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Occupational Socialization's Role in Forensic Psychologists' Objectivity

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Abstract
This report integrated quantitative and qualitative methods across two studies to compile descriptive information about forensic psychologists' occupational socialization and its relation to objectivity. After interviewing 20 board-certified forensic psychologists, we surveyed 334 forensic psychologists about their socialization into the field. Results indicated that occupational socialization, including socialization about objectivity, varied widely across time and situation as the field developed. Three hypotheses regarding occupational socialization were supported. It was positively associated with years of experience, belief in one's ability to be objective, and endorsement of the usefulness of various bias correction strategies. Implications and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: occupational socialization, forensic psychology, objective, impartial, mixed-method

How is it that police recruits "become" police officers, air force cadets "become" fighter pilots, medical students "become" surgeons, and psychology graduate students "become" forensic psychologists? There is a transformative process people go through: People change after they are trained and work in a profession in ways that are consistent with others who work in the profession (Bennett, 1984; Coffey & Atkinson, 1994; Dubinsky, Howell, Ingram, & Bellinger, 1986; Melia, 1987). This process of "becoming" a member of a profession is termed "occupational socialization" (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994; Frese, 1982).

Frese (1982) argued that occupational socialization works to engender changes in individuals due to their participation in work; that is, to mold

or shape individuals' cognitions, emotions, and values to be consistent with the work they do. This argument suggests mental health professionals can be occupationally socialized to act objectively in their work, even if they hold deep personal values and beliefs that might otherwise bias their work. Additionally, organizational ethics prescribes objective practice as a cornerstone of psychological assessments (Committee on Ethical Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists, in press; Principle E and standards 2.04, 2.06, 3.06, and 9.01 of APA Ethics Code, 2002). However, an historical controversy has existed in the legal (e.g., Bazelon, 1974) and psychological (e.g., Faust & Ziskin, 1988; Poythress, 1977) literature regarding whether objectivity on the part of forensic experts is possible.

Indeed, several studies have provided evidence for a lack of objectivity among forensic psychologists. Murrie, Boccaccini, and colleagues' recent series of studies documenting forensic clinician bias in both field and laboratory settings are compelling demonstrations (see, e.g., Boccaccini, Murrie, Caperton, & Hawes, 2009; Boccaccini, Turner, & Murrie, 2008; Murrie, Boccaccini, Guarnera, & Rufino, 2013; Murrie, Boccaccini, Johnson, & Janke, 2008; Murrie, Boccaccini, Turner, Meeks, Woods, & Tussey, 2009). For instance, in their most recent 2013 *Psychological Science* article titled "Are Forensic Experts Biased by the Side that Retained Them?" Murrie et al. reported the results of an experiment with actual forensic psychologists who were deceived to believe they were consulting for either the defense or the prosecution (when the case file was exactly the same). They found that clinicians who believed they were working for the defense assigned lower risk scores to offenders, whereas clinicians who believed they were working for the prosecution assigned higher risk scores. The effect sizes were large and ranged up to $d = 0.85$, leading the authors to conclude, "The results provide strong evidence of an allegiance effect among some forensic experts in adversarial proceedings" (p. 1889).

Perhaps in response to this controversy about whether or not we can be objective, forensic psychologists may be trained to believe in and strive for impartiality in their work as part of their occupational socialization process. For example, several professionals have argued it is possible and necessary to divorce one's personal values and beliefs and to be objective when practicing in a professional capacity (Bonnie, 1990; Brodsky, 1990; Brodsky, Zapf, & Boccaccini, 2001; Connell, 2008; Dietchman, Kennedy, & Beckham, 1991; Eisenberg, 2004; Murrie & Warren, 2005). Further argument is provided by Niederjohn and Rogers (2009), who note," It is often assumed that psychologists will be objective when conducting evaluations or that current training standards will neutralize potential sources of bias" (p. 70). However, questions remain, including: Are forensic psychologists trained to strive for objectivity? How are they trained about bias and objectivity? Can training and socialization help prevent bias?

