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Collective action for the rights of sex offenders: evaluating social movement organizations

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COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR THE RIGHTS OF SEX OFFENDERS: EVALUATING SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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DEDICATION

In memory of my Mum, who passed away during this journey; to my Dad who held strong and

got me through; and to Heidi MacRae for her constant love and support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

For every sex crime that occurs, there is at least one victim and one offender. In the 1970s and 1980s, the women's movement made a call for justice, requiring law enforcement to punish offenders for sexual crimes with the standard sanctions given by law enforcement, such as jail, prison, and parole or probation (Schechter, 1982). In the early to mid-1990s, policies were written that added an additional sanction specific to sex offenders: sex offender registration and community notification (Terry & Ackerman, 2009). The goals of this additional was for law enforcement and citizens in the community to know the offender's crime and place of residence, once the person was released from jail or prison. Over time, these policies began to require that pictures of the offender be made available to the public. By knowing the physical characteristics and place of residence, it was intended that citizens in the community would be able to protect themselves and their families from potential harm from these offenders.

Some researchers and advocates have questioned whether the sex offender registry reduces these potential harms to the community (Prescott & Rockoff, 2008). Legal challenges have questioned the constitutionality of these sanctions, on the grounds of cruel and unusual punishment, *ex post facto*, and violate offenders' right to due process of the law (Costigliacci, 2008). Others have suggested clearer boundaries for the types of offenders who are included on the sex offender registry, as some individuals on the registry have not committed a sexual offense (Ceglian, 2004). Finally, there are unintended consequences from public registration, that some would argue act as barriers to an offender's rehabilitation (Levenson, et. al., 2007; Farkas & Stichman, 2002; Tewksbury, 2005). Due to these many counter debates, one can see that there are two sides to the issue of sex offender registration and notification policies: that, a) citizens

have a right to live a life free of harmful sexual crimes, and b) the policies that have been written to address this social problem have not been effective at reducing sex crimes, while causing harm to registered sex offenders.

This dissertation studied social movement organizations (SMOs) that advocate for the rights and needs of those required to register as sex offenders. Before embarking on information about these organizations, I discuss sexual violence as a social problem, followed by a presentation of the types of sexual crimes that can put one on the sex offender registry. These two points need to be looked at to lay the groundwork for the aims of this study and the research questions.

Sexual Violence as a Social Problem

Sexually violent behaviors have been a part of the social world throughout history (Friedman, 1993). The impact that sexual violence has on a victim can be severe. Victims often experience posttraumatic stress disorder or similar symptoms, such as fear, flashbacks, aggression, panic and anxiety disorders, and phobias (Burgess & Holstrom, 1974; Campbell, Dworkin, & Cabral, 2009). Victims have been known to have their daily functioning disturbed in educational and employment settings, as well as within the victim's intimate and interpersonal relationships (West, 1991). Furthermore, victims who report such experiences to friends, family, law enforcement, or mental health providers may also experience secondary victimization when those they report it to do not believe the victim, or minimize the violence (Campbell & Raja, 1999). Sexual violence can have a varying impact on the life of a victim. Some individuals suffer severe consequences, while others experience comparatively minimal difficulties. The resulting impact that an offense has on a victim is moderated by the nature of the assault and the relationship that the victim had with the offender (Marshall, et. al., 2006). These consequences

for victims necessitated legislation that would sanction offenders for their violent behavior, resulting in justice for the victim. In the United States, it was not until the 1970s that sexual violence became a social problem that resulted in criminally enforced penalties (Friedman, 1993).

Since the 1990s, crime policy related to sexual offenses has been driven by the most abhorrent cases: those committed by strangers against children. The definition of, and extent to which a culture protects "childhood" has changed with the process of industrialization. Previously, children had toiled in the fields beside their parents to meet the very basic needs of life. After industrialization, with the creation of the middle class, children were not exposed to the hardships of life to the same degree that they had been previously. Children were also gradually removed from the labor force. Developmental psychologists, such as Erikson, propose that children, from birth to adulthood, develop through a series of stages, with different milestones and expectations for each stage. In the mid-nineteenth century, social movements advocated for the protection of children through the implementation of social welfare programs, such as public schools and the juvenile justice system (Best, 1990). In this way, children were separated from adults, and their protection became vital for survival of the family and cultural promotion.

The modern movement to protect children in the United States began with the child-savers of the late 1800s (Platt, 1969) and the movement to define physical child abuse began in the early 1960s (Kempe, et al., 1962). These two movements came to the aid of children who were being victimized by adults. Best (1990) argues that child-saving movements, like other movements in the United States, are based on a claims-making process which uses persuasive techniques, such as data and cultural values, to garner support for a cause. The child-saving

movement has gained wide-spread support and has stipulated that child abuse would no longer be tolerated in the United States.

The child-saving movement, during the 1970s, frequently included sexual abuse as one of many types of child abuse (Weisberg, 1984). The term sexual abuse was initially defined as incest and molestation, but grew to include child pornography and prostitution. In the 1980s, child abuse continued to be widely received as an important social problem, with media attention on actual cases and also through the production of cultural artifacts such as literature and movies (Best, 1990). In the same decade, some controversy arose related to the cultural consensus on sexual abuse. Highly publicized cases of ritual child sexual abuse were criticized for the inappropriate use of child questioning techniques and weak evidence (Best, 1990). The documentary, *Witch Hunt,* highlights one of these cases that occurred in Bakersfield, California, where several families were torn apart by allegations and false convictions of child sexual abuse towards many adults who were later found to be innocent (Hardy, 2008). Since this time, the child-saving movement has been shaped and influenced by a range of stakeholders and activists who have viewed the issue from various standpoints: criminological, cognitive psychology, treatment, and feminist (Whittier, 2009).

The child-saving movement in the U.S. addresses a very important social problem: that children deserve to live a life free of violence, and that offenders should be punished for their crimes. The cases discussed above, where false accusations caused damage to families and communities, are unfortunate as they distract from the premise that children should be protected from sexual harm. However, it is also important to be aware that sometimes social policies, and those who enforce them, can overreach in their efforts to protect children. This social problem has led to efforts to protect the public, both children and adults, from sexual crimes. The goal of

social welfare policy is to address this problem with policies that are effective at reducing such crimes (Mears, 2007).

Types of Sex Offenses

Today, there are many types of sexual behaviors that are considered sexual offenses. In the United States, The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, defines two types of sexual offenses involving sexual contact with victims: rape and sexual assault. Rape is defined as actual or attempted forced sexual intercourse, whereby "force" can mean physical force or psychological coercion (DOJ, 2010). Intercourse is described as penetration with an offender's body parts or a foreign object, into a victim's body. Sexual assault is defined as attacks, actual or attempted, that involve unwanted sexual contact between a victim and offender that does not include penetration. Sexual assault may or may not involve force, and includes behaviors such as grabbing or fondling. Both definitions are inclusive of various victims: males, females, same-sex or opposite-sex. Additionally, both definitions include verbal threats as an offense (DOJ, 2010).

The common theme found in sexual assault and rape is that there is the use or threat of force used with sexual contact. Additional offenses that are considered to be sex crimes, that do not include contact between individuals, include: child pornography, exhibitionism, indecent exposure, and voyeurism, or include threat of force or actual force (i.e. statutory rape). The viewing of child pornography is an offense which falls into the category of sexual crimes; however, it differs from sexual assault and rape because there is no contact between a perpetrator and victim, and there is no use of force or attempted force involved when viewing such images. Thus, the act of possessing, selling, receiving, sending, or transmitting child pornography through the internet or email is considered a sex crime. Individuals who produce child

pornography are charged with the crime that was committed during the production of the images (i.e. rape, sexual exploitation of a child, etc.).

Adults and adolescents can also be convicted of sexual offenses not involving force or attempted force in a sexual act. Hines and Finkelhor (2007) suggest that statutory rape cases, cases in which one party is under the legal age to consent to sexual activity, differ from forcible rape or sexual assault because there is a willingness to participate in sexual activity on the part of the minor. While the individual over the age of consent is still committing a sexual offense for having sexual contact with a minor, the case is different because force was not included. The age at which a minor becomes legal to consent to sexual activity varies across the United States. Prior to the beginning of the 19th century, the most common age of consent in the United States was 10 years old; however, over the past century this age has steadily increased with the evolving definitions of childhood (Garfinkle, 2003). Today, the majority of states set the age of consent at 16 years old, and all states place the age of consent between 14 to 18 years old (Posner & Silbaugh, 1996). Cases become controversial when they involve an offender who is of a similar age to that of the identified victim and include a sexual act that appears to be consensual by both parties (Colb, 2004; Garfinkle, 2003).

Individuals convicted of rape, sexual assault, the viewing of child pornography and statutory rape are charged with a sex crime. Depending on the laws of the state where the crime was committed, they may serve a prison, jail or probation sentence. Along with these sanctions, they are also mandated under federal law to publicly register as sex offenders. Additionally, other non-sexual crimes that are mandated to sex offender registration include: kidnapping and false imprisonment (SORNA, 2008). While they are not sexual in nature, conviction for these crimes requires that the perpetrators be placed on national and state sex offender registries

(Costigliacci, 2008). At a minimum, registration requires convicted offenders to make a quarterly appearance to local law enforcement authorities to register their name, place of residence, and provide a current photo. This personal information is available to all citizens through community notification laws.

The goals of sex offender registration and notification (SORN) policies are to deter future offenses from happening to innocent people living in the community and to have a social control mechanism over offenders once they have been released from prison. Previous studies have highlighted the lack of effectiveness in reaching these goals (Prescott & Rockoff, 2008), legal cases which suggest that these policies are unconstitutional (Costigliacci, 2008), and the collateral consequences that registered sex offenders and their families have endured from these policies (Comartin, et. al., 2010; Levenson, et. al., 2007; Tewksbury, 2005); however, there is a paucity of research regarding groups of individuals who are organizing and creating a collective voice to change these policies.

Social movement organizations (SMOs) have been established in many states across the country to block the passage of laws that excessively hinder offenders' quality of life, once they have re-entered the community. Some of these organizations are also attempting to create alternative policies that may be more effective in reaching the intended goals of SORN policies: to reduce recidivism among offenders living in the community. Impacting policy is a complex process, which is greatly influenced by the political environment in which organizations are embedded. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate:

1. SORN SMOs, to understand the capacity they have to bring about change in the political arena (McCarthy, Smith, & Zald, 1996).

2. The messages SORN SMOs use to persuade policy decision makers and the public to change SORN policies (Snow, 2007).

3. The most important past and current policy goals of each state's SORN SMOs.

4. The strategies that SORN SMOs use to reach their goals of policy change (Harvard Family Research Project, 2009).

5. If SORN SMOs have different goals and strategies for juvenile registered sex offenders, compared to adult registered sex offenders.

Research Questions

The goal of this study was to understand what SORN SMOs are doing to bring about policy change in their respective states. This researcher was particularly interested in the differences in the way that SMOs frame their cause when discussing juvenile registrants, compared to adult registrants. The following research questions were designed to address this goal:

1. What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting successful achievement of a policy goal? What do SORN SMOs do to increase the capacity of their organization to implement advocacy strategies in an effort to reach their desired policy outcome goals?

2. What strategies do SORN SMOs use that they perceive had an impact on a successful policy outcome? What strategies do SMOs use to reach their current goals? What adaptive strategies have resulted in an SORN SMO's perceived effectiveness towards an identified policy outcome? What barriers have SORN SMOs experienced when trying to reach their policy outcomes? How has stigma impacted the work of these organizations?

3. Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when advocating for policy changes specific to registered juvenile sex offenders? Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when trying to persuade different audiences for mobilization, such as potential or current members, policy decision-makers, and the public? What role does stigma play in how organizations frame their issue?

4. How do SORN SMOs use opportunities in the political environment to make progress towards their policy outcome goals?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Sex Offender Registration & Public Notification Policies

In 1990, the state of Washington instituted the first registration and community notification policy (Terry & Ackerman, 2009). From this policy, federal and state policies spread across the country, resulting in various forms of sex offender registration and community notification policies. The federal policies that guide the adoption of state policies are based on the Jacob Wetterling Act, Megan's Law, Pam Lychner Act and the Adam Walsh Act.

Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Predator Program. In 1994, Congress passed the Wetterling Act as a means to manage sex offenders once they exited prison and were living in the community. This mandate required all states to implement a registry of everyone convicted of a sex offense. Under this policy, the offender's registration information was not made available to the public and was managed and used by law enforcement only. The penalty for states that chose not to comply with this mandate was a 10% reduction in Byrne Formula Grant Funding, which comes from the federal government (Terry & Ackerman, 2009).

Megan's Law. Two years later, in 1996, the Wetterling Act was amended with the passing of Megan's Law. This amendment required that states make the registration information of sex offenders available to the public (Sample & Evans, 2009). While all states implemented Megan's Law, the federal law did not give detailed instructions regarding the implementation process; therefore, there is great variation across states' sex offender registries (Fitch, 2006). This variation includes seven components: a) the use of assessments to determine the risk of each offender to commit a future crime, b) the method used to disclose the offender's information to

the public, c) the differentiation between offenders placed on a public registry and those on a non-public registry, d) the information collected and published about offenders, e) resources allocated to local agencies that implement and manage the registry, and f) sanctions given to individuals that do not comply with registration requirements (Fitch, 2006).

States also varied on the handling of registration and notification policies for juvenile and young offenders. As of 2005, 32 states permitted or required juveniles to register as sex offenders. Half of these states (16) allowed for a juvenile court judge's discretion as to the registration for each case, while the other half (16) give no discretion to a judge. The remaining states do not apply Megan's Law to juveniles (Szymanski, 2005). By 2009, the number of states that registered juvenile offenders had increased to 38 (Terry & Ackerman, 2009).

Pam Lychner Act 1996 and the Jacob Wetterling Improvement Act of 1997. Two amendments to the Wetterling Act occurred within the same year as Megan's Law: The Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act of 1996 and the Wetterling Improvement Act of 1997. The Pam Lychner Act created a nationwide database of sex offenders that was compiled at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The Wetterling Improvement Act of 1997 required that offenders moving to a new state, or those working or going to school in a state other than their place of residence were required to register with law enforcement in the new state, as well as their state of residence (SMART, 2011).

The Adam Walsh Act. In 2006, The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act was signed into law by President George W. Bush. Along with other provisions, this law set national standards for registration and notification requirements. This act established a tiered system of offenders, based on the level of risk that each offender poses to the community. Risk to the community is determined by the offense committed that put the offender on the registry,

(SORNA, 2008) rather than being based on an offender's risk level after receiving treatment and rehabilitation services. The three risk tiers are: high, moderate and low. High-risk offenders are required to register for life, while moderate- and low-risk offenders are required to register for 25 and 15 years, respectively. This act mandates that all states register juvenile sex offenders 14 years of age and older, and that their personal information be made available to the public (Terry & Ackerman, 2009). The Adam Walsh Act also allowed states to lower this age limit if they chose (Young, 2008). Caldwell, Ziemke, and Vitacco (2008) used the assessment for assigning the risk tier to sex offenders among a sample of 91 juvenile sex offenders. They estimate that approximately 70% of juveniles arrested for sexual offenses each year would be placed in the high risk tier; thus resulting in lifetime registration. All states were supposed to comply with the Adam Walsh act by July 27, 2011; however, at deadline, only 14 states had done so: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Goals of Sex Offender Registration and Notification Policies. SORN policies are two sanctions, among others, that are given to individuals convicted of sex crimes. The identified goals of SORN laws are: a) to keep the community safe, b) to act as a social-control mechanism for monitoring offender behavior, and c) to deter offenders from future offenses (Carlsmith et al., 2007; Farkas & Stichman, 2002; McAlinden, 2005).

In criminology, classical theory (Beccaria, 1963), reintegrative shaming (Braithwaite, 1989), and, for a sub-population in this study, the philosophy of the juvenile justice courts (Trivits & Repucci, 2002) offer different vantage points from which to view these policies. SORN policies are based in classical theory, which suggests that there is a deterrent effect when the cost of a criminal sanction outweighs the rewards from committing a crime. Deterrence and

classical theory stem from a utilitarian philosophy, which seeks to maximize happiness in society. Since crime and sanctions decrease happiness for society and offenders, both should be kept to a minimum; thus, the sanctions given to offenders should be just enough to deter future criminal behaviors (Bentham, 1962; Erickson, et. al., 1977). However, the SORN SMOs would argue that SORN policies go beyond deterrence by adding a level of stigmatism that deters offenders from participating in their community.

Unlike classical theory, reintegrative shaming theory seeks to integrate offenders into their community in a non-stigmatizing way. Reitan (1996) writes, "In its simplest form, the reintegrative theory holds that criminal behavior represents a breach or absence of community, and the justifying purpose of punishment is to help restore community at the breach or establish community where it is absent" (p.58). Thus, reintegrative theory suggests that offenders should be given opportunities to engage with their community as a means to overcome their feelings of exclusion, as well as a strategy to reduce future criminal behavior. Braithwaite (1989) suggests that stigmatizing sanctions result in increases in crime, while reintegrative responses can be used to control crime. Thus, the assumption is that criminal behavior can be overcome by integrating offenders into their community in a meaningful and purposeful way. Connolly and Ward (2008) have designed a treatment philosophy for sex offenders which is congruent with reintegrative theory.

The philosophy behind the juvenile court speaks to the distinction between adult and youth offenders, in that juvenile courts are based on the premise that youth are less culpable for their crimes than adults (Repucci, 1999). The driving theory behind sanctions given to youth was that of rehabilitation (Trivits & Repucci, 2002). Rehabilitation theory suggests that individuals who commit crimes have psychological issues that need to be addressed. To prevent future

criminal behavior, offenders should be provided treatment and education to correct these issues. Like deterrence, rehabilitation is based on a utilitarian philosophy, which promotes the level of happiness for all within a society, by deterring future crimes in society and helping offenders move past their pervious mistakes.

With the passing of Megan's law, which brought about registration and notification requirements for juveniles, some of the protections offered to youth under the philosophy of the juvenile court were removed. Juvenile courts had previously intended to keep juvenile cases from the public record, so that the youth would not be stigmatized by their adjudication. Public registration has opened up what once was confidential information. These protections were designed so that children could learn from the wrongs they had committed in the past and move into adulthood with a clean record. Thus, there is a competing philosophical debate between rehabilitation theory under the juvenile justice philosophy and the movement to register juvenile offenders under Megan's Law and the Adam Walsh Act.

Additionally, a theory by Bottoms (1995), called popular punitivism, discusses the role that the media, the public, and politicians have in the formulation, and continuation, of criminal sanctions. High-profile media coverage of crime has driven the public to call on politicians for a more punitive style of justice. Politicians have chosen to be tough on crime to meet the demands of their voter/constituents. The combination of political decision makers drafting and passing policies based on the public's fear about high-profile criminal cases is called "popular punitivism" (Bottoms, 1995). This theory points out that the missing link in punitive style justice is the evidence and knowledge of those who study and work with offenders. When such policies are drafted, they lack research evidence suggesting whether the policy has been, or is likely to result in the desired outcomes (Zgoba & Bachar, 2009). This theory is important for

understanding how the barriers that are experienced by SMOs in the political arena. Politicians are motivated by the approval of their constituents, regardless of whether scientific research suggests these actions will effectively reduce these crimes from happening.

Criminological theories offer rival and conflicting justifications for the use or non-use of SORN policies. Under classical theory, registration and notification deter current and potential offenders from committing a sexual crime. However, reintegration theory and juvenile-justice philosophy contest the use of registration and notification, because there is an assumption that these policies hamper offenders' ability to move on with their lives, once they have gone through rehabilitation, especially juvenile offenders. Popular punitivism presents a position that politicians have become more punitive in crime policy as a response to the fears of the public, rather than basing decisions on expert knowledge. All of these theories underlie the environmental dynamics and beliefs of the stakeholders involved in SORN SMOs, and they also inform the worldviews of powerful decision makers. SORN SMOs that are advocating for changes to these policies must focus their energy on multiple facets of the issue, appealing to the public's sympathies for the unconstitutionality of these laws for all offenders, but especially the harms that can be done to juvenile offenders. They must also point to the research evidence, which highlights the inconsistencies between the stated goals and outcomes of these policies.

Assumptions of Sex Offender Registration and Notification Policies. SORN policies are based on several assumptions about sex offenders. First, since the intended goal of these policies is to keep the community safe from further offenses, there is an assumption that sex offenders are likely to commit other offenses. However studies that have followed up on sex offenders who have received treatment, show that recidivism rates are low, compared to other types of violent offenders (Fortune & Lambie, 2006; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Letourneau &

Armstrong, 2008; Quinn et al., 2004; Reitzel & Carbonell, 2006; Turner, 2002). A review of sexual recidivism rates for youth who received treatment shows an average of 10% (range 0% - 42%) (Fortune & Lambie, 2006). A meta-analysis of 61 follow-up studies of sexual recidivism offense rates was on average 13% (N=23,393) (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). This meta-analysis found that sexual offense recidivism was higher for different types of offenders and for those who did not complete treatment.

The existence of these registries gives the public the perception that registries allow residents to avoid dangerous individuals (Freeman-Longo, 1996) and to give law enforcement officials a tool for managing sex offenders in the community. These policies were intended to protect the public from sexual violence by raising awareness of the offender's presence in the community (Farkas & Stichman, 2002). This gives the perception that citizens need to avoid individuals in the community who are unknown to them. However, the majority of offenders who commit a sexual crime against a child are not a stranger to that child. They are more likely to be a family member (76%) or friend (90%) of the child's family (Finkelhor, 1994; Snyder, 2000). This holds true for adult victims, as well. Women who have been victims of rape or sexual assault are likely to know their offenders (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Therefore, some authors suggest that those who view the registry may have a false sense of security (Malesky & Keim, 2001).

Unintended Consequences of Registration and Notification. Recent research has been conducted on the consequences of SORN laws, which has found that sex offenders have endured forms of harassment, isolation, violence, and in some rare cases, homicide, as a result of public registration (Human Rights Watch, 2007; Levenson, et. al., 2007; Tewksbury & Lees, 2006). Tewksbury (2005) completed 121 surveys with registered sex offenders that assessed these

collateral consequences that result from their photo and personal identifying information being made public over the internet. In this study, 16.2% of registered sex offenders stated that they had been assaulted, 47% were subject to harassment, 45.3% were denied or lost their places of residence, and 42.7% lost employment. A new addition to registration information, under the Adam Walsh Act, is the inclusion of the registrant's work address (SORNA, 2008). This additional information may result in offenders losing their employment, as business owners will not want to have a reputation for hiring sex offenders. The stigma attached to sex offenders is strong, and businesses do not want to be associated with an employee who is on the sex offender registry.

These collateral consequences result in lower levels of engagement with one's community via social isolation, shame, stigmatization, and ostracism, factors which are associated with the potential for a person to reoffend (Craun & Kernsmith, 2006; Levenson et al., 2007; Prescott & Levenson, 2007; Presser & Gunnison, 1999). This is supported by a multi-state evaluation study by Prescott and Rockoff (2008), which identified that registered sex offender recidivism rates do not decrease due to public notification and registration policies. Concerns have also been raised that unintended consequences may result for both victims and members of their families, such as increasing offenders' fear of seeking treatment and making victims of intra-family offenses more hesitant to report crimes (Edwards & Hensley, 2001). A limited body of literature indicates that negative consequences of registration requirements not only accrue to the registrants, but also to their families and friends (Comartin, et. al, 2010; Levenson et al., 2007). Empirical evidence shows that sex offender management policies are counterintuitive to the stated goals, as it has increased non-sexual recidivism rates for those placed on sex offender

registries (Prescott & Rockoff, 2008). Additionally, Zgoba and Bachar (2009) did not find a decline in sexual reoffense rates after SORN policies were implemented in New Jersey.

Challenges to Registration and Notification Policies. The constitutional rights to privacy, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, ex post facto, and due process of the law have been used in court cases challenging SORN laws (Finn, 1997; Lewis, 1996). Providing photos and personal identifying information of sex offenders to the public violates personal privacy and has been considered to be cruel and unusual punishment (Griffin & West, 2006). Additionally, the shaming and ostracism that results from community notification can also be considered cruel and unusual punishment. *Ex post facto* cases have arisen, based on the fact that individuals convicted of sex offenses prior to the passing of Megan's Law were required to register as sex offenders *(Smith v. Doe, 2003)*. Since this law was created "from after the action" of their offense, the constitution would suggest that these offenders should not have been required to register under this law. Courts have rarely upheld such challenges to registration and notification laws, generally noting that they are not a form of punishment (*Smith v. Doe, 2003*). In 2010, the Ohio Supreme Court (*State v. Williams*) found registration and notification policies to be punitive in nature, and, therefore, a precedent was set to open up these policies for further constitutional challenges.

In reaction to the collateral consequences and the human and constitutional rights violations felt by registrants, groups comprised of registrants, their family members and professionals from the criminal justice and treatment fields have begun to organize a social movement to amend or eliminate SORN policies. The definition, history, and characteristics of this social movement are discussed below.

Social Movement Organizations (SMOs)

  What are SMOs? Advocacy practice in social work, defined by Hoefer (2006), is when a social work professional, "takes action in a systematic and purposeful way to defend, represent, or otherwise advance the cause of one or more clients at the individual, group, organizational, or community level, in order to promote social justice (p.8)". Additionally, political scientists have defined SMOs as groups of individuals that make, "…public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; p.481)". These quotes display two common elements: one of morality ("social justice" & "values") and another of change; thus, suggesting that advocacy is a change process that promotes one's values. Additionally, when advocacy takes place among a group of individuals, it is thought to have elements of organization. Thus, SMOs are made up of groups of individuals with shared values, seeking to change a policy or to support the group's cause. These organizations have many names across social science disciplines: public interest groups, advocacy organizations, non-profit organizations (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Sabatier, 1991) and policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 2003). For the sake of this paper, the term SMOs will be used to encompass all of these terms.

  History and Current Focus. SMOs in the United States have been a cornerstone of social activism throughout the last few centuries: from abolition and prohibition, to the women's and civil rights movements in the 1960s, to today's work for the rights of sexual minorities and worker's unions. Andrews and Edwards (2004) note that, since the 1960s, there has been exponential growth in SMOs. These authors suggest political reasons for this recent growth, which include: congressional reorganization, the move to deregulate government agencies, and

ideological polarizations. Additionally, there are theoretical reasons for growth in SMOs: social instability, economic affluence which has created opportunities for individuals to push their opinions and agendas, cultural shifts to postmodern values or neo-institutional values, and a call for new and innovative ways of managing governmental institutions (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). In today's political arena, SMOs work to influence government as a counterbalance to corporate influences, by promoting the needs of citizens.

