

# The Effects of Deindividuation on Correctional Officer Identities, Behaviors, Empathy, and Relationships: A Mixed Method Study

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## ABSTRACT

One of the most common misconceptions about the prison system is that the structure only affects one party, inmates. It is widely known that within the confinements of the prison system, inmates experience severe physiological and psychological effects, undergoing a process called deindividuation. However, what is not well known is how the other party of the prison system is affected by this process, guards. In this study, a mixed method was used to determine how deindividuation affects guards interpersonal vs intrapersonal relationships. A survey was sent out to a group of correctional officers, asking them questions from four different questionnaires on the four main factors that influence deindividuation, containing both a quantitative and qualitative section to the survey. Despite the contrasting results of the quantitative and qualitative sections, the main conclusion taken away from this study is that deindividuation has a minimal effect on guards behaviors, identities, empathy, and relationships, but not to a strong enough extent to show any clear changes in their survey results.

## Literature Review

The prison system is built on a complex foundation, forever being in a constant state of reformation. One thing, however, that has remained present all throughout the system's history, and too will bleed into its future, is the fact that its origins and structure were made to strip away identities, as explained by criminology professor Jason Warr (Warr, 2020). With a lack of current self-concept, inmate behavior begins to change drastically, going through a process called deindividuation, where a display of antisocial and impulsive behaviors may arise as inmate's sense of identity decreases (Beria et al., 2017). What is important to note, and often overlooked, is whether guards too experience the effects of an identity-restricting environment. As such it should be investigated to what extent deindividuation affects guard's interpersonal versus intrapersonal relationships.

According to the United States Department of Labor, part of a worker's rights entails that they reside in a physically and mentally safe and healthy work environment (U.S. Department of Labor, 1970/2023). If it is assumed that the prison system does in fact affect guards in the same way it affects inmates, then guards are not being met to these standards of labor. Thus, it is crucial to study how the prison system affects guards to ensure that the system does not harm those who are simply doing their jobs and dedicate their lives to working in correctional facilities.

The current literature will introduce the past and present of the prison system, along with how it affects prisoner and guard identities through deindividuation. The literature will also review the current relationships of guards and how they interact with one another and prisoners.

## The Past and the Present of the Prison System

To understand the underlying effects of the prison system, one must first understand its history. Judge Donald Dowd explains that prison reform often occurs like the swing of a pendulum, where in the 1960s, systems began to drift from punishment to rehabilitation, ensuring that systems remain humane and constitutional (Dowd, 1984).

Throughout the 1970s, however, the prison system did not act upon these new directions. As the prison system became more punitive, and confinement conditions deteriorated rapidly, psychology professors Craig Haney and Philip Zimbardo assessed the effects such a system has on prisoners. They go on to explain that the foundations upon which the system is built is faulty to begin with, and as these faults will leak through minor cracks in the “newer” system, any reformation is doomed to fail. Simple prison systems quickly become painful and powerful, psychologically overwhelming previously healthy individuals (Haney and Zimbardo, 1998). In agreement with Haney and Zimbardo, criminology researcher Charles Thomas explains that patterns of inmate and guard behaviors are partly a consequence of innate issues within the system. Guards devote their attention and resources to gain control, for the flaws of the system make it harder for guards to maintain power (Thomas, 1977).

Despite measures being made to ensure that prisons be a system of rehabilitation, the historical swing of the pendulum never fails to sway. The current prison system intends to be one of rehabilitation, but professors Benjamin Meade and Benjamin Steiner question how a rehabilitative system full of violence can be healing. The conditions of the current prison system creates a prison environment where inmates and guards feel vulnerable and unsafe in a place full of violence. Inmates cannot become “better” due to their fear of being attacked for the persona they show, and guards cannot help them improve either for the same fears (Meade and Steiner, 2013). As both parties feel less safe to associate themselves with their prior identities, they lose their sense of self and fall into a deindividuated state.

## The Process of Deindividuation

Deindividuation is a phenomenon that occurs from a disconnect of one’s self-concept in response to lowering levels of autonomy, causing one to act impulsively and violently (Beria et al., 2017; Atherton et al., 2021). The presence of deindividuation emphasizes how easy it could be to sway one’s behaviors, and how careful one must be in creating a system that causes the destruction and formation of new identities.

