ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES OF REGISTERED SEX AND KIDNAPPING OFFENDERS IN WASHINGTON STATE

FINAL REPORT

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Crime and Justice Research Center

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from a survey of 402 registered sex and kidnapping offenders in Washington State regarding their perceptions of registration and notification as implemented by Washington State's Community Protection Act and the federal system's Sex Offender Notification Act. The purpose of this research is to examine the views of registrants regarding the impact of registration to in Washington State to understand how registration impacts the reintegration of sex and kidnapping offenders in the community post-registration.

A survey was administered to a stratified random sample of 6,065 sex and kidnapping offender registrants drawn from the 18,148 adult registered sex and kidnapping offenders in Washington State. The survey included questions designed to solicit information regarding the general impact of registration, experiences with registration, the impact on employment, education, housing, and relationships, and views on registration and its relationship to public safety.

Results show that:

- The majority of registrants indicate that they were negatively impacted by registration.
- Perceived negative impact of registration did not significantly differ by registration level.
- There was no significant difference in terms of negative impact by demographic characteristics including sex, race, age, education, and income level.
- Level 1 offenders were more likely than level 2 and 3 offenders to rate shame as a negative impact.
- Level 2 and 3 offenders were more likely to believe that assigned risk classification should be regularly reviewed and less likely to agree with their assigned risk classification level.
- Level 3 offenders were more likely to report being denied a place to live, lack of access to education, feeling forced to live in high crime area, being excluded from online communities, being asked to leave a public space, being required to have contact with law enforcement, and being publicly recognized as an offender.
- Eastern WA respondents were more likely than Western Washington respondents to report losing a close relationship or be physically assaulted.
- The top reported impacts of registration were stigma and fear.
- The top reported challenges were finding housing and feeling ostracized.
- Regarding the impact on public safety, the majority of respondents disagreed that registration will protect their neighbors from them, but agreed that registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find them.
- Respondent suggestions for improvements to the registration process included reevaluation of levels, making the process more private and discreet, and having a more objective review to determine level.

The findings offer information to better understand the impact of sex and kidnapping registration from the perspective of registrants and the ways in which registration may impact community reintegration and reentry. Findings suggest that the negative impacts of sex and kidnapping registration affect registrants at all levels with consequences ranging from shame, stigma, ostracism, and fear of being physically harmed, to difficulties in obtaining housing and employment. Through the survey, registrants also offered constructive suggestions such as making the process more discreet, using objective tools to determine and reevaluate levels, and educating the public about ways to support registrants in the reintegration process to enhance public safety. Changes to the registration process that acknowledge the perspective of registrants may contribute to constructive changes to have the potential to improve opportunities for reentry and reintegration.

INTRODUCTION

The Community Protection Act of 1990 instituted sex offender registration in Washington State and civil commitment of sexually violent predators. The kidnapping provision to the law was added in 1997. One of the provisions of the law was community notification authorizing law enforcement agencies to release sex offender information to the public when law enforcement determined that disclosure of the information is relevant and necessary to protect the public. The Washington State law was the first in the country to implement sex offender notification and was followed by other states and the federal system. Since 1990, the Washington State law has been amended to expand its application, to increase citizen access, and uniformity across counties (WSIPP, February, 2006). Currently, all 50 states and the federal system have some form of sex offender registration (Matson & Lieb, 1996). In 2006, Title 1 of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act established a comprehensive, national sex offender registration system called the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA). SORNA aims to close potential gaps and loopholes that existed under prior laws, and to strengthen the nationwide network of sex offender registrations (United States Department of Justice, n.d.).

People who are obligated to register as sex and kidnapping offenders in Washington State must report personal information and other data to the county sheriff's office in their county of residence (RCW 9A.44.130). This includes their names, complete and accurate residential addresses, birthdates, places of birth, employment addresses, school addresses, criminal convictions, dates and places of criminal convictions, aliases, social security numbers, photographs, fingerprints, and DNA samples. Sheriff's deputies or police officers may monitor and visit the homes of registered sex and kidnapping offenders to verify their addresses. The length of time in which individuals are required to register is predicated on their criminal convictions. For people convicted of certain Class A felonies, their duty to register is indefinite. At the same time, individuals with two or more sex or kidnapping offenses must register indefinitely. People who were convicted of certain Class B felonies are obligated to register for 15 consecutive years after the last date of release from confinement or entry of the judgment and sentence. Individuals with certain Class C felony convictions and gross misdemeanor sex offenses must register for 10 consecutive years after the last date of release from confinement or entry of the judgment and sentence. During their registration periods, registered sex and kidnapping offenders cannot be convicted of a disqualifying offense, which includes any felony, sex crime, crime against children or other vulnerable persons, crime with a domestic violence designation, or permitting the commercial sexual abuse of a minor. Once registered sex and kidnapping offenders believe they have completed their periods of mandated registration, they must contact the county sheriff's office in their county of residence to be relieved of their duty to register. The county sheriff's office subsequently reviews their records and approves or denies whether or not the duty to register is terminated. Until their duty to register is terminated, registered sex and kidnapping offenders must provide their information and whereabouts to law enforcement at regular intervals as determined by their respective county sheriff's offices.

Prior to 2007, people who were subjected to registration were assigned a risk level classification by the local county sheriff's office using a sex offender risk level classification tool that varied by jurisdiction (WSIPP, January 2006). Since the inception of sex offender registration requirements in Washington State, many revisions have been made to strengthen these laws. In response to efforts in the law enforcement, attorneys, and others in the criminal justice community, in 2007 the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) created the Model Policy for Washington State Law Enforcement Adult and Juvenile Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification (Washington Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, 2007) to provide guidance to law enforcement agencies regarding sex offender notification and registration. The recommendations are made by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police (WASPC) to assist local law enforcement agencies with the development of policies and procedures regarding sex offender

registration classification. While the Washington State law does not specify risk assessment tools to be utilized, the WASPC Model Policy recommends that the Static 99R be used as the primary risk assessment tool for adult male sex offenders. Because the Static 99R has not been empirically validated for use on female and juvenile offenders, the Static 99R is used with special considerations when assessing risk in female offenders and the Washington State Sex Offender Risk Level Classification (WSSORLC) tool is the primary risk assessment tool used for juvenile sex offenders. Individuals who are assigned to Level I are labeled as low risks to sexually reoffend within the community at large. People with a Level II classification are said to be at a moderate risk to sexually reoffend in the community at large. Individuals designated as Level III offenders are believed to represent a high risk to sexually reoffend in the community at large. There is no community notification for people designated as Level 1. Community notification is triggered for Level II and III offenders (on the state's internet site, mailings to neighbors).

Goals of Project

The purpose of this project is to examine the views of registrants regarding the impact of registration in Washington State to advance our understandings of how registration impacts community reintegration and reentry of sex and kidnapping offenders. This study uses empirical methods to illustrate the impacts of registration in Washington State to aid criminal justice practitioners and treatment professionals, to better serve sex and kidnapping offenders as correctional clients, and to better inform scholars and policymakers as to the impacts of registration on public safety and reintegration and reentry in Washington State.

Literature Review

There is a growing body of research that examines how various populations in the United States perceive SORN legislation. To date, these studies focus on how the public, lawmakers, criminal justice officials, treatment professionals, registered sex offenders (RSOs), family members of RSOs, and support partners of RSOs view and experience SORN laws. Each social group observes and manages the impacts of SORN policies differently, but the collective attitudes, beliefs, and experiences suggest that such mandates are not only widely endorsed but also lacking in efficacy.

Public Views of Sex Offender Registration and Notification

The available evidence shows that the American public largely endorse SORN laws. Community members in the United States almost always express a desire to have information readily available to them about all types of people who are convicted of all types of sex offenses (Harris & Socia, 2016; Katz-Schiavone & Jeglic, 2009; Kernsmith, Craun, & Foster, 2009; Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker, 2007). Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, and Baker (2007) surveyed 193 adult residents of Melbourne, Florida who were not convicted of sex offenses and revealed that more than three-quarters of them believed that all sex offenders should be obligated to fulfil SORN requirements. Only 3% of these residents felt that no information about convicted sex offenders should be made publicly available. Risk level does not appear to impact the public's desire to know about people convicted of sex offenses. Katz-Schiavone and Jeglic (2009) surveyed 115 community members from 15 different states, and they found that a majority believed that high risk sex offenders (89%), moderate risk sex offenders (82%), and low risk sex offenders (51%) should be subjected to public exposure through SORN.

The public also frequently consider SORN policies to be fair strategies for monitoring sexual lawbreakers in communities (Brannon, Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Katz-Schiavone & Jeglic, 2009), despite simultaneously recognizing the drawbacks facing convicted sex offenders that stem from such mandates (Katz-Schiavone & Jeglic, 2009; Lieb & Nunlist, 2008; Phillips, 1998). Phillips (1998) surveyed approximately 400 Washington residents from rural and urban regions and found that 75% believed that the state's SORN law made it difficult for convicted sex offenders to find jobs, establish housing, and

form social relationships. At the same time, however, less than one-half of these Washington residents thought convicted sex offenders should be given every opportunity for a new start as law-abiding citizens. Ten years later, Lieb and Nunlist (2008) followed up on Washington residents' attitudes and beliefs about SORN and surveyed 643 individuals from rural and urban regions in the state. They revealed that 84% (compared to 75% in 1998) felt that the SORN policy made it difficult for convicted sex offenders to find jobs, establish housing, and form social relationships. As SORN legislation persisted, a greater proportion of Washington residents acknowledged the harmful ramifications that potentially stemmed from such mandates. Still, support for SORN remained strong, as nearly 80% reported that SORN was very important.

In addition, the American public commonly views SORN laws as effective responses to the problem of sexual violence (Katz-Schiavone & Jeglic, 2009; Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Lieb & Nunlist, 2008; Phillips, 1998). Phillips (1998) reported that more than 60% of Washington residents believed that SORN made released sex offenders behave better than they would otherwise. The proportion of Washington residents who felt that SORN made released sex offenders behave better than they would otherwise remained largely the same 10 years later at 63% (Lieb & Nunlist, 2008).

Lawmakers' Views of Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Qualitative evidence suggests that lawmakers, when compared with the American public, are less certain about the usefulness of SORN polices (Sample & Kadleck, 2008; Meloy, Boatwright, & Curtis, 2013; Meloy, Curtis, & Boatwright, 2013). However, they are also more reluctant than the public to acknowledge the negative consequences that may arise for publicly identified sex offenders (Sample & Kadleck, 2008; Meloy, Boatwright, & Curtis, 2013; Meloy, Curtis, & Boatwright, 2013). After conducting interviews with 21 state representatives and 4 state senators, Sample and Kadleck (2008) reported that just over one-fourth of Illinois legislators thought that SORN policies led to negative outcomes, such as threats and ostracism, for RSOs. Similarly, Meloy and colleagues (Meloy, Boatwright, & Curtis, 2013; Meloy, Curtis, & Boatwright, 2013) found that only 2 of the 61 lawmakers who completed interviews admitted that there was a possibility for registered sex offenders to experience harmful ramifications. Criminologists have posited that legislators may be unable or unwilling to accept that they are responsible for mandates that cause human suffering (Connor & Tewksbury, 2017).

Criminal Justice System Officials' Views of Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Apart from the perceptions of the American public and lawmakers, studies have examined what criminal justice system officials think about SORN laws, including law enforcement officers (Cubellis, Walfield, & Harris, 2018; Finn, 1997; Gaines, 2006; Harris, Levenson, Lobanov-Rostovsky, & Walfield, 2018; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2013), judges (Bumby & Maddox, 1999; Lennon, 2015), prison wardens (Connor, 2012), parole board members (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2012), and community corrections professionals (Datz, 2009; Tewksbury, Mustaine, & Payne, 2013; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000a). Once juxtaposed with the public and lawmakers, these criminal justice officials (with the exception of judges) appear to have more nuanced attitudes toward the value of SORN policies. On the whole, justice system officials express support for SORN and consider it to be a fair approach to addressing the presence of convicted sex offenders in communities. Looking between groups of criminal justice officials, law enforcement officers hold the most "negative" views of SORN laws (Finn, 1997; Gaines, 2006; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2013), and judges hold the most "positive" views of such policies (Bumby & Maddox, 1999; Lennon, 2015). What makes police officers the most negative is that they often do not see SORN as capable of preventing sex offenses or providing specific or general deterrence (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2013), which runs contrary to the perspectives of most prison wardens (Connor, 2012), parole board members (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2012), and community corrections professionals (Datz, 2009; Tewksbury, Mustaine, & Payne, 2011) who generally accept the premise that SORN stops sexual victimization yet reject its ability to deter.

Law enforcement officials also believe that SORN is challenging to execute and difficult to maintain. Among the 21 law enforcement officers responsible for maintaining online sex offender registries across the 11 states in his sample, Gaines (2006) found that nearly one-half struggled to

implement SORN laws, as it was difficult to obtain full compliance from convicted sex offenders throughout their lengthy or permenant registration and notification obligations. Maintaining the home addresses of convicted sex offenders was viewed as one of the most challenging aspects of implementing SORN policies, and it was said to undermine the ability of law enforcement to actively monitor persons who were most in need of surveillance. Finn (1997) conducted telephone interviews with 13 criminal justice practitioners from eight different jurisdictions. His findings observed that law enforcement officers frequently saw SORN laws as burdensome, as they consumed a significant amount of time that could be utilized for better purposes. Community corrections officials also report problems with implementing SORN mandates (Datz, 2009; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000a). Datz (2009) collected data from 259 probation and parole officers who supervised at least some convicted sex offenders in Florida and found that many of them had increased workloads as a direct result of SORN laws.

Only two identified studies have examined the differences between groups of criminal justice system officials. However, such research supports the notion that law enforcement officers hold the most negative and punitive perceptions about SORN. In the most comprehensive and methodologically rigorous study of criminal justice professionals' attitudes and beliefs toward SORN, Mustaine, Tewksbury, Connor, and Payne (2015) examined the views of officials in policing (i.e., law enforcement officers), criminal courts (i.e., prosecutors), and corrections (i.e., prison wardens, parole board members, and community corrections professionals). They found that law enforcement officers and prosecutors had the most negative and punitive views of SORN, as well as the highest degrees of belief in the fairness of SORN. In addition, Redlich (2001) compared the perceptions of 109 community members with those of 78 law enforcement officers and 82 law students. She discovered that law enforcement officers were more likely to believe that SORN laws did not violate rights of convicted sex offenders and to express support for such policies.

Treatment Professionals' Views of Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Support for SORN laws among treatment professionals is not strong (Call, 2015; Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2010). Levenson, Fortney, and Baker (2010) surveyed 261 sexual abuse professionals who attended professional sexual abuse conferences and found that only 13% completely agreed with such policies in their state. Treatment professionals also often do not believe that such policies adequately protect communities from sexual victimization (Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2010; Malesky & Keim, 2001). After surveying 133 mental health professionals who worked with convicted sex offenders, Malesky and Keim (2001) revealed that over 80% did not think that publicly available sex offender registries impacted the number of children who were sexually abused in the United States. At the same time, treatment professionals largely regard SORN laws as unfair for people convicted of sex offenses (Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2010; Malesky & Keim, 2001). However, those who primarily work with sexual abuse victims hold more favorable views toward SORN than those who primarily work with perpetrators (Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2010). In addition, treatment professionals who identify more with the mental health profession frequently see SORN laws more positively than treatment professionals who identify as criminal justice employees (Call, 2015).