The impetus for the present study was to explore how forensic psychologists are socialized into the field. Further, we wanted to investigate the role occupational socialization plays in developing respect for the notion of objectivity as well as developing belief in one's ability to be impartial. This two-part mixed-method study began with a qualitative interview of board-certified forensic psychologists first (study one) followed by a large international survey of practicing forensic psychologists (study two). Because we found no existing studies of the occupational socialization experiences of forensic psychologists, we began our research with qualitative methods to explore the issue and to generate hypotheses for testing in the follow-up (quantitative) study. Study one explored forensic psychologists' socialization into the field and their thoughts about and experiences with potential biases. Study two extended study one and sought to address the following hypotheses: (a) psychologists with a longer history of practice will report more occupational socialization than will psychologists newer to the profession; (b) psychologists with higher occupational socialization will believe they are more objective in their work; and (c) occupational socialization will be positively correlated with endorsement of bias correction strategies.

Study 1 Method

One goal of qualitative research is to generate grounded theory; that is, theory derived from, and grounded in, participants' own understandings (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The text generated by interviews with people who have experienced the phenomenon under study constitutes the data of such qualitative analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). The subjectivity of the researcher is limited by structured and disciplined methods of analyzing the text at three levels: recognizing repeating ideas, conceptualizing themes, and developing theory-driven constructs (see e.g., Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Harry, Sturges, & Klinger, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

We incorporated several safeguards in our analyses to ensure the qualitative equivalents of reliability and validity (see e.g., Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). For instance, we incorporated the ratings from two independent raters at each stage of the process; we aimed for transparency by keeping a clear and justifiable description of our steps; we aimed to make our categories understandable to the participants themselves as well as other investigators; and we sought coherence by fitting together various themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Participants

An in-depth narrative interview with 20 forensic psychologists was conducted. Participants were randomly selected from a list of forensic psychologists certified through the American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP), a specialty organization within the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). ABPP is a national organization that provides protection to consumers by certifying and making publicly available information about those psychologists who demonstrate competence in a specialty area of professional psychology (ABPP, n.d.). We chose to interview board-certified forensic psychologists because we thought they might have reflected on their identity as forensic psychologists given that they had chosen to go through an un-required certification process. We obtained 20 participants because qualitative researchers have described this as a good number for initial theorizing in grounded theory analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

We attempted to contact participants by telephone (N = 41). We called and left a standard message up to two times in an attempt to reach participants. Fourteen people were not contacted further after two attempts (34.1% of our sample). Four telephone numbers were either no longer in service or no longer associated with the sought participant (9.8%). Three participants (7.3%) declined to participate (two declined immediately upon answering the telephone, and one declined when asked whether the interview could be digitally recorded). The remaining 20 participants completed the interview, resulting in a 48.8% completion rate.

Procedure

The names and contact information for ABFP-certified evaluators were randomly selected via a stratified random sample from the online ABFP directory.[1] The purpose of the stratified sample was to capture the variability in occupational socialization changes over the last several years, as the field of forensic psychology has grown and changed in the last few decades (Heilbrun & Collins, 1995; Melton, Petrila, Poythress, & Slobogin, 2007). The first group consisted of psychologists who obtained their terminal degrees within the previous 1 to 15 years (n = 8), the second group within the last 16 to 30 years (n = 6), and the third group the last 31+ years (n = 6; note: this information is available on the directory).

Upon being contacted by telephone, the purpose of the study was briefly described to the participants, they were informed about how their

1. To randomly select the participants, a random sequence of 218 numbers (the total number of ABFP names available at the time of our search) was generated through a random sequence generator on the www.random.org website.

information was obtained, and their participation in a telephone interview was requested. Participants who agreed were read a participant information sheet prior to the start of the interview. Participants were then asked whether they would allow the interview to be recorded, and the recorder was turned on if allowed. The interview was terminated for participants who declined to be recorded (n = 1), because a transcript of each completed interview was considered necessary for the content to be adequately transcribed and analyzed.

Participants who agreed to the recording (n = 20) were asked a series of scripted narrative questions designed to explore their occupational socialization experiences, understandings of objectivity in forensic work, awareness and concern about biases in general as well as their own potential biases, and strategies to correct for perceived biases. Participants were encouraged to elaborate on their answers and to discuss related issues not raised by the scripted questions. The interviews lasted on average 16:01 minutes (SD = 8.41; median = 14.00). A debriefing document was read to each participant at the conclusion of the interview. A professional transcriptionist (who was considered unlikely to recognize the voices in the interviews) was hired to transcribe the entire content of each interview. Immediately after the interviews were transcribed, the digital recordings of the interviews were erased for confidentiality purposes.

