

Affective Predictors of Voluntary
Inmate Program Participation

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ABSTRACT

Most offenders have the capacity to learn new ways of adapting to prison and the society to which they will return. To do so, they must first alter the antisocial behavioral styles, values, and attitudes that conflict with those of mainstream society. This makes the development of programs that encourage prosocial inmate behavior a necessary feature of correctional environments. The challenge is to identify inmates who are most likely to benefit from such programming and who are willing to voluntarily participate. This article explores the effects of traditional factors on inmate self development program participation for a sample of medium-security Federal inmates. The central finding is that strong determinants emerged from both prison and demographic variable groups. Logistic regression analysis showed time served, and prior education and employment as measures that significantly affected the likelihood of program participation. An examination of inmate response-outcome and self-efficacy beliefs is also presented.

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One primary concern of prison administrators is operating correctional facilities in a safe and orderly manner. While prison staff have a range of methods and options available to them to maintain order within their facilities, a number of outside factors can influence the availability of these tools. Public opinions on crime and corrections, budgetary constraints, the size of the inmate population or its rate of growth, and legislative provisions which often impose specific restrictions on correctional managers and staff are among the influential areas. In many jurisdictions, a continuing emphasis on cost containment has placed correctional agencies under greater scrutiny. Often, legislators and the public have favored efforts to change prison conditions and administration by eliminating what they perceive to be creature comforts in an effort to create a more restrictive environment.

While the public is suspicious of such prison "amenities" as conjugal visits, furloughs, and disability benefits, it consistently supports basic education and rehabilitative programs (Clear & Cole, 1994). This idea is central in other recent public opinion research. Rehabilitation was viewed as an important purpose of prison by a significant number of respondents of the National Opinion Survey on Crime and Justice (Flannagan, 1996). Innes (1993) found public support for educational and vocational programs to be consistently strong over a twenty-year period in a detailed review of U.S. opinion survey results on punishment and corrections. The author argued that the public's interests are twofold. The public is primarily concerned about safety and it, therefore, supports punishing criminals. However, when this concern has been met (through incarceration), the public appears to support prison programs; specifically, those programs that promote prosocial skills

and consume inmate time constructively. Haghghi and Lopez (1998) examined gender differences regarding views of rehabilitation in correctional settings. Both men and women favored requiring all prisoners to learn working and educational skills before being released from prison. This was the prevailing opinion within each gender group.

Most correctional administrators view programs and services in functional terms--if an "amenity" helps to run a safer, more secure, and more orderly institution, then it is supported (Johnson, Bennett & Flannagan, 1997). If inmate programs are beneficial to the functioning of correctional facilities, the factors that play a role in successful program outcomes are a significant concern. These factors include program design, staff attitudes toward programming, and inmate program participation. The latter is the focus of the present study. The argument proposed here is that developing a better understanding of how programs will be received and are perceived by inmates will help in designing more effective intervention efforts. Also, it is expected that inmate perceptions of programming will vary since all inmates do not respond to incarceration in exactly the same manner. For example, inmate perceptions of their own level of self control and degree of interest in programs will have a strong influence on the likelihood that they will participate in and benefit from such programs.

This point demonstrates the importance of distinguishing inmates (participants and nonparticipants), an idea that has found support in prior research. Innes and Verdeyen (1997) argued that corrections managers may be better able to change inmate behavior when they can identify and differentiate inmates' behavioral motives. Further, inmates are different enough from one another to require different strategies to manage them and accurate identification of individual inmate behaviors should help in determining the

most appropriate available response (Innes, 1997; Jackson & Innes, 1997).

Some studies have analyzed the differences in inmate background, personality and prison characteristics (Goetting & Howsen, 1983; Jackson, 1997; Oldroyd & Howell, 1977; White, 1980). But only a few studies have examined these attributes to gain some understanding of how they impact program participation. White and Jones' (1996) research notably approached this issue. They described the personal and criminal history correlates of identity orientations using a sample of state prisoners with varying program participation experience. Inmates committed to unconventional behavioral styles were least likely to participate in educational programs while in prison. Those who avoided dealing with problems had lower education levels and were identified as the likely beneficiaries of activities that emphasize skills such as problem solving and decision making.