Goals and Strategies for Change. SMOs use many activities and strategies to achieve their desired goals or impacts. The ultimate vision of any SMO is to have a positive impact on services, systems, or the social or physical conditions for their target population (HFRP, 2009). These impacts are generally related to policy or capacity goals of the organization. The greatest level of achievement for a SMO is to make a change throughout the policy stage process: policy development through the proposal process, placement on the political agenda, policy adoption through statutes, policy blocking, policy implementation, policy monitoring and evaluation, and policy maintenance (HFRP, 2009; Ripley, 1985). Their work may impact policies that are under discussion in the political arena. They may propose new alternatives to current policies, or they may attempt to block policies that deter progress towards their goals (Kingdon, 2003).

Influencing policy can take on different strategies and tactics, depending on the point of intervention in the policy process: during agenda setting, when seeking policy alternatives, or when a policy is being implemented. During agenda setting, a SMO should focus on shaping and gaining public support through media campaigns and public protests (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). Policy alternatives are undertaken when amendments to existing policies are sought. Previous research has shown that having a large network of organizations may influence this process, and that these networks include not only interested citizens, but also governmental

bureaucrats who specialize in the implementation process, legislators, and researchers (Sabatier, 1991). During this time, lobbying, testifying, drafting legislation and regulations, and educating the public and reporters have been beneficial. Additionally, depending on the issue, protests are also influential (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). There is some evidence to show that SMOs can use political endorsements during elections as a negotiating tool for favorable policies.

SMOs also have a role during the monitoring and implementing of policies. Monitoring appropriations may lead to better outcomes (Smith, 1973) and ensure that the enforcement of policies is followed through by governmental bureaucrats. SMOs examine how the policy is translated into reality, at what time, and in what locations. SMOs can act as watch-dogs to ensure that policies are implemented correctly, so that beneficiaries of the policy receive the intended outcomes.

Policy change is a difficult and long-term process (Rothenberg, 1992), and thus there are additional, shorter-term outcomes that are the focus of many SMOs. These include an increase in the organization's capacity to change policy and also minor changes in the political arena. Shorter-term policy change can include: a) bringing awareness to the issue through media coverage and issue reframing, b) changing attitudes that lead to an increase in public or political will and c) increasing the perceived importance of the issue. A SMO may also focus on their capacity to achieve these shorter-term and long-term policy changes by building partnerships and alliances, increasing or diversifying funding and donors, and bringing more visibility to the organization (HFRP, 2009; Reisman, et. al., 2007). Thus, short-term and long-term outcomes can be used to focus the activities of the organization.

Members of the organization focus on two types of strategies for change: those that are specifically related to policy and politics, and those related to outreach (HFRP, 2009). Strategies

in the political arena include: analysis and research, education, legal advocacy, proposal development, lobbying, and building relationships with decision makers. For outreach, members may be involved in coalition and network building, grassroots mobilization, rallies and marches, voter education, public service announcements and other forms of media engagement, electronic social media campaigns, briefings, testimony, presentations on the issue, demonstration projects or pilot programs, and polling advocacy (Brueggman, 2002; HFRP, 2009; Reisman, et. al., 2007). All of these strategies build support for the goals of the organization, either through public support or the support of policy decision makers.

Organizational Resources. SMOs have three types of non-material resources at their disposal: a) moral, b) socio-organizational, and c) human resources, otherwise known as members (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Cress & Snow, 1996; Hardcastle & Powers, 2002; Kingdon, 2003).

Moral Resources. Moral resources are the social justice claims made to motivate individuals for change. These claims tap into an individual's sense of societal "wrongs" that the target population is suffering from; or conversely, the organization may make moral claims about the ways in which we should act as a society (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Cress & Snow, 1996).

Socio-organizational Resources. Social-organizational resources are tools used to mobilize members to action. These can include both the method and process of mobilization. SMOs can range in structures from highly differentiated roles and responsibilities to more informal structures with shared decision making (Smith, 2000). The methods used to organize and motivate members can occur through many different technologies, such as telephone, email, social networking sites and word of mouth. For example, an email to the list of members suggesting that they write to their legislators about an upcoming bill is a trademark of SMOs.

With new technologies, such as social networking, this resource has become more efficient and effective (Diani, 2000). Successful mobilization is achieved by extending membership and support via coalitions and networks. These networks can result in a larger membership and allow for access to more resources. However, depending on how they are maintained, networks and coalitions may also constrain mobilization processes (Andrews & Edwards, 2004).

Human Resources. The greatest resource that a SMO has is its members, either paid or volunteer, who organize, recruit and build relationships to make progress towards the goals of the group. SMOs generally have members who are directly and indirectly impacted by policies (Sabatier, 1991; Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Generally, those involved have some personal or professional stake in a specific policy. Individuals in a SMO generally have at least one of three traits: 1) they have a personal or professional investment in the issue, and can speak on behalf of the organization, 2) they are well known for their political ties or their ability to negotiate, or 3) they are persistent in their goal to achieve a positive policy outcome (Hardcastle & Powers, 2002; Kingdon, 2003). Motivation for participation in SMOs can stem from three factors: a) rationality, b) emotive, and c) normative. The retention of members is most likely to occur if they are receiving something for their participation (i.e. recognition, new knowledge, or a sense of belonging); thus, incentives are critical to keeping members in a SMO (Rothenberg, 1992). Just as members expect to receive some form of incentive to maintain their participation, the SMO places requirements on their members. These can include dues, engagement in joint actions and/or representation at policy and planning meetings.

In any SMO, a critical component involved in human resources is the level of cohesion among the members regarding their moral position (Kingdon, 2003). Members must have a united voice on a given issue. If dissent among members arises, division and confusion will

occur, generally resulting in a less effective campaign. In order to achieve a cohesive, effective organization, attention must be paid to two dimensions: task and process (Hardcastle & Powers, 2004). The task is related to the content of the policy alternatives the organization is working towards; the process is how the organization works together, their nature and interactions. Group processes either enhance or distract from the task achievements. Cohesive organizations share information openly, have common ways of looking at the issue, and build strong relationships among group members. Fragmented organizations, which lack cohesion, may contradict, replicate or undercut the work of others in the group, and are less likely to handle conflict within the organization effectively (Kingdon, 2003).

Chapter 3

Research Focus

This study investigates SORN SMOs. Social movement theories will be discussed as a means for understanding the characteristics of social movements and how they operate in the political environment (McAdam & Scott, 2005; Zald & Ash, 1966). Social movement theories include two foundational theories: collective behavior (McPhail, 1991) and collective action (Olson, 1965). There are three major schools of social movement theory: resource mobilization (Zald & Ash, 1966), political process or opportunity (Kingdon, 2003), and cultural-cognitive approaches (Snow, 2007). In recent years, social movement and organizational theories have integrated their perspectives. Thus, researchers studying social movements have incorporated components of organizational theories.

Social Movement Theory

Social movements are defined by Della Porta and Diani (1999) as, "informal networks, based on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about conflictual issues, through the frequent use of various forms of protest" (p.16). Two foundational concepts constitute the base from which social movement theories have been drawn: collective behavior and collective action. Three major schools of social movement theory have spun off from these foundations: resource mobilization, political process, cultural-cognitive approaches.

Collective Behavior & Collective Action. Those who study collective behavior are interested in crowds, fads, response to disasters, panics, and social movements (Marx & McAdam, 1994). Collective behavior was initially defined as irrational behavior of groups living at a time of social unrest (McPhail, 1991). Eventually, there was a move away from the irrational basis of collective behavior to a more rational reaction to social unrest, through the use of

organizations. Olson (1965) defined the strategic use of organizations to bring about social change as collective action. With an attention on organizations to bring about social change, the three aforementioned theories arose across different disciplines.

Resource Mobilization. The theory of resource mobilization began with Zald and Ash in the mid-1960s. They were the first researchers to turn the study of social movements towards a focus on the internal workings of the organization. They specifically investigated how organizational arrangements either increased or decreased the groups' ability to survive and bring about social change (Buechler, 1995). This theory put a focus on the process and structures within the organization (McAdam & Scott, 2005). Zald and Ash found that, over time, organizations became legitimate entities as they accumulated resources and built hierarchical structures to conduct the work needed to sustain a social movement, and to further mobilize their members (Zald & Ash, 1966). They argued that movement organizations are influenced by the environment in which they operate; this suggests a dynamic relationship where organizations achieve greater outcomes when they adapt to the constraints placed on them by the environment (McAdam & Scott, 2005).

Resource mobilization theory focuses on the ability of an organization to maintain its work over time. The availability of resources for collective action is a dominant focus of SMOs, as they are generally operating with insufficient resources; especially organizations in the earlier phases of development (Zald & Ash, 1966). Resource mobilization also focuses on organizational structure. Resource mobilization theory focuses on the ways that SMOs change over time. In many cases SMOs can expect change as they accumulate greater resources (e.g., time, skill, money), as opposed to a decentralized structure with inclusive membership, and few professional staff members (McAdam & Scott, 2005).

Resource mobilization theory is useful when studying organizations which seek to reform SORN policies, because many of them are new to this process. To become a legitimate entity in state-level policy processes, they must organize their members effectively, through structures and processes generally used by organizations that have been sustained over time. Conversely, there is evidence that organizations that become excessively bureaucratic are unlikely to remain loyal to the goals of the organization, which is replaced by sustainability goals. Therefore, these organizations want to maintain a level of structure and decision-making processes that are goal-directed and flexible in the policy environment.

Political Process/Opportunity. Different from resource mobilization theory and its focus on the internal aspects of the organization, political process or political opportunity theorists turned their focus outward, to the political environment. Charles Tilly was the first theorist to shift away from a social-psychological understanding of social movements to one of political opportunity and power (McAdam & Scott, 2005). SMOs can be constrained by competing organizations or the government, when their associated interests begin to be in conflict (McPhail, 1991). Tilly emphasized the importance of the opportunities an organization has to pursue its interests and the impact that powerful decision-makers have on the organization's level of effectiveness. SORN SMOs are competing with the interests of society, as these policies seek to protect individuals living in the community from registered sex offenders. Key decision makers, such as politicians, have a desire to protect these interests. Therefore, these organizations are operating in a difficult political environment.

McAdam (1996) highlights four opportunities that may stimulate a social movement, two of which apply to SORN SMOs. These organizations have been formed as a reaction to excessive harm to offenders and their families, what McAdam (1996) calls, "suddenly imposed

grievances" (p.25). Since the constitutional challenges to registration policies have now been upheld by the Ohio Supreme Court, an additional opportunity is now under consideration: "a glaring contradiction between a highly salient cultural value and conventional social practices" (p. 25). In regards to SORN policies, there is a contradiction between the cultural values outlined in the U.S. constitution and the breaches of these constitutional rights derived from the desire to protect individuals in the community. These two political opportunities are the foundation of the SORN SMO movement.

While there are political opportunities that can stimulate a social movement, there are also political opportunities that will impact the strategies that organizations employ to accomplish their policy goals. First, the relative openness of a political system, which determines if voices of the public are included in political decision making, will determine if an organization is able to play a role in the policy process. Second, the stability or instability of the political alignments that are operating at any given time within the political system, such as partisanship, are also likely to determine how an organization chooses to align itself to gain access to key decision makers. Third, is the presence or absence of elite allies. Organizations are more likely to be heard if they have elites as supporters of their cause, such as long-term politicians or the heads of bureaucratic institutions. Fourth, is the repressive or non-repressive action that the state has taken towards SMOs (McAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 1996). The openness and non-repressive nature of a state government, stability among politicians at the state-level, and the presence of or connection with key decision makers are all likely to increase the effectiveness of SORN SMOs.

Conversely, there are also ways that social movements can create political opportunities (Tarrow, 1996). They can expand their opportunities by innovating, or using different, strategies. Social movements can also expand opportunities for other challenging organizations by sparking

competition. SMOs may also make opportunities for key decision makers to take up the issue as their allies (Tarrow, 1996). All of these opportunities play a role in how organizations generate political opportunities. SORN SMOs may create a political opportunity for their interests by calling on a key decision maker to claim that, while protecting the safety of all citizens is a key priority, these policies may be too far reaching, leaning toward unconstitutionality. Additionally, they may find new techniques for finding common ground with politicians or seemingly competing organizations, such as victims' advocacy groups. These organizations are stimulated and influenced by political opportunities, but they can also create opportunities that are necessary for public policy change.

Cultural-Cognitive Approaches. Social movements have also taken on a social constructionist approach to studying the cultural meanings that are assigned to collective action efforts (Buechler, 1995). Social movements make claims about a social problem that are specifically crafted to gain empathy for their cause (Hutchinson, 2007). Thus, they frame their position in a way that promotes a positive interpretation of the problem and its rationale, and their selection of alternatives (Caniglia & Carmin, 2005). These approaches have been used to investigate the collective values, beliefs and ideas toward external group members and among actors within a social movement.

Zald (1996) outlines six ways in which the framing approach has been used in the social movement literature. Organizations use cultural images and values to construct the meaning of their cause, which is intended to set the tone for policy changes. They construct meaning out of a critical event which highlights contradictions in a policy. SMOs may also use the framing of meaning as a strategy to interpret the social problem, assign blame, or as a means for mobilization. Frames can also be used out of a reaction to a challenger's frame of the social

problem. Bystanders outside of a social movement or the countermovement may only receive information about a social problem through mass media; thus, the way in which the movement or problem is portrayed in the media will greatly influence the level of support a movement can garner from the general public. Finally, framing intersects with the two theories discussed above: political opportunity and resource mobilization. Framing can garner more resources for a SMO and framing can also be used to create political opportunities towards policy change. The technique can also be used to open up a political opportunity; conversely, a political system can use framing to close out a social movement (Zald, 1996). Thus, it is important to understand that all three of the predominant theories in social movements intersect and join to create situations in which social movements can be helped or hindered toward their outcomes and goals.

SORN SMOs construct their frames or messages by drawing from their personal experiences, either from registrants or family members of registrants. Using personal appeals, along with research evidence, they cultivate a message calling for more balanced and fair sanctions. Due to the moral nature of the counter-claims from groups being protected by these policies, the organization's message must reach a wide audience that is likely to be unaware of the affected families' personal experiences. For political decision makers, the agreement with the claims that this social movement makes will most likely go against the desire of their constituency; therefore, the SMO should include further messages that are targeted at the high cost associated with implementing these policies. In order for these organizations to gain support and agreement with their claims they must tailor their message to multiple audiences.

Research Questions

1. What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved?

What do SORN SMOs do to increase the capacity of their organization to implement advocacy strategies in an effort to reach their desired policy outcome goals?

2. What strategies do SORN SMOs use that they perceive to have had an impact on a successful policy outcome? What strategies do SMOs use to reach their current goals? What adaptive strategies have resulted in an SORN SMO's perceived effectiveness towards an identified policy outcome? What barriers have SORN SMOs experienced when trying to reach their policy outcomes? How has stigma impacted the work of these organizations?

3. Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when advocating for policy changes specific to registered juvenile sex offenders? Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when trying to persuade different audiences for mobilization, such as the potential or current members, policy decision-makers, and the public? What role does stigma play in how organizations frame their issue?

4. How do SORN SMOs use opportunities in the political environment to make progress towards their policy outcome goals?

Conceptual Framework

There are many factors to consider when evaluating the perceived influence of SMOs on policy outcomes. Evaluation studies of successful organizations are limited, (Whelan, 2008) and the literature regarding the policy process suggests that policy change is a complex and unpredictable process (Kingdon, 2003). Thus, it is difficult to fully represent a comprehensive list of variables and their associated dynamics. Based on the review of social movement theories, the conceptual model presented here presumes that an organization's progress towards state-level

policy change is partially tied to other indicators in the environment. The political environment, the social and economic conditions, public discourse and judicial decisions all play a part in how policy is shaped and developed.

Figure 1 visually represents the idea that SORN SMOs that are advocating for SORN policy changes are embedded within a state where other factors also influence SORN policies. This study investigated the structure, processes, resources, membership and strategies of SORN SMOs, and the perceived impacts on policy outcomes related to SORN policies. Additionally, this researcher inquired about the interactions that SORN SMOs have with their state's political environment.
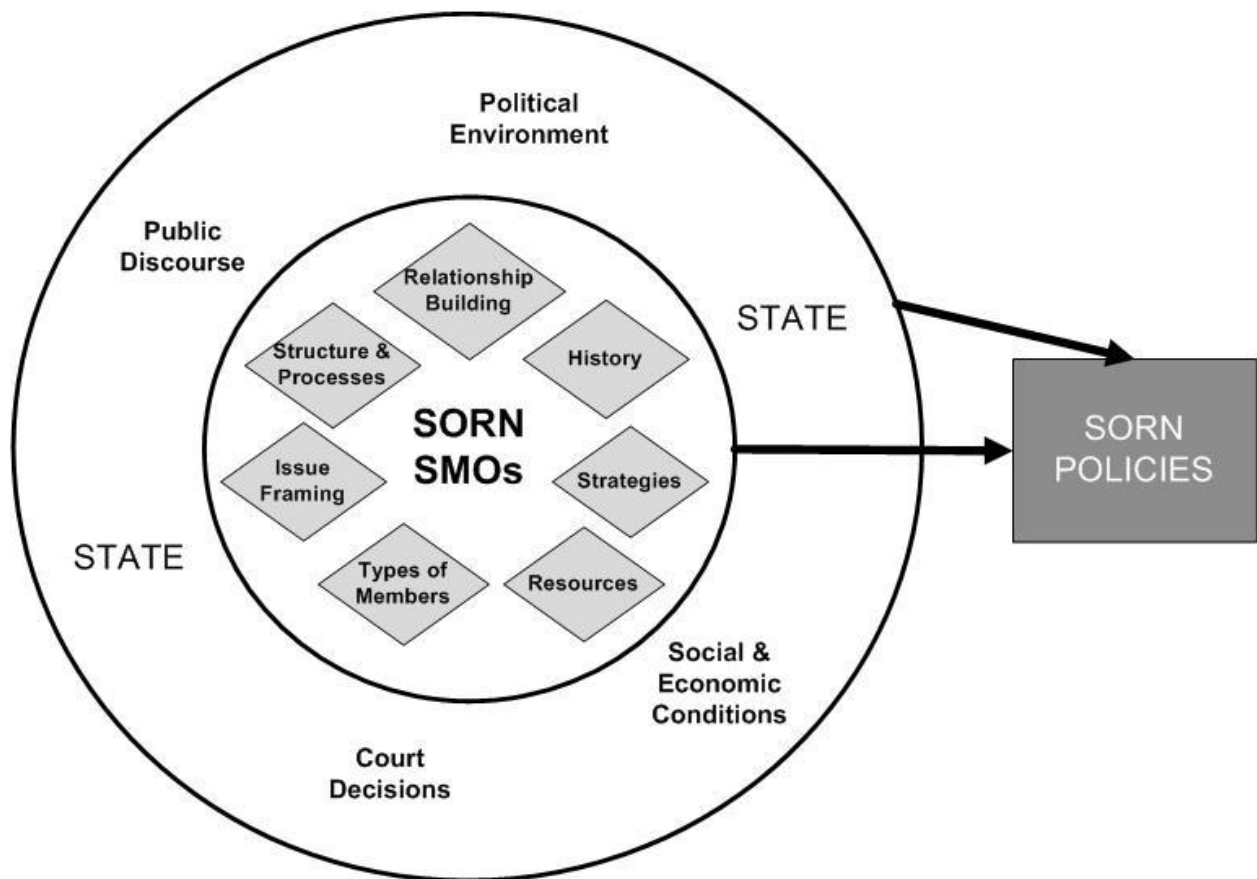
Figure 1. Conceptual Model

*SMO= Social Movement Organization

There are many organizational factors that were surmised to impact the progress that SMOs are making towards their desired policy outcomes. These factors include: history, leadership, members, structure, processes, resources, strategies, and the utilization of opportunities that arise in the political environment (see study variables for the operationalization and conceptualization of these factors).

The history of an SMO is related to its length of operation. The length of time in operation will suggest time for more progress and goal attainment. A long history in a political system may give rise to more visibility for the cause (Kingdon, 2003), legitimacy and credibility of the organization (UNICEF, 2009), and a stronger adherence to the mission and message of the organization (Boleman & Deal, 2003).

Like other organizations, SMOs may be more effective when the structure differentiates the roles of the members, and processes are established to integrate the work of different members (Boleman & Deal, 2003). The membership of the organization is critical to its success. Members' motivation for involvement in the organization, the skills they bring to the organization, the contributions they make, and their feelings of connectedness to the issue and other members may impact the effectiveness of the advocacy efforts (Knippenberg,, et. al., 2004). The moral, socio-organizational, and human resources available to the organization may also impact the progress it is able to make towards its goals (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Hardcastle & Powers, 2002; Kingdon, 2003).

Most importantly, SMOs may be more effective at impacting policy change depending upon the type of strategies they use, or their ability to adapt strategies to different political situations (Klugman, 2010). As with any intervention, the frequency and quality of strategies

used to make change are clearly important to the understanding of effective policy change. McCarthy, Smith and Zald (1996) list a range of strategies that SMOs use to have their issue placed on the political agenda: from the public agenda, to the media, the legislative agenda and the executive branch.

As previously noted, the policy process is unpredictable, with many variables influencing the state's political environment. Additional variables that may provide rival explanations for barriers or successes related to changes in SORN policy include: major judicial decisions, social and economic conditions of the state (Hofferbert, 1990) and public discourse regarding sex offenders (Klugman, 2010).

Currently, states are severely cutting their spending, and thus state budgets may be driving policy decisions. States are writing and amending policies so that government programs are more cost effective. A cost analysis conducted in New Jersey revealed dramatic cost increases associated with maintaining the sex offender registry. When it was initially implemented in 1995 it cost just under $600,000. In 2006 it cost almost $4 million (Zgoba & Bachar, 2009). These costs may drive decision-makers to change policies regarding sex offender management. Additionally, some states (Arizona, California, New York and Texas) have decided that the costs to comply with the mandates in the Adam Walsh Act are too costly (see Caygle, 2011; Greenblatt, 2010; Lui, 2011). Many states did not comply with the requirements of the act; therefore, they have lost 10% of their federal Byrne Funding. This reduction in law enforcement funding may also open up an opportunity to reduce the enforcement of punitive policies related to ex-offenders.

The public discourse, which demonizes sex offenders, influences the way that policies are written in order to manage sex offenders in the community (Lynch, 2002). High profile cases of

sex offenders who have committed heinous crimes against children, which most often included the murder of the child, heavily covered by the news media, have resulted in a public outcry for policies that harshly punish sex offenders. Therefore, this population has been subjected to more punitive sanctions, as politicians attempt to placate the electorate. Unfortunately, the basis for these policies has been built on myths about sex offenders (Quinn, et. al., 2004). The difficulties associated with changing public opinion are a critical impacting factor for this study. Politicians are not likely to vote for reducing policies that have support among their voters.

Additional exogenous variables that likely impact a change in public policy for SORN are court decisions that challenge registration policies (ex. *John Doe vs. State of Alaska*). The constitutionality of these policies has been challenged in the Supreme Court and also within state supreme and appellate courts. These decisions could lead to opportunities to change registration and notification policies in the legislative branch.

Chapter 4

Methods

This dissertation uses qualitative research methods because it explores a type of SMO that has not been introduced in the research literature. The individuals within SORN SMOs are unique, due to the high level of stigmatization that they experience. Qualitative methods were also chosen because a depth of information was needed to answer the research questions (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Likewise, the flexibility offered by qualitative methods was necessary to explore topics unidentified prior to data collection (Padgett, 1998). Thus, semi-structured telephone interviews were used to gather information from SORN SMOs. Many studies of social movements have used qualitative interviews (see Blee and Taylor, 2002). Interviews have been suggested: a) for understanding human agency in organizations that are interacting in the political environment (Morris, 2002), b) to garner a full description of the messages created by movement actors to mobilize others for change (Gamson, 1998), and c) when investigating founders of SMO, because a description of new fields and the associated activities of "nascent entrepreneurship" in SMOs can be gained (Minkoff & McCarthy, 2005).

When using qualitative methods it is important to consider the role of the researcher. A researcher generally fills one of four roles: a) a complete participant, b) participant-as-observer, c) observer-as-participant, or d) complete observer (Blee & Taylor, 2002; Rubin & Babbie, 2010). For this dissertation, the doctoral candidate is a participant-as-observer. Under this role, the participants are notified that the doctoral candidate is a member of a similar organization (i.e. "participant") and that research is being conducted during the interview (i.e. "observer"). To build rapport and trust with the leaders, participants were told about the researcher's role in a similar organization. However, there is a methodological consideration that study participants

could modify their answers to the interview questions; by being more forthcoming with responses or presenting the organization as more productive or effective than was actually the case. There is also a risk to the objectivity of the dissertation with the doctoral candidate's involvement in a similar organization, particularly the risk of over-identification with the participants. This doctoral candidate holds the role of consultant for updated research regarding SORN policies and also educates policy makers. While I am an advocate for more effective SORN policies, I am not personally impacted by these policies; which gives room for a more detached relationship with the participants than someone who is personally impacted. Additionally, interdisciplinary triangulation (Padgett, 1998) was used to minimize this threat to the trustworthiness of this dissertation: two dissertation committee members were chosen based on their discipline (Criminal Justice) and research expertise (Violence against Women), to critically evaluate the doctoral candidate's potential biases.

Research Design

As previously mentioned, the research questions were addressed using a qualitative research design and employing a semi-structured telephone interview. SORN SMOs were analyzed for the inputs and activities that were used to achieve their desired policy outcomes (see figure 2). This process lens was chosen to investigate SORN SMOS to see the path that these organizations take to achieve desired policy outcomes.