Registered Sex Offenders, Family Members, and Support Partners Views of Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Convicted sex offenders who are obligated to register and cooperate with public notification procedures under SORN laws, their family members, and their support partners commonly experience negative outcomes that result from such policies. These collateral consequences include stigmatization (Connor, 2019a; Evans & Cubellis, 2015; Robbers, 2009; Tewksbury, 2005, 2012; Tewksbury & Lees, 2006a), ostracism (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b), harassment (Connor, 2019a; Frenzel, Bowen, Spraitz, Bowers, & Phaneuf, 2014; Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Levenson & Tewksbury, 2009; Mercado, Alvarez, & Levenson, 2008; Tewksbury, 2004, 2005; Tewksbury & Lees, 2006a; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2009; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b), threats (Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Levenson & Tewksbury, 2009; Mercado et al., 2008; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b), vigilante attacks (Frenzel et al., 2014; Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Mercado et al., 2008;

Tewksbury & Lees, 2006a; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b), persistent feelings of vulnerability (Tewksbury & Lees, 2006a; Tewksbury & Lees, 2007), heightened levels of stress (Bailey & Sample, 2017; Levenson & Tewksbury, 2009; Mercado et al., 2008; Robbers, 2009; Tewksbury & Levenson, 2009; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2009), relationship loss (Connor, 2019a; Frenzel et al., 2014; Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Mercado et al., 2008; Tewksbury, 2004, 2005; Tewksbury & Connor, 2012; Tewksbury & Lees, 2006b; Tewksbury & Levenson, 2009), relationship deterioration (Connor, 2019a; Farkas & Miller, 2007; Tewksbury, 2004, 2005; Tewksbury & Connor, 2012), and withdraw from community involvement (Bailey & Klein, 2018; Tewksbury & Levenson, 2009; Robbers, 2009). These harmful ramifications for RSOs are expanded upon below, as described by Connor (2016).

RSOs commonly encounter numerous forms of social damage. Robbers (2009) used qualitative interviews and surveys with 153 convicted sex offenders and found that feeling socially discredited and shamed were regular occurrences. Drawing on data from 121 registered sex offenders (RSOs), Tewksbury (2005) revealed that a significant minority experienced social disapproval and felt disgraced. After conducting semi-structured qualitative interviews with 22 registered sex offenders from Kentucky about their community experiences, Tewksbury and Lees (2006a) discovered that being stigmatized by the public emerged as a common theme.

This stigmatization often leads to ostracism by community members. Zevitz and Farkas (2000b) interviewed 30 RSOs in Wisconsin about their perceived experiences with the state's SORN statute and found that 77% described being shunned by acquaintances and neighbors. Such ostracism may take the form of harassment, threats, and (occasionally) vigilante attacks. After surveying 183 convicted sex offenders who were subjected to SORN in Florida, Levenson and Cotter (2005) revealed that 33% were threatened or harassed by neighbors and 5% were physically assaulted by community members who found out that they had a sex offense conviction. Mercado, Alvarez, and Levenson (2008) examined the perceptions of 138 convicted sex offenders in New Jersey and found that almost one-half (48%) were physically threatened or harassed and 11% were physically assaulted. Zevitz and Farkas (2000b) found that 77% of RSOs experienced threats and harassment and one such offender reported being attacked by a community member who took the law into their own hands. Frenzel, Bowen, Spraitz, Bowers, and Phaneuf (2014) surveyed 443 registered sex offenders across Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin and found that 42% were harassed in person and 14% were physically assaulted due to their status. Tewksbury (2004) examined the views of 40 female sex offenders who were listed on Indiana and Kentucky's sex offender registries and found that 34% were harassed in person as a result of public knowledge of their sex offenses.

In Washington State, the first state in the country to adopt sex offender registration in the 1990 Community Protection Act, there have been a number of high-profile vigilante acts that have resulted in harm to sex offenders. The first most widely publicized incident occurred shortly after the Community Protection Act passed when Joseph Gallardo, a level III sex offender, was released to his father's home in Edmonds, Washington. The residents of the neighborhood to which he was released protested aggressively, and the night before he was released, someone set his father's house on fire. He then moved to New Mexico with his brother and was met there with additional protests and run out town a second time (The Associated Press, 1993). In 2005, two sex offenders were murdered by vigilantes in Bellingham, Washington (Martin & O'Hagan, 2005).

As a result of these active demonstrations of contempt by community members, with the most extreme cases resulting in crimes of arson and murder, many publicly identified sex offenders report persistent feelings of vulnerability, undergo heightened levels of stress, and witness harm to their family members. Among 209 registered sex offenders in Oklahoma and Kansas, Tewksbury and Mustaine (2009) found moderate-to-extreme levels of stress that were commonly influenced by public recognition and harassment. Mercado and colleagues (2008) revealed that 78% of the registered sex offenders in their sample believed that SORN laws generated additional stress that made rehabilitation difficult.

It is very common for individuals who are publicly identified as sex offenders through SORN laws to struggle with maintaining relationships and developing new associations. A majority of convicted sex

offenders (52%) in Levenson and Cotter's (2005) study reported losing friends or a close relationship because of SORN policies. Tewksbury (2005) found that more than one-half (54%) of RSOs believed that they lost a friend as a result of public knowledge of their sexual offending. Tewksbury and Lees (2006b) examined the experiences of 26 sex offenders who were listed on publicly available university-maintained sex offender registries and revealed that 42% lost a friend as a result of their registration status. Among registered female sex offenders, Tewksbury (2004) revealed that 39% lost a friend due to their public labeling. More recently, Frenzel and colleagues (2014) found that more than one-half of registered sex offenders (52%) lost a friend and about one-third (28%) lost a spouse or dating partner. RSOs even perceive having problems with their family members because of their public status. Tewksbury and Connor (2012) interviewed 24 sex convicted offenders and found that most expected to be rejected and scrutinized by at least some relatives.

Beyond social impacts, it is not uncommon for sex offenders who are publicly identified through SORN laws to lose their jobs when coworkers and employers discover their status. A majority of registered sex offenders (57%) in Wisconsin (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b) and New Jersey (52%) (Mercado et al., 2008), a significant minority of registered sex offenders (42%) in Indiana and Kentucky (Tewksbury, 2004, 2005), and almost one-third (27%) of registered sex offenders (27%) in Florida (Levenson & Cotter, 2005) had their employment terminated after being publicly recognized. At the same time, 65% of sex offenders on college campuses with campus-specific registries were not hired or lost a job due to their public identity (Tewksbury & Lees, 2006b). In addition, Frenzel and colleagues (2014) found that one-half of the more than 400 registered sex offenders who were surveyed lost a job with one-quarter of them also being denied a promotion. Loss of housing (Tewksbury, 2004, 2005; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b) and need to locate to a new residence (Levenson & Cotter, 2005) are also frequent experiences for sex offenders subjected to SORN.

Apart from the collateral consequences, registered sex offenders generally view SORN laws as ineffective policies. After surveying 183 sex offenders who were subjected to SORN in Florida, Levenson and Cotter (2005) found that a large majority of RSOs (78%) did not believe that SORN laws helped them to stop future offending. At the same time, most (64%) did not feel that they were more willing to manage their risk factors because they knew their neighbors were watching them. About one in seven (68%) registered sex offenders from Florida (Levenson & Cotter, 2005) and one in seven (74%) registered sex offenders from New Jersey (Mercado et al., 2008) did not think that community members were safer when they knew where sex offenders lived. Similarly, Zevitz and Farkas (2000b) found that registered sex offenders expressed skepticism about the deterrent value of community notification and believed that such laws hindered their progress. In fact, most interviewed sex offenders believed that SORN would not deter future sexual victimization. Most recently, (Connor, 2019b) tapped the perceptions of people who served as support partners for RSOs in sex offender treatment and revealed that SORN laws were viewed as incapable of adequately raising public awareness, unable to impact recidivism, and inappropriate for most sex offenders. And yet, there is some evidence that people convicted of sex offenses could potentially support SORN laws. RSOs in Kentucky recognized that SORN policies could make the public aware of their presence in communities (Tewksbury & Lees, 2007). Most of these RSOs, however, did not believe that the state's online sex offender registry was effective in its current form. Numerous RSOs believed that increased restrictions about who could access registry information and for what purposes may improve SORN mandates.

METHOD

This report utilized self-report survey research to collect data on views and experiences of RSOs on sex and kidnapping offender registration and notification in Washington State. Data for the current study were collected via a 50-item questionnaire administered to registered sex and kidnapping offenders through postal mail. The anonymous and voluntary survey included questions about registration requirements, experiences with registration, views on registration, experiences with

community notification, and demographics. Prior to data collection, all procedures and materials were reviewed and subsequently approved by the Seattle University Institutional Review Board.

Sampling Procedure/Participants

The target population included all adult registered sex and kidnapping offenders in Washington State. On July 25, 2016, the researchers submitted a public records request to the Washington State Patrol for a listing of the names, addresses, criminal convictions, date and place of criminal convictions, and community notification risk level classifications of all currently registered sex and kidnapping offenders in Washington State who were 18 years of age or older. This information was subsequently received by the researchers on August 10, 2016 and served as the sampling frame for the present study. A total of 21,686 people were listed in the database. Within the data, 41 minors and 77 individuals residing outside of Washington State listed as registered sex and kidnapping offenders. These 118 registrants were excluded from the present study. Because a primary focus of the project was RSO experiences in the outside world, individuals who were incarcerated (*n* = 1,727), civilly committed (*n* = 24), and committed to a psychiatric hospital (*n* = 1) were eliminated. In addition, registrants who did not have a valid home address in which to send the survey instrument were removed. This included people who were homeless (*n*= 1,310), had incomplete addresses (*n* = 132), failed to verify their address after initial registration (n = 213), failed to initially register (*n* = 8), and were deported by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (*n* = 5). The remaining sample of 18,148 registrants represented non-incarcerated adults living in Washington State, who had seemingly valid home addresses.

A stratified random sample of 6,500 registrants were drawn from the 18,148 people who were eligible to receive the survey instrument. The goal was to examine adult registrants in a way that would be representative of all counties in Washington State, including less-populated areas that may not be represented in a random sample. By this design, the researchers stratified the sample by county population density to account for non-uniform population density. For instance, since 30% of Washington State's population resided in King County, this was reflected in the random sample, as 30% of the surveys were delivered to registrants in King County. Eligible registrants were randomly selected for participation by county, at rates equal to the county population divided by the state population. The United States Postal Service verified that 435 registrants in the stratified random sample did not have valid mailing addresses, leaving the final sample at 6,065 who were mailed the survey instrument. A total of 402 registrants submitted completed surveys. This represents a 6.63% response rate.

Instrument

The data collection instrument was designed specifically for this study with some question items borrowed from previous sex offender perception research. The hard copy survey was a two-page (front and back sides of two pages) questionnaire. The format of survey items is varied within the instrument to facilitate thoughtful responses. The first five items on the survey ask about registration requirements. This includes registration length, risk classification level at release, risk classification level at present, whether or not registrants are listed on their county sheriff's online registry for sex and kidnapping offenders, and what types of information their online registry page may list. Next, to measure experiences with registration, participants are presented with nine items that focus on possible ramifications of living in Washington communities among the public as a registrant. These include close-ended questions about possible interpersonal, employment and education, housing, social life, and mental health impacts, as well as open-ended questions about outcomes of registration, experiences with registration at the county sheriff's office, and encounters with law enforcement. Views on registration are also gauged through nine ordinal scales where participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with specific statements (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 10) and to respond to one item about what should be changed about the registration process at the county sheriff's office. Five items focus on experiences with community notification. For two of these items, registrants are asked who was notified about their registration and how notification about their registration was performed. Responses to these items were coded at the nominal level (no = 0, yes = 1). Registrants are also asked what percentage of

people know that they are a convicted sex or kidnapping offender (measured at the ratio level), how often they are recognized by someone else as a registered sex and kidnapping offender (measured at the ordinal level), and how often they have contact with law enforcement (measured at the ordinal level). Lastly, the instrument includes 21 items regarding demographics, juvenile sex offenses, and self-reported political views. (See Appendix for the survey instrument.)

RESULTS

The results are presented in three sections – 1) Descriptive presenting frequencies and means of responses on survey questions, 2) Bivariate presenting findings comparing responses by registration level and region, and 3) Qualitative presenting themes that were identified in open-ended survey questions.

Descriptive

Demographics (Including registration requirements)

Figure 1 and Table 1 show the percentage of responses by county. Of the responses, the largest groups of respondents on the west side of the state came from King County (32%), Snohomish County (11.9%), and Pierce County (9.7%). On the East side of the state the largest group of respondents came from Spokane County (8%), Yakima County (2.2%), and Benton County (2%). There were no responses from some of the lower population counties such as Skamania on the West side and Douglas, Columbia, Garfield, and several other counties on the East side of the state.

Figure 1.
Percentage of Responses by County

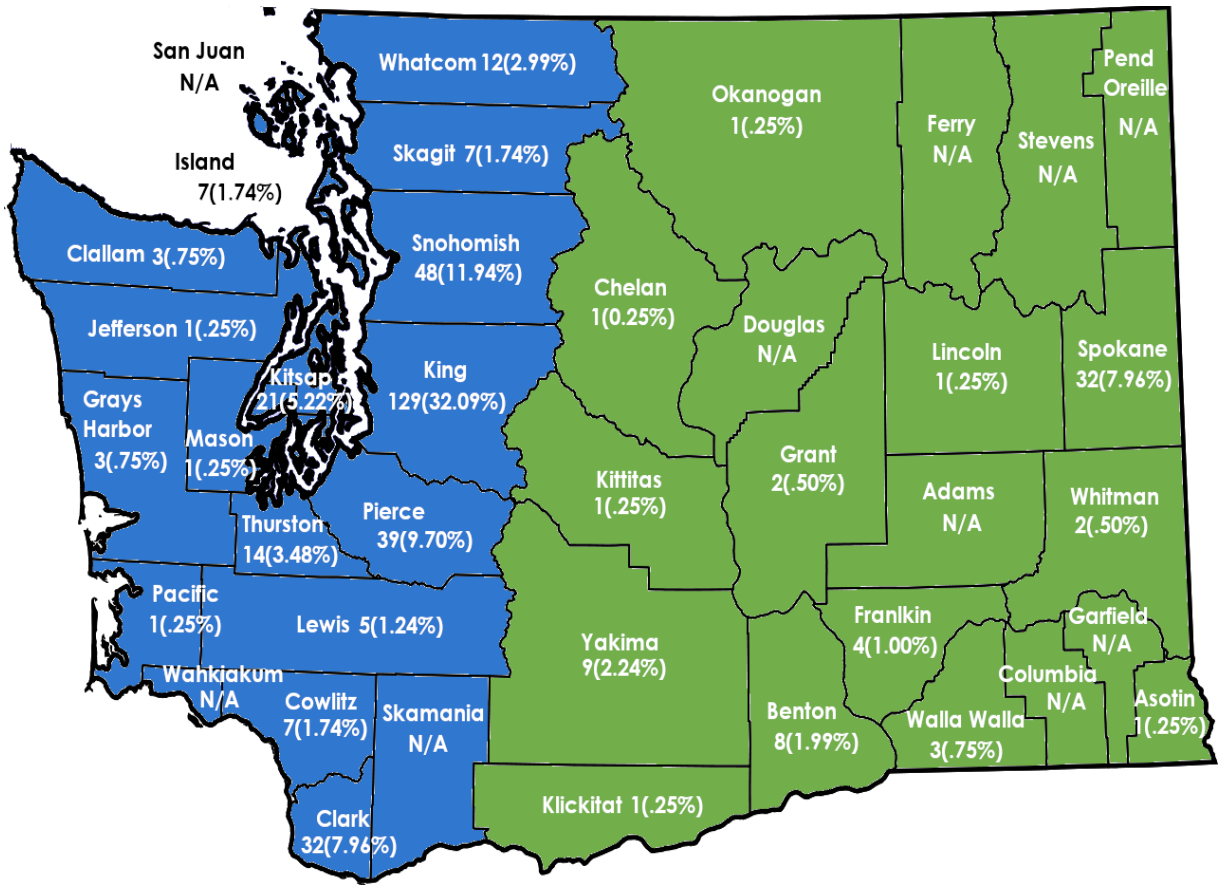


Table 1.
Frequency of Response by County (*N* = 402)

County of Residence	*f*(%)
King	129(32.09%)
Snohomish	48(11.94 %)
Pierce	39(9.70%)
Clark	32(7.96%)
Spokane	32(7.96%)
Kitsap	21(5.22%)
Thurston	14(3.48%)
Whatcom	12(2.99%)
Yakima	9(2.24%)
Benton	8(1.99%)
Cowlitz	7(1.74%)
Island	7(1.74%)
Skagit	7(1.74%)
Lewis	5(1.24%)
Franklin	4(1.00%)
Clallam	3(0.75%)
Grays Harbor	3(0.75%)
Walla Walla	3(0.75%)
Grant	2(0.50%)
Whitman	2(0.50%)
Asotin	1(0.25%)
Chelan	1(0.25%)
Jefferson	1(0.25%)
Kittitas	1(0.25%)
Klickitat	1(0.25%)
Lincoln	1(0.25%)
Mason	1(0.25%)
Okanogan	1(0.25%)
Pacific	1(0.25%)

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the 402 respondents. The mean age of the respondents was 51.23 (*SD*=14.80), the majority (96.6) were male, the majority (68%) with an annual income of less than $30,000. Of those who reported their employment status, 41% were employed full-time, 9% part-time, 4% temporarily employed, and 35% were unemployed. The group as a whole was diverse in terms of political views with a mean rating of 4.2 (*SD*=1.6) on a scale of 1 to 7 very liberal to very conservative. Most (91%) were adults at the age of their registration with a 12 year average number of years registered. Only a small percentage (13%) reported having prior offenses and the majority of respondents reported that the age of their victims were under age 18, that their victim was a female family member[1] (See Table 2-3 and Figures 2-7).

