

WHAT SHOULD RESEARCHERS KNOW ABOUT DOING PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES INSIDE
PRISONS?

A Thesis

Presented to the faculty of the Department of Public Policy and Administration
California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

in

by

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SUMMER
2016

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Department of Public Policy and Administration

Abstract
of
WHAT SHOULD RESEARCHERS KNOW ABOUT DOING PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES
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by
Leah Paysa Farkas

Although researchers know a great deal about conducting fieldwork in the free world, we know far less about effective survey and interview administration practices inside a prison environment. Through the examination of the Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works (AVP) study, I create a five-component framework in order to explore the prison-based research process. After identifying specific challenges and implications, I produced a set of key findings aimed at helping future researchers navigate through this frequently complicated and intimidating process.

As with all human subject studies, prison-based research projects involve Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Although an often long and daunting process, the need for IRB approval stems from the long history of coercion, involuntary experimentation, and torture found inside the field of prison-based research. Addressing the challenges of voluntary and anonymous participation greatly increases as respondent agency decreases inside correctional institutions. Additionally, prison-based research projects often come with public funding which typically includes match requirements, ultimately increasing the number and influence of stakeholders. The

costs of conducting research inside a prison-setting can also increase compared to studies in the free world due to the remote setting of many facilities and their unpredictable schedules.

Although participant incentives can increase response rates, correctional institutions often prohibit them. As a result, researchers rely on other aspects of the project such as room location, and prison staff support to increase response rates. Lastly, prison-based research projects require adequate training well beyond that of studies in the free world. In addition to the expected safety requirements, researchers must be keenly aware of other issues of concern such as the long distances we often must travel while working inside, prison specific formal and informal rules, which frequently change without notification, and inmate manipulation. Given the unique, albeit often intimidating, insulated, and secluded nature of correctional institutions, gaining insight surrounding the research process itself will help future researchers understand what they should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons.

Committee Chair

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August 4, 2016
Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my parents: thank you for instilling in me the drive to fight against injustice and the notion that everyone deserves a second chance.

To my readers: Andrea and Ted: thank you for your endless patients, support, and guidance. Your ability to think outside of the box and work through the challenges is an inspiration to me and our student body. I am forever grateful.

To my Davis community with particular appreciation to Margaret Lloyd: without you I would never have made it this far. Thank you for inspiring me to go after my dreams and for the support while doing so. You will always be in my heart.

To CaliforniaVolunteers: I am truly honored to have worked alongside such a wonderful and inspiring group of people. Thank you for all that you do.

Last but certainly not least...

To the inmates who participated in the AVP study: you taught me above all that “no one is only as good as the worst thing they have done”. Thank you for helping me fight the good fight. May each of your inspirational dreams come true.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s California's incarcerated population steadily increased to as high as 163,000 or 200% of prison design capacity (Public Policy Institute of California, 2013). In May 2011, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld a federal district court decision in *Brown vs. Plata*, ruling that California's overcrowded, state-run prison system prevented inmates from receiving adequate health and mental healthcare and therefore violated the 8th amendment-prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment (Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), 2011). As a result, California was ordered to reduce its prison population to 137.5 percent of design capacity or by roughly 40,000 persons by February 26, 2016.

The Supreme Court's decision coupled with souring costs of incarceration which are estimated between \$47,000 and \$75,000 per inmate per year in California, renewed prison reform interest by Governor Brown, growing opposition to mass incarceration both federally and within California, and the enactment of federal policies aimed at decreasing its incarceration population has thrown California into a policy window in which policy makers, researchers, funders, and constituents increasingly support efforts to reform California's prison system. As such, the state now faces myriad challenges surrounding the creation of reform policies and how, when, and where to implement them. In order to address these challenges, stakeholders, through reliable and valid research must explore ways to meet the needs of California's inmate population.

As described below, although a great deal is known about how to conduct quantitative and qualitative research in the free-world, we know far less about how to effectively do so within prison settings. By design, correctional facilities engender retributive, isolated, and abstruse environments which often increases the number and breadth of challenges researchers face while working inside. The following theses explores the prison-based research process so as to better understand what researchers should know about conducting studies inside prisons and how stakeholders can best to support these efforts.

The Prison Environment

Traditionally, state corrections departments employ retributive models inside prisons focusing on punishment rather than rehabilitation (Karp et al., 2004). Such models view crime and criminal behavior as transgressions against the state rather than the individual and therefore concentrate efforts and funding on repayment to society rather than victims (Bazemore, 1998). This conventional crime response approach often fails to meet criminogenic, or underlying causes of criminal behavior such as, mental illness, drug-addiction, and other inmate psychological and physical needs (Mills et al., 2012). Thus, current models often do little to facilitate the successful reintegration of previously incarcerated individuals back into society.

Retributive prison models also frequently create harsh environments hostile to outsiders including researchers. In part due to the isolated nature of prisons in which inmates as well as staff members often live segregated from the general public, correctional facilities by definition prohibit individuals from engaging in free-world

interpersonal exchanges such as non-work community events in which we spend time others from different backgrounds (Crawley & Crawley, 2007). As a result, staff members working inside retributive prisons become unaccustomed to outsiders especially those interested in learning about life inside and those who occupy this space.

In recent years, departments of corrections such as the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) began moving away from retributive crime reduction models and towards rehabilitation. To this end, the CDCR increased the number and quality of specialized volunteer-run inmate programs which work outside of the traditional prison structure. As such, stakeholders must work to better understand the nature of inmate programs and how they benefit participants.

Current Study

The current body of prison related literature indicates research processes include five components: Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval/informed consent, funding, costs, participant incentives, and training. In the following thesis, I explore what researchers should know about conducting studies inside prisons by identifying specific challenges and key findings which I outline in Chapter 4. Given the unique challenges associated with conducting research inside prison environments, I hope that this exploration helps future researchers better navigate through an often complex and hostile process.

The following thesis includes a literature review in Chapter 2, which exams the five components of prison-based research beginning with the history of informed consent and subsequent need for IRB approval. The world, specifically the United States and

more specifically the State of California, unfortunately hold long and brutal histories of involuntary and inhumane inmate experimentation. Most notably during the Holocaust and up through the 1970's in the United States, scientists coerced and often forced inmates to participate in research studies (Hornblum, 1997). As a result, researchers must now receive IRB approval prior to conducting research inside correctional facilities (Mosesso et al., 2004).

Prison-based researchers must also consider funding streams, research costs, participation incentives, and training procedures. Prison research is often public funding and therefore requires private match funding. As a result, the number and influence of outside stakeholders increases which can complicate an already abstruse process. Additionally, prison-based research projects frequently require travel to isolated locations, ultimately increasing costs especially delays occur do to prison closures or safety issues.

Although the greater research community considers participation incentives ethically sound, many correctional institutions do not allow them. As a result, it is increasingly important prison researchers conduct studies efficiently such as setting up in locations that allow for the greatest access to eligible populations. Lastly, adequate and proper training of survey team members highly contributes to the success of the project. Inadequate training procedures opens the project, its participants, and research team members to increased delays, costs, and safety concerns, and ultimately places the project's success at risk.

Next, in Chapter 3 discuss my methodological approach to exploring the five research components. I begin with a discussion of the Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works (AVP) study which surveyed inmates, volunteers, and correctional staff at three California state-run prisons. As the project lead during the field work portion of this study, I led teams of volunteers into the three prisons over the course of three months. Although ultimately successful, the publicly funded AVP study required IRB approval, incurred months of delays, went three times over budget, faced numerous challenges when attempting to meet response rates, and initially included inadequate training.

