ATTITUDES TOWARD PUNISHMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND CYNICISM

A Multilevel Analysis of Staff Responses in a Juvenile Justice Agency

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Staff commitment to agency goals is important in juvenile justice settings, where the mission oscillates between the often-competing goals of rehabilitating youth and punishing them. Although prior research considers how staff characteristics relate to commitment to, and/or cynicism about, criminal justice organizations, less work examines these relationships in juvenile justice settings, and even less examines the effects of staff attitudes toward punishment. The current study assesses the influence of rehabilitative and punitive attitudes on organizational commitment and cynicism in a juvenile justice agency ($n = 204$). Multilevel analyses evaluating staff members within organizational units reveal that staff holding more traditional (punitive) attitudes are significantly and positively associated with cynicism, whereas staff holding rehabilitative values demonstrate greater commitment to the agency. Findings suggest attitudes toward punishment play an important role in staff commitment to, and cynicism about, justice organizations, which may affect workers' adherence to organizational policies and goals.

Keywords: attitudes toward punishment; organizations; juvenile justice; commitment; cynicism

Staff organizational commitment is an essential component to achieving desired goals in any organization. More committed staff typically adhere more closely to the agency mission, resulting in a greater likelihood of implementing policies and practices as intended

(Taxman & Belenko, 2011). As such, criminal justice staff commitment to achieving public safety and dispensing justice are paramount for agencies striving to achieve the same. This is especially true in juvenile justice settings, where a primary aim is to reach at-risk youth and intervene before they become more deeply embedded in criminal lifestyles (Cullen & Jonson, 2012). Although the juvenile justice system historically oscillates between rehabilitation and punishment goals, rehabilitation and the "child-saving" mission are again emerging as the prevailing objectives (Zimring, 2000). To this end, many juvenile justice agencies are adopting and using rehabilitation-oriented evidence-based practices (EBPs) and policies to improve both agency processes and outcomes.

The structure and functioning of organizations likely affect the implementation of EBPs and achievement of agency goals. In particular, two contrasting aspects of organizational functioning—commitment and cynicism—may facilitate or impede an agency's goals. However, little scholarship examines how staff attitudes toward punishment intersect with these constructs. Research suggests that commitment to the rehabilitation-oriented goals underlying EBPs influences their use (Farrell, Young, & Taxman, 2011). Their effectiveness may very well depend on staff members' commitment to or, by contrast, cynicism about the types of EBPs and their associated goals. Staff may be encouraged to use these practices in pursuit of the agency's rehabilitation-oriented goals; however, even practices intended to improve outcomes may contribute to cynicism or lack of commitment if staff have different aims. For example, justice workers committed to primarily punitive approaches such as "zero tolerance" or "incarceration first" may encourage their own desired outcomes, regardless of the agency's goals, even if their own aims are ineffective or potentially detrimental to clients and public safety (Nagin, Cullen, & Jonson, 2009). When mismatches occur on either end of the rehabilitation–punishment spectrum, employee cynicism about agency goals may result in conflict (Stazyk, Pandey, & Wright, 2011).

Prior research on criminal justice workers considers the impact of organizational features on staff members' commitment to and cynicism about the agency, such as input in decision making (Minor, Wells, Lambert, & Keller, 2014), burnout and job satisfaction (White, Aalsma, Holloway, Adams, & Salyers, 2015), and role alignment (Bolin & Applegate, 2016). However, extant research rarely considers the relationship between organizational commitment and cynicism in conjunction with juvenile staff attitudes toward punishment. The current study examines this relationship while accounting for variations in office location within a single juvenile justice agency. Considering these relationships among juvenile justice workers may provide opportunities for aligning staff views with agency goals and mission, thus improving service delivery and youth outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The juvenile justice system is no stranger to policy shifts, sometimes dramatic, in efforts to solve the problem of juvenile delinquency. In response to soaring crime rates during the 1980s and early 1990s, lawmakers in the United States enacted numerous "get tough" policies. Like their adult counterparts, juvenile courts shifted toward more punitive responses, expanding legislation to more easily prosecute juveniles as adults including lifting age restrictions and increasing petitions to waive cases to adult courts (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2018; Kupchik, 2006). However, at the turn of the century, rehabilitation once again became the prevailing focus for juvenile justice agencies. Between 2000 and 2015,

total arrests for juvenile crime declined by 57% (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). As youth crime rates and arrests decreased, courts increasingly relied on alternatives to detention, resulting in a 44% decline in the number of delinquency cases involving detention between 2005 and 2015 (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2018). As of 2015, 49% of the nearly 602,000 delinquency cases resulted in probation as the most severe sanction (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2018; Sickmund, Sladky, & Kang, 2018). With U.S. juvenile courts focusing on alternatives to incarceration and a renewed emphasis on rehabilitative efforts within agencies, the attitudes and actions of juvenile justice staff become important mechanisms of implementing such practices.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD PUNISHMENT

