

SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VIDEO
VISITATION PROGRAMMING IN A JAIL SETTING: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

by

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DEDICATION

To Mom, Dad, and Sean,
who encouraged me to go on every adventure,
especially this one.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to understand how sheriff's deputies at the Ada County Sheriff's Office perceived the implementation of a remote video visitation program at the Ada County Jail, as well as what the deputies believed to be the strengths and weaknesses of the system in terms of how it affects their daily job, and inmates and their families. Anecdotal evidence suggests that video visitation can positively impact the work of sheriff's deputies by decreasing the amount of time they spend processing visitors into the facility and moving inmates around the facility. An exploratory secondary data analysis was conducted by reviewing data collected during interviews with 10 sheriff's deputies. Five main themes emerged from the data: the challenges of in-person visitation, the transition from in-person visitation to video visitation, the effect the use of video visitation has had on deputies, the effect deputies believe video visitation has had on inmates and their families, and the improvements the deputies hope to see in the future. According to the deputies, the transition from in-person to video visitation was relatively smooth and has taken away most of the visitation responsibilities from the deputies while providing greater access to visitation for inmates and their families. Overall, the sheriff's deputies reported that they are satisfied with the use of video visitation as a replacement for in-person visitation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
LITERATURE REVIEW	4
Correctional Facility Visitation.....	4
Strengths: Behavioral Management, Recidivism, and Family Interactions.....	4
Weaknesses: Long Waits, Short Visits, Staff Interactions, and Travel	7
Video Visitation	10
Origins.....	10
Strengths: Inmates, Families, and the Staff	12
Weaknesses: Cost, Personal Connection, and Troubleshooting	15
Staff Buy-In and the Implementation of New Programming.....	17
History of the Organizational Structure within Correctional Facilities	17
Overcoming Employee Resistance to Change	20
Correctional Officer Stress	22
Summary	24
METHODOLOGY	26
Data Collection	28

Confidentiality and Consent	29
Research Questions	29
Data Analysis and Coding	31
FINDINGS	34
The Challenges of In-Person Visitation	35
“It was like a nightmare plane ride or something”	35
The Switch from In-Person to Video Visitation: Transition and Training	39
“It was just a temporary Band-Aid for the real system, Telmate, coming in.”	39
“No training. My coach was like ‘this is Telmate, this is how you get on.’” ..	42
How the Switch Impacted the Deputies’ Job: Movement, Monitoring Videos and Troubleshooting	45
“ We don’t have to have deputies in charge of coordinating the inmate traffic for visitation.”	46
“ We just say ‘Oh Sorry, Telmate knows about it.’”	48
“ It kind of goes on your time schedule and you can really focus on any details of it if need be.”	51
How the System has Impacted the Inmates: Inmate Behavior and Family Access	56
“ It’s a good management tool as far as discipline if they’re not behaving right, take that away from them”	57
“ And for the inmates it’s hopefully, hopefully it’s their outlet to stay relaxed, try to stay out of trouble”	61
“ They’re either going to be a repeat offender or they’re not, I don’t see how their communication with family while they’re here has anything to do with it.”	61
“ It does provide flexibility to the family, makes it easier for them.”	65
“ They can do the same thing, where it’s kind of like a Facebook.”	69

Improvements	73
“I think sky’s the limit...there’s always room for improvement”	73
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	78
Study Limitations.....	86
Future Research and Policy Implications	87
REFERENCES	91
APPENDIX A.....	98
Interview Questions: Stakeholders	98
APPENDIX B	99
Interview Questions: Detention Staff.....	99
APPENDIX C	100
IRB Approval Letter	100

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACJ	Ada County Jail
ACSO	Ada County Sheriff's Office
COs	Correctional Officers
IVV	Inmate Video Visitation

INTRODUCTION

The 1960s was a decade full of political and social turmoil throughout the United States. Many racially and morally charged campaigns were running throughout the country resulting in more media reports on more crimes of violence than ever (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). Consequently, there was a growth in public concern for how the criminal justice system was handling punishment. Beginning in the 1970s, public support for the use of rehabilitation fell and Americans began to call for a more punitive response to crime (Travis et al., 2014). As such, throughout the 70s and 80s, and until very recent years, the use of incarceration continued to grow exponentially throughout America (Travis et al., 2014). The United States has one of the highest imprisonment rates in the world, incarcerating nearly 707 per 100,000 people each year as of 2012 (International Center for Prison Studies, 2013). According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, at the end of 2014, 2,224,400 individuals were imprisoned in both federal and state prisons, as well as in local jails (Carson, 2015; Kaeble, Glaze, Tsoutis, & Minton, 2015). More importantly for this study though, are the large numbers of those released from correctional institutions each year. Most of those who are sentenced to prison or jail will eventually be released into society; as an example, approximately 636,000 adults were released from correctional institutions in 2014 (Carson, 2015). Since a significant number of individuals is released each year, it is important to understand how correctional agencies and personnel are helping to prepare inmates for their reentry into society.

Several factors may affect an inmate's successful reentry into society, one of which is the utilization of visitation programs throughout the duration of their incarceration (Bales & Mears, 2008). This reflects the reality that in many institutions throughout the country, reentry programming begins while the person is still incarcerated (Petersilia, 2003). Researchers have claimed the use of inmate visitation programs will help offenders succeed once they are released into society as it allows them to maintain important social bonds with family members (Applegate, 2001; Christian, 2005; Duwe & Clark, 2011; Mears, Cochran, Siennick, & Bales, 2012). The maintenance of these social bonds can help offenders effectively reintegrate into society, as family members may be able to assist offenders in finding employment and housing upon release.

An increasing number of studies have been conducted seeking to understand how visitation may affect offender reentry (Bales & Mears, 2008; Duwe & Clark, 2011; Mears et al., 2012). Theoretically, if empirical studies can link visitation to decreased rates of recidivism, providing offenders with opportunities to visit their loved ones should lead to less institutional overcrowding and an overall decrease in the cost of running individual facilities. These changes could ultimately affect how correctional officers (COs) function within their workplace, as they currently must manage large numbers of inmates in relatively small spaces. Further, correctional staff are charged with running visitation programs day in and day out; as such, it is essential to gain insight into how visitation affects correctional staff. As of this writing (February 2016), there are no studies examining the importance of COs' perceptions in regards to running various visitation programming, making this study relevant to today's literature, or lack thereof.

While administrators have the final say on the facilitation of visitation programs, it is important, as noted above, to understand how these programs affect the work of line-level COs who interact with inmates on a daily basis. As with other programming, the structure of visitation programs and policies continues to adapt with the times, resulting in new responsibilities for COs. Throughout the past two decades, and as technology systems have advanced, visitation programs have begun a slow shift from in-person to online video visitation systems (Phillips, 2012). While video visitation is still relatively new within the United States, it is important to understand how the transition from in-person to video visitation has been perceived and experienced by COs.¹ The current study seeks to provide insight into the transition from in-person visitation to video visitation at a local jail in Boise, Idaho, through analyzing interviews conducted with sheriff's deputies. The following section will discuss the use of both in-person and video visitation, as well as how correctional organizations can help gain employee 'buy-in' to programming changes.

¹ This author will use the terms 'correctional officers' (COs) and 'sheriff's deputies' interchangeably throughout this text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Correctional Facility Visitation

Visitation programs are the primary way in which prisoners can interact with the public during their incarceration. The programs have wide-ranging effects on both inmates and their families, in addition to the correctional staff who facilitate the daily operations of the institutions. For example, it is believed visitation programs are related to reduced recidivism and increased institutional safety and security, both of which affect COs' abilities to effectively do their jobs (Boudin, Stutz, & Littman, 2013; Tewksbury & DeMichelle, 2009). As with any program, visitation has both strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths: Behavioral Management, Recidivism, and Family Interactions

Visitation is often viewed as a privilege for inmates, rather than a right. For this reason, the opportunity for visitation helps keep inmates in line while they are incarcerated. According to the National Institute of Corrections (2009), there are multiple components to the successful management of inmate behavior, such as ensuring the facilities' utilization of effective risk/needs assessments, making sure inmates remain safe, and also, guaranteeing inmates' basic needs are met. Reportedly, one aspect of meeting inmates' basic needs is to ensure their social needs are met. Inmates who are able to remain in contact with family and friends, whether through visitation, by allowing them to send and receive mail, or through telephone access, are more likely to maintain compliance with correctional officer instructions (National Institute of Corrections, 2009).

Thus, opportunities for visitation help with prison management in that inmates are less likely to violate institutional rules if they know they can look forward to interactions with their loved ones (Maruna & Toch, 2005). As a correctional administrator interviewed by Murdoch, King, and O'Very (in progress) explained, if inmates view visitation as a privilege that could be taken away for bad behavior, they are more likely to follow the rules of the institution. Furthermore, they are more likely to interact positively with staff because their basic human needs are being met (Hutchinson, Keller, & Reid, 2009). Conversely, if the inmates do not view visitation practices as fair, or if inmates simply do not have access to visitation, they may be less likely to follow the instructions of the COs. As will become clear in the following section, well-run visitation programs may prove important for the well-being of both COs and inmates.

Losing ties to the outside world can be very detrimental to inmates and can negatively affect their reentry (Adams, 1992). According to social bond theory, prosocial ties may help to prevent offender recidivism upon release as they insulate inmates from the negative influences that led them to commit crime in the first place (Bales & Mears, 2008; Hirschi, 1969). How then, does this idea relate to that of visitation? Glaser (1964) claimed that human motivation stems from interactions with other individuals. Theoretically then, visitation programs that keep offenders tied to positive influences outside of the facility can motivate inmates to change their behavior. The idea that visitation relates to decreased rates of recidivism is not a topic that has yet been grounded in an abundance of empirical research, nevertheless, some literature notes that the maintenance of prosocial bonds while incarcerated may lead to lower rates of recidivism upon release (Hirschi, 1969; Mears et al., 2012; Phillips, 2012).

One empirical study analyzed how both the type and amount of visitation inmates received affected their recidivism rates. Mears et al. (2012) reviewed recidivism rates after three years for a sample of inmates from a Florida jail who had served 12 months or less. Interestingly, the researchers found that in-person visitation did reduce overall recidivism rates for those inmates who received at least three visits throughout their time in jail. Mears et al. (2012) then compared types of recidivism and found that those inmates who received at least three visits had lower rates of recidivism for property crimes. According to the study, inmates who received visits in jail likely felt less of an urge to commit crimes because they were able to rely on family members post-release due to the social bonds they were able to maintain during their incarceration. If it is found that visitation does decrease the likelihood of recidivism, administrators may find it useful to increase the amount of visitation inmates receive within a facility (Duwe & Clark, 2011; Mears et al., 2012). In summation, an offender's social bonds, maintained through visitation, may insulate them from the urge and need to commit additional crimes upon their release into the community.