Study 1 Results

This section presents our text-driven repeating ideas, conceptualizing themes, and theoretical constructs. We provide examples of raw text here as well, although most of the text is not included.[2] Table 1 illustrates how the repeating ideas logically cluster into themes and themes cluster into theoretical constructs. We discovered there are many different ways in which and reasons why people become involved in the field. For this analysis, we were particularly interested in the ways in which socialization about objectivity occurred. As can be seen from Table 1, socialization about objectivity occurs in a variety of ways. Several participants described how bias develops and how psychologists' socialization experiences themselves can introduce or reinforce biases.

Varied Pathways Into the Field

It became clear while examining the data that participants had become involved in the field in many different ways. Whereas some people set out

2. Full transcripts are available for review upon request.

Table 1. Occupational Socialization: Theoretical Constructs, Themes, and Repeating Ideas

I. Varied pathways into the field	
Formal forensic psychology training is a relatively recent development	65%
Originally no specific training forensic psychologists	
Pathways directly into forensic psychology	
Indirect pathways into forensic psychology	70%
Clinical psychologist first and serendipitously started forensics	
Clinical psychologist first and planfully switched to forensics	
Varied reasons for becoming a forensic psychologist	65%
A niche needed to be filled in the community/economic opportunities	
Fascination	
Attracted to the field due to emphasis on objectivity	
Pursuit of knowledge	
II. Socialization about objectivity	
Formal training about objectivity	60%
Didactics, seminars, workshops, readings, internship, and/or coursework	
Hands-on experience with feedback	
Mentorship about objectivity	25%
Mentorship about objectivity in general	
Teaching objectivity is important for oneself and the field	50%
Teaching objectivity	
Modeling objective behaviors	
Teaching others can further develop own professional self	
Informal training about objectivity	30%
Observation of others	
Consultation and discussion with others	
The absence of pressure toward a particular conclusion is helpful for learning	
Objectivity is expected	
Many people have received no explicit training about objectivity	40%
Denial of receiving any explicit training about objectivity	
III. Biases are influenced by external sources	
Forensic psychologists may be shaped by others and the system	55%
Our advocacy-based justice system can socialize bias	
Politics can shape psychologists' socialization	
Opinions may be influenced by other psychologists	
Forensic psychologists may be shaped by experience	15%
Bias may be socialized by experience in the field.	

The numbers refer to the percentage of participants who talked about each theme.

intentionally to become a psychologist working with justice-involved clientele, others unintentionally stumbled into the work. Many people were attracted to the field due to fascination with the work; several others described economic opportunities as the impetus for becoming involved. The field has changed a great deal over the last four decades, during which time our sample received their training. These changes emerged as a frequent topic of discussion, with descriptions of how specific training in psychology-law issues is a relatively recent development for the field.

Formal Forensic Psychology Training Is a Relatively Recent Development

A majority of participants (65%) reflected on the recent emergence of forensic psychology as a defined field. Formal training programs for forensic psychology have been developed only in the last couple of decades. Before then, psychologists working in forensics described working without specific training in an undefined field that was significantly less evolved than it is now. For instance, one participant said:

> One of the realities is that I got into forensic psychology when it was just getting started, and so while there are lots of forensic programs right now, there weren't any when I went through school. There wasn't any licensing, there wasn't any acknowledgement of the field of forensic psychology. . . I wasn't trained at all in it.[3]

Approximately a third of participants described intentionally seeking forensic psychological training. Specialized graduate programs, forensic practicums, forensic internships, forensic post-doctoral positions, and the process of board certification as a forensic psychologist were described as recent pathways directly into the field of forensic psychology.