Current Capacity	→	Building Capacity	→	Strategies	→	Policy Outcomes
Inputs				Activities		Outcomes
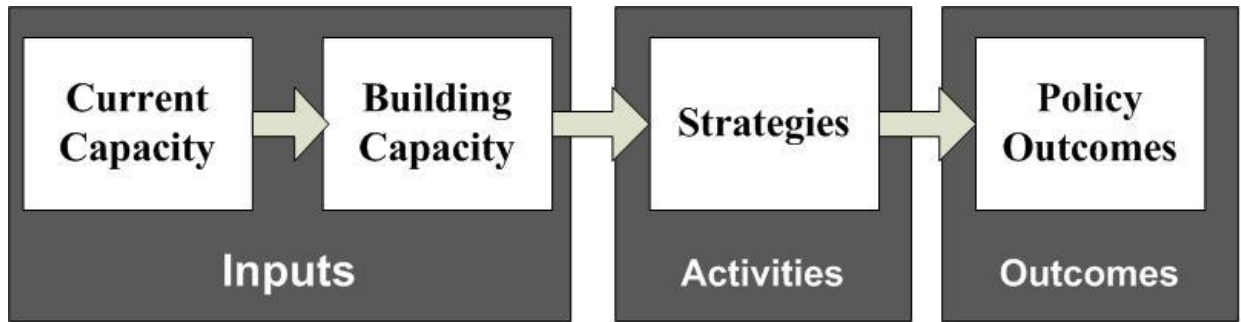
Figure 2. Proposed Model

A semi-structured interview was used over the telephone because it allowed a large number of concepts to be included, which could be clarified by the researcher as the interview unfolded. The telephone interview was used for data collection because participants lived across the country, and it allowed respondents to focus on their verbal responses without needing to formulate typed or hand-written responses.

The interview instrument was designed to be responsive to SORN SMOs that are in various phases of development: by inquiring about previously achieved policy goals as well as current policy goals and projects surmised to result in achieving a policy goal. Additionally, the instrument was semi-structured so that the respondents could give a wide range of experiences related to the policy process. This gave a space for all leaders to discuss the activities of their organizations, regardless of their level of success. Therefore, organizations that had been in operation for many years were able to share their outcomes related to organizational capacity, strategies and policy outcomes. Emergent organizations were also able to report their early stages of development by responding to questions about capacity building projects and any strategies they have implemented towards policy outcomes. The dissertation interview process also included organizations with various levels of advocacy intensity. SORN SMOs that were heavily involved in advocacy work and those that were only lightly involved could respond to the instrument. The instrument was also designed to include the various types of SORN policies,

such as: the Adam Walsh Act, residency restrictions, policies that control the movement of registered offenders on holidays (ex. Halloween bills), etc.

The instrument was created by this doctoral candidate because of the exploratory nature of this dissertation. A preliminary version of the instrument was first piloted with twelve SORN SMO leaders. These pilot interviews were done at an annual meeting of the Reform Sex Offender Laws' (RSOL) national organization. The conference organizers sent email addresses of organizational leaders who were attending the conference. This doctoral candidate sent emails to these leaders requesting a time to meet with them during the weekend conference. This was an informal meeting to get a basic understanding of these organizations in relation to their length of operation, organizational structure, the organization's members, strategies and messages they use to advocate for policy changes, and details related to their state's SORN policies.

Substantial changes were made to the instrument based on the findings from these preliminary interviews, additional research conducted by this doctoral candidate, and feedback from the dissertation committee members. First, questions were added to the instrument about the relationship between the sex offender population stigma and the policy changes the organizations were attempting to make in their respective states. Second, the questions in the preliminary interview which asked about the organization's message were expanded to include the organization's mission and counter-arguments made when confronted by challengers. Third, the membership section of the instrument was expanded to include questions about the contributions of professionally-motivated members and other organizations that the SORN SMO networks with to achieve desired policy outcomes. Fourth, additional questions were asked to get a sense of the organizations level of formalization. The previous version of the instrument only asked about non-profit status, while the second version included questions about formal

organizational documents, such as an organizational charter, bylaws, and also about business meetings and subcommittees. Fifth, the questions about advocacy strategies previously asked as stood alone. After the preliminary interviews, these questions were asked in conjunction with the most successful policy outcome that the organization had achieved in its history. For example, instead of asking if they had used a particular strategy, they were asked about a previously achieved policy outcome, and then asked about the strategies used to achieve this outcome. Likewise, when asked about current goals, they were asked about the strategies they were using to achieve their current goal. Sixth, questions were added to the instrument about the SORN SMO's use of political opportunities that may have helped the organization achieve a past policy outcome. A similar question was asked about the current goals of the organization. Finally, questions were added to the instrument about the projects SORN SMOs were currently undertaking to build the resources of their organizations.

After these changes were made, a second version was piloted with a different SORN SMO leader prior to data collection for this dissertation. The purpose of the second pilot was to determine: a) if the new questions made sense to the leader, b) if the questions flowed in a logical manner, and c) to see how long it would take to complete the interview. Minor adaptations were made to the instrument after this pilot was completed. There were some concerns about study fatigue (i.e. length of the interview); therefore, questions were removed which asked the number of times strategies were used because they did not contribute to the research questions guiding this dissertation. Additionally, the pilot instrument included two sets of questions about the advocacy strategies the organization had used: one specifically focused on policies related to juvenile and youthful offenders and the other for policies related to all types of registered offenders. In the final instrument these questions were asked about the general

population of registered offenders. Since only minor revisions were made to the instrument after this pilot interview, the responses from it were included in the results. The final instrument was used as a discussion guide. The participants willingly responded with relevant comments which showed that the questions on the instrument were relevant to their work and the context in which they were operating. They did not state or suggest that the questions being asked were irrelevant.

Procedures/Protocol. After the human investigation committee approved the instrument (Protocol number: 1109010163), an email was sent to each leader requesting their participation. This email included a study information sheet (see appendix B), which described the study's purpose, and the benefits and risks if the individual chose to participate. Interested individuals were asked to contact the doctoral student to participate in the study. Two follow-up emails were sent, two and four weeks after the first email, in an attempt to increase the number of respondents (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). For individuals who agreed to participate, the researcher sent a pre-interview document that gave participants an overview of the questions they would be asked during the interview (see appendix C). This overview gave them a chance to consider the questions and to contemplate a thoughtful response prior to the scheduled interview. The individual who was a part of the pilot interview suggested that this might be helpful to others participating in the dissertation. Participants were also sent a document with four lists, related to: a) policy outcomes, b) advocacy strategies, c) organizational knowledge, and d) organizational skills (see appendix D). The policy outcomes gave an overview of the types of goals that SMOs set as policy goals, such as blocking, amending, developing or monitoring a policy. Advocacy strategies included a range of activities that SMOs may have chosen to implement in order to achieve the policy goals. These could include strategies related to their membership, such as grassroots organizing and mobilization; strategies geared towards the public, such as education

campaigns or media stories; or strategies directed toward policy makers, such as lobbying and policy maker education. The organizational knowledge list was included to ask leaders about the background information that their organizations need to understand the current policies and to create an effective argument for policy change. The organizational skills lists outlined the interpersonal skills needed to communicate the position of the organization to individuals outside of the organization. These lists were given to the participants before the interview, so that the interviewer and the participant would have a shared understanding of the topics that were going to be discussed.

At the beginning of the interview, each participant was asked to verbally consent to participation. Consent for participation was determined when the participant completed the telephone interview. Leaders were provided with a $20 gift card incentive for their participation. They were notified of this incentive in the study information sheet. It is unlikely that the incentive biased the responses, as the majority of participants were surprised when they received the incentive. All of the interviews were completed by this doctoral candidate. At the beginning of the telephone interview, participants were asked if the interview could be audio-recorded. All participants agreed. Additionally, the doctoral candidate took notes over the course of the interview.

Important Aspects

This dissertation considered the inputs, activities, and outcomes of SORN SMOs (see figure 2 on page 47). The inputs included the current structure, processes, and resources of the SORN SMOs, as well as capacity building projects. Activities are the strategies used to bring about policy change. Strategies commonly used by SMOs include: a) grassroots organizing and mobilization, b) electronic and social networking outreach, c) polling the public, d) voter

education, e) briefings, presentations and public education, f) coalition and network building, g) media coverage, h) policy analysis and research, i) lobbying and policy maker/candidate education, j) legal advocacy or litigation, k) demonstration projects or pilot programs, l) endorsement of political candidates, and m) rallies and marches (HFRP, 2009; see appendix D for more description). The outcomes are the policy goals that the SMO seeks to attain. These include: a) policy blocking, b) placement on the policy agenda, c) policy development, d) policy adoption, e) policy implementation, f) policy monitoring and evaluation, and g) policy maintenance (HFRP, 2009). Logically, the inputs of the organization would have a strong effect on future strategies. Therefore, current and future capacity of the organization influences the strategies that are implemented, and these strategies influence the policy outcomes that the SMO was able to achieve.

Time Frame of Policy Goals. Sex offender registration laws have been in development across the country for almost 20 years. Thus, state legislatures have adopted these policies at different times and in different ways. The Adam Walsh Act attempted to standardize registration and notification policies across the country (SORNA, 2008); however, to date (03/2012) only one-third of US states have complied with the act. Based on the differences that exist across states, SMOs have different goals when it comes to their proposed ideas for change. For example, a state that initially adopted sex offender registration policies that did not require the registration of youth under the age of 18 may not have the same goal as a state that places young offenders on the public registry. For this reason, this research focuses on the organizations' previous and current policy goals related to registration and notification for both adults and young sex offenders. Leaders were not given a timeframe when considering the most successful policy goal in the organization's history.

Inputs

History. Historical information was collected about the organizations. The dates they were established were used as the starting point. It is assumed that SMOs that have been in existence for a shorter period of time will differ from those who have been operating for a longer period of time in: organization formalization and resources, strategies used, and policy outcomes achieved. The questionnaire included the reason that the organization was started as an indicator of the organization's mission.

Capacity. Participants were asked about the current capacity of the organization and capacity building projects for the active members**.** Capacity comprises the knowledge and skills of the membership, as well as the infrastructure of the organization. The knowledge needed to achieve policy outcomes is specific to SORN policies, such as the reason these policies were originally created and the impacts the policies have on different stakeholders (i.e. victims, registrants, communities, and the state). Additionally, leaders were asked about alternative courses of action that policymakers should consider to achieve the intended goals of SORN policies (Bardach, 2005). total of eleven knowledge questions, with the response options that included: a) no knowledge, b) limited knowledge, c) moderate knowledge, d) substantial knowledge, and e) extensive knowledge. While the majority of the leaders responded well to this response scale, a few respondents preferred to respond with a yes or no answer. Common skills needed to conduct successful strategies, which lead to policy outcome achievement, include: a) analyzing legislation or policy, b) preparing a briefing note or position paper, c) writing and delivering a presentation, d) building relationships with political decision makers, e) possessing persuasion skills, f) having negotiation skills, g) working from inside the system, h) writing and using press releases, and i) carrying out media interviews (ICASO, 2003; see appendix D for

more details). The leaders were asked, "to what extent did at least one active member of the organization have experience" with each skill. Capacity can also refer to the infrastructure of the organization, such as establishing a hierarchical structure, increasing financial or technological resources, etc. Respondents were asked about the current knowledge and skills and also about any projects to build the knowledge, skills or infrastructure of the organization. The question that solicited information about capacity knowledge and skills was asked as: "Does your organization have an active project to build the knowledge and skills of your members?" If they responded in the affirmative, they were asked to describe the project. The question which solicited information about organizational infrastructure capacity was, "Does your organization have an active project to build the infrastructure of the organization?" If respondents became confused or did not know how to respond, they were probed with the following examples, "projects that would increase the use of technology, increase finances, or projects that would change the governance structure to become more efficient or effective in implementing strategies".

Structure. In order to gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the members, interviewees were asked about the structure of the organization. Information was collected about leadership positions and subcommittees. Additionally, respondents were asked if the organization included any elements of formalized organizations, such as: a) incorporation, b) tax-exempt status, c) organizational charter, d) bylaws or constitution, e) annual report, f) board member manual, g) holding of business meetings, and h) those involved in decision making for the organization. Grassroots (Horton Smith, 2000) and social movement researchers (Kriesi, 1996) suggest that these elements are found in more formalized organizations.

Resources. The interviewees provided information on human, material and socio-organizational resources. Information about human resources included: a) the number of paid

staff; b) the number of staff that are voluntary; c) the number of members, both active and inactive; and d) the professional expertise of the membership. To assess material resources, leaders were asked about the previous year's operating budget, and the percentage of the budget that is comprised of: a) donations, b) external funding sources (ex. grants), c) proceeds from fund raising events, and d) membership dues. These were considered to be the most common sources of monetary resources of non-profit organizations; and thus, were included in the interview guide. These financial aspects are surmised to impact the activities that the organization is able to implement in order to achieve its policy goals. The socio-organizational indicators include the medium (e.g. face-to-face meetings, email, blogs and forums, Skype) and frequency of communication among the active members.

Members. Leaders were asked about the individuals who participate in the SORN SMO. Research shows that work-group diversity across demographic variables has positive and negative impacts on performance (Knippenberg, et al., 2004). Membership diversity can be positive when different skills are brought to the organization; however, studies have shown that more homogeneity in an organization leads to higher member commitment and group cohesion (O'Reilly, Caldwell & Barnett, 1989). Thus, membership diversity may help explain an organization's ability to make progress towards its goals. This dissertation accounted for work-group diversity by considering the motivation of members to participate in the organization: those who are personally motivated and those who are professionally motivated. Leaders were asked about the participation of both groups in relation to: a) the time when members first became involved in the organization; b) their level of current participation; and c) their participation in current strategies to bring about policy change. This was asked for each type of member in the organization: the personally motivated members included: a) a registrant or b) a

family member or friend of a registrant, and the professionally motivated members, which included: a) judges, b) attorneys, c) sex offender treatment providers, d) parole, probation or police officers, e) therapists/social workers/ case managers, other than sex offender treatment providers, f) university researchers, g) members of the state or local Chamber of Commerce or others from the business community, and h) a representative from a victims' rights organization.

Activities

The activities, or strategies that social movement organizations use include: a) grassroots organizing and mobilization, b) electronic outreach/social media, c) polling the public, d) voter education, e) briefings, presentations and public education, f) coalition and network building, g) media coverage, h) issue or policy analysis and research, i) relationship building with key stakeholders, j) lobbying, k) policy maker and candidate education, l) testifying at bill hearings, m) legal advocacy or litigation, n) demonstration projects or pilots, o) political candidate endorsements, and p) rallies and marches (HFRP, 2009, see appendix D for more description). First, leaders were asked if the organization had ever used the strategy. Second, they were asked about the strategies they used to achieve a previous policy outcome and strategies currently being used in relation to two current policy goals. These strategies are critical to understanding the processes used by SORN SMOs that may impact the attainment of desired policy outcomes. Additionally, SORN SMOs were assessed for their adaptability to the political environment. Leaders were asked, "Has a situation arisen where you were going to employ an advocacy strategy, but the organization changed the strategy?" Leaders were then probed as to why they changed the strategy and what resulted from the change in strategy. These questions were asked in order to investigate the flexibility and adaptability of SORN SMOs, because this has been shown to lead to successful policy outcomes (Kingdon, 2003). The outcomes that SORN SMOs

are able to achieve are highly dependent upon the political context in which they are operating. This can be influenced by those who have power and status in government positions, such as politicians and government bureaucrats, and this environment is shaped by the media, corporations and the public (Van Horn, et. al., 2001). Thus, these constant changes require that SORN SMOs mobilize their resources to support activities that adapt to this type of environment.

Policy Outcomes

Policy outcomes are the desired goals of SORN SMOs. Participants were asked about the most important previous policy outcome achieved by the organization. These prior successes were coded as one of the following outcomes: a) policy development, b) placement on the policy agenda, c) policy adoption, d) policy blocking, e) policy implementation, f) policy monitoring and evaluation, or g) policy maintenance (HFRP, 2009, see appendix D for a description of each outcome). The organizations were then clustered into two categories: reactive and proactive organizations. Reactive organizations included SORN SMOs who reported their most successful policy outcome as blocking a bill. Proactive organizations are those that reported developing a policy. The organizations that reported policy amendments as their most successful outcomes were placed into the category where they fit best (see results chapter for more details about these organizations).

Participant Recruitment

The theoretical population included in this dissertation was state-level SORN SMOs. SMOs in any of the 50 United States whose mission it is to advocate for less punitive SORN policies were considered for inclusion. To participate, the organization had to have been operating for more than three months. This limitation was chosen because the pilot interviews conducted at the conference demonstrated that organizations that had been operating for less than

three months were unlikely to be able to answer many questions included in the instrument. Also, participants had to be over the age of 18. The unit of analysis for this dissertation is the organization. This unit was chosen because the overarching inquiry is to investigate how collective action, through the inputs and activities of SORN SMOs, is able to influence policy outcomes. Therefore, information needed to be gathered at the organizational level to answer these questions.

Potential participants were identified through a website of state-level organizations focused on this issue (www. reformsexoffenderlaws.org) and also through snowball sampling. This researcher used this website for the sampling frame because it was the only place where a list of these organizations was found. Since this listing may not have been representative of all existing SORN SMOs across the country, a snowball sample was used to gain further participants. Snowball sampling is a non-probability technique used when the population under study is difficult to locate (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). There are questions regarding the representative nature of the sample when this technique is used; however, it was necessary when considering that the stigma associated with this topic is likely to cause these organizations to keep a low profile. At the end of the interviews, participants were asked to provide names of similar organizations that were potential participants. Four additional organizations were found as a result of the snowball sampling technique, and two participated. As of October 15th, 2011, this website included contact information for organizations in the following 39 states:

Arizona	Maryland	North Dakota
Arkansas	Massachusetts	Ohio
California	Michigan	Oklahoma
Colorado	Minnesota	Oregon
Delaware	Mississippi	Pennsylvania

Florida	Missouri	South Carolina
Illinois	Montana	South Dakota
Indiana	Nebraska	Tennessee
Iowa	New Hampshire	Texas
Kansas	New Jersey	Vermont
Kentucky	New Mexico	Washington
Louisiana	New York	Wyoming
Maine	North Carolina	

The unit of analysis was the organization; therefore, there was potential for more than one organization from each state to be involved. Additionally, it is possible to have organizations that operate in more than one state. While this dissertation had a specific focus on advocacy efforts related to youthful offenders, these organizations may advocate for offenders of any age.

Attempts were also made to find SORN SMOs in states that were not listed on the RSOL website, through two other organizations: The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) and Department of Corrections Offices at the state level. The doctoral candidate contacted five state chapters of ATSA to seek referrals for groups known to them in their state. Only one ATSA state chapter responded with an organization, and it was already known to the doctoral student. Additionally, there were five states that did not have a RSOL group or an ATSA chapter. This researcher sent an email to the state's Department of Corrections' (DOC) email address that was linked to prison- based treatment or community re-entry for the sex offender population. While two responses were received from these emails, these DOC contacts did not know of any SORN SMO in their states.

In order to get an illustrative sample of organizations across the country, it was important to include organizations from states with various qualities. These qualities included various: a)

regions of the country, b) levels of total population, c) political partisanship, d) rates of registered sex offenders, and e) compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. The regions of the country included the official census locations of: Midwest, Northeast, South and West (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The various levels of total population included a mixture of states with the highest total population (top quantile), states with the lowest population (bottom quantile) and states in the middle (US Census, 2010). Political partisanship includes states that are known as either "red"; those that vote Republican; or "blue", that vote Democratic. A map of voting behavior in the 2008 presidential election was used to ascertain state political partisanship (Newman, 2012).

To gain an illustrative sample of SORN SMOs from various states across the country, two specific indicators were used specifically related to sex offender registration: a) per capita rate of registered sex offenders and b) compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. A map of the number of registered sex offenders per 100,000 people in each state was used to determine if the organizations that participated in this dissertation came from a variety of states: those with the highest (300 or more per 100,000 state population), middle (200 to 299 per 100,000 state population) and lowest (199 or fewer per 100,000 state population) per capita rates of registered sex offenders (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2011). The dissertation expected to include SORN SMOs from states that have substantially complied with the Adam Walsh Act (Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, 2011) and states that have publicly objected to compliance (Clark, 2012; see updates at National Conference of State Legislatures, 2012).

Preparing Data for Analysis

All of the interviews were transcribed from the audio recordings. The transcribed documents were sent to the corresponding participants for member checking (Creswell, 2000),

which gave participants the opportunity to verify that the transcriptions accurately reflected their statements and intentions. Four participants responded with comments about their transcripts. The feedback that these participants provided was incorporated into the transcript because the comments were considered to add more trustworthiness to the responses.

The researcher created themes for each question on the instrument using "open coding" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding is a process by which the phenomenon under study is categorized during a thorough examination of the data. During open coding, a list of themes was created to include all potential responses for each question on the interview guide. This doctoral candidate then used this list of themes to code each transcript in the software program NVivo 9. This software was used because it helped organize the text from all interviews into the codes for each question. To begin, the transcripts were imported into the software. A hierarchical tree was created in the software to include the codes for each question that corresponded to the three guiding theories of this dissertation (see figure 3).
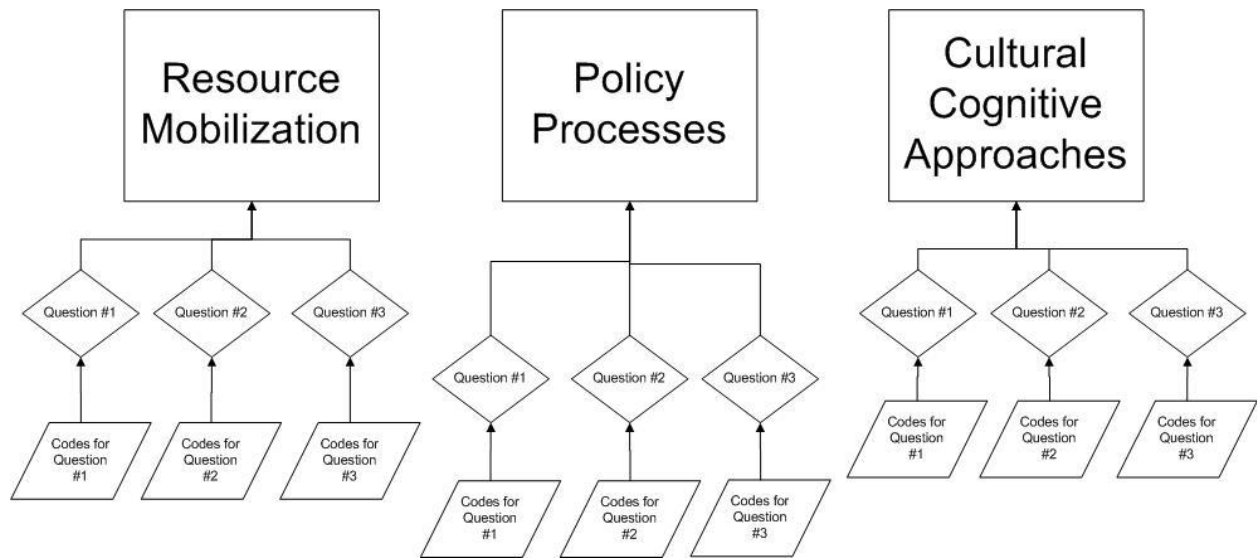
Figure 3. NVivo Coding Process

Data Analysis Strategy

The data analysis strategies used for this dissertation include content analysis (Rubin & Babbie, 2010) and a site-ordered predictor-outcome matrix for cross-site analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Content analysis was used to tabulate the number of responses within the codes for each question on the instrument. The side-ordered predictor-outcome matrices "…array sites on a main outcome or criterion variable, and provide data for each site on the main antecedent variables that the analyst thinks are the most important contributors to the outcome" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p.168). The outcome variable was the achieved policy outcome, and the key antecedent categories included the messages, capacity (i.e. knowledge, skills, structure, financial resources, and membership) and the strategies used to achieve a previously achieved policy outcome. The sites were then clustered by categories for analysis (for example, by proactive and reactive organizations or by organizations that do or do not focus on youthful offenders).

Chapter 5

Results

A total of nineteen (19) interviews were conducted for this dissertation. One interview was conducted with a leader whose organization was operating in two different states and two interviews were conducted with leaders whose organizations were operating in the same state; therefore, there were a total of 19 interviews with leaders of SORN SMOs that were operating in 19 different states. These SORN SMOs were operating in states from each region of the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011) and from states in all four quantiles of states ranked by total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Organizations were also evenly split by political partisanship, with nine SORN SMOs representing Republican states and ten representing Democratic states (Newman, 2012). Additionally, there was participation from SORN SMOs in states with the highest (300 or more per 100,000 state population), middle (200 to 299 per 100,000 state population) and lowest (199 or fewer per 100,000 state population) per capita rates of registered sex offenders (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2011). As of March 2012, fifteen states across the country had substantially complied with the Adam Walsh Act (Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, 2011). Organizations from five of these fifteen (15) states participated in interviews for this dissertation. Conversely, SORN SMOs from two states that have publicly objected to compliance with this act have also participated in this dissertation (Clark, 2012; see updates at National Conference of State Legislatures, 2012). To protect the identity of the leaders and their organizations, specific information about individual organizations is not provided.

While each interviewee represented the perceptions of his or her respective organization, it is only one perception among many that may exist within the organization. For example, the

doctoral candidate/interviewer asked respondents about the most successful policy outcome that the organization has achieved to date. For organizations that have achieved many outcomes, the one that is chosen by the interviewee may be the one that that person worked on the most; thus being successful personally, as well as to the organization. However, another member may have chosen a different outcome that was most meaningful to that person within the organization. Even though the unit of analysis for this study is the organization, the term used throughout this chapter is "organizational leaders" or "leaders" to make clear that it is one individual's perception of the organization.

The quotes that have been selected for inclusion in this chapter were chosen as representative of dominant themes or to reflect when one organization's response differed noticeably from the others. Minor edits have been made to some quotes for ease of understanding for individuals who are not able to read the entire transcript of the interview. These minor edits included grammatical changes and spaces between major points of a long quote. Three dots (…) have been used when text was taken out between two sentences of the transcript. This was done to reduce the length of quotes and to capture only the major points made by the leader. Additionally, brackets [ ] were used to add in words that were not used by the leader, but were required so that the sentence would be clearer or when identifying information was removed. This researcher took special care to edit quotes only when necessary and to be sure that the words and meanings of the leader were not taken out of context.