In an analysis of prisonization (defined as endorsing the values of prison culture) and program participation membership, Peat and Winfree (1992) found therapeutic community drug program participants had lower levels of prisonization than nonparticipants and those who had the interest in participating but not yet the opportunity. The participants tended to be younger and minority group members. These findings were supported in other research that examined the perceptions of two groups of federal prisoners (Van Voorhis, Browning, Simon & Gordon, 1997). Those with a positive orientation toward rehabilitation were young, nonwhite inmates who were not aggressive, subcultural (committed to procriminal values) types of offenders; they also had less extensive prison experience. Inmates who were not diagnosed as aggressive, and those who were unemployed prior to arrest were most likely to see incarceration as a chance to repay society, suggesting some level of responsibility.

This study explores the effects of various traditional demographic and prison factors on self development program (SDP) participation. A portion of this investigation of an inmate's self-selection decision is based on the proposition that inmates can be expected to adopt a form of treatment or therapy that requires a change in behavior, if they can gain some benefit, perceive some value in the outcome, and feel that achieving the outcome is probable. Sappington (1990, 1996) examined the utility of this concept and suggested that certain cognitive factors were useful in predicting or changing behaviors in noncriminal populations. He then found support for this perspective in a recent study of state inmates. Self-efficacy and response-outcome beliefs were significantly correlated with age, time served and education. Age and time served lessened the belief that one's actions in prison influence treatment in prison (response-outcome). More education was associated with the belief that new ways could be learned to control one's actions (self-efficacy). The present research extends prior similar efforts by including response-outcome and self-efficacy measures. An analysis of these expectancies is presented with a particular interest in their ability to distinguish between SDP participants and nonparticipants.

SDP participation can be viewed not only as an indicator of effective adaptiveness in the correctional setting but also as an inmate coping strategy. Several factors related to coping have been identified in the prison setting--the most frequent being age. Studies have suggested that adjustment and coping are more acute issues for new offenders and younger inmates (Bonta & Gendreau, 1990; Ellis, Grasmick, & Gilman, 1974; Flannagan, 1983; Innes, 1997; Jackson & Innes, 1997; MacKenzie, 1987; Toch, Adams & Green, 1987; White, 1980). Younger inmates may be limited in the number of coping strategies they possess to respond to intimidating and stressful

situations such as prison and its concomitant problems. Furthermore, nonadaptive coping styles can result from extreme stress, inaccurate appraisals of situations, or from coping/life skills deficits.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as a subset of adaptational activities that involves an effort by the individual. By this definition, not all adaptive activities would be coping since some have become automatic rather than effortful. Individuals start to learn adaptive techniques by a process of skill acquisition. As these skills are applied more frequently through experience, they become automatized. No strategy, therefore, is necessarily better or worse than any other, but must be evaluated in terms of its adaptiveness within a specific context.

Strategies of daily coping expectedly differ among inmates. Some inmates may have work assignments, while others may focus on hobbies, physical exercise or programming. Program participation, the focus of this study, requires some effort or initiative on the part of the inmate and can promote better adjustment, acting as an outlet for stress and tension or consuming excess time (Parisi, 1982). Based on this perspective, the present research views SDP participation as an active individual response to prison life. As discussed earlier, correctional administrators view activities such as this as helpful in maintaining a more secure facility. Thus, the benefits of programming reciprocate for both staff and inmates.

Evaluations dominate empirical research on inmate programs but lack the detailed data needed to better understand participation. The obvious reason for this is that the major objectives in any evaluation are to demonstrate program outcomes and effectiveness. Also, in some cases, an inmate's participation in a program may be required. In the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), for example, literacy program participation is required for inmates who

do not have a GED or High School Diploma. These inmates must participate within four months after their arrival for 240 hours or until the GED requirements are achieved, whichever is first (Federal Bureau of Prisons [BOP], 1997).

The BOP has also offered various types of voluntary SDPs to build inmate educational and life skills. In recent years, Values Programs were implemented in support of programming goals. The main objectives of these and other inmate self development programmatic efforts are to encourage more prosocial outlooks and to teach positive values. Inmates explore these principles by reviewing their value systems, examining their life options and developing plans for personal change. However, inmates can choose not to participate (BOP, 1997).