A great example of deindividuation at play is through psychology professors W. Banks, Craig Haney, and Philip Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment. Participants in a simulated prison environment quickly became consumed in their role of inmate or guard, forgetting their pre-prison identities. Antisocial behaviors developed as a result of their loss of self (Banks et al., 2004). The experiment was meant to last two weeks, but was terminated after four days when inmates experienced mental breakdowns and guards became overly abusive. Inmates began planning breakouts and riots from the simulated prison, and guards began abusing simulated prisoners, going as far as stripping inmates naked in their cells and putting them in solitary confinement for hours on end.

A whole decade before the experiment was done, Professor Stanton Wheeler introduced the concept of prisonization, a process equal to deindividuation, where he found that the loss of identity and increase in antisocial behaviors occurs from the deprivations of identity in imprisonment (Wheeler, 1961). Essentially, Wheeler found that deindividuation exists in true prison systems too.

## Deindividuation's Effects on Identity

Before the consequences of a changing identity can be understood, one must first understand what identity is. Identity is composed of who one is and what one does in relation to themselves and others, where a presence of it too is crucial in maintaining well-being (Burke et al., 2000; Ardnet et al., 2009).

The circumstances of the prison system cause individuals to feel isolated from others and themselves, diminishing any sense of self-worth and value. As a result, cruel and impulsive behaviors begin to form, a sign of deindividuation being present (Haney, 2002; Orr and Paterline, 2016). In one of his personal works, Craig Haney establishes just how devastating and long-lasting the consequences of the prison system's deindividuation has on identity. The extreme and long-term stress results in psychological damage that persists beyond an inmate's years of imprisonment, and a guard's years of work, despite there being room for change within the system (Haney, 2008). The prison system is not bound to behave in such a way, it could be improved, but instead, it is being operated as if it is bound. Individuals feel like they have little choice but to attempt to adapt to their new lives and depart from their current identities, behaviors, and norms.

## Guard Relationships

The prison system does not only influence identity and behavior, but relationships too. As found in the Stanford Prison Experiment, guards spoke about inmates constantly, even in their free time, and continuously dehumanized and subjected them to cruel punishments in an attempt to assert power (Banks et al., 2004). Lawyer Christine Chong explains that there is still a current struggle between guards and prisoners to maintain a sense of control. Guards may use inmates as a means of gathering information to keep their power over the prisoners in check, leaving their relationships tense (Chong, 2013). Overall, the way guards are not able to rely on the structure for power makes them feel the need to over emphasize the fact that they are the ones in control.

It is not uncommon for prisoners to rebel. One of the most notable prison riots, the "San Quentin Six", occurred in San Quentin Prison. Retold by criminology researchers Paige John and James Queally, the riot began as six inmates attempted to escape the prison, taking a guard hostage and forcing him to unlock dozens of prisoners' cells. Quickly, a riot of over seventy inmates broke out, leaving six dead, three of whom were guards (John and Queally, 2015). From the start, the relationships between guards and prisoners are bound to get wound up. As riots break out, and guards are forced to get involved, tensions rise between the already rocky relationships. Due to the tense atmosphere of the system, guards feel more safety and comfort when sticking together to their colleagues, creating a strong, almost "hive minded" bond with one another, as explained by criminology professor Cynthia Blackburn-Line (Blackburn-Line, 1993).

## Conclusion

The current literature explains the structures of the prison system and why, as a result, guards and inmates tend to lose their sense of identity through deindividuation, affecting both their behaviors and relationships. However, little research has been done to directly demonstrate how prisons affect guards. Despite guards being mentioned in studies as to how they too are affected by the system, they have not been focused on specifically. It is still relatively unknown how the identities, behaviors, empathy, and relationships of guards change as they work longer and longer in a harmful establishment. Future research should determine how exactly deindividuation plays a role in guard experiences and daily life. This study's hypothesis, going off of the findings of past studies, predicts that there will be a significant effect of deindividuation among guards, shown through a noticeable decrease in guard's levels of identity and empathy, an increase in antisocial behavior, and through strong relationships with other guards.

## Method

### Methods Introduction

I will be exploring the levels of deindividuation guards experience throughout their time working in prisons, and determine the effects deindividuation may have on guards' interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. The research in itself will be exploring a currently existing idea, mainly proposed and sparked by W. Banks, Craig Haney, and Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment, applied to modern day prisons rather than suggested through a simulated prison environment (Banks et al., 2004). Inspired by previous researchers' methods and studies working with inmates and guards, I designed my own methodology according to those studies and aligned them to my own research.

