

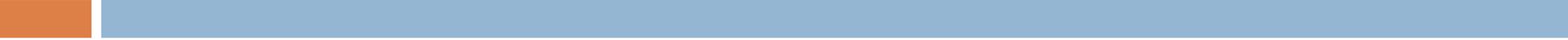
Impressions of the Prison Rape Elimination Act:
Wardens' Attitudes Toward, and Implementations of, the PREA

Prison Rape Elimination Act (2003)



- Establish a zero-tolerance policy
- Prison rape as a top priority
- Increase available data through increased recording
- Develop national standards for detection, prevention, reduction, and punishment
- Increase the accountability of prison officials

Background



- Research indicates varying rates of prison rape
- Limitations to researchers
- Social and media representations minimize severity
- Studies continue to show prevalent and widespread sexual abuse and assault within correctional facilities
- Implications for reintegration and recidivism

Research Questions

- How are wardens implementing the PREA?
- Is it perceived as a productive or inhibiting measure?
- How could the PREA be better structured?
- Do wardens believe that the PREA is a valuable tool for reducing inmate sexual violence?

Methods

- Surveyed 500 wardens nationwide
 - ▣ Paper and electronic survey versions
 - ▣ State and federal wardens
 - ▣ Male-only correctional facilities

- Anonymity

- Survey contained both open and closed questions

Survey Structure

- *Estimation of Prevalence and Reported Assaults*
- *Classification of Prison Sex*
- *Attitudes Toward the PREA*
- *Open-Ended Commentary*

Results



Demographics

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Male	30	71.4
Female	12	28.6
Caucasian	33	78.6
African American	9	21.4
Two-year degree or less	7	16.6
Bachelor's Degree	18	42.9
Master's Degree	16	38.1
Doctorate	1	2.4
Midwest	18	42.9
South	13	30.9
West	6	14.3
Northeast	5	11.9

- Mean age 50.3 years (*SD* = 5.5 years)
- Response rate 8.4% (*N* = 42)

Results

- *Estimation of Prevalence and Reported Assaults*

Table 3
Warden Estimations of Inmates Engaging in Sex

"Estimation of the percentage of your facility's inmate population that engages in *forced sex*."

Estimate	<i>n</i>	%
0 to 5%	32	88.9
6 to 10%	3	8.3
11 to 25%	1	2.8

"Estimation of the percentage of your facility's inmate population that engages in *consensual sex*."

Estimate	<i>n</i>	%
0 to 5%	15	44.1
6 to 10%	9	26.5
11 to 25%	6	17.6
26 to 50%	4	11.8

N = 42

Table 4
Reported Inmate Sexual Assaults in Last 12 Months

"In the past 12 months, how many inmate sexual assaults were reported within your facility?"

Reports	<i>n</i>	%
0 to 5	30	81.1
6 to 10	5	13.5
11 to 25	1	2.7
26 to 40	0	0
41 to 60	1	2.7

N = 42

Results

- *Classification of Prison Sex*
 - Similar classification patterns to those found in Moster and Jeglic's (2009) study
 - Findings indicate that wardens generally have more difficulty in clearly identifying situations of prison rape and sexual assault when more covert tactics are used

Results

- *Attitudes Toward the PREA*
 - ▣ Generally positive and highly regarded as a useful tool for training staff
 - ▣ Conflicting responses indicate that incident occurrence and reporting of inmate sexual violence still need to be investigated

Results

- *Open-Ended Commentary*
 - ▣ Inmate sexual violence not viewed as a priority
 - ▣ Belief that more officers would be a stronger preventative tactic than the PREA guidelines
 - ▣ Does not address more nuanced aspects of prison experience

Discussion

- Limitations:

- Local level correctional facilities not surveyed

- Representative?

- Anonymity compromised

- Only one methodological tool

- Multiple IRB approvals

Discussion

- Implications for the Future:
 - ▣ Encourage warden input for policy design
 - ▣ PREA as an effective preventative tool
 - ▣ Evidence-based research
 - ▣ Provide resources to foster compliance and adherence