The results are organized by the purpose of this investigation (see pages 16-17). First, an overview of the responding SORN SMOs' current capacity will be provided. This will include a synthesis of their history, structure, resources, and knowledge and skills within the organization. Second, this chapter will present the leaders' perceptions of stigma experienced by individuals

listed on the registry. This is an important concept when discussing the work of SORN SMOs, because stigma influenced many aspects of these organizations, from organizational resources and chosen strategies, to barriers to success and the achievement of policy outcomes. Third, the chapter continues with a discussion of the ways that organizations frame their message, to: a) make claims about the issue, b) mobilize different stakeholders for change, and c) react to those who challenge the SORN SMO's position. Fourth, an overview of previous policy outcomes will be provided. This section also includes a discussion of the range of strategies that have been used and the barriers that have been faced. The final section of this chapter will present the current policy goals, strategies and capacity building projects of these SORN SMOs. A purpose of this investigation is to see if any differences existed in the way SORN SMOs advocate for juvenile or young adult offenders. Therefore, results specific to organizations that focus on youthful offenders will be presented in the sections mentioned above where they are most pertinent.

Current Capacity

History. The historical variables assessed in this dissertation include the length of operation and the reason that the SORN SMO was started. The length of operation for participating SORN SMOs ranged from four months to six years. Many leaders reported that their organizations had been started by someone else prior to their participation. A common experience for some leaders was that they took over the organization after a period of time when a previous leader had been disengaged. Thus, the current leader who was interviewed for this dissertation could not trace the date that the organization started with the previous leader. Therefore, the start date for some of these SORN SMOs is from the time that the current leader restarted the organization. Five organizations began between 2006 and 2008; however, the majority of the organizations (13) began in 2009 or 2010. One organization started in 2011.

When leaders were asked why the organization was started, the majority suggested that the leader (or a few leaders) was personally impacted by the issue, either as a registrant or a family member of a registrant. One leader, who is also a registrant, stated, "We started because of the insanity of the whole situation. You just get tired of being pushed around, you get tired of the insanity that is involved". The majority of the organizations were started by family members of registrants: most often a mother, daughter or wife of someone on the registry. One leader told a story of how she started the organization in her state:

> My husband and I were forced to move from our home that we have lived in, owned and lived in for over 10 years, because of retroactive application of residency restrictions. We didn't handle it real well…We just wanted to deny the whole sex offender registry. He filled out paperwork, nobody talked about it, and all of a sudden this came up. And at that point, I just had enough….When we were forced to move, that punished me and our children because that was our home, too. So really our only choices at that point were to have him not live with us; which punishes us, or move from a home that was ours. And at that point, I really felt it had gone too far because I was being punished for something he had done 25 years ago. At that point I'd had enough.

Almost all of the leaders stated that sex offender management policies have caused harm to registrants and their family members. Moreover, it was these consequences that instigated their participation in the SORN SMO.

While the majority of the organizations began as a result of the impacts that SORN policies have on registrants and their family members, three of these organizations began as spin-offs of other organizations. Two organizations began as spin-offs from support groups for registrants and their family members and the third grew out of an organization that focused on

the rights of prisoners, regardless of the type of crime committed. All three leaders explained that the prior organization was not doing enough to address the needs of sex offenders who are listed on the public registry.

Two leaders did not have a personal connection to the issue (i.e. they were not a registrant or a family member). Both of these leaders started their organizations out of a sense of injustice when they learned about the collateral consequences of these policies. Both had previous work experience in the policy arena and wanted to use their skills to help advocate for better policies. One leader became knowledgeable about this issue while working as a prison volunteer. While volunteering, he began working with a prisoner who was a sex offender, and who would become a registrant once he was out of prison and on parole. While the offender was still in prison, these two men worked together on sex offender bills. This leader stated:

> I started following all the legislation and sharing with him [the prisoner he befriended] what I was hearing. There was one horrendous bill in 2006…that was so bad that we vowed to work together to stop it or change it. I talked lawmakers into coming into the prison to talk to sex offenders and he picked the people to talk to. They came out of the meeting determined to drop or kill the legislation that leadership in both houses and the Governor's office very badly wanted. That's how we got started.

The other leader became involved in the issue after reading a book written by a registered sex offender. This leader stated:

> It changed my life because I cannot believe that anybody, any group of people in our society at this time, is being treated in this manner. They're being treated like lepers, whatever we want to use as the analogy. But anyway, I decided I wanted to do something.

Structure. To assess the level of formality of the SORN SMO, leaders were asked about the leadership and structure of the organization. This section of the interview included questions related to a formalized leadership, an executive board, incorporation, and other elements of formalized organizations.

Table 1 *SORN SMO Structure (N=19)*

Elements of Formalized Structure	N	%
Identified Leader(s)	19	100%
Executive Board	11	58%
Incorporation	12	63%
Written Document (at least one)	11	58%
Types of Written Documents:		
By-laws	10	16%
Organizational Charter	3	53%
Annual Report	4	21%
Board Member Manual	3	16%
Business Meetings	14	74%
Decision-making by Active Members only	9	47%
Subcommittees (at least one)	13	68%
Types of Subcommittees:		
Legislative	11	58%
Recruitment/Membership	7	37%
Outreach/Public Education	6	32%
Communications/Website	5	26%
Organizational Structure/Resources	5	26%
Research	4	21%
DOC/Police Liaison	3	16%
Youthful Offenders	2	11%
Litigation	1	5%

All of the organizations had an identified leader. Eleven had an executive board, which generally consisted of four positions (i.e. president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary). Of the eleven organizations that had an executive board, four had executive boards that were appointed, while two had executive boards that were elected. Twelve of the leaders reported that their organizations were incorporated at the time of the interview, or had filed the paperwork with the

state to become incorporated. Three are currently incorporated as not-for-profit 501(c)3's; eight are incorporated as 501(c)4's; and one is filed as a different type of non-profit organization.

Over half (11) of the organizations had at least one type of written document, with by-laws being the most common (10). A few leaders stated that they did not currently have an annual report, but that they needed to produce one in the future to meet the requirements for IRS incorporation. At the time of the interviews, some organizations had not been incorporated for one year, and thus had not written the first annual report. Over half of the leaders (13) noted that the organization had at least one subcommittee. There was a total of 44 subcommittees across all of the SORN SMOs. Among all of them, there is a clear focus on making legislative changes to these policies, evidenced by the number of organizations that have a legislative subcommittee (11). The average number of subcommittees per organization was 2.3, and ranged from zero to six.

SORN SMOs have various types of formalized and non-formalized structures. More formal organizations show signs of incorporation (12), hierarchy (executive board, 11) and task delegation (subcommittees, 13), and through written documents (11). While some may believe that formalization will bring legitimacy in the political arena, some of these organizations insinuated that they do not want to be formalized to the extent that funding is required for sustainability. One leader stated:

> Some organizations I've seen have great goals and aspirations and serve their community, and then they start becoming more and more professional, more and more expensive, and they begin to make commitments: office space and professional staff. And soon they spend all their time fundraising and don't have any time to commit to their constituents. So that's the last thing I want to do, is become that financially

burdensome...If we could just keep it to printing and mailing and everybody's responsible for getting to where they need to get on their own. I know that sounds like an ad-hoc kind of local organization, but I just dread the thought of making that step to a professional, expensive organization. If you're working for crippled children or for pets or whatever, you can engender support from the community financially, but if you're working with sex offenders, no organization is going to support you with grants.

Resources. Leaders were asked about the SORN SMOs' financial and socio-organizational resources. Financial resources were coded by the presence of an operating budget and the sources of income. The socio-organizational resources were assessed by the number and types of members in the organization, and the type and frequency of communication among the active members. Six organizations had a current operating budget. Four reported that their operating budget was between $1,200 and $4,000 of income in the previous year. One leader stated that the budget for the organization's first year, which had not yet ended, was set at $20,000. One of the leaders was unable to provide the amount of the current year's income. All of the organizations who detailed income for the year received the money from donations. Four of these five organizations also received income from membership dues.

One of the most important resources of any SMO is the membership. These human resources, or members, implement the strategies designed to impact policy outcomes. Leaders were asked about three types of individuals participating in the organization: a) those that run the organization as volunteers, b) the active members of the organization who participate in the strategies toward achieving the organization's policy goals (active members), and c) the number of individuals who belong to the organization, either those who are on an email list or receive the organization's materials (total members). The median number of volunteers that run the day-to-

day operations of these organizations is 10, and ranged between one and 15. The median number of active members, who participate in the strategies of the organization, was 15 members (range 1-230). Most of the leaders recounted a total membership between 100 and 300, with a median of 110 members (range 1-500).

The interview included a question asking leaders if their organization had a support group component, where registrants and their family members could meet to support each other in coping with the negative consequences of sex offender registration. The purpose of this question was to assess the multiple tasks that organizations take on in addition to policy work. Answers to this question aided in assessing whether the organization had a source of potential recruits into the policy work of the organization. Eleven of the leaders affirmed the existence of a support group, either a formal or informal one. Some of these leaders expressed, without prompting, that they used the support group as, what one member called "a training ground" for legislative work. While one organization stated that it did not have a support group, the leaders referred members to a sister organization when personal issues arose. Two other leaders notified the interviewer that the organization was considering adding a support group as a component of their SORN SMO.

Although registrants and their friends and family are the most likely to be negatively impacted by sex offender laws, the stigma that is associated with this population is likely to delegitimize the organization. One way to regain some legitimacy is to have non-personally impacted members in the organization who have some expertise related to the population that is impacted by the policy. Therefore, leaders were asked about any professional members that have taken part in the organization. All but five leaders described the involvement of one of the following professionals: a) legal personnel (N=12), b) sex offender treatment providers (N=11),

c) researchers (N=7), d) victims' rights advocates/groups (N=5), e) parole or police officers (N=4), f) clergy (N=2), and g) individuals from the business community (N=2). Table 2 shows how different types of professional members participated in SORN SMOs. Legal personnel and treatment providers participated in the greatest range of strategies. Two leaders stated that victims' rights organizations and the SORN SMO worked together on public education. One leader reported that they work on policy analysis, with a goal of formulating policies that will reduce sexual recidivism rates in sex offenders. The role of police, probation and parole has generally related to legislative work; however, these professionals provide much-needed research about the states' registry information and recidivism rates of sex offenders. Additionally, legal and criminal justice members participated in grassroots organizing and mobilization, along with networking and coalition building, by passing out information about the SORN SMO to potential members or other professionals. Clergy were helpful in networking with other organizations and educating their parishioners about the impact of SORN policies. While leaders recognized business people as members, to date business related members had not participated in any organizational strategies, outside of attending meetings.

Table 2 *Strategy Participation by Professional Members*

	Legal	Treatment Providers	Research	Victims' Rights Groups	Police/ Parole/ Probation	Clergy	Business
Lobbying & Policy Maker Education	X	X	X		X		
Testimony	X	X			X		
Grassroots Organizing & Mobilization	X	X			X		
Networking & Coalition Building	X	X	X		X	X	
Media Interviews/Stories	X	X	X				
Research & Policy Analysis	X	X	X	X	X		
Legal Advocacy	X		X				
Public Education	X		X	X		X	

This dissertation also explored socio-organizational resources, within SORN SMOs; specifically the frequency and means of communication among the active members. Seven organizations reported that they meet face-to-face, with some meeting quarterly and others once a week. The most common form of communication was email (15), with many organizations emailing other individuals in the organization multiple times per day. Just under half of the organizations mentioned telephone, Skype or texting to communicate with other active members. Four leaders reported using an on-line forum or blog. This technology was mostly used as a place for documents that members could share within the organization.

Knowledge and Skills. All of the leaders expressed that someone in their organization had knowledge related to the reasons that SORN laws were created, the assumptions that underlie these policies, and the effectiveness that these policies have in reaching their intended goals. However, only half revealed that they were able to find research on the impact that SORN policies have on victims of sexual violence. Many of the leaders stated that they had attempted to

find that kind of information, but these leaders were unable to find any. Additionally, all but one organization's leaders felt that their members had the necessary skills to analyze SORN policies. Over half of the organizations have compiled information: a) regarding the impact that SORN policies have on the community (15), and b) federal and state Supreme Court cases that challenged these policies (17). One-third of the leaders (6) told the interviewer that they have not been able to obtain the costs involved in implementing the sex offender registry in their particular state; however, some have been able to obtain research on the costs in other states.

While these organizations are equipped with the foundational knowledge of SORN policies, only half of the leaders recounted information about alternative approaches policy could take to address the issue of sexual violence. The organizations that notified the interviewer that they had knowledge of alternative policies expressed a desire to take a public education approach to this issue. They noted that the registry is ineffective because it would not protect victims from the predominant perpetrators of sexual violence: persons known to victims. Therefore, these organizations believe that it is important to educate individuals, so they do not have a false sense of security that the sex offender registry will protect them.

A few of the organizations mentioned an additional alternative policy: the need to focus state resources on sex offender treatment programs. One leader stated:

> We need to set up ways for persons who are needing treatment, and they self-report needing treatment, are able to get help. The way a person who self-reports they're using illegal drugs. And they can report to a rehab center and it doesn't necessarily prevent them from getting any kind of punishment, but it is mitigated by it. And so that would increase reporting and decrease the recidivism.

Two more organizations viewed treatment as an alternative focus for SORN policies. While some leaders mentioned an alternative policy, only seven reported that they had information on the projected impacts that their preferred alternative policy would have on reducing sexual violence. Five interviewees stated that they would be able to present the tradeoffs between the current SORN policies and the alternative policy they proposed.

All of the SORN SMO representatives informed the interviewer that someone in the organization had the necessary skills to building relationships with policy makers and government bureaucrats. Fifteen leaders believed someone within their organization had the necessary persuasive skills, and thirteen believed someone in the organization had negotiation skills. A few leaders commented that there is no room for negotiation with policy makers in their states. One leader put it this way:

> There is no good way to negotiate with legislators. It is a discussion with a legislator that can be split between good and bad [they either support or do not support the position of the SORN SMO]. There is no way to negotiate this. If they do not like it they will not vote for it.

Conversely, another leader reported that the lack of negotiation skills was due to the idealism of some of the members. He said:

> Certain people in our organization are idealists, and they don't like to compromise, and life's all about compromise. You go after the best you can get, and then better it. And to some, that is a bit of a challenge. That's sort of a personality driven thing: idealism versus realism.

Only half of the leaders believed that someone in their organization was able to "work from inside the system", most likely because of previous difficulties in getting their voices heard.

When one leader was asked about working inside the system, she analogized, "I'm trying, but boy, sometimes it feels like we're David and they're the Goliath." Many have not been offered a seat at the table to begin to work within the system. Seven of the leaders suggested that their organization had obtained a seat, and that they have been effective in advancing their cause when they have interacted with policy makers for committee work in the legislature or when asked to provide research for drafting/amending new policies.

The interview covered a final set of skills: the ability to articulate the organization's position. Thirteen are able to write a policy analysis or a position paper; seventeen could write and deliver a presentation, and fifteen said they were able to write and use a press release. Seventeen believed that someone in their organization was able to give an interview if needed; however, only eleven leaders reported that someone in their organization had already given a media interview.

Stigma

Leaders were asked about stigma in relation to the SORN SMO's target population, The questions asked about how much this population is stigmatized by the general public and by policy makers. Additionally, the interviewer inquired about variations in the level of stigmatization experienced by different types of sex offenders. Lastly, leaders were asked about the impact of stigma on the organization's ability to achieve its mission.

The majority of the organizations (16) expressed a high degree of stigma exhibited by the general public. One leader stated, "I think that they are probably the most stigmatized of convicted offender of any sort. And I would say that very likely, the most stigmatized group of citizens in the United States…The person convicted of a sexual offense is publicly destroyed". Another leader said, "The term "sex offender" these days is synonymous with "monster", and so

the public thinks that anybody who is on the registry is a monster, anyone who is on the registry is a pedophile". When asked why they felt the level of stigmatization was so high, one respondent commented, "because of political grandstanding and media frenzy". This quote exemplifies many of the leaders' beliefs, that the media demonizes sex offenders and policy makers use the public's fear to get elected into public office. In a similar sentiment, another leader noted, "Primarily this is due to how the media presents these issues and the lack of a balanced presentation of the facts relating to sex offenders and their issues".

One organizational leader described the level of stigmatization exhibited by the general population as a mixture of high and low. Some individuals highly stigmatize sex offenders, while many in the general public do not. This leader noted that there are definitely individuals who demonize sex offenders, "but then I think there is an informed group of people who realize that there is something more to it." Surprisingly, two organizations declared that the general public in their states do not greatly stigmatize registered sex offenders. One leader informed the interviewer that registrants were not experiencing the same level of stigmatization and its resulting consequences in her state, because individuals are judged based on their reputation, rather than a public list with one's criminal history. Both of the organizations that reported low levels of stigma were located in less densely populated states.

Organizational leaders were also asked about the degree of stigma expressed by policy makers in their state. Six of the organizational leaders noted that the stigma is approximately as high as that from the general public. One leader commented:

> The policy makers are responding to their constituents. Policy makers or elected officials don't get reelected by being soft on crime, and sex offenders are the low hanging fruit that they can pluck to show how tough they are. And so the laws that they're passing tend

to not only limit access of sexual offenders to their community, but that limitation can stigmatize.

Just under half of the leaders (8) believed that there was a mix of high and low levels of stigmatization expressed by policy makers. These leaders expressed the sentiment that some politicians have come to understand that registration policies need to be amended; however, they are not willing to take the first public step towards less punitive policies. One leader stated, "They are very concerned that looking like they support sex offenders is in fact going to be the kiss of death for them, and they won't get re-elected".

In response to questions about whether they believed that the level of stigma varied for different types of sex offenders, five of the leaders reported that there was no difference in level of stigmatization by the type of sex offender. These five leaders explained that the general public believes that individuals listed on the public registry are all considered to be pedophiles, or as one leader reiterated, "the worst of the worst", regardless of their actual offense. Since registration has become synonymous with pedophilia, all registrants are stigmatized to the same degree as the worst offenders.

For leaders who mentioned varying levels of stigma, six reported that the greatest levels of stigma were for those who committed a crime against a child, such as cases of child molestation or child pornography. Conversely, half of the leaders believed that statutory rape cases between minors and juvenile offenders had lower levels of associated stigma. Additionally, a minority of leaders believed that cases which involved public urination, pornography, a female offender, or a first time offender had lower levels of associated stigma. These results show that the greatest level of stigmatization is held against registrants that offend against a child, and those who were a child or young adult when they committed their crimes are stigmatized less.

The majority of leaders (14) recognized that stigma was a barrier to their organization's mission. Unexpectedly, however, three of the leaders did not feel that stigma had caused any barriers to their organization's mission, despite the fact that two of these leaders reported a high level of stigma from the general public towards sex offenders. One-third of the leaders (6) described registrants' sense of fear about becoming involved in the organization. These leaders stressed that registrants and their families have encountered consequences from registration that have negatively impacted their lives. For this reason, they do not want to get involved in any high-profile situations that may cause further harm to their families. One leader expressed the fear of registrants to become active in the organization, and additionally explained the financial consequences that impede registrants from contributing financially to the organization:

> Well, many of them are afraid to speak out. They're afraid to use their names. They're afraid to participate in media, in newspaper—to let the public know who they really are and why they're on the list. And most of them don't have the finances to help in a financial manner because of the registry. And the stigma has kept them from getting good jobs.

This fear deters members from participation because of reports of vigilante justice, when someone has taken the law into their own hands and has killed someone listed on the public registry. One leader noted that the stigma that is associated with sex offenders leaves some of the members with fear about what could occur at their public meetings, "There's some fear even in the organization with who's going to show up at a meeting. Somebody could come in and shoot the place up". This fear has made it difficult for these organizations to recruit members and also to have a pool of members willing to publicly tell their stories for mobilization. Regarding the level of member participation one leader described it this way:

There is an unwillingness to do anything. You could say it's being scared…that it's been beaten out of them, I don't know, but it's just getting the members to care…but people are afraid, ashamed, but by and large, a lot of times they'll say they're gonna do something and then they'll just not follow through".

Similarly, another leader explained, "its embarrassment and shame and the stigma that is a big barrier, and fear. Fear for their families". Another member spoke to the anger that causes some members to obstruct the work of the organization:

Another barrier that I think all of us in this advocacy nationwide experience is that we often are our own worst enemy. People who are convicted of sex crimes, or who are on the sex offender registry, are often people who don't play well with others--people who have struggle[s] [with] social issues. So when we ask for volunteers to come and testify, we have to be very careful who we let come up and speak for our organization. Because you can have people who are just filled with rage and don't engender any sympathy. People who are in denial of their offense…Again that creates a real problem. We need to—whenever we are asked by the press to provide people for interviews, we have to be very selective in who we promote as a spokesperson of [the SORN SMO]. And, at times it feels like we're really censoring ourselves. Sometimes you have to do that.

Almost one-third of the leaders (5) informed the interviewer that the stigma related to sex offenders has made it difficult to be accepted as a legitimate organization by politicians; and to a lesser extent, by the media. One leader explained, "Newspapers and legislators do not want to hear what we have to say. It is very hard to get a response. Cases in the media put stories out there that just create hysteria and misinforms the general public. The media and legislators just ignore our group". Two leaders told stories of politicians publicly discrediting registrants when

they spoke at public hearings. Both of these leaders implied that it was best for their organization to have family members or professionals who work with sex offenders do the majority of the testimony and lobbying, as registrants would not help the organization achieve their goals. One of these leaders noted, "I think if they were the ones going out and trying to advocate, it would not be as effective towards our mission because in the eyes of the legislature it looks self-serving".

Not only have politicians publicly humiliated registrants, some leaders have also experienced difficulties when trying to engage politicians on this issue. Many leaders have felt disdain from politicians, or their aides, when requesting meetings. These organizations have predominant strategies of lobbying and policy maker education. It is difficult to follow through with these strategies if the organizations are unable to establish a meeting with policy makers. One leader suggested that politicians do not want to be associated with this population or the issue because of the high level of stigmatization.

When asked what barriers stigma has caused for the organization, one member believed that the stigma has perpetuated misinformation about this population. This leader stated that stigma deters:

> …people [from] believing the truth. People believing the statistics versus the hysteria that the media produces. It's just trying to get the truth to them and getting them to realize the truth. We've got so many PhD's and people that have written so many articles, they just, they don't know.

This leader implied that the stigma associated with sex offenders overshadows the research about this population. She went on to explain that the organization spends substantial resources on educating the public against all the misinformation.

Another leader suggested that stigma has changed the way she frames the issue when talking to people who do not know the work she does with the SORN SMO. When people ask what she does, she does not lead with the topic or population, because this repels people from the discussion. She reported that she must be gentle in how she brings up the topic so that she can disarm individuals before they can call on the images and stigmatizing statements that are manifest throughout this society.

Framing the Issue

The way SORN SMOs frame this issue is greatly influenced by the public attitudes and perceptions that surround sex offenders. SORN SMOs have an overarching position about SORN policies, in which they construct meaning for the cause. Then, many of the organizations craft or tailor this overall message to different stakeholders; which is how they construct meaning for mobilization. Additionally, there is another type of meaning-making when SORN SMOs counteract the messages that are put forth by their challengers. These three ways of framing the issue are discussed in the section below.

For the Cause. Leaders were asked about the organization's mission and the primary points they make when talking to individuals about the goals of their SORN SMO. Five topics were found within the mission and messages that these leaders reported. The most frequently discussed topic within the mission and messages of these SORN SMOs was the goal to educate the public and politicians about research that refutes the assumptions that underlie SORN policies. A few leaders went so far as to suggest that this is their organization's primary focus. One leader stated that legislators "don't have time to sit around and research these laws. So by doing that [research], we can then turn that information to them and hope that they do some better bills in the future".

Among all of the organizations, there is a sense that the general public is not aware of all that is included in SORN policies. For example, three leaders reported that the public was unaware that all registered sex offenders in their state are subject to lifetime involvement with the criminal justice system, either through lifetime registration, parole or treatment. These organizations felt compelled to bring this issue to the public as a violation of individual rights.

SORN SMOs are educating the public and policy makers about the research that refutes the assumptions on which these policies were based. One leader commented:

Of course we are trying to change the law, but we're also trying to educate the public, and generally speaking, I find that their heads are full of misconceptions. A big misconception that is out there is recidivism. I have discovered, gathering all the information that I put together for our website, one particular thing that has been misunderstood by the press and misquoted is the recidivism rate from the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice's report is kind of confusing. It says that recidivism for sex offenses is 3%, but then there's another piece of information back there that mentions another percentage figure. And because it is higher, the press has stuck on that. And what that one was, if I remember correctly, that figure that is higher is the number of people who've committed a general population [non-sexual offense] type offense who are registered sex offenders.

Many of these organizations have obtained statistics from their State's Department of Corrections office, which have similarly low statistics related to sexual recidivism rates for sex offenders. One leader stated that one of the facts they try to educate people about is that of treatment efficacy, "We need to revise the sex offender treatment program in prison so we can

more swiftly move people through this successful program and get more people involved in it. Get more people through it".

Half (9) of the organizations interviewed suggested that an aspect of their messages is that there are different types of sex offenders. There are offenders who are the most dangerous to society, from which society needs to be protected; however, there are other classes of sex offenders who are not a risk to society. These organizations believed that the current laws are written to treat all sex offenders as if they were dangerous and violent predators. These SMO's conveyed a message that juvenile cases have even lower recidivism rates than those reported for adults, or 'Romeo and Juliet' offenses. These offenses present minimal risks to society, compared to individuals charged with pedophilia or rape. One leader stated, "Who wants an 18 or 19 year-old to be labeled like this for sleeping with a 15 or 16 year-old? Whether they agree that they should be punished or not, or whether they agree it should take place, there's not a lot of people who agree that this is the right solution". Therefore, these organizations contend that lower level crimes should not be subject to lengthy prison or registration sentences.

Safety is the underlying goal of SORN policies. The goal is to protect children and families from sexual violence. Therefore, safety is included in the mission or message of most (15) SORN SMOs. One leader, when asked about the mission, stated:

Our mission is to help make communities safer and help reduce recidivism, and that is one area where everyone can agree. The way we accomplish this may be different. We think for example that residency restrictions make communities less safe, and increase recidivism. We think that a publically accessible sex offender registry makes communities less safe and increases recidivism. And there are laws being placed on the

books every year that do that, so we are lobbying to have sane, workable, cost effective laws.