The two primary attitudes about punishment contrast traditional, disciplinary punishment with rehabilitative ideals. The first orientation follows a law enforcement ideology, emphasizing the power of the legal system to deter criminal behavior and ensure offender compliance (Schwalbe & Maschi, 2009; Skeem, Louden, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007). Traditional attitudes tend to be more punitive and retributive in nature, highlighting rule enforcement via close monitoring and sanctions, such as detention. However, rehabilitative beliefs focus on the power of reform. Today, justice workers demonstrate this ideal by using EBPs, which aim to increase the influence of protective factors while reducing the effects of risk factors. For example, workers may focus on substance abuse, family functioning, or mental health treatment, providing access to community resources to reshape behavior (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Lipsey, 2009).

Prior research commonly distinguishes between staff working inside correctional facilities (detention, in the case of juveniles) and those working in the community (probation or parole). Just as officer orientation may affect staff relationships with clients, offender population and staff caseload may also affect attitudes toward punishment (Farkas, 1999). In a survey of adult Canadian correctional workers (line staff in prisons vs. probation officers, managers, administration, etc.), Larivière (2002) shows that correctional officers working directly with prison inmates have more negative and punitive attitudes toward offenders compared with probation and parole officers. Prior literature generally indicates less emphasis on punishment and more emphasis on rehabilitation (and especially using EBPs) among adult probation officers, compared with staff working in prisons (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Viglione, 2016; Young, Antonio, & Wingeard, 2009).

Research suggests that institutional and community corrections workers in both juvenile and adult settings experience tension between these competing ideologies, and many staff ultimately support a mixture of rehabilitative and punitive strategies depending on the circumstances (Bazemore & Dicker, 1994; Blevins, Cullen, & Sundt, 2007; Bolin & Applegate, 2016; Cullen, Latessa, Burton, & Lombardo, 1993; Cullen, Lutze, Link, & Wolfe, 1989; Farkas, 1999; Sluder & Reddington, 1993). For example, Cullen and colleagues (1989) point out the dichotomy between prison officers' sentiments that treatment is as important as punishment, while agreeing that prisons are too soft on inmates. Sluder, Shearer, and Potts (1991) find a similar dichotomy among probation officers who felt their goal should be to change offender behavior through a helping relationship, while agreeing that their job is to control, regulate, and document. Despite often grappling with the types of attitudes most appropriate for their work, workers' actions typically

demonstrate a preference for one orientation or the other. Although substantial research exists on correctional staff attitudes in both institutions and the community, much of this focuses on adult staff, and generalizations to juvenile justice workers are difficult to make. Still, studies comparing juvenile corrections staff with their adult counterparts find both groups share an ideological tension between punitive and rehabilitative orientations. In this work, staff frequently express significant support for treatment and services for youth, and simultaneously emphasize the importance of punishment and control (Bazemore & Dicker, 1994; Blevins et al., 2007; Bolin & Applegate, 2016; Schwalbe & Maschi, 2009; Shearer, 2002; Sluder & Reddington, 1993).

Some differences appear in staff orientations toward work, however, underscoring the need for the current study. For example, Shearer (2002) observe that juvenile probation trainees scored significantly lower than their adult counterparts did on law enforcement work ideologies, despite similar scores on casework and resource brokering ideologies. Similarly, Sluder and Reddington (1993) reveal differences in their analysis of 193 juvenile and adult probation trainees, noting that juvenile officers scored significantly higher on casework scales than the adult officers did, again without differences in casework and resource brokering perspectives. More recently, Bolin and Applegate (2016) surveyed 347 juvenile and adult probation and parole officers, finding that juvenile officers more likely championed rehabilitative ideals than did their adult counterparts.

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS: COMMITMENT AND CYNICISM

Employee commitment and cynicism represent two important factors related to organizational outcomes. Research increasingly focuses on staff commitment to organizations, given its relationship with adherence to agency goals (Stazyk et al., 2011). Organizational commitment refers to the strength of an individual's bond or identification with an organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Committed employees experience less role conflict/ambiguity, and demonstrate a greater acceptance of the goals and values of the organization (Stazyk et al., 2011; Vickovic & Griffin, 2014). Moreover, commitment to an organization influences an employee's job performance, absenteeism, and tenure/longevity with the organization (Vickovic & Griffin, 2014). For instance, in Matz, Wells, Minor, and Angel's (2013) study of juvenile detention workers, staff with greater commitment and job satisfaction were less likely to express intent to leave their jobs.