### Research Design/Approach

The research design consists of a survey, where guards would be asked questions regarding their levels and experienced changes in self-concept, behaviors, empathy, and relationships, the most common factors found to influence deindividuation (Orr and Paterline, 2016; Atherton et al., 2021). A survey would ensure that guards would be able to answer the questions as honestly as possible, but would also make it more accessible to distribute to guards in order to gather more data. Self concept, behavior, empathy, and relationships will be measured using several different Likert scale response surveys that were designed and adapted from a wide range of researchers.

### Participants

The participants of the study are California prison guards who have served in the system for one or more years. Due to the difficulty of contacting guards, subjects were derived from a convenience snowball sampling, and were taken from only California prisons for easier contact. Guards that were willing to participate were asked to pass the survey to their colleagues who were willing to take the survey too.

### Materials and Instruments

A survey has been developed using Google Forms and distributed through a link to gather comprehensive data where questions from previous researchers' surveys have been gathered to assess changes in self-concept, behaviors, empathy, and relationships. Questions regarding self-concept were derived from Psychology Professor Erin Kaufman's Self Concept and Identity Measure (SCIM) questionnaire, a valid and reliable instrument used to assess the functions of identity (Kaufman et al., 2019). Antisocial behavior was evaluated using the Antisocial Beliefs Scale (ABS), a forty-item self-report measure whose factors correlate significantly with external variables and showed good internal consistency, used by psychology researcher Bartłomiej Skworoński (Skowroński 2022). Changes and experiences in guard relationships were assessed using psychology researcher R.C. Fraley et al.'s Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-RS), a validated nine-item self report scale created to assess attachment patterns in various close relationships (Brennan et al., 2000). To measure levels of empathy, the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) created by Psychology Professor Brian Levine will be used, in which Levine reported that in three studies, the TEQ demonstrated strong convergent validity, and exhibited good internal consistency and high test-retest reliability (Levine et al., 2009). The survey was repeated in two sections, where guards were asked to give a report on who they were before working in correctional

facilities (pre-test), and who they are now (post-test). The relationship and empathy scales were grouped together into one section, while the identity and antisocial beliefs scale were grouped together into another section due to overlapping themes among the questions. The questions too were greatly reduced in number, asking only four to six questions from each questionnaire that best could reveal a presence of deindividuation.

## Procedure

Through advertising the study on LinkedIn, calling Public Information Officers throughout the state, and through personal connections, I was able to collect a sample of guards. The survey was sent to a couple of guards via email, where they could then send the survey on to their colleagues.

After getting in touch with some correctional officers who agreed to take and send the survey out, I emailed and later met with an employee at Willow Anxiety and OCD over Zoom, a company with experts in cognitive behavioral therapy. I asked what would be the best questionnaires to administer to guards to get a sense of their self concepts, behaviors, empathy, and relationships. As we developed a list of questionnaires, I was able to find the surveys online through previous academic journals in which the researchers utilized or created them to use in their own studies.

Following a two month period, the survey was approved and sent out to guards who signed up. Guards had to first read and agree to a consent form to continue on with the study. The survey was left open for two months for guards to complete.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were assessed throughout the study, and measures were taken to ensure the privacy and anonymity of guards. No measures of identification were required when taking the survey, and instead, guards were identified with numbers. Before completing it, guards were required to read and agree to a consent form. The survey was also sure not to ask emotionally provocative questions to ensure that guards did not feel disturbed or triggered while taking part in the study.

## Data Collection

Data was collected through an online survey guards filled out at their discretion. Participants were instructed to answer the questions honestly, and were ensured anonymity for them to be able to freely answer the questions without fear of their jobs and security being jeopardized.

## Data Analysis

A 2 Sample Hypothesis t-Test was used to quantitatively analyze the data collected from the pre versus post-tests of the survey. Based on guard responses to the different sections of the survey, levels of deindividuation were determined based on the significance of the results. I used a significance level of 0.05 in order to test my null hypothesis that deindividuation is not affecting guards because of how their changes in relationships, empathy, identity, and antisocial beliefs were presented. The null hypothesis will be what I am trying to disprove. For the open-ended response question, a thematic analysis was conducted, where I searched for the most common themes and factors of deindividuation among responses if present.