Discussing sex offender management policies, one leader noted, "A lot of times it's less safe. You're actually destabilizing a population". In regards to residency restrictions, many registrants have been removed from their homes or find difficulties obtaining housing. Reacting to this reality, one leader said:

> We argued that these residency restrictions make sex offenders homeless, driving them to the outskirts of communities where they can't walk to work or walk to treatment or walk to their parole board's parole office. And it breaks up their families. It would evict them from a home they own. And those are bad things to do."

One leader explained that many individuals tell her that the goal is to protect children. She responds:

> Which children are you trying to protect? You know, is it only the few that you're trying to protect? And then I go into the few cases that may be in the news…then I'm going, you know, all these people who allegedly committed all of these latest crimes- not one of them was on the registry. So, how did the registry help these people?

This leader's point is one that was reiterated by many of the organizations, that these policies harm children that either have a parent on the registry or who were youthful offenders. Many of the leaders stressed that youthful offenders should be held less culpable for their crimes, as echoed in the principles of the juvenile court; and therefore, should not experience the collateral consequences and shame that results from sex offender registration.

A general point made by seven of the organizations is the unintended or collateral consequences that registrants and their family members endure because of these policies. One

leader pointed out that their primary message is, "to make the citizens of [state name] aware of the offenses that can place a person on the public registry and the consequences that will follow long after his or her sentence has been completed". Another leader reported, "Our primary focus is the belief that once someone has completed their punishment: parole, probation, prison sentence; treatment, whatever it is, that they should be allowed, they and their families, should be allowed to live a free life."

Eight of the leaders stated that their mission or message includes a focus on the rights of offenders. Many leaders recounted that sex offenders serve their time through the sentence they were given for the crime, but then they are subjected to further sanctions after completing their initial sentence. One leader commented, "It's like a double jeopardy thing and it seems totally unconstitutional…You've [the offender] complied, but oh well, you're going to have to register for life." Another leader stated that part of their primary message reads, "that anybody who is listed on our state registry is being denied their basic civil rights on a daily basis." Some of these leaders suggested that the stigma associated with the label of sex offender, and the collateral consequences that result, are considered harsh and punitive.

Thirteen of the leaders disclosed that part of their message is citing the high cost to states for implementing and maintaining SORN policies. These policies cost states, counties, and local law enforcement personnel to update the registry with the personal information of registrants, as well as to identify and follow those registrants who do not comply. These costs are exacerbated by the inclusion of offenders who are at low risk for reoffense. Leaders reported that they present the high cost of these policies in conjunction with research that shows that these policies have not been effective at reducing sexual violence. Six of these organizations pointed out that the high cost for SORN policies has been one of the most effective arguments with legislators in

their state, due to strained state budgets. One leader, when asked about the mission, revealed, "I think in general, the message is, by and large, that most of the laws have really gone way too far, and are really ineffective at achieving the purpose of preventing sexual abuse, and that we are putting far too many resources in policies that don't work".

For Mobilization. To mobilize different stakeholders (i.e. members, policy makers or the general public) organizations may stress different aspects of their message. The majority of participating organizations (16) reported that they tailor their message differently to different stakeholders. Of the leaders who reported this, twelve believed that tailoring resulted in greater support for the cause. One leader believed that it was successful because "different groups of people are looking for different answers. For example, legislators want to know how they can present this to the public, without appearing soft on sex offenders". A leader of an organization that predominantly focuses on juvenile or 'Romeo and Juliet' cases stated, "I think that politicians are more empathetic and sympathetic to the children and more apt to listen when it does pertain to the children. These children [either registered children or children of registrants] are going into schools and being publicly ridiculed by teachers and peers, so it does catch their attention".

When SORN SMOs talk to members of the public who have not been personally impacted by these policies, they focus on one or a combination of these messages: a) the myths that underlie SORN policies, b) the cost to the public, and c) the impact that it has on children. In total, nine of the organizations discussed how they frame this issue to the public. One leader stated, "When we are talking to the public, we're trying to educate them about the sex offender registry, because the public believes that sex offender equals child molester, when in fact that is probably a small percentage of people who are on the list". Another leader acknowledged:

When we talk to the general public we emphasize how smarter criminal laws would make them safer at less cost. We don't talk about the rights of the bad people they are scared of-- or not as much. The message 'your rights are in danger if you let anybody's rights be trampled on' doesn't resonate the same way as, 'we can make you safer for less money'.

When asked specifically about the message given to the public about this issue, three leaders specifically stated that they tell the public about 'Romeo and Juliet' cases, or 'sexting' cases, because the public is generally not aware that these types of offenders are required to publicly register. One leader told the interviewer that when she explains that consensual sex between teens is a registerable offense in her state:

They're usually shocked those people are on the registry. And then they soften up a little bit. And that's when they'll listen. So trust me, when it comes to getting the message out to the public…it is that this is a broad spectrum of people who are on the registry, so I really want to educate them.

Two organizations suggested that they typically tailor their message to the public based on the individual interests of the group they are talking to. For example, when they talk to church groups, they focus on rehabilitation and an ethic of redemption, but when they talk to an organization of criminal defense attorneys, they focus on what one leader reported as, "the challenges of working within the system, and especially things with probation and parole. Every group has a different need that they want to address".

Nine organizational leaders suggested that they tailor their message to members of their organization. One leader stated that this message is difficult because, "Really, the message they want to hear is that I'm here to help them get off the registry. And that's not it". These SORN SMOs generally keep their membership abreast of the current policies, new bills being

introduced in the legislature, new research or reports that discuss the impact of these policies, and also how the members need to become involved to help the organization change the laws. Five of these nine leaders recounted that they also try to counteract the effects of stigmatization when talking to members. One leader commented, "One main message that we have for our members is that 'you are not your crime'…and our members who are family members, we make sure that they know that they are not their loved one's crime." Another leader avowed:

> The biggest challenge is changing the hearts and minds of the people, but you also have to change the hearts and minds of the men, and women, and children on the registry. Say, 'I do have value, I can speak out, I do have rights that are abridged, and not just sit there and hide in shame and fear.

Sixteen of the leaders in this dissertation conveyed that they tailor their messages to policy makers. The majority of these organizations noted that they focus on topics similar to those for the general public: a) the cost of the policies, b) that the laws are not effective at reducing sexual violence, and c) that there are impacts on the populations for which these laws are designed to protect: children and families. In the current economic times, with the tightening of state budgets, many of these leaders reported that the cost of these policies has become the dominant discussion with political stakeholders.

Five leaders, who noted that they tailor their message differently for politicians, (5 of 16) suggested that they extend this tailoring to the interests of the politician they are speaking with at the time. One organizational leader would bring a different member of her organization that fit well with the specific interest of the politician with whom she was meeting, "For example, if the legislator worked in law enforcement previously, the juvenile judge and juvenile probation officer would attend that meeting. If they had background in education, the school social worker

would attend that meeting". Another leader would make specific reference to the number of registrants in the legislator's district so the lawmaker would be more aware of constituents. Another leader reviews the voting history of the legislator, and she tailors her message depending on, "if they're real tough on crime or if they're a little bit lax". This leader follows up with specific legislators who voted against the bills her organization supports, and she refers them to the research which contends that these policies are not meeting the intended goals.

Four leaders modified messages, depending on the political party of the legislator, or the political ideology revealed by the statements or voting patterns of each legislator (4 of 16). One leader stated, "I really try to frame it—a lot of times—as a public safety issue for those that are pretty conservative. And that we're all concerned about public safety and try to lead that into how the registry itself does not promote public safety". Another reported that there are many legislators in his state that are strict constitutionalists; therefore, he focuses on the issue of civil liberties and rights related to SORN policies. The other two organizations frame their issue differently with Democratic and Republican legislators, as they have found that there are different aspects of the message that resonate with each type of legislator.

Leaders were asked if they tailored their message differently when advocating on behalf of young registered sex offenders, as opposed to the general population. Half (9) of the organizations said they specifically talked about this group of offenders with legislators. One of these leaders highlights the research showing that SORN policies do not protect children of registered offenders or children who are registrants themselves. She stated, "A lot of people believe that, you know, the laws were created to protect all children and they don't see the opposite, that they're really hurting children". She goes on to mention that this position has gained support for the cause from many legislators. Another leader declared that youthful

offenders are a specialized population that deserves different sanctions, because their recidivism rates are low. She asserted:

> What we basically try to let people know is that these are children. And most laws are put in place to hold up, quote 'to protect children'. So we are talking about children here…With proper counseling and care, most will never reoffend again.

Another leader insisted that advocating on behalf of youthful offenders opens doors to further policy discussions. This leader stated:

> I think it's a starting point for me and then you can move up to different avenues of the law. I think that's what got a lot of media attention—here's this kid, that all he was in love and making stupid decisions…I start with the Romeo and Juliet laws and how it basically ruins their futures, and then I sort of talk about how the law itself should be looked at.

Regarding youthful offenders, half of the organizations reported that they start talking about this group to open doors to talk about all SORN policies, to engender sympathy for this population, and to discuss their lower level of culpability, compared to their adult counterparts. These organizations hope to either abolish or reduce the sanctions for youthful offenders.

As a Reaction to Challengers. Nine (9) leaders suggested that their organization has encountered individuals or organizations in their state that are opposed to the mission of the SORN SMO. The challengers include individual politicians, a political party, a government organization (such as the state police department), a victims' rights organization, or a prominent state lobbyist. Leaders were asked to discuss why they believed these challengers opposed the position of the SORN SMO. The reasons, discussed further below, included: a) that children and

families need to be protected from sex offenders, b) that a governmental organization does not want to lose its funding, and c) offenders deserve the sanctions they are given.

When challengers state that sex offenders deserve the sanctions they are given, one leader reported, "I talk about the fact that the current laws are not effective, and achieving its stated objectives and also the fact about wasting taxpayer dollars…that the resources need to be used more efficiently and more wisely". When the opposition is a governmental entity that is concerned about a potential loss of funding (if the state was to lose federal dollars for non-compliance with the Adam Walsh Act) one leader stated, "We testify that a loss in funds will be significantly less than the cost of maintaining what they're doing." In addition to reporting about the high cost, this organization testified with other governmental agencies that reinforce these statements (i.e. a local Sheriff's department) to balance this discussion. In two cases, leaders explained that they tried many times to counteract the message of their opposition, but the research evidence was not accepted as proof in the eyes of the opposition. Therefore, these SORN SMOs have resorted to ignoring the claims of these particular opponents. When asked how the organization frames its counter argument to these challengers, seven organizations noted that they highlight the research which shows that the assumptions that underlay SORN policies are not accurate. Likewise, four organizations refer the challengers to the high cost to the state to maintain sex offender management policies. One leader stated:

> The overall costs are high, especially when you factor in all the efforts of the counties—because it really falls on the counties to enforce these laws…The cost is much more localized. I don't know if the [challengers who do not want to lose federal funding] recognize this.

This leader mentioned that local law enforcement officials have requested changes to the policies, in order to have a more manageable registry. While this organization does not have an official collaboration with local law enforcement, they highlight that these local agencies are struggling with the requirements to maintain the current system.

Two organizations suggested that they try to engage challengers in order to find common ground on the issue. These two leaders specifically focused on safety as a common goal, and they use this position to engage their challengers. Both of these organizations reported that finding common ground can be effective with some challengers, but it is not always successful. When talking about the inability to engage challengers over a common goal, one leader noted:

> A lot of people perceive us as being akin to NAMBLA [North American Man-Boy Love Association], or some organization that supports sexual abuse, because they don't really understand. I've spoken 'til I'm blue in the face [with challengers], and they hear what I'm saying, but they either don't believe or don't trust [what I am saying]. They are sort of fundamentally opposed to our goals, and I don't know why.

After several attempts were made to engage a challenger in a discussion about the research evidence one leader decided that the best way to deal with them was to ignore them.

Previous Policy Outcomes Achieved

All leaders were asked about the most successful previous policy outcome their SORN SMO was able to achieve. Three of the organizations explained that, by the date of the interview, their organization had not successfully achieved a policy outcome. These organizations are not included in the results for the rest of this chapter. The remaining leaders (16) described a previous success as either blocking, amending, developing or adopting a policy. None of the

organizations reported any of the following policy outcomes as successful: placement on the policy agenda, monitoring and evaluating policy, or policy maintenance.

Seven of the 16 leaders said that blocking a bill was their most successful previous policy outcome. Three of these policies were related to residency restrictions; two organizations blocked a bill that would bring their state into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act; one bill would have limited the use of the Internet for registered offenders; and the final bill would have put an identifying stamp on the driver's licenses of registered sex offenders.

Three organizations reported that their most successful outcomes were policy amendments. One delayed the effective date of a residency restriction bill, in order to allow registrants more time to find suitable housing. Another removed language from a bill that suggested treatment was not effective for sex offenders and that all offenders were an equal risk to society. Additionally, this organization was also able to include language on this bill that would bring the state's Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) under review every 5 years, as opposed to every 10 years. The third organization stated that it was able to amend its state's bill that complied with the Adam Walsh Act mandates, by removing 'Romeo and Juliet' cases.

Five of the 16 leaders declared that their organization's most successful policy outcome was the development of a new policy. One of these policies was coming up for a vote soon, and the other four did not pass. While these policies were not passed, the leaders still consider them to be their greatest successes. One of these bills was to remove 'Romeo and Juliet' cases from the state's sex offender registry. One policy was developed to completely re-write the state's sex offender registry law to limit the types of offenses that must register and decrease the time on the registry. Another SORN SMO developed and introduced a bill that would ban residency restrictions across the state. Another organization developed a policy that would create a tiered

risk system so that offenders had different registration requirements based on their risk of reoffending. The last policy involved a mechanism for registrants to request removal from the state's sex offender registry. One leader described the most successful policy outcome as a policy adoption. That leader worked with one legislator to develop and adopt a policy to remove 'Romeo and Juliet' cases from the state's sex offender registry.

Strategies. The most common strategies reported by the leaders of the 16 SORN SMOs that achieved policy outcomes were: a) lobbying and policy maker education, b) research and policy analysis, c) testimony, d) network and coalition building, e) media stories or interviews, f) grassroots organizing and mobilization, and g) electronic outreach. A handful of strategies sometimes used by other SMOs (HFRP, 2009) that were not used by any of these SORN SMOs included: a) polling the public, b) voter education, c) public education, d) legal advocacy or litigation, e) demonstration projects or pilot programs, f) endorsement of political candidates, or g) rallies or marches.

The groups used lobbying and research and policy analysis strategies, regardless of the policy outcomes previously achieved by the organization. Lobbying and policy maker education occurred through emails, letter writing, or face-to-face meetings with legislators or legislative aides. One leader described it this way:

> So it's meeting with the individuals on a particular committee and educating them one by one, giving them tools and facts, and approaching it from, 'look, my purpose here is to give you the tools you need to have to make an informed decision so that you don't fall prey to the misinformation, public panic and hysteria, but you can base your decisions on fact'. And you know, we always ask [legislators] the question, 'tell me how I can help you to educate your constituents, so that you can do the right thing'.

Additionally, SMO's educated legislators regarding sex offender management policies by testifying at legislative committee hearings. Research and policy analysis was explicitly or implicitly noted as useful in all of the achieved policy outcomes, by all but two of the organizations. In these two remaining cases, the SORN SMO relied heavily on the constitutional rights argument, as opposed to research or policy analysis. SORN SMOs used grassroots organizing and mobilization and electronic outreach when a quick response was needed from the membership, generally to attend a hearing on short notice. The media was used by only three of the 16 organizations. There was a suggestion by quite a few of the organizations that the media is highly stigmatizing to SORN SMOs; and, therefore, these organizations limit their use of this strategy.

Leaders who specifically mentioned that they have advocated for policy changes related to juvenile or youthful offenders were asked if they believed that there are strategies that are more useful when advocating on behalf of this population. One leader speculated:

I would think that all strategies would be more effective when advocating for juvenile offenders. There's just a natural sympathy for juvenile offenders or the perception of juvenile offenders. And when people hear that you can be 13 years old and be on the state sex offender registry it shocks many people.

Another group reported that they did find that one-on-one, face-to-face lobbying was more useful when advocating on behalf of youthful offenders. When asked, "Does this change your strategy at all, knowing that the people you're speaking to have more compassion for this group?" one leader stated, "Not really. No, the thing is we don't advocate only for juveniles, so we don't want to come across as only advocating for juveniles when there's other people out there that need relief".

SORN SMOs were assessed for their adaptability to the political environment by asking if they have taken advantage of any political opportunities or have changed their strategies to achieve a previous policy outcome. Six leaders discussed cases in which the organization had changed the strategies or goals. Three organizations noted that the changed strategies came out of the general growing pains that new organizations must confront when they begin to understand the political reality of advocacy work. One leader suggested that they changed the way they testify in committee hearings, by reducing the number of individuals who testify and separating the key points that need to be covered. This leader stated, "It's hard though, starting out as a group like this and growing. Getting to know what you should and shouldn't do and how to say things appropriately. It takes a while". Another organization had to change the goals they set for the organization:

> I think early on we had some ideas for bills that we wanted to try and get sponsored, and as time went on we realized that these bills weren't going to work. We needed to switch our way of thinking and go along a different line.

The third organization changed a focus of one of their policies after receiving pertinent information from political insiders. The leader said, "We got some very strong negative feedback in terms of going forward with [the bill] from both the legislature and from some of the lawyers we worked with and someone who really tried to help us." This organization was advised to take up this particular bill at a time in the political process when it would be more likely to be passed by the legislature.

One organizational leader discussed a situation in which her group changed the particulars of a policy that they wanted to amend once they realized that a new bill created room for negotiation with the state legislature. She put it this way:

We really wanted to address our other issues, but we had to focus on this because they were moving on this [policy], so it forced us to put our attention on this [policy], and diverted our attention away from the things we really wanted to see changed in the law. We still always talked about it, but it's hard to talk about it when you know they're not going to entertain it…So our energy was focused more on what we could do within the law…It gave us an opportunity to get changes in there that might have taken longer to get otherwise.

Another leader told the interviewer that, when her organization realized that juveniles and youthful registrants garner more sympathy from policy makers, her group changed the way they frame the issue. She commented:

In a sense, we sort of use that [type of registrant] to help open the door for other ones, because when they recognize that these kind of individuals are labeled and yet they're low risk for reoffense, then that's when it sort of opens the door to talk about risk assessment and what really is the kind of person you'd have register.

After one organization was ignored by policy makers, its members decided to change their dominant strategy from political advocacy to legal advocacy and litigation. That group's leader said:

They basically disrespected us last spring at the legislature by killing our bill unanimously in committee and not listening to us. Our answer to that is, OK, if you won't listen to us we'll do it ourselves…They better take us seriously if we raise $10,000 for litigation that takes everybody off the registry convicted prior to 2002. That will get attention.

Leaders were also asked about any opportunities that arose in the legislature, the media, or the courts that may have had an impact on the organization's previously successful policy outcome; five leaders noted that they used an opportunity in the state legislature; four used something that occurred in the media; and two used a court case. When one SORN SMO was working to develop a bill that would ban residency restrictions, they used a district court decision which stated that such restrictions are unconstitutional. The group's leader stated, "We capitalized on the court decision to say, 'you have an unconstitutional law. What are you going to do about it? You took an oath to uphold the constitution of [state name]'". The other organization also used an appellate court case that found registration of 'Romeo and Juliet' cases to be cruel and unusual punishment under the state constitution, in their successful quest to remove similar laws altogether from state legislation.

The leader of the organization above also used a story that was portrayed in the media to secure and expand public support. This organization worked with individuals in the media to present a sympathetic 'Romeo and Juliet' case, that showed the negative consequences that extensively impact young people, once they become registered as sex offenders. A similar situation was reported by another organization that used a sympathetic case in the media to block a bill. A third leader described the use of a different type of media portrayal. At the time, this organization developed a policy requiring the removal of 'Romeo and Juliet' offenses from public registration. There was a national news story about university athletes who were falsely accused of rape. This leader added, "I believe it helped because the politicians, especially the one I was working with, saw how girls and young ladies can lie." The final organization that used the media as an opportunity happened when a state was working to develop residency restrictions.

There were news reports regarding concerns that the policy would remove sex offenders from their homes; thus, making them homeless.

Five organizations noted that they used an opportunity in the legislature to their advantage when achieving a policy outcome. While many leaders noted that they used the high cost of implementing sex offender management policies as a way to frame this issue for mobilization, only two leaders explicitly stated that they used their states' budgetary issues to their advantage. Two other organizations used their established rapport with a particular political party to advance their policy goals. One of these leaders was worried about pushing these relationships too far during an election year:

> We've already got our foot in the door, but I can't go out there right now on other areas, because this is an election year…So absolutely during election time you just kinda take a whole new avenue. That sucks, it really does, 'cuz you want to scream out, 'hey, you can help us 'cuz I'll teach you the truth', but they're like, 'oh, no'.

This leader suggested that, to push a political ally too much during this time period, would deter future opportunities for the SORN SMO.

One leader explained that policy makers share information among themselves, especially when they work on the same committees. This leader described a situation in which they gained support from an unlikely policy maker, by the spread of information through other policy makers. She stated:

> The individual that was the chair last year, I've had multiple conversations with, and he's very instrumental, and this year they switched it up, so this year it was a new chair on the committee…I contacted the chair and I had about eight or ten conversations with her and kept giving her information…She has really skewed so much misinformation to the

committee. It was just a lack of information, so we made it a point to go see her several times, and she was not really all that receptive, but by the time we left, we at least had her to agree to read our information and to look at some stuff that we were going to forward her and to allow us to follow up with her, which we did several times. Then we started to go see her in [state capital]. And then, interestingly enough, all the input…and all the information that we funneled through her [made it around]…When we had an opportunity to meet with another Republican member of the house, we went to meet with her to ask her some stuff we had about a bill we had and she said, 'look, I can't support you on that this year, it's just not going to happen, but what we have done is written a mechanism to get people off the registry'. Bingo…She didn't even really know that it came from us necessarily. And so then, we started meeting with everyone on the committee, and had conversations with everyone about it, and gathered support for it that way.

This same leader reported that the SORN SMOs bills can get caught in the crossfire between different politicians. In order to decrease the chances of this happening, one leader commented that they do much of the legwork for legislators, regarding who is going to support the bill. She described it this way:

What I've learned is politics is a game, and who's the best player, and I've had politicians come straight out and tell me, 'look, the reality is I have this piece of legislation, if I want to get this moved forward I need to know whose votes do I need in order to make this happen'. And so sometimes it's leveraging, 'if you don't help me on this, I'm not going to help you on that'. So, it's a game that they play. So they will sacrifice even if they know that it's damn fine legislation. They'll sacrifice that because they now deal with a

specific legislator or group of legislators on another bill…A lot of it is personalities and relationships, which is stupid but it's a fact, it's how it works.

Another organization noted that one opportunity that they used to their advantage was a situation in which they gained the support of two legislators who controlled the bills that would be heard at a committee. The respondent stated, "they worked very closely to manipulate the agenda, to eliminate the [bill]".

Comparing Different Types of SORN SMOs

Figure 4 was created to portray differences or associations between different types of SORN SMOs, using the process lens previously discussed in this dissertation. The process lens looks at the inputs, activities and outcomes of these organizations. The inputs include the structure, resources, knowledge and skills, and perceived stigma. Activities are related to the strategies that SORN SMOs use to achieve their policy outcomes and how they frame the issue for mobilization. This analysis investigated the differences in organizations that advocated differently for youthful offenders, compared to those that believed advocacy efforts should be kept the same for all types of sex offenders. The policy outcomes previously achieved are blocking, amending, developing and adopting policy; and also if the policy was focused on young offenders.
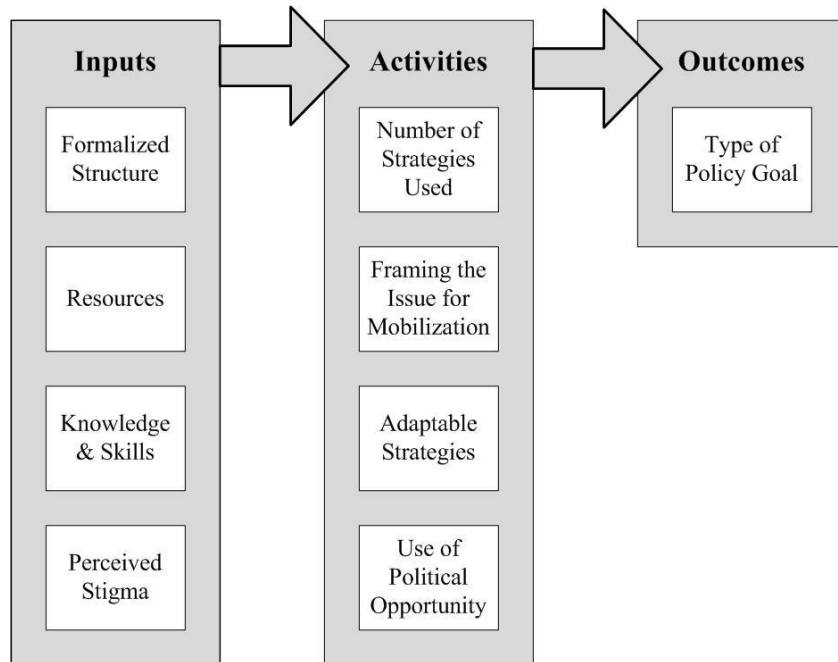
Figure 4. Process Model for Analyzing SORN SMOs

Indexes were created for both the inputs and activities of the organization. Refer to table

3 for a description of how the variables were created. Indexes were created for each of the inputs

included in this model: structure, resources, knowledge and skills, and perceived level of stigma.

The index for formalized structure ranged from zero to 18, and includes seven items. The index

for resources ranged from 0-13, and included 7 items. The index for knowledge and skills ranged

from 0-20 and included 2 items. The index for perceived level of stigma ranged from 0-3, and

included 3 items. The activities included the number of strategies used to achieve the previous

policy outcome, how the SORN SMO framed the issue, if they used adaptable strategies and if

they used an opportunity in the political environment to their advantage. The only index created

for the activities was related to how the organization framed the issue. There are three types of

arguments that SORN SMOs used to appeal to different stakeholders: a logical argument based

in research evidence, the collateral consequences of registration that appeals to the emotions and

sympathies of the stakeholder, and the argument that address the rights of offenders, which calls on the individual values of stakeholders. This index assessed whether the organization drew on each of these arguments, depending on the stakeholders it was trying to persuade (0-3). Thus, the index also includes the various stakeholders that were given a tailored message: members, the public and policy makers (0-3). The index ranged from 0-6.