A limited body of work examines the influence of staff attitudes toward punishment on commitment to the organization. In one study, Lambert, Hogan, Barton, Jiang, and Baker (2008) studied these traits among correctional officers in adult prisons, finding that rehabilitation-oriented officers were more committed to the organization and punishment-oriented officers were less committed. In a subsequent study of staff in a high-security prison in the Midwest, Lambert, Hogan, Barton, and Elechi (2009) demonstrated that organizational commitment and job involvement significantly predicted alignment with rehabilitative ideals.

Staff cynicism is a growing, but understudied, area within criminal justice organizations. Cynicism emerges when workers develop both a pessimism and skepticism toward an organization's ability to change (DeCelles, Tesluk, & Taxman, 2013). Cynicism refers to the belief that problems exist within the organization and organizational failures will prevent solutions (Tesluk, Farr, Mathieu, & Vance, 1995). This disbelief in the ability of the organization to solve problems may exist due to irreconcilable differences between employee and agency goals, a common origin of cynicism. Importantly, organizational cynicism exists as

both an "employee's attitude and an organizational climate," suggesting researchers should consider individual-level cynicism while also accounting for perceptions of organizational climate (DeCelles et al., 2013, p. 154).

Cynicism is critically important to justice organizations because cynical staff are more likely to exhibit rule-breaking behavior (or simply not follow agency directives) and experience burnout and turnover (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail, & Baker, 2010). Because cynicism varies among workers, even in similar institutions such as adult prisons, it is not enough to work at the organizational level to improve it. Regoli, Poole, and Shrink (1979) speculated that cynicism may connect to one's specific job duties because it varies among staff within the same institution. Moreover, many factors affect cynicism. For example, in treatment-focused institutions, adult prison staff exhibit high cynicism, suggesting that it is a defense mechanism against the competing orientations of rehabilitation and punishment (Farmer, 1977; Rudes, Lerch, & Taxman, 2011; Ulmer, 1992).

Research on cynicism among staff in juvenile justice agencies focuses mostly on probation officers and shows that it emerges from a variety of places. Notably, cynicism largely arose among juvenile probation officers in one study due to frustrations about role conflict, not negative feelings about the youth with whom they worked (Curtis, Reese, & Cone, 1990). However, more than two decades later, a study revealed that juvenile probation officers who were more cynical about the organization also exhibited stigma toward clients (White et al., 2015). In the same study, White and colleagues (2015) found that cynicism and stigma changed the way officers provided services. Thus, cynicism is important for organizations to study whether they want officers to follow specific directives, such as using EBPs.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Prior literature reveals gaps in understanding how juvenile justice workers' attitudes about punishment and rehabilitation influence their commitment to, and/or cynicism about, the agency. As important, past research tends to compare community versus institutional corrections workers, overlooking important variation *within* juvenile corrections agencies, where workers' jobs often reach beyond the confines of the settings where they work. Current trends in juvenile institutional and community corrections suggest workers are more alike than different (Huebner, 2013; Lipsey, Howell, Kelly, Chapman, & Carver, 2010). Understanding the relationships between staff attitudes toward punishment, commitment, and cynicism may provide agencies with important information for improving the work environment and increasing the likelihood that workers meet agency goals. This study aims to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What individual staff member characteristics relate to attitudes toward punishment?
Research Question 2: Are staff attitudes toward punishment related to organizational commitment and/or cynicism, after controlling for organizational factors?

METHOD

DATA AND SAMPLE

Data for this study come from an organizational survey conducted among employees working in a large county juvenile justice agency in a mid-Atlantic state. The agency

provides pretrial services, child welfare services, probation, detention, and rehabilitative programming, and includes 16 staff offices, each serving one or more of the above functions in a different location in the county. Staff in each office receive similar or the same training and professional development resources, often participating in agency-wide trainings for multiple offices at once. The organization aims to use evidence-based and evidence-informed practices[1] across all offices and to understand and improve working environments in the agency. As part of the effort to understand and assess EBP implementation and organizational culture, agency administrators enlisted researchers to conduct a survey.

The agency's offices vary across their climates, cultures, clientele served, and geographic locations within the large suburban county. Although prior research distinguishes between juvenile and adult correctional workers by their work environment—community or institutions—those distinctions may mask the microlevel variation among employees and the cohesive mission within this juvenile justice agency. For instance, this agency titles its juvenile detention workers "youth counselors." These staff undergo extensive training in EBPs such as trauma-informed care and motivational interviewing techniques. Similarly, staff in the pretrial services unit have job descriptions similar to traditional community probation officers. Thus, similar to model agencies such as the Missouri model (see Huebner, 2013), institutional and community staff in this agency are more alike than different. For this reason, we examine our data by type of staff *and* within the agency as a whole.