[1] Respondents could identify more than one victim age, sex, and relationship category.

Table 2.

Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Group Size (*n*), Means, Standard Deviations (*SD*)[a], Minimums, and Maximums

Variable	*n*	f(%) yes	Mean	(*SD*)	Min	Max
Age	390	-	51.23	(*14.80*)	19	89
Male	382	96.6%	.97	-	0	1
Gender Identity Male Female Non-Binary	382 11 2	96.6% 2.9% .52%				
Age first registered	383	-	39.10	(*14.96*)	11	80
Years registered	383	-	12.03	(*8.15*)	1	41
Marital status	384	-	1.07	(*.91*)	0	3
Highest level of education	394	-	3.35	(*1.36*)	0	6
White	402		.75	-	0	1
Income ($10k)	387	-	2.93	(2.96)	0	11
Number of children	381	-	1.60	(*1.79*)	0	9
Number of children under 18	352	-	.47	(*1.00*)	0	6
Number of children living with under 18	361	-	.29	(*.78*)	0	5
Employment status						
Full time	392	161(41%)	.41	-	0	1
Part time	393	34(9%)	.09	-	0	1
Temporary	393	15(4%)	.04	-	0	1
Unemployed	393	139(35%)	.35	-	0	1
Retired	393	45(11%)	.11	-	0	1
Student	371	21(6%)	.06	-	0	1
Previous offenses	390	50(13%)	.13	-	0	1
Minor when first registered	389	36(9%)	.09	-	0	1
Convicted in juvenile court	44	37(84%)	.84	-	0	1
Eligible to have juvenile record sealed and registration dismissed	25	21(84%)	.84	-	0	1
Asked court to remove requirement to register	26	6(23%)	.23	-	0	1
Victim age						
Under 6	378	62(16%)	.16	-	0	1
6-12	379	172(45%)	.45	-	0	1
13-15	380	121(32%)	.32	-	0	1
16-17	379	54(14%)	.14	-	0	1
18-20	379	15(4%)	.04	-	0	1
21-30	379	17(4%)	.04	-	0	1
31-40	379	15(4%)	.04	-	0	1
41-50	379	8(2%)	.02	-	0	1
51+	380	9(2%)	.02	-	0	1
Relationship to victim						
Family member	203	113(56%)	.56	-	0	1
Non-family member	202	89(44%)	.44	-	0	1
Acquaintance	105	58(55%)	.55	-	0	1
Stranger	105	33(31%)	.31	-	0	1
Victim gender						
Male	239	54(23%)	.23	-	0	1
Female	239	194(81%)	.81	-	0	1
Political/social views	372	-	4.22	(*1.60*)	1	7

ABBREVIATION: *SD* = standard deviation, Min = minimum, Max = maximum

[a]The – (dash) indicates entries are not applicable.

Figure 2.
Annual Income of Respondents

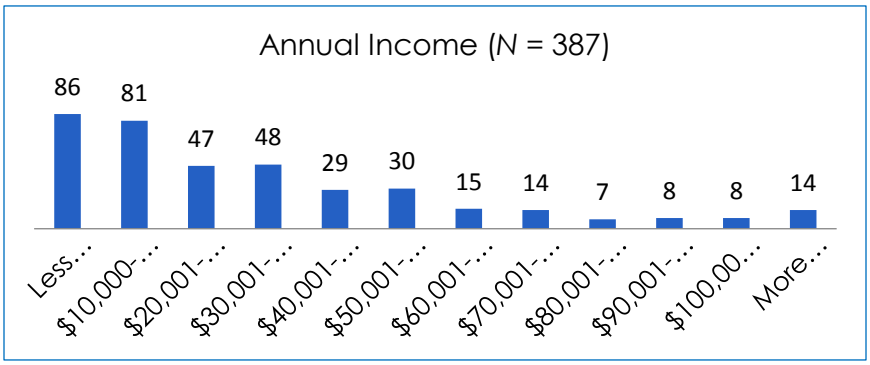


Figure 3.
Marital Status

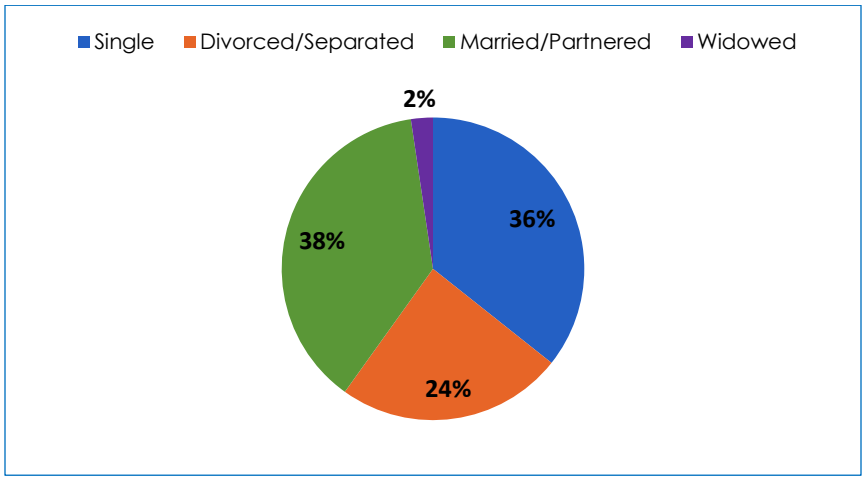


Figure 4.
Racial Identity (*N* = 363)

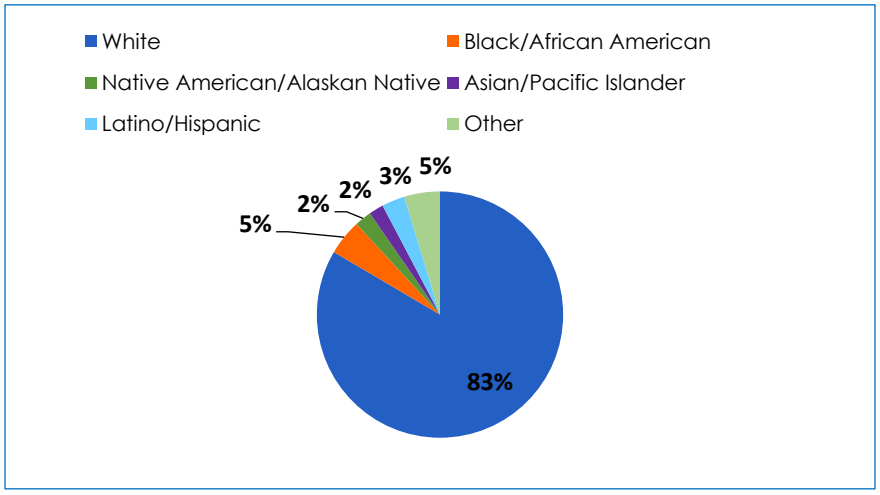


Figure 5.
Employment Status (*N* = 363)

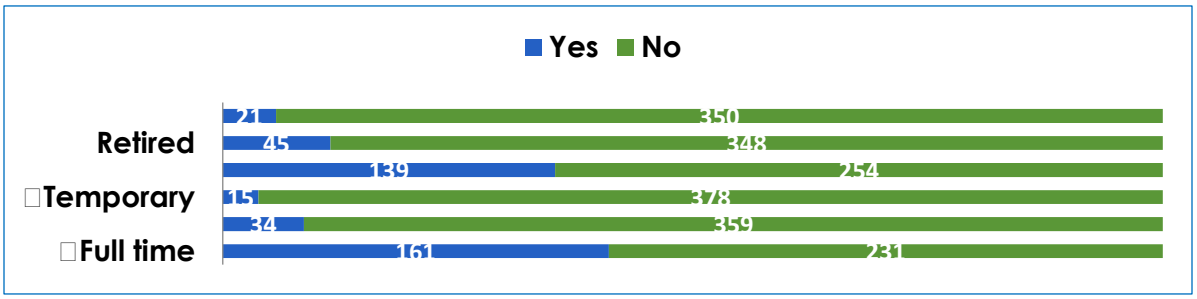


Figure 6.
Criminal History

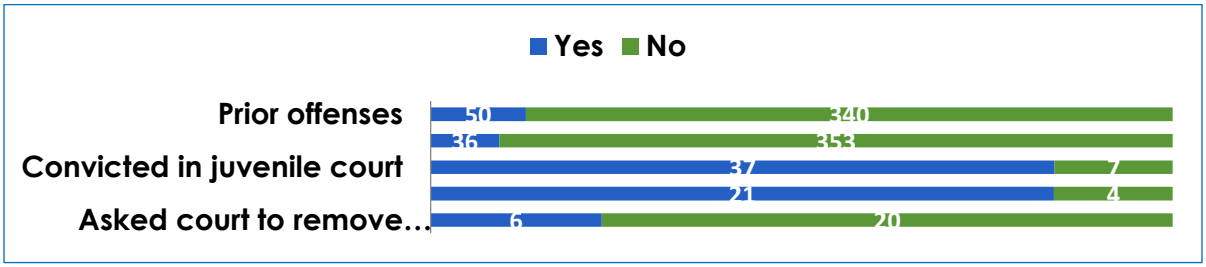


Figure 7.
Victim Demographics

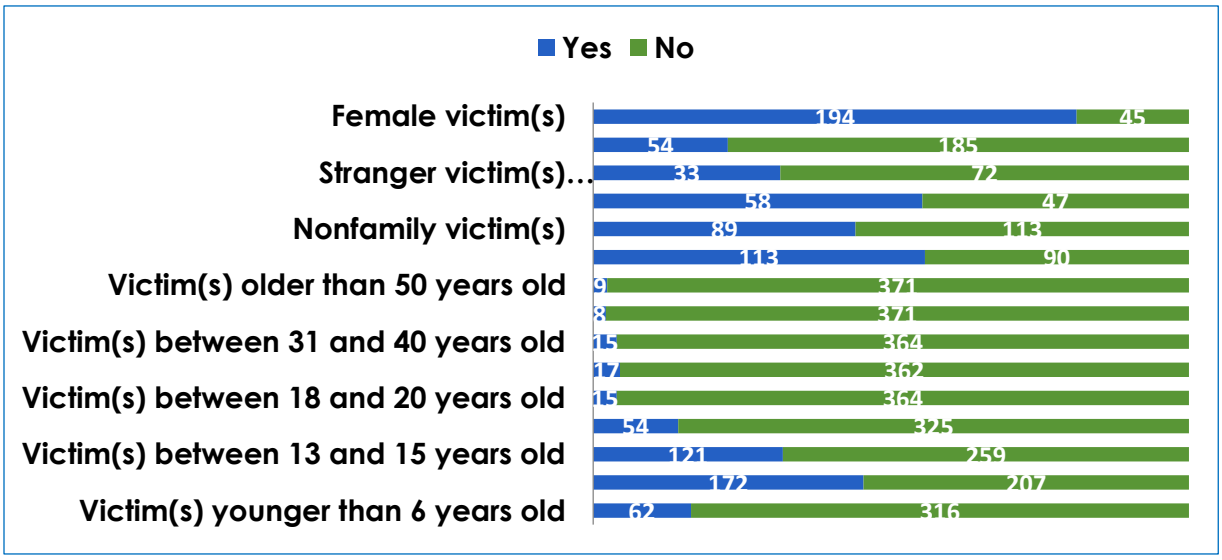


Table 3.
Political and Social Views (*N* = 372)

Rank	*f*(%)
1 (Very Liberal)	22(5.91%)
2	35(9.41%)
3	46(12.37%)
4 (Moderate/Neutral)	127(34.14%)
5	55(14.78%)
6	51(13.71%)
7 (Very Conservative)	36(9.68%)

Registration Requirements

Results show that the majority of respondents reported that they are required to be registered for 10 years to lifetime with 190 (48.35%) required to register for life. The majority (*n*=232 (59%)) reported being classified as Level 1 with 83 (21.17%) classified as Level 2 and 58 (14.8%) as Level 3, and 19 (14.9%) unsure of their classification. The majority of respondents (*n*=209 (52.8%)) reported being listed on Internet sex offender registries (See Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4.
Registration Requirements - Frequencies

Frequency of Registration Lengths (*N* = 393)		
	Registration Length	***f*(%)**
	Lifetime	190(48.35%)
	10 years	78(19.85%)
	Not sure	57(14.50%)
	15 years	35(8.91%)
	Indefinite	25(6.36%)
	Other	8(2.04%)
Frequency of Risk Classification Levels at Release (*N* = 392)		
	Risk Level	***f*(%)**
	Level I	232(59.18%)
	Level II	83(21.17%)
	Level III	58(14.80%)
	Not sure	19(4.85%)
Frequency of Risk Classification Levels at Time of Survey (*N* = 392)		
	Risk Level	***f*(%)**
	Level I	229(59.42%)
	Level II	81(20.66%)
	Level III	52(13.27%)
	Not sure	30(7.65%)
Frequency of Respondents Listed on Online Registries (*N* = 396)		
	Listed on Online Registry?	***f*(%)**
	Yes	209(52.78%)
	No	102(25.76%)
	Not Sure	85(21.46%)

Table 5.
Registration Requirements - Means
Group Size (*n*), Means, Standard Deviations (*SD*)[a], Minimums, and Maximums

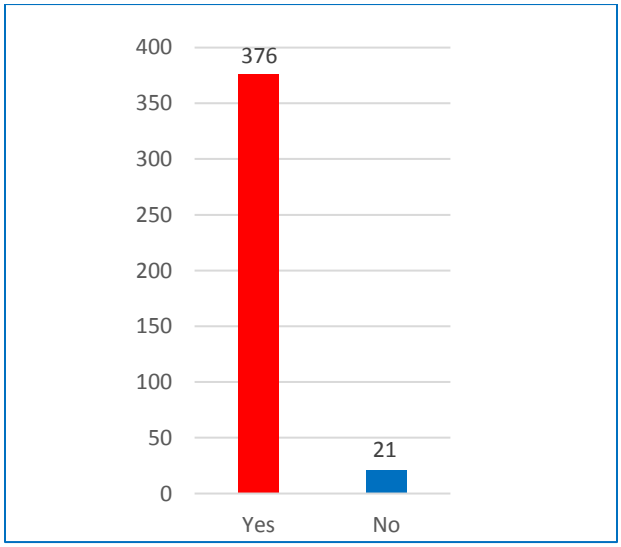
Variable	*n*	f(%) yes	Mean	(*SD*)	Min	Max
Registration length	328	-	2.49	(.94)	1	4
Risk level at release	373	-	1.53	(.75)	1	3
Risk level at time of survey	362	-	1.51	(.73)	1	3
Listed on online registry	311	209(67%)	.67	-	0	1
Online registry includes						
Incorrect name	175	5(3%)	.03	-	0	1
Incorrect risk classification level	175	15(9%)	.09	-	0	1
Incorrect address	175	3(13%)	.13	-	0	1
Incorrect aliases	175	15(9%)	.09	-	0	1
Incorrect physical description	175	5(3%)	.03	-	0	1
Incorrect offense information	175	15(9%)	.09	-	0	1
No photo	175	8(5%)	.05	-	0	1
Incorrect photo	175	2(1%)	.01	-	0	1
Outdated photo	175	23(13%)	.13	-	0	1

ABBREVIATION: *SD* = standard deviation, Min = minimum, Max = maximum
[a]The – (dash) indicates entries are not applicable.