Indirect Pathways into Forensic Psychology

Most of the participants (70%) described becoming a forensic psychologist after their formal graduate training in clinical psychology was complete. After later exposure to forensic opportunities, they decided to devote their practice to forensic psychology. Some people discussed how they serendipitously became forensic psychologists:

> I never meant to be a forensic psychologist, except I was unemployed for 6 months and I took the first job available. . . I didn't specialize in grad school or post-doc or anything. . . I went to a university and received my degree in clinical psychology.

and "As happenstance would have it, I lived fairly near a forensic state hospital that had forensic units . . . I got a job there and really enjoyed doing the work." Others described planfully focusing on forensics after their careers were underway: "I decided when [my practice] was about 25% fo-

3. Ellipses indicate raw material has been removed from the transcribed comment. Often, pieces of a response consistent with a theoretical construct were interspersed with less relevant detail. The less relevant detail was removed for simplicity's sake here. The full texts of the transcripts are available from the first author upon request.

rensic in the early 90s to make a dedicated effort to retread as a forensic psychologist in terms of getting board-certified."

Varied Reasons for Becoming a Forensic Psychologist

Participants (65%) provided a variety of reasons for becoming forensic psychologists. Several people described becoming involved in forensic psychology due to economic opportunities. Courts needed psychologists to conduct psychological evaluations, and these participants realized their skill set was appropriate for the task. For instance, one participant said:

> I felt that it was a niche in the community here that wasn't really filled. . . it seemed like there was a need and, at the same time, strictly healthcare psychology seemed to be struggling to survive. So, it seemed like a pretty good career move.

Approximately one-fourth described fascination with the work of forensic psychologists as their reason for becoming involved in the field. A few others described the field's emphasis on objectivity as particularly attractive, and still others became interested after realizing there was "a wealth of new stuff" to learn in forensic psychology.

Socialization about Objectivity

Most of the sample described ways in which they had been exposed to training about objectivity in forensic work. Although many participants described formal training, others described informal training or informal mentorship regarding objectivity. A substantial minority stated never having receiving training about objectivity in forensic work (i.e., "I was never taught about objectivity" and "I never had any training about countering bias"). Objectivity socialization was described as important for the field, and the process of teaching others about objectivity was highlighted as having the additional benefit of further developing ones' own professional objectivity.

Formal Training About Objectivity

All participants discussed the formal training about objectivity they had received with regard to forensic work. Sixty percent described ways in which objectivity training occurs, and 40% denied that explicit training in objectivity occurs. Of those who described receiving training about objectivity, some indicated methods through formal education sources (e.g., graduate coursework, internship, continuing education, conferences) as well hands-on experience with feedback. For example, one participant said:

> Read the specialty guidelines for forensic psychology. . . [the necessity of objectivity] is pretty blatantly stated in there and also in the fundamental texts—pretty much anything you read during the beginning level emphasizes that and uses that to differentiate [forensic] from clinical work.

Another said:

> In supervision, it's important to address with people what their emotional reaction is to cases that have emotionally difficult content. . . Whatever the case may be, we would want to encourage the trainee to really think about how this makes them feel so that they can make sure that that contact is as far removed from the final report as possible.

Mentorship About Objectivity

One-fourth of participants discussed learning about objectivity through their mentoring relationships. Mentors explicitly discussed issues of bias with mentees, provided good examples of managing bias, and assigned specialized readings about objectivity to mentees. For instance:

> The socialization was actually quite explicit, lots of didactic information about what it meant to be a forensic psychologist, lots of discussion of what the role entailed in forensic versus clinical issues, lots of observation of other people and, again, a lot of explicit discussion of transference and countertransference issues and how you maintain objectivity and so on. . .

Teaching Objectivity Is Important for Oneself and the Field

Half of this sample discussed ways in which teaching and modeling objectivity is important not only for training new psychologists, but also for continued personal growth throughout the course of a career. With regard to teaching objectivity, one participant discussed the necessity of "helping students develop a degree of humility about the fact that no matter how smart you think you are, no matter how thorough you are, that doesn't necessarily mean you're being objective on top of that." Regarding the modeling of objective behaviors, someone said:

> I worked with . . . an insightful and skilled . . . psychiatrist . . . [during internship and my first three years] who was my primary supervisor. He did several things that were really important. . . he treated all of the folks that came into our office whether they were the lowest enlisted guy or an officer of some rank all the same . . . even though . . . in an institutional setting. . . we could have really treated them anyway we wanted to. That was critically important modeling because forensic psychology as it is practiced in the criminal arena often involves people that are captive. . .

An example about how teaching about objectivity can enhance ones' own objectivity was, "Talking with other people about their own concerns about their own biases also kind of circles back in on itself, so then I'll end up thinking well, gee, is that an issue for me as well."