Beginning in October 2014, researchers visited each unit in the agency to administer an organizational survey to all 320 employees. Researchers coordinated with unit supervisors to determine the most opportune time to administer the survey to capture as many staff as possible. Most often, this involved attending a staff meeting, at the end of which researchers presented the study, reviewed the survey protocol and consent procedures, and obtained consent. The organizational survey contained numerous scales measuring dimensions such as client engagement, working with judges, organizational measures, and demographic information.

In total, 233 employees completed a survey (response rate = 73%).[2] However, of these employees, 17 are nonmerit, meaning they do not have primary employment with the agency (e.g., relief staff, interns, and select support staff) and were, therefore, excluded from the current study. List-wise deletion of missing data in the control variables resulted in a final sample size of 204 respondents.[3] Table 1 presents demographic information on the study sample. Most staff are female (56.4%) and identify as White (51.9%). The average age of participants is 41.81 years (*SD* = 10.03 years) with an average tenure of 11.36 years (*SD* = 8.44 years). Nearly one third of staff reported having a master's degree or higher (30.4%). One quarter of staff work in a detention setting (28.7%), as compared with a community-based setting (71.3%). Comparisons with agency records on staff demographics suggest the study sample is representative of the organization.

OUTCOME VARIABLES

Table 1 presents the outcome variables: organizational commitment and cynicism. Organizational commitment (Cronbach's α = .820) is a 12-item measure developed by Taxman, Young, Wiersema, Rhodes, and Mitchell (2007), and represents the degree to which staff feel committed to the goals of the agency. This measure uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) and contains questions such as, "I

TABLE 1:   Summary Statistics

Variable	%	M (SD)	Range
Race			
White	51.9		
Non-White	48.0		
Gender			
Male	43.6		
Female	56.4		
Supervisor	20.4		
Education			
Bachelor's degree or less	69.57		
Master's degree or higher	30.43		
Tenure		11.36 (8.44)	0-35 years
Age		41.81 (10.03)	24-67 years
Attitudes toward punishment			
Rehabilitation attitudes		4.42 (0.66)	1-5
Traditional sanctions attitudes		2.22 (0.73)	1-5
Organizational climate		3.34 (0.78)	1-5
Organizational commitment		3.57 (0.61)	1-5
Cynicism		2.43 (1.00)	1-5
Type of staff			
Detention	28.7		
Community	71.3		
Number of participants in each office (n = 204)		13.5	6-51

Note. Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

feel a sense of ownership for this organization rather than just being an employee." Cynicism (Cronbach's α = .921) is a five-item measure using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) in which the questions are reverse worded so that a lower score reflects a more positive attitude toward the organization (Taxman et al., 2007). For example, staff ideally disagree with the statement, "I've pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here."

PREDICTOR VARIABLES

Table 1 also presents the primary variables of interest regarding staff attitudes toward punishment, as measured by two alternate viewpoints (Taxman et al., 2007). Rehabilitation attitudes (Cronbach's α = .792) is a four-item scale reflecting the respondent's level of agreement (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) with the belief that crime control strategies are most effective when they take a rehabilitative approach focusing on treatment, education, and individualized responses (e.g., "We should make sure that treatment provided is matched to the client's needs"). The traditional sanctions attitudes scale contains five items indicating the respondent's level of agreement (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) with the belief that the most effective punishment is incarceration (Cronbach's α = .818). For example, "We should keep delinquents in detention and off the street."

Control variables include staff demographics such as gender (male = 0, female = 1), race (White = 0, non-White = 1), and age. An indicator of tenure is also included, measuring time employed with the agency in years and months, with the mean participant tenure

of 11.36 years. We include a dichotomous measure for denoting supervisor status (yes = 1, no = 0). Education reflects whether the participant has a bachelor's degree or less (coded as 0) or a master's degree or above (coded as 1).[4] A measure of organizational climate (Cronbach's α = .957) is included as a control and represents the organizational culture and function affecting job satisfaction (Taxman et al., 2007). This 20-item 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) includes questions such as, "Ideas and suggestions from employees get fair consideration by unit supervisors."[5] The average score was 3.57 (*SD* = 0.61), indicating a moderately positive climate.