Initially, I intended to utilize the AVP data set to examine the role of volunteer-run organizations inside California's state-run prison system. In the spring of 2015, I gained permission to use the data set from both California Volunteers, the state agency that commissioned the AVP study as well as the contracted private analytics company hired to do the analysis. Nearly a year later and after almost completing my initial thesis, I was informed the private company granted me permission without consideration of a contract which prohibited them from giving anyone outside of the AVP study access to the data set. As such, I had to discontinue my initial thesis and begin again. This led to the development of a new thesis topic which explored the process by which researchers conduct study inside prison settings.

Chapter 4 discusses the challenges and I faced while participating in the AVP study. Beginning with the IRB approval process in which the project incurred numerous delays due to inadequate planning and communication, I then outline how our team met

these challenges as well as those surrounding funding, costs, incentives, and training. In conclusion, I created a list of key findings that I hope will help researchers mitigate future challenges.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the nation and the state of California are currently in a prison reform policy window where researchers, policy makers, and the public agree the current system fails to prevent crime while costing tax payers tens of thousands of dollars each to year to house a single inmate. In order to address the myriad of challenges faced by this historically retributive, isolated, and abstruse sector of public governance, researchers must continue to explore a wide-range of prison related issues. Though there is extensive literature on how to conduct qualitative and quantitative research in the free world, far less is known about how to do so within a prison environment. Given the unique challenges surrounding prison research, exploring the prison field work process itself helps stakeholders gain understanding as to what researchers should know about conducting studies inside prisons. This understanding in turn, informs policy makers and funders on how best to support these efforts.

This chapter explores the different components of conducting field research inside a prison environment. The following sections break down the literature into five sections. The first section discusses the history and importance of informed consent and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process. Next, I review prison research funding streams, followed by an examination of field research costs. The last two sections then explore research participation incentives and the importance of training.

The History and Need for Informed Consent and the IRB

The history of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) begins with the atrocities committed during the Holocaust leading up to and during World War II. As the world began to realize the depth of the crimes committed under the Nazi regime and how far the arm of evil reached, the international scientific community for the first time set out to draft a list of rules surrounding human experimentation (Schuman, 2012). Largely informed by American scientists, the trials eventuated in the “Nuremberg Code”, a set of ten universal principles governing human subjects. Generally considered the most important, the first principle states, “the voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential”. In doing so, for the first time scientists and the public recognized the right to informed consent without coercion when participating in scientific experiments (Cisloa & Trestman, 2013).

Unfortunately, although American scientists played an essential role in developing the Nuremberg Code, the United States simultaneously increased its own use of inmate human subjects, viewing them as an untapped and inexpensive resource (Hornblum, 1997). In part fueled by the popular notion that everyone, including those behind bars, held an obligation to the war effort, during the 1940s, scientists drastically increased prison-based experimentation (Cisloa & Trestman, 2013). Often rewarding participants with reduced or early release sentences, prisons quickly became havens for disease, coercion, and involuntary participation. As a result, in the years following World War II, the United States and its growing scientific field, rather than embracing the

Nuremberg Code, increased experiments on inmates exposing them to gonorrhea, malaria, and other diseases (Cisloa & Trestman, 2013).

The 1960s and the civil rights movement brought increased public awareness to medical studies conducted on unknowing individuals such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. As such, American public opinion of informed consent and support for the Nuremberg Code increased, eventuating in the creation of the Institutional Review Board process now required across the country (Cisloa & Trestman, 2013). With few exceptions (Mosesso et al., 2004), researchers must now receive IRB approval whenever conducting research on human subjects, particularly if they belong to a “high risk” or vulnerable population. Currently, all publically funded research using human subjects must receive IRB approval (Payne & Wansink, 2011).

Funding Streams

Prison research is largely funded through public streams (Jewkes, 2011). In the United States, several federal agencies including and most notably the Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institute of Justice (NIJ) offers grants or other funding streams to researchers. Other NIJ agencies providing prison related research funding include, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Executive Office of Weed and Seed, Office of Victims of Crime, and the Violence Against Women Grants Program Office, all of which encourage or require public presentation of their findings such as at academic conferences or in peer-reviewed journals (Ross, 2000). State correctional agencies such as the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) also conduct research inside their own state-run

facilities, although often with a dual purpose of both scientific research and for the betterment of the department (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 2016). In recent years and in part due to increased interest in prison reform, other federal agencies not historically focused on prison research, such as the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) have begun funding prison-based research projects (CaliforniaVolunteers, 2016).

Privately funded experiments on incarcerated individuals increased after 1962 as a result of decreased Food and Drug Administration regulations (Kalmbach & Lyons, 2003). In fact, by 1972, 90% of all pharmaceutical drugs in the United States were tested on inmates. This allowed private companies to circumvent the IRB process, leading to increased involuntary participation, coercion, and disease and illness throughout the national prison system. Although regulations have tightened up since the seventies, there remains concern that recent decreases in public funding coupled with government encouragement of privately funded research puts participants, particularly members of vulnerable populations such as inmates, once again at risk for unethical experimentation (Kalmbach & Lyons, 2003).

Research Costs

Prison literature indicates the costs associated with conducting research inside a prison environment fall into three categories: personnel time, travel, and supply expenditures (Patrick et al., 1998). Personnel time is calculated by multiplying the hourly rate of both researcher and support staff by the number of hours spent working on the project, including during the IRB process (which itself can cost thousands of dollars)

(Office of Research, 2015). Of particular importance, although often overlooked, are the costs associated with recruiting participants (Patrick et al., 1998). Conducted both prior to entry and while inside, recruitment efforts can take several additional days when access to inmates is limited due to restriction policies (Bosworth, 2005). In addition to inmate access issues, prison researchers face challenges recruiting African Americans as well as other members of minority groups due to longstanding embedded distrust of researchers and research stemming back to historical events such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study (Patrick et al., 1998).

Prison research costs generally include lodging and gas (and sometimes, although rarely, airfare). As the majority of prisons in the United States, are located in isolated, rural areas (Huling, 2002) such as Pelican Bay and High Desert State Prison in California, travel can significantly increase research costs. In addition to being geographically isolated, travel costs associated with conducting research inside prisons tend to be higher than in other research areas because of prison access denial (Huling, 2002). Prison access denial often occurs when security at a facility is heightened due to fights or other internal threats. Periods of heightened security can occur at any time and therefore delay or cancel research projects. Denial occurs when researchers fail to follow dress codes or other often undocumented bureaucratic procedures. Lastly, the weather has increased impact on travel costs associated with prison research as many correctional institutions bring their prisons into periods of lockdown when visibility is limited to inclement weather such as during periods of fog or heavy rain (Kort and Malonea, 2014).

As a result, prison-based research projects face additional challenges in regards to weather than those conducted in the free world.

The security measures of most institutions also limit the types of materials and equipment researchers are permitted to bring inside (Edgar et al., 2011). As such, prisons generally forbid researchers from bringing computers, recording devices, and other electronic devices inside prison gates. Therefore, surveys and interview notes must be completed using paper and pen which requires transcription into digital format ultimately adding to research project costs and increasing the risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation (Bosworth, 2005).

In the free world, researches often incentivize participation with cash or other goods adding to the supply costs. In prison, giving incentives such as money, extra food, or additional leisure time to inmates for participation in research projects is often highly controversial and forbidden (Hansen et al., 2012). Although prohibited in 25 states plus the District of Columbia and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, inmate participant incentives when permitted add additional financial burdens including administrative and purchasing costs to often under funded research projects (Hansen et al., 2012).

Research Participation Incentives

In order to achieve success, prison researchers must connect and build trust with an inherently distrustful and isolated respondent population. Given the unique challenges prison researchers face, motivating incarcerated individuals to participate in research, which often bears little benefit to them, can be difficult. In order to overcome this burden, it is important to understand what incentivizes inmates to participate in research studies.

