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## **The Analysis of the Effect of Inmate's Violence on Correctional Officer's Burnout : The Moderating Effects of Decision-making Latitude**

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### **Abstract**

The purposes of this study are to examine the effect of inmate violence toward correctional officers and to examine the effect between inmate violence and burnout is moderated by decision-making latitude of correctional officers. To do so, we distributed 1900 questionnaires to correctional officers working in 7 prisons and jails in South Korea. Total of 871 questionnaires were analyzed. The results of this study are as follows: among four categories of inmate violence (slight and serious physical violence, verbal violence and emotional violence), slight physical, verbal, and emotional violence were found to significantly increase the level of burnout: The moderating effect of decision making was examined to significantly lower the level of burnout experienced by inmate violence. Based on these results, we can get several implications. First, for correctional officers suffer from high levels of burnout, programs to assist correctional officer such as stress management program, various kinds of counseling and therapies. Second, to effectively reduce the level of correctional officers' burnout, organizational level approaches are suggested to enhance the level of decision latitude.

**Keywords: Correctional officer, Inmate violence, Decision-making latitude,  
Correctional welfare**

## Intro

Correctional officers play crucial roles in correctional institutions (Moon & Maxwell, 2004a). In a constant relationship with inmates, they manage and control them, provide significant insights for the problems of inmates (Thomas, 1972), and maintain the order in prison environment. Moreover, correctional officers work hard for the rehabilitation of inmate to prevent re-incarceration by helping them ready for the re-entry into society (Lee & Yoon, 2004; Kommer, 1993).

In spite of these important roles, correctional officers have been distressed by fear of inmate victimization or by actual injuries due to inmate violence. This is because correctional officers spend most of their working hours with inmates in isolated environment from outside. They are exposed to the ever-present possibility of victimization by inmates. Although there has been the scant amount of research on correctional officers' exposure to interpersonal violence, COs are regarded as one of the most highly exposed groups (Bourbonnais et al., 2007).

Few years ago in Dea-gu, South Korea, a correctional officer was beaten to death by an inmate while he was rounding in prison. As media reported this striking news, inmate victimization toward correctional officers got the interests of the public. In last year, the National Assembly Legislation and Judiciary Committee carried the survey to find out actual condition of inmate victimization toward correctional officers. As a result, the total numbers of inmate violence toward COs and victimized COs from 2003 to 2008 were found to be 551 and 593 respectively, almost one fifths of the total number of between-inmates violence during the same period. And the average number of victimized COs per year was 100. These findings showed the seriousness of the inmate violence toward correctional officers.

Inmate violence has considerable effects on COs burnout and job stress. In the study of Jacobs (1978), almost half of the correctional officers in Illinois responded that the danger of being attacked or taken hostage was a main concern for them. Also, in Lombardo's study (1981) of correctional officers in Auburn, New York, the majority of respondents identified physical danger as a main source of job dissatisfaction. According to previous studies, COs experienced inmate violence were found to be more likely to be burned out than COs who did not.

Correctional officers who are burned out by inmate violence or by the fear of inmate victimization tend to be physically, emotionally and even socially dysfunctional. That means inmate violence causes COs problems in personal physical and psychological health and even a decline in job competency (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Finn, 2000; Moon & Maxwell, 2004a). These losses in personal and organizational levels ultimately hinder in COs efficient conduct of rehabilitation.

Decision-making latitude in work has been known to closely relate to COs' burnout. Previous studies revealed the significant buffering effect of decision-making latitude on effects of job stressors on burnout. Especially on the relationship between workplace violence and burnout of other 'person work' occupations such as home care social worker and mental health social worker, the buffering effect of decision latitude was significant (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Evans et al., 2006). Xanthopou pou et al. (2007) discussed that home care employees who face emotionally charged situations or patients' aggression can profit from decision latitude to effectively deal with those situations and to prevent themselves from high levels of burnout.

While Western societies have been interested in correctional officer's burnout and related problems in an effort to improve the welfare of correctional officers and augment institutional capacities to more effectively and efficiently manage correctional institutions (Finn, 2000),

South Korea has paid not enough attention to the problem of inmate violence owing to the tendency which views COs victimization as trivial issues or as the lack of COs ability to control (Lee & Yoon, 2004).