GROUPING VARIABLE

Given the nested nature of the data and our research questions about the influences of office setting and individual characteristics on outcomes, we rely on multilevel modeling (MLM) procedures. Staff members (Level 1) are situated within 16 offices (Level 2), representing an array of units within the juvenile justice agency that are also geographically dispersed across the county. Controlling for staff members' work locations accounts for office-level differences, which might explain variation in the outcomes of interest. In the same way that past scholarly work distinguishes between institutional and community officers, we control for type of staff (community = 0, detention = 1) at Level 2 as an attribute of between-office differences. Because the traditional view of institutional versus community roles in this agency is restricting, however, we instead control for the differences between offices (geographic location and type of work performed) because all the offices work together to contribute to the same agency mission. This approach provides a more holistic view of the factors that predict cynicism and organizational commitment in this juvenile justice agency.

ANALYTIC STRATEGY

We first conducted bivariate analyses, including *t* tests, chi-square, and correlation tests, to understand group differences and associations on key variables. We then employed MLM for the multivariate analysis using hierarchical linear model(ing) 7.02 (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, Congdon, & du Toit, 2011). Accounting for the hierarchical structure of data isolates nuanced patterns not captured by other multivariate methods (Gelman & Hill, 2007). Respondents were spread across the 16 staff offices, ranging from six to 51 participants per office. This range and the moderate participant size ensure adequate variation within offices, reducing the risk of biased standard error estimates at the office level (Maas & Hox, 2005). Significant unconditional models for both dependent variables organizational commitment ($p < .001$) and cynicism ($p < .001$) validate MLM and affirm the random intercept of the resulting models (Woltman, Feldstain, MacKay, & Rocchi, 2012). All continuous independent variables were grand-mean centered, allowing us to make predictions about the outcomes (Enders & Tofighi, 2007).

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

A series of bivariate tests reveals important group differences and associations among our variables of interest. Participants reported an average organizational commitment score

of 3.57 (SD = 0.61), indicating moderately positive commitment to the agency. Supervisors reported significantly higher commitment than nonsupervisors did (t = −4.45, p < .001). Furthermore, older (r = .28, p < .001) and more tenured (r = .25, p < .001) participants also scored higher on commitment to the organization. Higher scores on commitment also associate with higher scores on organizational climate (r = .58, p < .001), rehabilitation attitudes (r = .20 p < .001), and lower on traditional sanctions attitudes (r = −.161, p < .001). There were no differences in commitment based on race, education, gender, or working in a detention setting.

The average perceived cynicism score in the organization was 2.43 (SD = 1.00), indicating a low to moderate level of cynicism. Non-Whites reported significantly higher cynicism than Whites did (t = 3.65, p < .001), as did line staff compared with supervisors (t = 4.48, p < .001) and those working in a detention setting (t = 3.69, p < .001). Younger participants were more cynical (r = −.13, p = .050). Higher scores on cynicism were significantly associated with higher scores on traditional sanctions attitudes (r = .24, p < .001) and lower scores on climate (r = −.73, p < .001). There were no differences in cynicism based on education, gender, or tenure.

The average rehabilitation attitudes score was 4.42 (SD = 0.66), reflecting high levels of support for rehabilitation. We observed no statistically significant differences or associations among our controls and rehabilitation attitudes. The average traditional sanctions score was 2.22 (SD = 0.73), indicating low support for incarceration. Men scored significantly higher on traditional sanctions attitudes than women (t = 3.53, p < .001), as did non-Whites compared with Whites (t = 2.88, p = .004) and those with a bachelor's degree or less compared with those with a master's degree or higher (t = 2.74, p = .009). Line staff scored significantly higher on traditional sanctions than supervisors (t = 2.08, p = .039). Staff working in a detention setting reported higher scores on traditional sanctions than community staff (t = 5.50, p < .001). There were no associations between traditional sanctions attitudes and age or tenure.

Prior to conducting multilevel analyses, we also tested for multicollinearity by evaluating variance inflation factors (VIF; Gelman & Hill, 2007). A model regressing the independent variables on rehabilitation attitudes showed multicollinearity is not a concern (largest VIF = 3.26 and lowest tolerance = 0.41). A model regressing the independent variables on traditional sanctions attitudes also suggests no issues with multicollinearity (largest VIF = 3.26 and lowest tolerance = 0.31).

MULTILEVEL ANALYSES

To assess the impact of working in different offices across the agency on commitment and cynicism toward the organization, we employ two multilevel models. This analytic strategy allows us to control for between- and within-office effects on the outcome variables. Table 2 shows the fit of these models. Our models account for 11.9% and 13.1% of the total variation in organizational commitment and cynicism, respectively. Between-office differences account less than 20% of variation in the outcomes, meaning that most variation in our models occurs within offices.

