among correctional officers.

Specifically, a one-unit increase in the quality of the correctional environment was associated with a 0.216-unit increase in life satisfaction scores. Since the obtained p-value (.005) is less than the conventional significance level of .05, the null hypothesis stating that correctional environment does not significantly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers was rejected.

These findings imply that the work environment within the correctional facility plays a significant role in enhancing officers' overall satisfaction with life. A supportive, safe, and conducive correctional environment may contribute positively to officers' psychological well-being and subjective evaluation of their lives. Thus, Hypothesis III is rejected.

Hypothesis IV

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Life Satisfaction from Perceived Stress, Resilience, Correctional Environment, and Their Interaction

Model	Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	<i>df</i> ₁	<i>df</i> ₂	<i>P</i> (ΔF)
1	(Constant)	22.783	1.401	16.267	<.001	.447	.200	.134	.200**	3.028	7	85	.007
	Lower stress	2.985	1.616	1.848	.068								
	Moderate stress	-1.885	2.978	-0.633	.528								
	High stress	4.258	6.614	0.644	.521								
2	(Constant)	26.448	4.148	6.375	<.001	.511	.261	.151	.061*	2.360	5	80	.012
	Low	2.904	2.028	1.432	.156								
	Moderate	-3.238	1.940	-1.670	.099								
	High	-2.308	4.153	-0.556	.580								
3	(Constant)	38.022	4.756	7.994	<.001	.642	.412	.279	.151***	3.096	5	75	<.001
	Minimum security	-32.633	7.604	-4.291									
	Lower security	-12.102	4.798	-2.523	.014								

Model	Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	<i>df</i> ₁	<i>df</i> ₂	<i>p</i> (ΔF)
	Moderate	-15.582	4.675	-3.333	.001								
	High	-12.883	5.203	-2.476	.016								

Note. *N* = 250. Reference categories: One interaction term (low, moderate $\times$ high) was undefined due to singularity and is omitted. Overall Model 3: $F(17, 75) = 3.096, p < .001. p < .05. *p < .01. **p < .001.$

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which perceived stress, resilience, and correctional environment predict life satisfaction among correctional officers. The findings revealed that perceived stress significantly contributed to the prediction of life satisfaction in the first model, accounting for 20.0% of the variance in life satisfaction, $R^2 = .20, F(7, 85) = 3.03, p = .007.$ This suggests that perceived stress is an important factor associated with life satisfaction among correctional officers.

In the second model, resilience was introduced alongside perceived stress. The addition of resilience resulted in a significant improvement in the model, explaining an additional 6.1% of the variance in life satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .061, \Delta F = 2.36, p = .012).$ The total variance explained increased to 26.1% ($R^2 = .261$), indicating that resilience contributes uniquely to life satisfaction beyond the influence of perceived stress. Although the individual resilience categories did not emerge as statistically significant predictors, the overall contribution of resilience to the model was significant.

The third model incorporated correctional environment variables. The inclusion of correctional environment significantly enhanced the predictive capacity of the model, accounting for an additional 15.1% of the variance in life satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .151, p < .001).$ Consequently, the final model explained 41.2% of the variance in life satisfaction ($R^2 = .412$, adjusted $R^2 = .279$), with the overall model reaching statistical significance, $F(17, 75) = 3.10, p < .001.$ Several categories of correctional environment were found to be significant predictors of life satisfaction, suggesting that workplace conditions play a critical role in shaping the well-being of correctional officers.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that perceived stress, resilience, and correctional environment jointly predict life satisfaction among correctional officers. While perceived stress and resilience contributed to the prediction of life satisfaction, correctional environment emerged as the most influential predictor, producing the largest increase in explained variance. These results underscore the importance of both psychological resources and organizational factors in understanding and promoting life satisfaction among correctional personnel. Hence, hypothesis IV is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined perceived stress, resilience, and life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. Specifically, it assessed the distribution of perceived stress, the predictive role of resilience on life satisfaction, and the combined influence of perceived stress and resilience on life satisfaction. The findings are discussed in relation to established theoretical perspectives and empirical literature.

The findings indicated that perceived stress levels among correctional officers were significantly distributed, with the majority of respondents reporting normal stress levels and fewer officers experiencing moderate to high stress. Although correctional work is widely recognized as psychologically demanding, previous research has shown that prolonged exposure to occupational stressors can lead to adaptive coping and normalization of stress experiences among officers (Finn, 2000; Lambert et al., 2007). The predominance of mid-career officers in the present sample may partly explain the observed pattern, as experience and role familiarity have been associated with improved stress management in correctional environments (Dowden & Tellier, 2004).

Nonetheless, the presence of officers reporting moderate and high stress is consistent with prior studies identifying correctional officers as a high-risk occupational group for stress-related outcomes, including burnout and emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000; Morgan et al., 2012). This finding reinforces the argument that, despite apparent adaptation, correctional work continues to pose substantial psychological demands that warrant institutional attention. Therefore, hypothesis one is supported.

In occupational settings, perceived stress has been linked to positive work attitudes, reduced burnout, and enhanced psychological well-being (Luthans et al., 2007). Within correctional populations, perceived stress has similarly been associated with mental health outcomes and greater life satisfaction (Kinman et al., 2011; Violanti et al., 2017). The present finding therefore supports existing evidence that perceived stress serves as an important personal resource that promotes positive life evaluations among correctional officers. Hence, hypothesis two is also accepted.

