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Citizen-agency versus state-agency at the frontline in prisons and probation services: A systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT

Street-level bureaucrats play a key role in the delivery of public services to the citizens with whom they interact. Using the PRISMA approach, we rely on a street-level perspective to report a systematic review of 46 studies about officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services. In doing so, we examine how correctional officers articulate state-agency – whereby they focus on the implementation of rules and policies – and citizen-agency – whereby their decisions regarding offenders are based on judgements of offenders' worth.

Our results provide evidence that frontline work in prisons and probation services stems from a mix of citizen- and state-agencies in which the former is prioritized over the latter: when rule enforcement allows it, correctional officers often make discretionary decisions based professional judgements rooted in professional norms. In this respect, the managerial and actuarial approach to risk management and public protection involved by contemporary correctional reforms comes with new role expectations that conflict with correctional officers' rehabilitative ideals. At the same time, the literature provides many instances of officers coping with workload in order to meet policy objectives and organizational demands while maintaining satisfactory working conditions. In other words, there is an increasingly elaborate and fragile articulation of state- and citizen-agencies at the frontline, in prisons and probations services. We conclude with some implications and an agenda for future research.

Keywords:

Systematic literature review, Street-level bureaucracy, Prisma, State-agent, Citizen-agent, Prison, Probation

CITIZEN-AGENCY VERSUS STATE-AGENCY AT THE FRONTLINE IN PRISONS AND PROBATION SERVICES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

While top-down approaches often dominate public administration and policy, Lipsky (1969, 2010) highlights that frontline civil servants' practices influence the public services delivered to the citizens. In doing so, Lipsky draws attention to the so-called "street-level bureaucrats", i.e., the civil servants who directly interact with citizens, such as social workers, police officers, or tax officials. In prisons and probation services, frontline officers provide public services to citizens who have to serve a sentence. The work of these officers consists of a blend of paper work, social work as well as risk and security management. They hold a certain degree of discretion (Brodkin, 2012; Davis, 1969), since the nature of their work imposes discernment in applying administrative rules which are not always clear, complete nor univocal, as well as responsiveness to citizen-offenders' individual demands. As a result, street-level bureaucrats shape policy on the ground. In doing so, prison and probation officers have to cope with limited resources and time to make quick decisions on multiple cases (Tummers et al., 2015). They must also meet the demands of their first-line managers, whose work approaches can differ from one case to another (Evans, 2011).

Next to recent works on discrimination or stereotyping (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018), street-level bureaucracy (SLB) research has diagnosed (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000) and documented (e.g., Tummers, 2017; Tummers & Bekkers, 2014) the tension between two "narratives" of frontline work. These two narratives result from two corresponding agency logics (Harrits & Møller, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000, 2003, 2012). In the "state-agent narrative", the street-level bureaucrats look for solutions that

facilitate the attainment of policy objectives or the achievement of rule compliance. By contrast, in the "citizen-agent narrative", they make judgements and decisions that are rooted in social and cultural norms. According to the citizen-agent narratives, frontline officers can sometimes take risks or to surpass themselves in order to make a difference to their clients' lives; at the same time, they can provide fewer assistance to the citizens whom they deem unworthy.

In the course of the last decades, policy reforms in many Western countries have promoted a more punitive approach to probation and prison work (Garland, 2012; Pratt et al., 2013; Wacquant, 2009). While institutional approaches used to emphasize social work and rehabilitation, the 1980s' managerial and conservative turn of new penology (Feeley & Simon, 1992) – most often described as the diffusion of a U.S. movement in Western democracies and then in other countries of the world (Shahidullah, 2012) – shifted the priorities of correctional institutions towards "public protection, risk management, punishment and accountability" (Healy, 2012, p. 379). This new rhetoric materialized into additional penalties in cases of non-compliance and policies that further criminalize deviant behaviors (e.g., Pratt et al., 2013). In many countries, probation officers had to trade treatment, social work and rehabilitation-oriented activities for punishment and control imperatives (Pratt et al., 2013; Kury & Shea, 2011). In the U.S. (Garland, 2012), but also in other contexts such as France (Wacquant, 2009) or Italy (Corda, 2016), the overall increase of the demand for punishment resulted in prison overcrowding, thus placing prison officers under further strain. At the managerial level, new penology is often enforced with actuarial strategies and tools, even in countries such as Belgium (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010) which have been resistant to this trend for a longer time. Risks and needs assessment tools, for instance, provide probation officers with a systematic framework assessing offenders' individual situation and the danger they represent for society (e.g., Persson & Svensson, 2012). Such tools intend to provide "hands-on" results that provide the basis to maintain or adapt sentences based on the individual situation of offenders as well as the analysis

of the danger they represent for the society. While the nature of this new policy environment is well documented, its effects on public service delivery by correctional workers at the frontline still require some clarification.

How do prison and probation officers articulate state-agency and citizen-agency when delivery public services in this new policy environment? Just as new public management challenged street-level work in public-sector organizations (Brodkin, 2011; 2012), in general, new penology has questioned the traditional work approaches and values of frontline officers, in prisons and probations services. In particular, new adjustments between state- and citizen-agencies may be expected. Using the PRISMA approach (Moher et al., 2009), the present article addresses this question by adopting a street-level perspective to report a systematic review about officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services. The reviewed literature is rooted in public administration research and criminology which is prolific on issues related to the correctional field. We adopt an SLB perspective to report how correctional officers' use their frontline discretion and cope in the reviewed studies. In doing so, we discuss what these studies uncover about the state-agent and citizen-agent narratives of frontline work in prisons and probations services.