We present two multilevel models to evaluate the relationship between our predictors and organizational commitment (Model 1) and cynicism (Model 2), shown in Table 3. We first consider the influence of type of staff at Level 2 on the dependent variables. We found

TABLE 2:   Model Justification and Fit

Model	χ^2 p value for unconditional models	Intraclass correlations	Proportional reduction of error	Total effect on variation
1. Organizational commitment	$p < .001$	15.7%	75.4%	11.9%
2. Cynicism	$p < .001$	18.3%	71.5%	13.1%

TABLE 3:   Multilevel Models Predicting Associations Between Individual and Workplace Characteristics and Organizational Commitment and Cynicism

	Dependent variables, β (SE)	
Variable	Model 1 Organizational commitment	Model 2 Cynicism
Constant	3.566*** (0.125)	2.921*** (0.207)
Level 2: Offices		
Type of staff	−0.132 (0.129)	−0.229 (0.215)
Level 1: Participants		
White	0.037 (0.066)	−0.268** (0.091)
Gender	0.089 (0.069)	−0.112 (0.095)
Supervisor	0.039 (0.095)	−0.114 (0.131)
Tenure	0.010 (0.006)	−0.008 (0.008)
Age	0.011** (0.004)	−0.003 (0.006)
Education	0.011 (0.073)	−0.074 (0.100)
Organizational climate	0.427*** (0.045)	−0.852*** (0.062)
Rehabilitation attitudes	0.129** (0.049)	−0.038 (0.067)
Traditional attitudes	0.075 (0.048)	0.180** (0.065)
N	204	204

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

no significant impact of this Level 2 attribute on either organizational commitment or cynicism. We then examined Level 1 individual-level variables. An individual's attitude toward punishment (traditional or rehabilitative) significantly influenced organizational commitment and cynicism. For every 1-point increase in rehabilitation attitudes score, an individual's organizational commitment score should increase by 0.13 units. Similarly, for every 1-point increase in traditional sanctions attitudes score, an individual's cynicism score should increase by 0.18 points. This larger value for traditional attitudes indicates that traditional attitudes have a stronger effect on individual cynicism levels than rehabilitation views have on commitment levels.

Organizational climate is also a significant predictor of both organizational commitment and cynicism. For every 1-point increase in organizational climate score, an individual's attitude toward cynicism score should decrease by 0.85, whereas organizational commitment score should increase by 0.43. A more positive organizational climate encourages stronger commitment, whereas negative climates promote cynicism. This finding suggests that an employee's perception of the overall organizational climate significantly affects his or her level of cynicism about, and commitment to, the organization.

DISCUSSION

The current study examines the impact of juvenile justice employees' attitudes toward punishment on their organizational commitment and cynicism levels. Individuals who view traditional sanctions (such as incarceration) more favorably are more likely to hold a cynical view of the workplace. By contrast, individuals with higher rehabilitation attitudes are more likely to feel a sense of commitment to the organization. Our work aligns with prior research about staff attitudes and organizational factors, while also advancing the literature by applying the concepts to juvenile justice workers and accounting for organizational factors (Farrell et al., 2011; Griffin et al., 2010; Matz et al., 2013; Minor et al., 2014; White et al., 2015).

A key finding of our study relates to the magnitude of the effects of staff attitudes on organizational outcomes. We find that the effect of traditional sanctions beliefs is stronger on staff cynicism than the effect of rehabilitative beliefs is on organizational commitment. This suggests that rehabilitation-oriented agencies will suffer more negative effects from punishment-oriented employees' cynicism than can be remedied by improving commitment. This effect may be similar to the psychological mechanism that causes individuals to remember one negative experience more prominently than a history of many positive experiences, such as in the case of one negative experience at a store or restaurant (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). For juvenile justice workers, if employees are punishment oriented and cynical about agency goals, they may treat their young clients more punitively and not adhere to EBPs. More important, if the punishment orientation lasts, then agencies must develop strategies to shift the tide back toward reform and rehabilitation. Although many factors influence attitudes toward punishment, agencies have a stake in employing staff who will advance their larger goals and objectives in ways that align with the evidence.

Considering the impact of office-level differences, organizational climate significantly affects both cynicism and commitment. The more positive the climate, the less likely individuals are to hold cynical attitudes and more likely they are to express greater commitment to the agency. However, negative views toward organizational climate had the largest impact on an individual's cynicism levels. Past work details an explicit link between organizational climate and the psychological well-being of employees, and a positive organizational climate is key to establishing a model for improving an employee's passion for his or her work (Bahrami, Taheri, Montazeralfaraj, & Tafti, 2013; Lambert & Paoline, 2008). Although we do not model this relationship directly, positive organizational climate correlates with higher rehabilitation attitudes and lower traditional sanctions attitudes. This suggests a positive office environment may be a key ingredient influencing staff alignment or misalignment with agency goals. Future research should consider the impacts of climate, attitudes toward punishment, and adherence or commitment to the goals of the agency.