Informal Training About Objectivity

Thirty percent of participants described informal objectivity training. Observing others and discussing issues of potential bias was one method of informal training; "We've had lots of conversations about what it would take to do capital evaluations objectively. . . We've also tried to foster here an environment in which people feel quite comfortable coming up and bouncing things off colleagues. . ." Learning how to do forensic evaluations without adversarial pressure was also mentioned:

> In my training, in my internship and beyond. . . [impartiality] was emphasized, and since I worked at a state facility initially, we really did have that luxury of being completely neutral. . . wasn't any pressure to go one way or another, so I think that was helpful as well along with the explicit messages.

Expectation of objectivity was also discussed as a method of informal training in the field. For instance:

> It was something that I recognized as part of ethics, that you could only have a career if you were credible, and the only way to be credible was to be thorough and objective. So, in some ways, it was self-serving without having been taught that way.

Biases are Influenced by External Sources

Attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum. As such, the environment in which a psychologist is trained and works can influence that psychologist's attitudes and beliefs. Most of our sample described ways in which psychologists' biases may be shaped by the people around them, the system in which they work, and the previous experiences they have had in their work.

Forensic Psychologists May Be Shaped by Others and by the System

Fifty-five percent of this sample described specific ways in which psychologists can be socialized by people around them. One-fourth of the sample discussed how the subtle pressure of consistently working for one adversarial side or the other can affect a psychologist's thinking: "If you're finding yourself being retained by the defense all the time in criminal cases.

. . undoubtedly, you're starting to become socialized within the milieu of defense attorneys" and "If one works for a particular side, i.e., the prosecutor or the defense attorney, more often than the other side, by the very nature of the business, one takes on a bias. I think it's subtle, but I think it's undeniable." Another fourth of the sample outlined how individuals in the system and the system itself can influence the way psychologists process cases: "Who else is influencing you and the attorneys? Because we're in not just treatment team-based environments but in institutional environments where there are also external influences through forensic review boards and attorneys and judges in various counties and so forth."

Forensic Psychologists May Be Shaped by Experience

Three participants (15%) described how experience over time can shape psychologists' attitudes about their work. Attitudes can become increasingly sympathetic or critical over time. For instance, "Either a very sort of increasingly sympathetic view, for example that there's certain subgroups of people that really never had a chance or in an increasingly critical view of people bringing things on themselves" and "Before I started working in this, I figured it was mostly the defense that cheats. What's happened over time is that I've become quite skeptical of the state and their motives [laughs]."

Study 1 Discussion

The occupational socialization processes of psychologists working in forensics varied widely across time and situation. As the field has developed, the "typical" psychologist working in the field has received increasing amounts of specialized training related to forensic decision making. Socialization specific to objectivity also varied quite a bit. Most psychologists described receiving either formal or informal training about objectivity; however, fewer people were able to describe specific strategies learned didactically about *how* to manage biases. Training about objectivity and how to mitigate bias were considered important by these psychologists, and several of them stated that supervisors and teachers have a responsibility to encourage bias consideration and incorporate lessons about how to manage bias.

This self-report methodology suffers from the possible influence of social desirability on participants' responses, which may have been exacerbated by the study's interview format. Further, the interviewer knew the identities of the respondents. These pressures (live interview format, lack of anonymity) may have exaggerated self-serving responses. Responses were likely shaped by the interview questions as well: With different phrasing of questions, other data may have emerged. In addition, the sample was a group of ABPP-certified clinical psychologists special-

izing in forensic-clinical work. ABPP certification is an arduous credential to obtain, and ABPP-certified psychologists are often perceived as some of the most qualified and respected forensic clinicians in practice. As such, the responses of our participants may not generalize to all clinicians working in forensics or to other ABPP-certified forensic clinicians who were not part of the sample.