The added value of this article is twofold. First, public administration research adopting a street-level perspective to officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services is very scarce. Mainstream SLB research focuses on social services (e.g., employment, or welfare: Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007; Tummers & Bekkers, 2014), on regulatory services (e.g., tax, food or building inspectors: de Boer & Eshuis, 2018; May & Wood, 2003; Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018) or police services (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Epp et al., 2014). However, the lack of studies conducted in correctional settings remains paradoxical as Lipsky argues that the correction field provides a "highly refined example of street-level bureaucratic discretion" (Lipsky, 2010, p. 13). So far, most studies have been conducted in penology and criminology

without necessarily adopting an SLB perspective. Hence, our review contributes to the importation of key research lessons about officer-offender interactions in correctional contexts within public administration research. In doing so, this article brings to light the role of frontline officers in contemporary reforms of correctional administrations and policies (Snacken, 2010). On another note, this literature review also proposes a new, SLB perspective on existing criminological research**.**

Second, this article speaks to the SLB literature about the narratives of frontline work (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Our review provides evidence about the articulation of conflicting agency logics by correctional officers at the frontline, with a focus on the effects of large-scale policy reforms resulting from the rise of new penology. In doing so, we bring some grist to the mill in the current debate about the actual negotiation between different forms of agencies on the ground (Harrits & Cecchini, 2019; Harrits & Møller, 2014).

After two first sections presenting the theoretical insights as well as the methods and scope of our literature review, we report our results: we look at frontline discretion before turning to coping strategies. Each time, we also discuss what these results reveal about frontline officers' struggle between agency logics in a new policy environment. We conclude with theoretical and practical implications, as well as an agenda for future SLB research.

2. DEALING WITH CONFLICTING AGENCIES AT THE FRONTLINE

Strictly speaking, frontline officers' discretion refers to their power to make choices among possible courses of action when interacting with citizens and delivering public services (Davis, 1969; Lipsky, 2010). The concept of discretion is pivotal because it acknowledges that street-level bureaucrats use their judgements and interpret policies to respond to their clients' individual demands (Hupe & Hill, 2007). For this reason, discretionary decisions can influence

policy implementation and thus shape policy "on the ground" (Brodkin, 2012, p. 943). To make sure citizens are treated equitably and according to policy decisions, frontline workers operate within a set of rules constraining their discretion. In that regard, first-line managers are considered as key regulators of frontline workers' discretion (Lipsky, 2010, p. 19). At the end of the day, policy on the ground results from a mix of political signals, managerial influence, and discretionary implementation by frontline workers (May & Winter, 2009).

This classical perspective on discretion is prevalent in the "state-agent narrative" of frontline work depicted by Maynard-Moody & Musheno (2000, 2003, 2012). The state-agent narrative is essentially about law abidance, i.e., frontline officers' use of discretion in accordance to their understanding of law, procedures and bureaucratic rules (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). It also emphasizes how self-interest may guide frontline workers' practices when trying to achieve policy goals, organizational objectives, or to improve work conditions. For instance, to reconcile organizational and job goals with daily work constraints, frontline workers may develop shortcuts, informal routines, and compromises commonly referred to as "coping mechanisms" (Lipsky, 2010). Various forms of coping mechanisms have been acknowledged so far (Tummers et al., 2015; Winter, 2003), such as routinization (frontline officers develop routines to make tasks manageable), creaming (they privilege the worthiest clients) or client control (they implement strategies to achieve client cooperation). Several constraints fostering coping mechanisms have also been highlighted, such as excessive workload (e.g., Brodkin, 2011), role conflicts (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), managerial styles (e.g., Walker & Gilson, 2004), red tape, but also limited competences. In other words, confronted with work constraints, frontline workers would establish priorities and routines motivated by the achievement of policy goal and/or by self-interest.

While the state-agent narrative could be prevalent in the literature (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and, often, encouraged by public managers and the administration (e.g.,

Tummers, 2017), many frontline officers would rather consider themselves as "citizen-agents" (Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; de Witte et al., 2015). According to the citizen-agent narrative, frontline officers rely on assessments regarding "the identities and moral character" of their citizen-clients (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003, p. 9). It draws on the idea that frontline workers make sense of their encounters and act based on moral judgements rather than on legal premises. Thus, according to the circumstances, frontline officers might decide not following the rules or relying on "pragmatic improvisation" (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2012) to provide what they consider as the most adequate answer to the needs of their citizen-clients. Even when confronted with work constraints, frontline officers would not necessarily opt for the most efficient or comfortable solutions but, rather, for those fitting to their perceptions of their clients' worth (e.g., Borrelli & Lindberg, 2018; Tummers, 2017).

Narratives are powerful analytical devices that demonstrate that frontline workers act according to distinct – and sometimes conflicting – agency logics that are embedded in institutional structures and socio-cultural norms (Harrits & Møller, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012). In this literature review, we examine how frontline officers in prisons and probation services articulate state- and citizen-agency in making discretionary decisions regarding offenders and when implementing coping mechanisms.

3. METHOD AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The systematic literature review presented in this article draws upon the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA: Moher et al., 2009). This approach ensuring the transparency and replicability of the reviewing process has been used for other recent systematic reviews in public administration (e.g., Moyson et al., 2018; Tummers et al.,

2015). This section presents the search strategy of the review, the eligibility criteria of the searched records, the methods for their analysis, as well as an overview of the reviewed articles.