The current body of literature suggests, and to no surprise of mine, inmate respondents participate in studies for the same reasons as their free-world counterparts: for personal and altruistic as well rational and economic reasons (Bosworth et al., 2005).

Specifically, the literature clearly signifies that once trust has been established inmates give their time to research as a means to contribute to the greater good or simply out of curiosity (Bosworth et al., 2005). In prison, respondents also participate in order to breakup monotonous routines and create new relationships as many individuals live isolated from others including fellow inmates. Participating in research projects has also been shown to help individuals adjust to prison life and increase feelings of connections with the outside world (Bosworth et al., 2005).

In addition to personal and altruistic reasons and similar to those in the free world, external benefits such as money, additional food, and extra leisure time also motivate incarcerated individuals. (Hansen et al., 2012). As mentioned above, paying inmates to participate in research studies opens the institution, researchers, and project to a great deal of controversy. On one side of the issue, some in the scientific community believe that external incentives for incarcerated populations help foster research participation while staying grounded in the ethical principles laid out in the Nuremburg Code (Hansen et al., 2012). Specifically, consensus holds external benefits for incarcerated individuals should not be so large as to influence respondents' answers or give advantage to inmates in their daily lives while incarcerated. Far less consensus exists within correctional and governmental systems with many jurisdictions concerned incentives reduce prison

deterrence effects, create additional administrative work loads, and remove opportunities for inmates to remunerate (Hansen et al., 2012).

In order to mitigate negative consequences of offering external incentives to incarcerated individuals, the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research developed a three principal guide on ethics (Hansen et al., 2012). First and foremost, researchers have a burden to respect the people participating in the study and therefore protect their right to informed consent without coercion. Second, similar to the Hippocratic Oath, researchers must do no harm by maximizing benefit and minimizing potential harm. Lastly, justice must be upheld with equal persons receiving equal treatment of both benefits and risk. In short, great care should be taken when offering inmates incentives to participate in research studies.

Research Training

Prisons with their cement and steel buildings, isolated locations, and military structure, by design, can communicate a sense of discomfort, inaccessibility, and distrust (Liebling, 1999). Purposefully hostile, prisons are stressful and challenging places to conduct research. As such, in order to mitigate discomfort and distrust, prison researchers must first work to gain the trust and build rapport with both incarcerated individuals and facility staff (Bosworth et al., 2005). Trust begins with the researcher fully understanding the formal and informal rules or rather “the art” of doing research inside a state correctional institution. In most cases, this understanding comes from pre-site visit and on-the-job trainings.

In general, formal prison rules involve understanding the dress code, prohibited item list, how and to whom to speak, how to behave with inmates, where and when to arrive and work inside the facility, the formal prison staff hierarchy, and the name and information of the primary prison contact person (Schlossler, 2008). Formal prison rules tend to be easily understood and located either on facility websites or by contacting the institution directly. It is important to note, formal prison rules are not universal across states, jurisdictions, or even correctional agencies.

Of equal importance to anyone doing research inside prisons, are the often hidden, easily misunderstood, and undocumented informal rules. By definition, these rules are not written down and therefore lend themselves to interpretation and inconsistency. Informal prison rules center around questions of access: access to inmates, access to staff, and access to the facility itself (Schlossler, 2008). Making connections with individual facilities and specific staff prior to entry highly contributes to the success of research projects in terms of building trust with respondents and therefore meeting targeted response rates (Bosworth et al., 2005). Without strong relationships, researchers can easily find themselves inadvertently breaking informal rules and therefore contributing to the stress and challenges already inherent in the work.

One particular area researchers potentially overstep simply by not understanding informal prison rules involves engaging in over familiarity with inmates (Liebling, 1999). Although human tendency permits one to attempt to engage in personal conversations with respondents, when conducting prison research doing so can inadvertently put not only the project at risk but the prison in danger. For example, although casual

conversations with inmates such as dinner plans or hobbies can help facilitate trust between researchers and respondents, it can also unknowingly place the researcher in dangerously vulnerable position (Liebling, 1999). As such, inmate manipulation stands as a primary concern for many correctional agencies including the CDCR (CDCR, 2016).

Conclusion

Although the current body of prison literature indicates the key to prison field research success lies in persistency, innovation, and methodological preparedness (Schlossler, 2008), there is a lack of information about what it actually takes to conduct research in such a hostile, isolated, and abstruse setting. Specifically, gaining a greater understanding of the unique challenges surrounding informed consent and the IRB process, funding streams, field research costs, research participation incentives, and the need for adequate training prior to entry and how to properly address them, could help future researchers, policy makers, and funders support this important body of work and underserved population. The following chapter discusses my personal experience while conducting research inside the California state prison system with particular attention paid to the successes and challenges.

Chapter 3

METHODS: THE STUDY

Study Background

In 2015 I participated in the Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works (AVP) study as the Prison Survey Project Lead with CaliforniaVolunteers, Office of the Governor. The self-reported survey measured volunteerism inside the California state-run prison system. A joint effort between CaliforniaVolunteers, a private analytics company, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), and three California state-run correctional institutions, the study evaluated the relationship between inmate participation in volunteer-run programs and perceptions surrounding inmate behavior patterns, quality of life, and readiness to change. Publically funded and therefore required to receive Internal Review Board (IRB) approval, the study included three separate surveys, one for volunteers involved with inmate programs, a second one for staff, and a third for programming inmates. Due to limited funding and an interest in understanding gendered outcome differences inside, the AVP study included two male and one female California state-run prisons. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) chose which prisons participated and in order to ensure respondent anonymity, the names and locations of the prisons are not included in this thesis and will therefore be referred to as Prison A, Prison B, and Prison C as needed. CaliforniaVolunteers, the CDCR, the private analytics company, and the participating facilities jointly determined respondent participation eligibility.

In this chapter, I explain in detail how the survey team, led by me, approached the inmate survey component of AVP study which collected more than 1500 surveys inside the three state-run facilities over the course of three months. First, I discuss the IRB process and how we ensured informed consent. Next, I review the project's funding sources followed by research costs, participation incentives, and survey team trainings.

IRB Process and Informed Consent

The AVP study received dual approval through the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS), the state IRB for all California Health and Human Services Agencies as well as from the CDCR's internal research department. In accordance with CDCR protocol, in March 2015 the private analytics company through CaliforniaVolunteers submitted an External Research Preliminary Assessment Request to the CDCR and then while pending approval, submitted a Request for CPHS Approval. At the advisement of the CDCR the survey team expected to begin work inside the prisons in early June.

Although the CDCR internal approval process went smoothly, the CPHS process took several months, delaying the project. In April 2015 the private analytics company appeared in front of the CPHS board to answer questions surrounding data collection and storing protocols. Although the CPHS typically gives researchers interview questions prior to appearing before the board, the private company was afforded no such consideration. As a result, instead of receiving immediate approval (or disapproval), the board elected to delay pending further review. Additionally, the CPHS conveyed a short decision timeline of a few weeks although the company did not receive notification for

several months. The company's researchers as well as CaliforniaVolunteers office staff repeatedly contacted the CPHS for updates with little or no response. In August, the company finally received approval and the survey phase of the project began in late September.

Prior to entering the prisons, the survey team (which I led) went through a brief training on informed consent which included information on how to approach the issue and an examination of the approved CDCR consent form. The survey team gave interested parties copies of the Participant Bill of Rights and then asked them to sign consent forms. In short, the bill of rights explained the purpose of the survey and any risks, that participation was anonymous and voluntary, participants could start and stop whenever they wanted and skip questions, and no benefit or punishment came from participating. It became clear early on that the current process failed to ensure all participants understood the purpose of the survey and their rights. As such, in order to ensure informed consent, I created a new procedure which I discuss in detail in Chapter 4.