However, given that reducing COs stress and improving their job environment are ultimately related to promoting efficiency and effectiveness of rehabilitation, intervention strategies to reduce the occurrence of inmate violence toward COs and its negative effects on COs are urgently needed. Thus, this study is to identify the effects of inmate violence on South Korean correctional officers' burnout and then to examine moderating effect of decision making latitude on the relationship between inmate violence and burnout. To do so, we are expecting to suggest appropriate intervention methods for correctional officers' mental health and timely alternatives for South Korea's correctional administration policy for successful rehabilitation.

## **Literature review**

### Workplace violence

Workplace violence has been a critical health and safety issue facing many organizations in the world. Especially in North American work places, 20 employees on average are murdered each week while at work or on duty (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH], 1996) and approximately 18,000 individuals are assaulted on the job each week in the United State alone (NIOSH, 1996). According to European data, 9% of workers said they were victims of bullying at workplace during the last year of the study (Fondation europeenne pour l'amelioration des conditions de vie et de travail, 2000). Also, two Quebec studies reported that the frequency of exposure to different forms of psychological harassment ranged from 7 to 9% (Brun & Plante, 2004).

While many countries so far have paid attention to the seriousness of workplace violence problem, South Korean organizations and employees have been ignorant of this issue. Only recently, few studies have been conducted on this workplace violence of particular occupations (Social worker, policeman, etc.). However, South Korean employees are still not immune to this phenomenon and are exposed to harmful situation without basic supports from laws or policies to protect themselves from workplace violence. Especially, employees who work in isolated workplace such as correctional officers may be more vulnerable than other occupations.

Prisons, another social system existed within our societies, has distinctive orders and regulations. Ensuring those orders and regulations of this special system are well managed and controlled is the duty of correctional officers. However, managing routines in prisons is not at all simple. Because the clients correctional officers should deal with are inmates who are confined in prisons against their will (Bottoms, 1999). Due to the relationship of structural conflict between CO as 'the keeper' and prisoner as 'the kept' (Poole & Regoli, 1981), working with inmates causes a great emotional burden for correctional officers and sometimes leads to a risk of being victimized by inmates (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000).

In western society and South Korea alike, comparatively few researches have examined correctional officers' experience and concerns about inmate violence and workplace safety (Bottom, 1991; Light, 1991). It is because of the barrier to get the accurate data from correctional institutions. Considerable proportions of assaults and physical threats are known only to the parties concerned, and it is not easy to find the way into the official prison assault figures (Bottoms, 1999). Therefore victim survey should be used for obtaining more accurate figures than officially reported ones from the Bureau of Corrections

Lee and Yoon (2004) conducted a study of 420 South Korean COs to find the actual frequency of inmate violence and examine the effect of inmate violence on COs burnout and PTSD. Results showed that emotional violence was most frequent violence and inmate violence was positively related to COs burnout. In other occupations, violence from clients, patients, etc. also found to be significantly increasing the level of burnout of employees (Bourbonnais et al., 2001; McDonald & Sirocich, 2004).

## Burnout

Burnout defined as a prolonged response toward chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job (Maslach, 1976; Maslach & Goldberg, 1998) comprises of the three dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is a component representing the basic individual stress dimension of burnout while 'depersonalization' and 'reduced personal accomplishment' represent the interpersonal context dimension and self-evaluation dimension of burnout respectively. Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources. It has been known as the central quality of burnout and the most obvious manifestation of this complex syndrome. Also, emotional exhaustion is the most widely reported and the most thoroughly analyzed among three aspects of burnout. Secondly, depersonalization, a representation of interpersonal aspect of burnout, is defined as the degree that workers response to their job negatively, callously, and indifferently (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Workers experiencing depersonalization tend to treat clients as objects rather than people, display a detached and an emotional callousness (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). The final and self-assessment component of burnout, diminished personal accomplishment, refers to inefficiency, lack of job achievement and productivity. Workers in reduced personal accomplishment level tend to evaluate themselves negatively and experience a decline in feelings of job competence and successful achievement in their work.

Burnout is known to cause oneself various problems in personal and organizational levels. In an emotional level, burned-out workers tend to experience low self-esteem, depression, frustration, powerlessness, anxiety (Jackson & Maslach, 1982), and fatigue, insomnia, headache, digestion disorder etc. in physical level (Kahill, 1988). Burnout also causes negative effects in organizational level such as job withdrawal behaviors, reduced job efficiency and job dissatisfaction (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Recently, negative effects of burnout on family life were also reported (Burke & Greengrass, 2001).