Program participants are likely to believe they can learn to change their behavior and that what they do makes a difference in how they are treated in prison. Based on research cited earlier that noted nonwhite inmates were more oriented toward the idea of rehabilitation and younger inmates may lack effective coping strategies, age and race differences may appear between participants and nonparticipants. Interest in programs geared toward more adaptive coping and life skills (prosocialization) may be greater during the early imprisonment stage since this period marks a sharp change in an inmate's life (Zamble, 1992; Zamble & Porporino, 1988). Thus, the amount of time served may also prove to be a useful explanatory measure. An additional effort of this research concentrates on response-outcome and self-efficacy beliefs. The correlates of these cognitive measures and their impact on SDP participation are of interest since they have been helpful in understanding behaviors in both criminal and noncriminal populations. However, the primary question of interest is whether demographic and prison

factors are affective predictors of SDP participation.

RESEARCH METHODS

The Survey of Federal Inmates (SFI) was designed to measure inmate views on programming, specifically regarding program interests, benefits and participation. This project was one aspect of a larger evaluative effort within the Federal Prison System. The data collected through this instrument was intended to provide prison managers with supplemental information that may help them in designing and promoting SDPs. The SFI was administered in the Fall of 1997 to a representative sample of male offenders aged 19 to 30 years old in medium-security institutions.

One facility was chosen from each region of the country. The subjects were given a written informed consent statement that explained the purpose and procedures of the project. Participation in the research project was voluntary. Those who chose to participate completed the self-administered questionnaire in groups. The survey had a response rate of 75% (291 completed questionnaires). To ensure each subject's anonymity, it was important that no individual identifying information was associated with survey answers. While this method provided response security, it prevented an analysis of objective data that could have been retrieved through automated inmate records.

The dependent variable for analysis is program participation, which indicates an inmate's level of prison program experience. Inmates were divided into two groups based on their response to a questionnaire item that asked whether they had been involved in various types of SDPs at the facility in which they were housed: vocational training classes, college courses, continuing education, anger/stress management and/or values programs. Participants (N=178) are those inmates who indicated that they had participated in at least one type of SDP. Those who responded that they had

not participated in an SDP comprise the nonparticipant group (N=108). Five inmates did not complete this item. As a result, their cases were not included in this analysis.

Several checklist items that measured various attitudes and behavioral styles were included in the SFI. Given the concerns of this study, only the items that measured specific expectancies were analyzed for this effort. Inmates responded to two items of this type. The first of which addressed whether they thought they could learn new ways to control their behavior. The second item addressed whether they thought how they act in prison makes a difference in how they are treated in prison. These measures were designed for inclusion into a (true/false) checklist format already prepared for the SFI.

A few traditional background predictors were included in the analysis: race, education and employment status prior to prison, marital status and age. Though age is controlled in the study (since all of the subjects are 30 years of age or younger), some variance still exists. Thus, age was included in this examination as a continuous measure. Race, education, employment and marital status variables were dichotomized to measure the presence or absence of specific characteristics. Those inmates who were GED/high school-educated prior to prison, employed prior to prison or married were coded as one for the applicable measure. Those without a particular characteristic were coded as zero. Race was also coded as zero (other race) and one (black). The "other race" category includes hispanics.

Misconduct was measured according to responses to a question that asked inmates whether they had been found guilty of any prohibited acts. This item was coded for analysis as zero (no incidents) and one (any incidents). Basic program participation, recent visiting patterns, inmate trust (staff/inmates

or no one), time served, time expected to serve, and prison help measures were also analyzed. The visiting and time served variables are continuous. The number of visits made by family or friends was reported for the month prior to the survey date.

Inmates also reported if they had any help when they first entered prison and if they seek help when they encounter problems at the facility in which they were housed. Help was defined as someone who would explain things or tell an inmate how to get along in prison. Basic program experience was determined based on responses to a question that asked inmates whether they had participated in an English as a second language(ESL), drug education, or GED/literacy program since they came into the BOP. The prison help, basic program participation and inmate trust measures are dichotomous and were derived from yes/no questionnaire items.