Funding

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the current prison reform policy window has persuaded some federal and state agencies which historically work outside of the issue such as the Corporation of National and Community Service (CNCS) to invest resources in prison-based research. As such, in 2014 CaliforniaVolunteers set aside a portion of its fiscal year 2014-2015 CNCS, Volunteer Generation Fund, funding in order to partner with the CDCR and measure volunteerism inside the state prison system. CNCS a federal

agency, funds Americorps among other missions. In its role as the state agency in charge of volunteerism and service, CaliforniaVolunteers serves as the California state Americorps commission.

As with most federal grants, CNCS requires match funding for all of its grantees. The AVP study received additional funds from CaliforniaVolunteers's general fund, the private analytics company, and other CaliforniaVolunteers strategic partners. The project also received non-match reported funding in the form of volunteer service hours not included in the original scope or budget.

Research Costs

Although the AVP study received federal, state, and private funding, costs far exceeded the projected budget. In line with the current body of literature, research costs fell into three categories: personnel time, travel, and supplies. Personnel time should include all hours associated with the project but I only had access to data for hours associated with CaliforniaVolunteers's staff and volunteers. Our staff spent a total of 3,000 hours from project conception through data entry as the private analytics company conducted the analysis and wrote the report. In addition to staff hours, the project also included 650 volunteer service hours for a total of 3,650 hours. The original scope called for a total of 1,000 CaliforniaVolunteers paid staff hours and by leveraging the help of over 50 volunteers the project saved close to \$10,000

The most underfunded component of this project per capita involved travel to the three prisons. The original project design called for two days of survey administering by two CaliforniaVolunteers staff members (one full time staff member and one student

assistant) at each of the three facilities. As such, the travel budget included car rentals, lodging, and per diem for two people over six days when in fact we required accommodations for fourteen days in total. As a result, we spent three times as much on travel than originally budgeted.

The cost of supplies also greatly contributed to our budget concerns. Although the original budget included line items for survey and support material printing, several unanticipated supply costs arose. For example, the CPHS required the survey team to secure all completed surveys. As such, we bought several locked rolling storage containers we carried with us in and out of the prisons. In the end, the project came in at triple the costs of the original budget.

Incentives

As discussed in Chapter 2, a great deal of controversy exists surrounding the ethical and practical implications of giving incentives to inmates for research study participation. The AVP did not give participants external benefits and disclosed this as part of the informed consent procedure. Instead, the survey team relied on other factors such as location to encourage participation.

Located in both high traffic areas such as gyms and main yards as well as inside inmate programs, the survey team aimed to maximize participation by working in a variety of settings. In high traffic areas, inmates readily approached us with only a few individuals refusing to participate. Inside the inmate programs, the survey team created a captive audience and therefore response rates went up. In addition, the prison staff and I made efforts to increase participation through advertisement prior to our arrival and

walking the prison ground throughout the day. The majority of those who approached us in high traffic areas or during inmate programs seemed excited and interested in participating. As a result, I am inclined to believe the lack of external incentives did not hinder our study response rates

Training

The survey team received minimal training prior to entering the state correctional institutions. As mentioned above, we did receive minimal training on informed consent. Additionally, I was able to preview the survey instrument and work with the prison staff prior to arrival in order to better understand the formal rules such as dress code and code of conduct. Although nothing can prepare you for your first time working inside a prison, better planning and training would most certainly have mitigated our challenges and increased the response rate. As such, I implemented a training process which I discuss in length in Chapter 4.

My Methods for Drawing Inferences from the Study

As CaliforniaVolunteers's AVP Project Lead, I led 13 volunteer groups into three California state-run prisons over the course of three months. I faced a number of challenges leading up to and during our time inside. The following Challenges and Implications chapter discusses my observations which developed from my daily methodological record of which a sample is located in Appendix A at the end of this report. In addition, I spoke anecdotally with the three participating Community Resources Managers (CRM), the prison staff members in charge of overseeing all volunteer-run inmate programs, correctional officers, and other prison and CDCR administrative staff.

Lastly, since completing the AVP study, I attended several meetings with key Executive Branch and CDCR executive staff members in which we presented our survey findings. During these meetings I gained additional knowledge surrounding what researchers should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons.

Summary

While administering the AVP survey inside three California state-run correctional institutions, my survey team and I gained firsthand experience on conducting research inside a prison setting. As the literature on this subject reflects, prisons are hostile, unwelcoming, and profoundly perplexing working environments. The publically funded study went through an IRB process and ensured informed consent, went over budget, collected over 1500 surveys without external incentives, and included limited survey team trainings. Fraught with challenges from start to finish, a great deal of the issues, concerns, and delays could have been mitigated with strategic planning, increased communication, and adequate training. Chapter 4 discusses how I met the project's challenges and lays out a set of recommendations for future prison-based research projects.

Chapter 4

CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

Conducting research inside prison environments comes with unique challenges such as repeated searches of personal items, limited interaction with respondents, and working under intimidating, remote, and complex conditions. As a result of my observations during the Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works (AVP) survey study and the completion of the literature review summarized in Chapter 2, I realized the current body of research lacks information surrounding what researchers should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons. In an effort to help future researchers, policy makers, and funders better address issues surrounding prison-based research, the present chapter lays out a set of challenges and implications related to my work on the AVP study. I base these challenges and implications on my participatory observations, daily methodological notes, and anecdotal conversations with CDCR and prison staff that I then drafted into a day-by-day methodological record.

IRB Process and Informed Consent

Challenge-IRB Process

Immediately upon joining the CaliforniaVolunteers survey team I realized a great deal of confusion encompassed the IRB phase of this project. My involvement in the AVP study began a few weeks before CaliforniaVolunteers received IRB approval. Thus, I have limited firsthand knowledge of the process leading up to notification, although I

met extensively with CaliforniaVolunteers, CDCR, and the private company's staff in order to understand the gravity of the situation and help mitigate further delays.

Although all human subject studies require IRB approval, CaliforniaVolunteers as a state agency not traditionally involved with social research, was unaware of this requirement. In fact, CaliforniaVolunteers understood the project to only require internal CDCR approval and not a formal IRB until almost a year into the project. As a result, the project went through its first delay while the private company prepared for and then presented to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the project received its second delay when the CPHS failed to give immediate approval.

Implications-IRB Process

Although the CPHS approval delay was clearly outside CaliforniaVolunteers, the CDCR, and the company's control, I believe a significant portion of the project's setbacks could have been mitigated with increased process understanding and communication between stakeholders. Specifically, although none of the stakeholders involved in the AVP study previously participated in publically funded, prison-based research projects, prison and inmate research holds a long academic history. Therefore, staff members at any one of the organizations should have looked into the rules surrounding conducting research inside California state-run prisons prior to signing off on the project and committing public funds. A simple Google search clearly indicates all publically funded studies involving vulnerable populations require IRB approval.

Challenge-Informed Consent

Upon entering Prison A on the first day, it became immediately apparent our informed consent procedures lacked effectiveness and proper safeguards in order to ensure anonymity and voluntary participation. For example, the survey team arrived with paper participant's bill of rights and consent forms without procedures in place addressing how to assist participants with literacy needs. A second challenge faced by the survey team involved safeguarding against involuntary participation as inmates by definition lack agency. Lastly, and admittedly more nuanced, ensuring respondents understood the purpose of the survey and their legal rights developed into a much larger task than conveyed in our initial training.

