

**International Perspectives on Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Policies: A Comparison of 26 Countries**

Samantha L.N. Tjaden, MA, PhD Student  
Angelo Brown, MA, PhD Student  
Washington State University

Sex offender registration and community notification (SORN) policies were implemented as a result of several high-profile cases involving the sexual assaults and murders of children. They were signed into federal law in 2006, in The Adam Walsh Child Safety and Protection Act, which required states to align with federal standards regarding the registration, classification, and notification of sexual offenders released into the community. Despite limited empirical validity in support of their effectiveness, various countries have implemented variations of SORN. The purpose of the current study was to conduct a macro-level policy analysis to determine if these policies have had the desired effect. We specifically analyzed the sexual assault rates of 26 countries divided in three categories: 1- No Registration and No Notification policy; 2- Registration Only policy; 3- both a Registration and Notification policy. We conducted the analysis using a two-level hierarchical analysis. First, we compared the sexual assault rates of countries like the United States which have sexual offender registration and notification policies and countries like Australia who only have a sexual offender registration requirement to countries like Switzerland and Denmark which do not have a SORN requirement. Results indicate that having a SORN policy does have a statistically significant relationship with sexual assault rates. Second, we determined whether sexual assault rates were impacted by the type of SORN policy (Registration only or Registration and Notification). Results indicated that Registration Only policies were associated with a significant decreased sexual assault rate.

**Samantha L.N. Tjaden** is a doctoral student in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Washington State University. Her research interests involve exploring perceptions of sexual assaults and consent, the influence of sex roles, and gender-based violence.

**Angelo Brown** is a doctoral student in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Washington State University. His research interests involve exploring violence, equality, and community-related policy.