The impacts of the workspace also varied across individual characteristics. We find a positive relationship between age and organizational commitment, though no association with tenure. This finding suggests staff who are older may have more experience and be more likely to invest in the organization longitudinally. Although qualitative research could uncover why this is the case, some research suggests that baby boomers experience significantly less organizational mobility than millennials (Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015). Future research should consider variation in age and experiential factors other than tenure to better explain this relationship.

Race also strongly predicts cynicism among staff in this agency, with Whites appearing less cynical about the organization than non-Whites. It may be that the presence of racial disparities and unequal treatment of minority juveniles fuel cynicism among minority staff. If minority workers are seeing an increasing number of non-White juveniles in the justice system, this may reinforce a cynical attitude toward the rehabilitative goals of the system and, thus, the organization overall. Other research supports the increase in cynicism among minority employees (Nunn, 2002; Petta & Walker, 1992), but this question demands additional theoretical and empirical attention. This is especially important within a context of increasing support for reducing disproportionate minority contact in juvenile justice settings (Kempf-Leonard, 2007).

Study results also present important implications for agencies as they seek to simultaneously implement EBPs and improve working conditions. As the focus in the juvenile justice system moves back toward rehabilitation and diversion practices, individual staff members' attitudes toward punishment may play a critical role in steering implementation of the prescribed reforms. If misaligned with agency goals, these attitudes may contribute to undetected or subconscious barriers to fidelity and adherence to EBPs. For example, if a staff member feels harsh punishment is necessary for youth and believes detention is the most appropriate sanction in general, this attitude may conflict with, and potentially override, the agency's preference for diversion programs or other rehabilitative techniques. Alternately, staff who favor rehabilitation may be more likely to buy into programs and practices supporting this orientation and more readily implement them. Although recent research examines attitudes toward EBP implementation (Viglione, 2017; Viglione, Blasko, & Taxman, 2018), the literature has yet to consider the influence of individual attitudes toward punishment on these reforms. Furthermore, preexisting attitudes may influence the way staff do their jobs because individuals form opinions about the justice system prior to employment or training. In turn, those attitudes may affect willingness to implement certain practices if they appear in opposition to one's own orientation.

The importance of staff attitudes in this research makes agency training a critical implication. As more agencies move to adopt EBPs, they may consider developing protocols to assess staff attitudes toward punishment, and develop professional development trainings to educate staff about their own attitudes and the consequences of those attitudes for implementation. As the evidence amasses about the importance of staff relationships with justice-involved individuals, training programs could focus not only on recruiting more rehabilitation-oriented staff but also on retaining them by accounting for the influence of those attitudes on workplace satisfaction.

This study contributes to the expanding literature on organizational factors in criminal justice agencies; however, some limitations exist. First, this study uses data from one county-level juvenile justice agency, so it lacks generalizability to jurisdictions that are organized differently (e.g., statewide systems). In particular, the college education requirements of this agency may limit generalizability to other agencies who do not require staff to have postsecondary education, especially for detention workers. The relationship between the staff education levels, attitudes toward punishment, and agency goals should be explored in future research. This study is also cross sectional, so claims about causality are not possible. Future work in this area should consider surveying staff at multiple times points to develop a longitudinal frame that includes preexisting attitudes and notes how perceptions of the organization and attitudes shift over time. It is possible that staff who embrace the

rehabilitative orientation of the agency at the time of hire will exhibit greater commitment and less cynicism over time. As our finding about the stronger effect of traditional attitudes than rehabilitative ones suggests, negative experiences in the organization (or with the reforms implemented) may have a lasting impact on organizational attitudes that warrants further inquiry.

It is also likely that other individual-level factors explain staff commitment, cynicism, and attitudes toward punishment, such as victimization experiences, being a parent, compensation and benefits, training, and disciplinary action. Future studies should examine how such factors relate to organizational perceptions. Similarly, we only include organizational climate as a contextual factor helping to explain the outcome, but it may be that culture, morale, or other organizational perceptions influence attitudes. Finally, the current study reveals that individual characteristics explain the most variation in attitudes. Future work could include additional predictors at the office level to provide further insight into shaping individuals' attitudes agency wide.