3.1. Search, selection, and analysis or the studies

We searched for peer-reviewed English-speaking articles recorded on Scopus until January 2018 1st in the "social sciences" subject area. We used three clusters of keywords. The first set of keywords addresses the settings in which we are interested: "prison", "probation" or "jail". The second set – "officer" or "civil servant" – and third set – "convicted" or "offender" – focus on the actors. To be sure, the search was repeated with additional keywords such as "prison guard", "detainee" or civil servant, which did not increase the number of eligible records. Furthermore, keywords related to SLB research (e.g., "discretion" or "coping") were not used since most research about officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services have been conducted without adopting such a perspective. At least one keyword from each cluster had to appear in the title, abstract or keywords, resulting in a list of 317 articles. Formally, we selected articles published in journals of "public administration" or "criminology and penology" following the 2017 subject categories in the Web of Science citation index (Clarivate Analytics, 2017), shortening the list to 100 articles. As such, the articles published in journals falling in the "social work & social policy" category were not searched. That being said, the subject categories overlap: for example, 16 out of the 88 journals falling in the "social work and social policy" category do also fall in the "penology and criminology" category. This suggests that many relevant articles published in journals about social work and social policy in correctional context were also searched. The search was repeated with similar parameters and keywords translated in French, Spanish and Danish providing no record, which does not necessarily indicate that there is no research in other languages since social science databases tend to be biased in favor of English-speaking publications (Albarillo, 2014).

In order to select the records included in the review, two of the authors independently screened the title and abstract of the searched articles. They selected those that actually look at officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services: either the comparison of two lists revealed an agreement on including/excluding the article or a decision was made together after discussion, which led to a consensual set of 46 articles – 40 empirical articles and six conceptual articles – that the first author reviewed. In order to foster internal consistency, the coding was executed intensively during a few weeks rather than split over months. The search statistics and the selection process are summarized in Figure 1. The 46 studies were analyzed using a coding grid.

[Figure 1 here]

In order to analyze the articles, we combined two deductive and inductive stages. In the first stage, beyond general information about the articles, we used classical analytical devices of the SLB research: we looked at the manifestations of discretion as well as at the nature and causes of coping mechanisms. We also observed the effect of the punitive turn of contemporary correctional reforms on the missions and administrative tools of frontline officers. While the broad categories – discretion, coping mechanisms, reforms – were set from the start, subcategories – e.g., coping mechanisms and causes of coping – were refined during the analysis. The outcomes of this coding are summarized in the Appendix. In a second stage, we inductively interpreted the results and noticed that the reviewed research repeatedly referred – but most often using other words – to the tension induced between agency logics by correctional reforms. As a result, in the next sections, we portray correctional officers' discretion and coping as an articulation between the state-agent and citizen-agent narratives of frontline work and we

examine the effect of correctional reforms on this articulation. In other words, our findings are, at the same time, deduced from our analytical approach to the reviewed studies and induced from our analysis of the content of these studies. One limitation of this protocol is that the research methods fall out of the scope of the review: this means that we are not able to assess the evidence level of the reviewed findings. That being said, in the results, we provide statistics about the number of studies exploring each topic and we reference each of them according to their conclusions on these topics. In addition, the next section includes a methodological overview of the reviewed studies.

4.2. Overview of the reviewed studies

Compared to criminological research, public administration research is very scarce in the reviewed articles. The most represented journal is the Journal of Criminal Justice (24%), followed by Criminal Justice and Behavior (11%), Crime & Delinquency (8.5%), Prison Journal (8.5%) and Social Policy & Administration (8.5%). Overall, our sample is composed of 42 studies in criminology and only four studies in public administration. Furthermore, only six studies directly refer to SLB research – all of them in criminological journals. In addition, SLB research is not central in the analytical framework of these studies. Rather, their findings are related with SLB considerations at a general level, with respect to discretionary practices (Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Persson & Svensson, 2012), to the normative implications and effects on policy implementation (Schneider et al., 1996; Viglione et al., 2015; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992), as well as to coping mechanisms (Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986a, 1986b; Persson & Svensson, 2012).

There has been an ever-increasing interest in officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services: 23 (50%) of the reviewed studies were published between 2009 and 2016.

This being said, Figure 2 suggests that this increase has not been constant. Most of the research on officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services has been conducted in the United States (28, or 61% of the reviewed articles). This is not surprising, since the 1970s were marked by the rise of a "punishment imperative" (Clear and Frost, 2014) in the United States, which has resulted in mass incarceration and has drawn scholarly and media attention. Nonetheless, some other countries are also involved in the production of research on this topic, especially the United Kingdom (eight articles) and Canada (five articles). We acknowledge that the focus of this review on articles published in English can have an influence on the geographical distribution of the reviewed records.

[Figure 2 here]

Most studies look at probation services (82.61%), rather than at prisons (13.04%) or at both types of agencies at the same time (4.35%). As far as populations are concerned, most studies collect data or discuss academic knowledge on officer-offender interactions based on officers' viewpoints (71.74%), rather than focusing on offenders (15.22%) or contrasting officers' and offenders' perceptions (13.04%). Overall, Table 1 shows that existing research tends to focus on officers working in probation services.

[Table 1 here]

Overall, quantitative methods are prevalent in our corpus: out of 40 empirical studies, 22 are quantitative while only 11 are qualitative. The seven remaining articles rely on a mix of

quantitative and qualitative methods. Interviews were used in almost half (17 studies) of the reviewed studies. In comparison, surveys were most commonly used (21 studies) to collect quantitative data. A detailed overview of the methods of data collection in the reviewed studies is presented in Table 2.

[Table 2 here]

4. RESULTS OF THE REVIEW

In this section, we adopt an SLB perspective to present existing research evidence about discretion and coping mechanisms in officer-offender interactions within prisons and probation services. Furthermore, we discuss what these results tell about the articulation between agency logics by frontline officers.