In occupations such as correctional officers, policemen, social workers, doctors, or nurses who are repeatedly exposed to emotionally strain interpersonal relationships, burnout is likely to be experienced. Especially for correctional officers, burnout is caused due to characteristics of their job and working environment. Previous research have reported that role ambiguity and role conflict, lack of participation in decision-making, low decision

latitude, low social support at work, poor relationship with colleagues and inmates, shift work, constant contact with inmates, fear of inmate assault, etc. have significantly increased the level of COs burnout (Dollard & Winefield, 1994; Triplett, Mullings, & Scarborough, 1996; Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986; Grossi & Berg, 1991; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000).

Job resources such as control coping, social support, skill use, decision latitude, and decision involvement seem to be especially critical to prevent COs' burnout (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998). These job resources have been proven to buffer the effects of various job demands and job stressors on burnout. Especially decision latitude, in correctional officer's workplace violence context, can be most effective to moderate the effect of stressor on burnout because high decision latitude in dangerous situations allow COs to deal with those situations effectively with their own decision authority for that moment. Aspin and Taylor (1997) examined the relation between job resources and home care workers' burnout. Results showed that worker in high decision latitude were less likely to be burned out. Despite of those significant moderating effect of autonomy and decision latitude, intervention strategies were limited to individual centered approach which focuses on changing the person rather than changing the work environment. Therefore, more efforts to improve the safety and quality of COs work environment are in need.

### The South Korean Context

The correctional environment has undergone numerous transformations over the last 10 to 20 years. In the past, the goal under the punishment-centered orientation was to protect society from criminals by controlling them through inmate surveillance and confinement techniques whereas the official goal of South Korea has been to "correct and educate, cultivate sound national spirit and work ethic and teach job skill, so that inmates be adopted to society upon their release from correctional institutions" (Correctional Bureau, 2000).

Since the 1990's, correctional institutions in South Korea have slowly incorporated rehabilitative approaches shifting away from the straightforward punishment of inmates. More humane treatment of inmates is increasingly emphasized, and various rehabilitation such as counseling, academic education, job training, language/ computer programs, and other treatment programs have been introduced to help inmates better adjust to society after their release (Correctional Bureau, 2000).

Followed by the transition from punishment-centered administration to rehabilitation-centered one, COs' role has significantly been changed (Liebling, 2006; Rostaing, 1997). Their role has been expanded beyond a traditional custodial role into a human service role in which correctional officers help and assist inmates with various problems. Correctional officers are expected to not only maintain a secure and safe prison but also create a humane prison environment to benefit the treatment and rehabilitation for inmates.

In the middle of this transition, the issue of inmate victimization toward COs was disclosed and became known outside the prisons through several accidents of COs. With this as a momentum, actual condition of inmate violence was examined in an effort to have an accurate grasp of inmate violence. The actual condition was more serious than we expected: Average 100 inmate violence incidences have been reported each year and correctional officers who experienced inmate violence showed high levels of burnout, low job satisfaction, and even the symptom of PTSD (Lee & Yoon, 2004). Also, due to the fear of inmate violence, majority of correctional officers showed inconsistent opinion on rehabilitation: most of them agreed on the necessity of rehabilitation, but majority of respondents also suspected the

efficiency of rehabilitation (Moon & Maxwell, 2004b).

Given that inmate violence has a tremendous influence on correctional officers' mental health compared to its relatively small number of cases, urgent and substantial response and intervention methods should be developed to reduce the high level of tension. Also, in a long-term point of view, new measures to protect correctional officer from inmate victimization should be planned considering correctional relatively shrunken law enforcement authority. Therefore this study is to examine the moderating effect of decision-making latitude on between inmate violence and burnout.

## **Method**

### Sample

A total of 1900 questionnaires were distributed to 7 prisons and jails in South Korea which agreed to cooperate with survey. The aim of this survey was explained to correctional officers by the head of the organization according to request in advance. Each officer was instructed to fill out the questionnaire during their free time. The first page of the questionnaire informed potential respondents that the study was voluntary and that respondents would remain anonymous. Among the 1900 questionnaires distributed, 1101 questionnaires were collected and finally 870 were used for analysis except non-usable questionnaires.