Study 2 Method

Participants

The participant sample for this study consisted of practicing forensic psychologists in North America. The American Psychological Association (APA) website directory was used with the intention of generating 1,000 randomly selected forensic psychologist participants. To search the directory, "Division 41" (APLS) was entered into the appropriate field, and "clinical psychology" was selected from the "current major field" pull-down menu. This search yielded 878 names and addresses. To obtain additional participants, the "current major field" was reset, and a search was conducted by selecting "clinical" from the "area of interest" pull-down menu. This second search produced 10 additional unique names. Third, the area of interest menu was reset and, in the certification field, "ABPP-Forensic" was entered, yielding 65 unique participants. Finally, the certification field was reset and, in the degree major field, "forensic psychology" was selected, which provided 9 unique participants. Thus, 962 participants with clinical-forensic interests were identified through the APA directory. Random sampling from the Division 41 domain was not necessary because this study surveyed the entire population of clinical-forensic psychologists in that domain.

Of the 962 surveys mailed, 351 were completed, for a completion rate of 41.54%.[4] Respondents included forensic psychologists in 43 U. S. states, the District of Columbia, the U. S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and British Columbia and Ontario, Canada. The sample was largely Caucasian (90.6%). Other ethnicities reported included 4.8% Hispanic, 1.2% African American, 0.8% Asian, and 2.4% Other. Most of the respondents were male (69.9%; 30.1% female). The average age of participants was 59.27 (*SD* = 9.50). The majority of participants reported their highest degree earned was a PhD (81.9%), followed by PsyD (13.6%), joint JD/PhD (2.4%), and Other (2.1%; including EdD, JD, master's degree). Participants in this sample indicated substantial years of experience, with a mean of 22.45 years conducting forensic evaluations (*SD* = 9.67). Almost 30% (28.8%) reported being certified by any specialty board (71.2% did not).

4. One hundred and seventy-seven surveys were returned as undeliverable; thus, 785 were presumably received. The completion rate was calculated as 351 returned of 785.

Procedure

The mailed packet included a cover letter indicating the research was being conducted by a university student, an Institutional Review Board participant information sheet, the questionnaire printed on green paper, a separate debriefing page, a self-addressed stamped envelope with first-class postage, and a $1 bill as a gesture of appreciation. A follow-up postcard was sent 2 weeks later.

Materials

In addition to scales measuring occupational socialization and bias correction strategies, a questionnaire with items inquiring about demographic characteristics, training, and professional experiences was included in the survey.

Occupational Socialization Scale

The Occupational Socialization Scale (OSS) is a 20-item scale designed for use in this study (see Appendix). Items are answered on a seven-point Likert-type scale (1, *strongly disagree*, to 7, *strongly agree*) with higher scores indicating greater occupational socialization. The original version of the scale contained 27 items, which were adapted or drawn from three existing scales. Six items were adapted from the Haueter, Macan, and Winter (2003) Measurement of Newcomer Socialization Scale, designed to measure the socialization of newcomers to an organization. We reworded items to reflect socialization of psychologists who do forensic evaluations. Eleven items were drawn or adapted from Chao and colleagues' (1994) Socialization Content Questionnaire. These items tap into the extent to which the respondent holds values similar to the profession; is familiar with the history, language, and politics of the profession; feels proficient in his or her performance; and the degree to which he or she socializes with the people in his or her profession. Seven items were drawn from Gould's (1979) Career Planner Scale. The items were designed to measure the degree of career planning, involvement, and satisfaction. The remaining three items were developed to capture constructs unrepresented by the items available in other scales (e.g., testifying self-efficacy and training in objectivity).

Prior to being used in the full survey, this scale was pretested with a convenience sample of 21 forensic psychologists to determine its reliability and validity for our purposes. The initial internal consistency alpha coefficient estimated for the 27-item scale was acceptable (a = 0.8; Cronbach, 1951). After examining the initial item pool, seven weak items were deleted. The resulting 20-item scale had good reliability in the full sample, with an alpha of 0.85. Zero-order correlations for the total score with each of the other three socialization scales were calculated. Criterion-related

validity was demonstrated in that the correlations between the Occupational Socialization scale and the other three socialization scales ranged from 0.51 to 0.71.

The pattern of correlations between this new socialization scale and the subscales of the other measures yielded additional convergent and discriminant validity of this new occupational socialization scale. Higher correlations were observed between those subscales of the existing measures theoretically more related to the new socialization scale, and those subscales theoretically less similar to the new scale were lower. Specifically, the new scale had a strong positive correlation with task socialization (e.g., "learning the ropes") on both the Newcomer Socialization Questionnaire–Task subscale (Hauter et al., 2003, $r = 0.58$) and Socialization Content Questionnaire–Performance Proficiency subscale (Chao et al., 1994; $r = 0.72$) as well as with a subscale measuring strength of career involvement (Career Planner Scale–Career Involvement subscale, Gould, 1979, $r = 0.67$).