4.1. Discretion and frontline agency

Prison and probation officers have to make choices among several courses of actions when interacting with offenders (Irwin, 1990). While 37 (80.5%) studies acknowledge discretion – using, sometimes, other wordings – only 24 (52%) of them actually examine the discretionary practices of officers. Officers' discretion is usually contrasted with the objectivity and formality of rules and procedures. In this respect, a pool of studies suggests that the lack of formal structuring of officers' decision processes may result in inconsistent judgements and unequal treatment of probationers (Benson, 1985; Cohen & Palmor, 1985; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Wolff et al., 2009) or prisoners (e.g., McIntyre et al., 1999). The implementation of adequate assessment and decision-making tools (Baglivio et al., 2015,

Ballucci, 2012; Bonta et al., 2011; Bosker et al., 2013; Nash, 2011; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Schneider et al., 1996; Viglione et al., 2015) is often viewed as a possible contribution to such a structuring.

According to 13 (28 %) studies, correctional officers tend to focus on the social aspects of their work at the expense of institutional objectives, such as risk management and public protection. This behavioral pattern was mostly observed among probation officers who emphasize rehabilitation and social work rather than offender monitoring and control. For example, Whitehead and Lindquist (1992, p. 18) find that, although formal procedures in Alabama should encourage officers to "remain distant from offenders", probation officers are eager to facilitate their rehabilitation, even at the expense of such a distance. Similarly, in community supervision of sex offenders in England and Wales, officers give priority to their rehabilitative ideals and practices via motivational and transformational interventions, in contrast with the current institutional focus on risk management, and public protection (Digard, 2014). Similar patterns are observed in prisons: Nielsen and Kolind (2016) report that the fuzzy identity of drug-dependent inmates – halfway between client and offender – seems to alter the perceptions and practices of Danish prison officers: rather than maintaining a strict adherence to rules and non-fraternization, they soften their views on punishment and promote a therapeutic, relaxed and respectful approach during interactions in cells (see also Baglivio et al., 2015; Ballucci, 2012; Clear et al., 1992; Flory et al., 2006; Fulton et al., 1997; Healy, 2012; Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986a, 1986b; Morash et al., 2016; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Waters, 1988). These studies suggest that prison and probation officers often act as citizen-agents, privileging their own approaches to frontline work over established procedures and bureaucratic rules. Their decisions appear to primarily rely on moral judgements of what is good – or what should work – for the citizen-clients rather than on a logic of law abidance (state-agency).

Twenty-five (54%) studies pinpoint the influence of new penology in recent policy orientations. According to these studies, officers' professional values and beliefs are guided by a rehabilitative ideal that contrasts and, sometimes, conflicts with the new policy imperatives. Probation officers, in particular, tend to share "common sets of values and principles" (Grant, 2015, p. 5) that emphasize transformative work, welfare, social justice and the rehabilitation of offenders. Most authors argue that their professional culture is historically embedded in a tradition of social work (e.g., Corrado et al., 2010; Digard, 2014; Grant, 2015; Gross, 1966; Healy, 2012; Nash, 2011; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Sparrow & McIvor, 2013). As a consequence, many of the reviewed articles describe instances in which probation and prison officers are caught in a dilemma between their ideals and the institutional approach to risk, coercion, and punishment (e.g., Kemshall, 2000; Nash, 2011; Whitehead, 1987).

Consequently, tensions between narratives are quite clear in accounts of discretion at the frontline. Instances of resistance to new institutional imperatives are particularly numerous: twenty-eight (61%) of the reviewed studies provide evidence about such tensions. For instance, Persson and Svensson (2012, p. 187) depict officers discarding institutional tools in favor of their "professional ideology" to assess risks. Similarly, Grant (2015, p. 10) notices "deeply inculcated layers of ethical or moral schemata" that lead officers to resist against external punitive discourses. The current emphasis on risk management conflicts with officers' beliefs in probationers' ability to change: despite injunctions, some officers still engage in transformative work with offenders, based on trust and self-esteem and stimulating changes in behavior (Digard, 2014). These acts of resistance often transcend the intentions of policies and procedures and, sometimes, they decrease the diversity in officers' attitudes toward offenders as much as rules can do (Corrado et al., 2010). In other words, correctional officers are deeply attached to their professional values and ethos which provide a normative framework regarding the ideal course of action to adopt with offenders. As a result, when making discretionary

decisions, prison and probation officers are likely to act as citizen-agents and to resist new punitive injunctions according to their shared moral principles.

Other articles provide similar insights when scrutinizing correctional officers' implementation of new administrative instruments, such as risks and needs assessment tools. Only 4.4% of the 1320 pre-sentence reports made by Swedish probation officers in 2010, for example, were based on the results of standardized administrative tools, according to Persson and Svensson (2012). In fact, probation officers tend to privilege impressions and pragmatism (Miller et al., 2015). As a result, their assessments focus on their own evaluation of individual offenders' specific needs, rather than on factors leading to repeated offences (Viglione et al., 2015). These results are consistent with the findings of four other studies on this topic (Ballucci, 2012; Bosker et al., 2013; Grant, 2015; Schneider et al., 1996) and further support the idea that probation officers, in particular, tend to make judgements and decisions according to a citizen-agency logic.