## Limitations

While the research design aimed to answer the research question successfully, there is a limitation to this method. A random sample of guards was limited, and a snowball sample had to be created instead which is less reliable, and thus the results may not be as generalizable to guards as they would be if a random sample could have been taken.

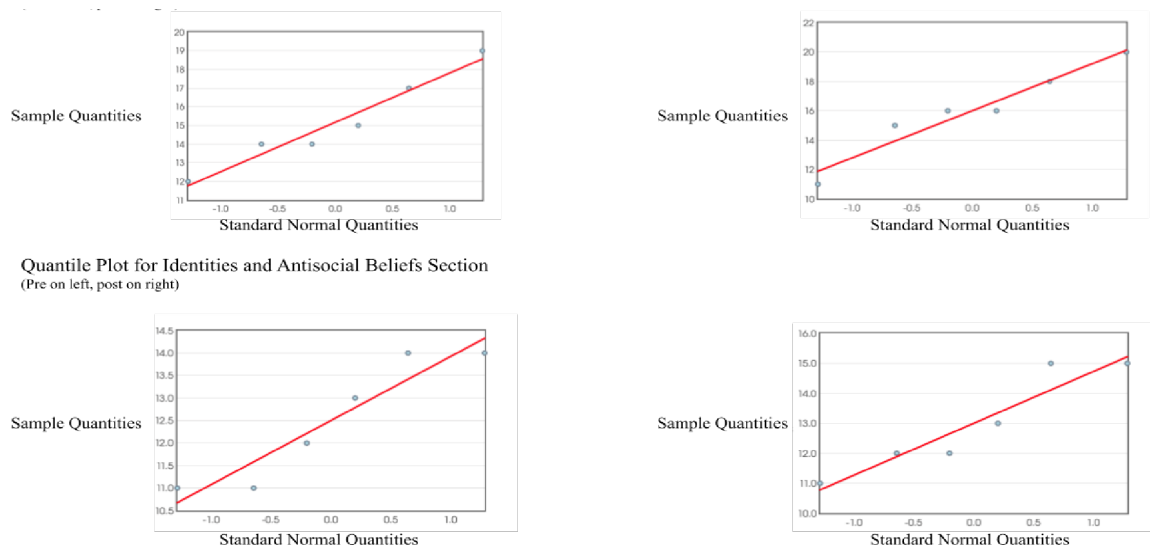
## Results

### Demographics

Of the participants in the study, 83.3% ( $n = 5$ ) reported themselves to be white, while the remaining 16.7% ( $n = 1$ ) participant reported themselves as Asian. As for ages, 33.3% ( $n = 2$ ) of participants reported their age being 45, and 16.7% ( $n = 1$ ) reported being 40, 53, 38, and 43. Guards also reported how long they have been working in correctional facilities, with 60% ( $n = 3$ ) having worked for ten to twenty years, 20% ( $n = 1$ ) having worked for six to nine years, and 20% ( $n = 1$ ) having worked for one to two years. One participant declined to answer.

### Sample Size

Due to the small sample size of the study, in order to determine whether or not the sample size was reflectant of the population, a quantile plot was used based off of the total number of data points reported by each guard for each section. A total of six responses were collected with guards coming from two different facilities.



Since the sample size was less than 15, a quantile plot was used to assess whether or not the sample used reflected the population of guards. The closer the dots are to the linear line on the graph, the more representative they are of the population of guards. Since largely the dots are not too close to the linear line, a warning is to be wary of how the results reflect how the general population would behave. These results are reflecting of this sample size only.

**Figure 1.** Establishing the quality of the sample size Quantile Plot for Relationships and Empathy Section (pre on left, post on right).

As shown in Figure 1, each quantile plot is roughly linear, meaning that the data is somewhat normal despite the small sample size. However, because the data is only slightly normal, and not fully normal, I would

like to make clear that any assumptions and generalizations are to be made of this sample size only, and not the population of guards as a whole, since the data cannot be fully generalized.

## Quantitative Data

The means, standard deviations, and p-values of each pre and post-test section were found. Table 1 highlights the overall findings of the study.