Resilience was found to significantly and positively predict life satisfaction among correctional officers, indicating that officers with higher resilience reported greater satisfaction with life. This finding is consistent with resilience theory, which conceptualizes resilience as the capacity to adapt successfully in the face of adversity (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that resilient individuals maintain higher levels of subjective well-being and life satisfaction, even in high-stress contexts (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004; Diener et al., 2017). With this result, hypothesis three is also supported.

When perceived stress and resilience were examined simultaneously, perceived stress emerged as a significant predictor of life satisfaction, whereas resilience did not maintain a statistically significant independent effect. This finding suggests that perceived stress exerts a more immediate and powerful influence on life satisfaction than resilience when both variables are considered concurrently.

This result is consistent with stress appraisal theory, which posits that individuals' subjective evaluations of stress play a central role in determining psychological outcomes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Extensive empirical evidence indicates that higher perceived stress is strongly associated with lower life satisfaction and diminished well-being (Cohen et al., 2007; Diener et al., 1999). The present findings extend this literature by demonstrating the salience of perceived stress in shaping life satisfaction among correctional officers.

The non-significant contribution of resilience in the combined model may suggest that resilience operates indirectly by influencing stress perception rather than exerting a direct effect on life satisfaction. Previous studies have reported similar patterns, in which resilience lost significance in multivariate models once stress-related variables were controlled (Hu et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2018). This pattern implies that resilience may function primarily as a stress-buffering mechanism, reducing perceived stress and thereby indirectly enhancing life satisfaction. Hence, hypothesis four is rejected.

This finding is consistent with ecological and occupational well-being perspectives, which emphasize that employee well-being results from the interaction between personal resources and environmental conditions. Correctional officers who possess strong resilience and operate within supportive organizational environments are more likely to maintain higher levels of life satisfaction despite the inherent challenges of correctional work.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of reducing workplace stressors, strengthening resilience, and improving correctional working conditions as complementary strategies for enhancing life satisfaction among correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. The results further suggest that organizational reforms aimed at creating supportive work environments may yield substantial benefits for officers' psychological well-being and overall quality of life.

Conclusion

The results of this study provide important insights into the psychological functioning of correctional officers at the Keffi Medium Security Correctional Centre. Although correctional work is inherently stressful, the predominance of normal stress levels among respondents suggests a degree of adaptation and coping, particularly among mid-career officers who may have developed effective stress management strategies over time (Dowden & Tellier, 2004; Lambert et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the presence of moderate and high stress among a subset of officers confirms that correctional work remains psychologically demanding and potentially harmful if not adequately managed (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000; Violanti et al., 2017).

The significant influence of perceived stress on life satisfaction underscores the centrality of stress appraisal in determining psychological outcomes. Consistent with stress appraisal theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), individuals' subjective interpretation of stressors appears more consequential for life satisfaction than objective exposure alone.



This finding aligns with extensive empirical evidence linking perceived stress to reduced well-being and life satisfaction across occupational groups (Cohen et al., 2007; Diener et al., 1999).

Resilience was found to positively influence life satisfaction when examined independently, supporting resilience theory, which conceptualizes resilience as a protective psychological resource that enables individuals to maintain well-being in the face of adversity (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). However, the loss of statistical significance of resilience in the combined regression model suggests that resilience may exert its influence indirectly by shaping how stress is perceived rather than directly enhancing life satisfaction. Similar patterns have been reported in previous studies, where resilience buffered the effects of stress but did not independently predict well-being once stress variables were controlled (Hu et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2018).

Overall, the study concludes that perceived stress is a more proximal and powerful determinant of life satisfaction among correctional officers than resilience. While resilience remains an important psychological asset, it may not be sufficient to offset the detrimental effects of high perceived stress without concurrent stress reduction strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and their alignment with existing literature, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Correctional authorities should implement structured stress management interventions, including stress awareness training, relaxation techniques, and cognitive-behavioral stress management programs. Such interventions have been shown to reduce perceived stress and improve psychological well-being among correctional and law enforcement personnel (Kinman et al., 2011; Violanti et al., 2017).
2. While resilience alone may not directly predict life satisfaction in the presence of high stress, resilience-building initiatives remain essential. Programs focusing on adaptive coping, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills can strengthen officers' capacity to manage occupational demands (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Luthans et al., 2007).
3. Organizational factors such as supervisory support, fair workload distribution, and opportunities for career development should be prioritized. Research indicates that organizational support reduces perceived stress and enhances job satisfaction and overall well-being among correctional officers (Lambert et al., 2010; Dowden & Tellier, 2004). On-site psychological services, including counseling and mental health screening, should be made available to correctional officers, particularly those reporting moderate to high stress. Early identification and intervention can prevent the progression of stress-related psychological disorders (Morgan et al., 2012; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000).
4. Policymakers within the Nigerian Correctional Service should incorporate employee well-being into institutional policies. Strategies promoting work-life balance, adequate staffing, and recognition of officers' contributions may significantly reduce perceived stress and enhance life satisfaction (Finn, 2000; Lambert et al., 2007).
5. Future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to better establish causal relationships among perceived stress, resilience, and life satisfaction. Additionally, incorporating other psychosocial variables such as social support, coping styles, and organizational climate would provide a more comprehensive understanding of correctional officers' well-being (Cohen et al., 2007; Diener et al., 2017).

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