This retrospective study used a multivariate approach building from several bivariate investigations of the dependent and independent measures. Chi-square analysis was used to initially identify relationships between SDP participation, cognitive measures and the traditional variables. Means and standard deviations were reported for continuous items. Finally, logistic regression was employed to determine which predictors served to explain inmate SDP participation.

Due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, the logistic regression statistical technique was preferred in examining the differences between the SDP participation groups with respect to prison and demographic factors. Hosmer and Lemeshow (1989) provide an authoritative discussion on the advantages of using the logistic function with a binary outcome measure. To assess the utility of the model constructed, a comparison was made of inmates who have participated in SDPs and those who have not. Those

predictors that were statistically significant in the bivariate analyses were entered in the logistic regression equation. Other variables that were not significant at the bivariate level but were deemed theoretically important to this study were also examined. Cases with missing data for any of the selected measures were not included in the regression analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1 provides a cross-tabulation of demographic categorical predictors and SDP participation groups, revealing some expected relationships. Program experience is significantly related to prior education and employment. Education apparently has the strongest relationship with participation. Only 38.1% of the nonparticipants graduated from high school or earned a GED prior to entering prison. The majority of both the participant and nonparticipant groups self-identified as being black and reported they have never been married. Neither race nor marital status reached significance.

A few unexpected findings are shown in Table 2. Though there was no statistical significance, participants appear to have committed prohibited acts at a greater rate than nonparticipants. However, further analysis (not provided in Table 2) showed the type of offenses committed differed between the groups as well. A greater proportion of the misconduct committed by the nonparticipants was for serious violent offenses (45%), such as homicide or assault with a weapon, compared to 30% for the participants.

A majority of the inmates, irrespective of their SDP experience, reported when they have a problem in prison, they have (current help) someone to go to for help (see in Table 2). But a greater proportion of nonparticipants do not consult anyone when they encounter problems in prison (44.3% compared to 32.6% for participants). This was the only categorical

prison measure that was significantly related to program participation. However, the relationship between basic program and SDP experience yielded a noteworthy finding. It appears that most of the inmates with basic program experience also reported having participated in an SDP.

A portion of this investigation is based on the idea that inmates can be expected to adopt a form of treatment or therapy that requires a change in behavior, if they can gain some benefit, perceive some value in the outcome, and feel that achieving the outcome is probable (Sappington, 1996). The cognitive variables examined in this study measured inmates' potential interest in controlling their behavior and belief that what they do in prison makes a difference in how they are treated in prison.

Table 2 shows the responses between the program groups were not significantly different. An overwhelming majority of both groups believed they could learn ways to control their behavior (self-efficacy) and over 60% of each inmate group felt what they did in prison made a difference in how they were treated in prison (response-outcome).

The cognitive variables were only associated with two other (categorical prison) measures--current and initial prison help. Since significant results are few, the results for this particular analysis are not shown in the tables. Only the following brief narrative is presented. Those inmates who received help at two stages, when they first entered prison and when they encounter a problem in prison, comprise the majority of the favorable respondents for both the response-outcome and self-efficacy items. Fifty-four percent of those who responded positively to the self-efficacy item had help at both stages: $P^2(2, n=235 \text{ true responses}; 24 \text{ false})=12.390, p<.01$. And 60% of the favorable responses on the response-outcome measure were also reported by inmates who had help at both stages: $P^2(2, n=168 \text{ true responses}; 90 \text{ false})=19.95, p<.01$.

When the data were controlled for program participation, the strength and direction of the relationships remained. The only difference was a slightly higher proportion of unfavorable nonparticipants on the response-outcome measure (39% compared to 32% for participants). This difference did not reach significance.

Descriptions of continuous measures and t-tests for differences in group means are found in Table 3. Participants and nonparticipants clearly differ with regard to the number of visits received and the amount of time served. Participants had more visits and served more time in prison on average.

The Logistic Regression model in Table 4 clearly performed well in predicting SDP participation and classifying the two groups according to demographic and prison criteria. The Chi-square for the model was significant. Also, the test for the model fit and the proportion of respondents correctly classified indicate the model adequately predicted group membership. The traditional criteria entered into the equation explained more than 22% of the variation in the self-selection decision. Also, the effects of the majority of the predictors were strong in determining inmate SDP participation. The affective measures covered both groups of variables. Participants and nonparticipants were distinguished by: basic program participation; time served; recent visiting patterns; and prior employment and education.