Implications-Informed Consent

As a result of these challenges, I quickly created and instated policies aimed at safeguarding informed consent. First, I instructed the survey team to read the informed consent related materials (as well as the entire survey) upon request without questioning legitimacy in order to mitigate embarrassment and/or bias. Next, although coercion rarely occurred, I did observe instances of prison staff either pressuring inmates to participate or hovering over them to finish. At these times, I immediately interceded and informed the prison staff of the study's strict voluntary requirements. Additionally, I instructed my team to immediately inform me upon observing coercive behavior. Lastly, as prison research reflects, researcher distrust runs high among inmate populations due to the long and brutal history surrounding prison-based experimentation. As such, I adjusted our approach by creating a script explaining to all interested parties the purpose of the survey

including what we planned to do with the data, voluntary participation and anonymity requirements, and a summary of all other participant's legal rights.

Funding

Challenge

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), through California Volunteers, funded the AVP study. As a publically funded project, the AVP study faced challenges including IRB approval and finding match funding sources. Specifically, requiring match funders increased the number and influence of stakeholders which ultimately complicated the collaboration process.

Implications

Although publically funded research studies inevitably come with unique sets of challenges, creating clear stakeholder task descriptions prior to signing off on projects would greatly reduce unforeseen issues. For example, the AVP project lacked specific job descriptions resulting in task by task negotiations between California Volunteers and the CDCR, which created confusion, contention, and delayed the project. Strategically planning the survey project's process backwards from desired outcomes to starting point and assigning specific tasks to each agency would have greatly increased communication and decreased the unfortunate anti-collaboration mentality that inevitably arose.

Research Costs

Challenge

Although the AVP study received federal, state, and private funding, costs far exceeded projected budget allocations. CNCS funding limits determined the AVP study's

budget, rather than projecting costs from a strategically planned line-item analysis. As a result, CaliforniaVolunteers eventually drew from its general funds in order to complete the project and meet CNCS and state requirements. In addition, as a result of inadequate understanding surrounding where and when to administer our survey inside Prison A, the survey team failed to meet the 500 respondent minimum response rate requirement. Consequently, we returned for a second multi-day visit which increased personnel time and travel costs. In the end, due to a lack of prison-based research experience both in terms of process and operational costs, the AVP study cost almost three times its initial budget (due to internal office regulations, I am prohibited from reporting actual costs).

Implications

Although I recognize the uniqueness of the AVP study in terms of its funding, process, and purpose as well as the difficulties surrounding estimating true costs, a line-item cost analysis would almost certainly have helped staff members stay within budget allocations. As shown in the below Table 4.1 Example Cost Analysis (due to participant anonymity requirements I am prohibited from using actual figures; as such, the figures below use rounded estimates), projecting costs using categories for personnel time, travel, and supplies for in the office as well as at the three prisons allows project design team members to gain valuable knowledge surrounding anticipated costs. Specifically, the chart shows, the hourly rates of participating personnel multiplied by the projected number of project hours of each staff member. Additionally, the analysis reflects the average hotel rate in the three prison neighborhoods as well as the maximum allowable costs for car rentals and per diem.

In addition to completing a projected cost analysis, increased communication between the survey team and each prison prior to entering would have helped reduce the project's costs. Although extremely helpful to the survey team while inside, communication between us and the Community Resources Managers (CRM), only included one thirty-minute call prior to entering each institution. The conversations covered security expectations and prison staff support, but failed to discuss day-of logistics.

Table 4.1 EXAMPLE COST ANALYSIS														
	Projected Hours	Hourly Rate	Lodging Per Night	Number of Nights	Total Lodging Costs	Car Rental Per Day	Number of Days	Total Car Rental Costs	Per Diem Per Day	Number of Days	Total Per Diem Cost	Number of Items	Cost Per Item	Total Costs
Office														
<i>Personnel Time</i>														
Staff Member A	500	\$35.00												\$17,500.00
Staff Member B	300	\$125.00												\$37,500.00
Staff Member C	100	\$45.00												\$4,500.00
Student Assistant	300	\$15.00												\$4,500.00
<i>Supplies</i>														
Pens/Pencils												50	\$0.50	\$25.00
Storage Items												2	\$250.00	\$500.00
Total Office Costs:														
\$64,525.00														
Prison A														
<i>Personnel Time</i>														
Staff Member A	30	\$35.00												\$1,050.00
Student Assistant	30	\$15.00												\$450.00
Total:														
\$1,500.00														
<i>Travel</i>														
Staff Member A			\$90.00	2	\$180.00	\$33.00	3	\$99.00	\$5.00	3	\$15.00			\$294.00
Student Assistant			\$90.00	2	\$180.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$5.00	3	\$15.00			\$195.00
<i>Supplies</i>														
Survey Copies												500	\$0.10	\$50.00
Informed Consent Material Copies												1000	\$0.10	\$100.00
Subtotal Costs Prison A:														
\$2,139.00														
Prison B														
<i>Personnel Time</i>														
Staff Member A	30	\$35.00												\$1,050.00
Student Assistant	30	\$15.00												\$450.00
Total:														
\$1,500.00														
<i>Travel</i>														
Staff Member A			\$120.00	2	\$240.00	\$33.00	3	\$99.00	\$5.00	2	\$10.00			\$349.00
Student Assistant			\$120.00	2	\$240.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$5.00	2	\$10.00			\$250.00
<i>Supplies</i>														
Survey Copies												500	\$0.10	\$50.00
Informed Consent Material Copies												1000	\$0.10	\$100.00
Subtotal Costs Prison B:														
\$2,249.00														
Prison C														
<i>Personnel Time</i>														
Staff Member A	30	\$35.00												\$1,050.00
Student Assistant	30	\$15.00												\$450.00
Total:														
\$1,500.00														
<i>Travel</i>														
Staff Member A			\$100.00	2	\$200.00	\$33.00	3	\$99.00	\$5.00	2	\$10.00			\$309.00
Student Assistant			\$100.00	2	\$200.00	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$5.00	2	\$10.00			\$210.00
<i>Supplies</i>														
Survey Copies												500	\$0.10	\$50.00
Informed Consent Material Copies												1000	\$0.10	\$100.00
Subtotal Costs Prison C:														
\$2,169.00														
Total Costs:														
\$71,082.00														