While the information presented above details how the maintenance of family ties does benefit inmates, it is important to remember that visitation can also be beneficial for family members. Without visitation, Arditti (2005) notes the incarceration of a loved one can create a feeling similar to what is perceived after the death of a loved one. Arditti (2005) explains that despite the fact the offender is technically still living, they are unable to freely communicate or interact with their family (Arditti, 2005). This becomes increasingly concerning for children who must cope with the ambiguous loss of a parent. Visitation helps families, and especially children, cope with the loss of a loved one

because they are still able to maintain a personal connection (Arditti, 2003; Mears et al., 2012). While families appreciate having the opportunity for visitation, the question then becomes, do families' enjoy the process of visitation as much as the inmates do?

In 2001, Applegate interviewed 200 individuals who had visited a local prison in central Florida and asked questions related to their support for visitation programs. According to the survey, 93 percent of the sample supported visitation because they believed maintaining social ties was important for both parties involved (Applegate, 2001). While families support the idea of visitation, there is some evidence that the actual practice of visiting a facility can be quite strenuous on loved ones; this idea will be further discussed in the following section. Nevertheless, it is central to understand how families feel about visitation not only in regards to their interactions with inmates but also in relation to their interactions with the COs who process them into the facility.

As there is no research directly related to this topic, it can be assumed that if the family views visitation in a positive light, they are more likely to also be on good behavior and maintain compliance with visitation policies throughout their time in the facility; this compliance with institutional rules becomes important when considering how families and COs interact during visitation. Actually having families in the facilities has proven to be challenging for COs. As will be discussed in the following section, visiting a prison or a jail can often mean long wait times, short visits, and negative staff/family interactions (Christian, 2005; Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009).

Weaknesses: Long Waits, Short Visits, Staff Interactions, and Travel

There is no doubt that inmates must overcome many pains of imprisonment while incarcerated; not regularly seeing their family and friends is considered a major one

(Sykes, 1958). While the previous section noted that families appreciate having the opportunity to visit, there are still challenges they face when traveling to see their loved ones. As more and more individuals are processed into correctional facilities, there are more and more families wishing to visit loved ones behind bars. Logistically, this has proven difficult for both families as well as COs.

Families tend to report that they are negatively affected by long wait times, high security measures, and short visit times (Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009). Families must often wait for long stretches of time to visit their loved ones for only a short period of time, lasting on average between 30 to 90 minutes (Arditti, 2003). Arditti (2003) found that more than half (55.6%; n=56) of family members who were surveyed did not like going to visit partly because of the long wait times but also due to the negative treatment by COs.

When visiting a facility, family members spend a good portion of time interacting with COs. For this reason, it is important to understand how family members perceive their interactions with COs throughout the duration of their visit. Again, minimal research has been conducted related specifically to visitation, even less of which has focused explicitly on how family members and COs interact during visitation periods. Nevertheless, a few studies have been conducted in which the researchers asked family members what their interactions with staff were like throughout in-person visitation. These studies have found that visitors were dissatisfied with COs throughout the duration of their visit (Arditti, 2003; Davies, 1980; Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009).

Overwhelmingly, family members who participated in Sturges and Al-Khattar's (2009) study reported they had negative interactions with staff because the sheriff's

deputies were perceived as treating family members like they are inmates as well. Both the physical environment of the facility as well as the policies that regulate visitation also influence families. For example, families reported that overcrowded waiting rooms provided uncomfortable seating and stated visitation policies, such as those requiring the inmates to meet behind glass, created an “unpleasant” meeting environment not conducive to the maintenance of family bonds (Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009, p. 484).

Visitors in Arditti’s (2003) study perceived the treatment by staff to be both harsh and disrespectful, and that the staff was especially hard on children. Sheriff’s deputies were perceived this way because they were noted as being “unexpressive” and virtually silent when interacting with family members (Arditti, 2003, p. 127). Just as with any experience, there are two sides to every story and the COs’ side is one that is often overlooked. In 2000, Sturges and Al-Khattar stated that families often do not understand that safety and security are the most important concerns for COs, which may lead them to act in what is perceived as a harsh and disrespectful manner. For this reason, studies of staff perceptions are equally as important as those investigating the perceptions of both families and inmates.

Regardless of whether the inmate is at a local jail or a distant prison, the family must take into consideration whether or not they can afford the cost (in both time and money) to travel to the facility (Arditti, 2003; Hairston, 1998; Tewksbury & DeMichelle, 2009). According to Arditti (2003), even family members who travel an average of 18 miles to a jail find it hard to make the time to visit. Relatedly, Christian (2005) discussed a case study of a program that helped families visit loved ones in a New York prison. For 40 dollars, families are able to reserve a seat on a bus that will take them from New York

City to a maximum security institution about 265 miles away. In total, the family members travel for 24 hours, and are only allotted 30 minutes to visit their loved one. As mentioned previously, COs must interact with potentially sleep-deprived and unhappy family members throughout the duration of their visit, so it is important to understand how visitation programs affect COs.

Visitation programs have shifted to try and make the process run more smoothly for the staff, and also to make the process easier on family members. In the following section, the types of changes that have occurred in regards to visitation will be discussed. As technology has advanced, the possibilities for visitation programs have shifted as well. While reading the following section it will be important to understand that each time correctional administrators change how a program functions, the line-level COs must also adapt to that change.

Video Visitation

Origins

As discussed in the previous section, there are many challenges related to in-person visitation programs for prison and jail administrators, staff, and the visitors themselves. In an effort to overcome these difficulties, correctional administrators have made changes to visitation programming, which has ultimately resulted in the use of video visitation programs throughout the United States. Video visitation, which was first implemented in Pennsylvania in 1995 (Boudin, 2013; Fulcher, 2014; & Wagner, 2015), is “the use of videoconferencing software and equipment to allow inmates to visit family and friends via the Internet as opposed to face-to-face” (Fulcher, 2014, p. 92). To date, there are three types of video visitation including: regional, on-site, and remote video

visitation. In 1995, Pennsylvania established a regional visitation site in the hopes that families would be able to travel less distance to visit their loved ones. At the regional site, family members travel to a third party facility where they are able to talk with their loved ones via a computer screen (Loper & Coleman, 2014).

On-site video visitation programs have also been implemented throughout the past decade. Here, families still travel to the facility; however, they do not enter the actual secure portion of the jail or prison. Rather, they are able to talk and visit with their loved one through a computer screen that is located on the prison or jail site (Grohs, 2013). These on-site visitation kiosks and buildings help prevent the infiltration of contraband into the facility, which increases the overall level of security within the facility (Boudin et al., 2013; Philips, 2012). The third type of video visitation, and the newest to the field of corrections, is that of online, or remote, visitation, which allows inmates to visit with their families from the comfort of their own home. Inmates and families are able to interact over telecommunications programs similar to Skype or FaceTime (Rabuy & Wagner, 2015; Rogers, 2013).

Video visitation programs were offered as a solution to some of the weaknesses of in-person visitation, such as the cost to travel to the facility, the long wait periods, and the negative interactions with staff (Fulcher, 2014; Rabuy & Wager, 2015). As the use of video visitation programs has increased throughout America, more and more COs have had to adapt to new procedures within their facilities. It has become increasingly important to understand how these officers perceive and adapt to these changes. The researcher was unable to find any peer-reviewed empirical studies that tested the effectiveness, use, or implementation of the video-visitation programs, let alone how staff

have adapted to this new technology. Similar to in-person visitation, there is anecdotal evidence, in the form of non-peer reviewed articles, classified as grey literature, that suggests there are both strengths and weaknesses to video visitation programs. The following paragraphs highlight the benefits and downfalls of video visitation systems operating in correctional facilities across the country. It is important to note there is extremely limited research conducted within jail environments, so much of what will be discussed is in relation to prisons.

Strengths: Inmates, Families, and the Staff

After reviewing the anecdotal information available regarding the benefits of video visitation, the results can be divided into two main themes. The first of which is related to how the video visitation programs benefit both the family and the inmate. The second, and the one most relevant to this study, considers how the programs assist correctional staff in their daily work.

Similar to the strengths for in-person visitation, video visitation has been noted as an additional tool for families and inmates to stay connected during a period of incarceration (Johnson & Hesse, 2005). In the previous section it was stated that families must pay for the cost of travel to the facility, which depending on the distance to the institution or the family's level of income, may prove to be a challenge. Video visitation allows the family to travel less, or no distance at all, and still remain in contact with their loved one (Boudin et al., 2013). Additionally, the prison environment does not become 'normalized' for children who are able to utilize video visitation programs as they are not subjected to the negative environment of a prison or a jail and are less inclined to believe that going to prison or jail is just a normal part of life (Key Stakeholder as cited in

Murdoch, et al., in progress). Furthermore, children are able to communicate with their parents from within the comfort of their own home and do not have to worry about being reprimanded by a CO for unintentionally violating a rule.

When considering families who do live close to a prison or jail, there are still some groups who are unable to visit such as the disabled and elderly. For those who have the proper technology, video visitation allows these individuals to maintain contact with their loved one. In this respect, video visitation allows inmates and family members to remain in contact in ways that in-person visitation would not have allowed for (Boudin et al., 2013). Ultimately maintaining contact with the outside world, even when incarcerated a great distance from home, is beneficial for inmates because they are able to uphold those support systems. As discussed earlier, family ties and prosocial bonds are believed to help protect an offender from recidivating upon their release (Rabuy & Wagner, 2015). Finally, these prosocial bonds and having the privilege of using video visitation are believed to incentivize inmates to maintain compliance with institutional policies and COs' instructions.

While it is clear that video visitation offers many benefits for inmates and their families, it is also important to discuss the additional benefits of virtual visitation for COs and administrators. Inmates who view visitation as a privilege are more likely to follow the rules within a facility because they know if they do not, their visitation privileges may be restricted (Rabuy & Wagner, 2015). Inmates know that video visitation allows for longer stretches of time in which they can visit with the family and so this gives them something to look forward to throughout their time behind bars (Grohs, 2013). Inmates are allotted more time for visitation because virtual visitation does not require a large

number of staff to coordinate the visitation. Rather, families can sign up for a time and the staff is simply expected to make sure the inmate is sitting at the video kiosk at the correct time (Rogers, 2013). Video visitation also saves the COs time because they no longer have to process extensive background checks or force individuals to wait for long periods of time to visit the inmate (Grohs, 2013; Johnson & Hesse, 2005; Loper & Coleman, 2015).

Anecdotal evidence supports the idea that institutional security is also increased when correctional administrators decide to implement video visits. Since no one from the community enters the facility for video visitation, it seems logical that less contraband enters the facility making for a more secure correctional environment (Boudin et al., 2013). Relatedly, COs are not expected to transport inmates around the facility as frequently, which also increases security levels within the institution because they no longer have to worry about mixing offender populations who are not allowed to be together (Boudin et al., 2013; Rabuy & Wagner, 2015; Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009).