That being said, eight studies provide evidence that officers' use of discretion sometimes lead to unfairness, discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of offenders' characteristics. This results from self-interested attitudes and/or a willingness to achieve rule enforcement. For instance, Benson (1985) demonstrates that probation officers prefer to focus on cases of "lower class criminality". Their uninvested supervision of white-collar offenders often results from practical reasons since officers feel ill-prepared to supervise their "social equals or betters" (Benson, 1985, p. 435-436). In another vein, some prison officers turn a blind eye or even exacerbate existing tensions among juvenile offenders – to maintain control over a secure custody institution in Ontario, Canada (Peterson-Badali & Koegl, 2002). Other studies discuss discriminatory treatments based on race (e.g., Cohen & Palmor, 1985; Waters, 1988; Wolff et al., 2009) or health status (McIntyre et al., 1999). The effect of disrespectful treatments on offenders' attitudes and behaviors was less frequently examined. However, Reisig and Mesko

(2009) demonstrate that prisoners who evaluate prisons officers as procedurally fair are less likely to report misconducts or rule violations.

Overall, the reviewed studies reveal systematic patterns rather than isolated acts of discretion transcending policy and procedures. Consistent with the citizen-agent narrative of frontline work, officers' confidence in discretion seems to be rooted in "the assumption that positive outcomes will be achieved" (Grant, 2015, p. 10) for the offenders. This assumption is deeply embedded in officers' professional norms and values which, in turn, provide a powerful moral justification to resist new punitive policy or procedural injunctions. That being said, while the state-agency logic does not appear to be prevalent when scrutinizing officers' use of discretion, a limited number of studies still provide evidence of unfairness, discrimination, or preferential treatment based on self-interested coping mechanisms and in a logic of rule enforcement (i.e., state-agent narrative).

4.2. Coping and frontline agency

Coping mechanisms allow public officials to do their job despite work constraints. Twenty-six (56%) studies provide indications about these mechanisms in prisons and probation services. We look at routinization, control and prioritization, before turning to the main types of constraints that push officers to rely on those mechanisms.

First, correctional officers develop routines to alleviate the burden induced by administrative tools and instruments. When probation officers have to implement risks and needs assessment tools, they do not necessarily rely on their results to make decisions because of the additional procedures that such implementation involves (Viglione et al., 2015). More specifically, Schneider et al. (1996, p. 119) note that some probation officers do not accurately record offenders' problems while others avoid reporting minor rule violations (Clear et al., 1992) to

lessen administrative paperwork (see also Grant, 2015; Kemshall, 1997; Martin et al., 1972; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). In some instances, routinizing also refers to "extra precautions" by officers when dealing with probationers (Denney & O'Beirne, 2003, p. 59): for example, risk-reducing strategies can be used during interactions while delayed appointments can be made to adequately prepare themselves.

Second, prison officers rely on control mechanisms to achieve work requirements, especially to maintain social order. As mentioned above, Peterson-Badali and Koegl (2002) note that peer violence among juvenile offenders is sometimes allowed or even induced by prison staff to achieve order maintenance. To steer probationers away from day-to-day crime opportunities, some probation officers spontaneously develop informal and indirect forms of control, such as promoting organized and constructive activities (Miller et al., 2015). These examples are consistent with other, similar depictions of control strategies in the literature (Ahlin et al., 2016; Kerbs et al., 2009; Lazzaretto-Green et al., 2011; Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Steiner et al., 2012).

Third, correctional officers prioritize the supervision of some offenders to the detriment of the others. Prioritization is used to deal with pressing institutional demands. For example, Ahlin et al. (2016) find that U.S. probation officers preferably rely on kiosk reporting with compliant probationers in order higher-risk offenders who require more time and effort (Ahlin et al., 2016, pp. 703-704). Stewart and Smith (1987) find that probation officers working in a custodial environment struggle at overcoming the contradictions between the constraints of this environment and their probationary objectives: combined with a lack of time and resources, they choose to spend time and energy with other supervisees. Benson (1985), Digard (2014) and Steiner et al. (2012) report other instances of such "creaming" strategies (Vedung, 2015).

Such coping mechanisms mainly result from organizational work constraints or the lack of personal resources: 24 out of 46 studies (52%) provide indications about those factors. On the one hand, organizational work constraints mainly refer to instances in which officers develop

strategies to cope with work overload. Probation officers' caseloads are a recurring concern in the literature (Ahlin et al., 2016; Clear et al., 1992; Lindquist & Whitead, 1986; Payne & DeMichele, 2010; Schneider et al., 1996; Steiner et al., 2012; Stewart & Smith, 1987). For example, heavy caseloads and reduced staff lead probation officers to rely on external judiciary assistance rather than on their own sanctioning power (Kerbs et al., 2009). In the custodial context, the number of prisoners also pushes officers to rely on control strategies to maintain order in a facility (Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Peterson-Badali & Koegl, 2002; Wolff et al., 2009; see also, on gender differences in officer-offender interactions: Stout, 1973; Walsh, 1984). Other constraints can result from the relationships between first-line managers and frontline officers. For example, Denney and O'Beirne (2003) report the lack of coordination and consistency in managerial responses to offenders' acts of violence on frontline officers. Officers may also experience a lack – or inadequacy – of organizational support in their daily work activities (Martin et al., 1972; Rosecrance, 1988; Schneider et al., 1996; Whitehead, 1987).

Overall, organizational constraints seem to provide a breeding ground for coping practices anchored in a logic of rule abidance. When pressured by heavy workloads and/or a lack of resources or time, the correctional officers try to prioritize their work with some offenders, to routinize administrative processes, and to optimize their control over offenders in order to meet institutional requirements. In doing so, they tend to act as state-agents. That being said, citizen-agency and state-agency logics can also converge (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016): prioritization, for instance, can simultaneously derive from a pragmatic need to improve caseload management (state-agent), but also from judgements about offenders' worth (citizen-agent).