Of the completed survey, 95 percent were men, and a majority (71.3%) was married. Respondents' mean age was 38.36, with a range of 22-57 years of age. More than four-fifths (79.8%) responded to having a two-year college degree or a higher education. For job types, 93.5% of respondents were line officers and 584 respondents (67.4%) were working in prisons whereas 283 (32.6%) were in jails. For the duration of employment, 23.8% responded their tenure less than 2 years and the rest responded between 10-20%.

### Measures

#### Dependent variable

Burnout: Burnout was assessed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI, Maslach, 1900). Emotional exhaustion, one of three subscales of MBI, was used to measure correctional officers' burnout. Emotional exhaustion comprises of 9 items and a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) were employed as response options. High scores are indicative of greater levels of correctional officers' burnout (range=9 to 45). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .837.

## Independent variables

Socio-demographic information: Participants were asked to report their sex, education, work tenure, shift work, and work station. Four variable-sex, education, shift work, work station-were dichotomized as dummy variables.

Inmate violence: To measure the frequency and degree of inmate violence toward correctional officers, this study developed questionnaire containing a series of questions based on the results of previous study (Lee and Yoon, 2004) which made a list of violence COs experience through focus group interview and then surveyed COs frequencies of each listed violence. According to the results, this study chose the violence which COs most frequently reported and then divided those items into three categories: physical violence, verbal violence, and emotional violence. In case of physical violence, we divided again into two subcategories: slight physical violence and serious physical violence according to the degree of injury. Respondents were asked to answer the frequencies they experienced two kinds of physical violence in the last one year with response options from 1 (never) to 5 (more than 10 times a year). Verbal violence was defined as “insulting words, slanders, abuses, intimidations and etc.” whereas emotional violence was defined as “a fear for the possibility of being attacked or threatened by inmate, or being responsible for occurrences of correctional accidents or accusations of inmates and etc.” The frequency for verbal violence was measured with 5-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequent). For emotional violence, we applied the degree of their feeling of fear for response options instead of frequency because the damage from emotional violence can be felt and expressed differently according to each individual’s subjective evaluation. Response options for emotional violence range from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very seriously).

Decision-making latitude: Decision-making latitude is defined as the degree of decision authority with which a worker can decide how to execute his or her work. In this study, we used 10 items of “Decision-making and authority” from Lee & Park’s Job Stress Measurement (1988) which translated the measurement of Caplan and Pinneau (1973) into Korean. Example items are ‘I have enough authority to do my job’, ‘I can decide the direction of job with my colleague’, ‘My ideas can be reflected in my work’ and etc. Responses were measured with 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha for the original measurement was .866 and for this study .851.

## Results

### 1. Effects of inmate violence on correctional officers’ burnout

We examined the main and moderating effects of decision-making latitude, four categories of inmate violence on correctional officers’ burnout using multiple regression analysis. First, using multiple regression analysis, we examined the main effects of inmate violence (slight

and serious physical violence, verbal violence, and emotional violence) on burnout controlling for socio-demographic variables (sex, education, shift work, work station, work tenure). The result is shown in Table 2.

This model including control and independent variables explained 22.7% of correctional officers' burnout which was statistically significant at the level of  $p < .01$ . Among the control variables no variable has significant effect on burnout. Among independent variables, slight physical violence ( $\beta = .100, p < .05$ ), verbal violence ( $\beta = .216, p < .001$ ) and emotional violence ( $\beta = .253, p < .001$ ) were all significant and positively related to burnout while serious physical violence alone didn't show statistically significant effect on burnout. This result means the more frequently COs are exposed to slight physical, verbal, and emotional violence, the higher the level of burnout they experience. Among the inmate violence which has significant effect on burnout, emotional violence was proved to have relatively high influence on burnout.

<Table 1> Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>1. Burnout</b>	3.22	0.61	1					
<b>2. Slight physical violence</b>	1.52	0.89	.210**	1				
<b>3. Serious physical violence</b>	1.29	0.66	.157**	.615**	1			
<b>4. Verbal violence</b>	2.95	0.96	.401**	.399**	.314**	1		
<b>5. Emotional violence</b>	3.27	0.95	.417**	.268**	.214**	.578**	1	
<b>6. Decision-making latitude</b>	3.03	0.56	-.284**	-.105**	-.074**	-.188**	-.171**	1