**Table 1.** Summary of participant's pre and post reflection of working in correctional facilities by section.

	Pre and Post Working Mean & SD				Statistical Significance
	Pre	Post	SD Pre	SD Post	p-Value
Relationships & Empathy	2.67	2.66	2.16	3.03	0.54
Identities & Antisocial Beliefs	1.78	1.85	1.37	1.67	0.71

P-value significant if  $\leq 0.05$

This table shows the means of the pre and post test along with its standard deviation and statistical significance. For the relationship and empathy section, the mean increased within pre and post test, while for identities and antisocial beliefs, the mean decreased within pre and post test. The standard deviation should be no higher than  $\mp 2$ . Three out of the four standard deviations fall within that scale. The statistical significance should be greater than or equal to 0.05 to have significance, therefore the results likely happened due to chance.

The p-value found for each section was larger than the desired significance value. The p-value for the pre and post test of the relationships and empathy section was 0.54, while the p-value for the pre and post test of the identity and antisocial beliefs sections was 0.71. In order for the data to have statistical significance, the p-value needed to be less than or equal to 0.05 to disprove the null hypothesis. Thus, because of how insignificant the scores were, deindividuation likely did not cause a change in behaviors, identity, empathy, and relationships among this group of guards explored in the study. Instead, these changes may have been due to chance or another factor that was not explored.

The responses for the Likert scale questions on the survey varied from guard to guard, with largely no clear common agreement among guard responses. One question asked guards to rate on a scale from one to four whether they strongly disagree or agree with the statement "I view guards as similar to myself." Each possible answer was chosen by the guards, with two responses each for disagree and agree (combined 66.67%) and one response each for strongly disagree and strongly agree (combined 33.3%)

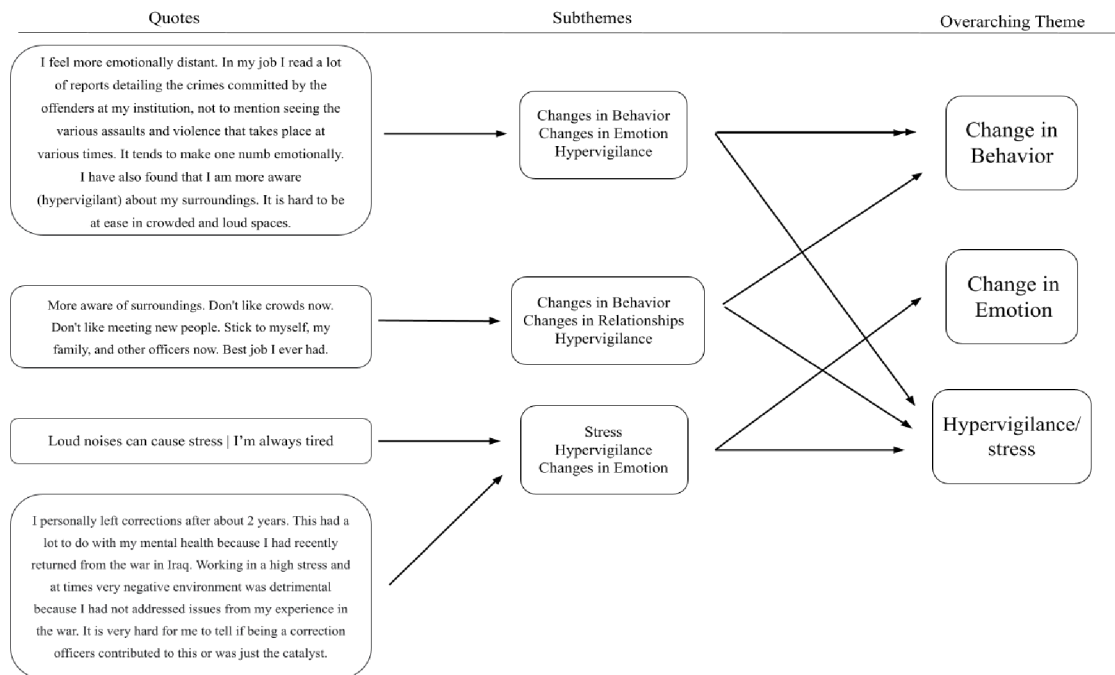
Most questions were split this way with a 50% (n = 3) to 33.3% (n = 2) to 16.7% (n = 1) variation. On three of the 27 questions in the survey, guards unanimously agreed on an answer. The statement that "[they] get a strong urge to help when [they] see someone who is upset" was agreed upon with 100% (n = 6) participants reporting a three (agree) on the Likert scale.