Video visitation has been surrounded by some controversy regarding the cost of the program. From the administration's perspective, the cost of the programming can be considered a strength; it becomes controversial when discussing the cost in relation to inmates and their families. Video visitation helps save the facility money and ultimately lowers prison and jail costs by preventing the need to hire additional staff to help run visitation hours or to help move inmates around the facility (Phillips, 2012; Rabuy & Wagner, 2015). Meanwhile, not only do inmates or their families often have to pay for the actual visits, but the family members may also have to purchase a new computer with

a camera. The controversy thus stems from the fact that the institution may be able to generate revenue by charging for the program.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) does not regulate video visitation programs in either prisons or jails, so correctional administrators are free to charge whatever fee they wish (Loper & Coleman, 2014).² As such, costs vary between jurisdictions and in some jurisdictions, inmates may even receive a certain number of free visits before being charged for additional visits. Often, correctional facilities will contract with private companies in order to offer video visitation and these private companies require prison and jail administrators to charge inmates varying rates for the use of their services. For example, the company Telmate charges anywhere from 33 to 66 cents per minute while another company, Securus, charges anywhere from 50 cents to \$1.50 per minute for a video visit (Rabuy & Wager, 2015). While these fees can be perceived as a strength for correctional administrators, they are often viewed in a negative light from both the family and inmate perspective.

Weaknesses: Cost, Personal Connection, and Troubleshooting

Many inmates and their families come from lower socioeconomic classes and cannot always afford expensive video visits. As an additional example of the cost for these programs, in Virginia, inmates and their families pay \$15 dollars for a 30-minute visit or \$30 dollars for a 60-minute visit. Meanwhile, in Rockville, Indiana, inmates are charged \$12.50 for a 30-minute visit (Phillips, 2012). While these numbers may seem insignificant to some, they can be quite strenuous for some families. A special report

² At this time, the FCC is seeking feedback and comments on the use, cost, and rates of video visitation. They hope the feedback will give insight into whether or not video visitation could be used as a replacement for traditional in-person visitation (Wigfield, 2015).

done by the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that in 2012 state governments spent approximately \$2.3 million on indigent defense, suggesting that many families cannot afford expensive video visitation programs, new computers, or the monthly cost of internet (US Department of Justice, 2015). While the revenue from video visitation is beneficial for the administrations, the cost may not always be feasible for families.

When it is affordable, families do enjoy the opportunity to use video visitation because they can maintain a connection despite the distance between their residence and the facility where their loved one is being detained. However, some have reported that they are dissatisfied with the actual technology that is offered; stating, in general, that video visits are of poor quality; the image is pixelated and tends to freeze in the middle of a call (Rabuy & Wagner, 2015; Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009). Furthermore, the cameras are placed above eye level, so inmates and their families cannot look directly into one another's eyes. This may lead to the family member feeling more stress because they are not able to see the inmate's physical body to make sure they are healthy and unharmed (Rabuy & Wagner, 2015). A study conducted by Sturges and Al-Khattar (2009) found that of 281 interviewees, 66 percent of respondents felt 'dissatisfied' with the visitation program due to the unclear image and poor quality of the video.

As one of the goals of the criminal justice system is to reduce crime rates, partly through lowering recidivism rates, it is important to maintain programming that will help achieve these outcomes. As technology continues to advance, it is reasonable to believe that video visitation may become more common in correctional facilities (Loper & Coleman, 2014). These changes will naturally affect inmates and their families, but it is imperative to remember that COs are also affected when policies and processes change. If

one wishes for a smooth transition, it may prove useful to ensure the COs are informed of the changes and are supportive of the changes. As will be discussed in the following section however, it can often prove challenging for correctional administrators to gain the support of COs in regards to large-scale changes.

Staff Buy-In and the Implementation of New Programming

It is no secret that the field of criminal justice has grown exponentially over the past 40 years in both inmate numbers, staff numbers, as well as the total number of facilities. Despite the expansion in both inmate and facility numbers, resources and financial support for these institutions has not increased at a similar rate (Slate, Vogel, & Johnson, 2001; Wright, 1998). Corrections departments are expected to do more with fewer resources; as such, departments have begun to implement new policies and programs to help save costs (Porporino, 2003; Slate et al., 2001). Unfortunately, the nature of corrections work is one that is often resistant to change, meaning management must figure out ways to gain staff support when they implement change even when resources are minimal (Porporino, 2003). Since the purpose of this study is to review staff perceptions of the implementation of a new video visitation program, which will be discussed in later sections, it is important to discuss how corrections facilities are organized, what makes the personnel working within them resistant to change, and how this resistance can be overcome.

History of the Organizational Structure within Correctional Facilities

Organizational research has been of interest since the early 1900s (Wright, Saylor, Gilman & Camp, 1997). The research assimilated to date has led to a debate posing the question, does giving employees more or less autonomy and decision-making ability

increase or decrease work productivity and job satisfaction (Kohn, 1976; Taylor, 1923; Weber, 1947)? In 1923, Taylor claimed that less decision-making ability would lead to more satisfaction and job productivity among employees because they would not have the stress of making potentially difficult decisions. Meanwhile, Marx (1964) claimed that the lack of control found in capitalist organizations would lead to the alienation of workers and their ultimate dissatisfaction with employment.

During the 1970s and 1980s, two research camps were running parallel to one another; one claiming that more job autonomy was needed in corrections, and one stating less decision-making ability should be afforded. As early as 1973, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals began to advocate for the participation of line level staff in decision-making procedures. Conversely, the 1987 study conducted by DiIulio concluded that all prisons should operate in a bureaucratic manner and that no line-level employees should have any level of discretion in their day-to-day work. DiIulio (1987) suggested that if COs were allowed job autonomy, the facilities would become disorganized and ineffective at controlling inmates.

Ultimately, due to the high stakes nature of corrections work, many administrators have chosen to follow Taylor's (1923) model and do not allow employees much say in programming decisions (DiIulio, 1987). Over time, the decision was made that prisons and jails would operate in a strict, hierarchical, almost paramilitary fashion. The hypothesis being that in order to maintain control of inmates, strict policies and guidelines would need to be adhered to, and therefore, minimal input into decision-making by staff would be afforded (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Wright et al., 1997).

A shift was seen in the findings as research continued throughout the mid to late 1990s. Researchers concluded that job autonomy, defined as “a practice or set of practices, involving the delegation of responsibility down the hierarchy so as to give employees increased decision-making authority in respect to their primary work tasks” (Leach, Wall, & Jackson, 2003, p. 28), was positively related to productivity and job satisfaction (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Ross & Reskin, 1992). Ultimately, as the 20th century came to a close, many findings pointed to the idea that greater employee job control would be beneficial for organizational success.

Expanding on the research conducted in the early 20th century, Lambert and Paoline (2005) further explained that work environment does have an effect on staff in regards to job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational commitment. In 2009, Lambert et al. conducted a study on supervisory consideration (the level at which the supervisor takes into account both employee needs and their well-being), supervisory structure (the level to which the supervisor directs employee job efforts to meet both the goals and objectives of the organization), and training. The researchers were trying to gain a better understanding of how these three factors could affect employee job stress, satisfaction, and their overall commitment to the organization. In regards to training employees, the level at which a supervisor considers their employee’s well-being was found to have a higher statistically signification relationship to stress than did the amount of direct supervision an employee receives (Lambert et al., 2009).

Organizations that provide strong training programs and those where supervisors take into account employee needs will ultimately have lower levels of job stress and higher levels of organizational commitment. In 2011, Johnsen, Granheim and Helgesen

theorized that when deputies who work directly with inmates are given the chance to establish collaborative networks with management, the facility would operate more efficiently. The researchers' hypothesis was supported in their study when they found that staff in facilities that had 'flat' lines of communication tended to report higher levels of satisfaction because line-level staff were able to communicate more effectively with administrators and inmates (Johnsen et al., 2011).

These findings are relevant in terms of the successful management of prison and jail programming, including video visitation. If administrators consider employee desires during the implementation of new programming, they are likely to have more employees report higher levels of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, even if deputies work in an agency with managerial practices such as those described above, commitment to programming change is still inherently difficult within correctional settings.

Overcoming Employee Resistance to Change

Generally, new programming implemented in a correctional setting is aimed at changing offender behavior to lower their chances of recidivating. While video visitation is not necessarily aimed solely at changing inmate behavior, it is still useful to know how difficult change often is within correctional settings. According to Porporino (2003), the resources available in corrections will never match the actual needs of the clients; therefore, employees ultimately claim that 'nothing works' to change offender behavior or decrease recidivism rates. For this reason, it can prove difficult to gain employee buy-in to the implementation of new programs. Change certainly is difficult within any organization, but especially within corrections due to the strict and bureaucratic nature of the work. Nevertheless, there is research that suggests if management follows certain

evidence-based practices, they can help staff to both understand and support the purpose of the change (Porporino, 2003).

According to Armenakis and Bedeian (1999), the key to either the success or the failure of change within an institution is how staff come to acquire the knowledge and make sense of the change. Staff need time to make sense of the change and resolve any ambiguity they may feel towards it. Stated differently, the change cannot be pushed quickly through an institution if management wishes to gain employee buy-in (Porporino, 2003). Furthermore, change will not occur if the need for the change is not explained, if there is little significance attached to the need for change, or if staff make any initial negative predictions about the outcomes of the change, in either policy or procedure (Porporino, 2003).

As stated by Porporino (2003), three things need to happen if management wishes to gain employee support for their change initiatives. First, management must fully and unambiguously explain both the reason for the change, as well as their plan to implement the program from the very beginning. It is important that the implementation of the new program is consistent and continuous so that staff may see the benefit of the program over time. Consistency helps management show staff that the quality of the program is important (Porporino, 2003). Second, management must overcome the resistance from staff by listening to any disputes about the evidence behind the program and then reflecting those ambiguities back to staff so they know they are understood. This supports the idea that management does in fact care about employee input in the decision-making process (Castle & Martin, 2006; Lambert et al., 2009; Slate et al., 2001). Staff need to be trained effectively on how the program works and in that process, must be given

knowledge about when, with whom, and how the program will work in the future (Lambert & Paoline, 2005; Porporino, 2003).

Thirdly, if management wishes to gain employee support for change, they need to have a strong program design from the outset. The design team should take the time to prepare a high quality program to present to staff so that it runs smoothly from the start (Porporino, 2003). Hypothetically, if administrators follow the above guidelines in relation to the implementation of video visitation, the process will be almost seamless in that COs will better support the use of the new system. Relatedly, employees will also feel lower levels of stress because they felt prepared for the change.