Lower correlations were obtained between the new scale and the Hauter and colleagues (2003) Group socialization subscale ($r = 0.34$), the Chao and colleagues (1994) Politics subscale ($r = 0.36$), and Gould's (1979) Adaptability subscale ($r = -0.20$), which taps into how people adjust to changes in their job. These issues ("group" socialization, political issues in the field, and adaptability to change in job tasks) appear to be less relevant to the socialization processes of forensic psychologists than learning how to do one's work and becoming thoroughly involved in one's work. The magnitude of the differences in correlations between similar and dissimilar subscales suggested this new scale was sufficiently valid to use it for the proposed purposes.

We initially conducted an exploratory factor analysis on the 20-item OSS to explore the internal structure of the measure. We used principal component analysis as the extraction method in SPSS version 18.0. Results indicated only one factor had an eigenvalue greater than two (factor 1 eigenvalue = 5.77, 28.85% of the variance), and the Scree plot indicated one factor best captured the data. All of the items loaded on this factor at a value of 0.30 or higher, and all except three items loaded at 0.40 or higher (items 1, 5, and 17 loaded between 0.30 and 0.40; see Appendix). Thus, we used the total OSS score in our analyses.

In the large sample for study two, the internal reliability of the scale was good: Coefficient alpha was 0.85 (Cronbach, 1951), and the average inter-item correlation was 0.25 (within recommended benchmarks of 0.15 to 0.50; Clark & Watson, 1995). The mean was 121.34, and the standard deviation was 9.24.

Bias Correction Strategies Scale

The Bias Correction Strategies Scale (BCSS) was developed from the qualitative data obtained in interviews with practicing forensic psycholo-

gists about how they manage their potential biases.[5] The BCSS contains 27 items inquiring about the perceived usefulness of various bias management strategies anchored on a five-point scale (*Very Useless, Useless, Not Certain, Useful*, and *Very Useful*). Examples of some of the items include, "Investigating all relevant data before forming an opinion," "Consulting with colleagues about issues of potential bias," "Taking careful notes during an evaluation," "Being an active consumer of scientific knowledge," and "Attending to wording choice in reports to edit out value-laden language."

The scale evidenced good reliability in this sample on two different measures of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha was 0.85, and the average inter-item correlation was 0.21 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Cronbach, 1951). There was no existing measure with which to demonstrate criterion-related or convergent validity. This scale, therefore, had unique utility: It was the first to measure the construct of bias management. It also had face validity: The items composing this scale were logically related to the underlying construct of bias management. The mean for this scale was 116.22 (SD = 8.56).

Study 2 Results

Parametric assumptions, including equal variance, normal distribution, and independence, were checked prior to data analysis. The assumptions were not violated. The first hypothesis was that psychologists who had been practicing longer would have higher occupational socialization scores than psychologists newer to the profession. A simple Pearson correlation was conducted to examine the relation between years as a forensic examiner and occupational socialization scores. As expected, results revealed a positive relation: The longer a forensic psychologist has been practicing, the higher his or her occupational socialization scores; $r = 0.21$ ($p < 0.001$, one-tailed). Thus, hypothesis one was supported.

The second hypothesis predicted that psychologists with higher occupational socialization scores would believe they are more objective in their work. Again, a positive relation emerged: people with higher occupational socialization scores were more likely to believe in their ability to be objective in their forensic work; $r = 0.50$ ($p < 0.001$, one-tailed). Based on these results, hypothesis two was supported.

Hypothesis three predicted that occupational socialization would be positively correlated with endorsement of bias correction strategies. The results revealed support for this hypothesis. As occupational socialization scores increased, so did endorsement of the usefulness of various correction strategies for managing potential biases; $r = 0.38$ ($p < 0.001$, one-tailed).

