

AN ASSESSMENT OF JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SOUTH CAROLINA CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



**A PRESENTATION PREPARED FOR THE
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS BY:**

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Correction Officer Turnover Rates



- Between 2000-2008, MTC (2011) reported a nationwide CO turnover rate of 16.2 percent. This is highly varied, however.
- Many systems face 30% turnover:
- Patenuade (2001) found that from 1998-2001, 35 percent of Arkansas officers resigned annually.
- 35 percent of Vermont officers resigned in 2004.
- 35 and 34 percent of SCDC officers resigned in 2008 and 2009.

Factors Contributing to Turnover



- Low pay and benefits
- Low managerial and supervisory support
- Job dangerousness
- High disease and injury threat
- Low job commitment
- Other more appealing job possibilities

Purpose of this Report



- Understand how many officers desire to resign
- Identify factors leading to their turnover intentions
- Inform policies designed to retain these employees

Methods



- The present researchers, along with SCDC officials, collaborated during two meetings to: a)-Request permission to conduct the current study; b)-Amend and finalize the survey instrument and c)-Schedule a time to administer the survey.
- On April 16th, 2013, the researchers provided each warden a box of surveys, which were then distributed to their respective CO's.
- The following month the researchers collected these surveys and began entering the data into the statistical software package (SPSS 21.0).

RESULTS



**THE FOLLOWING ARE FINDINGS FROM OUR
STUDY**

Table 1: Response Rates by Institution and Security Level

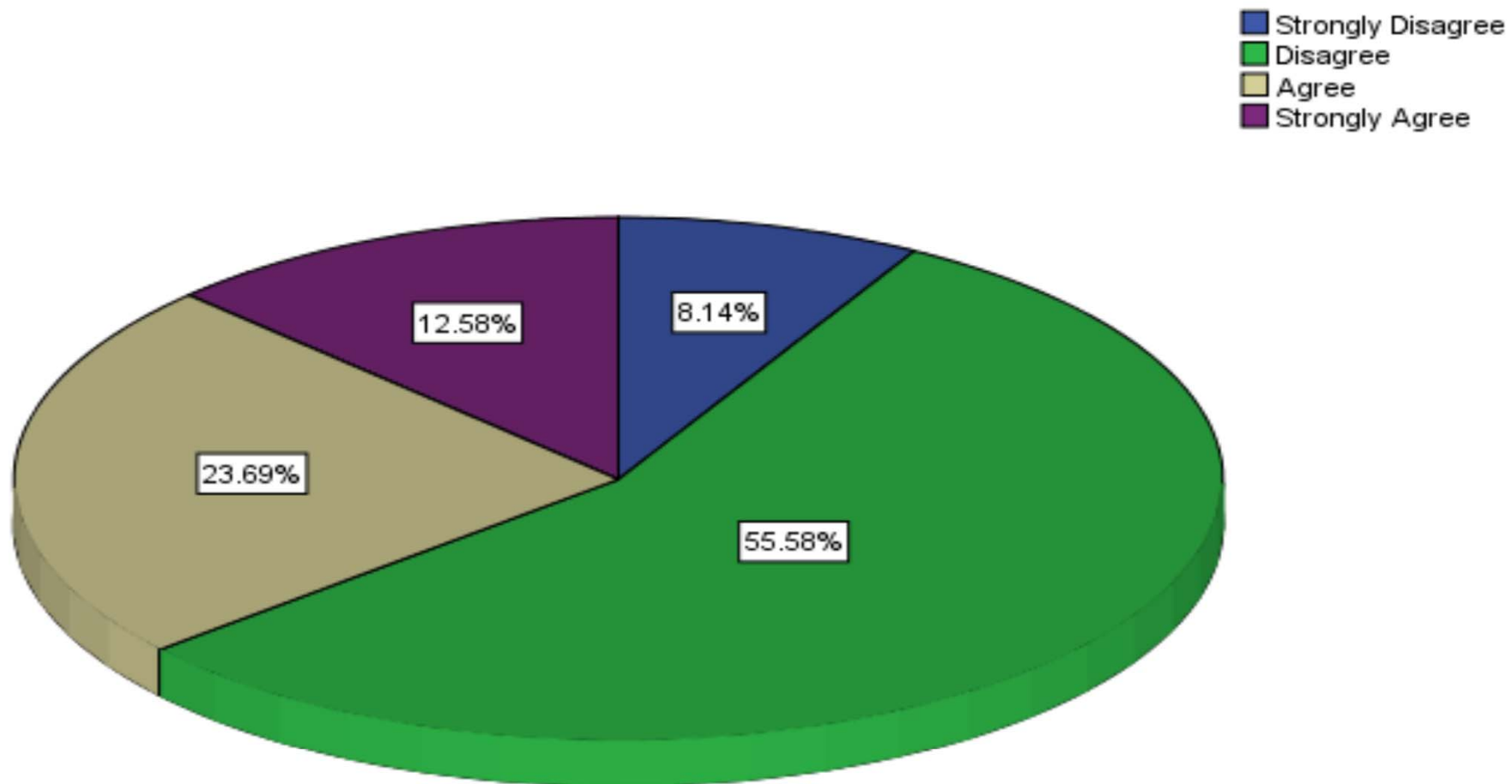
Institution	Total Number of Officers	Security Level ^a	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
Allendale	148	II	71	48 Percent
Broad River	254	III	61	24 Percent
Camille	128	III	68	53 Percent
Campbell	30	I	26	86 Percent
Catawba	18	I	17	94 Percent
Coastal	24	I	18	75 Percent
Evans	185	II	121	65 Percent
Goodman	60	I	34	56 Percent
Kershaw	197	II	129	65 Percent
Kirkland	306	III	142	46 Percent
Leath	88	III	28	32 Percent
Lee	234	III	63	27 Percent
Lieber	204	III	101	50 Percent
Livesay	64	I	36	56 Percent
Lower Savannah	27	I	9	33 Percent
Manning	89	I	49	55 Percent
McCormick	151	III	91	60 Percent
McDougal	95	II	32	34 Percent
Palmer	27	I	21	77 Percent
Perry	193	III	117	60 Percent
Ridgeland	139	II	64	46 Percent
Trenton	109	II	92	84 Percent
Turbeville	194	II	95	49 Percent
Tyger River	190	II	83	44 Percent
Walden	89	I	53	60 Percent
Wateree River	166	II	29	17 Percent