Experiences with Registration

Overwhelmingly, the respondents reported that registration negatively impacted their life with 95% (n=376) answering affirmatively to the question *"Has registration negatively impacted your life?"*

Figure 8.
Registrant Responses to the Question – *"Has Registration Negatively Impacted Your Life?"*



Findings regarding the specific experiences with registration and its impact, most reported losing a close relationship (53%), job opportunities commensurate with their skills (63%), and housing opportunities where they were denied a place to live(58%). The majority indicated that they experienced stigma (78%), shame (74%), worry about their future (84%), feeling isolated (78%), embarrassed (74%), lonely (64%), hopeless (65%), and fearful of their safety

(49%). The majority indicated that they had difficulty making new friends (59%) and participating in community activities (54%). Of the more extreme impacts, some respondents indicated that they had experienced harassment by family members and strangers, property damage, and physical assault, homelessness (22%), and suicidal thoughts (43%). Only 6% reported that they felt tempted to reoffend (See Table 6).

Table 6.

Experiences with Registration – Means

Group Size (*n*), Means, Standard Deviations (*SD*)[a], Minimums, and Maximums

Variable	*n*	*f*(%) yes	Mean	(*SD*)	Min	Max
Registration negatively impacted life	397	376(95%)	.95	-	0	1
Relationship impacts						
Physically assaulted by family	381	14(4%)	.04	-	0	1
Physically assaulted by other known person	381	38(10%)	.10	-	0	1
Physically assaulted by stranger	381	47(12%)	.12	-	0	1
Lost a romantic relationship	381	152(40%)	.40	-	0	1
Lost a family relationship	381	190(50%)	.50	-	0	1
Lost a close friendship	381	202(53%)	.53	-	0	1
Lost a casual friendship	381	195(51%)	.51	-	0	1
Lost a short-term relationship	381	120(32%)	.32	-	0	1
Lost a long-term relationship	381	117(31%)	.31	-	0	1
Harassed/threatened by family	381	55(14%)	.14	-	0	1
Harassed/threatened by other known person	381	146(38%)	.38	-	0	1
Harassed/threatened by stranger	381	118(31%)	.31	-	0	1
Property damaged by family	380	19(5%)	.05	-	0	1
Property damaged by other known person	381	38(10%)	.10	-	0	1
Property damaged by stranger	381	44(12%)	.12	-	0	1
A romantic relationship was weakened	380	122(32%)	.32	-	0	1
A family relationship was weakened	381	202(53%)	.53	-	0	1
A close friendship was weakened	381	172(45%)	.45	-	0	1
A casual friendship was weakened	381	137(36%)	.36	-	0	1
A short-term relationship was weakened	380	89(23%)	.23	-	0	1
A long-term relationship was weakened	381	101(27%)	.27	-	0	1
Witnessed harm to a family member	381	20(6%)	.06	-	0	1
Arrested for mistaken identity	381	10(3%)	.03	-	0	1
Arrested for failure to register	381	45(12%)	.12	-	0	1
Employment and education impacts						
Lost a job	381	145(38%)	.38	-	0	1
Denied a job that matches my skills	380	241(63%)	.63	-	0	1
Decided not to apply for a job	381	245(64%)	.64	-	0	1
Forced to take a job below my skill level	381	190(50%)	.50	-	0	1
Denied a promotion at work	380	46(12%)	.12	-	0	1
Decided not to apply for a promotion	381	53(14%)	.14	-	0	1
Denied admission to school	381	50(13%)	.13	-	0	1
Denied an apprenticeship/internship	381	47(12%)	.12	-	0	1
Housing impacts						
Lost a place to live	367	117(32%)	.32	-	0	1
Denied a place to live	367	211(58%)	.57	-	0	1
Forced to relocate due to community pressure	367	66(18%)	.18	-	0	1
Forced to live separately from people who support me	367	121(33%)	.33	-	0	1
Forced to live in a high-crime area	366	115(31%)	.31	-	0	1

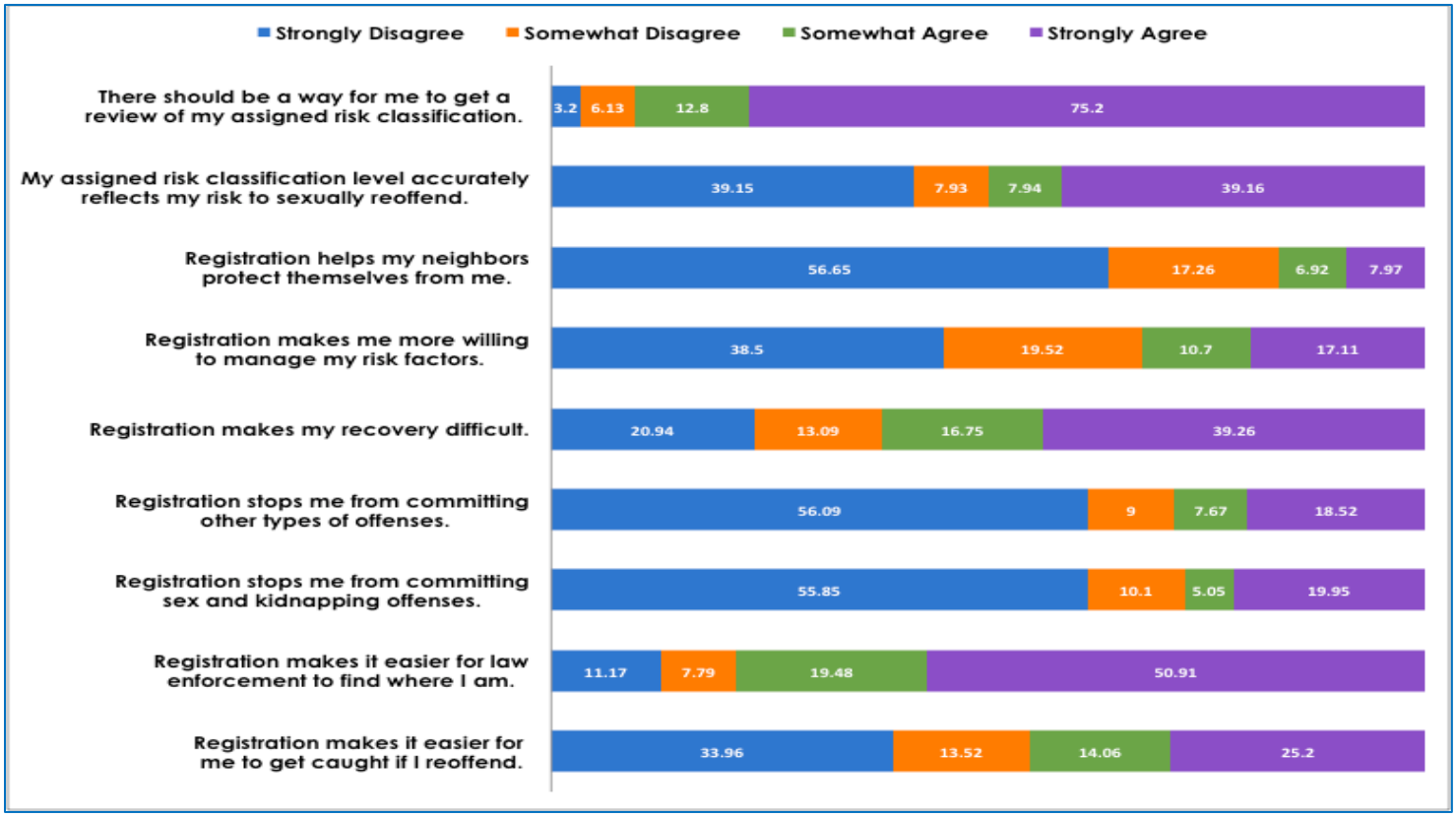
Denied housing on school campus	367	25(7%)	.07	-	0	1
Became homeless	367	80(22%)	.21	-	0	1
Forced to live far away from people who support me	368	96(26%)	.26	-	0	1
Social impacts						
Blocked from volunteering	382	231(60%)	.60	-	0	1
Excluded from a community club	382	150(39%)	.39	-	0	1
Excluded from an online community	382	123(32%)	.32	-	0	1
Chose to stay off social media	382	172(45%)	.45	-	0	1
Unable to participate in community activities	382	207(54%)	.54	-	0	1
Treated rudely in a public space	382	82(21%)	.21	-	0	1
Asked to leave a public space	382	79(21%)	.21	-	0	1
Difficult to make new friends	382	224(59%)	.59	-	0	1
Emotional impacts						
Felt stigmatized	385	283(74%)	.74	-	0	1
Feared for my safety	385	188(49%)	.49	-	0	1
Felt isolated	385	278(72%)	.72	-	0	1
Felt shame	385	308(80%)	.80	-	0	1
Felt hopeless	385	250(65%)	.65	-	0	1
Felt discredited	385	245(64%)	.64	-	0	1
Felt tempted to reoffend	385	22(6%)	.06	-	0	1
Felt embarrassed	385	300(78%)	.78	-	0	1
Worried about future	385	323(84%)	.84	-	0	1
Felt lonely	385	247(64%)	.64	-	0	1
Had suicidal thoughts	385	162(43%)	.42	-	0	1
Had decreased motivation	385	228(59%)	.59	-	0	1
Felt stressed	385	296(77%)	.77	-	0	1
Feared for family's safety	385	129(34%)	.34	-	0	1
Number of times per year law enforcement verifies address	377	-	3.72	(9.21)	0	156

ABBREVIATION: *SD* = standard deviation, Min = minimum, Max = maximum
[a]The – (dash) indicates entries are not applicable.

Views on Registration (% respondents)

Findings on respondent views on the registration process show that 75.2% agreed with the statement "There should be a way for me to get a review of my assigned risk classification and the majority (56%) disagreed that "Registration Helps my Neighbors protect themselves from me" and that "Registration stops me from committing sex and kidnapping offenses," while 36% agreed with the statement, "Registration Makes it Easier For Law Enforcement to Find Where I am."

Figure 9.
Views on Registration - Frequencies



Experiences with Community Notification

Regarding who was notified about their registration status, most reported that the police (84%) and their victim was notified (60%), and that they were included on the online registry (51%) (See Table 7).

Table 7.
Experiences with Community Notification - Descriptive Statistics
Group Size (*n*), Means, Standard Deviations (*SD*)[a], Minimums, and Maximums

Variable	*n*	*f*(%) yes	Mean	(*SD*)	Min	Max
Who was notified?						
Victim	347	208(60%)	.60	-	0	1
Schools	347	111(32%)	.32	-	0	1
Public libraries	347	46(13%)	.13	-	0	1
Businesses/organizations for women	346	20(6%)	.06	-	0	1
Neighborhood near home	347	113(33%)	.33	-	0	1
Media	347	79(23%)	.23	-	0	1
Public at large	347	83(24%)	.24	-	0	1
Police	347	290(84%)	.84	-	0	1
Neighbors	347	122(35%)	.35	-	0	1
Child day care providers	346	51(15%)	.15	-	0	1
Businesses/organizations for children	347	31(9%)	.09	-	0	1
Businesses/organizations for vulnerable adults	347	25(7%)	.07	-	0	1

Community groups near home	347	36(10%)	.10	-	0	1
How was notification done?						
Media releases/announcements	336	69(21%)	.21	-	0	1
Mailed or posted flyers	336	89(26%)	.26	-	0	1
My county sheriff's online registry	338	173(51%)	.51	-	0	1
Unofficial website or private security website	338	77(23%)	.23	-	0	1
Door-to-door information from the police/sheriff	338	37(11%)	.11	-	0	1
Registration lists at law enforcement agencies	338	126(37%)	.37	-	0	1
Community meetings	338	35(10%)	.10	-	0	1
Automated telephone calls to neighbors	338	7(2%)	.02	-	0	1
Notification not done	338	77(23%)	.23	-	0	1
Percentage of people in life that know about conviction	378	-	60.52	(33.06)	0	100
How often recognized?	370	-	1.56	(2.07)	0	7
How often contact with law enforcement?	380	-	2.03	(1.28)	0	7
ABBREVIATION: *SD* = standard deviation, Min = minimum, Max = maximum [a]The – (dash) indicates entries are not applicable.						

Bivariate Findings

Data analysis included examination of key variables of interest including location of residence and registration level. Results show that there was no significant difference on registration variables for East and West respondents (See Tables 8-11). However there was a significant difference on some of the relationship impact variables with residents from the Eastern side of the state more likely to report being physically assaulted and losing a close relationship as a result of registration (See Table 9).

Table 8.

Mean Differences in Registration Errors between Eastern and Western Washington

	East WA (*n*=70)		**West WA (*n*=332)**			
Variable	*f*	*M*	*f*	%n	Mean Diff.	z-score/sig.
Incorrect name?	1	0.03	4	1.2	0.01	z=.172, p=.863
Incorrect risk classification level?	3	0.1	12	3.6	0.02	z=.31 , p=.759
Incorrect address?	0	0	3	0.9	0.02	z=-.79 , p=.427
Incorrect aliases?	1	0.03	14	4.2	0.06	z=-1.13 , p=.260
Incorrect description?	1	0.03	4	1.2	0.01	z=.17 , p=.863
Incorrect offense?	2	0.07	13	3.9	0.02	z=-.41 , p=.682
No photo?	1	0.03	7	2.1	0.01	z= -.36, p=.721
Incorrect photo?	1	0.03	1	0.3	0.02	z= 1.24, p=.215
Outdated photo?	5	0.16	18	5.4	0.04	z=.63 , p=.530
Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.						

Table 9.