Prior education and the amount of time served had the strongest direct influence on the probability of an inmate to participate in an SDP. This suggests that participants were significantly more likely to be high school-educated and to have spent more time in prison. For every increase of one year in the amount of time served, the odds of SDP involvement increase 1.43 times. Inmates with at least a GED/high school education are more than twice

as likely to be SDP participants than those who lack this characteristic. Prior employment was also associated with membership in the participant group (odds ratio 2.08). The direction of the current help beta indicates that the odds of inmate involvement in an SDP are increased for those who seek help when they have a problem in prison. Though basic program participation was not significant in the bivariate analysis, it showed a considerable effect on the SDP self-selection decision after adjusting for the other criteria in the regression model.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are presented with some caveats. These data were self-reported and some areas, like criminal offense and history information, may have been influential but were not included in this effort. More research is needed to get a full range of predictors that influence the self-selection decision. Also, this examination analyzed SDP participation and not SDP completions. Many of the participants could have 'dropped out' of a program for a myriad of reasons. The factors surrounding program completion should be included in similar analyses.

It is also worthy to note that the growing number of hispanic and female offenders could bring to light cultural and social issues that may direct the future design of prison programs to suit more specific inmate needs. In the present research, only males in medium facilities were studied (most female inmates are in lower security institutions). Data on hispanic inmates were not readily accessible since the race item included a response category for hispanics; hispanics were included in the "other race" category for analysis. Clearly, ethnic and gender issues in SDP participation need further exploration.

SDP participants were involved in a fair level of misconduct (mostly

nonviolent offenses, insolence and simple assaults). Since the data examined were based on self-reports, it may be that participants were more forthcoming with misconduct information. A review of official inmate records may reveal different results. Also, some interest should be given to the timing of the incident--i.e., did a prohibited act(s) occur in the early stage of their imprisonment, while they were participants or nonparticipants? Could SDP participation contribute to a change in the rate of misconduct? Although these are questions for an evaluative effort or experimental approach, they remain relevant.

The present research is more theoretical, an attempt to provide further information on the determinants of SDP participation. The presence of factors differentiating between those who were involved in an SDP and those who had not yet participated were operative in this study. The main objective was to explore the effects of prison and demographic measures on inmate SDP participation. These traditional measures demonstrated considerable explanatory power.

Program participants were mainly characterized as full-time workers prior to being incarcerated, more educated and likely to have basic program experience. These inmates reported more time served and less time they expected to serve. Most of the inmates who had completed at least half of their reported sentence (reaching the later stages of their incarceration) were participants. Significance for the sentence measures was expected but more in the opposite direction. Perhaps, in this instance, program involvement at this level was of interest to some inmates (with more time served and less time remaining to serve) because they wanted to learn something beneficial before being released. In this context, SDP participation appears to have been a self-imposed pre-release task.

This point was supported by the finding that many inmates got involved with some view of the future in mind. The primary reason reported by 84% of the participants for getting involved in an SDP was, "I think it will help me when I get out." Moreover, the most frequently chosen primary reason reported for getting involved in any program for both participants (61%) and nonparticipants (45%) was "It will help me when I get out of prison": $\chi^2(1, n=173 \text{ participants}; 101 \text{ nonparticipants})=19.55, p<.05$. The second and third reasons, according to their frequencies, were "to get a higher pay grade" and "I want to better myself." On this same point, basic program participants (75%) reported "I think it will help me when I get out" as the most important reason for their program involvement. Basic program participation was shown in the multivariate logistic regression model to be an affective predictor of SDP participation. This suggests that these inmates found some value in participating. They may have graduated to another level to further their program experience for some emphasized knowledge or skill.

The number of visits from family or friends, and current help also appear to be related to SDP participation. But family influence may be an intervening variable in these relationships. Forty-six percent of the participants consult their family for direction when they encounter a problem in prison, compared to only 24% for nonparticipants: $\chi^2(1, n=116 \text{ participants}; 59 \text{ nonparticipants})=7.98, p<.01$. Additional analyses are needed to explore this point. The specific kinds of problems for which families are consulted should also be considered.