Note: ^a I=Minimum Level Security; II=Medium Level Security; III=Maximum Level Security

Included in March 20, 2019 letter from SCDC to LOC

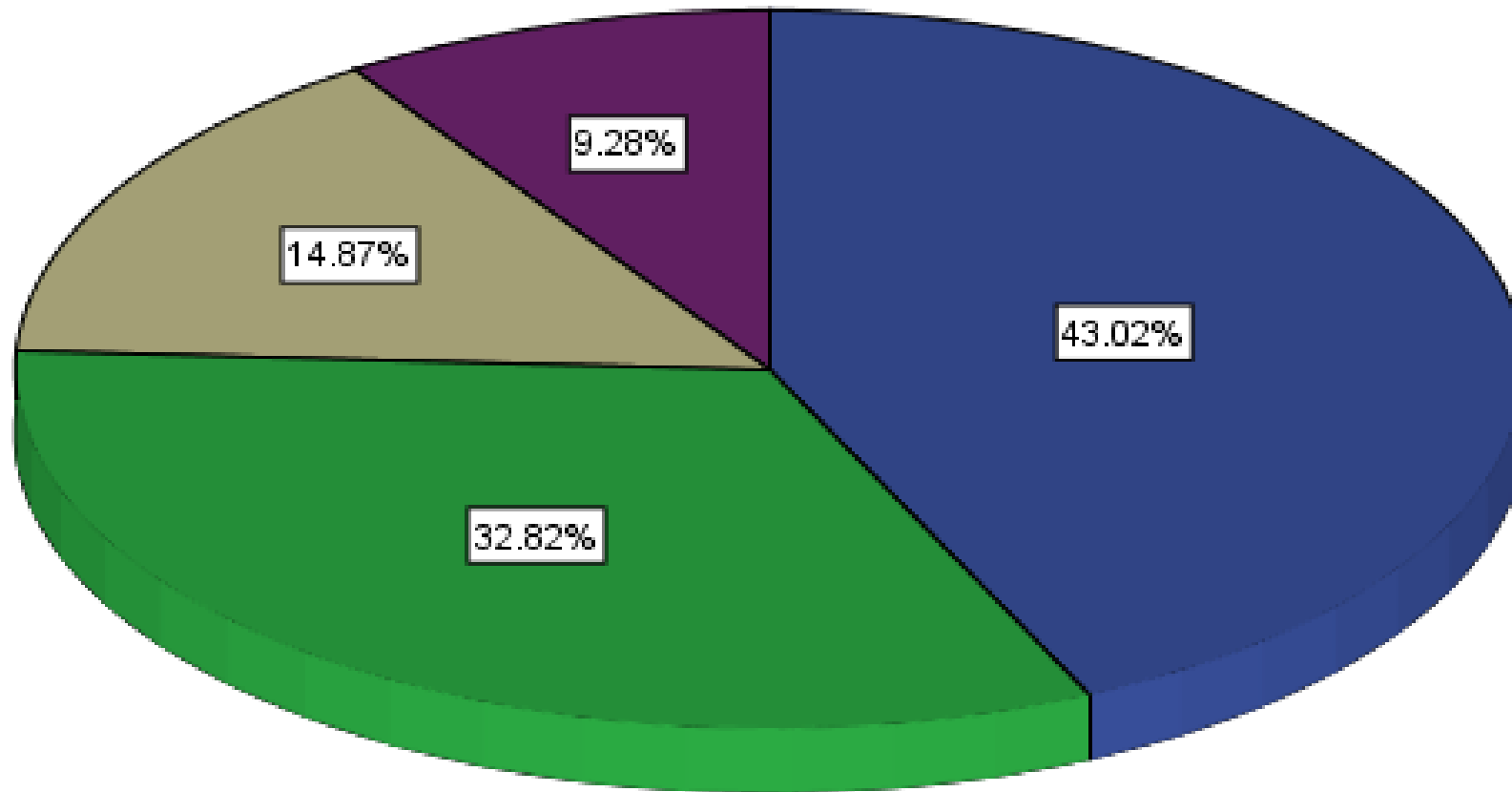
Variables	Description	Code or Min/Max	Median or Percentage
Age	Captured respondent's age at time survey was taken	1 = 18-23 2 = 24-29 3 = 30-35 4 = 36-41 5 = 42-47 6 = 48-53 7 = 53 or older	4.00
Educational Level	Captured highest level of education achieved by respondent at time survey was taken	1 = Less than High School 2 = High School/GED 3 = 2-year College/A.A. 4 = 4-year College 5 = Master's Degree/Doctoral Degree 6 = Professional Degree 7 = Other	2.00
Ethnicity	Asked whether respondent was of Hispanic heritage	0 = No 1 = Yes	0 = 96.64 Percent 1 = 3.36 Percent
Gender	Captured respondent's gender	0 = Male 1 = Female	0 = 63.74 Percent 1 = 36.36 Percent
Marital Status	Captured respondent's marital status	0 = Single 1 = Married 2 = Divorced/Separated 3 = Widowed 4 = Other	1.00
Race	Captured respondent's race	1 = Black or African American 2 = White or Caucasian 3 = Other	1 = 59.66 Percent 2 = 36.38 Percent 3 = 3.96 Percent
CDC Employment	Asked how many years respondent has been employed with South Department of Corrections	1 = Less than a Year 2 = 1-2 Years 3 = 2-5 Years 4 = 5-8 Years 5 = 9-12 Years 6 = 13-17 Years 7 = 18-23 Years 8 = 24-29 Years 9 = 30 plus Years	3.00

Percentage of Respondents Frequently Thinking About Leaving



How actively have you searched for a job in the last year?

- Not at all
- A little
- Actively
- Very Actively



List of Statistically Significant Factors for Turnover Intentions

Variables

Psychological Variable

Original Desire for Employment within this Profession