Note. n=871

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

<Table 2> The Effects of Inmate Violence on Burnout

		Burnout		
		B(S.E)	$\beta$	Sig.
Control Variable	Sex	.214(.147)	.053	.148
	Education	.046(.065)	.028	.484
	Work station	.012(.053)	.009	.814
	Shift work	-.041(.051)	-.031	.421
	Job tenure	.023(.015)	.069	.118
Independent Variable	Slight physical violence	.069(.032)	.100*	.031
	Serious physical violence	-.052(.044)	-.053	.235
	Verbal violence	.139(.030)	.216***	.000
	Emotional violence	.160(.028)	.253***	.000
R <sup>2</sup>		.227		
Adj R <sup>2</sup>		.216		
F(sig.)		20.458***		

†  $p < .1$  \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

2. The moderating effect of decision-making latitude on the relationship between inmate violence and burnout

In the second model (Table 3), we examined whether the relationships between each kind of inmates' violence and burnout was moderated by decision-making latitude using hierarchical regression analysis. Results showed that interaction terms were significant only in verbal and emotional violence.

First, we examined the moderating effect of decision-making latitude between slight physical violence and burnout (Table 3). Model 1 in the first low explained 15.9% ( $p < .001$ ) of burnout excluding interaction term. Then we examined the full model (Model 2) including the interaction term, however the effect of interaction term was not significant ( $p = .688$ ).

Secondly, we examined whether the relationship between serious physical violence and burnout was moderated by decision-making latitude and found the interaction term was not significant ( $p = .892$ ).

Thirdly, we examined the moderating effect on the relationship between verbal violence and burnout and found the interacting effect was significant ( $\beta = -.081, p < .01$ ). The negative coefficient for the interaction term representing verbal violence by decision-making latitude indicates that the positive effect of verbal violence on burnout is weaker among those higher in decision-making latitude. That is verbal violence has less influence in increasing burnout for those individuals who are higher in decision-making latitude which is consistent with previous research (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Evans et al., 2006).

Lastly, for the interaction term representing emotional violence by decision-making latitude, the significant negative coefficient was found ( $\beta = -.116, p < .001$ ) which indicates that the strong effect of emotional violence increasing burnout is weaker among those higher in decision-making latitude. Stated differently, emotional violence is less influential in increasing burnout when COs have higher decision-making latitude.

<Table 3> The Moderating Effects of Decision-making Latitude on Burnout

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B(S.E)	$\beta$	B(S.E)	$\beta$
Sex	.386(.151)	.095	.387(.151)	.095**
Education	.087(.067)	.052	.085(.067)	.051
Job station	-.072(.054)	-.053	-.072(.054)	-.052
Shift work	-.044(.052)	-.033	-.045(.053)	-.034
Job tenure	.060(.015)	.177	.060(.015)	.177***
Slight physical	.120(.025)	.175	.123(.026)	.179**
Decision-making	-.357(.043)	-.306	-.359(.044)	-.308***
Slight physical violence * decision-making			.016(0-.040)	.015
Physical violence	R <sup>2</sup>	.159	.159	
	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	.150	.149	
	F(sig)	17.249***	.019	

	Sex	.395(.153)	.097	.394(.153)	.096**	
	Education	.089(.068)	.053	.090(.068)	.053	
	Work station	-.078(.054)	-.057	-.078(.054)	-.056	
	Shift work	-.060(.053)	-.045	-.059(.053)	-.044	
	Job tenure	.065(.015)	.192	.065(.015)	.192***	
	Serious physical violence	.085(.037)	.086	.083(.038)	.084**	
	Decision-making	-.381(.043)	-.330	-.380(.043)	-.329***	
	Serious physical violence * Decision-making			-.007(.054)	-.005	
	R <sup>2</sup>	.159		.159		
	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	.150		.149		
	F(sig)	17.249***		.019		
Verbal violence	Sex	.234(.146)	.057	.243(.145)	.059	
	Education	.049(.064)	.029	.060(.064)	.036	
	Work station	-.028(.052)	-.020	-.026(.051)	-.019	
	Shift work	-.038(.050)	-.028	-.034(.050)	-.025	
	Job tenure	.045(.015)	.134	.045(.015)	.133***	
	Verbal violence	.214(.024)	.332	.201(.024)	.312***	
	Decision-making	-.303(.042)	-.261	-.283(.043)	-.244***	
	Verbal violence * decision-making			-.090(.041)	-.081**	
		R <sup>2</sup>	.249		.255	
		Adj R <sup>2</sup>	.241		.246	
	F(sig)	30.348***		4.833**		
Emotional Violence	Sex	.279(.144)	.068	.272(.143)	.067	
	Education	.029(.064)	.017	.039(.064)	.024	
	Work station	-.027(.051)	-.019	-.017(.051)	-.012	
	Shift work	-.080(.050)	-.060	-.079(.049)	-.059	
	Job tenure	.046(.015)	.135	.047(.014)	.138***	
	Emotional	.212(.023)	.334	.198(.023)	.312***	
	Decision-making	-.302(.041)	-.262	-.278(.042)	-.241***	
	Emotional violence * decision-making			-.131(.040)	-.116***	
		R <sup>2</sup>	.251		.264	
		Adj R <sup>2</sup>	.243		.254	
	F(sig)	30.589***		10.659***		