On the other hand, coping mechanisms can also result from frontline officers' skills or beliefs, such as a misunderstanding or a defiance towards administrative tools and rules. Probation officers sometimes struggle with the implementation of RNA tools, for example, because they do not understand their purpose and show little trust in the information obtained through their

implementation (Viglione et al., 2015; see also Ballucci, 2012; Digard, 2014; Grant, 2015; Kemshall, 1997; Persson & Svensson, 2012). A lack of appropriate skills and knowledge can also lead to prioritization (e.g., Benson, 1985). For example, McIntyre et al. (1999) show that officers with lower levels of education and knowledge about HIV consider themselves at higher risk when interacting with HIV-infected prisoners. This can lead to the implementation of segregating measures against those prisoners. When lacking appropriate knowledge or facing rules and procedures that contradict their professional ideals, correctional officers tend to cope in accordance with their moral judgements. Simply put, individual constraints lead correctional officers to behave according to a citizen-agency logic.

Overall, correctional officers cope with the constraints of their job according to a mix of agency logics. They develop routines, not only to make their job easier, but also to make it compatible with their professional ideals. They rely on extra control mechanisms, not only to maintain social order, but also to facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders. They prioritize some offenders over some others, not only to meet institutional demands, but also to help the offenders who need it the most. In other words, coping practices demonstrate that correctional officers simultaneously act as state-agents and citizen-agents. Officers resist the new punishment imperatives using their citizen-agency while simultaneously retaining a loyalty to core organizational goals such as order in prisons facilities or access to individualized services.

5. CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH AGENDA

In prisons and probation services, frontline officers and offenders regularly interact, with a decisive influence of the former on public service provision to the latter. Paradoxically, prisons and probation services have received little attention from SLB researchers so far. Most studies about officer-offender interactions have been produced by criminology and penology research,

without adopting an SLB perspective. Following the PRISMA approach (Moher et al., 2009), this article has adopted such a perspective to review 46 articles about officer-officer interactions in prisons and probation services. In doing so, the review imported crucial research evidence from criminological research in public administration research about frontline work in prisons and probation services. More specifically, we used Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000; 2003)'s notion of frontline "narrative" to report how correctional officers articulate conflicting agency logics during the delivery of public services to their citizen-clients. We examined this issue with a focus on officers' use of discretion and coping mechanisms in an increasingly punitive policy context.

The most obvious finding of this review is that correctional officers' attitudes and behaviors result from a mix of agency logics (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000; 2003). Consistent with existing SLB research (e.g., de Witte et al., 2015; Durose, 2011; Tummers & Rocco, 2015), when rule enforcement allows it, frontline officers in prisons and probation services often make discretionary decisions based on their judgements about offenders' worth. At the same time, the literature review also highlights many instances of officers coping with workload in order to meet organizational demands while maintaining satisfactory working conditions (state-agents). In other words, we concur with some SLB research (e.g., Alden, 2015; Heywood et al., 2002) suggesting that SLBs are also driven – at least partially – by a willingness to enforce rules and/or to protect their self-interest, in line with the figure of the Economic Man (Kjaerluff, 2018). That being said, citizen- and state-agencies are not irreconcilable (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003): we found evidence that behavioral implications of citizen- and state-agencies converge when officers' judgements about offenders and institutional requirements concerning their control align with each other (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; McIntyre et al., 1999).

The review has also stressed how prison and probation officers' rehabilitative ideals conflict with contemporary correctional reforms (e.g., Healy, 2012; Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Sparrow

& McIvor, 2013). The new institutional approach to risk management and public protection involved by these reforms come with new role expectations with regard to correctional officers at the frontline. Yet, correctional officers do not simply accept these new punishment imperatives and tend to resist them. More specifically, they make discretionary decisions based on assumptions derived from their professional norms and values (e.g., Grant, 2015; Digard, 2014) and tend to distrust the information provided by the new administrative tools and procedures (e.g., Viglione et al., 2015; Ballucci, 2012). At the same time, correctional officers still fulfill most core organizational goals which do not necessarily contradict their own professional ideals, such as minimal order maintenance in prisons or the provision of individualized supervisions to probationers. In other words, the results of the literature review suggest that this new policy environment leads to an increasingly elaborate and fragile articulation of state- and citizen-agencies at the frontline, in prisons and probations services. This is even more true because the managerialization of frontline supervision makes it increasingly difficult for correctional officers to act according to their professional ethos without bending or breaking rules.

Theoretically speaking, first, these results call for more research about the articulation of agencies at the frontline. The findings of this review are consistent with the idea that frontline behaviors result from a permanent "negotiation" process between multiple forms of agencies (Harrits & Cecchini, 2019). This negotiation process occurs at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels and is embedded in institutional opportunities and constraints. The main challenge of future studies is probably to understand in which contexts and circumstances SLBs privilege an agency logic over the other. For example, street-level teachers' autonomy is comparatively higher than in prisons and probation services: they "run relatively small risks of being discovered" when acting as citizen-agents (Vedung, 2015, p. 18). For the same reasons, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the influence of shared professional norms (Hupe & Hill,

2007) on agency articulation at the frontline is stronger in the correction sector than in the education sector. In other words, we suspect that the way street-level bureaucrats balance conflicting agencies can strongly vary according to the policy sector and concur with calls for comparative designs in SLB research (Hupe & Buffat, 2014; Virtanen et al., 2016).

Second, our review has stressed the link between the introduction of administrative instruments – especially risk assessment tools – and correctional officers' use of discretion: they tend to avoid using those tools or making decisions according to their results. This finding seems consistent with Buffat's (2015) "enablement thesis" that digitalization and standardization of public administration seem to shape rather than to limit discretion. For example, new IT tools provide managers with remote information on frontline agents' use of discretion but divert their attention from controlling whether this use is appropriate. Frontline agents' knowledge of the field may also prove useful in correcting wrong assessments based on new tools. Conversely, frontline officials may opportunistically rely on conclusions based on new administrative tools to justify higher control on some citizen-clients ("the computer told it"). Future SLB research should empirically put Buffat's thesis to the test by looking at officers' use of risk assessment tools in probation services.