Mean Differences between Eastern and Western Washington on Likert-scale Questions and Registration Questions

	East WA (*N*=70)		West WA (*N*=332)		
Likert-Scale Questions	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	*t-value (df) /Sig.*
Registration makes it easier for me to get caught if I reoffend.	5.3 (3.6)	66 (94.3)	5.1 (3.4)	311 (96.6)	.24 (91), p=.808
Registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find where I am.	7.0 (3.1)	67 (95.7)	7.5 (2.9)	318 (95.8)	-1.25 (92), p=.212
Registration stops me from committing sex and kidnapping offenses.	4.6 (3.7)	62 (88.6)	3.7 (3.5)	314 (94.6)	1.89 (83), p = .063
Registration stops me from committing other types of offenses.	4.5 (3.8)	64 (91.4)	3.7 (3.4)	314 (94.6)	1.56 (86), p=.122
Registration makes my recovery difficult.	6.8 (3.3)	65 (92.9)	6.3 (3.3)	317 (95.5)	1.17 (92), p=.245
Registration makes me more willing to manage my risk factors.	5.0 (3.3)	63 (90.0)	4.4 (3.2)	311 (93.7)	1.31 (87), p=.192
Registration helps my neighbors protect themselves from me.	3.5 (2.9)	63 (90.0)	3.1 (2.8)	313 (94.3)	1.02 (87), p=.309
My assigned risk classification level accurately reflects my risk to sexually reoffend.	5.6 (4.0)	63 (90.0)	5.5 (3.9)	315 (94.9)	.17 (87), p=.864
There should be a way for me to get a review of my assigned risk classification level.	9.2 (1.7)	66 (94.3)	8.8 (2.1)	309 (93.1)	1.51 (112), p=.135
Registration Questions					
How often do you have contact with law enforcement?	1.8 (1.3)	64 (91.4)	2.1(1.3)	316 (95.2)	-1.46 (89), p=.148
How often are you recognized by someone else as a registered sex or kidnapping offender?	1.9(2.2)	63 (90.0)	1.5 (2.0)	307 (92.5)	1.44 (85), p=.155
What percentage of people in your life know that you are a convicted sex or kidnapping offender?	62.3 (32.0)	64 (91.4)	60.2 (33.3)	314 (94.6)	.48 (93), p=.634
Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.					
Because reported values were not normally distributed, all independent sample t-tests were conducted with the assumption of abnormal variances					

Table 10.

Mean Differences in Persons Notified and Notification Methods between Eastern and Western Washington

	East WA (n=56)		**West WA (n=291)**			
Variable	*f*	*M*	*f*	*M*	Mean Diff.	z-score/sig.
Who was notified about your registration?						
Victim	36	0.64	172	0.59	0.05	z=.72, p=.469
Schools	17	0.3	94	0.32	0.02	z=-.29, p=.775
Public libraries	7	0.13	39	0.13	0.01	z=-.18, p=.855
Businesses/organizations for women	3	0.54	17	0.58	0	z=-.11, p=.910
Neighborhood near your home	18	0.32	95	0.33	0.01	z=-.07, p=.941
Media	16	0.29	63	0.22	0.07	z=1.13, p=.258
Public at large	12	0.21	71	0.24	0.03	z=-.48, p=.633
Police	47	0.84	243	0.84	0	z=.08, p=.938
Neighbors	17	0.3	105	0.36	0.06	z=-.82, p=.411
Child day care providers	9	0.16	42	0.14	0.02	z=31, p=.759
Businesses/organizations for children	5	0.09	26	0.09	0	z=.00, p=.999
Businesses/organizations for vulnerable adults	3	0.05	22	0.07	0.02	z=-.58, p=.559
Community groups near your home	4	0.07	32	0.11	0.04	z=-.87, p=.386

Other	8	0.14	26	0.09	0.05	z=1.22, p=.221
How was notification done?						
Media releases/announcements	16	0.29	53	0.19	0.1	z=1.63, p=.103
Mailed or posted flyers	11	0.2	78	0.28	0.08	z=-1.27, p=.203
My county sheriff's online registry	26	0.46	147	0.52	0.06	z=-.78, p=.436
Unofficial website or private security website	11	0.2	66	0.23	0.04	z=-.61, p=.540
Door-to-door information from the police/sheriff	8	0.14	29	0.1	0.04	z=88, p=.381
Registration lists at law enforcement agencies	22	0.39	104	0.37	0.02	z=.34, p=.734
Community meetings	5	0.09	30	0.11	0.02	z=-.38, p=.701
Automated telephone calls to neighbors	1	0.02	6	0.02	0	z=-.16, p=.870
Notification not done	8	0.14	69	0.24	0.1	z=-1.66, p=.097
Other notification used	5	0.09	24	0.09	0	z=.10, p=.919
Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.						

Table 11.

Mean Differences in Negative Life Impacts between Eastern and Western Washington

	East WA (n=68)		**West WA (n=329)**			
Item	f	M	f	M	*Mean Diff.*	*z-score/ Sig.*
Has registration negatively impacted your life?	65	.95	311	.96	.01	z=.36, p=.722

Table 12.

Mean Differences in Impacts between Eastern and Western Washington

	East WA (*n*=65)		**West WA (*n*=316)**			
	f	*M*	*f*	*M*	Mean Diff.	*z-score/sig.*
Relationship Impact						
Physically assaulted by family	4	0.06	10	0.03	0.03	z=1.16, p=.243
Physically assaulted by other known person	11	0.17	27	0.09	0.08	z=2.05, p=.040*
Physically assaulted by stranger	8	0.12	39	0.12	0	z=.01, p=.993
Lost a romantic relationship	27	0.42	125	0.4	0.02	z=.30, p=.766
Lost a family relationship	37	0.57	153	0.48	0.09	z=1.25, p=.212
Lost a close relationship	44	0.68	158	0.5	0.18	z=2.60, p=.009**
Lost a casual friendship	33	0.51	162	0.51	0	z=-.07, p=.942
Lost a short-term relationship	22	0.34	98	0.31	0.03	z=.45, p=.654
Lost a long-term relationship	22	0.34	95	0.3	0.04	z=.60, p=.547
Harassed/threatened by family	12	0.18	43	0.14	0.05	z=1.01, p=.311
Harassed/threatened by other known person	25	0.38	121	0.38	0	z=.03, p=.980
Harassed/threatened by stranger	20	0.31	98	0.31	0	z=-.04, p=.969
Property damaged by family	4	0.06	15	0.05	0.01	z=.47, p=.639
Property damaged by other known person	5	0.08	33	0.1	0.03	z=-.67, p=.500
Property damaged by stranger	5	0.08	39	0.12	0.05	z=-1.07, p=.286
A romantic relationship was weakened	26	0.4	96	0.3	0.1	z=1.50, p=.134
A family relationship was weakened	37	0.57	165	0.52	0.05	z=.69, p=.489
A close friendship was weakened	35	0.54	137	0.44	0.1	z=1.55, p=.122
A casual friendship was weakened	26	0.4	111	0.35	0.05	z=.75, p=.456
A short-term relationship was weakened	16	0.25	73	0.23	0.02	z=.25, p=.803
A long-term relationship was weakened	22	0.34	79	0.25	0.09	z=1.47, p=.141
Witnessed harm to a family member	5	0.08	18	0.06	0.02	z=.62, p=.538
Arrested for mistaken identity	0	0	10	0.03	0.03	z=-1.45, p=.146
Arrested for failure to register	8	0.12	37	0.12	0	z=.14, p=.892
Employment Impact						

Lost a job	24	0.37	121	0.38	0.1	z=.-.21, p=.836
Denied a job that matches my skills	37	0.57	204	0.65	0.08	z=-1.19, p=.232
Decided not to apply for a job	37	0.57	208	0.66	0.09	z=-1.36, p=.173
Forced to take a job below my skill level	34	0.52	156	0.49	0.03	z=.43, p=.666
Denied a promotion at work	6	0.09	40	0.13	0.04	z=-.78, p=.435
Decided not to apply for a promotion	6	0.09	49	0.15	0.06	z=-1.31, p=.190
Denied admission to school	10	0.15	40	0.13	0.03	z=.59, p=.553
Denied an apprenticeship or internship	5	0.08	42	0.13	0.05	z=-1.25, p=.211
Housing Impact						
Lost a place to live	19	0.29	98	0.32	0.03	z=.51, p=.613
Denied a place to live	35	0.54	176	0.58	0.04	z=-.66, p=.512
Forced to relocate due to community pressure	10	0.15	56	0.18	0.03	z=-.60, p=.548
Forced to live separately from people who support me	25	0.38	96	0.32	0.07	z=1.04, p=.299
Forced to live in a high-crime area	20	0.31	95	0.32	0.01	z=-.12, p=.901
Denied housing on school campus	3	0.05	22	0.07	0.03	z=-.77, p=.438
Became homeless	17	0.26	63	0.21	0.05	z=.94, p=.349
Forced to live far away from people who support me.	14	0.22	82	0.27	0.05	z=-.92, p=.357
Social Impact						
Blocked from volunteering	38	0.58	193	0.61	0.02	z=-.36, p=.716
Excluded from a community club	24	0.37	126	0.4	0.03	z=.42, p=.671
Excluded from an online community	19	0.29	104	0.33	0.04	z=-.56, p=.574
Chose to stay off social media	24	0.37	148	0.47	0.1	z=-1.44, p=.149
Unable to participate in community activities	34	0.52	173	0.54	0.02	z=-.33, p=.738
Treated rudely in a public space	14	0.22	68	0.22	0	z=.02, p=.988
Asked to leave a public space	17	0.26	62	0.2	0.06	z=1.20, p=.232
Difficult to make new friends	37	0.57	187	0.59	0.02	z=-.31, p=.758
Emotional Impact						
Felt stigmatized	48	0.74	235	0.73	0.01	z=.07, p=.946
Feared for my safety	30	0.46	158	0.49	0.03	z=-.47, p=.636
Felt isolated	47	0.72	231	0.72	0	z=.02, p=.984
Felt shame	55	0.85	253	0.79	0.06	z=1.02, p=.308
Felt hopeless	48	0.74	202	0.63	0.11	z=1.65, p=.099
Felt discredited	44	0.68	201	0.63	0.05	z=.75, p=.456
Felt tempted to reoffend	4	0.06	18	0.06	0.01	z=.17, p=.867
Felt embarrassed	51	0.78	249	0.78	0.01	z=.12, p=.908
Worried about future	53	0.82	271	0.85	0.03	z=-.63, p=.526
Felt lonely	44	0.68	203	0.63	0.04	z=65, p=.514
Had suicidal thoughts	32	0.49	130	0.41	0.09	z=1.28, p=.200
Had decreased motivation	39	0.6	189	0.59	0.01	z=.14, p=.888
Felt stressed	52	0.8	244	0.76	0.04	z=.65, p=.513
Feared for family's safety	22	0.34	107	0.33	0.01	z=.06, p=.949
Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.						

Table 13.

Registration Errors by Registration Level at Release

SOR Level at Release:	**Level I**		**Level II**		**Level III**		**"I don't know"**		
	(*N*=232)		(*N*=83)		(*N*=58)		(*N*=19)		
Variable:	*M*	*n*	*M*	*n*	*M*	*n*	*M*	*n*	*F (df), Sig.*
	(SD)	(%N)	(SD)	(%N)	(SD)	(%N)	(SD)	(%N)	
Incorrect name?	0.00	65	0.05	55	0.04	45	0.00	8	1.28 (3), p=.282
	(0)	(28.0)	(.23)	(66.3)	(.21)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect risk classification level?	0.06	65	0.09	55	0.11	45	0.00	8	.55 (3). p=.652
	(.24)	(28.0)	(.29)	(66.3)	(.32)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect address?	0.02	65	0.02	55	0.02	45	0.00	8	.07 (3), p=.975
	(.12)	(28.0)	(.13)	(66.3)	(.15)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect aliases?	0.06	65	0.09	55	0.11	45	0.00	8	.55 (3), p=.652
	(.24)	(28.0)	(.29)	(66.3)	(.32)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect description?	0.02	65	0.04	55	0.02	45	0.00	8	.26 (3), p=.855
	(.12)	(28.0)	(.19)	(66.3)	(.15)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect offense?	0.05	65	0.07	55	0.16	45	0.00	8	.54 (3), p=.655
	(.21)	(28.0)	(.26)	(66.3)	(.37)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
No photo?	0.06	65	0.04	55	0.02	45	0.00	8	.72 (3), p=.542
	(.24)	(28.0)	(.19)	(66.3)	(.15)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Incorrect photo?	0.02	65	0.00	55	0.00	45	0.00	8	.55 (3), p=.649
	(.12)	(28.0)	(0)	(66.3)	(0)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Outdated photo?	0.14	65	0.16	55	0.09	45	0.00	8	.82 (3), p=.482
	(.35)	(28.0)	(.37)	(66.3)	(.29)	(77.6)	(0)	(42.1)	
Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.									

Table 14.

Mean Differences on Likert-scale Questions and Registration Questions by Registration Level at Release

	Level I (*N*=232)		**Level II** (*N*=83)		**Level III** (*N*=58)		"I don't know"		
Likert-Scale Questions	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%N)*	
Registration makes it easier for me to get caught if I reoffend.	5.0	216	5.3	80	5.5	56	5.4	17	.49 (3), p=.687
	(3.5)	(93.1)	(3.5)	(96.4)	(3.3)	(96.6)	(3.8)	(89.5)	
Registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find where I am.	7.4	221	7.8	82	7.0	57	7.3	17	.88 (3), p=.453
	(3.0)	(95.3)	(2.7)	(98.8)	(3.2)	(98.3)	(3.4)	(89.5)	
Registration stops me from committing sex and kidnapping offenses.	3.8	216	3.9	81	3.5	55	4.3	17	.30 (3), p=.823
	(3.5)	(93.1)	(3.6)	(97.6)	(3.4)	(94.8)	(4.4)	(89.5)	
Registration stops me from committing other types of offenses.	3.7	218	3.8	81	3.7	55	4.3	17	.14 (3), p=.935
	(3.5)	(94.0)	(3.5)	(97.6)	(3.5)	(94.8)	(4.0)	(89.5)	
Registration makes my recovery difficult.	6.2	220	6.4	82	6.8	57	7.2	16	.68 (3), p=.564
	(3.3)	(94.8)	(3.6)	(98.8)	(3.4)	(98.3)	(3.0)	(84.2)	
Registration makes me more willing to manage my risk factors.	4.5	215	4.6	81	4.2	54	4.4	17	.18 (3), p=.912
	(3.2)	(92.7)	(3.3)	(97.6)	(3.1)	(93.1)	(3.7)	(89.5)	
Registration helps my neighbors protect themselves from me.	2.8	216	3.5	82	4.0	55	3.8	17	3.66 (3), p=.013*

	(2.6)	(93.1)	(2.9)	(98.8)	(3.1)	(94.8)	(3.6)	(89.5)	
My assigned risk classification level accurately reflects my risk to sexually reoffend.	7.3	218	2.5	81	3.1	57	3.9	16	59.77 (3), p=.000***
	(3.5)	(94.0)	(2.6)	(97.6)	(2.9)	(98.3)	(3.5)	(84.2)	
There should be a way for me to get a review of my assigned risk classification level.	8.5	215	9.4	82	9.5	56	8.6	15	5.75 (3), p=.001***
	(2.3)	(92.7)	(1.7)	(98.8)	(1.3)	(96.6)	(2.5)	(78.9)	
Registration Questions									
How often do you have contact with law enforcement?	1.88 (1.24)	221 (95.3)	2.30 (1.25)	80 (96.4)	2.43 (1.43)	56 (96.6)	1.53 (1.07)	17 (89.5)	4.75 (3), p=.003**
How often are you recognized by someone else as a registered sex or kidnapping offender?	1.16 (1.73)	214 (92.2)	2.10 (2.53)	77 (92.8)	2.47 (2.32)	55 (94.8)	1.50 (1.72)	18 (94.7)	8.40 (3), p=.000***
What percentage of people in your life know that you are a convicted sex or kidnapping offender?	55.66 (32.66)	219 (94.4)	66.31 (31.99)	80 (96.4)	76.73 (27.37)	55 (94.8)	47.65 (39.97)	17 (89.5)	8.09 (3), p=.000***
Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.									
Because reported values were not normally distributed, all independent sample t-tests were conducted with the assumption of abnormal variances									

Table 15.