Incentives

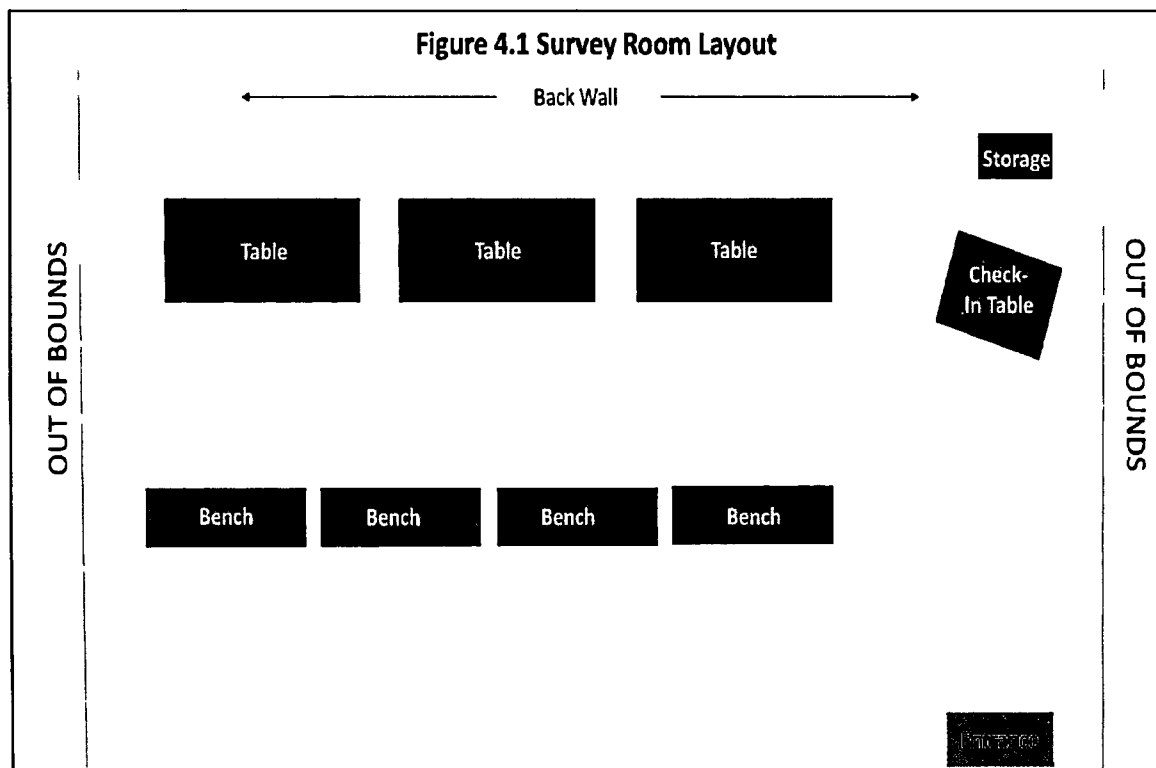
Challenge

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the AVP study did not include incentives and this did not appear to hinder our response rates. The challenges faced by the survey team in terms of survey response rate and participation derived from a lack of advertisement prior to our arrival at the three prisons, inadequate survey locations inside each facility, and an inability to gain access to all eligible inmates. Although both CDCR headquarter staff and I contacted each prison prior to arrival and instructed the staff members to advertise the survey through word of mouth, flyers, and announcements inside volunteer-run programs, the survey team received little support from the prison in this area. In addition, as mentioned above, our team spent a great deal of time strategizing the best location to administer the survey at each facility. Specifically, during my communications with both the prison and CDCR headquarter staff prior to entering each facility, I was granted access to inmate programs in order to administer the survey in groups. Upon arrival, it came to my attention two of the facilities failed to inform the inmate programs of our arrival and therefore were unable to accommodate us without a great deal of disruption. As a result, we relied much more heavily on one-on-one participation, which both takes a greater amount of time and produces lower response rates. Lastly, due to time constraints, the survey team failed to gain access to all eligible inmates. Physically large, correctional institutions by design incorporate long spaces with multiple gates and check points throughout the prison. As such, valuable time went into moving from one yard to the next which prohibited our team from reaching all eligible inmates within each facility.

Implications

In order to meet our minimal response rates of 500 respondents per correctional institution, I communicated with prison staff, specifically, project point people including CRMs and their support staff, and strategized locations prior to entering Prisons B and C. Our survey team administered twice as many surveys within half the amount of time at Prison C because I made additional efforts to communicate via email our needs to their CRM prior to arrival. As a result of my experiences at Prisons A and B, I explicitly directed the staff to post flyers of the dates, times, and locations at least 5 days before we arrived.

In addition, I expressed my desire to administer the survey in groups, as shown below in Figure 4.1. Creating a working space with a single entry point and large tables and benches available to accommodate small and large groups of participants helped



increase our numbers; it also helped with crowd control. Additionally, having adequate volunteer staff on hand to assist our efforts during busy periods of time greatly increased our response rate. As participants entered the room and sat down, the survey team distributed the informed consent materials. After the room filled up, I then used our script and explained the purpose of the survey, the participant's bill of rights, and consent forms. Next, the team dispersed the survey instrument to all interested participants.

In addition to advertisement and administering the survey to groups rather than one-one-one, our success at Prison C stemmed from increased communication with the Community Resources Managers (CRM) during our site visit. Specifically, I inquired about onsite transportation and other day-of needs such as the formal rules including prohibiting inmates from gathering in certain areas as indicated in Figure 4.1. As such, Prison C provided us with golf carts driven by prison administrative staff and made additional efforts to ensure our team understood expectations.

Training

Challenge

As the current body of literature reflects, success in conducting field research inside a prison environment derives from adequate and proper training. The AVP project included training for both myself and the volunteer survey team I put together. As mentioned above, my training, which was conducted by a contracted criminologist familiar with the policy issue, lacked sufficient information in order to help me ensure informed consent, meet our minimal response rate requirements, and achieve overall success of the project. Although the training included information surrounding the survey

instrument and formal prison rules such as dress, it lacked adequate information in order to logistically prepare the survey team. As such, I spent a great deal of time while inside each facility strategizing how to accomplish our goals and train my volunteers properly.

Implications

Although I recognize conducting research inside prison environments comes with its own set of unique challenges and that no amount of training can fully prepared anyone for their first time entering a correctional institution, the AVP study lacked logistical training and therefore hindered our efforts to reach goals without adding unnecessary expense. As a result of the literature review I completed for my initial thesis research project, I gained knowledge that greatly helped us on the inside. For example, I learned creating training sessions which cover the day's events, prison specific structures and layouts, reviews of survey instruments and accompanying materials, and an overview of informed consent greatly reduces challenges. As such, I created a half hour training session found below in Appendix B. Next, as the literature recommended, I created a day-by-day survey schedule indicating our entry and exit as well as training times, a copy of which is located in Appendix C. Additionally, I found creating a survey team schedule with names and phone numbers (see Table 4.2 for an example) helped ensure the survey team arrived on time and ready to begin once we convened.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>New Team Member</u>
September 1, 2015	Leah Farkas	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	n/a
	Christal Stafford-Odel	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Helen Cox	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Ragan Wicker	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	John Scott	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Sarah Trammel Hustwit	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
September 2, 2015	Leah Farkas	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	
	Christal Stafford-Odel	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	
	Dan Spatz	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Ilan Pudhomme	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Ragan Wicker	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	
	Krystal Morrow	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
September 3, 2015	Leah Farkas	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	
	Ferne Gaines	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Joy Friedler	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Helen Cox	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	
	Garrick Lynn	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New
	Michael Ring	(xxx) xxx-xxxx	New

Lastly, as suggested in the literature, checklists help researchers plan out each day's events. As such, I drafted facility-specific checklists such as shown in Table 4.3, listing all of our required materials including training sheets, schedules, and legal forms such as waivers of liability and emergency contact forms.

Table 4.3 Prison A Checklist	
<u>In Folder</u>	
1.	Training Sheet
2.	Volunteer Schedule with Contact Information
3.	Survey Schedule
4.	Contraband List
5.	Waiver Forms
6.	Emergency Contact Forms
7.	Gate Clearance Approval Printout
8.	Welcome Letter
9.	500 Prisoner Surveys
10.	500 Prisoner Instruction Sheet
11.	500 Consent Form
12.	500 Participant Bill of Rights
13.	50 Numbered Pencils
14.	Labeled and Dated Medium Envelopes
15.	10 Large Envelopes with CV Address
16.	500 CO Surveys
17.	500 CO Instruction Sheets
18.	500 CV Envelopes

Key Findings

As the California Volunteers, Prison Survey Project Lead for the Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works research study I faced several challenges which hindered our success and increased expenditures beyond the projected budget. As a result of the literature review I completed as part of my initial thesis, I realized many of the challenges we faced could have been mitigated with increased communication between stakeholders, training, and research. As such, I created a set of key findings listing the challenges and solutions I previously outlined. My hope is that this summary will help future researchers, policy makers, and funders gain understanding as to what they should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons.