The current study contributes to the growing literature focused on understanding the influence of individual and workplace factors on important organizational outcomes such as commitment. These organizational factors are also integral to the successful adoption, implementation, and fidelity of EBPs aimed at reducing recidivism and improving outcomes. This is especially important in the juvenile justice system, where preventing youth from continuing into adult offending is paramount. Staff who hold more rehabilitative attitudes may be better suited for this work because they are more committed to the organization and, thus, potentially more committed to the rehabilitative aims of the juvenile justice system.

APPENDIX

Response items for each scale used in the analyses are presented here with reliabilities in parentheses.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ($\alpha = .820$)

1. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great place to work.
2. Since joining this organization, my personal values and those of the agency have become more similar.
3. The reason I prefer this organization to others is because of what it stands for, that is, its values.
4. My attachment to this organization is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by the office.
5. How hard I work for this organization is directly linked to how much I am rewarded. (R)
6. For me to get rewarded around here, it is necessary to express the right attitude. (R)
7. My private views about this organization are different from those I express publicly. (R)
8. Unless I am rewarded for it in some way, I see no reason to expend extra effort on behalf of this organization. (R)
9. What this organization stands for is important to me.
10. If the values of the organization were different, I would not be as attached to this organization.
11. I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.
12. I feel a sense of ownership for this organization, rather than just being an employee.

CYNICISM (α = .921)

1. I have pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here.
2. Changes to the usual way of doing things at this office are more trouble than they are worth.
3. When we try to change things here, they just seem to go from bad to worse.
4. Efforts to make improvements in this office usually fail.
5. It is hard to be hopeful about the future because people have such bad attitudes.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE (α = .957)

1. Ideas and suggestions from employees get fair consideration by management.
2. Managers and staff periodically meet and talk about what is working well and what is not to improve our performance.
3. Learning new knowledge and skills and using them in your job is highly valued by supervisors and managers.
4. We systematically measure important outcomes for this office that assess our performance.
5. Staff feel comfortable promoting different ideas or suggestions even if they conflict with established policy or practices.
6. We have well-defined performance outcomes and specific plans in place for how to achieve them.
7. Opportunities are provided for staff to attend training or other developmental opportunities.
8. Innovative actions and initiatives undertaken by staff are highly valued.
9. The informal communication channels here work very well.
10. Employees are always kept well informed.
11. Information on new or best practices is made available to staff to use in their work.
12. Managers are open and willing to try new ideas or ways of doing things.
13. Employees always feel free to ask questions and express concerns in this organization.
14. There is a shared understanding of the changes needed to help the agency to achieve its long-term objectives.
15. There are discussions involving all the staff about the vision of the office and ways to achieve it.
16. Most staff here believe that they can have open discussions with supervisors and managers about work-related difficulties.
17. Most staff are aware of, and agree about, where we should be in the future.
18. When mistakes or errors are made, managers tend to treat them as opportunities to learn rather than respond by using punishment.

REHABILITATION ATTITUDES (α = .792)

1. We should make sure delinquents get effective treatment for addictions and other problems while they are in organization.
2. We should provide delinquents with treatment to address addiction mental health or other problems.
3. We should make sure that the treatment provided is matched to the client's needs.
4. We should provide more treatment, jobs, and educational programs in a correctional setting to address problems that often contribute to crime.

TRADITIONAL SANCTIONS ATTITUDES (α = .818)

1. We should show people who use drugs they will be punished severely if they do not stop.
2. We should deter future offenders by severely punishing delinquents who are caught and convicted.
3. We should keep delinquents in detention and off the streets.

4. We should keep delinquents in detention to prevent them from committing new crimes.
5. We should keep drug users in detention and off the streets.
6. We should use the eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth principle.
7. We should punish addicts to stop them from using drugs.

NOTES

1. Evidence-informed practices lean toward an "evidence base," but may not have enough rigorous scientific evidence to garner the evidence-based practice and policy (EBP) label yet.

2. Past studies established 73% as a valid and adequate rate of responses for conventional organizational research (Baruch & Holtom, 2008).

3. An analysis of missingness using the "UpSetR" package in R identified 12 participants missing some data for the gender, race, and education variables (for more information on the "UpSetR" package, see Lex, Gehlenborg, Strobelt, Vuillemot, & Pfister, 2014). Half of these participants ($n = 6$) were missing data for all three of these controls.

4. In the study agency, most positions require a college degree. Among our sample, 5% listed a high school diploma, 6.5% had an associate's degree, and 55% had a bachelor's degree as their highest education level. This may be a unique setting, limiting generalizability to other juvenile justice agencies, as it is common to only require a high school diploma for institutional correctional officers.

5. For a full list of questions/measures included in each scale, refer to the appendix.

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