## Qualitative Data

One question within the survey required an open-ended response. The question asked guards to give an example of how working in a correctional facility has impacted their day to day life, and common themes were extracted from responses that indicated a role of deindividuation coming into play. Figure 2 highlights each response and



its themes connecting to deindividuation to find the most common theme among guard responses. Of the participants, 83.3% (n = 5) responded to this question, while 16.6% (n = 1) left the question blank.



This figure shows the overarching themes found within responses to the open-ended question on the survey. Guards were asked to give one or more examples of how working within correctional facilities has impacted their day to day life. Responses, shown on the leftmost side of the figure, were broken down into sub themes, displayed in the middle of the figure, and from those, the most common themes, as shown in the right most side of the figure, were found. Changes in behavior among guards and levels of hyper vigilance and stress were most present while guards work in correctional facilities.

**Figure 2.** Overarching themes of open-ended responses

The qualitative data had a lot more to say in regards to a presence of deindividuation than the quantitative data did. Despite the guards not having reported a specific change in relationships, empathy, identity, and antisocial beliefs in the Likert scale section, they did explain through their response that they have experienced changes since working in correctional facilities.

Overall, the three most common themes that related to deindividuation were reported changes in behaviors, emotions, and an increase in hypervigilance and/or stress. One guard goes as far as to explain that he has become “numb emotionally” from the work he has done for correctional facilities. He explained that reading the reports of crimes and seeing the several assaults that take place within the prison tends to change one emotionally, with him feeling more emotionally distant as well. The emotional numbness, overall change in behavior, and increase in hypervigilance may be a sign of the guard going through a deindividuated state where they find themselves becoming more detached from who they were previously.

## General Connection to Deindividuation

The quantitative data collected does not suggest that deindividuation plays a role among guards, while the qualitative data suggests that deindividuation may play a role. The reports of the guards are not enough to totally refute the results of the quantitative section that suggested deindividuation has no role among guards. It is important though to keep the variation among guard responses and Likert scale scores in mind for future directions.



## Discussion

### Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data showed no statistical significance for the changes guards experienced from before working within the correctional facility to now, suggesting that I do not have sufficient evidence to accept the claim that prison guards experience a sense of deindividuation. For now, I will go off of the assumption that the quantitative data simply suggests no sense of deindividuation among guards, in order to be better able to explain why my data shows what it does.

One of the many theories of deindividuation explained by Psychology Professor Francielle Beria addresses the theory of a reduced psychological state. One of the reasons why individuals, and more specifically inmates, may experience such a strong sense of deindividuation is due to a reduced psychological state, or a lack of stimulation (Bertia et al., 2007). Due to a lack of stimulation to the outside world and a lack of stimulation to their pre-prison identities, inmates have no choice but to become immersed in the prison world and immersed into their prison identities. Essentially, they have no choice but to become deindividuated due to their diminished psychological state. The same thing is suggested to happen with guards, with the main difference between inmates and guards being the fact that guards can go home at the end of the day. Guards still have contact with the outside world, still have stimulation with their loved ones. Guards have time to come back into contact with their identities, which is why I believe there were no observed changes in identity and relationships within the quantitative data.

As for changes in antisocial beliefs and empathy, I believe there were no observed changes for two different reasons: the implications of self awareness theory on behavior and the prosocial implications of deindividuation. In regards to self awareness theory, according to Professor of Psychology Gregory Bovasso's study regarding deindividuation, public and objective self-awareness prevents antisocial behaviors from occurring (Bovasso, 1997).

Public self awareness is how aware the individual is of how they can appear to others (Bommel et al., 2012).

Objective self awareness is a reflective state with attention focused on ourselves for social evaluation (American Psychological Association, 2023). Due to how guards may feel they are being perceived, they may be repressing any antisocial behavior from coming into play in their work life in order to better fall along the proper social script and norms that are expected of them. Another reason I believe no observed changes in antisocial beliefs and empathy was found is because of the theory that deindividuation may promote prosocial behavior. This study focused mainly on the negative aspects of deindividuation and did not focus on the possibility that it could drive prosocial behaviors to appear, according to the theory Nicholas Bowman developed (Beria et al., 2007).

### Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data on the other hand suggested that there is a presence of deindividuation among guards. One reason for this may be the fact that the open-ended response allowed answers to become more personal and emotional among guards. The response acted as a way for guards to clearly express or perhaps vent about the changes they experienced working within the prison system.