Mean Differences in Persons Notified and Notification Methods by Registration Level at Release and Current

SOR Level at Release:	**Level I**		**Level II**		**Level III**		**"I don't know"**		
	(*N*=232)		(*N*=83)		(*N*=58)		(*N*=19)		
Variable:	*M (SD)*	*N (%)*	*M (SD)*	*N (%)*	*M (SD)*	*N (%)*	*M (SD)*	*N (%)*	*F (df), Sig.*
Who was notified about your registration?									
Victim	.58	197	.66	77	.57	53	.57	16	.58 (3), p=.627
	(.49)	(84.9)	(.48)	(92.8)	(.50)	(91.4)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Schools	.19	197	.44	77	.60	53	.38	16	14.77 (3), p=.000***
	(.40)	(84.9)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.49)	(91.4)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Public libraries	.05	197	.21	77	.36	53	.06	16	14.53 (3), p=.000***
	(.22)	(84.9)	(.41)	(92.8)	(.48)	(91.4)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Businesses/organizations for women	.03	197	.08	77	.15	53	.06	16	4.47 (3), p=.004**
	(.16)	(84.9)	(.27)	(92.8)	(.36)	(91.4)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Neighborhood near your home	.16	197	.58	77	.60	53	.31	16	27.50 (3), p=.000***
	(.37)	(84.9)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.49)	(91.4)	(.48)	(84.2)	
Media	.14	197	.26	77	.53	53	.19	16	13.14 (3), p=.000***
	(.35)	(84.9)	(.44)	(92.8)	(.50)	(91.4)	(.40)	(84.2)	
Public at large	.12	197	.36	77	.47	53	.31	16	13.95 (3), p=.000***
	(.33)	(84.9)	(.48)	(92.8)	(.50)	(91.4)	(.48)	(84.2)	
Police	.81	197	.84	77	.91	53	.88	16	1.08 (3), p=.358
	(.40)	(84.9)	(.37)	(92.8)	(.30)	(91.4)	(.34)	(84.2)	
Neighbors	.20	197	.53	77	.64	53	.5	16	20.30 (3), p=.000***
	(.40)	(84.9)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.48)	(91.4)	(.52)	(84.2)	
Child day care providers	.05	196	.27	77	.34	53	.13	16	14.66 (3), p=.000***
	(.22)	(84.5)	(.45)	(92.8)	(.48)	(91.4)	(.34)	(84.2)	
Businesses/organizations for children	.04	197	.12	77	.25	53	.06	16	7.83 (3), p=.000***

	(.20)	(84.9)	(.32)	(92.8)	(.43)	(91.4)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Businesses/organizations for vulnerable adults	.04	197	.10	77	.17	53	.06	16	6.70 (3), p=.000***
	(.19)	(84.9)	(.31)	(92.8)	(.38)	(91.4)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Community groups near your home	.05	197	.18	77	.21	53	.06	16	5.98 (3), p=.001**
	(.22)	(84.9)	(.39)	(92.8)	(.41)	(91.4)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Other	0.10	196	0.09	77	0.13	53	0.00	16	.82 (3), p=.483
How was notification done?									
Media releases/announcements	.21	190	.21	77	.52	54	.31	13	2.38 (3), p=.069
	(.96)	(81.9)	(.41)	(92.8)	(.50)	(93.1)	(.48)	(68.4)	
Mailed or posted flyers	.18	190	.48	77	.56	54	.31	13	4.49 (3), p=.004**
	(.96)	(81.9)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.50)	(93.1)	(.48)	(68.4)	
My county sheriff's online registry	.34	190	.79	77	.72	54	.54	13	22.69 (3), p=.000***
	(.47)	(81.9)	(.41)	(92.8)	(.45)	(93.1)	(.52)	(68.4)	
Unofficial website or private security website	.14	190	.34	77	.39	54	.15	13	7.61 (3), p=.000***
	(.35)	(81.9)	(.48)	(92.8)	(.49)	(93.1)	(.38)	(68.4)	
Door-to-door information from the police/sheriff	.07	190	.10	77	.24	54	.23	13	5.05 (3), p=.002**
	(.25)	(81.9)	(.31)	(92.8)	(.43)	(93.1)	(.44)	(68.4)	
Registration lists at law enforcement agencies	.33	190	.40	77	.52	54	.23	13	2.59 (3), p=.053
	(.47)	(81.9)	(.49)	(92.8)	(.50)	(93.1)	(.44)	(68.4)	
Community meetings	.02	190	.17	77	.28	54	.23	13	13.70 (3), p=.000***
	(.14)	(81.9)	(.38)	(92.8)	(.45)	(93.1)	(.44)	(68.4)	
Automated telephone calls to neighbors	0	190	.04	77	.06	54	.08	13	3.54 (3), p=.015*
	0	(81.9)	(.19)	(92.8)	(.23)	(93.1)	(.28)	(68.4)	
Notification not done	.36	190	.04	77	.06	54	.08	13	17.18 (3), p=.000***
	(.48)	(81.9)	(.19)	(92.8)	(.23)	(93.1)	(.28)	(68.4)	
Other notification used	.08	190	.09	77	.11	54	0	13	.55 (3), p=.647
	(.28)	(81.9)	(.29)	(92.8)	(.32)	(93.1)	0	(68.4)	
Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.									

Table 16.

Mean Differences in Negative Life Impacts by Registration Level at Release and Current

SOR Level (Release):	**Level I**		**Level II**		**Level III**		**"I don't know"**		
	(N=232)		(N = 83)		(N=58)		(N=19)		
	M (SD)	n (%N)	M (SD)	n (%N)	M (SD)	n (%N)	M (SD)	n (%N)	F (df), Sig.
Has registration negatively impacted your life?	0.95	229	0.95	83	0.97	58	0.84	19	1.61 (3),
	(0.21)	(98.7)	(0.22)	(100)	(0.18)	(100)	(0.37)	(100)	p =.053
SOR Level (Current):	**Level I**		**Level II**		**Level III**		**"I don't know"**		
	(N=229)		(N = 81)		(N=52)		(N=30)		
	M (SD)	n (%N)	M (SD)	n (%N)	M (SD)		M (SD)	n (%N)	F (df), Sig.
Has registration negatively impacted your life?	0.94	227	0.95	81	0.96	52	0.93	29	.15(3)
	(0.23)	(99.1)	(0.22)	(100)	(0.19)	(100)	(0.26)	(96.6)	p =.930
Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.									

Table 17.

Mean Differences in Impacts by Registration Level at Release

	Level 1 (*N*=232)		**Level II** (*N*=83)		**Level III** (*N*=58)		**"I don't know"** (*N*=19)		
	M (SD)	*n (%)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%)*	*M (SD)*	*n (%)*	*F (df), Sig.*
Relationship Impact									
Physically assaulted by family	0.03	219	0.01	81	0.09	58	0.00	16	2.15 (3), p=.093
	(.17)	(94.4)	(.11)	(97.6)	(.28)	(100)	(0)	(84.2)	
Physically assaulted by other known person	0.07	219	0.11	81	0.14	58	0.25	16	2.31 (3), p=.076
	(.26)	(94.4)	(.32)	(97.6)	(.35)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Physically assaulted by stranger	0.09	219	0.12	81	0.22	58	0.19	16	2.75 (3), p=.043*
	(.29)	(94.4)	(.33)	(97.6)	(.42)	(100)	(.40)	(84.2)	
Lost a romantic relationship	0.43	219	0.35	81	0.36	58	0.44	16	.73 (3), p=.532
	(.50)	(94.4)	(.49)	(97.6)	(.48)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Lost a family relationship	0.56	219	0.44	81	0.38	58	0.44	16	2.52 (3), p=.058
	(.50)	(94.4)	(.50)	(97.6)	(.49)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Lost a close relationship	0.55	219	0.58	81	0.43	58	0.38	16	1.70 (3), p=.167
	(.50)	(94.4)	(.50)	(97.6)	(.50)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Lost a casual friendship	0.54	219	0.49	81	0.41	58	0.56	16	1.12 (3), p=.340
	(.49)	(94.4)	(.50)	(97.6)	(.50)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Lost a short-term relationship	0.32	219	0.32	81	0.29	58	0.25	16	.16 (3), p=.926
	(.47)	(94.4)	(.47)	(97.6)	(.46)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Lost a long-term relationship	0.32	219	0.31	81	0.28	58	0.25	16	.22 (3), p=.881
	(.47)	(94.4)	(.46)	(97.6)	(.45)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Harassed/threatened by family	.15	219	.15	81	.14	58	.06	16	.30 (3), p=.829
	(.35)	(94.4)	(.36)	(97.6)	(.35)	(100)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Harassed/threatened by other known person	.39	219	.40	81	.31	58	.63	16	1.76 (3), p=.154
	(.49)	(94.4)	(.49)	(97.6)	(.47)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Harassed/threatened by stranger	.26	219	.40	81	.36	58	.44	16	2.59 (3), p=.052
	(.44)	(94.4)	(.49)	(97.6)	(.48)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Property damaged by family	0.05	219	0.04	81	0.09	58	0.00	16	.96 (3), p=.413
	(.21)	(94.4)	(.19)	(97.6)	(.28)	(100)	(0)	(84.2)	
Property damaged by other known person	0.09	219	0.11	81	0.10	58	0.19	16	.64 (3), p=.592
	(.28)	(94.4)	(.32)	(97.6)	(.31)	(100)	(.40)	(84.2)	
Property damaged by stranger	0.08	219	0.17	81	0.16	58	0.19	16	2.49 (3), p=.060
	(.27)	(94.4)	(.38)	(97.6)	(.37)	(100)	(.40)	(84.2)	
A romantic relationship was weakened	0.33	219	0.28	81	0.31	58	0.31	16	.24 (3), p=.867
	(.47)	(94.4)	(.45)	(97.6)	(.47)	(100)	(.48)	(84.2)	
A family relationship was weakened	0.56	219	0.50	81	0.47	58	0.44	16	.77 (3), p=.510
	(.50)	(94.4)	(.50)	(97.6)	(.50)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
A close friendship was weakened	0.46	219	0.43	81	0.45	58	0.38	16	.19 (3), p=.902
	(.50)	(94.4)	(.50)	(97.6)	(.50)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
A casual friendship was weakened	0.36	219	0.37	81	0.34	58	0.31	16	.08 (3), p=.970
	(.48)	(94.4)	(.49)	(97.6)	(.48)	(100)	(.48)	(84.2)	
A short-term relationship was weakened	0.22	219	0.25	81	0.28	58	0.13	16	.64 (3), p=.590
	(.42)	(94.4)	(.43)	(97.6)	(.45)	(100)	(.34)	(84.2)	
A long-term relationship was weakened	0.26	219	0.28	81	0.24	58	0.13	16	.63 (3), p=.598
	(.44)	(94.4)	(.45)	(97.6)	(.43)	(100)	(.34)	(84.2)	
Witnessed harm to a family member	.04	219	.05	81	.12	58	.06	16	1.87 (3), p=.135
	(.20)	(94.4)	(.22)	(97.6)	(.33)	(100)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Arrested for mistaken identity	.02	219	.02	81	.05	58	0	16	.65 (3), p=.581
	(.15)	(94.4)	(.16)	(97.6)	(.22)	(100)	(0)	(84.2)	

Arrested for failure to register	.11	219	.10	81	.14	58	.25	16	1.11 (3), p=.344
	(.31)	(94.4)	(.30)	(97.6)	(.35)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Employment Impact									
Lost a job	0.35	223	0.38	77	0.48	58	0.38	16	1.15 (3), p=.327
	(.48)	(96.1)	(.49)	(92.8)	(.50)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Denied a job that matches my skills	0.61	223	0.67	77	0.67	58	0.69	16	.52 (3), p=.668
	(.49)	(96.1)	(.47)	(92.8)	(.47)	(100)	(.48)	(84.2)	
Decided not to apply for a job	0.67	223	0.58	77	0.60	58	0.60	16	1.24 (3), p=.295
	(.47)	(96.1)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.49)	(100)	(.49)	(84.2)	
Forced to take a job below my skill level	0.48	223	0.49	77	0.55	58	0.44	16	.38 (3), p=.767
	(.50)	(96.1)	(.50)	(92.8)	(.50)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Denied a promotion at work	0.12	223	0.08	77	0.14	58	0.19	16	.72 (3), p=.539
	(.33)	(96.1)	(.27)	(92.8)	(.35)	(100)	(.40)	(84.2)	
Decided not to apply for a promotion	0.16	223	0.12	77	0.14	58	0.06	16	.55 (3), p=.651
	(.36)	(96.1)	(.32)	(92.8)	(.35)	(100)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Denied admission to school	0.12	223	0.08	77	0.24	58	0.13	16	2.80 (3), p=.040*
	(.33)	(96.1)	(.27)	(92.8)	(.43)	(100)	(.34)	(84.2)	
Denied an apprenticeship or internship	0.10	223	0.09	77	0.21	58	0.25	16	2.60 (3), p=.052
	(.30)	(96.1)	(.29)	(92.8)	(.41)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Housing Impact									
Lost a place to live	0.33	212	0.28	75	0.29	56	0.53	17	1.44 (3), p=.231
	(.47)	(91.4)	(.45)	(90.4)	(.46)	(96.6)	(.51)	(89.5)	
Denied a place to live	0.53	212	0.60	75	0.63	56	0.88	17	3.00 (3), p=.031*
	(.50)	(91.4)	(.49)	(90.4)	(.49)	(96.6)	(.33)	(89.5)	
Forced to relocate due to community pressure	0.15	212	0.21	75	0.23	56	0.24	17	1.20 (3), p=.309
	(.35)	(91.4)	(.41)	(90.4)	(.43)	(96.6)	(.44)	(89.5)	
Forced to live separately from people who support me	0.30	212	0.32	75	0.39	56	0.47	17	1.10 (3), p=.348
	(.46)	(91.4)	(.47)	(90.4)	(.49)	(96.6)	(.51)	(89.5)	
Forced to live in a high-crime area	0.26	212	0.36	75	0.45	56	0.35	17	2.76 (3), p=.042*
	(.44)	(91.4)	(.48)	(90.4)	(.50)	(96.6)	(.49)	(89.5)	
Denied housing on school campus	0.06	212	0.05	75	0.11	56	0.06	17	.60 (3), p=.617
	(.24)	(91.4)	(.23)	(90.4)	(.31)	(96.6)	(.24)	(89.5)	
Became homeless	0.19	212	0.21	75	0.25	56	0.53	17	3.75 (3), p=.011*
	(.39)	(91.4)	(.41)	(90.4)	(.44)	(96.6)	(.51)	(89.5)	
Forced to live far away from people who support me.	0.21	212	0.31	75	0.34	56	0.35	17	2.04 (3), p=.107
	(.41)	(91.4)	(.46)	(90.4)	(.48)	(96.6)	(.49)	(89.5)	
Social Impact									
Blocked from volunteering	0.59	221	0.06	80	0.66	58	0.56	16	.32 (3), p=.814
	(.49)	(95.3)	(.49)	(96.4)	(.48)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Excluded from a community club	0.34	221	0.46	80	0.53	58	0.25	16	3.41 (3), p=.018*
	(.48)	(95.3)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Excluded from an online community	0.23	221	0.55	80	0.47	58	0.06	16	14.15 (3), p=.000***
	(.42)	(95.3)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Chose to stay off social media	0.47	221	0.45	80	0.48	58	0.06	16	3.50 (3), p=.016*
	(.50)	(95.3)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.25)	(84.2)	
Unable to participate in community activities	0.52	221	0.59	80	0.57	58	0.50	16	45 (3), p=.716
	(.50)	(95.3)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.52)	(84.2)	
Treated rudely in a public space	0.19	221	0.23	80	0.28	58	0.38	16	1.63 (3), p=.183
	(.39)	(95.3)	(.42)	(96.4)	(.45)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Asked to leave a public space	0.14	221	0.20	80	0.43	58	0.38	16	9.37 (3), p=.000***
	(.35)	(95.3)	(.40)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	