Third, few studies scrutinize the socialization process (Moyson et al., 2018) leading to the adoption of shared professional beliefs and values. Only Grant (2015) takes a deeper look into the building process of English and Scottish probation officers' *esprit de corps*. He argues that their shared values are firstly acquired during primary socialization (family and school) and then re-aligned around dominant and deeply inculcated, welfare-oriented beliefs and practices. Future SLB research should examine this socialization process, the nature of shared professional norms that results from this process, as well as the compromises made by street-level bureaucrats between institutional and personal approaches to frontline work as a result of these norms (e.g., Oberfield, 2014).

Practically speaking, correctional officers have to develop professional competences and knowledge to implement policies and guidelines in complex situations. Lipsky, and SLB research in general, have an overall "confidence in human judgment and discretion" (Schneider et al. 1996, p. 110). Such confidence recognizes various beneficial outcomes of frontline workers' discretion, such as their adaptation to the specific needs of a client. Surprisingly, criminological research seems more suspicious with respect to officers' discretion. The main concerns relate to the quality of practice (in terms of supervision, control and rehabilitation) and the consistency of judgements (fairness). At the same time, our review pinpoints prison and probation officers' tendency to prioritize social work over punishment and control. Hence, there are good reasons to believe that beneficial impacts of frontline discretion do also exist in prisons and probation services. Future SLB studies testing this idea empirically would add to existing criminological research and would provide very complementary indications to frontline practitioners about discretionary practices in correctional context.

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Note: [*] indicate studies that have been included in the systematic literature review.

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	Probation	Prison	Both	% total
Officers	28	3	2	71.74%
Offenders	4	3	0	15.22%
Both	6	0	0	13.04%
% total	82.61%	13.04%	4.35%	

Table 1. Cross tabulation of sectors and populations examined by the reviewed articles

Quantitative methods (n = 22)		
Methods		**# Studies**
Single quantitative method	Questionnaire survey	15
	Statistical analysis of coded documents	2
	Randomized experiment	3
Mix of quantitative methods	Statistical analysis of coded documents & questionnaire survey	2
Qualitative methods (n = 11)		
Single qualitative method	Interviews	8
Mix of qualitative methods	Interviews and observation	3
Mix of qualitative and quantitative methods (n = 7)		
Statistical analysis of coded documents; interviews; survey		1
Statistical analysis of coded documents; interviews		2
Statistical analysis of coded documents; interviews, focus groups		1
Survey; interviews; focus groups		1
Survey; observation		1
Survey; interviews		1

Table 2. Overview of the methods of data collection in the reviewed studies

Figure 1. Flow diagram of the search strategy

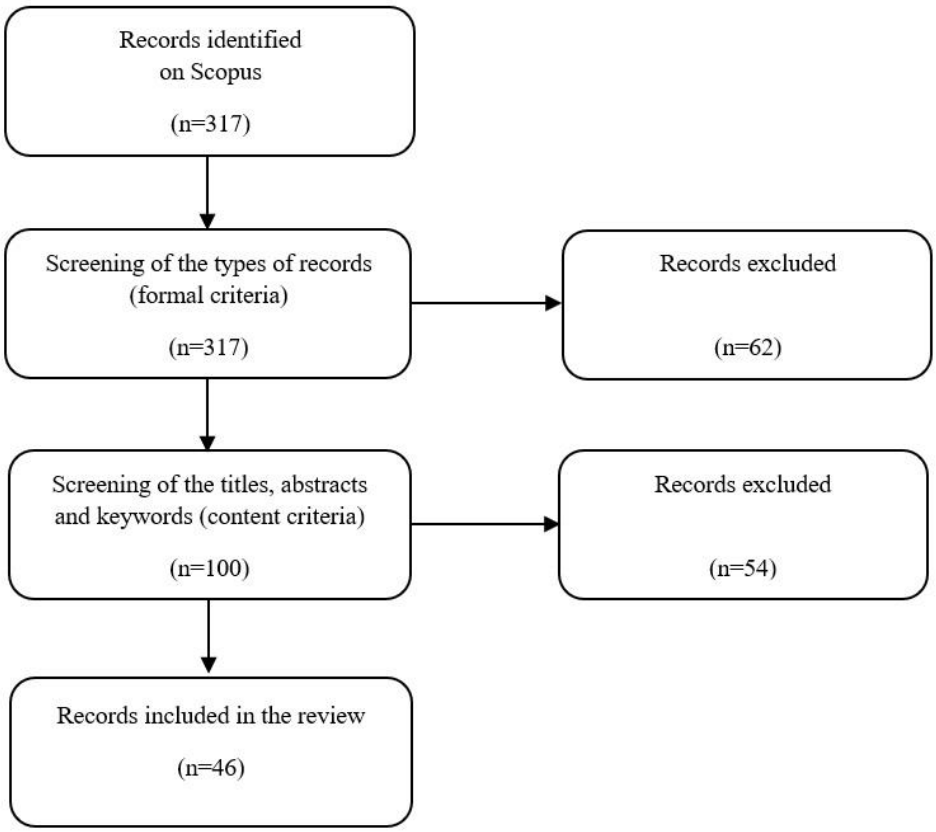
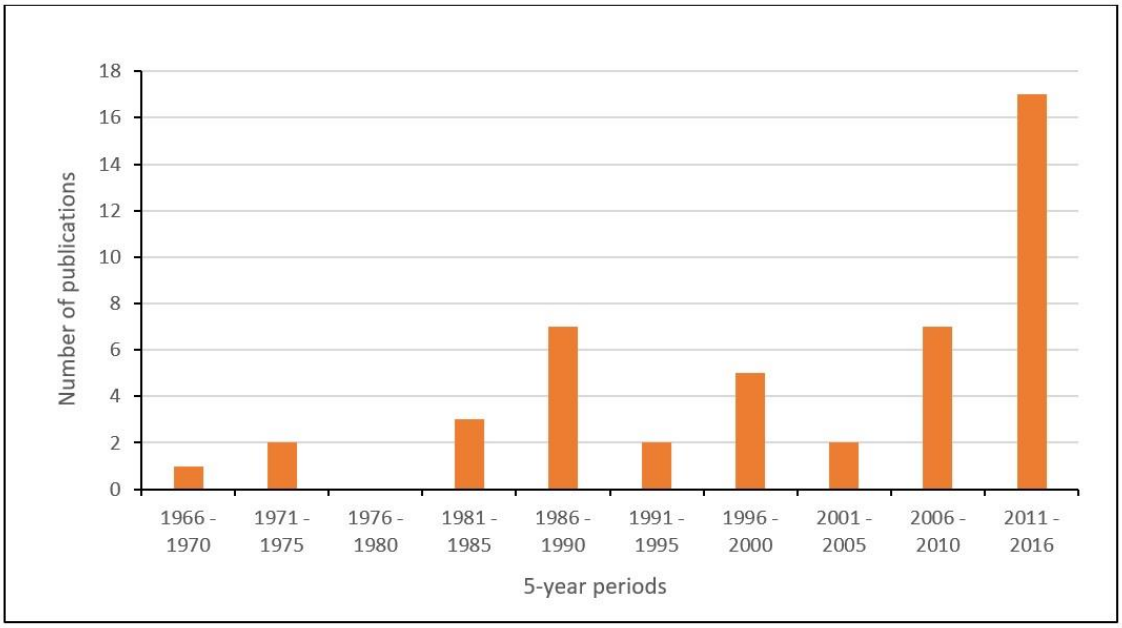