In regards to the observed factors of deindividuation found among responses, several different theories may explain their presence. For one, every guard reported having experienced an increase in hypervigilance and stress since having worked within the system. Physiological arousal and long term stress are factors that influence the development of deindividuation, a factor that I did not consider in this study. In order to cope with

the high amounts of stress guards experience throughout the day, they begin hiding behind a mask to be better able to deal with the stress and detach a bit from themselves. Being able to detach from themselves during the work day would allow guards to think more logically than emotionally, and overall help them deal with the chaos and structure of the prison system (Beria et al., 2007; Haney, 2008). The prison system essentially provides guards with a mask to hide behind, their uniforms. Uniforms allow guards to become detached from their personal identities and put on the face of someone new, a person with perhaps the right mind to be able to survive the system. With their uniforms, guards experience a reduction in their identifiability, which only acts as a catalyst to further detach themselves from their identities, for inmates and coworkers would only perceive and address them as the mask they put on (Zimbardo, 1969; Reciher 1987).

With the effects that stress has on guards and their identities, they experience changes in their behaviors and emotions. Guard behaviors would change along with how their “new” identity acts throughout the day, having to put on a tougher persona to not let the hardships of the job overwhelm them, and in turn become more emotionally numb. Guards often have to deal with seeing various assaults take place in the facility and take charge in dealing with this violence, and in order to do so, they have to let themselves become consumed by the role of “guard” (Zimbardo, 1969).

## Implications

While this study does not completely fill in the gap in the research, it does act as a step for future researchers to understand that deindividuation among prison guards may be a significant issue to study. If deindividuation is found to occur among the general population of guards, then policy makers will need to begin thinking of a better way to run correctional facilities. People will become much more alarmed that guards are being harmed by the system than for inmates, and the system would need to be fixed to help both parties. As hopeful as this conclusion may seem, however practically impossible to do properly given the history of the system, worker protection and mental health care should become more advocated and easily accessible for guards to reach in case they are experiencing the negative effects of deindividuation while at work.

## Future Directions

For one, future research should replicate the study with a much larger sample size of participants from several different prison facilities. Since the qualitative data showed better results than the quantitative data did, I would also suggest future researchers add more open-ended responses to their survey questions, or perhaps conduct interviews too. I also think it would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study and assess how guards change over time as they work in correctional facilities. Future research could replicate this study over the course of ten years and administer the survey once or twice a year to assess the changes in identities, relationships, behaviors, and empathy guards may experience.

## Conclusion

The phenomenon of deindividuation can occur in many different settings, due to a factor of reasons with differing theories. The results of this study show two contrasting sides, with the quantitative data suggesting no presence of deindividuation and the qualitative data suggesting a presence of deindividuation. There are multiple theories that may pose an answer as to why the data varies so differently. Deindividuation was present among guards, but not to the degree where there would have been noticeable effects on their identities, behaviors, relationships, and empathy.

Even before having started my study, there were signs that suggested that deindividuation is a significant issue guards experience. When calling participants to see if they were interested in joining my study, the most common reaction I got to my research was that they too have experienced and noticed a change in behavior among themselves and their colleagues. One went so far as to explain that his friend lost his wife and kids after working in the prison system “made” him highly aggressive. Even if not all guards undergo such an extreme transformation, the fact that guards have realized that change is generally occurring is enough of a sign to encourage future research to be done to determine further how those who dedicate their life to serving the system are affected.

## Limitations

The main limitation to this study is the quality of the sample size. Only six guards participated in this study, and after putting the data sets into a quantile plot, it was determined that these results cannot be generalized to the population of guards as a whole. Instead, this study only reveals that there is a slight presence of deindividuation among these six guards who participated in the study. The recall bias is also another limitation to this study. The recall bias, where guards may not have accurately remembered a past event or piece of information, could have skewed the interpretation of the study (National Cancer Institute, 2011). Their memory may be faulty or unreliable, and since some guards have been working for the prison system for over twenty years, their recollection of the past may be inaccurate. The study also focused on the negative effects deindividuation has on guards, when deindividuation has been shown to also exhibit prosocial behaviors (Beria et al., 2007). My study did not cover the full scope and effects deindividuation may have on guards, positive or negative.

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