A portion of this study focused on the utility of the idea regarding inmate beliefs about themselves and the prison environment within the context of the self-selection decision. Inmates overwhelmingly viewed themselves as capable of learning ways to control their behavior. Though response-outcome

expectancies were mostly positive--inmates feel what they do in prison makes a difference in how they are treated in prison, over one-third of both groups responded negatively to this item. This points to a fair amount of skepticism about the 'real' benefits for participating in programs. For many inmates, the self-selection decision is made on a more personal basis. The most frequently chosen extra benefit inmates wanted to receive for getting involved in any program was "a transfer close to home," 48% for participants and 47% for nonparticipants.

The self-efficacy and response-outcome measures were not related to program participation and only significantly correlated with the prison help measures. Most of the inmates who responded favorably to the cognitive measures received help when they first entered prison and had someone to consult when they encountered a problem in prison. This finding is not consistent with Sappington's (1996) research in which other prison (and demographic) correlates of these cognitive measures were identified. There are some methodological explanations for this. Sappington studied a small group of high-security inmates involved in one type of SDP (anger management). This effort covered five possible types of SDPs for medium-security inmates. Also, the belief variables were dichotomized for this analysis and should be captured at a greater level of measurement in other analyses to better test this theory and verify these results.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study present several implications for corrections managers and future research. The finding that most basic program participants self-select for SDPs suggests the Federal Bureau of Prisons' GED/literacy policy may be an extremely important factor in SDP participation rates. The literacy program participation requirement for Federal inmates

without a GED or high school diploma may be encouraging many inmates down the 'program road'. Implementing a policy such as this and promoting inmate involvement in other basic programs may be the most effective means of ensuring SDP participation.

Basic program participation is more under management's control. But other affective predictors, like prison help sought by inmates, are not. Prison help in the early and later stages of incarceration had an important impact on either inmate views or program participation. Participants sought help mainly from family/outside contacts, possibly suggesting some level of outside influence. However, when an inmate's main contacts are limited to the prison environment, as is the case with most nonparticipants, issues relating to staff and inmate communications may become pivotal.

The main focus of this research was to identify some traditional determinants of SDP participation. In effect, some insight is also provided into nonparticipation. Nonparticipants believe they have the ability to change their behavior and recognize the benefits of doing so. But they have not been involved in an SDP. The finding that higher education levels are associated with participants suggests that classroom experience may play a role in nonparticipation. Education implies the extent of an individual's exposure to the classroom setting. The less education an individual has, the less frequent the exposure and, therefore, familiarity with a classroom environment. This may help to explain the relationship between lower education levels and nonparticipation.

Program participation is only one type of inmate response or coping strategy. It is worth noting that nonparticipants may gravitate toward other activities. Corrections managers may want to know how present SDPs can gain the interest of nonparticipants or if new programs can be designed to capture

this group's needs. Determining the activities that interest nonparticipants is key. An examination of inmate involvement in a wider range of activities would be useful. Clearly, more analyses are needed to fully address this topic.

The findings of this study raise other issues that also need to be addressed in future research. Prison factors and inmate personal characteristics were identified that appear to be related to the self-selection decision. However, future efforts need to determine if differences in inmate self-selection decisions can be attributed to cognitive factors that were not included in the present analysis. Other cognitive measures may prove useful in distinguishing between participants and nonparticipants according to individual behavioral styles and coping patterns.

White and Jones (1996) suggested that cognitive measures like identity style criteria could help in designing inmate programs and identifying inmate groups with specific programming needs. Identity styles may help explain how observable behaviors demonstrate an individual's level of life skill development, specifically problem solving and decision-making abilities. For example, an investigation such as this may clarify the impact of family influence on program participation by examining inmates with normative identity styles. Normative individuals conform to the expectations of significant others, like parents, other family members and friends (White, Wampler & Winn, 1998). A key underlying element of identity styles is coping. This may make the identity concept even more promising since how inmates approach the transition from community life to prison plays a major role in how they cope with incarceration. This may also help further our understanding of inmate coping strategies, including program participation. Identity research on incarcerated populations is scant and needs further

exploration.