† p<.1 \*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

## Discussion

Recently, many researchers have begun to highlight an important impact on the mental health of workers of an exposure to interpersonal violence in the workplace (Einarsen, 2005; Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004; Mathiesen & Einarsen, 2004; Tehrani, 2004). These studies have identified that some sectors of employment and certain categories of employees are particularly at risk of exposure to interpersonal violence in the workplace (Waddington, Badger, & Bull, 2005). This is especially true of employees who work with a clientele such as prisoners, patients, students, clients, etc. COs working with criminals who were put in custody against their will are among the most highly exposed groups (Bourbonnais et al., 2007).

In case of correctional officer, however, no concrete frequency or degree of correctional officers' injury or harm from inmates due to the closeness of prisons. Therefore, this study firstly examined the frequencies of inmate violence (slight and serious physical violence, verbal violence, and emotional violence) of 871 correctional officers in South Korea. Secondly, we examined the effect of inmate violence on COs burnout. Then, to find out the methods to effectively moderate the effect of inmate violence on burnout, we examined the moderating effect of decision-making latitude.

First, as a result of examining the effect of inmate violence on burnout, we found that correctional officers' experiences of slight physical, verbal and emotional inmate violence except serious physical violence were significantly and positively related to burnout. That means correctional officers will be likely to be burned out if they have more experiences of inmate violence, which is consistent with previous research (Sung, M., 2000; Jang, S., 2004; Choi, S. et al., 2008; McDonald & Sirotch, 2004; Bourbonnais et al., 2006).

Second, after examining the moderating effect of decision latitude, we found that interaction term with verbal and emotional violence was significantly related to COs burnout ( $p < .001$ ). That is, the effect of verbal and emotional violence on burnout is weaker among those with high decision latitude. It is hard to find moderating effect of decision latitude between inmate violence and burnout among previous researches. However, there has been research reporting that the lack of decision latitude increases the level of burnout (Lombardo, 1981; Harenstam et al., 1988; Lombardo, 1988) and that the decision latitude moderated the relationship between the stressor and burnout. Therefore, it can be said that this study supported the previous researches and examined the significance of moderating effect of decision-making latitude.

Meanwhile, interaction term between slight and serious physical violence and decision latitude was statistically significant. We can explain this result with several reasons. First of all, two physical violence have relatively low frequencies to show statistically significance of interaction term. Also, physical violence might need different kinds of moderating effects more protective and feasible methods in workplace such as physical exercise program or training.

The results of this study also hold important implications.

Based on the results of this study, several implications are suggested for practice and policy in correctional welfare and occupational social work. First, individual-based and organization interventions are needed for a group of COs suffer from inmate victimization. For COs with serious level of burnout, counseling and stress management program should be provided. Inmates in Korea have been provided with various kinds of counseling and programs, however the treatments for COs job stress and preventions for burnout are poor compared to those of inmates. Therefore, it is suggested to change the approach of

correctional institutions toward inmate violence into the direction considering the welfare of correctional officers and their safety as well as their duty and responsibilities.

Second, according to the result of this study, it is examined that the decision latitude is significantly reduce the level of burnout experienced by exposure to inmate violence. Therefore, to reduce the negative effect of inmate violence, improvement of the system toward allowing COs to give their opinion to be reflected on job is needed. At the same time, correctional officer should change their attitude toward inmate violence as active by promoting their autonomy and decision authority. Introducing the team system is also suggested to link individual's decision making to that of the organization. Through all of there efforts to enhance the latitude of decision-making, it is expected to effectively reduce the burnout level and the dangerous elements of workplace.

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