Correctional Officer Stress

Stress has been defined in many different ways throughout correctional research, but in general, it is considered the inability of a worker to handle the different stressors they encounter in their workplace (Blix, Cruise, Mitchel, & Blix, 1994; Gershon, Barocas, Canton, Li, & Valhov, 2009). Stress is important to study because high levels of occupational strain can lead to elevated levels of employee burnout (McCarty, Zhao, & Garland, 2007). Reportedly, burnout can develop as a prolonged response to stressors at work, which can then become detrimental to an organization because employees will begin to feel higher levels of job dissatisfaction leading to absenteeism, premature retirement, and attrition (Hassell, Archbold, & Stichman, 2010; McCarty, et al., 2007).

As mentioned previously, correctional organizations have historically been structured bureaucratically, which means employees have had a minimal amount of participation in the daily functioning of departments (Lambert et al., 2006; Violanti & Aron, 1994). A lack of participation in decision-making has been found to increase stress

among COs (Lambert, Hogan, & Allen, 2006; Slate & Vogel, 1997). Other research shows that employees who feel like their voice has been heard are also likely to feel more committed to the organization and less overall stress (Slate et al., 2001). Various factors such as dangerousness of the job, role strain, and role ambiguity have also been found to contribute to stress among COs (Lambert et al., 2009).

Similar to what was detailed above, correctional research conducted in the early 2000s revealed that organizational factors, such as management style and decision-making abilities, correlated with higher stress levels than did job-related factors, such as institutional overcrowding and type of unit in regards to security level (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004; Zhao He, & Lovrich, 2002). Based upon all of the information presented above, and since the use of video visitation would likely have a significant impact on a deputy's job, it can be assumed that in order to create an environment for the successful implementation of video visitation, line-level COs must feel they are able to communicate effectively with management regarding how the program is developed. The smooth running of these programs would prove essential to correctional officer stress levels as the use of video visitation programs may become a large part of the daily job tasks required of deputies since they are the individuals interacting with inmates most frequently (Lambert, et al., 2006). The implementation of a ground breaking and new program, such as video visitation, would likely have a significant impact on the day-to-day work of COs; this has the potential to increase stress for officers, and it is therefore important to study how this change is best implemented in corrections, in addition to what practices help reduce correctional employee stress levels.

Summary

Theoretically, the running of in person visitation programs may cause increased levels of stress for sheriff's deputies due to their interactions with inmates and their families. The officers must make sure the facility stays safe and secure, but they must also interact with the public, who as discussed earlier, might be tired, impatient, etc. from lengthy travels to the facility and uncomfortable being in an overcrowded lobby at a jail or prison. Research findings demonstrate that officers are perceived by the public as cold and uncaring when they interact during visitation, which can cause increased levels of strain for COs if they are negatively affected by these stereotypes (Arditti, 2003; Key Stakeholder as cited in Murdoch, et al., in progress).

As discussed earlier, initial, anecdotal evidence suggests IVV may be beneficial for COs because it is believed to decrease the amount of time COs interact with the public, which may positively affect their levels of job-related stress (Lambert et al., 2006; Sturges & Al-Khattar, 2009). Relatedly, video visitation is said to allow inmates increased opportunities for access to visitation. If inmates are able to maintain prosocial bonds with loved ones while they are incarcerated, it is possible their chances of recidivating may decrease, and further, that they will be more inclined to follow institutional rules, thus making COs' jobs less stressful (Hirschi, 1969; Mears et al., 2012; Phillips, 2012). It is for these reasons, among others (e.g., cost savings), that facilities have begun to implement video visitation programming.

If administrators hope for the successful implementation of the program, they need to understand how to train their staff and further, how the use of the program affects their staff, as they will be the ones charged with facilitating the program. Based on the

above-mentioned studies, correctional administrators are likely to have more success implementing new video visitation programs if COs feel they have had a say in the implementation of the program and that they received timely information and training about the program. But ultimately, video visitation is still an extremely new programming idea within the field of corrections, which means it is important to conduct multiple studies to increase our understanding of its effects and to create knowledge surrounding best practices for implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to better understand staff perceptions—Ada County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) deputies' perceptions—of the implementation of an online, remote video visitation program implemented at the Ada County Jail (ACJ) in 2010. It was mentioned in the previous section that there is a limited scope of peer-reviewed research regarding in-person visitation. Relatedly, as of the time of this writing, there are currently no empirical studies testing the effectiveness, use, or implementation of video-visitation programs in jails, making this study relevant to the advancement of today's correctional literature.

Most of the existing literature focuses on the use of visitation within prison settings and when jails are mentioned, this research often falls into the category of 'grey' literature. Furthermore, a review of the literature has determined that research on staff perceptions of video visitation is virtually non-existent. Given the limited research in this area, an exploratory and qualitative study was deemed most appropriate. No previous research design exists that would have helped guide this research and relatedly, there is currently no available theory to use as the basis for a research question or hypothesis.

According to Babbie (2013), exploratory research is useful when one wishes to (1) gain a deeper understanding of a subject or topic, (2) when they wish to test the realistic ability of conducting a more extensive study, and (3) when one wishes to work on developing new methodological designs for future studies. Generally, the answers to these exploratory research questions are pursued through small case studies or focus

groups with a sample of the population in question. Palys (2003) states that the best way to understand how a group works or feels about something is to study that group specifically and to get in touch with their emotions.

As the original interviews were conducted and transcribed for the purpose of another study, the current study involves secondary data analysis. The original research project was designed to gain a better understanding of the inmate video visitation (IVV) program at ACJ, and while that project provides a general picture of the program, the researchers did not delve deeply into any one component of the implementation of the new system. Secondary data is often analyzed when there is a question regarding a deeper understanding of the primary data that was collected (Babbie, 2013). Secondary data analysis was chosen as the most relevant and useful method of data collection for the project given (1) the researcher's access to the data, (2) the lack of research on IVV, and (3) an overall interest in the topic on the part of the researcher.

The researcher was interested in using the data collected during the evaluation study at ACJ for a variety of reasons; the first of which involves ACJ's reputation as being one of the top jails in the state of Idaho. Ada County Jail has been noted as a well-run facility, one in which management generally has the best interest of staff in mind and one which has been cited by inmates as a top-notch facility (Murdoch et al., in progress). The second reason the researcher was interested in this topic was due to the excitement of being able to study and create additional literature regarding the use of a program that is so new to correctional facilities. Additionally, the researcher has an interest in staff satisfaction and organizational change. Prior to discussing the research questions of this

project, it is important to provide a brief overview of the original study, including the data collection processes utilized by the researchers.

Data Collection

The original study set out to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a video visitation program operating at ACJ (Murdoch et al., in progress). The original researchers invited 10 ACSO sheriff's deputies to participate in individual interviews to discuss their experiences with the implementation of the video visitation system that replaced in-person visitation in the jail in 2010. A Lieutenant at the jail contacted sheriff's deputies to ask if they would be interested in participating in the interviews during one of their shifts. The Lieutenant provided the deputies with a copy of both a recruitment letter that explained the purpose of the project and the informed consent document. Deputies who were willing to participate in the study were able to leave their posts to participate in the approximately 30-minute long interviews that took place in a conference room, away from their peers and the inmate population. The original researchers shared an electronic copy of the transcribed recordings with the researcher of this project for analysis purposes.

Given the small sample size and use of non-probability sampling in the original study, the results of this secondary data analysis will not be generalizable to all sheriff's deputies at Ada County Jail, or elsewhere. However, representativeness is not the main concern, as this is an exploratory study and the main purpose is not to generalize the results but rather to gain a better understanding of this particular topic in this specific setting.

Confidentiality and Consent

This project is of minimal risk to participants since the data being analyzed is of a secondary nature, meaning no interviews with human subjects took place under this design. Furthermore, there were not issues regarding confidentiality, as the only documents containing the true names of the participants were the original informed consent agreements, which were not included in the transcribed data shared by the original researchers.

This researcher was granted permission by ACSO to use the transcriptions of the staff interviews for a secondary data analysis of the video visitation program. Additionally, to ensure the proper research protocols were met, and to ensure confidentiality for participants, this researcher submitted an Institutional Review Board application to the Institutional Review Board at Boise State University.³

Research Questions

Initial interviews⁴ with the key stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of the video visitation at ACJ suggested the transition from in-person to video visitation went relatively smoothly and that there was not much push back from the sheriff's deputies.⁵ This idea runs contrary to much of the current research regarding corrections organizations and the process of change. It has generally been noted that due to the nature of the work within facilities, prisons and jails are often resistant to both organizational and personnel change (Porporino, 2003). The researcher thus began to

³ The Institutional Review Board application was submitted on August 31, 2015 and was approved on September 10, 2015 (Approval #044-SB15-159).

⁴ A list of the key stakeholder interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

⁵ This researcher was a graduate assistant on the original research project responsible for transcribing the interviews with the key stakeholders.

question how staff at ACJ perceived the change from an in-person to a video visitation system and whether they too felt it went as smoothly as management claimed.

As this is an exploratory study, more than one research question came about during the researcher's review of the literature. One cannot simply ask how staff perceived the change of visitation style within their organization and expect to gain a meaningful response. Rather, multiple questions must be considered when evaluating how the new program has affected sheriff's deputies. When considering sheriff's deputies' perceptions, one must question how the use of the system has impacted their daily work, as well as how staff interactions with inmates may have changed based on the program's implementation. Additionally, one may begin to question how managerial practices affected the sheriff's deputies' perceptions of the video visitation program in the jail. From these ideas came the following research questions:

1. How was the management team at ACJ able to get sheriff's deputies' to "buy-in" to the use of the video visitation program?
2. How does the use of the video visitation system affect the daily work of the deputies?
3. How does the staff perceive the use of the video visitation system affecting the inmates in terms of both family ties as well as behavioral management?
4. What strategies do staff recommend to either strengthen or revise the video visitation system?

Ultimately, the goal of this study was, first and foremost, to better understand how the staff at ACJ adapted to the use of the IVV system implemented at ACJ in 2010.

Additionally, this analysis sought to better understand the challenges sheriff's deputies' experienced as the program was implemented. Information regarding the challenges was discovered through discussions surrounding the sheriff's deputies' experiences administering the program. The researcher also hoped to better understand the aspects of staff training that proved useful for deputies in gaining knowledge regarding how to run the program. Additionally, the researcher hoped to gain an understanding as to whether they (the deputies) believed this program has contributed to better inmate behavioral management and overall institutional security. Finally, the researcher hoped the data would reveal suggestions for future improvements in program implementation, leading to policy implications.

Data Analysis and Coding

The researcher used NVivo10 to analyze the transcribed data collected during interviews with sheriff's deputies employed by ACSO. The use of this program was chosen based upon the recommendation of the faculty advisor on this project that had previous experience using NVivo10 to analyze data collected during a qualitative study. NVivo10 allows qualitative researchers to manage, organize, and code their files in a secure program that has been made specifically for qualitative research. Additionally, this program was chosen since it was available to the researcher at no cost on the Boise State University Campus. The researcher watched instructional videos on the QSR International website to ensure she was confident in her ability to accurately use NVivo10 once she had gained access to the interviews and began the process of open coding.

Once the researcher was granted access to the sheriff's deputies' interviews, she first read through all the interviews and began the open coding process (Georgia Institute of Technology, n.d.).⁶ As the researcher read through each interview, she wrote down themes that she then was able to add to NVivo10 for further analysis. At the end of the open coding process, the researcher identified 45 codes believed to be relevant to the current study. NVivo10 allowed the researcher to manually 'drag and drop' sections of the interview text to the appropriately coded section. Once the researcher was finished with the first round of open coding, she read through each code to ensure the accuracy of their coding. While reviewing each code, the researcher checked for any codes that could be pared down due to a common theme.

The second stage of qualitative data analysis, axial coding (Georgia Institute of Technology, n.d.), allowed the researcher to further combine similar codes into broader concepts. It was during this process that larger themes began to emerge, which the researcher used to draw conclusions about the sheriff's deputies' perceptions of the video visitation program. During the axial coding process, the researcher found seven main themes and presents five of these themes in the findings section of this thesis. Only five key themes will be discussed, as the other two themes were not deemed relevant for this research project.

This process of open and axial coding ensured the researcher was well versed in the information gathered in the sheriff's deputies' interviews. NVivo10 also allowed the researcher to verify that no section of text had been 'double-coded,' which guaranteed that no information was coded into two different themes. Additionally, the program

⁶ The researcher was provided with the interview transcripts on November 9, 2015.

allowed the data to be easily stored in one location and within a program that easily permitted the researcher to code and re-code throughout their analysis. This efficiency also allowed the researcher to code, analyze, and report the findings that emerged from the data in a timely manner.

FINDINGS

Prior to discussing the findings that emerged from the data, readers may find it useful to know what key objectives the Sheriff of ACSO wanted to achieve by implementing IVV at ACJ. The key stakeholders responsible for the development and implementation of remote IVV at ACJ explained how the agency sought to achieve five objectives through the use of video visitation: increase access to, and frequency of, visitation; prevent the desensitization of kids to the jail; increase jail security and order; promote public safety; and, reduce resource and space requirements (Murdoch et al., in progress).

As mentioned in the previous section, five key themes will be discussed in this section. The first theme discussed in this section reviews what in person visitation was like for the deputies. The second theme summarizes how the deputies felt about the switch from in-person visitation to IVV. The other three themes that will be discussed throughout this section include: 1) the effect the switch had on the deputies in terms of inmate movement and management, 2) the effect the deputies' believe the switch had on inmates in terms of their behavior and ability to maintain a connection with their family, and 3) improvements the deputies wish to see in the future.

The Challenges of In-Person Visitation

The sheriff's deputies were asked a multitude of questions over the course of their interviews,⁷ many of which focused on how the use of the system affected them in their daily work. Prior to discussing how the IVV program has affected their daily work, it will first be important to gain an understanding of what challenges the deputies claimed came with in-person visitation.

“It was like a nightmare plane ride or something”⁸

Five of the 10 sheriff's deputies interviewed had worked for ACSO prior to the implementation of the video visitation program.⁹ These five deputies expressed that the original in-person visitation was quite taxing on them. Mathew explained that due to the small size of the visitation room, the agency had to conduct multiple visits throughout the day, which meant the deputies spent much of their working day focused on visitation-related tasks:

We only had so big of an area or whatever to accommodate [visitation] and so we were doing visitations at 9:30 in the morning, 10:30, shortly after lunch, and then [in the] evening. It tied us up quite a little bit.

Relatedly, Roy explained that the process was also time consuming for the families of inmates, as it would often take family members “three hours out of their day for a one hour visit”:

The visitor that is visiting their loved one, their inmate, they would have to show up an hour and a half, two hours early to sign up. So they sign up and then they may go to the mall. A lot of the times they go to the mall, but they have to be back here 10 to 15 minutes before the visitation.

⁷ The list of interview questions asked of the deputies can be found in Appendix B.

⁸ Chris. All interviewees were given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

⁹ Roy, Wade, Mathew, Chris, and Stanley all worked at ACSO prior to the implementation of video visitation.

According to a few of the deputies, visitation was an even greater challenge for those family members who brought children into the facility:

It's not convenient for them. They have little kids; they need to use the bathroom. When we have the [in-person] visitation, there's no restrooms in the visitation thing and you're there for an hour... we would find puddles of urine from who knows where, probably kids, because they just couldn't wait to get out. What's kind of weird is sometimes that room was full of other people so to do that, you're doing it in front of everybody. (Roy)

Stanley, who worked in control at the time of in-person visitation, explained that watching children come in to the facility was often emotionally challenging even for those who did not interact with the children during visitation:¹⁰

I actually worked in control so we were the ones that were popping people in and out, bus[ing] everybody through the metal detectors. As we're filing them all in, everybody bringing kids, and you kind of, for me at least, it's kind of like you hate to see them [brought] in to see their parents and loved ones in that kind of situation.

Mathew goes on to say that part of the challenge in having children come into the jail is that they are not fully aware of the reason their parent is incarcerated and that their daily schedule may not match up to the jail's visitation schedule:

Not always did the child understand, "hey why is mom or dad here and why can't they come [home] with [us]?" But, you know, littler [sic] kids, you also had babies and stuff that would come in. They're kind of on whatever regiment of eating and so either the individuals are bringing large diaper bags in or having to leave items outside.¹¹

Individuals were not allowed to bring large items into the jail as this could pose a risk to security. In addition to telling families that they would have to return these large bags to their cars before entering the facility, the deputies also spent much of their time

¹⁰ Control deputies were in charge of opening and closing the inner doors of the jail. They did not interact with visitors, but were able to observe them go through the visitation screening process.

¹¹ Hesitations in speech such as "like" and "um" were left out of the quotations to allow for easier reading.

conducting searches on visitors to decrease the possibility that contraband would be brought into the jail. The deputies would have to screen every family member, including babies entering the jail, before allowing them into the jail's visitation room. Additionally, the jail had to have their records technicians check to see if any of the visitors had active warrants out for their arrest:

We have to run them through security checks. When you bring them to jail, they have to go through a metal detector. We need to make sure they don't bring stuff in. Everyday somebody's trying to bring in more than they're supposed to. We have to say, "I'm sorry, you need to take that [to] your [vehicle]" ... The sheriff's office then has to check each person and we check them for, we used to check for warrants. So there would be some people who would visit and they actually have an outstanding warrant and you'd have to arrest them when they came to visit their loved one. (Roy)

Chris explained how having large numbers of visitors and children within the facility made the screening process more challenging and stressful for the deputies:

Movement was super stressful. There's a slider over here (points)... we would be crammed in there about 40 people because we have to escort them in there... You have to screen babies in there, so it was like a nightmare plane ride or something. And you get them in there and it's just people with different values not watching their kids run around and hitting their head on something.

As some deputies were processing families into the facility, others were moving inmates from their cells to the visitation room, which created an additional layer of challenges. Roy explained that during in-person visitation it took "extra deputies to coordinate that and make that movement go." Chris detailed how the deputies had to be cautious about maintaining safety while moving the inmates and while in the visitation room itself:

[There were] so many visitors that you'd have to pack in, security threats like MCU. That's three different groups where you had to bring them down separately and separate them when you got them down there. So I believe it's dangerous, both on the inmate side, getting them separated and moving so many of them, and

then at the same sense, the public side. They bring kids in, there's people that I think got hurt in there, weren't watching their kids on the other side, there's just too many variables to mention.

Roy goes on to explain how tedious and mundane the movement of inmates could become given the large number of inmates in the facility:

It's repetitive for us to go through it. And then coordinating, once you get them in there... we'd have a list and every once and awhile you're going to miss somebody, or you'd have people with the same last names, wrong person comes. You gotta [sic] flip flop the people so one person thinks they got a visit, all excited, realize that they have the same last name as somebody else and in some cases, actually the same first name.

The challenges of in-person visitation did not end after the families and inmates were processed into the visitation room. The deputies also had to remain alert throughout the visit. Wade explained how certain behaviors by family members and inmates, such as a lack of parental supervision, in conjunction with the large number of individuals in the room, could create a potential risk to security:

[We were] dealing with the children running amuck and disturbing everyone else because their parents were so busy concentrating on talking to each other. People coming into the jail trying to pass stuff, or you used to find things on occasion taped up under the seats, drugs and such, that get the trusty floor man to go in there when he's cleaning out the place and they give it off into the jail from there.

Mathew points out that the possibility of prohibited items entering the facility might have been unavoidable with in-person visitation because "anytime you're bringing in individuals from the outside into a secure facility, you have the possibilities of [the] introduction of weapons, contraband, [and] anything else coming in and out."

As detailed above, one of the key objectives of implementing the video visitation program was, by and large, to help maintain institutional security by decreasing opportunities for contraband to enter the facility (Murdoch et al., in progress).

Furthermore, IVV was implemented in an attempt to save both deputies and records technicians time, as they would no longer be processing visitors into the system or checking their records for warrants (Murdoch, et al., in progress). While the above material details the challenges the deputies encountered with in-person visitation, the following sections demonstrate whether the sheriff's deputies' believe IVV has met the objectives outlined at the beginning of this section.

In seeking to achieve these objectives through the implementation of the video visitation system, ACSO management greatly changed some of the job responsibilities for the deputies, which will be discussed in later paragraphs. But first, it is important to note that while ACSO deputies are satisfied with the current operations of the Telmate system, this was not always the case. ACSO had to work through a few challenges – as discussed in the next section – with their original video visitation system before landing where they are today.

The Switch from In-Person to Video Visitation: Transition and Training

“It was just a temporary Band-Aid for the real system, Telmate, coming in.”¹²

According to the deputies, the shift from in-person to IVV seemed to occur almost overnight. In regards to how quickly the switch occurred and what sort of initial training they received, Mathew clarified that “it was - as of this day, we're live basically and... I don't know that there's been a whole lot of officers that have gotten a lot of training even on this.” Wade explained how management was able to quickly push this transition throughout the jail:

When they decided it was going to go on, they actually started up in like one or two dorms, like the inmate worker dorm and then maybe like [the] female inmate

¹² Chris

worker dorm. They started it out there first to kind of run a trial and then they just kind of, once they figured it was working well enough, they got all the hardware in to do it [and] then it was just like “okay, on this day we’re going to start video visiting” and it would all be video visiting from there. There won’t be any personal visits as far as the family stuff goes, only clergy, attorney, professional staff type visits.

Telmate was not the first system ACSO used to facilitate video visitation. The five deputies who worked for ACSO during the transition discussed the challenges they encountered with first system:

We had an interim system that we had actually developed ourselves before we had the Telmate [system] and that kind of started getting, yeah we had quite a few problems with it. It would work fairly often, at least we had people in house that could fix [it] or answer their problems when, “Ahhh I got my visit dropped, or there is no volume, I couldn’t hear what they said, they could hear me but I couldn’t hear them.” (Wade)

Roy expanded on Wade’s statement and explained that the system was successful at first because they had technicians on-site to help with problems, but that once the technicians left, the system became more work than it was worth, prompting the shift to the Telmate system:

When we first started, a different company... came in and said we will provide you with a service for free and basically they were developing it and while they were here to support the system, it worked pretty good. But then once the system got set up and they gave it to, I think we sold it to some commissary company, well once that commissary company took over, they had no maintenance support people and it was terrible... So something that went from fairly good to we were always trying to fix a station or a computer. And then during that time too, we were buying little \$300 computers so the processor wasn’t, you know, they were the little teeny, they were like Internet machines that you’d buy at Wal-Mart or Costco... as time goes on, as people use them, as people hit different keys, they just wore out... We’ve had some issues where, I don’t know how they do it, but some of these inmates have, they can break into, or they’ll find gateways outside the computer to their own personal Facebook accounts. They can search anything on the Internet, so that means they can communicate anywhere. So some people have knowledge, hacking knowledge that they were able to hack into the computer and go to areas that they weren’t supposed to.

Chris explained that the use of laptops in the original system created more work for the deputies, as they had to take the laptops to the inmates when they had a visit scheduled:

Everything had a lot of kinks in it from the in-house system and it was a lot of work... We would actually have to take these tablets to the inmate, like in CCU [closed custody unit] or day room dorms. There's [sic] so many areas in here that... it was a lot of work. And then when the stations actually got put in, that was quite a bit more helpful because they're actually permanently stationed, I think HSU's [High Security Unit] is the only place where they still do it over a tablet anymore because of the high security risk in there, but yeah, it's increasingly got a lot better.

Mathew goes on to explain that not only did the movement of portable laptops create more work for the deputies, it also posed a security risk by allowing inmates to show the public the inner structure of the jail:

In our previous [system] everything was pretty well done off of a laptop and that system basically had been compromised several different times... it was because you're handing somebody a portable item though too... that also kind of still created that safety concern. Security as well, because... it was [a] camera. You could spin it around and say, "hey this is what this room looks like; this is where this is actually located."

When the jail switched to using Telmate, they installed permanent kiosks, which could not be moved by the inmates. Roy explained that the deputies felt the installation of the Telmate kiosks was beneficial because the company had higher security measures in place and they were very responsive to fixing any security issues that did arise, such as the inmates being able to access websites like Facebook:

The kiosks from Telmate [are] better, that's a lot harder to do. However, we've had issues there where they'll find a way to get to a different website to communicate, so it's like one website is there to communicate to them, they want feedback from you, but they were able to put in an email address and it was sent a response back to their family member using some religious websites, contact, and anyway, they're getting communication outside the jail where we can't monitor

what's going on, so that's a security issue. Those have happened before; Telmate's been responsive on fixing those.

Despite the fact that there were some challenges to keeping the Telmate system 100 percent secure, Wade explained why the deputies were still supportive of the switch to Telmate:

I think everyone could pretty much see that. "Wow, we're not going to have to mess with the public anymore coming into the jail, this is going to be great!" It's just, it was kind of the "oh this thing isn't working as well as we'd like and it's a hassle because everyone's whining and complaining about it," that's the only real downside of it. Telmate seems to be getting on fairly good now.

While the deputies discussed the challenges that went along with the first system of IVV, they also described what the training process was like. In the following section, all 10 deputies discuss what the training process was like either during the transition to IVV or the process once they were hired by ACSO.

"No training. My coach was like 'this is Telmate, this is how you get on.'"¹³

Prior to fully implementing and using the video visitation system, deputies had to be trained on how the system worked; at least to the point where they could answer some questions the inmates may ask. Additionally, newly hired deputies need to be trained on the system. All 10 deputies who were interviewed described the training process they participated in to learn how to use the new IVV. The ACSO management team utilized a 'train-the-trainer' system when they first switched from in-person to video visitation; Jeremy explained why this process was the best for the organization:¹⁴

We'd have one or two deputies on each team that would go to a class and learn how to do it and then they would come back and slowly just start teaching other

¹³ Chris

¹⁴ Jeremy started working for ACSO just as the video visitation was implemented.

people how to do it... that worked. I mean, with all the duties that we had it was kind of a slow process but it was, with just our staffing levels, it was the best way we could do it.

The majority of the deputies spoke to the current training practices new deputies receive; Craig described the initial training as “really informal” and Todd further explained how their training deputy casually walks them through the use of the program:

When you first come on, you have a coach you work with and the coach will get you a login to the system and then you’ll just kind of peruse the system with your coach and once you figure out the basics, then you’re kind of on your own as far as finding out more of the details of the video visit. I’m still sure there’s a lot of the video visitation that I don’t know about from the website. (Craig)

When you step into what we call our coaching phase, so you’re sitting there with another deputy that’s kind of walking you through it... they show you how to do the basic things on Telmate, you know. They show you how to log in, how to monitor things, but anything beyond that, you kind of wind up figure out on your own. (Todd)

Todd clarified that because they “focus so much on other things, [the] security side of things...there really wasn’t a whole lot of training.” While most deputies expressed receiving minimal training, they explained that there are specific deputies who are more knowledgeable than others on the Telmate system. These are “Telmate deputies that actually attend Telmate trainings on each team that you can call and if you can’t figure something out, typically they can, or [they can] point you in the direction.”¹⁵ Todd explained that many of the more specific questions about the system end up on the desks of the Telmate deputies:

A lot of the time we wind up forwarding that stuff to our specific Telmate deputies. We have some of them that are trained in that and we don’t see a whole lot of training in it. A lot of it is just kind of what we’ve figured out on our own,

¹⁵ Craig

so any issues like that where we can't really handle them, we'll forward those on to a Telmate deputy and they can at least give us some advice on where to go from there.

Since these individuals generally have more training on the system, they are often the first ones to get to use new systems or programs the agency implements within the Telmate system, such as inmate request forms:¹⁶

There's a few of them on each team, I want to say there is [sic] two or three per team and we have four teams in the jail. So there's generally at least one on shift. I don't know what kind of extra training they receive or anything like that. I don't know what all goes into it, but they're more familiar with the system than we are and they have access to more things than we do. When we originally moved to this electronic kite system,¹⁷ they were the only ones that could see it for about a week or two, kind of as a trial period. And then they opened it up to all of us. So they're a little more specialized area, it's kind of an extra duty that they take on. And so when we, as just regular housing deputies, run into a problem we haven't dealt with before, we don't understand, we can get ahold of them and then they also have more direct lines to Telmate. They know who to call so if there's something that's an issue with Telmate, they can get ahold of Telmate easier than we can, so that's kind of their function is to step in when we've exhausted our options as a housing deputy, they kind of take that slack on the end of it. (Todd)

Alan expressed that he feels the Telmate deputies are extremely helpful and always willing to answer questions, which is appreciated, as he does not have the best understanding of technology:

There [are] always people I can ask. There are people who are super-duper smart and there's typically always a few on each team that are just awesome at stuff like that. So if I was really in a pinch, there's always people I can call and there's always resources. If I really had the time, which being day shift it's busier, if I had spare time, if I was on night shift, I would just navigate through it and figure it out myself and finally, just answer my own questions, so it's not like I'm stuck.

Roy, who at the time of his interview had been working at ACJ for over 10 years, explained that while there was a learning curve involved in learning the new system, it

¹⁶ See pages 70-72 for additional information on the new inmate requests system.

¹⁷ Also known as Inmate Request Forms.

was valuable because the benefits of moving to this system would outweigh any type of in-person visitation:

As deputies we have to educate ourselves too... So if there was a deputy that didn't understand the system, they knew who to contact, they would ask questions. A deputy who had more information would go over, help educate the inmate, help educate the other deputy and I think information was, everybody was pretty willing to help everyone, I think we wanted to make it work, so for the most part, I'm sure there were some deputies that maybe didn't like it, but I think if you look to the alternative, video visiting outweighed doing it the way we were doing it.

Having discussed the history of in-person visitation, the technological difficulties of the first IVV system, and the process of training on the new system, the discussion will now focus on how the switch has impacted the deputies' jobs. The following section reviews how IVV has affected inmate movement around the facility, the ability to monitor visits, and who is responsible for troubleshooting technology issues.

How the Switch Impacted the Deputies' Job: Movement, Monitoring Videos and Troubleshooting

As stated above, the switch from in-person to IVV has significantly impacted the daily work of the deputies. This section will cover the various ways in which the deputies' job has been impacted by the change in visitation. First and foremost, the use of the system has cut back on inmate movement throughout the facility. Relatedly, the deputies are no longer in charge of scheduling to make sure the inmate is present for their visit, rather the responsibility lies on the inmate to ensure they do not miss a visit.

As with all technology, the use of the Telmate system does result in some technical issues. As will be further explained below, the deputies reported feeling as though the technical issues that the inmates face while using the system are quite minor and actually similar to what they might experience at home in the community. Relatedly,

the deputies also are not charged with handling any technology issues. Rather, the inmate is able to contact Telmate directly. As will be discussed, one additional duty placed on the deputies is that of reviewing the videotapes. The deputies may choose to review tapes in their down time, or if they believe a no contact order or in-house jail rule has been violated. Prior to explaining the process of reviewing tapes, the discussion will turn to how there was a decrease in inmate movement resulting from the use of IVV, which has had a positive impact on the daily job duties of the deputies.

“We don’t have to have deputies in charge of coordinating the inmate traffic for visitation.”¹⁸

The deputies articulated that they prefer the use of video visitation because it cuts back on some of the inmate movement that occurs throughout the facility. Wade disclosed that the process of scheduling for video visitation is “much easier” for deputies because “that’s one less group of people that we’ve got to round up once or twice a day to try and move them all through the halls and down to a visiting area.” Under the new system, the inmates do not leave their unit and they are also the ones in charge of making sure they are present for their visits. Wade described how this has benefited the deputies:

It really helps the deputies more I would say, because inmates love to get out of their cells and go take a little trip somewhere else, go see somebody, because they have more of a sense of actually seeing the person. Oh man, it helps out the deputies immensely. Not having to mess with moving people around. Not having to mess with gathering them up. Not having to go wake them up because they’re asleep and they didn’t know they had a visit... Because they set up the visits, they know where they’re supposed to be... we can go “hey you missed your visit,” that’s their troubles.

¹⁸ Roy

Roy gave a detailed explanation of how visitation on the kiosk works and how this set-up has shifted the responsibility from the deputies to the inmates and their families and friends:

To make it work, the person has to go in and they have to know an email address of their loved one. So [the] inmate knows [the] email address of [their] loved one, they type in the email address and the system sends out an automatic email saying, “such and such at the Ada County Jail, this person would like to do a video visit with you, approve or disapprove?” So it gives them an option to approve it or not approve it. ...it sends a confirmation back to the video visitation in the jail, person goes up “ah good my family member approved it” and they can go in and schedule. We have scheduled block times and then they can go in and schedule a block time that sends another email back to the loved one to confirm it. “Can you make this time, yes or no? The loved one will then confirm or reject it and the loved one can then send a request for the same thing.

Mathew and Todd illustrate how this shift has helped hold inmates more accountable for their visits, which likely has allowed deputies to focus on other job-related tasks:

For the most part it’s [been] pretty good, because Telmate has it set up to where people can’t schedule visits over the top of each other. So it kind of runs itself in a lot of ways. We don’t really have to manage who’s going to visit and what not.” (Todd)

They pretty well can do that all on their own now, yeah. I mean, scheduling as well as doing their own visits and stuff. It kind of takes... part of us out of that loop that we used to be [in], and kind of...has them somewhat held accountable basically for part of this as well. (Mathew)

Jeremy noted that with video visitation, it is the inmate’s responsibility to make sure they are at the kiosk and ready for the scheduled visitation time, and that it is not the deputy’s fault if they miss a visit:

That’s all their responsibility so if [the] other family [member] doesn’t show, or if they don’t show up over there, but the inmates are [there], I mean that’s what they look for, so typically, they’re always there. The way, sometimes they’ll miss a

visit, like sometimes, they'll have a court date come up they didn't know about, just a scheduling conflict and stuff like that.

Since the Telmate system is able to essentially run itself, the system runs into very few difficulties. The deputies described this as a strength; they explained that even though challenges do arise, they are seen as only minor challenges that do not greatly affect their daily work:

The only time [the system] affects me is when it's not working because I work MCU [Maximum Custody Unit] a lot and you get a lot of people angry pretty quick when it's not working. Otherwise, I mean, we barely have, we don't interact with it much other than that. It's kind of one of those background things that takes care of itself. (Chris)

The only issues that we really run into are when we have people who schedule a visit for a time when they shouldn't. Or they, something happens; you know, we'll have a fire drill; we have to cancel their visit, things like that. That's more kind of [a] management thing, or if Telmate has an issue and it drops the visit, it disconnects them, something's not working. (Todd)

In addition to no longer worrying about moving inmates around the facility for their visitation, the deputies also are not required to troubleshoot any technological issues that arise.

"We just say 'Oh Sorry, Telmate knows about it.'"¹⁹

In regards to troubleshooting, the deputies only interact with the system when the inmates complain to them about technical problems. As with all technology, the inmates sometimes encounter problems with the Telmate system; however, it is not the job of most deputies to fix these problems. While there are Telmate deputies on hand who can answer questions that come up, it is not their primary responsibility to fix the system.

¹⁹ Wade

Jeremy explained that when the system was first implemented, these questions would come to the deputies, but that this changed over time:

In the beginning it was all coming to us, and since it's not really our system, it was hard to answer their questions at first. But now it's got[ten] a lot more streamlined. They can send messages to them, to Telmate themselves... that way they can get it done on their time and they're not waiting on us to try and find an answer out.

As the system runs currently, the deputies are mostly "hands off from troubleshooting because they're told to contact 211411 for help and [to] contact Telmate and a Telmate representative communicates with them" (Roy). Stanley clarified that this is the standard protocol because "Telmate's obviously a bigger company and they have service techs and people that are designed specifically to come in and stay on top of that stuff."

When an inmate tells a deputy they have encountered a technological issue, the deputies are only charged with explaining to the inmates how to contact Telmate, but sometimes a Telmate deputy will step in to help:

Normally, what we have them do at that point is we have them send a request in to Telmate because all those issues can be handled on Telmate's end. So they have a voice recording issue... they can go on there and record a voicemail and send it to them and they also have a text one. And the text one seems to be more effective... Telmate can review it and decide if it is worthy of a refund or if it's something that was their fault. So if their visitor just cancels the visit, that's not Telmate's fault, and they burned that visit. But if something on Telmate's end was the issue, then they can refund, and sometimes we do see it where they'll send those issues in, Telmate will look at it and tell them there's no reason why it should have been refunded, they will refuse to. Of course the inmate's still upset about it so they'll come up and tell us about it. We'll go through and we can do some research, we have access to the system so we can kind of take a look at it and see exactly what the circumstances were and then we can make the determination after they've dealt with Telmate if they need to have a refund. (Todd)

The interviewees noted that technological mishaps are not a common occurrence in the jail because of the reliability of the Telmate system. Nevertheless, Roy reflected that he believes when there is an issue, it is mostly user error:

Eight out of 10 times, nine of that 10 times that disconnect is because the person on the other side did something on the computer because the Telmate's system is pretty much set all the time. Somebody hit a wrong button, somebody did something on the other side, and Telmate's position is once you make a connection and you lose that connection, then you have to pay for another connection. Set up for another one, so [when] something happens, they think it's Telmate's fault. Most of the time, it's the users fault on the other end; they did something that caused that deactivation to occur.

When the failure of the system is not related to user error, the deputies feel the problems the inmates face with the technology are no different than ones they would encounter at home on their personal computer:

Sometimes the systems will freeze up, but our computers at home freeze up sometimes, so it's just trying to get them fixed on time. Getting in a work order possibly for it to make sure they come in and get it looked [at]. Or the phones, make sure they can hear out of it, sometimes after awhile of use. it's hard to hear and they have to jiggle the wire and adjust here. But I mean, that's with any products like that...and they get a lot of wear. (Jeremy)

It seems like they're very reliable, they're probably having the same issues I would at home and that's what I tell them, "hey, my cell phone wasn't working the other day, just get over it," and that seems to be fine. (Chris)

Despite the fact the deputies believe the technology mishaps are minimal, they explained that the inmates often do not hold the same thought and tend to get very upset when the system does not work correctly:

Issues come up with the Telmate system, which kind of puts the inmates in [a] frenzy. Understandably so, because if they have a video visit scheduled and they

were looking forward to it, it's not very frequent, but sometimes there's issues with the equipment itself. (Craig)²⁰

The kind of technical stuff that goes on with computers, things crashing, things not working right, software failures, just when they go down. One thing... the inmates' love is predictability, and when you have anything that throws in a measure of unpredictability, that's when they start getting all upset about things. So they can rely on that every time they go and log in and they've got their visits set up and they can have their visit then they're just pleased as punch and then they get all upset when the consistency isn't there with the machinery. (Wade)

Despite the fact deputies are not responsible for fixing the kiosks if they break, or troubleshooting when a video connection is disrupted, deputies are able to review tapes of the visits to monitor inmate behavior.

“It kind of goes on your time schedule and you can really focus on any details of it if need be.”²¹

No matter what type of programming is implemented, inmate behavior is something deputies will always continue to monitor. The Telmate system records every visit an inmate conducts, which allows deputies to go back and monitor inmate behavior.²² Deputies at ACSO monitor the video visits to ensure that the inmates are maintaining compliance with both in house rules and the rules set in place by the legal system. Even though it requires additional work, the ability to monitor videos is often viewed as a strength of the system:

It's something else for us to monitor as far as reviewing video visits to make sure they're compliant with the policies. But aside from that, it also takes duties off other deputy positions as far as processing visitors in, or monitoring in person visits. (Chris)

²⁰ None of the deputies were able to provide an exact number for how often these non-user error, technological issues occurred.

²¹ Craig

²² According to the Telmate (2016) website, an electronic document is used to verify users are aware of the video recording rules.

Despite the fact IVV takes some responsibilities from the deputies, they must always continue to ensure that inmates maintain compliance with jail rules, and IVV helps with this. While in-person visits were recorded, Alan and Todd explained why video visitation recordings are better than the recordings of in-person visits. They reflected on the fact that they are able to monitor all behavior, not just some, and how it can be used as a law enforcement investigation tool, as well as an inmate behavioral management tool:

With the personal visits... it's on camera but we're not actually recording their conversations. You know, there are speakers there, but nobody is sitting there actively listening and it's not being DVR'd like Telmate is, so this is so awesome. (Alan)

It also allows us to go back and monitor those visits because in a physical visit, we can listen to a recording, or we can watch a camera but you don't pick up on everything. This, with a face-to-face recording of both individuals, if we get somebody that's attempting to, you know, send something in, or they're talking about a crime that's occurred, or something like that, we can take that and use it. We've even successfully used it in criminal prosecutions and things like that. So it's another tool for us, as a management tool and as a law enforcement tool. (Todd)

In regards to legal violations, the deputies spoke most often about catching no contact order violations, which they will send away for a criminal prosecution:

A no contact order...we do catch them every once and awhile and that is going to be a criminal prosecution normally. So we will forward that to a detective that's working on the case because a no contact order is generally a misdemeanor or a felony prosecution and we'll forward that on and that tape can actually be booked into evidence and used later in court. (Todd)

While the deputies did not delve too deeply into what often constituted an in house jail rule violation, they did explain that one type of behavior, indecent exposure, is seen most frequently:

What we see a lot of is actually nudity, that kind of thing. Because it specifically says in there that there is not to be any sort of sexual contact between the people on the visits; and we'll see it from both ends, we see visitors that do it and we see inmates that do it. It's like I said, we can't have eyes on them all the time so sometimes they expose themselves, things like that, and that's mostly in-house discipline. That is something, we'll go in, we'll see that violation and Telmate can actually flag that and say, "Hey, we see something in here that looks suspicious if you can review." We'll get a notification of that and then we'll go back and look at it and that's all in-house discipline. (Todd)

The biggest thing is showing too much, male or female, showing too much to their boyfriend [or] girlfriend that they shouldn't be showing. Which is, they're breaking a jail rule, you get punished for it. You can lose your privileges if you keep on doing it. (Stanley)

Wade explained that inmates are willing to violate these rules when they feel the benefit of seeing their girlfriend naked outweighs the consequences outlined within the jail:

The only time I've really seen some rather graphic stuff was [when] the guy... knew he was leaving for prison the next day and he wanted to get one last bit of eye candy from his girlfriend. So it was a little vulgar and then by the time we saw it, it was like, "Oh, he left yesterday!" And so it was kind of like (growls), you know, not really anything you could do about it. There's [sic] still all these people that will try to get away with it, assuming well, they can't watch every visit, so it's worth my while to try; usually to get her to do something on the camera for me."

When a rule violation does occur, Stanley explained the deputies do "have the ability to cut them off" clarifying "they can just end the visit." Despite having the ability to cut-off a visit, Mathew noted that most often the deputies are not reviewing the recordings live, rather hours or even days later:

It's not like it's [a] live right on the spot type thing. And reviewing... I think there is still a lot of inappropriate actions... being taken by both sides... when you go back to review, this is something that took place hours, or possibly even days ago, and so you're trying to play catch up after that...It can be quite tedious, reviewing, but day shift, we have other things going on, it may be that night shift, or even days after that items may be reviewed, so yeah...a lot of times it may be

the evening individuals that are having [sic] to review the different videos throughout whatever time and that can be time consuming, especially at 3:00 in the morning.