Table 3 *Index Description for Variables in the Process Model*

Index:	Formalized Structure	Resources	Knowledge & Skills	Perceived Stigma	Number of Strategies Used	Framing the Issue for Mobilization	Adaptable Strategies	Use of Political Opportunity
Points Range:	0-18	0-13	0-20	0-3	0-7	0-6	0-1	0-1
Interpretation:	Higher score means more formalized organization	Higher score means the org has more resource	Higher score means the org has more knowledge and skills for advocacy work with this topic	Higher score means more perceived stigma	Higher score means more strategies were used for previously achieved policy outcome	Higher score means the organization frames the issue more for mobilization	Higher score means the organization has adapted their strategies in the past.	Higher score means that the organization used a political opportunity/window, to achieve the previous policy outcome.
Variables Included, and assigned points:	Incorporated (yes= 1, no=0)	Operating Budget (yes= 1, no=0)	11 Knowledge Questions (yes= 1, no=0)	Perception of High Stigma from General Public (yes= 1, no=0)	Strategies used for Previous Policy Outcome Achieved	Tailored message to membership (yes= 1, no=0)	Did they use a different strategy than they intended because of a change in the political environment? (yes= 1, no=0)	Did they use a political opportunity to make the case for their position? (yes= 1, no=0)
	Identified Leader (yes= 1, no=0)	No Known Challengers to the Issue (yes= 1, no=0)	9 Skills questions (yes= 1, no=0)	Perception of High Stigma from Policy Makers (yes= 1, no=0)		Tailored message to the public (yes= 1, no=0)		
	Executive Team(yes= 1, no=0)	Support Group (yes= 1, no=0)		Reported Stigma as a barrier to the organization (yes= 1, no=0)		Tailored message to policy makers (yes= 1, no=0)		

Index:	Formalized Structure	Resources	Knowledge & Skills	Perceived Stigma	Number of Strategies Used	Framing the Issue for Mobilization	Adaptable Strategies	Use of Political Opportunity
	Business Meetings (yes=1, no=0)	Volunteers (>= median number= 1, < median number=0)				Arguments made when discussing previously achieved policy outcome covered any of the three areas: a) Research b) "Heart strings" c) Values 1 point for each type (0-3)		
	Decision making not open to all members (yes=1, no=0)	Active Members (>= median number=1, < median number=0)						
	Number of Written Documents (0-4)	Total Members (>= median number= 1, < median number=0)						
	Number of Subcommittees (0-9)	Number of professional types of members (0-7)						

Table 4 *Comparing SORN SMOs*

	All SORN SMOs (N=16)	Proactive (N=8)	Reactive (N=8)	Youth Focused Policy Outcome Achieved (N=4)	Non-Youth Focused Policy Outcome Achieved (N=12)	Do not Advocate differently for Youthful Offenders (N=5)	Advocate differently for Youthful Offenders (N=11)
Inputs							
Formalized Structure Index (0-18)	*7.6*	8.5	6.5	7.3	7.8	7.2	7.8
Resource Index (0-13)	*5.7*	5.9	5.5	6.8	5.3	5	6
Knowledge & Skills Index (0-20)	*16.1**	15.6*	16.5	16.5	15.9*	16	16.1*
Perceived Stigma Index (0-3)	*2.1*	2	2.3	2	2.2	2	2.2
Activities							
Number of Strategies (0-7)	*2.8*	2.9	2.6	3.3	2.6	2.2	3
Frame Issue for Mobilization Index (0-6)	*3.9**	3.6	4.6*	3.5	4.3*	4.8*	3.8
Average of SMOs that have used an Adaptable Strategy	*N=6*	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4
Average of SMOs that used a Political Opportunity	*N=10*	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6
Outcome/Policy Type							
Block	*7*	0	7	1	6	4	3
Amend	*3*	2	1	1	2	1	2
Develop	*5*	5	0	1	4	0	5
Adopt	*1*	1	0	1	0	0	1

*Index could not be calculated for one organization because the leader was not asked these questions.

A table was set up to analyze the SORN SMOs by: a) the proactive and reactive organizations, b) youth focused policy outcome achieved, and c) organizations that do not advocate for young offenders differently than the general population of sex offenders; to assess differences in inputs, activities and outcomes (see table 4). The proactive and reactive organizations were not created *a priori*, but emerged from the data during analysis. Reactive organizations included SORN SMOs who reported their most successful policy outcome as blocking a bill (7). Proactive organizations are those that reported developing or adopting a policy (6). The three organizations that had amended a policy were not easily categorized as either a proactive or a reactive organization. The organization that delayed the effective date of a residency restriction policy was put into the reactive group because they did this in response to a bill that was going into effect, with no amendments that would have a long-term impact on registrants. The other two organizations made substantial changes to their amendments that would result in longer term outcomes for their constituents; therefore, they were placed with the proactive organizations. When comparing the proactive and reactive organizations, it was found that proactive organizations are more formalized, have more resources, and have used more strategies, compared to reactive organizations. Conversely, proactive organizations have lower knowledge and skills, perceived stigma, and frame the issue less than reactive organizations.

This dissertation looked at differences in how SORN SMOs related to issues of youthful offenders in two ways: a) to see if there were differences in SMOs that had previously achieved a policy outcome that was focused on a youth issue or b) to see if there were differences in organizations who did not advocate differently for this sub-population. SORN SMOs that had achieved a policy outcome that was focused on youth ranged in the type of policy outcome they had achieved; one in each category: block, amend, develop, and adopt. These SMOs had more:

resources and knowledge and skills, and used more strategies and political opportunities, than non-youth focused organizations. However, these organizations were less formalized, had lower perceived stigma, and framed the issue less than organizations without a youth-focused policy outcome. The organizations that did not advocate differently for youthful offenders have either blocked or amended policy outcomes. The organizations that advocate differently for youthful offenders are spread across the four policy outcomes that have been achieved by SORN SMOs. Organizations that do not advocate differently for youthful offenders are less formalized, have fewer resources, have lower levels of knowledge and skills to advocate effectively for this issue, have lower perceived stigma, and used a lower number of strategies to achieve their previous policy outcomes. Conversely, these organizations have higher levels of framing for mobilization.

Table 5 *Number of SORN SMOs Using Each Strategy for Successful Policy Outcome*

	Total Number of SORN SMOs		Proactive		Reactive	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lobbying & Policy Maker Education	16	100%	8	100%	8	100%
Research & Policy Analysis	14	88%	6	75%	8	100%
Testimony	9	56%	3	38%	6	75%
Networking & Coalition Building	5	31%	3	38%	2	25%
Grassroots Organizing & Mobilization	4	25%	3	38%	1	13%
Media Interviews/Stories	3	19%	2	25%	1	13%
Total	16	100%	8	100%	8	100%

The proactive and reactive organizations were assessed for the different strategies they used to achieve the previous policy outcome. Reactive organizations used testimony and research and policy analysis more than proactive organizations. Proactive organizations used network and

coalition building and grassroots organizing and mobilization and media interviews more frequently than reactive organizations.

Barriers. Participating organizations were asked about the barriers they experienced when trying to achieve any of their policy outcomes. Aside from stigma, which was previously discussed, the most common barrier experienced by SORN SMOs was a lack of organizational resources. This barrier included time to implement the strategies, such as lobbying and policy maker education and testimony. Many of the leaders reported that time is a barrier, because the active members work full-time and then spend their off-work hours focused on the needs of the organization. One organization suggested that time is also a barrier when working with professionally motivated members. She discussed the difficulties in getting members to the state capital, "The people you want to testify are the professionals that you want the legislators to hear from, but it's hard with such short notice, to just drop everything and head to [state capital]." Half of the organizations (8) believed that lack of money to run the day-to-day operations or to employ an individual for the organization was a barrier. Another leader noted, "The fact is, there's only 24 hours in a day…trust me, I get calls early in the morning, late at night, and every time in between". One leader explained that the organization had funding of over $5,000 last year. One leader stated, "the greatest threat to this movement is no money…and it takes money to do this kind of stuff. Even if you are talking about driving to the capital—that is gasoline every day, and a day off of work. Somebody has to get paid. That is the biggest barrier". The lack of time and resources have been especially challenging for five organizations operating in geographically large states. For holding meetings, the distance between members has been a challenge, as well as the difficulty of getting members to travel to the state capital to lobby or testify at committee hearings.

Two more organizations expressed barriers which relate to organizational resources or structure. One pointed out that money was offered to their organization by a single donor, with the request that the organization only work to abolish the state's public registry. The leader of this SORN SMO stated that this goal is nearly impossible to achieve, and, therefore, they cannot promise her it can be reached. This leader stated that another barrier is the lack of political astuteness of those interested in the issue. The second barrier described by an organization is the desire to have both a 501(c)3 and a 501(c)4. They want to be able to lobby, but also be able to make contributions tax deductible.

Leaders reported that the political will of legislators is a barrier to their organization's mission. One leader stated, "I think the only barriers that we've found so far is that legislators are scared. They're scared to go back and ask any bill that can be looked at as being soft on sex offenders…Most of them know what's going on. They're scared to death to put it out there. They're like, 'Not me. I'll support it if someone else puts it out there, but I'm not going to do it'". Another commented:

> When I talk to legislators behind closed doors they're pretty sympathetic…They agree with me in a lot of ways, but you get out to the public and that changes quite a bit. I'm not sure that they exactly know what to do to balance out their need to keep their constituencies happy to get votes, because if they step out on a limb to make better changes in the law they won't get them. It will look like they're being soft on sex offenders.

Nine of the leaders suggested that challengers were a barrier to their organizations' mission. These challengers are generally legislators or representatives from government organizations, such as the police. One leader also conveyed that common challengers include not

only government organizations, but the vendors who provide services to parole and police, such as geographical positioning system (GPS) companies or those that provide transportation for the Department of Corrections (DOC). Respondents from a few states reported that a victims' rights organization was a challenger on the issue; however, the challengers were predominantly governmental organizations and legislators.

The political climate of the state was also mentioned as a barrier to the organization's mission. Some leaders (5) reported that the state is dominated by a political party that has a 'tough on crime' philosophy; therefore, there is an unwillingness to reduce the sanctions that are given to any type of offender, and specifically the sex offender population. One leader suggested that the legislators use sex offenders as an opportunity to gain votes. She stated, "You got the ones that just, they're gonna use it to their advantage".

In a few states, political processes were described as a barrier. In one state, the short legislature session is a barrier. Two leaders reported that their legislatures only meet every other year to create new policies; then the alternate year is only focused on appropriations. Another leader believed that legislative term limits have led to a process of re-education of new policy makers every time a major election occurs. Three leaders declared that the upcoming election year will make for difficulties in getting legislators to sign or develop a bill that is related to this cause. She sarcastically stated, "Yeah, so it's an election year, so I don't think anybody is going to stand up this year and say, 'let's really go out there and save the sex offender population' ". Leaders were also asked if a lack of research was a barrier for their organizations. Two leaders reported that they were unable to find research about the connection between viewing child pornography and the act of committing an offense against a child. This research is important to these organizations because current policies are preemptive in that there is an assumption that

individuals who view child pornography will commit an actual offense against a child. These organizations would like to know if this has been found in a research study.

Current Policy Goals

Leaders were asked about the two most important policy goals their organizations were working on at the time of the interview. One leader did not have a current policy goal, because the organization had intended to spend its time blocking the state's bill to come into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. Much to this leader's surprise, no bill had been introduced. This organization has decided to focus on building the membership and structure of the organization.

Similar to the previous successful policies, this dissertation found that SORN SMOs are currently working on blocking, amending, and developing policies. In addition to these three policy outcomes, two leaders reported that one of the current policy goals is to monitor the implementation of a state policy. Leaders were asked to discuss their *two* most important policy goals; for example, an organization could be working on blocking one policy and also developing a different policy. There appears to be a larger proportion of organizations that are focused on developing policies (10 organizations, 14 policies) than blocking policies (5 organizations, 5 policies). Nine organizations (10 policies) were also working on amending policies.

The two organizations that reported monitoring current state policies are monitoring: a) the governmental organization that is charged to comply with the Adam Walsh Act, and b) the governmental organization that manages the state's sex offender registry. Five organizations are currently focused on blocking policies in their respective states. Three of these are specifically focused on bills that would bring their states into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. One organization is working to block a residency restriction bill. The other organization was getting

ready to block a bill calling for sanctions for registered sex offenders. At the time of the interview, the leader noted that only a one-line summary of the bill had been released, and that the full bill was going to be released in the next week. This leader was under the impression that the bill intended to increase sanctions for sex offenders.

Nine organizations are focused on amending current state policy. Six of these organizations are specifically focused on amending their state's residency restriction policies. Two organizations are focused on amending their state's policies related to compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. One organization is working to remove the requirement of including a registrant's employer's information from their profile on the public registry. Another state's organization is working on amending its state's sex offender registration policy that requires individuals who committed an offense prior to the state's passing of SORN policies, to be registered. This is an issue of retroactively applying a policy to individuals who committed their crimes prior to this new sanction for sex offenders.

Ten organizations reported that they were developing policies in their state. Four organizations were interested in developing policies related to the use of risk assessments as a way to classify offenders who are the greatest risk to reoffend; therefore, those who are low risk are able to receive reduced sanctions. Two organizations that were interested in using risk assessments were also developing policies that would reduce the over-inclusion of individuals who are required to register, by specifically developing policies that would set up a better tiered system to classify offenders and assign sanctions based on these classifications. Two organizations were developing policies that would remove some cases from public registration and also create a mechanism for removal from the registry.

Contrary to the logic behind the mission of SORN SMOs, one organization is working to develop a policy for its state to come into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act. This leader reported that her state's policies are more punitive than that of the federal policy, and compliance would reduce many restrictions on sex offenders in their state. Another organization was developing a policy about child pornography possession. Currently this group's state gives harsher sanctions for individuals who possess child pornography than for those who create or distribute child pornography. This organization seeks to reduce the current charging policy for possession.

A group in another state was developing a policy that would limit residency restrictions at the municipal level, thus banning residency restrictions across the state. One SORN SMO was developing a 'Romeo and Juliet' policy to remove consensual acts between minors and young adults from public registration. One organization is developing a policy that would create a sex offender management board in the state. This board would include a wide ranging, diversified group of professionals that work with individuals who are charged with sex offenses. The goal is to create objective, effective policies for the reduction of sexual violence.

Finally, two organizations were developing policies that are specific to the sex offender prisoner population. One organization would like to see mandatory treatment for those convicted of a sex crime; the other is developing a policy for an early release program for sex offenders because, the leader asserts, "Statistically, they are less likely to recidivate than other types of offenders".

Table 6 shows the type of current policy goal by the strategies that will be used to achieve that type of policy goal. Lobbying and policy maker education were used in almost the same frequency across all policy goals. Like the strategies reported in the "previously achieved

policy outcomes" category, testimony is more frequently used by organizations that are attempting to block policies. Research and policy analysis was used most often in monitoring and blocking policies. The media was rarely used as a strategy, but when it was reported, it was more likely to be used for blocking policies than for the other policy goals. Organizations that are amending or developing policies use grassroots organizing and mobilization most often. Organizations that are amending policies were the only ones to report the use of public education and marches and rallies. Those that are developing and monitoring policies were the only organizations to report the use of legal advocacy.

Table 6 *Strategies used for Current Policy Goals*

	Block		Amend		Develop		Monitor	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lobby & Policy Maker Education	5	33%	9	32%	8	33%	1	25%
Research & Policy Analysis	4	27%	4	14%	4	17%	2	50%
Grassroots Organizing & Mobilization	1	6%	4	14%	4	17%	0	0%
Network & Coalition Building	0	0%	4	14%	4	17%	0	0%
Testimony	3	20%	2	7%	1	4%	0	0%
Media	2	13%	2	7%	1	4%	0	0%
Legal Advocacy/Litigation	0	0%	0	0%	2	8%	1	25%
Public Education	0	0%	2	7%	0	0%	0	0%
Marches or Rallies	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	15	100%	28	100%	24	100%	4	100%

Capacity Building Initiatives

Leaders were asked about projects their organizations were undertaking to increase the knowledge and skills of the membership or to build infrastructure. Most leaders suggested that they were training the general membership on how to effectively articulate the organization's message to legislators, whether through face-to-face meetings, on the phone, in a letter, or through email. Some of these organizations produce literature for members to read, while others run a training session. In order to increase the general membership's knowledge of the issue, one organization has a website and a forum on which they post new research produced by the active members. Two organizations conduct trainings with the members at the state capital, during which they shadow a more experienced member, then lobby on their own. On the other hand, one leader stated her hesitance about training the general membership to lobby at the state capital:

> We really don't want them out there speaking to legislators, because one of the detrimental things is when you have a bunch of people under this same organizational name talking about different issues, talking about their personal stories, talking about this bullshit that really, the legislators don't care about. And it wastes the legislators' time, so it will turn them off, and they will be difficult to get them back to the table…Most people, when they get in front of a legislator, they get very nervous, they ramble, they talk about stuff that has nothing to do with the big picture, and I don't mean to be cold…they just whine about their own story and their own difficulties. These individuals that are in there—that are not up to snuff on how to deal with these legislators—they waste your opportunity.

To build the infrastructure of the organization, SORN SMOs were working on three types of projects: a) increasing membership, b) changing organizational structure or goals, and c) increasing financial resources. Half (9) of the leaders reported that they are working to increase membership, especially in different areas of their state. In order to increase membership, a few organizations were conducting letter-writing drives to individuals listed on the public registry. One organization teaches current members how to rally support for the cause, with the goal of bringing in new members.

Five leaders mentioned projects that would change the structure or goals of the organization. Two organizations have had outside consultants conduct organizational retreats to create strategic plans. One of these leaders stated, "It was invaluable. And he essentially summarized the decisions we made and wrote a long-range plan for us. We have very little reworking to do, but it basically stands for what we're gonna do in the next three years." Three organizations expressed a desire to bring in skilled individuals that can develop different aspects of the organization. One leader believed that the organization needed a leadership team, instead of one sole leader doing the majority of the work:

> Well, I'm really trying to get more structure to our organization. I'm going to incorporate, I'm going to set up as a non-profit, and then set up a leadership team, and then have some specific roles. I think that's been kind of the problem—we didn't designate specific jobs for people, so I'm really trying to frame out some things [to help] me as the director: have a membership director, and get somebody who can be our webmaster.

Another leader disclosed that there is a need for another leader in the organization to take over, because, "We have people on our board that will be better than me at this stage of our

growth…folks who have been Executive Directors….I'm a good writer, so I'm gonna focus on that. I can help our group much more if I focus on those things". One leader noted that he has tried to reach out to individuals in his state that are crusaders for similar causes, requesting their participation with his SORN SMO. To date, he has not been successful in increasing the number of skilled individuals in the organization.

To boost their financial resources, a few organizations were focusing on fundraising. Two organizations had recently established a committee to explore ways to bring in more money. Another organization has started to have conversations with other SORN SMOs across the country to see how their peer groups have raised funds. One organization is working on bringing in a volunteer who has the skills to do fundraising, and will take that on as their primary task. To raise funds, another organization is creating a resource manual for offenders re-entering into the community. This bound resource manual will be for sale to parole officers, offenders and their family members. As an additional source of revenue, the manual will also have sponsored advertisements.

These results show the various types of SORN SMOs that are operating across the United States. While many of them are relatively new to the political arena, they are mobilizing to change SORN policies. These signs can be found in their resources, activities and outcomes. The next chapter will further discuss these results, in relation to the theories and research questions that guide this dissertation.

Chapter 6

Discussion

The sample included in this dissertation shows that these SORN SMOs have influenced the policy environments in which they are operating, with 16 of 19 organizations achieving a policy outcome by the time their leaders were interviewed. This is especially important when considering that none of the organizations had been in existence for more than six years. This dissertation is the first analysis of SORN SMOs; thus, the three dominant theories of SMOs were used to garner an overall picture of these organizations: cultural/cognitive approaches, resource mobilization and political opportunities. This chapter is organized by these theories, and the research questions will be addressed within these theory sections. It is important to point out that, while this chapter separates these theories, the respective theoretical concepts do not operate in a silo. These theories are commonly used in combination to evaluate the interactions of their corresponding concepts (McAdam, et al., 1996); therefore, when appropriate, these interactions will be discussed within the most appropriate theory section. Finally, the section on implications for practice and policy discusses similarities and differences between SORN SMOs and the organizations with the most similar levels of stigmatization: prisoners' rights and poor peoples' rights movements.

Cultural/Cognitive Approaches

Cultural/cognitive approaches use a constructivist paradigm to evaluate the context and culture that surrounds the issues that SMOs are trying to change (Shafer Caniglia & Carmin, 2005; Williams, 2007). These theories facilitate discussion of the ways that SMOs make claims about their issue in order to frame the topic and mobilize others to action. Leaders in this study were asked about the organization's mission and the primary points they make when talking to

individuals about the goals of the SORN SMO. These leaders reported five major topics found in their mission and message.

Cultural/cognitive approaches highlight the importance of issue framing. The first two topics discussed by SORN SMOs use a rational, research-based argument to frame their position for changing SORN policies. First, the message focuses on educating the public about the current sex offender management policies and research that refutes commonly held misinformation regarding sex offender recidivism and treatment that are the foundation of these policies. Second, leaders reported that they frame the issue in the same light under which these policies were written: safety. However, they discuss how these policies do not create a safer environment for families or the community. The leaders discussed how the stigma and isolation experienced by registrants and their families put these families at risk for harm, and that this isolation may put registrants at a greater risk to reoffend (Edwards & Hensley, 2001), which reduces community safety (Prescott & Rockoff, 2008). Many leaders described how SORN policies have harmed registrants in their groups, from harassment and isolation to the loss of their homes. Likewise, leaders reported that these policies are unlikely to stop a new offense from happening. Thus, the issue of safety is paramount to SORN SMOs, and they frame the issue by highlighting that these policies are not accomplishing this goal. While the leaders reported extensive knowledge of the research regarding sex offender treatment and recidivism, and many highlighted the positive responses they have gained from this education process, others reported that their organizations' challengers and policy makers are not always influenced by these arguments. Many scholars have suggested that registration policies are not driven by research evidence (Chaffin, 2008; Fedoroff & Moran, 1997; Levenson & D'Amora, 2007; Quinn, et. al., 2004; Turner, 2002), but are more likely to be driven by misinformation, moral panic (Cohen, 1972), and popular

punitivism (Bottoms, 1995). Misinformation takes the place of valid research, and has created cultural beliefs that "once a sex offender, always a sex offender (Turner, 2002) and that sex offenders are unresponsive to treatment (Faniff & Becker, 2006; Hanson, et. al., 2002). Moral panic, as termed by Cohen (1972), suggests that the public's fear of sex offenders is out of proportion to the actual threat that they pose (Jenkins, 1998). Popular punitivism occurs when the public's desires for harsh sanctions has a greater influence on the decisions of policymakers. Therefore, the research evidence may not able to overcome the dynamic between these three forces. However, Sabatier (1991) suggests that a single piece of research is unlikely to impact policy, but that, over the course of time, and as the research accumulates, policy makers are likely to understand the issue and investigate the causes and consequences of social policies.

The third topic discussed by SORN SMOs is the collateral consequences, for both registrants and their family members that result from these management policies. The leaders highlighted the harm that is done to the family members of registered sex offenders, such as their spouses and children (Comartin, et. al., 2010; Levenson & Tewksbury, 2009). These collateral consequences range from loss of friends and family members because of the stigma associated with public registration to loss of employment or housing (Tewksbury, 2005). To draw on the sympathies of their audience, organizations have also used this frame for youthful offenders. Leaders reported that they do not believe that the public would agree with these extensive punishments for youthful offenders. Thus, this frame is used to appeal to the hearts of the public and policy makers, and may be more useful in political environments, where the research evidence argument is unlikely to be useful.

Fourth, some SORN SMOs expressed that these policies, and the collateral consequences that ensue, violate the rights of offenders. These organizations stressed that everyone in the

United States of America has a basic level of rights. They believe that once individuals have been convicted of a sex offense and have completed their court requirements, they should be able to re-secure these inalienable rights. However, sex offender management policies continue to keep sex offenders from having these rights long after they have paid their debt to society. These include rights to privacy, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, *ex post facto* violations, and due process of the law (Finn, 1997; Griffin & West, 2006; Lewis, 1996). This argument is not a rational argument, such as those that are based on the research evidence, and it is not used to gain the sympathies of the public, such as the collateral consequences argument. This argument is used to tap into the individual's beliefs in the values of this nation. This message was used by some organizations, because there was an indication that this was particularly important in their states; however, other leaders stated the opposite: that the message of offender's rights is not one that will mobilize key stakeholders towards policy change in that area. Therefore, the usefulness of this message seems highly dependent on the context in which the organization is operating.

The fifth and final point is the high cost to tax payers for implementing and maintaining current sex offender management policies (Justice Policy Institute, 2008). This argument comes at a time when states have had to make extensive budget cuts. This argument has primarily been used when talking to legislators and is greatly influenced by the current political opportunity of state budget reductions (Kingdon, 2003). Many SORN SMOs state that this is one of their most effective arguments when lobbying and educating policy makers and during legislative testimony. SORN SMOs have used this argument with the general public but it has not had the same level of influence as it does on policymakers.

Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when advocating for policy changes specific to registered juvenile sex offenders? The answer to this research question is that most of the organizations framed the overall message differently when advocating on behalf of youthful registrants. These organizations suggested that juvenile and youthful (i.e. 'Romeo & Juliet') offenders may have made a mistake instead of acting out of malicious intent. Therefore, there is a belief that these youths should not be subject to the same sanctions as adult offenders. These organizations emphasize rehabilitation and redemption for this type of offender; both of these concepts are grounded in the philosophy of the juvenile court system (Repucci, 1999).