Figure 2. Number of publications over time



APPENDIX – RESULTS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

	General information				Data			Discretion		Coping		Punitive correctional reforms		
N°	Author, year	Institutional affiliation of the author	Field of the journal	Policy sector of the article	Origin of data	Type of article	Population	Officers' discretionary power	Departures from the ideal policy implementation	Prevalent coping mechanisms	Causes of coping	Officers' conflicting missions	Influence of new penology	Risks and needs assessment
1	Ahlin et al., 2016	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Creaming	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
2	Baglivio et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Evaluation of tool's predictive validity
3	Ballucci, 2012	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & implementation of tools and instruments	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
4	Benson, 1985	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
5	Bonta et al., 2011	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical (Experimental design)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

6	Bosker et al., 2013	Netherlands	Criminology	Probation	Nether-lands	Empirical (Experimental design)	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
7	Clear et al., 1992	USA	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents; Interviews)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Other
8	Cohen & Palmor, 1985	Israel	Criminology	Probation	Israel	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents)	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
9	Corrado et al., 2010	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical (Experimental design)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
10	Denney & O'Beirne, 2003	UK	Public administration	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical (Survey; Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology
11	Digard, 2014	USA	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
12	Erwin, 1990	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey data)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

13	Flory et al., 2006	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
14	Fulton et al., 1997	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
15	Grant, 2015	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
16	Gross, 1966	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
17	Healy, 2012	Ireland	Public administration	Probation	Ireland	Empirical (Interviews)	Offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology
18	Kemshall, 1997	UK	Public administration	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Other	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology
19	Kemshall, 2000	UK	Public administration	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Other	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

20	Kerbs et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
21	Lazzaretto-Green et al., 2011	Canada	Criminology	Prison	Canada	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
22	Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986	USA	Criminology	Both	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
23	Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986	USA	Criminology	Both	USA	Empirical (Survey; Observation)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
24	Martin et al., 1972	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
25	McIntyre et al., 1999	USA	Criminology	Prison	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
26	Miller et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Control of clients	Meet the objectives of supervision	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal

27	Morash et al., 2016	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey; Stat. analysis of coded documents; Interviews)	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Other
28	Nash, 2011	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
29	Nielsen & Kolind, 2016	Denmark	Criminology	Prison	Denmark	Empirical (Interviews; Observation)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
30	Payne & DeMichele, 2010	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
31	Persson & Svensson, 2012	Sweden	Criminology	Probation	Sweden	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents; Interviews; Focus groups)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on social work & implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
32	Peterson-Badali & Koegl, 2002	Canada	Criminology	Prison	Canada	Empirical (Survey)	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

33	Reisig & Mesko, 2009	USA	Criminology	Prison	Slovenia	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents; Interviews)	Offenders	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
34	Rosecrance, 1988	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Observation & Interviews)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Whistleblow-ing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
35	Schneider et al., 1996	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey; Interviews; Focus groups)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
36	Smith et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey; Stat. analysis of coded documents)	Offenders	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
37	Sparrow & McIvor, 2013	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Other	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
38	Steiner et al., 2012	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Lack of personal & organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
39	Stewart & Smith, 1987	UK	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned	Other	Creaming	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

40	Stout, 1973	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Interviews)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
41	Viglione et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Observation; Interviews)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
42	Walsh, 1984	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Stat. analysis of coded documents; Survey	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Gender	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
43	Waters, 1988	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
44	Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
45	Whitehead, 1987	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
46	Wolff et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Prison	USA	Empirical (Survey)	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned