

Research plan outline example



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Describe how you will recruit participants

I will recruit participants through the longitudinal sample consists of 808 students who consented to participate in the study from the population of 1,053 9th through 12th grade students attending 18 high schools serving high-crime neighborhoods. As incentives to participate, students will be provided with pizza at the focus group and their names will also be placed in a basket to be drawn for a \$25 gift certificate to Barnes and Nobles (Battin, Abbott, Catalano, Hawkins, 1998).

How will you assure that participants are not in any way coerced to participate? I can assure that students will not be coerced to participate in any way because they will willingly choose to participate and will be given the opportunity to stop participation in the focus group at any time if they feel uncomfortable or do not wish to complete the discussion for any reason.

Specify the location of the study.

Anywhere the students want to meet.

Each participant will be given a consent form that they must sign before discussion or data collection begins. This study will use focus groups to collect data. There will be four focus groups, and each group will ideally have 5 participants. One group will be all male, one all- female, and one mixed. I will be facilitating the all-female group, a male colleague, trained in research methods will be facilitating the all-male group, and we will co-facilitate the mixed group. There will be a series of questions that the facilitator asks, each with “ probe” questions that will only be used if the discussion is slow

or does not go in the desired direction. Each focus group will be tape recorded for record keeping, and all participants will be aware of the presence of the recorded (Monroe, 1978).

Participants will be asked to participate in about a one-hour discussion with approximately 5 other students. The group will be asked to respond to and discuss five questions or situations. The only equipment used will be a tape recorder that all participants will be aware of. The risk factors for gang membership were organized into the 5 categories of community, peers, family, individual, and school. All of the categories except school were statistically significant. The lack of significance for this category can be attributed to minimal distinctive responses between gang and non-gang member (Sharpe, 2000).

Should a participant experience any emotional stress due to the content of the discussion, questions asked, or comments made by other group members, the facilitator will stop discussion and remind all participants that they are free to leave the room at any point during the study. The facilitator will then ask a different question so as to move the discussion in a new direction. If the group as a whole experiences any emotional stress throughout the discussion, the facilitator will stop the conversation and ask if anyone would like to leave the study. The facilitator will stop all discussion if it gets out of hand at any point and the group begins to feel uncomfortable.

There are no physical or financial risks known in this study. In order to minimize the risk of harm, participants will be warned about the content of discussion when they arrive. Prior to the data collection process, the

facilitator will acknowledge the importance of everyone's voice in the discussion and that everyone is from different backgrounds so therefore everyone has very different views on these discussions. This will hopefully remind people to be respectful of others' opinions and contributions to the discussion. Also, all participants will be reminded that participation is completely voluntary and if they choose to leave at any point they may. If anyone, or the group, seems to be uncomfortable or emotionally disturbed, they will be asked whether or not they would like to continue the study, and if not, it will be stopped immediately. Attached to the consent form at the beginning of the study, all participants will be given the contact information for my mentor. Describe how you would report an incident of harm if such an incident occurred. There should be no harm done in this study. It is an important subject with day-to-day value (Monroe, 1978)

All participants show their initial consent to participate in the study by willingly contacting the facilitator to be a part of the study. By voluntarily showing up to the focus group, consent is shown. All participants will then sign a written consent form prior to participation in the study and all forms will be placed in an envelope so as to maintain confidentiality of the subjects. After each focus group, all consent forms will be placed in a folder apart from the materials used to collect data from participants during the study. (Monroe, 1978)

The methods for protecting the identity of the individual participants.

All consent forms will be held separate from the data collected therefore disconnecting data from the participants' names. The tapes used for

recording will be used only until fully transcribed and will then be destroyed so the voices of participants will no longer be able to be used to identify the individual (Monroe, 1978).

All data will initially be recorded on audiotapes. The facilitator will keep the tapes in a lock-box until they are fully transcribed. Once they have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed and thrown away. The transcribed focus group discussions will be saved on a private computer to which only the facilitator has access. Once the study has been completed, all transcriptions will be held in a lock box separate from the individual consent forms (Monroe, 1978).

The category peer was analyzed using t-test analysis to determine how the variable age affected the relationship of this risk factor to gang membership. This category was statistically significant for all age groups and thus is highly associated with gang membership regardless of the age of the individual (Sharpe, 2000).

It is important to note that the ages used in the current study, were the participant's age when completing the questionnaire, not the age when joining a gang. However, the results reveal that the risk factors for gang membership are affected by the age of the individual and thus offer insight into possible prevention and intervention strategies. The findings should be viewed cautiously as the impact of risk factors may have changed as the individual aged. Therefore, the study should be repeated to determine the relevance of these findings to additional individuals with varying ages and time involved in gang activities (Sharpe, 2000).

Ethical Considerations

All participants mentioned in this study will be composite participant studies. In no circumstances will actual participant material be used or presented in order to protect the confidentiality of individuals and group members with whom is in this study.

Reference:

Battin, S. R., Hill, K. G., Abbott, R. D., Catalano, R. F., & Hawkins, J. D. (1998). The contribution of gang membership to delinquency beyond delinquent friends. *Criminology*, 36(1), 93-115. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/library/capella.edu/docview/220690795?accountid=27965>

Benak, R. (1977). The relationship between alienation and middle class juvenile delinquency. Retrieved May 5, 2014 from <http://search.proquest.com/library/capella.edu/docview/302857507?accountid=27965>. (302857507).

Monroe, C. C. (1978). PREDICTION OF ADOLESCENT ALIENATION. (Order No. 7905178, Marquette University). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 106-106 p. Retrieved May 5, 2014 from <http://search.proquest.com/library/capella.edu/docview/302899218?accountid=27965>. (302899218).

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