Safety

Supervision/Management

Co-Worker Relations

Job Excitement/Creativity

Compensation

Benefits

Age

Race

Popular Rival Jobs Identified



- Law enforcement of any kind
- Correctional officer within other institutions
- Probation/Parole

Rival Jobs identified



Jobs Listed	Count of How Many Times Job was Identified
Police/Law Enforcement ^b	143
Detention Centers/Jails/Other Prisons	55
Probation/Parole	20
Federal Prison Systems	18
School Resource Officer	7
Paralegal	3
Administrative Assistant	2
Military	2
Dispatcher	2
Mental Health Arena	1
Other ^a	5

Variables of Interest



Contributing To Turnover

- Job Desirability
- Psychological Problems
- Benefits/Compensation
- Job Dangerousness

Protecting From Turnover

- Vacation/Overtime compensation
- Overcrowded
- Co-Worker Relations
- Supervisor-Management Relations

Key Recommendations



- **Develop multi-level compensation packages that include not just pay issues, but consideration of retirement and healthcare benefits. Also some senior employees feel the neglected when the focus is centered on hiring new employees.**
- **Develop a reward and recognition program for all correctional officials. This may as simple as utilizing the email system more effectively.**
- **It is important to address work environment issues, and especially those concerning officer safety. Training may be needed to reinforce workplace safety and health risk concerns.**
- **Provide emotional outlets for officers. Also of stress appears to stem from the suppression of emotions while at work. Programs that target CO stress should include issues of emotional dissonance.**

Questions or Comments



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