Table 4.4 Key Findings		
Category	Challenge	Solution
IRB Process	Does project need approval?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research requirements prior to drafting project design and allocating funds. All publicly funded research projects using human subjects in the United States require IRB approval.
Informed Consent	A major concern when researching vulnerable populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a strategy with specific need-based policies. • Make sure all survey team members understand informed consent and surrounding policies. • Have a script for all team members to use that covers the project's purpose, voluntary participation and anonymity, legal rights, and any other important aspects of the study.
Funding	Publicly funded projects often require match funding which increases the number and influence of stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an atmosphere of communication and transparency between all stakeholders. • Create specific task descriptions identifying expectations. • Assign tasks to stakeholders. • Create and implement communication mechanism so that all stakeholders have a way to knowledge share.
Costs	AVP study cost 3 times the projected budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft a projected cost analysis. • Back into cost figures starting with desired outcomes and assigning costs to each line item.
Incentives	Reduced response rate because of lack of advertisement prior to arrival, inadequate survey locations, and reduced access to eligible populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly express needs to prison staff prior to arrival. • Have prison staff advertise the survey through flyers, word of mouth, and announcements at least 5 days prior to arrival. • Plan out survey locations prior to arrival while keeping in mind administering surveys to groups reduces costs and increases response rates. • Keep in mind prison are large spaces. Prior to arrival make arrangements to have transportation between yards and gates as needed. • Plan to spend enough days inside each facility in order to meet minimum response rate requirements.
Training	Successful research projects require adequate and proper team member training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research prior projects in order to gain understanding as to what researchers should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons. • Conduct team member training sessions covering each day's events, prison structures and layouts, the survey instruments, and informed consent. • Create a day-by-day survey schedule identifying entry and exit times, locations, activities, and other important information. • Create a survey team schedule with dates, names, and phone numbers. • Create a survey checklist listing all required materials including documents and other support items

Limitations

The limitations of my analysis of what researchers should know about doing public policy studies inside prisons stem from a lack of information surrounding the formal and informal rules of a particular prison setting. Each prison holds within its walls a unique set of norms, procedures, security levels, and processes. As such, it is quite difficult to fully understand expectations and logistically plan prison-based research projects.

Although it appears conducting one-on-one surveys in high traffic areas is logistically easier for prisons, as the AVP study shows, this technique produces lower response rates. We know less about the group dynamics that produce the highest response rates. Specifically, it would be helpful to know 1) What is the ideal size of an inmate respondent group given the overall size of a prison population, what types of programs will contribute the largest percentage of participants? 2) What time of day/evening gives the highest chance of participation? 3) What are the group dynamics that produce the highest response rates? 4) Are these factors the same across all correctional institutions or are they prison specific?

Additionally, prisons by design are obtuse institutions and reluctant to share inside information about internal processes and procedures. As such, a lot of what researchers need to know about conducting research inside a prison setting will only be learned after work begins. If I had gained access to additional prison staff in a formal debrief setting, it is entirely possible I would have gained additional insider information.

As a result of my limited one-on-one access to prison staff, I cannot create an exact “how-to” manual but rather only communicate a set of lessons learned.

Conclusion

Conducting publicly funded, human subject research in a prison setting comes with its own unique set of challenges in such areas as required IRB approval, special attention needed to ensure informed consent, match funding which increases the influence and number of stakeholders, cost analysis, strategic planning surrounding incentivizing participation, and adequate and proper training. As a result of participating in the AVP study, I now realize doing prison-based field work requires additional planning and strategizing compared to the free world due to the unique set of challenges surrounding conducting research inside a prison environment. This gaining in depth knowledge of the formal and informal rules of each particular prison involved in the study, maintain a high level of communication with all participating stakeholders including prison staff members whom often have limited access to cell phones and email, and costing out the different components of the study with particular attention paid to travel costs as part of the project design stage.

Additionally, I believe it is important to explicitly express needs to each correctional facility and follow up regularly with requests and updates. Specifically, successful prison-based research projects conduct their work in ideal locations which should be determined prior to arrival. Lastly, prison-based research requires adequate and proper training. Sending survey teams inside a hostile, isolated, and abstruse environment such as many of the prison across the United States without adequate training not only

fails to ensure project success and informed consent, but also quite literally puts people at risk. I cannot stress enough how important training is to the success and safety of any prison-based project.

Appendix A

Assessing Prison Volunteer Programs to Determine What Works - Inmate Survey Example Methodological Record

Dates: Fall 2015

Outline

- I. Materials List
- II. Volunteer Training
- III. Inmate Survey Instrument
- IV. Anonymous and Voluntary Participation
- V. Prison Specific Methodology
 - A. Administering Survey Set-up and Procedures
 - B. Roadblocks
 - C. Keys to Success

I. Materials List

A. All Facilities

- Training Sheet
- Volunteer Schedule with Contact Information
- Survey Schedule
- Contraband List
- California Volunteers Waiver of Liability
- Emergency Contact Forms
- Gate Clearance Approvals
- Welcome Letter

B. Prison A

- 500 Inmate Surveys
- 500 Instruction Sheets
- 500 Participant Bill of Rights (PBR)
- 500 consent forms
- 60 Pencils, 20 Pens
- Labeled and Dated Large Envelopes for Completed Surveys
- Labeled and Dated Medium Envelopes for Completed Consent Forms

II. Volunteer Training

A. Project Overview

- California Volunteers and Project Funding
- Prison survey project- measuring volunteerism inside the California state prison system

B. Prison Protocol

- Entering facility
- Meet outside main gate, enter as team
- State issued ID
- Appropriate attire
- Contraband list

C. Exiting facility

- All items must be retrieved
- State issued ID
- All team members exit together

D. Interacting with inmates

- Participation STRICTLY voluntary
- Be respectful and courteous
- Avoid sharing personal details
- Do not speak ill of guards/COs/CDCR staff members
- No physical interactions
- Be aware of biasing inmate responses

E. Review Survey Instrument (see below for details)

F. Review Survey Administration (see below for details)

G. Role of Community Resources Manager (CRM)

III. Inmate Survey Instrument

A. No names or other inmate identifying information on survey

B. Numbered surveys

C. 10 pages, 100 questions, 6 sections

IV. Anonymous and Voluntary Participation

- A. Participant Bill of Rights (PBR)
 - Delivered to inmates by CV staff and/or volunteers
 - Summarized, read or translated as necessary by CV staff and/or volunteers

- B. Informed Consent
 - Background and purpose
 - Forms delivered to inmates by CV staff and/or volunteers
 - Summarized, read, or translated as necessary by CV staff and/or volunteers
 - Singed by inmates and returned to CV staff and/or volunteers
 - Placed in secured envelope by CV staff and/or volunteers

- C. Surveys
 - Delivered to inmates
 - Read or translated as necessary by CV staff and/or volunteers
 - Returned to and placed in secured envelope by CV staff and/or volunteers

I. Prison Specific Methodology

Prison A
Fall 2015

A. Administering Survey Set-up and Procedures

Day 1:

- Team: 6 (2 CV staff, 3 volunteers, 1 CRM)
- 5 inmate volunteers
- Volunteer training: 30 minutes, in person
- Entered Facility: 10:30 am
- Exited Facility: 3:30 pm

Survey Announcements

- a) Main yard, education block, multipurpose room, and outside of north block (housing unit)
 - 1 CV staff, 1 CRM
 - Group: General Population

- CV staff member made one announcement per group or each person explaining survey purpose, PBR, and consent form and then directed inmates to the gym

Gymnasium

a) Physical Set-up

- 2 CV staff, 3 volunteers
- Group: General Population
- Inmates assisted set-up and breakdown
- 3 large tables, 2 benches, 25 chairs
- 1 check-in table with PBR, consent forms, and surveys
- Instruction sheets on large tables

b) Procedure

- CV staff explained survey purpose, PBR, and consent form to individual inmates
- CV staff collected signed consent forms
- Volunteers directed inmates to seats, delivered survey, and explained directions
- CV staff and volunteers informed inmates of missing answer options, questions B1 & B2, fielded questions and assisted inmates as needed
- CV staff collected completed surveys

Day 2:

- Team: 5 (2 CV staff, 2 volunteers, 1 CRM)
- 5 inmate volunteers
- Volunteer training: 30 minutes
- Entered Facility: 9:30 am
- Exited facility: 3:30pm

Survey Announcements

- a) Main yard, education block, multipurpose room, and outside of north block (housing unit)
 - 1 CV staff, 1 CRM
 - Group: General Population
 - CV staff member made one announcement per group or each person explaining survey purpose, PBR, and consent form and then directed inmates to the gym

- a) Chapels
 - 1 CV staff members, 1 CRM support staff member
 - 3 Groups: Group 1: 25 inmates, Group 2: 30, Group 3: 10 inmates
 - CV staff member made one announcement per group explaining survey purpose, PBR, and consent form and then directed inmates to the gym.