Remedying the limitations of this study may provide some direction for future efforts as well. In addition to examining more cognitive measures, subsequent studies should also be longitudinal. Though the present research provided interpretable results, data should be collected more than once to further strengthen other analyses. A longitudinal design would allow a comparison of the processes and factors related to the self-selection decision over time. This design would also allow trends in inmate perceptions to be detected and the effects of program participation to be isolated in an evaluative effort. Specifically, pre and post tests would be necessary for measuring the change in the skills for which a particular program emphasized.

In the present study, inmate program concerns seemingly reflected their interests in personal achievement and their ability to set long term goals. These offenders appear to be interested in responsibility and in-line with prosocial thinking. Their self-reported reasons and benefits for getting involved in SDPs are key areas of interest for designing, implementing and promoting prison programs. However, knowing more about the participants and nonparticipants in terms of their differences, as indicated by measures that can distinguish between the groups, only can augment what is already known. This study provided some evidence for this position.

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Table 1

Demographic Categorical Predictors by SDP Participation

Predictor	Participants		Nonparticipants		n	P ²
	f	column%	f	column%		
Race						
Black	98	55.7	66	61.7		
Other Race+	78	44.3	41	38.3	283	.98
Married						
Presently	52	30.2	34	32.1		
Never Married	120	69.8	72	67.9	278	.10
Prior Education						
H.S./GED	95	53.7	40	38.1		
No Diploma	82	46.3	65	61.9	282	6.41**
Prior Employment						
Yes	99	57.9	47	44.3		
No	72	42.1	59	55.7	277	4.82*

*p<.05; **p<.01. +Hispanics are included in this category.

Table 2

Prison Categorical Predictors by SDP Participation

Predictor	Participants		Nonparticipants		n	<i>P</i> ²
	f	column%	f	column%		
Misconduct						
None	65	41.1	50	50.0		
Any	93	58.9	50	50.0	258	1.95
Current Help						
Yes	116	67.4	59	55.7		
No	56	32.6	47	44.3	278	3.90*
Initial Help						
Yes	127	71.8	69	64.5		
No	50	28.2	38	35.5	284	1.65
Trust						
Staff/Other Inmates	42	26.0	18	18.4		
No One	120	74.0	80	81.6	260	2.22
Self-Efficacy						
True	150	92.0	91	88.3		
False	13	8.0	12	11.7	266	1.00
Response-Outcome						
True	107	66.5	64	61.5		
False	54	33.5	40	38.5	265	.67
Basic Program Participation						
Yes	117	66.5	63	58.3		
No	59	33.5	45	41.7	284	1.91

*p<.05.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations and t-Tests for Continuous
Predictors by SDP Participation

Predictor	SDP		Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
	Participation				
Age	P		25.52	2.57	176
	N		25.01	2.88	107
Recent Visits*	P		1.81	3.39	172
	N		1.10	2.21	106
Time Served (years)**	P		2.96	1.83	178
	N		2.16	1.61	108
Time to Serve (years)+	P		1.11	1.20	178
	N		1.27	1.31	107

*Differences based on t-test are statistically significant at .05; ** p<.01;

+Natural Log. Ps represent the participant group. Ns represent the nonparticipant group.

Table 4

Determinants of Voluntary Inmate SDP Participation

Predictors	Coefficient	SE	Wald Statistic	<i>p</i>	Odds Ratio
Basic Program	0.6557	.3145	4.3453	.0371	1.9264
Time Served	0.3573	.0973	13.4772	.0002	1.4294
Time to Serve*	-0.1476	.1203	1.5068	.2196	.8628
Recent Visits	0.1188	.0581	4.1835	.0408	1.1261
Current Help	0.5415	.2972	3.3198	.0684	1.7186
Prior Employment	0.7317	.3008	5.9191	.0150	2.0787
Age	0.0457	.0551	.6883	.4067	1.0468
Prior Education	0.9962	.3056	10.6279	.0011	2.7079
Race	-0.1934	.3046	.4032	.5254	.8242
Constant	-4.2430	1.5449	7.5430	.0060	
Model χ^2			45.70 (df 9); <i>p</i> =.0000		
Nagelkerke R^2		.224			
Hosmer and Lemeshow					
Goodness-of-fit χ^2			12.00 (df 8); <i>p</i> =.1511		
Percentage of Respondents					
Correctly Classified		70			

*Natural Log