5. These data are further detailed in Neal (2011).

Study 2 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to compile information about the occupational socialization of forensic psychologists. Each of the three predictions made about occupational socialization was supported in this study. Evidence suggests that the longer one has been practicing, the more occupational socialization increases. People who have been practicing forensic psychology longer identify more with their career, are more familiar with the nuances of the profession, and report greater satisfaction in their work. Of particular interest to this project was the finding that higher occupational socialization predicted greater belief in objectivity. What remains to be investigated, however, is whether belief in objectivity is related to actual objectivity. Perhaps these two variables correspond with one another. Alternatively, perhaps socialization into the importance of objectivity increases psychologists' belief in their objectivity without an actual increase in objective practice.

An encouraging finding was that occupational socialization was positively related to endorsement of bias correction strategies. The perceived usefulness of various bias management strategies increased as occupational socialization increased. This finding suggests psychologists may become more objective as they are socialized into the profession. Believing in the utility of various bias correction strategies and using such strategies should increase one's objectivity in practice; however, whether this finding translates into actual differences in practice is an empirical question.

Limitations of this study include that it was conducted in a self-report format with a sample of volunteers willing to spend the time to complete and return the survey. It is possible that those respondents who chose to participate may be systematically different than the people who chose not to respond. Further, the self-report nature of the study may have elicited socially desirable responding, which could limit the validity of the findings.

General Discussion

The primary aim of this project was to apply quantitative and qualitative methods in compiling descriptive information about forensic psychologists' occupational socialization processes. We also wanted to explore how the socialization process dealt with the issue of objectivity in forensic psychological practice. We conducted two studies to address these questions. Limitations existed within each of the individual studies; however, using two separate studies measuring different traits and using different methods enhanced the holistic nature of the study and balanced out some of the individual study limitations.

Qualitative methods were used in study one. Occupational socialization as described by participants in the first study varied widely across

time and situation. The field has grown and developed in the last few decades, and psychologists have received increasing specialized training related to forensic decision making. Findings from study two suggest that occupational socialization increases for individuals over time and is associated with a greater belief in one's objectivity and greater endorsement of bias correction strategies. Of course, belief in one's objectivity is no guarantee of actual objectivity. Future studies may help shed light on this question.

The findings in study two that higher occupational socialization predicted greater belief in objectivity and higher endorsement of bias correction strategies suggest that socialization into objective practice might improve baseline objectivity. However, it remains to be investigated whether belief in objectivity is related to actual objectivity. Future investigations must pair the analysis of evaluator attitudes and beliefs with an investigation of their own behaviors in order to answer this question.

Implications emerged in this study for how the field might better teach psychologists to recognize and mitigate their biases. It is possible that psychologists are occupationally socialized to believe they are more objective than they are in practice. Budding psychologists might be more explicitly taught how to recognize and correct for their own biases during the early socialization process. Borum, Otto, and Golding (1993) suggested that clinical training programs underemphasize the process of clinical judgment and decision making. They argued that clinicians must be trained about the limitations of clinical judgment, how biases are manifested in practice, and how to avoid or minimize their impact. We think there is potential for sharpening forensic psychologists' objectivity in training students to effectively recognize and manage biases during their professional development and socialization period. Future research may shed more light on the degree to which explicit training is needed as well as how the training might most effectively be implemented.

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Appendix

Occupational Socialization Scale

Please circle your answer for each question on the scale provided.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

1. The goals of my profession are also my goals.
2. I understand how to perform the tasks that make up my job.
3. During my forensic training, I learned the importance of objectivity and impartiality in one's work.
4. I know the history of this profession (e.g., forensic psychology's roots).
5. I have not really decided what my career objectives should be yet.
6. I would be a good example of a psychologist who represents my profession's values.
7. I know how to be objective and keep my personal beliefs from influencing my professional work.
8. I have not fully developed the appropriate skills and abilities to successfully perform my job.
9. I know what I want out of life.

10. I know what constitutes acceptable job performance.
11. I know this profession's overall policies and/or rules (e.g., ethical code for clinical psychologists and for forensic psychologists).
12. I understand what all the duties of my job entail.
13. I know this profession's long-held traditions
14. I feel competent to share my findings with the court in a credible manner (e.g., to testify).
15. I know the responsibilities, tasks, and projects for which I was hired.
16. My chosen line of work gives me a sense of well-being.
17. I believe most of my colleagues like me.
18. I have a strategy for achieving my career goals.
19. I know how to meet my client's needs.
20. I have a good understanding of the politics in my profession.