Difficult to make new friends	0.59	221	0.65	80	0.55	58	0.38	16	1.54 (3), p=.205
Emotional Impact									
Felt stigmatized	0.77	224	0.71	80	0.69	58	0.50	16	2.20 (3), p=.088
	(.42)	(96.6)	(.46)	(96.4)	(.47)	(100)	(.52)	(84.2)	
Feared for my safety	0.50	224	0.48	80	0.53	58	0.25	16	1.41 (3), p=.239
	(.50)	(96.6)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	
Felt isolated	0.74	224	0.71	80	0.66	58	0.63	16	.80 (3), p=.495
	(.44)	(96.6)	(.46)	(96.4)	(.48)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Felt shame	0.83	224	0.80	80	0.69	58	0.63	16	3.05 (3), p=.029*
	(.37)	(96.6)	(.40)	(96.4)	(.47)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Felt hopeless	0.63	224	0.69	80	0.34	58	0.63	16	.26 (3), p=.853
	(.48)	(96.6)	(.47)	(96.4)	(.48)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Felt discredited	0.63	224	0.65	80	0.67	58	0.56	16	.27 (3), p=.848
	(.48)	(96.6)	(.48)	(96.4)	(.47)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Felt tempted to reoffend	0.03	224	0.11	80	0.09	58	0.00	16	3.20 (3), p=.024*
	(.17)	(96.6)	(.32)	(96.4)	(.28)	(100)	0	(84.2)	
Felt embarrassed	0.81	224	0.75	80	0.71	58	0.69	16	1.31 (3), p=.270
	(.39)	(96.6)	(.44)	(96.4)	(.46)	(100)	(.48)	(84.2)	
Worried about future	0.81	224	0.89	80	0.88	58	0.81	16	1.11 (3), p=.346
	(.39)	(96.6)	(.31)	(96.4)	(.33)	(100)	(.40)	(84.2)	
Felt lonely	0.67	224	0.66	80	0.55	58	0.50	16	1.45 (3), p=.227
	(.47)	(96.6)	(.48)	(96.4)	(.50)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Had suicidal thoughts	0.48	224	0.38	80	0.40	58	0.44	16	.52 (3), p=.672
	(.86)	(96.6)	(.49)	(96.4)	(.49)	(100)	(.51)	(84.2)	
Had decreased motivation	0.61	224	0.56	80	0.60	58	0.38	16	1.20 (3), p=.310
	(.49)	(96.6)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.49)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Felt stressed	0.81	224	0.71	80	0.74	58	0.63	16	1.84 (3), p=.140
	(.39)	(96.6)	(.46)	(96.4)	(.44)	(100)	(.50)	(84.2)	
Feared for family's safety	0.29	224	0.41	80	0.40	58	0.25	16	1.78 (3), p=.151
	(.46)	(96.6)	(.50)	(96.4)	(.49)	(100)	(.45)	(84.2)	

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.

Qualitative Results

Impact of Registration on Participants

The survey included open-ended questions, including: "*In your own words, tell us how registration has impacted your life,*" "*In your own words, tell us what it was like when you first registered at the county sheriff's office,*" "*How often do law enforcement come to your house to see if you are living there?*", and, "*In your own words, tell us what should be changed about the registration process at the county sheriff's office.*"

When asked how registration has impacted their life, about one third of participants indicated that registration negatively impacted their employment prospects. Individuals commonly mentioned that they were unable to find or maintain gainful employment due to their registration. For example, Participant #40 mentioned, "*Unable to have a job that I wanted to do. Forced to find work that has no criminal history check*" and Participant #84 mentioned they, "*lost a job after coworker found out about my registration.*" Along the same lines, Participant #310 wrote, "It has taken away the self confidence that I used to have and has made it near impossible to obtain employment equivalent to my skill set."

Relatedly, almost one-fourth of participants mentioned that they felt ostracized due to their registration. Some participants specifically mentioned that they felt ostracized. For

instance, Participant #29 stated, "*Even though we have served our sentences and have changed our thinking, we are ostracized and isolated and are continued to be punished by job and housing denials.*" Other participants described that they felt purposely isolated from their support networks and/or community, maintained isolation to keep a sense of anonymity, or felt trapped in their own home. Participant #100 mentioned, "*Registration makes me feel like an outcast, not a part of society*" and Participant #178 mentioned, "*I was a very outgoing person, and now I just stay to myself.*" Similarly, Participant #179 expressed, "*It has made me almost completely anti-social*" and Participant #196 expressed, "*It's debilitating and completely destructive. I am unable to re-integrate with society. I am alone. Depressed. Anxious.*"

A little less than one fourth of participants also discussed that registration made it difficult to find or maintain adequate housing. Some participants mentioned that registration made it especially difficult to find adequate housing for their family. Participant #2 discussed, "*As if housing isn't hard enough to find, I'm stuck in too small of a place for my wife, two children and I*" and Participant #9 made note that, "*I live in a 30 foot travel trailer with my 10 year old daughter, my mother in law, and wife because I'm unemployed and apartments in our budget won't rent to me with registration. I've lived here 10 years now.*" Other participants talked about how they must live with family members in order to make ends meet. For instance, Participant #238 wrote, "*It is impossible to find a place to rent*" and Participant #21 stated, "*I have lived with my parents for the past three years as I will not be able to get an apartment with my girlfriend.*" By the same token, individuals discussed that they are ineligible for public housing due to their registration. For example, Participant #135 mentioned, "*Could not get a good job. Gave up working and had to get social security disability. Cannot get housing. Cannot get HUD housing.*"

Approximately one in five participants described that registration put a strain on their relationships with others. Participants typically mentioned that they had lost the support of family and friends due to their registration or that it is difficult to make or keep friends due to their registration. Participant #159 responded that they, "*Lost relationship w/my sons. My wife has lost relationship w/her family. We both lost jobs, and find it hard to attend church functions, or make lasting friendships. I have to live in separate house from my wife, because I can't pass background check*" and Participant #226 discussed, "*I have to be careful that people don't know my name. It's hard to make friends. I live in fear of being found out. Loss of some friends/partners/jobs.*" Other less prominent themes (mentioned by 10% or less of participants) included an increased sense of fear, a general negative impact on participants' lives, feelings of stigmatization, restricted travel, a negative impact on participants' mental health, feeling subhuman, a negative impact on participants' education, feeling that registration was an extension of punishment, experiences of harassment, and the inability to receive public assistance (See Table 18 for themes identified in qualitative comments).

Table 18.
Themes Identified in Qualitative Comments on the Impact of Registration (*N* = 349)

Theme	*f (%)*
Employment difficulties	103(30%)
Ostracism	81(23%)
Housing difficulties	78(22%)
Relationship difficulties	63(18%)
Increased fear	36(10%)
General negative impact on life	36(10%)
Stigmatized	35(10%)
Restricted travel	28(8%)
Negative impact on mental health	26(7%)
No effect	11(3%)
Felt subhuman	10(3%)
Negative impact on education	9(3%)
Extension of punishment	7(2%)
Experienced harassment	6(3%)
Unable to receive public assistance	4(1%)

Initial Experience with the Registration Process

When asked to describe the initial registration process, about one half of respondents indicated that they felt stigmatized. Participants commonly mentioned feelings of shame, embarrassment, and humiliation as indicators of stigmatization. For example, Participant #21 stated, "*Rude staff and humiliated. I was told I had to wait until all the other "normal" people in the office were taken care of first*" while Participant #94 stated, "*I felt embarrassed, like everyone was watching me. I felt unsafe and wanted to leave as soon as I could,*" and Participant #255 mentioned, "*Embarrassing, hard, humiliating, like I am less of a person regardless of what my situation is or was.*" At the same time, participants discussed that they were fearful of the process. Individuals described being fearful of the public or police, nervousness, and/or intimidation. For instance, Participant #327 described, "*It was extremely stressful and felt extremely worried for my safety*" and Participant #89 stated, "*Terrifying and humiliating. I feel like they either want me to move away or kill myself.*"

One specific concern of respondents was the public nature of registration. Slightly more than one in ten respondents criticized the public nature of the registration process. Participants typically stated that they felt like they were being watched. For example, Participant #69 wrote, "*I felt uneasy—like everyone was watching me fill out forms. Then I got called back to an office for picture taking where I was asked other questions out loud that could be heard by others out front. Very embarrassed to walk out afterward*" and Participant #148 mentioned, "*Embarrassing because the sheriff loudly told me where to go in a public place, to make his point.*" Interestingly, some participants mentioned that they had concerns about registration being conducted publicly at the sheriff's office due to concealed weapons permits being issued at the same time. For example, Participant #383 discussed, "*There was no privacy and it was where the concealed weapons permit was issued as well. People looked at me with disgust and fear hatred.*" and Participant #189 stated, "*I had to walk past a line of people down the hall waiting to get their concealed weapons permits. My safety was in clear jeopardy at that point.*"

In stark contrast to these responses, about 14% of participants suggested that the registration process was uneventful, simple, or routine. Participants wrote that they filled out

forms and "*went through the motions,*" but that the process did not affect them negatively. Likewise, about 13% of respondents felt that they were treated fairly by their sheriff's office and had pleasant and respectful interactions with registration staff. Exemplifying these views, Participant #101 felt, "*It was a smooth process and the sheriff's office has always treated me with respect and dignity*" and Participant #51 stated, "*It was ok. Just one on one, filling out paperwork and picture and finger printing. No judgment from the detective.*" Other less prominent themes (mentioned by 8% or less of participants) included negative mental health impacts resulting from the initial registration, poor interactions with sheriff's offices, feeling that registration was an extension of punishment, the process was inconvenient, and that the initial process made participants feel subhuman, angry, or confused. Overall, respondents seemed to either feel stigmatized and fearful at the time of registration, or feel that the process was uneventful and the sheriff's office was respectful and pleasant.

Table 19.

Themes Identified in Qualitative Comments on the Registration Process (*N* = 350)

Theme	*f* (%)
Stigma	153(44%)
Fear	80(23%)
Uneventful process	49(14%)
Pleasant interactions w/sheriff's office	44(13%)
Public process	40(11%)
Negative impact on mental health	28(8%)
Extension of punishment	17(5%)
Poor interactions w/sheriff's office	17(5%)
Inconvenient process	13(4%)
Subhuman	9(3%)
Anger	8(2%)
Confusion	7(2%)

Views on What Should be changed about the Registration process

When asked what should be changed about registration, participants most commonly mentioned that they would like their risk classification and registration to be reevaluated automatically after some time. About one-third of individuals stated preference this view where they described that a reevaluation should include an objective review of their registration and risk level as well as the possibility for elimination of registration requirements on a case-by-case basis. For example, Participant #30 stated, "*They should evaluate each offenders risk—then recommend release from registration for those who deserve it, or at least less home checks*" while Participant #124 mentioned, "*Case by case evaluation of individuals and how they are treated. But mostly a good system with good people*" and Participant #250 discussed, "*It should be automated as to take the judgmental human element out of the process.*"

Individuals also expressed a clear preference to make the registration process more private or discrete. Participant #4's answer typified this preference: "*They should allow a way to make an appointment in advance so I don't have to announce my reason for being there in front of a waiting room.*" Participants also talked generally about eliminating online registration requirements. For instance, Participant #253 stated, "*I think that it is a good idea to*

have law enforcement know where offenders live. However, the public should not be notified, because they do not deal with the information appropriately, and sex offenses have not decreased since the enactment of this law. Community notification increases fear & paranoia in otherwise reasonable humans. They tend to jump to conclusions because the available offender information tends to create more questions than answers."

Approximately 13% of participants mentioned that they would like registration to expire automatically after a certain period of time. For example, Participant #41 noted that, "*A low level offender should be released from all registration & lists after 10-20 years of no further offenses*" and Participant #142 stated, "*As a Level I offender, without any offenses, I believe there should be a termination of registration after 20 years.*" Other participants (around 13%) discussed that they would like registration eliminated completely for some individuals. Participant #24 made the point that, "*People such as myself that are a low risk level to reoffend should not have to be on lifetime supervision or registration*" and Participant #308 stated, "*I was charged as a juvenile as an adult, I should not have to register.*" In contrast, about 13% of respondents stated that they believed the registration process should not change at all. Other less prominent themes (mentioned by 7% or less of participants) included eliminating registration completely, providing electronic/mail/phone registration options, and requiring registration for other types of offenses.

Table 20.

Themes Identified in Qualitative Comments on What Should Be Changed About Registration Process (*N* = 275)

Theme	*f* (%)
Reevaluate after some time	77(28%)
Make private/discrete	40(15%)
Automatic registration expiration	37(13%)
No change	37(13%)
Eliminate for some individuals	35(13%)
Eliminate for all	19(7%)
Electronic/mail/phone registration	16(6%)
Require registration for other offenses	5(2%)

DISCUSSION

The results presented here offer data from the perspective of sex and kidnapping offender registrants to build upon prior research that has examined the perspectives of the public, criminal justice professionals, and lawmakers, and family members of registrants. The results offer insight into how the Washington State Community Protection Act and SORN has impacted registrants and their community reintegration and reentry.

Key Findings

The findings taken as a whole indicate that the vast majority of the registrants surveyed reported they have been negatively impacted by registration regardless of registration level, county of residence, and demographic characteristics. Key findings include:

- The majority of registrants indicated that they were negatively impacted by registration.
- Perceived negative impact of registration did not significantly differ by registration level.
- There was no significant difference in terms of negative impact by demographic characteristics including sex, race, age, education, and income level.
- Level 1 offenders were more likely than level 2 and 3 offenders to rate shame as a negative impact.
- Level 2 and 3 offenders were more likely to believe that there should have a review of their assigned risk classification and less likely to agree with their assigned risk classification level.
- Level 3 offenders were more likely to report being denied a place to live, lack of access to education, feeling forced to live in high crime area, being excluded from online communities, being asked to leave a public space, being required to have contact with law enforcement, and being publicly recognized as an offender.
- Eastern WA respondents were more likely than Western Washington respondents to lose a close relationship or be physically assaulted.
- The top reported impacts of registration in qualitative comments were stigma and fear.
- The top reported challenges in qualitative comments were finding housing and feeling ostracized.
- Regarding the impact on public safety, the majority of respondents disagreed that registration protects their neighbors from them, but agreed that registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find them.
- Suggestions for improvements to the sex offender registration process by respondents included: regular reevaluation of levels, making the process more private and discreet, and having a more objective review to determine registration levels.

Prior research has shown that the majority of registered sex offenders report negative psychological consequences of notification, while subsequently recognizing the benefits of knowing that others were monitoring their behavior and acknowledging that intrusive notification strategies were associated with higher rates of socially destabilizing consequences (Lasher & McGrath, 2010). The findings presented here are consistent with previous research on the negative impacts of sex offender registration and notification, as well as the view that these processes also provide some positive societal benefits (e.g., participants report that registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find them). However, our findings generally indicate a lack of distinction between sex offender levels on the negative impacts of notification, thus failing to support the prior research suggesting that more intrusive methods of notification are associated with higher levels of destabilizing consequences.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Study and Suggestions for Future Research

No study is without limitations. The strength of the current study is that it provides data from a random sample of sex and kidnapping registrants in Washington State and offers detailed information regarding the perceptions of registrants to better understand how registration impacts community reintegration and reentry of sex and kidnapping offenders.

One weakness of the study is the low response rate. While 402 respondents is comparable to the size of samples included in prior research, the sample reflects only a 6.6% response rate. While this is a low response rate, obtaining data from this population is difficult. Future research replicating this study in other jurisdictions would provide necessary additional data to build on the current findings.