Gymnasium

- a) Physical Set-up
 - 1 CV staff, 2 volunteers
 - Same as Day 1
- b) Procedure
 - Same as Day 1
 - Inmates informed of handwritten answer option on questions B1 & B2

Education Block and Multipurpose Room

- a) Physical Set-up
 - 1 CV staff member, 1 CRM
 - 2 Groups:
 - Inmate Program: 5 inmates
 - Inmate Program: 5 inmates
 - Dozens of tables and chairs
- b) Procedure
 - CV staff explained survey purpose, PBR, and consent form to each group
 - CV staff member handed out PBR and consent forms
 - CV staff member collected signed consent forms and delivered surveys with instruction sheets
 - CV staff member circulated between the three groups, fielding questions and collecting completed surveys

Day 3:

- Team: 4 (2 CV staff, 1 volunteer, 1 CRM support staff)
- 3 inmate volunteers
- Volunteer training: 30 minutes
- Entered Facility: 9:30 am
- Exited facility: 3:30pm

Survey Announcements

- a) Main yard, education block, multipurpose room, and outside of north block (housing unit)

- 1 CV staff, 1 CRM
- Group: General Population
- CV staff member made one announcement per group or each person explaining survey purpose, PBR, and consent form and then directed inmates to the gym

b) Chapels

- 1 CV staff members, 1 CRM support staff member
- 3 Groups: Group 1: 60 inmates, Group 2: 30
- CV staff member made one announcement per group explaining survey purpose, PBR, and consent form and then directed inmates to the gym.

Gymnasium

a) Physical Set-up

- Setup same as Days 1 and 2

b) Procedure

- Same as Days 1 and 2
- CV staff member walked the gym and invited inmates to participate

Multipurpose Room

a) Physical Set-up

- 2 CV staff members and 1 volunteer
- 1 Group:
 - Inmate Program.:10 inmates
- 1 large table with chairs

b) Procedure

- CV staff explained survey purpose, PBR, and consent form to group
- Second CV staff member and volunteer handed out PBR and consent forms
- Second CV staff member collected signed consent forms and delivered surveys with instruction sheets
- Both CV staff member fielded questions and collected completed surveys
- Inmates informed of new handwritten answer option on Questions B1 & B2

B. Roadblocks

Survey Instrument

- a) Error on instrument: Missing answer option "Never or Almost Never" on questions B1 and B2- inmates were informed of error within the first 15 minutes

of our arrival. They were instructed to write "None, never, zero etc" if this was the most applicable answer.

Limited Access to Population

- a) Gym geographically isolated, we were removed from main yard where the majority of inmates were gathered
- b) Not all eligible inmates utilize main yard or gym
- c) CV staff were prohibited from administering survey inside of housing blocks

Limited Outreach Prior to Visit

- a) Programs unaware of survey prior to our arrival
- b) Inmates unaware of survey prior to our arrival
- c) No flyers, banners, announcements made prior to visit

Competing Activities

- a) Inmate work obligations
- b) Saturday: outside special program
- c) Sunday: family visitation and NFL football games

Institutional Barriers

- a) Yard is Down'
 - After any and all fights the entire inmate population is required to stop and sit on the ground exactly where they are and wait until the prison is cleared. This is to help ensure that a fight does not take place as a decoy for other misbehavior.
 - On Saturday the yard was down 2.5 hours, therefore inmates were prohibited from entering the gym or moving about the prison hindering our ability to administer the survey.
- b) No CRM support staff, CRM only point person and had other obligations while we were on site

C. Keys to Success

Support

- a) CRM: helped mitigate gate delays, facilitated day-of survey outreach to programs and individual inmates, and engaged correctional staff to assist and support CV staff efforts
- b) Inmates: assisted with physical set-up and breakdown, participated in survey outreach, helped assure other inmates survey was anonymous and voluntary
- c) Volunteers: assisted in all aspects of administering the inmate survey, worked with a high level of professionalism and flexibility

- d) Sharon at Algorhythm quickly addressing survey error

Lessons Learned

- a) More effective to tie survey to Governor's office than to Algorhythm. Inmates interested in giving Governor's office insight but reluctant to give information to private unknown company
- b) Location is very important. Survey must be administered in high traffic area
- c) Offenders serving time inside of the California state correctional system self-identify as inmates rather than prisoners. As such, the CV team began referring to inmates as such and began referring to the survey as the "inmate survey instrument"

Appendix B
Survey Team Training




**PRISON SURVEY PROJECT TRAINING
PRISON A
September, 2015**

- *Welcome*
- *Overview of day*
- *Introductions*
- *Training*
 - *Entering the facility*
 - *Parking*
 - *Walking in together*
 - *IDs*
 - *Meeting with CRM*
 - *What is a CRM*
 - *Why we are meeting up*
 - *Set-up Inside the Facility*
 - *The Survey Instrument*
 - *10 pages, 100 questions, 6 sections*
 - *Sections are: Background Information, Behavior While Incarcerated, Program Participation, Prime Adjustment Questionnaire, Self-Esteem Scale, and Motivation to Change*
 - *Surveys are numbered and it is imperative they are distributed in numerical order*
 - *Estimated to take each inmate 20-30 minutes*
 - *Administering the Survey*
 - *Participants will come up to the tables at their leisure*
 - *Survey team will explain the survey, give them the Participant Bill of Rights (which they take with them) and Consent form*
 - *Once participants sign the consent form it will be placed in an envelope that will be sealed at the end of the day*

- *Survey team will give them the survey and the instruction sheet.*
- *Survey team will direct them to a spot at the table*
- *Survey team will help answer questions and translate*
- *Once participants have completed the survey they will return the survey team who will place it in an envelope that will be sealed at the end of the day*
- *Survey Scoring*
- *Exiting*
 - *We will pack up and exit together*
 - *We must leave with the all of the surveys and all of the pencils*
- *Wrap-Up and Debrief*
 - *We will have a quick wrap-up and debriefing session in the parking lot*
 - *We ask you to please fill out a short survey*
- *Incidentals*
 - *Inmates must participate voluntarily*
 - *You are permitted to bring a brown bag lunch*
 - *There is a cash only snack bar inside*
 - *We expect to be inside at least 5 hours from the time we walk in until we exit*
 - *There are no cell phones, computers, etc. inside*
- *CaliforniaVolunteers thanks you for your time, efforts, and good work!*

Appendix C

Survey
Schedule

		PRISON A PROJECT SCHEDULE September, 2015	
 California Volunteers Office of the Governor	TE	SCHEDULE	
		September 1, 2015	8:30 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. 3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.
September 2, 2015	9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. 3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Volunteer Meet and Greet (for new volunteers) Training (for new volunteers) Enter Facility Begin Surveying Finish Surveying Exit Facility	
September 3, 2015	9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. 3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Volunteer Meet and Greet (for new volunteers) Training (for new volunteers) Enter Facility Begin Surveying Finish Surveying Exit Facility	

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