One-third of SORN SMOs interviewed do not advocate differently for young registrants. These organizations believe that once individuals have been labeled as 'sex offenders,' they are all treated as 'monsters'. The analysis of these organizations showed organizational differences: a less formalized structure, fewer resources and fewer strategies used, when compared to the rest of the organizations. This researcher thought that maybe these organizations did not advocate differently for young offenders because these states do not register this population; however, only one organization was from a state that registered juveniles. While this dissertation specifically studied how these organizations operated in their individual states, an interesting focus for the future, if the movement decides to take a national stage, is how the national movement will resolve these conflicting frames, through what Zald (1996) called an "internal competitive process" over which frame comes to dominate the movement.

Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when trying to persuade different audiences for mobilization, such as the potential or current members, policy decision-makers, and the public? The majority of SORN SMOs tailor their

messages differently for different audiences, as a form of "strategic activity" and "external competitive processes" (Zald, 1996). Strategic activity is when the organization tailors the message so that it resonates with a person or group (see also Snow & Bedford, 1988), and external competitive process is where the issue is tailored to those who challenge the SORN SMOs' position. SORN SMOs generally use the five arguments discussed above as the overarching framework for the claims they make about SORN policies. However, the majority of the organizations stated that they emphasize some points more than the others, depending on which group they are speaking to: members, the public or politicians. Furthermore, some organizations tailor the message even further, based on the person or group with whom they are speaking. Those organizations that reported having challengers to their cause used the challenger's arguments to reframe the issue. These different frames for mobilization are discussed below.

SORN SMOs that tailored the message to members reported that they generally frame the issue in response to the work and rhetoric that is being discussed in the state legislature. An interesting finding from the standpoint of a micro social work lens is that a few organizations spend time empowering the members, by letting registrants know that they are not their crime. This is a therapeutic technique used to help registrants de-identify with the label of "sex offender," to rise above the problem and create change within themselves, and also to empower ex-offenders to mobilize for change within the movement.

The messages to the public and politicians are generally the same. However, there is more emphasis on the misconceptions about sex offenders and the impacts on children and families with the public, while the costs to the state was one of the dominant points of emphasis with legislators. Less than half of the leaders reported that their organizations tailor the message

to each specific audience they address. Williams and Demerath (1991) suggests that mobilization to particular audiences is likely to garner more support for one's cause, as in the case where one SORN SMO focused on an ethic of redemption when asking for the support of religious organizations or clergy. Tailoring the organization's message to this level of intricacy is necessary because the policy process is greatly impacted by values and beliefs of individual policy makers (Ostrom, 2007); therefore, all of these organizations may wish to investigate their audiences to this depth before implementing the advocacy strategies, thus increasing support for their cause.

Under cultural/cognitive approaches, there are external competitive processes (Zald, 1996), which is how SORN SMOs frame the issue in reaction to a challenger's frame. This particular frame of the SORN SMO is greatly influenced by the arguments of the challenger. It has been mentioned that many organizations have tried to use research evidence to counter the arguments of challengers, but this has not proven effective in all cases. At this point, some of the organizations have noted that they end up ignoring the statements of the challenger. While there was no question on this dissertation's instrument to probe for other strategies or tactics used with challengers, it is important that SORN SMO leaders find a way to work with, or work around, immovable challengers. One organization reported that they attempt to find common ground with any individual or group that opposes the organization's position; however, there is a point at which discussion is no longer useful or successful. If this individual or group is particularly important in bringing about change on SORN policies, it may behoove the SORN SMO to network with an individual or organization that can act as a mediator to present the issue to the challenger and engage them in an open discussion (Rucht, 2007).

What role does stigma play in how organizations frame their issue? The stigma associated with sex offenders has greatly influenced the way that SORN SMOs frame their issues. The majority of the organizations reported that the public highly stigmatizes this population. Only two organizations reported a different situation. Both of these SORN SMOs operate in rural states where most people know individuals in their town by name. Here, an individual's reputation is likely to cause the stigmatization more than a publicly available list of registered sex offenders. For the remaining states, SORN SMOs tried to appeal to their audiences' logic and reasoning, compassion and values to overcome the stigma mind set. Additionally, some used more sympathetic cases, such as young offenders and children of registrants, to reduce the level of stigmatization among the public.

Approximately half of the organizations reported that policy makers are less harsh in judgment than the public; however, legislators are unlikely to put this issue on their agenda, because it would negatively impact their political careers. The unwillingness of politicians to take on this issue due to public support for harsh sanctions is backed by the concept of popular punitivism (Bottoms, 1995). SORN SMO leaders reported that politicians understand that these policies are a violation of the offender's rights, that the impacts on registrants and their family members are extensive, and the policies are unlikely deterring future sexual offenses; yet, they shy away from fixing these problems. The misconceptions that the public holds about sex offenders is reflected in the way constituents vote, and politicians are aware that the public is unlikely to elect them if they appear to be "soft" on crime. Thus, proving that stigma is associated with this population is a sizeable challenge to the work of SORN SMOs. Again, the argument that has been most effective with policy makers is the high cost to tax payers for implementing registration policies.

Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization theory focuses on the history, structure, resources and membership found within the target organizations. SORN SMOs have been operating for only a relatively short period of time and are most often lead by a family member of a registrant or a registrant personally, which reveals that this social movement is relatively new and deeply personal to those within these organizations. Using the process lens, this dissertation investigated additional inputs: resources, formalization, organizational legitimacy, and the knowledge and skills that are necessary to do advocacy work. The resources of SORN SMOs take on material and human forms, which have been directly connected to the success (or failure) of SMOs (Edwards & McCarthy, 2007). SORN SMOs have very few material resources, with only five participating organizations reporting an operating budget. With lower levels of material resources than other social movements, one might conclude that SORN SMOs are destined for failure; however, the type of movement (Kriesi, 1996) may have a greater impact on the longevity and success of SORN SMOs. These organizations are part of an identity-driven movement, which suggests a high level of commitment on the part of the membership that will sustain the group despite having lower resource levels than other movements (Kriesi, 1996). Even though identity movements have been found to contain more committed members, the relatively low levels of membership across SORN SMOs (1-500) may not be high enough to combat the stigma, misinformation, moral panic and popular punitivism urge to punish sex offenders that are driving registration policies. A greater number of advocates are needed to achieve policy changes. A barrier commonly reported is that SORN SMOS have difficulties mobilizing current and potential members because they fear what will happen to themselves and their family members if

they take another high-profile position. Members as an organizational resource should be a focal point, as these organizations move forward towards their desired policy goals.

The indicators of a formalized structure used in this dissertations (i.e. identified leadership, executive board, incorporation, written documents, business meetings, centralized decision making, and subcommittees) shows that SORN SMOs are between a high and low level of formalization. This is evidenced by one-half to two-thirds of the organizations reporting these indicators and also through the use of McCarthy's (1996) dimensions of movement-mobilizing structures; where SORN SMOs are more formal than local activist networks because they were not founded within the social circles of the member's daily lives, but are less formal than SMOs with highly professionalized national offices. Kriesi (1996) suggests that most SMOs begin with power in the hands of a few members, but as these organizations grow and develop, they begin to build resources that make the structure more formal. Kriesi states, "The process of internal structuration is virtually inevitable, if the SMO is to have success in the long run (p.155)". SORN SMOs are developing the four elements of "internal structuration": formalization, professionalization, internal differentiation and integration (Kriesi, 1996). Formalization includes the documentation and integration of organizational documents, and the creation of formal leadership and office structure. Professionalization is occurring on a minor level, as SORN SMOs build the capacity of their organizations through trainings and the integration of professionalized volunteers; however, none of the organizations have paid professional staff. Almost half of the organizations exhibit differentiation, through role division (sub-committees). At the same time, decisions are centrally decided upon by the active members, and there are also coordinating mechanisms for organizational integration (executive boards and business meetings) (Kriesi, 1996). An important point that SORN SMOs should consider is a concern

which was reported by one organizational leader regarding what Kriesi (1996) calls "organizational maintenance". This is when the goal of the organization has moved from a focus on policy change to a focus on maintaining organizational structure and resources. If this shift occurs, then the policy outcomes become less central to the mission of SORN SMOs.

An interesting finding related to the structure of these organizations is that the SORN SMOs have different tax statuses. While these organizations focus on policy change, a few reported that they are incorporated as a 501(c)3. This status limits the lobbying efforts of the organization under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code, which ultimately hinders the ability of these organizations to reach their policy outcomes. Conversely, eight organizations are incorporated as a 501(c)4, which does not place limits on their advocacy efforts but does not allow a tax deduction for individuals who contribute funds to the organization. This status causes a barrier for organizations that require financial resources for their work. The choice of which tax status to use is an important element for these organizations to consider, which will ultimately impact their mobilization efforts. McCarthy (1996) suggests that these choices in structure will expand or constrain the range of policy goals that these organizations can achieve.

Resource mobilization theory suggests that organizational legitimacy determines successful advocacy (Edwards & McCarthy, 2007). SORN SMOs have had difficulties in establishing themselves as legitimate organizations, as evidenced by the difficulties in obtaining meetings with policy makers and gaining access to the political arena. It is likely that the stigma surrounding 'sex offenders' contributes to this lack of legitimacy. Some SORN SMOs have integrated professionals who work with this population to strengthen their legitimacy (Edwards & McCarthy, 2007). In addition, some professionals who work with sex offenders participate in the strategies of SORN SMOs, most commonly attorneys and treatment providers who are likely

to speak to the misinformation that is perpetuated about sex offenders. These professionals participate in a wide range of efforts made by these organizations. Building a list of professional allies, who are not personally impacted by this issue, will increase SORN SMO legitimacy. This, in turn, will assist SORN SMOs in gaining access to the political environment.

SORN SMOs have the foundational information and skills needed to conduct their advocacy work, which Edwards and McCarthy (2007) label as the human capital that individuals bring to a social movement. However, there are two voids of information: the impact that SORN policies have on victims of sexual violence and alternative approaches that states can take to achieve the desired outcomes of SORN policies. While half of SORN SMOs have developed an alternative approach, only a few are able to discuss projected outcomes from these alternatives. Even fewer organizations are able to talk about the tradeoffs between current SORN policies and an alternative policy. If organizations are able to fully articulate a plan to address the goals intended by SORN policies, then they may be more successful. Kingdon (2003) writes that major reform occurs when a window of opportunity opens and policy advocates are ready with a well-developed policy proposal that is technically, financially and politically acceptable to decision makers. SORN SMOs should be ready with an alternative policy proposal that addresses the issues with current policies, and also discusses the projected outcomes from the new proposal and the tradeoffs between the new proposal and existing policies. It may be more likely that SORN SMOS will achieve greater outcomes if the proposal is ready to go when a political opportunity arises.

What barriers have SORN SMOs experienced when trying to reach their policy outcomes? The participating leaders were asked about the barriers they experienced when trying to achieve previous or current policy outcomes. A range of barriers were reported: stigma

towards sex offenders, a lack of political will on the part of policy decision makers, challengers to the issue, the state's political climate or political processes, organizational resources and structure, and lack of research evidence. The most significant barrier that SORN SMOs need to overcome is the high level of disdain both the public and politicians feel toward sex offenders. These attitudes have likely influenced the lack of political will on the part of politicians, as well as challengers to the issue. Political climate and political processes are likely to remain barriers, as politicians cling to ways that make policy change difficult, especially for SMOs that are outside of the decision-making process.

SORN SMOs are relatively new organizations, so the resources they have acquired and the structure they have implemented are in the beginning stages. As groups build a grassroots movement and gain new members, the resources and structure are likely to progress; otherwise the organizations are likely to perish (Kriesi, 1996). Two leaders noted that part of their advocacy work is specific on behalf of registrants who have been convicted of child pornography. They noted that a lack of rigorous research to either confirm or deny the theoretical claim that individuals who view child pornography are likely to commit an offense against a child deters more effective forms of management and treatment of this type of registrant.

What do SORN SMOs do to increase the capacity of their organization to implement advocacy strategies in an effort to reach their desired policy outcome goals? SORN SMOs are undertaking projects to build the skills and knowledge of the membership and to change the infrastructure of their organizations. To increase the skills and knowledge, some organizations take a hands-on approach by training their membership to lobby through courses and shadowing. Others are doing their best to provide information about how to do these tasks using email or a group forum. Leaders are also changing the organization's infrastructure, by

increasing membership levels, revising the organizational structure for more effective delegation of tasks, and increasing the organization's financial resources. These projects are intended to make the organizations more effective at implementing their strategies to achieve their desired policy goals.

Political Opportunities/Processes

Political opportunities/process theory was used to investigate the influence that SORN SMOs have had on their political environment. SORN SMOs conduct various activities in order to reach their goals. The activities they use are specifically related to advocacy strategies and policy fulfillment (HFRP, 2009). While there are eight different policy goals, the SORN SMOs included in this dissertation have achieved four: blocking, amending, developing and adopting a policy. The remaining goals: placement on the policy agenda, policy implementation, policy monitoring and evaluation, and policy maintenance have not been achieved. However, two organizations are currently focused on policy monitoring. The range of SORN policies that these organizations have achieved or are currently working on include: reductions or elimination of registration and community notification requirements, easing or eliminating residency restrictions, establishing or improving sex offender treatment programs, encouraging the use of risk assessments to distinguish between offenders who are at greatest risk to society from those who are not, and reducing sanctions for youthful offenders. It is surmised that the remaining policy goals have not been the focus because of the newness of their efforts and because organizations need to react to the multiple policies that are being introduced that increase sanctions for registrants through policy blocking.

SORN SMOs have difficulty establishing organizational legitimacy. This leads to their initiatives not being given serious enough attention to be placed on policymakers' agendas.

Policy implementation would be more likely to occur if policies were adopted that fit the mission of these SORN SMOs. Additionally, these organizations might be more likely to monitor, evaluate and maintain policies that were in agreement with their position on sex offender management policies. As they amend and adopt policies that support their position, SORN SMOs may act as a watch-dog to be sure that policies are implemented correctly.

What strategies do SORN SMOs use that they perceive had an impact on a successful policy outcome? For the previously achieved policy outcomes, SORN SMOs used six of the 13 strategies commonly used by SMOs: a) lobbying and policy maker education, b) research and policy analysis, c) testimony, d) networking and coalition building, e) grassroots organizing and mobilization, and f) media interviews or stories. Proactive organizations, those that adopted, developed or amended policies, used networking and coalition building, grassroots organizing and mobilization, and media stories more than reactive organizations. Reactive organizations, which blocked and amended policy, used research and policy analysis and testimony. Both the proactive and reactive organizations reported using each of these strategies; however, these strategies were reported as being used by one type of organization more than the other. The strategies that were not used by any of the SORN SMOs to achieve their policy outcomes were: a) polling the public, b) voter education, c) public education, d) legal advocacy or litigation, e) demonstration projects or pilot programs, f) endorsement of political candidates, or g) rallies or marches. Strategies directed toward the general public are unlikely to be used by these organizations because of the public's perceptions associated with the target population. For example, rallies and marches, polling the public and voter education may lead to a backlash on this issue. Additionally, SORN SMOs are unlikely to publicly endorse a political candidate because of the general public's punitive attitudes, making policy makers unlikely to advocate for

this issue. Some organizations used public education and legal advocacy or litigation, but they were not specifically tied to the achieved policy outcome. It is speculated that demonstration projects or pilot programs were also unlikely to be used because these are costly to undertake. Currently, SORN SMOs do not have the financial resources for such programs. An interesting finding in this dissertation that differs from what is known about other social movements is the reluctance of SORN SMOs to use the media as an advocacy strategy. Generally, this strategy has been used to create political opportunities for social movements (Gamson & Meyer, 1996); however, many SORN SMOs believe that the media has created hysteria about sex offenders and continues to perpetuate misinformation. Therefore, some SORN SMOs do not see the media as a way to open up political opportunities.

SORN SMOs are working to change policies related to sex offender registration and community notification, ease residency restrictions, encourage the use of risk assessments to classify offenders at greatest risk to society, push for the creation of a state level sex offender management board, urge mandatory treatment for sex offenders in the state prison system and advocate for reductions in sanctions for certain offenders: youth and individuals charged with child pornography possession.

What strategies do SMOs' use to reach their current goals? SORN SMOs are using more strategies to achieve the current policy goals, as opposed to their previous focuses: a) lobbying and policy maker education, b) research and policy analysis, c) grassroots organizing and mobilization, d) network and coalition building, e) testimony, f) media interviews/stories, g) legal advocacy/litigation, h) public education and i) marches or rallies. All of the organizations are now using lobbying and policy maker education and research and policy analysis. Organizations that are blocking a policy are also using grassroots organizing, the media and

testimony. Organizations that are blocking a policy use testimony more often than the organizations focused on other policy goals. Organizations that are blocking a policy are also using the media more often than organizations that are achieving another policy goal. Organizations that are developing a policy are using the same strategies as the organizations that are blocking policies, but, in addition, they are using network and coalition building and legal advocacy and litigation. Organizations that are amending policies are using the same strategies as organizations that are developing policies, except they are not using legal advocacy and litigation; and, interestingly, they are using strategies that take a high profile position on this issue: public education and marches or rallies. Organizations that are monitoring policies are using three strategies: lobbying and policy maker education, research and policy analysis, and legal advocacy and litigation.

What adaptive strategies have resulted in an SORN SMO's perceived effectiveness towards an identified policy outcome? SORN SMOs were asked about times in their organizations' past when they changed their strategies or their policy outcome goals due to events that were occurring in the policy environment. Kingdon (2003) suggests that opportunities for policy change are likely to occur unpredictably and that the window of opportunity will only be open for a short period of time. Therefore, SORN SMOs must be flexible in the ways they engage with policymakers. Six SORN SMOs reported that they have changed their strategies or goals in the past. As three organizations became more familiar with their state's political environment, two changed their goals to fit with the current policy climate, and the other held off on a policy goal until it was more likely to pass in the legislature. Three organizations reported changes in strategy. One organization changed the way it framed the issue to policymakers, by focusing on more sympathetic cases first to gain interest in the issue. Another organization

changed the way its members testified, after realizing that policy makers wanted to hear different perspectives on the issue, instead of hearing that many individuals have the same opinions. The final organization, after realizing that lobbying and policy maker education was not going to gain attention, decided to take the issue to the courts and began using legal advocacy and litigation. Two of the organizations that changed their goals achieved a successful policy outcome after these changes.

How do SORN SMOs use opportunities in the political environment to make progress towards their policy outcome goals? SORN SMOs used three opportunities in conjunction with their achieved policy outcome: court cases related to SORN policies that were likely to influence new legislation; media portrayals of issues for registered offenders; and events in the state's legislature. Court cases have been used as a means of testing the constitutionality of SORN policies in relation to cruel and unusual punishment and retroactivity. These cases, especially the Supreme Court cases in Ohio, have resulted in high costs to the state to implement a new policy that was subsequently found unconstitutional, forcing the state to eventually go back to earlier policies. When courts find these policies unconstitutional, the goal is to have legislators amend the policy to make it constitutional (Van Horn, et. al., 2001). The costs to the state have been exorbitant, creating another opportunity for SORN SMOs use at a time when state budgets do not allow for irresponsible spending. SORN SMOs have used the media to help frame the issue in respects to the unintended consequences experienced by registrants and their family members, which is reflected in the SMOs literature, which states that the media can help shift public opinion (Gamson & Meyer, 1996).

Adaptability of strategies and the use of political opportunities did not vary by the clusters of organizations, other than when comparing the youth-focused organizations. Those

that had previously achieved a policy outcome that was youth focused used more adaptive strategies and more political opportunities than the organizations that did not have a youth-focused achieved policy outcome. It seems as though youth-focused organizations would gain greater access to the political environment and would not need to adapt as much as the organizations focused on all types of sex offenders.

Tarrow (1996) suggests three elements that open opportunities in the policy environment: creating an opening in the environment, using of influential allies, and dividing elites in the environment. SORN SMO leaders mentioned that an opening in the environment and the use of influential allies (professionals and individual policy makers) have created opportunities for engagement in the political environment; however, none reported the division of elites.

What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved? The following discussion should be interpreted with caution, as the sample was small, and statistical significance testing was not used. The differences found between different types of organizations should be investigated more intensely in the future. SORN SMOs were clustered by different types of organizations (i.e. proactive/reactive, youth focused/non-youth focused, and organizations that advocate differently for young offenders/organizations that do not advocate differently for young offenders) to look for differences in structure, resources, issue framing and perceived stigma. It was found that organizations that are proactive, not youth-focused in the previously achieved policy, and organizations that do not advocated differently for young offenders have more formalized structures. This may be due to the length of operation and number of active members to build the organizations' infrastructure.

Proactive organizations, organizations that had previously achieved a goal that was youth focused, and organizations that advocate differently for young offenders have more resources and use a greater number of advocacy strategies. This may have occurred because young offenders are likely to gain more support than other types of registered offenders. Additionally, proactive organizations may have acquired more resources because people are motivated to take charge of their own destiny to make things better, as opposed to only stopping things from getting worse (i.e. blocking policies).

Reactive organizations, non-youth focused organizations, and organizations that do not advocate differently for young offenders exhibited more developed issue framing. These three types of organizations are facing greater levels of stigma and are generally facing challengers; thus, it is not surprising that they have tailored their messages and used frames that address the individual characteristics of the individuals they speak with, by advocating with research, emotions and values in the way they frame the issue.

Reactive organizations, non-youth-focused organizations and organizations that advocate differently for young offenders had higher perceived stigma. A higher level of perceived stigma makes sense for reactive organizations and non-youth focused organizations, because they are less likely to directly face challengers to the issues, or they are dealing with the general population of sex offenders, which leads to greater levels of stigma. However, it is possible that organizations that advocate for young offenders differently would have lower levels of perceived stigma. Again, these findings should be viewed with caution, and the reasons for these differences should be studied more thoroughly in the future.

Implications for Practice and Policy

This dissertation takes the first comprehensive look at SORN SMOs, by investigating these organizations on three levels: a) how they use their message or position to gain support for their cause; b) the resources that they have, and the strategies they use to reach their desired policy outcomes; and c) their interactions with the policy environment to use or create opportunities for public policy change. Additionally, the process lens allows for an investigation of the resources and activities that are employed to achieve various policy outcomes. While social work researchers have called for the use of a process lens on advocacy organizations, (Netting, O'Connor, & Fauri, 2007) there is a paucity of examples in the literature. Unique to SORN SMOs is the high level of stigma associated with the sex-offender population. Little is known about the influence of stigma on the policy change process for advocacy organizations. Therefore, this dissertation informs social work practice by adding to the literature related to advocacy work with stigmatized populations.

Since the literature does not currently include SORN SMOs, the closest types of SMOs or movements were used as comparisons. Most notably is the prisoners' rights movement and, less notably, the poor peoples' movement. From the 1960s to the 1980s, prison reform was taking place within the court system, through legal activism (Jacobs, 1980). Prisoners' rights organizations were made up of prisoners; however reform was heavily dependent on individuals on the outside; mostly lawyers. Major Supreme Court cases ruled that the treatment of inmates in some prisons was cruel and unusual punishment. This stimulated state and local corrections departments to follow suit. Some lawyers utilized other advocacy strategies to bring attention to the issue of prison reform. For example Alvin Bronstien of the American Civil Liberties Union championed the cause through lobbying, public speaking, and presenting at national conferences

(Jacobs, 1980). Near the end of the 1980s, there was an assumption that Supreme Court rulings would do little to interfere with prison reform, so alternative strategies for change were needed. Contrary to what has occurred in the prison reform movement, few SORN SMOs have used legal advocacy/litigation as a strategy for policy change. SORN SMOs should evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using legal advocacy, compared to other advocacy strategies to achieve their desired reforms.

Recently, legislators and administrative officers have played a role in prison reform (Jacobs, 1980; Schuhmann & Wodahl, 2001). Jacobs (1980) writes, "The point is that a preoccupation with the courts should not blind us to the role of legislatures in both stimulating and impeding the goals of prisoners' rights advocates and their allies" (pg.447). A more recent case that used various advocacy strategies towards prison reform is the passage of the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) (Schuhmann & Wodahl, 2011). Schuhmann and Wodahl (2011) highlight the significance of the passage of this law at a time when there is little political will for reform on behalf of offenders. They highlight five components that successfully led to the passage of this policy: a) engagement of a policy entrepreneur, b) coalition building with evangelical organizations, c) putting a minimal financial and administrative burdens on the states to implement the policy, d) allowing states to implement the policy through their respective corrections department, thus abating a criticism of federalism, and e) re-framing the issue to put the focus on the benefits to the community, rather than the benefits to offenders. The similarities between this most recent prisoner reform policy and SORN SMOs is emphasizing cost reduction, focusing on state's rights through state-level reform, and highlighting the negative impacts that SORN policies have on community safety. Additionally, some of the organizations have begun to build their advocacy network with other like-minded SMOs.

The stark difference between SORN SMOs and the advocacy undertaken for PREA is that SORN SMOs lack a policy entrepreneur. A policy entrepreneur is someone who: a) has a level of credibility in the political arena, b) possesses political skills and holds connections with key stakeholders, and c) persists in policy change goals (Kingdon, 2003). Michael Horowitz, a lifelong civil-rights and sex-trafficking reform activist, took up the prison rape issue, and used his connections as an appointee to President Reagan's administration to put this policy on the agenda. He organized conservative SMOs (i.e. evangelicals) around this issue. This difference suggests a gap in SORN SMOs' strategies, when reflecting on how a similar SMO successfully achieved its desired federal policy, thus suggesting that SORN SMOs should focus on finding a policy entrepreneur to build a groundswell of advocates.

Another stigmatized population that has been investigated in the research literature is the poor peoples' movement. A landmark exploration of this movement by Piven and Cloward (1977) de-emphasizes the use of organizations, because the lack of resources among these members is not likely to support an organizational structure and activities. In fact, it is suggested that organizational development and maintenance would detract from the implementation of advocacy strategies. These authors further note that the focus of the poor peoples' movement has been to implement contentious and unruly strategies to call attention to the plight of the poor. Since the Piven/Cloward writing, however, another author (Hall, 1995) has shown that organizations, in fact, have been effective in the poor peoples' movement. These two findings are unlikely to be useful for SORN SMOs or any similar organization. For SORN SMOs, organizational capacity and the collective voice of the membership is essential to combat the high levels of distaste for sex offenders among the public. Additionally, this dissertation found that organizations making proactive change were more formalized, had more resources, and

implemented various types of strategies. The use of unruly or contentious strategies would draw too much attention to the issue, which may exponentially increase the current societal ethic of being "tough on crime". The use of such tactics would attract media attention, which has, in the past, demonized sex offenders and perpetuated misinformation about them. Thus, there are few similarities between the SORN movement and of the organizations that are part of the poor peoples' movement.