Another limitation is that juveniles were excluded from the current study. While the current study included respondents who were required to register as juveniles, the respondent sample did not include respondents who were under the age of 18. Future research examining the perspectives of juvenile offenders with respect to the impact of registration is necessary to better understand the experience of the registration process for juveniles. Furthermore, the mean age of our respondents is 51 which is significantly higher than the mean age of the sampling population which is 45. This may skew the results to the perspectives of older registrants. Additionally, counties with lower populations are under-represented in the sample. Future research is needed to better understand how registration process and the impact of registration differs by county and by region (East/West Washington State).

Finally, the survey design was self-reported and cross-sectional and thus is a measure of perceptions at the time the respondents completed the survey. Future research that employs a longitudinal design would allow for the collection of data over time to examine the reintegration and reentry trajectories of registered sex and kidnapping offenders. Research is needed from a mixed-method perspective that includes interviews with registrants, family members, community members, victims, law enforcement, corrections and other criminal justice professionals as well as recidivism measures. Research utilizing both recidivism as an outcome variable and qualitative data on the experiences of all involved in the process would contribute to the literature on the experience of registrants in the community reintegration and reentry process.

Implications

The perceptions of sex and kidnapping offender registrants are important for a number of reasons. First, the purported purpose of sex offender registration and notification is to increase public safety. However, the vast majority of offenders, including sex offenders, will eventually be released from incarceration and will live in the community (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013). Examination of the perceptions and experiences of sex offender registrants offers insight for treatment specialists, community corrections officers, law enforcement, family members, and the public to better understand how registration impacts registrants in the community reintegration and reentry process.

The findings presented in the current study show that registration brings negative effects for Level 1, 2, and 3 sex offenders. The results indicate that registration brings with it stigmatization and feelings of shame, humiliation, and hopelessness that begin very early at the time of registration. While shame and humiliation might be considered an inherent effect of the registration process that potentially contributes to crime desistance, research suggests that shame and humiliation without opportunities for reintegration and restoration have the potential to reduce opportunities for reentry and may ultimately decrease rather than increase public safety (Bazemore & Maruna, 2009; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Maruna, 2001).

The suggestion of respondents in this study that the registration process be made more procedurally just and discreet is a concrete recommendation that can be implemented to increase opportunities for registrant success in the reentry and reintegration process. Furthermore, reconsideration of the designation of Level 1 sex offender may be in order. The findings presented here that the negative effect is not significantly different for Level 1 sex offenders than for Level 2 and 3 sex offenders raises the question of how wide of a net should be cast in the registration process. Would it make more sense from the perspective of public safety to remove Level 1 sex offenders from the registration process entirely? Additionally, if the negative impact of registration cuts across all sex offender levels, then what is the benefit of wider notification for Level 1 and Level 2 sex offenders? Reconsideration of how wide of a net should be cast as well as the utility of online notification and other forms of public notification may be warranted in terms of how these practices impact community reintegration and reentry of sex offenders and ultimately how or if these practices enhance public safety.

Concluding Comments

The experiences and perceptions of registered sex and kidnapping offenders are important to consider to better understand the utility of registration and notification laws. The ultimate purpose of sex and kidnapping offender registration is to increase public safety through community awareness and deterrence. If registration has a negative impact on people in ways that limit registrants' ability to integrate into society and reintegrate and reenter their communities, then the negative effects of registration extend beyond public safety objectives and have the potential to decrease rather than increase public safety. As a society, it is worth considering how practices that have the potential to make registrants feel publicly shamed such as online public registries and difficulties in obtaining access to resources such as housing, employment, education and collateral consequences to family members impact not just the registrants, but their families and the community as a whole to determine whether the cost of registration is balanced with the benefits to public safety and long-term community well-being.

Findings from the current study show that registration brings with it significant negative impacts that may last a lifetime. The question arises, is it in anyone's best interest to have the impact of registration make a registrant feel like "…*they either want me to move away or kill myself.*" Is it necessary to have the registration process itself involve a public degradation ceremony such that a registrant would have to "…*walk past a line of people down the hall waiting to get their concealed weapons permits*…" and feel afraid of being physically attacked? Why couldn't the process involve, as one registrant suggested, to "…*allow a way to make an appointment in advance so I don't have to announce my reason for being there in front of a waiting room.*"

From the perspective of the registrants in the current study, these negative impacts of registration exceed the public safety function of registration by resulting in stigmatization, public shaming, and long-term feelings of hopelessness and isolation. Add to this logistical difficulties in obtaining housing, employment, and education as well as fear of physical harm and harassment, registrants face challenges that make community reentry and reintegration extremely difficult. For example, recent research suggests that internet stigmatization associated with sex offender registration is incompatible with the processes of reintegration

(Lageson & Maruna, 2018). Given our findings that stigmatization and shame is a prominent impact of registration, the social costs and benefits of registration are important to consider.

On the other hand, some of the respondents in the current study indicated that law enforcement treated them with respect and noted that they appreciated this. For example, one respondent indicated that "*It was a smooth process and the sheriff's office has always treated me with respect and dignity.*" Building practices into the registration process that increase feelings of respect and dignity while decreasing feelings of shame and humiliation have the potential to increase the public safety objectives of registration.

Perhaps it is time to reconsider public notification. The current findings suggest that many registrants understand the need for registration; however, they view the public shaming to be impossible to navigate and antithetical to successful community reintegration. For example, it is worth considering what one registrant said:

> *"I think that it is a good idea to have law enforcement know where offenders live. However, the public should not be notified, because they do not deal with the information appropriately, and sex offenses have not decreased since the enactment of this law. Community notification increases fear & paranoia in otherwise reasonable humans. They tend to jump to conclusions because the available offender information tends to create more questions than answers."*

In addition, having an expiration date on registration rather than having it last a lifetime was another dominant theme in the current study. Respondent suggestions such as "*A low level offender should be released from all registration & lists after 10-20 years of no further offenses" and ""As a Level I offender, without any offenses, I believe there should be a termination of registration after 20 years," and "People such as myself that are a low risk level to reoffend should not have to be on lifetime supervision or registration," and "I was charged as a juvenile as an adult, I should not have to register.*"

Ultimately, shaming practices that are perceived by registrants as excessive and impossible to logistically navigate have the potential to have a backfire effect in terms of decreasing rather than increasing public safety. Understanding how registrants experience the registration process offers important information to take into consideration to implement restorative rather than retributive elements into the registration process that can benefit victims, the community, criminal justice professionals, and registrants themselves.

The findings offer information to better understand the collateral consequences of registration from the perspective of sex and kidnapping offender registrants. Findings suggest that the negative effects of registration impact registrants at all levels with consequences ranging from shame, stigma, and ostracism to difficulties in obtaining housing and employment to being fearful of being physically harmed. Recognizing the impact of registration on registrants has the potential to better understand how the consequences of registration impact reintegration. Changes to the registration process that acknowledge the perspective of registrants such as making the process more discreet, utilizing objective tools to determine and reevaluate levels, and educating the public about ways to support registrants in the reintegration process may potentially improve opportunities for reentry and reintegration.

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Appendix

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Welcome!

Thank you for participating in this important study about sex and kidnapping offender registration and notification. **We want to understand what it is like to be in your situation and what you think.** This anonymous and confidential questionnaire asks about your experiences and perspectives. For each of the following questions, please mark the answer that best represents how you feel about the issue.

Registration Requirements

For questions 1 to 5, tell us about your registration requirements.

1. How long do you have to register? (circle one) 10 yrs. 15 yrs. Lifetime Indefinite I don't know Other: ____

2. What was your risk classification level at release? (circle one) Level I Level II Level III I don't know

3. What is your risk classification level now? (circle one) Level I Level II Level III I don't know

4. Are you listed on your county sheriff's online registry for sex and kidnapping offenders? (check one)
____ Yes ____ No (skip to question #6) ____ I don't know (skip to question #6)

5. My online registry page includes: (check all that apply)

____ Incorrect name
____ Incorrect aliases
____ No photo
____ Incorrect risk classification level
____ Incorrect physical description
____ Incorrect photo
____ Incorrect address
____ Incorrect offense information
____ Outdated photo

Experiences with Registration

For questions 6 to 14, tell us about your experiences with registration.

6. Has registration negatively impacted your life? (check one) ____ Yes ____ No (skip to question #12)

7. Which of the following happened to you because of your registration? (check all that apply)

____ Physically assaulted by family
____ Property damaged by family
____ Physically assaulted by other known person
____ Property damaged by other known person
____ Physically assaulted by stranger
____ Property damaged by stranger
____ Lost a romantic relationship
____ A romantic relationship was weakened
____ Lost a family relationship
____ A family relationship was weakened
____ Lost a close friendship
____ A close friendship was weakened
____ Lost a casual friendship
____ A casual friendship was weakened

____ Lost a short-term relationship
____ A short-term relationship was weakened
____ Lost a long-term relationship
____ A long-term relationship was weakened
____ Harassed/threatened by family
____ Witnessed harm to a family member
____ Harassed/threatened by other known person
____ Arrested for mistaken identity
____ Harassed/threatened by stranger
____ Arrested for failure to register

8. How has registration negatively impacted your employment and education? (check all that apply)
____ Lost a job
____ Denied a promotion at work
____ Denied a job that matches my skills
____ Decided not to apply for a promotion
____ Decided not to apply for a job
____ Denied admission to school
____ Forced to take a job below my skill level
____ Denied an apprenticeship/internship

9. How has registration negatively impacted your housing? (check all that apply)
____ Lost a place to live
____ Forced to live in a high-crime area
____ Denied a place to live
____ Denied housing on school campus
____ Forced to relocate due to community pressure
____ Became homeless
____ Forced to live separately from people who support me
____ Forced to live far away from people who support me

Please continue on the back of this page.

10. How has registration negatively impacted your social life? (check all that apply)
____ Blocked from volunteering
____ Unable to participate in community activities
____ Excluded from a community club (e.g., YMCA)
____ Treated rudely in a public space
____ Excluded from an online community (e.g., Facebook)
____ Asked to leave a public space
____ I chose to stay off social media (e.g., Facebook)
____ It is difficult to make new friends

11. Which of the following happened to you because of your registration? (check all that apply)
____ Felt stigmatized
____ Felt embarrassed
____ Feared for my safety
____ Worried about my future
____ Felt isolated
____ Felt lonely
____ Felt shame
____ Had suicidal thoughts
____ Felt hopeless
____ Had decreased motivation
____ Felt discredited
____ Felt stressed
____ Felt tempted to reoffend
____ Feared for my family's safety

12. In your own words, tell us how registration has impacted your life.

13. In your own words, tell us what it was like when you first registered at the county sheriff's office.

14. How often do law enforcement come to your house to see if you are living there?

Views on Registration

For questions 15 to 24, tell us your level of agreement with each statement about registration.

15. Registration makes it easier for me to get caught if I reoffend. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10
Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

16. Registration makes it easier for law enforcement to find where I am. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

17. Registration stops me from committing sex and kidnapping offenses. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

18. Registration stops me from committing other types of offenses. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

19. Registration makes my recovery difficult. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

20. Registration makes me more willing to manage my risk factors. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

21. Registration helps my neighbors protect themselves from me. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

Please continue on the next page.

22. My assigned risk classification level accurately reflects my risk to sexually reoffend. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

23. There should be a way for me to get a review of my assigned risk classification level. (circle one)

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9----------10

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

24. In your own words, tell us what should be changed about the registration process at the county sheriff's office.

Experiences with Community Notification

For questions 25 to 29, tell us about your experiences with community notification.

25. Who was notified about your registration? (check all that apply)

____ Victim ____ Police

____ Schools
____ Public libraries
____ Businesses/organizations for women
____ Neighborhood near your home
____ Media
____ Public at large
____ Neighbors
____ Child day care providers
____ Businesses/organizations for children
____ Businesses/organizations for vulnerable adults
____ Community groups near your home
____ Other: _____

26. How was notification about your registration done? (check all that apply)
____ Media releases/announcements
____ Mailed or posted flyers
____ My county sheriff's online registry
____ Unofficial website or private security website
____ Other: _____
____ Door-to-door information from the police/sheriff
____ Registration lists at law enforcement agencies
____ Community meetings
____ Automated telephone calls to neighbors
____ Notification about my registration was not done

27. What percentage of people in your life (i.e., family, friends, romantic partners, coworkers, and others) know that you are a convicted sex or kidnapping offender? (circle one)
0-----10-----20-----30-----40-----50-----60-----70-----80-----90-----100

28. How often are you recognized by someone else as a registered sex or kidnapping offender? (check one)
____ Daily
____ A couple of times a week
____ About once a week
____ A couple of times a month
____ About once a month
____ A few times a year
____ Once a year
____ Never

29. How often do you have contact with law enforcement? (check one)
____ Daily
____ A couple of times a week
____ About once a week
____ A couple of times a month
____ About once a month
____ A few times a year
____ Once a year
____ Never

Demographics

For questions 30 to 50, tell us a little about you. Remember, this information cannot be traced back to you.

30. Current age (in years): ____
31. What is your gender? ____

32. Age (in years) when you first registered: ____
33. How many years have you been registered? ____

34. What is your current marital status? (circle one)
Single Divorced/Separated Married/Partnered Widowed

Please continue on the back of this page.

35. Highest level of education: (check one)
____ Less than high school
____ Some high school
____ High school graduate/GED
____ Some college (no degree)
____ 2-year Associate degree
____ 4-year Bachelor degree
____ Graduate degree (e.g., Ph.D.)

36. Which best describes you? (check one)
____ White
____ Black/African American
____ Native American/Alaskan Native
____ Asian/Pacific Islander
____ Latino/Hispanic
____ Other: _____

37. What is your annual income? (check one)

____ Less than $10,000	____ $10,001-$20,000	____ $20,001-$30,000	____ $30,001-$40,000
____ $40,001-$50,000	____ $50,001-$60,000	____ $60,001-$70,000	____ $70,001-$80,000
____ $80,001-$90,000	____ $90,001-$100,000	____ $100,001-$110,000	____More than $110,000

38. Number of children (of any age): ____

39. Number of children (under 18 years old): ____

40. Number of children (under 18 years old) who live with you: ____

41. What is your employment status? (check all that apply)
____ Full-time

____ Part-time
____ Temporary
____ Unemployed

42. Are you a student? (check one)
____ Yes

____ No

43. Do you have any previous sex or kidnapping offenses? (circle one) Yes No

44. Were you a minor when you were first required to register? (circle one) Yes No (skip to question #49)

45. Were you convicted of a sex or kidnapping offense in juvenile court? (circle one) Yes No (skip to question #49)

46. Are you eligible to have your juvenile conviction sealed and registration dismissed? (check one)

____ Yes ____ No (skip to question #49) ____ I don't know (skip to question #49)

47. Have you asked the court to remove your requirement to register? (check one)

____ Yes ____ No (skip to question #49) ____ I don't know (skip to question #49)

48. In your own words, tell us why the judge did not remove your requirement to register.

49. Describe the person/people you were convicted of offending against. (check all that apply)
_____ Younger than 6 years old _____ Between 6 and 12 years old ____ Between 13 and 15 years old
_____ Between 16 and 17 years old _____ Between 18 and 20 years old ____ Between 21 and 30 years old
_____ Between 31 and 40 years old _____ Between 41 and 50 years old ____ Older than 50 years old
_____ Family member _____ Nonfamily member ____ Acquaintance

_____ Stranger (known less than 24 hours) _____ Male ____ Female

50. On a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 being "very liberal" and 7 being "very conservative," rate how your political and social views would best be characterized.

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7
Very liberal Moderate/Neutral Very Conservative

You have finished the survey. Thank you for your assistance!