This dissertation also adds to the research literature regarding registered sex offenders, by including information about SMOs that are advocating for changes to SORN policies. There are many studies across disciplines that have highlighted the problems with SORN policies; however, to date, the research literature lacks information about the ways that advocacy organizations are influencing the policy change process. This dissertation pays particular attention to differences between the advocacy work of SMOs on behalf of two segments of this population: youthful offenders and adult offenders. Differences found across SORN SMOs that have a youth focus and those that do not may contribute to our understanding of successful advocacy work on behalf of protected groups of people.

The findings contribute to research related to SMOs, as there is a paucity of research with organizations that focus on offenders; and more specifically, juvenile offenders. Much of the work on SMOs has focused on the civil, women's and gay rights movements, as well as environmental and health care reform movements (see Snow, Soule & Kriesi, 2007 for more movements). Additionally, little is known about movements that die out, i.e. organizations that are unable to meet their policy goals, and thus disengage from the political process. A few organizations whose leaders were interviewed for this dissertation have not built their resources

and structures, which may lead to their failure (Kriesi, 1996). If the result of this movement is that an SMO disassembles, this dissertation may highlight factors behind that failure.

Limitations

This dissertation is the first study to explore SORN SMOs. As an exploratory study, there are weaknesses one must consider in assessing the findings in regards to the study's method, sample, and instrument. The method used was qualitative: telephone interviews. The intention was to gain an in-depth understanding of SORN SMOs. While SORN SMOs from various states participated, the influence of the state's political environment may make for difficulties with transferability (Padgett, 2008) to other SORN SMOs. While results were produced that look at different types of SORN SMOs, these were only used to examine associations and cannot be used as a means of predicting which inputs and activities are likely to predict the type of policy outcome. While attempts were made to reduce researcher bias, this qualitative study is likely influenced by the doctoral student's personal biases as a participant in an organization similar to those whose officials participated in interviews for this dissertation.

While the sampling unit was SORN SMOs, only one leader from each organization was interviewed. It is unlikely that everyone in an organization would reply in the same way to all of the questions on the instrument. Therefore, the findings for this study may have been different if other individuals from the SORN SMO had been interviewed. Additionally, the findings may have been different if other SORN SMOs that were found on ROSL's website and did not participate had decided to participate, or if more organizations had been found through snowball sampling.

The major outcome variable used for this policy process lens asked the leader about the SORN SMOs most important policy outcome that had been achieved to date, thus suggesting a

dependence on the individual perceptions of the interviewee. A different policy outcome may have been chosen had another individual in the organization been interviewed. Therefore, organizations that fell into the reactive cluster may have been included in the proactive cluster had another individual reported a different policy outcome. Furthermore, it is assumed that the strategies the leader reported directly impacted the outcome that was achieved. While it may be the case that these strategies did impact the policy outcome, there may have been alternative events occurring at the same time that also influenced the outcome. Since all of the data for this analysis were retrieved from self-report interviews of individuals on one side of this issue, it is unlikely that a well-rounded view of SORN policies was achieved (Rubin & Babbie, 2010).

A few errors occurred during data collection that may have led to further limitations in this dissertation. One interviewee was not asked the knowledge and skills questions because time constraints cut the interview short. Additionally, a few interviewees had difficulty choosing an appropriate response option for the knowledge questions that were predetermined by the doctoral student: no knowledge, limited knowledge, moderate knowledge, substantial knowledge, and extensive knowledge. Therefore, the interviewer allowed them to answer with a "yes/no" response. Another leader was not asked about the arguments that the organization made in relation to its achieved policy outcome. The interviewee from the newest organization that participated in the study was unable to answer the questions about the organization's "message". This qualitative, exploratory dissertation used the instrument as a guide for the interview and was not treated as a highly standardized tool. However, the removal of questions for some participants may have influenced the findings of the study.

Future Research

This study highlights the influence that public attitudes have had on these organizations. Future studies should also consider the dynamics of stigma and popular punitivism from the perspective of policy makers. It is also important to gain a balanced perspective of this issue by incorporating policy makers into this study. Other social movement and political science scholars have suggested frameworks (Sabatier, 2007) and methods (Minkoff, 2002; Kriesi, 2007) to achieve this balance.

While the doctoral candidate who wrote this dissertation investigated the inputs, activities and outcomes of the organizations, additional concepts could have been included to understand what is associated with achieving a successful policy outcome. For example, Morris and Staggenborg (2007) suggest that leaders of social movements greatly impact the resource mobilization, issue framing and policy achievement of SMOs. Therefore, more variables regarding the leadership of SORN SMOs should be included in any follow-up study. To make predictions about the inputs and activities that impact policy outcomes, these organizations should be followed over time, tracking policy developments, along with the organizational inputs and activities (Exworthy, 2008). Additionally, an in-depth look at the cultural contexts in which these organizations operate is needed to gain a full picture of exogenous variables that impact SORN policy outcomes.

Future studies with SORN SMOs should include interviews with other members of the organization to capture differing opinions. It may also be useful to conduct case studies of particular SORN SMOs to further understand the different clusters in this dissertation: a proactive and a reactive organization, a youth-focused or a non-youth-focused organization, and an organization that does not differentiate between types of registered offenders.

APPENDIX A: Connection between Theory, Concepts, Research Questions and Interview Questions

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Cultural Cognitive Approaches	RQ #3: Are there differences in how SORN MOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when advocating for policy changes specific to registered juvenile sex offenders? Are there differences in how SORN SMOs *frame* the SORN policy issues when trying to persuade different audiences for mobilization, such as the potential or current members, policy decision-makers, and the public? What role does stigma play in how organizations frame their issue?	Construct Meaning for the Cause	What is the mission of your organization? What is the message of your organization? What are the arguments your organization has made when trying to gain support for your previous and current policy outcomes?
		Construct Meaning for Mobilization	Does your organization tailor the message depending on the audience (potential members, politicians, the public)? If so, do you believe that this has resulted in gaining more support for your cause? Please explain.
		Construct Meaning as a Reaction to a Challenger's Frame of the Social Problem	Do you have a counter argument to the individuals or groups in your state that oppose the changes you would like to see to these policies? If yes, what is your counter argument?
Resource Mobilization	RQ #1: What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved?	History	What year was your organization established? Why was the organization established?
		Structure	Is the organization incorporated? Does the organization have an identified leader? If yes, what is their title? Does the organization have an executive board? If yes, are they elected or appointed? What are the names of the positions? Does your organization have any of the following elements: Registered tax-exempt status with the state or IRS, organizational charter, bylaws or a constitution, annual report, board member manual, subcommittees (if so, what are the names), business meetings, and/or participation in decision-making from members?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Resource Mobilization (con't)	RQ #1: What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved?	Resources	Does the organization have an operating budget? If so, what is the annual budget in 2011? What percentage of your budget is comprised of each of the following: donations, external funding sources, fund raising events, membership dues (how much), other? How many paid staff members are in your organization? How many volunteers are in your organization? How many total members are in your organization? How many active members are in your organization? Does your organization have a support group for registrants and/or their family members? What are the barriers your organization has experienced related to the policy outcomes you have attempted to, or are currently attempting, to reach? (lack of studies/statistics for your case, lack of time or resources for advocacy strategies) How do the active members of the organization communicate? (by what means and how often?). What types of personally (registrants and family members) and professionally (judge, attorney, parole, probation, sexual offender treatment provider, other therapist/social worker, researcher, business community, victims' advocate organization) motivated individuals are members in your organization? Are they currently active? What strategies do they participate in?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Resource Mobilization (con't)	RQ #2: What strategies do SORN SMOs use that they perceive to have had an impact on a successful policy outcome? What strategies do SMOs' use to reach their current goals? What adaptive strategies have resulted in an SORN SMO's perceived effectiveness towards an identified policy outcome? What barriers have SORN SMOs experienced when trying to reach their policy outcomes? How has stigma impacted the work of these organizations?	Strategies	What strategies has your organization used related to a policy outcome (goal)? How successful has your organization been at this strategy since the organization started? Why do you think this strategy has been successful? List of strategies: • Grassroots organizing and mobilization • Electronic outreach/social media • Polling the public • Voter education • Briefings/presentations/public education • Coalition and network building (which organizations? Which legislators? How long did it take to cultivate a relationship with these legislators?) • Media connections • Policy analysis and research • Lobbying/Policymaker and candidate education • Legal advocacy or litigation • Demonstration projects or pilot programs • Endorse a political candidate • Rallies and marches What types of personally (registrants and family members) and professionally (judge, attorney, parole, probation, sexual offender treatment provider, other therapist/social worker, researcher, business community, victims' advocate organization) motivated individuals are members in your organization? Are they currently active? What strategies do they participate in?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Resource Mobilization (con't)	RQ #1: What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved?	Current Capacity & Capacity Building	How much knowledge does your organization have about the following? • Reasons that SORN policies were created • Assumptions that underlie these policies • Effectiveness/ineffectiveness of these policies • Impact of these policies on victims • Impact of these policies on registrants • Impact of these policies on the community at large • Costs involved in implementing these policies at the state level • Major federal and supreme court decisions about SORN • Alternative courses of action to reduce sexual violence • Projected outcomes from the above alternative course of action • Knowledge about the tradeoffs between SORN and alternative courses of action. To what extent does your organization have experience related to the following skills: • Analyzing legislation or policy • Preparing a briefing note or position paper • Writing and delivering a presentation • Building relationships with political decision makers • Persuasion skills • Negotiation skills • Working from inside the system • Writing and using a press release • Carrying out a media interview Does your organization have an active project to build the knowledge and skills of the members? If so, please tell me what you are doing? Does your organization have an active project to build the infrastructure of the organization? If so, tell me more about this project?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Resource Mobilization (con't)	RQ#1: What organizational factors, including structure, resources, issue framing, and perceived stigma, are associated with SORN SMOs reporting a policy goal that was achieved? RQ #2: What strategies do SORN SMOs use that they perceive to have had an impact on a successful policy outcome? What strategies do SMOs' use to reach their current goals? What adaptive strategies have resulted in an SORN SMO's perceived effectiveness towards an identified policy outcome? What barriers have SORN SMOs experienced when trying to reach their policy outcomes? How has stigma impacted the work of these organizations?	Policy Goals	Tell me about the best example of a successful policy outcome in your organization's history? Can you tell me about the strategies you used to bring about this policy outcome? What are the barriers your organization has experienced related to the policy outcomes you have attempted to, or are currently attempting to reach? (political climate, political will, challengers to the issue, etc.). Does stigma associated with registered sex offenders cause any barriers for your organization's mission? If so, how? How do you address these barriers?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
Political Opportunities	RQ #4: How do SORN SMOs use opportunities in the political environment to make progress towards their policy outcome goals?		Thinking about the previous and current policy outcomes of your organization, was something happening in the political arena or in the media at the time that influenced these outcomes? Has a situation arisen where you were going to employ an advocacy strategy but you changed your strategy? If so, why? What happened in this situation? By political opportunities I mean any of the following: • A change in a position of power related to SORN policies that may occur out of an election, a change in bureaucratic leadership, change of leadership in the judicial subcommittee. • Media coverage of a sympathetic case • Supreme court rulings • Research studies/statistics suggesting SORN policies are ineffective or too costly to implement
			Are there any individuals or groups in your state that oppose the changes your organization would like to see to SORN policies? If yes, what are the reasons or justifications these individuals or groups have for opposing your changes?

Theory/Population	Research Question	Concept	Survey Question
		Juvenile vs. Adult population	Do you tailor your message differently if you are advocating on behalf of juvenile registrants? If so, how? If so, do you believe that this has resulted in gaining more support for your cause? Please explain.
			Is stigma more or less of an issue when advocating on behalf of juvenile or young adult sex offenders? If so, why do you think so? How does this change your approach, if at all?
			Have you found any of these strategies more or less useful when advocating for juvenile registrants, as opposed to adult registrants? If so, how?
			How likely is it that the politicians in your state will amend SORN policies for juvenile registrants over the next 5 years? Why do you believe this? How likely is it that the politicians in your state will amend SORN policies over the next 5 years for adult registrants? Why do you believe this?
	RQ#2: How has stigma impacted the work of these organizations? RQ#3: What role does stigma play in how organizations frame their issue?	Stigma	To what degree do you think registered sex offenders are stigmatized by the general public? By policy makers? Are there any types of sex offenders that you advocate for where there is more or less associated stigma? If so, which ones? Why do you think this is so?

APPENDIX B: Study Information Sheet

Research Information Sheet

Title of Study: "Collective Action for the Rights of Sex Offenders: Evaluating Social Movement Organizations"

Principal Investigator (PI):   Erin Comartin, LMSW
                                    School of Social Work, Wayne State University
                                    (313) 577-9917

Purpose
You are being asked to be in a research study of sex offender registration and notification policy reform organizations because you are listed as the contact information for your state's affiliate organization on the Reform Sex Offender Laws website. This study is being conducted at Wayne State University.

Study Procedures
If you take part in the study, you will be asked to participate in a telephone interview about your organization's history, structure, processes, resources, membership, and also to discuss the strategies your organization has used to bring about policy changes in your state. The information we are collecting is not of a personal nature, but relative to your experience as the contact for your state affiliate organization.

You must be 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you can choose to answer all, some or none of the questions during the interview. The telephone interview will take approximately 1 hour. You may choose to answer all, some or none of the questions during the telephone interview.

Benefits
As a participant in this research study, there is no direct benefit for you; however, information from this study may benefit other people now or in the future.

Risks
By taking part in this study, you may experience the following risks:
Emotional risks (e.g., feelings of sadness or anxiety). If these feelings arise, feel free to not answer any questions that they do not want to.
Social risks (e.g., possible loss of confidentiality, possible effect to employment status). There is potential for confidentiality to be breached in this study. No names of individuals or organizations will be used in the results of the study as a means to minimize potential social risks.

Costs
There will be no costs to you for participation in this research study.

Compensation

For taking part in this research study, you will be compensated for your time and inconvenience. You will be given a $20 amazon.com gift card for completing the telephone interview. After completion, you will be sent an email with a link to your on-line gift card.

Confidentiality

You will be identified in the research records by a code name or number. There will be no list that links your identity with this code. Once the interview results have been analyzed, identifying information will be removed and placed in a separate password protected file that will not be located with the interview results. All necessary steps will be taken to keep the information you provide confidential. Since the information will be reported along with particular state policies, a person who is familiar with such policies and your organization may be able to make the connection that your organization participated in this study. This is the only known risk of breaching your confidentiality.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with Wayne State University or its affiliates.

Questions

If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, you may contact Erin Comartin at the following phone number (313) 577-9917. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Human Investigation Committee can be contacted at (313) 577-1628. If you are unable to contact the research staff, or if you want to talk to someone other than the research staff, you may also call (313) 577-1628 to ask questions or voice concerns or complaints.

Participation

By completing the interview you are agreeing to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Erin Comartin, LMSW

APPENDIX C: Pre Interview Document

Below is a list of topics that will be covered during the interview. These questions are based on my familiarity with an organization in Michigan, the research about sex offender registration and notification, and research about social movement organizations (organizations that advocate for public policy change). At the end of this interview, I invite you to ask any questions that you would like to know about the other organizations that participate in the interview. The goal of this study is to produce a report that will be useful to the organizations as they proceed in their advocacy efforts; therefore, all of your input is greatly appreciated and will hopefully benefit the other organizations across the country.

Attached is a list of terms and their associated definitions that are used in this study. I have done this so that we will have a common understanding of these terms. Please do not feel as though you have to know this information before we talk, I just would ask that you have a copy to refer to during the interview.

The interview topics focus on:

1. The work your organization has or is doing to impact policy changes for registered sex offenders in your state. It is not about any support group style services that are offered to registrants and their families.

2. A specific interest of this study is to know about different things your organization may be doing to change policies specifically related to juvenile registrants. Therefore, you will notice that some questions are directly related to this population.

The interview topics include:

1. The mission of the organization and the points the organization makes to gain support for the organization's cause.

2. A brief history of the organization: a) month and year started, b) why the organization was started, c) structure, and d) members of the organization.

3. The experiences of stigma for your members and the organization in your state.

4. The strategies your organization uses to change policy related to registered sex offenders (see the list of strategies for the types and definitions). An important piece I would like to understand from this interview is how your organization may "adapt" strategies to what is occurring in the political environment. For example, was the organization going to employ one strategy but due to a change they used another strategy.

5. I'd like to know about any previous successful goals your organization has achieved in the policy arena. For example, has your organization worked with legislators to: a) block a bill, b) get on the state's political agenda, c) develop a policy, etc. (refer to the policy outcomes list for the types of successes). I'd also like to know about two current policy outcomes your organization is working on.

6. What have been the barriers your organization has faced when attempting to reach a policy goal or implement a strategy? This could include many reasons, such as: a) lack of time or resources to implement advocacy strategies, b) the political climate was not conducive to change, c) there was not enough political will for this issue, d) the challengers to your organization are too strong in the state legislature.

7. I also have some questions about two types of members that may be members of your organization: personally motivated or professionally motivated. I want to know

approximately when different types of each of these members: a) started participating in the organization, b) their current level of participation, and c) the strategies they have or are participating in on behalf of the organization.

8. I would like to know the knowledge and skills of your organization as a whole (refer to these tables for the types and definitions). I would also like to know about any projects your organization may be working on to build the knowledge and skills of the membership.

9. I have one question about professionals or other organizations in your state that have opposing views from your organization.

10. Finally, there are a few questions about your vision for the future regarding the key decision makers in your state.

This list is provided so that you have an understanding of the questions I will ask. Please do not feel like you have to answer all of these questions prior to our interview.

APPENDIX D: Terminology Lists

Description: During the telephone interview you will be asked questions about the work your organization has done and is currently doing to change state level policies for registered sex offenders. We will talk about this on four levels related to your organization's:

a. **Goals** related to policy change (policy outcomes list)

b. **Strategies** that the organization uses to bring about these policy changes (strategies list)

c. **Skills** your organization has to implement the strategies towards policy change (skills list).

d. **Knowledge** your organization has to implement the strategies towards policy change (knowledge list).

In the policy, strategies, and skills tables you will find the types associated with each table and a definition of each type. I have provided these definitions to you so that we will have a common understanding of these terms during our conversation. For the knowledge table I will ask to what level your organization has knowledge of these specific topics. Please have these tables with you to refer to during the interview.

Policy Outcomes List

Policy Outcome (Goal) Type	Definition
1. Policy Blocking	Successful opposition to a policy proposal. Member(s) of the organization work with legislators to block bills that the organization believes will decrease the quality of life for registered sex offenders.
2. Placement on the Policy Agenda	The appearance of an issue or policy proposal on the list of issues that policy makers give serious attention.
3. Policy Development	Developing a specific policy solution for the issue or problem being addressed. Creating a new policy or policy guidelines.
4. Policy Adoption	Successful passing of a policy proposal through an ordinance, ballot measure, legislation, or legal agreement.
5. Policy Implementation	Proper implementation of a policy, along with the funding, resources, or quality assurance to ensure it.
6. Policy Monitoring and Evaluation	Tracking a policy to ensure it is implemented properly and achieves its intended impacts.
7. Policy Maintenance	Preventing cuts or other negative changes to a policy.

Strategies List

Strategy Type	Definition
a. Grassroots organizing and mobilization	Creating or building on a community-based groundswell of support for an issue or position, often by helping people affected by policies to advocate on their own behalf.
b. Electronic outreach/social media	Using technologies such as email, websites, blogs, podcasts, cell phones, Facebook, or Twitter to reach a large audience and enable fast communications.
c. Polling the public	Surveying the public via phone or online to collect data for use in advocacy messages.
d. Voter education	Conveying an issue or position to specific groups of voters in advance of an election.
e. Briefings/presentations/public education	Making an advocacy case in person through one-on-one or group meetings.

Strategy Type	Definition
f. Coalition and network building i. What organizations or coalitions? ii. How long have you been working with this organization or coalition on this issue?	Unifying advocacy voices by bringing together individuals, groups, or organizations who agree on a particular issue or goal, such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Public Defender's Office, Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA), etc.
g. Earned or paid media/public service announcements /partnerships with someone in the media	Pitching the print, broadcast, or electronic media to get visibility for an issue with specific audiences. Paying for media coverage through, for example, advertisements and "open letters." Getting a media company to agree to promote a cause through its communications channels and programming.
h. Issue/policy analysis and research	Systematically investigating an issue or problem to better define it or identify possible solutions.
i. Lobbying/Policymaker and candidate education If they select this strategy ask: i. Who was the relationship with? ii. How long did it take to cultivate a good working relationship?	Attempting to influence legislation by communicating with a member or employee of a legislative body or with a government official or employee who may participate in forming legislation. Telling policymakers and candidates about an issue or position, and about its broad or impassioned support.
j. Testifying	Member(s) of the organization present information at a hearing for a bill in the state legislature.
k. Legal advocacy or litigation.	Using the judicial system to move policy by filing lawsuits, civil actions, and other advocacy tactics.
l. Demonstration projects or pilots	Implementing a policy proposal on a small scale in one or several sites to show how it can work.
m. Endorse political candidates.	Notify the membership that a political candidate is supportive of the organization's stance on SORN policies.
n. Rallies and marches	Gathering a large group of people for symbolic events that arouse enthusiasm and generate visibility (particularly in the media).

Skills List

Skill Type	Definition
1. Analyzing legislation or policy	The skill of understanding the effects of a policy or law, or their implementation, is essential for advocacy work.
2. Prepare a briefing note or position paper	A briefing note and a position paper are both documents that clearly state the position or opinion of an organization about a particular issue. The message of these documents is: 'This is what we think about this topic, and this is what we recommend'. They are different from a press release, which is written specifically for a media audience.
3. Writing and delivering a presentation	A presentation is a formal way of delivering a message face-to-face to an audience. It can vary from a brief talk to a small group, to a formal presentation to hundreds of people at a conference. The stages in developing a presentation include planning, writing and delivering.
4. Building relationships with political decision-makers.	A face-to-face meeting with a targeted decision-maker. Personal contact provides the opportunity to build relationships with decision-makers, which could prove very useful in future.
5. Persuasion Skills.	Involves being able to convince others to take appropriate action by: a. developing a line of reasoned argument. b. Backing up points with logic- using positive language. c. Emphasizing the positive aspects of your argument. d. Getting your points across in a calm, but assertive manner.
6. Negotiation skills:	Involves being able to discuss and reach a mutually satisfactory agreement, by: a. Listening to the needs of the other party. b. Getting an agreement acceptable to both sides: win-win. c. Establishing trust. d. Knowing when to compromise: making concessions for agreement. e. Using open, encouraging body language.
7. Working from inside the system.	Participation in decision-making bodies. Decisions affecting your advocacy issue or problem are made in many different forms, i.e., local council committees, sub-committees and working groups, joint committees, etc.

Skill Type (continued)	Definition (continued)
8. Writing and using a press release	A press release is the standard method of distributing a story to the media. Using the mass media is also an information, education and communication (IEC) method. It only becomes an advocacy method when: • The general public has been identified as an 'indirect target' who will go on to influence a direct target – for example, voters who will influence a politician. • Influential people are the targets of the article or broadcast item – for example politicians reading a newspaper.
9. Carrying out a media interview	A media interview is a conversation between a reporter and a person who has an interesting story that can be used as the basis for publication or broadcast.

Knowledge List

Knowledge Type	Level of Organizational Knowledge
1. The reasons that Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification (SORN) policies were created.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
2. The assumptions about sex offenders that underlie SORN policies. (Ex. Strangers commit majority of sex crimes, treatment of sex offenders is ineffective.)	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
3. Studies or statistics about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of current policies.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
4. Studies or statistics related to the impact that SORN policies have on victims of sexual violence.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge

Knowledge Type (continued)	Level of Organizational Knowledge (continued)
5. Studies or statistics related to the impact that SORN policies have on registered sex offenders.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
6. Studies or statistics related to the impact that SORN policies have on the community at-large.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
7. Studies or statistics of the costs involved in implementing SORN policies at the state-level.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
8. Major federal or state Supreme Court decisions related to SORN policies.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
9. Alternative courses of action that might be taken to solve the issue of sexual violence.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
10. Projected outcomes from the alternative courses of action mentioned above. (in Q#9)	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge
11. Knowledge of the tradeoffs between current SORN policies and the alternative policies to solve the problem.	a. no knowledge b. limited knowledge c. moderate knowledge d. substantial knowledge e. extensive knowledge

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ABSTRACT

COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR THE RIGHTS OF SEX OFFENDERS: EVALUATING SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

by

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Sex offender registration and community notification (SORN) policies have been instituted across the country to manage individuals in the community who have been convicted of sex offenses. A social movement, made up of registrants and their family members, has sprung up across the country to address the resulting consequences that have ensued from these policies. State organizations are now working towards policy change for these families. The author of this dissertation conducted in-depth interviews with leaders of 19 of these social movement organizations (SMO) to explore the organizations' structure and resources, and the strategies they use to achieve desired policy outcomes. Three social movement theories guided this investigation: resource mobilization, cultural cognitive approaches and political opportunities/processes. The findings were assessed using a process lens, which looked at the inputs, activities and outcomes of these organizations. The findings indicate that SORN SMOs share many similarities with other nascent SMOs, but are also characterized by a vital difference from other SMOs found in the research literature: a significant degree of stigma that is associated with this population. This stigma impacts both the organizations' resources and the strategies they use to achieve the desired policy outcomes. Previously achieved and current policy

outcomes are described and barriers to success are discussed. Implications for social work

practice and policy are discussed, along with ideas for future research.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Erin Comartin received her undergraduate degree in Sociology from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan; a Postgraduate Diploma of Arts in Community and Family Studies from the University of Otago in New Zealand, and both her Master's of Social Work and Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Work at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Her research includes public attitudes of sanctions for sex offenders, with a specific interest in juvenile or young adult sex offenders. She has also explored the impacts that public registration has on family members of young adult sex offenders. She will begin her first faculty position in the fall of 2012 in the department from which she received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Oakland University.