Despite the benefits of catching violations through the visitation recordings, deputies at ACSO are not required to review all the video visits and Todd explained why:

On average we have 800 to 900 inmates in the facility at any given time and almost all of them will use the video visiting at some point. So it's impossible to review that many of them. It's just with the manpower we have, we'd have to have somebody dedicated to sit down and watch every single one of them. But what it does allow is if you have suspicions of something, if you have something that has led up to it, probable cause per say, to think there is something going on, it allows you to review it through that method.

Thus, given the large number of inmates in the facility, it would be almost impossible to review all of the visits. The deputies noted that they either randomly choose to review the visits when they have down time, or they will watch them when they suspect a rule violation may have occurred:

You just kind of randomly do it. Sometimes you get a gut feeling like "you know what, something during the day made me, or night shift, something they were doing, you know what I should check out those phone calls, or I should do this." You kind of pick and choose people according to [whether] something kind of looks suspicious or something like that. Or if they did have a no contact order that you knew, you could always review a lot of their stuff and sometimes, you find more and more as you go along that you didn't assume was going to be there. (Jeremy)

I try to if I have any down time, I mostly work days and a lot of times it's easier to do on nights because they're asleep and you have more downtime. But yeah, on occasion you'll go back and you'll review. You're just looking for anything inappropriate. It's just another tool for us to go "okay, you can't do this, here are the rules of the jail and you're breaking the rules of the jail." (Stanley)

Well you do have access to monitor them; you can do it, I believe, at the same time. But you know, generally, people aren't doing that until they've already got some idea that there might be a no contact order violation going on. Sometimes people just listen at random, or not listen but look at them. (Wade)

Moreover, there are certain times of day in which deputies prefer, or have more time available to review video visits. Additionally, there are some deputies who enjoy watching more visitation recordings than others:

It kind of depends on the person, you know, there's some people that watch a lot of them, there's some people that just don't, and generally, night shift is the one that does a lot of phone tracking and stuff like that because, on days, we just don't have time to. We get busy with movement and what not, but nights have a good period where they're able to, and we see a lot of stuff that comes out of there. We have a couple [of] deputies that work night shift regularly, they don't really like working day shift, and they catch no contact order violations all the time. They catch all sorts of things because they have the opportunity to sit down and do some research and take the time to watch a 30-minute visit. (Todd)

There's a period between 1 and 5[am] that nothing, there's not a lot going on, so you try to find time to either do training or study things out. But yes, those video visits [sic] because you can find them breaking rules, you can find no contact orders being violated and that's when you can send those off to the right people and they can figure out if a new crime has gone on, or if it's just in-house discipline. (Jeremy)

While a major strength of the video recordings is to catch rule violations, for Roy, monitoring video visits also allows deputies to check in on the well-being of the inmate. Roy discussed how the video visitation recordings can be used to help the deputies understand why inmates may be behaving the way they are:

Another positive for video visiting from a deputy standpoint, we can pull up any visit and we can monitor it... we check every once and while. If someone, if I have an inmate I'm watching and he's stressed, I can maybe go to that visit and find out why he is stressed. So having the ability to maybe check on somebody if they're not, you get a vibe that's something really... I can look at their video visitation, get a feel for them, do I need to call medical? Do I need to talk to them? Are you going to be okay?"

Throughout their interviews, the deputies discussed how they appreciate using IVV because they do not have to move inmates around the facility nor are they charged with scheduling the visitations. Furthermore, the deputies are not required to fix the

technology should an issue arise. The only time the deputies interact with the system on a regular basis is when they choose to review video visits for rule violations. While the deputies spent a great deal of time discussing how the use of the system affected them, they also went into great detail explaining how they believe it has affected the inmates in terms of their behavior both in and out of the facility. Relatedly, the deputies also noted that they believe the inmates' families have come to prefer the use of IVV over in-person visitation.

How the System has Impacted the Inmates: Inmate Behavior and Family Access

More than any other topic, the deputies focused on how the use of IVV has impacted both the inmates and their families. This section will discuss the deputies' thoughts surrounding the use of the system as a behavioral management tool. Related to behavior, the deputies' also discuss whether or not they believe the maintenance of family bonds does correspond with a reduction in inmate recidivism. Overwhelmingly, the deputies stated that they could theoretically understand how being able to remain in contact with positive influences could affect recidivism, but ultimately, that they do not see that happening at ACJ. Rather, they tended to believe that the maintenance of family ties helps keep them content and on good behavior only while they are incarcerated.

The deputies then briefly discussed how family members on the outside seem to enjoy the use of the visitation. They noted that families likely enjoy using this system because they no longer have to transport children, or themselves, to the jail. Additionally, it allows those loved ones who would likely have been unable to visit the facility for a multitude of reasons, including travel distance, disability, or a lack of transportation, the opportunity to visit, so long as they have the technology available to them. Finally, the

deputies discussed additional Telmate programming, such as inmate request forms, which have positively impacted their daily job duties and allowed them to function more efficiently. The first of these ideas to be discussed is the use of IVV as a behavioral management tool.

“It’s a good management tool as far as discipline if they’re not behaving right, take that away from them”²³

While the Telmate system is beneficial in that it allows deputies to monitor videos, it also serves another purpose: inmate behavioral management. The previous section explained what deputies’ look for when reviewing video visits; when an inmate is found to have violated a rule, the deputies have the ability to discipline inmates. One of the ways they can do this is by limiting the access an inmate gets to video visitation²⁴:

When someone breaks a jail [rule]... one form of discipline is taking away their visitation rights for hours, a few days, or a week, depending on the severity of the rule that they’ve broken. So for me, if I see someone and they’re always on Telmate [and] they do a lot of visitation... I know that’s important to them. So jail rules [are] important to me, [and] you broke [a] jail rule, [so] I’m going to take this privilege away from you for a couple days. You need to follow jail rules so you can have this privilege back and that usually seems to work; in most cases it works very good because that is important for them, once they have that connection with their family. (Roy)

Stanley explained that while he believes being in jail is enough of a punishment for inmates, he will punish them if they cannot follow jail rules. Since IVV is a privilege for inmates, the deputies are easily able to take away their access if they do violate policies:

²³ Chris

²⁴ Deputies were also able to restrict an inmate’s access to in-person visitation should an inmate misbehave. Key stakeholders explained how they believe IVV may improve inmate behavior because they have more access to IVV than they did during in-person visitation (Murdoch et al., in progress).

It was put to me a long time ago that we're not here to punish them; their punishment is to be in jail so you try [to] always keep that in the back of your mind. And I always follow that philosophy; I tell them, "look, it's not my job, unless you're breaking the rules in here, it's not my job to punish you, but if you can't follow the rules then you're going to lose some of the privileges, and Telmate's one..." So like I said, it's kind of a tool to use, it's certainly a privilege for them to be able to do that, so it's kind of nice to have that thing where you can go, "look, I want you to do this, but if you can't maintain while you're in here, it's something we can take away from you."

Stanley and Jeremy further detailed why the Telmate system is viewed as a useful behavioral management tool and why it is often so effective at managing inmate behavior:

It's definitely a management tool. We can take away their ability to use that... if they're doing something they shouldn't be doing, we can say, "look, if you get in trouble and I write you up for something, one of the punishments, or one of the things we can take away is this, because it is a privilege to be able to do that..." We try to be reasonable, at least I do. It's like, you want them to be able to see their family... I think it keeps them preoccupied as well, as a tool. You know, we have, depending on where you're at in the jail, you get access to television. You get access to stuff and the better you are, the more access you have with that, so it's kind of a nice tool to have. You know, we joke about maybe, kind of like kids, you can take away their toys. It really is, you got 24 hours a day facility. They're stuck in here 24 hours a day, if you don't have those privileges... people will act out because they're upset and angry and even though it's their own doing, it's still, you still need to have that stuff because otherwise it could be chaotic. Like I said, I think it's a great tool and it gives them... other things to do... beside the face-to-face... you can [also] look up news articles and stuff like that.²⁵ (Stanley)

They know that if they misbehave they can lose that privilege and that's their number one privilege that they like. It's almost to the point where they feel it's a right, but a lot of times you lose that when you come to jail. [The] better the attitude, the better the privileges you will have, the worse attitude, the less privileges you have. It's a tool we use to help keep their attitude in line and for [the] majority, over 90 percent of them, they know that and it's fine; they don't have issues and [they] like using it, so it's helped manage their time better too. (Jeremy)

²⁵ See pages 69-70 for information on additional Telmate kiosk programs.

Alan explained that this is the most frequently used form of behavior management due to the large amount of use the system gets by the inmates:

There's not a day that goes by that something Telmate related doesn't come up. Whether they're struggling with something; you know, they lost a visit or some money or something. Something will always come up almost every day that is somewhat related to it, whether they're unhappy or happy, or it's used as a disciplinary tool. So you're constantly like, if you write something up, that's the easiest disciplinary tool is to limit their visitations for a day or something like that.

The time frame for the loss of privileges varies depending upon the individual being reprimanded; a few of the deputies described what sort of considerations they make when determining how long an inmate should lose their visitation privileges:

[It] depends on their disciplinary history. It's either going to be a level one or a level two. Level one would be maybe [a] loss of Telmate privileges for up to 36 hours, or if they have done it multiple times, it could be loss of Telmate privileges for up to 7 days. (Craig)

It depends on how frequently it's happened; if they're new and it's never happened before, you know the write-ups that they get aren't as bad, I guess you could say. If it continues to happen, if they're doing a ton of other things and getting in trouble here, here, and here, and they do something like that, [then] yes, it progresses. It's always a progressive scale that goes up on those, but yeah, you name it, we've seen, heard, and caught everything exposed. (Jeremy)

While Telmate restrictions are a useful tool for most inmates, they do not work to correct the behaviors of all inmates. Certain inmates will change their behavior when reprimanded by a deputy; others lash out angrily. For example, "some are like, 'yeah I screwed up, sorry.' Others are like, 'you took my video visit away! Screw you!' and then they have a bigger problem" (Danny). Todd helped explain why certain inmates are more understanding than others when they lose their privileges:

It really kind of depends on the inmate because we have some people that have girlfriends, wives, families, things like that; they really live for those visits... they

try and get as many of them as they can. Their family will pay to have them make more visits and things like that, and those people, if you take their Telmate account away, they really don't like it and it is a discipline measure for them. But we have other people that don't have support systems, that don't have family members in the area, or don't [have] family members that care, and don't want to visit with them, and for that, it's sometimes difficult to really find a discipline that is actually effective. Because if you get somebody that doesn't use the system at all, taking the system away from them isn't really a discipline; they don't really care. We've had people actually tell us that before, where you'll write them up for something and you'll say "I'm taking your Telmate away for four days" and they'll flat out tell you "I don't care because I don't use it, so what's the difference to me in my day to day functioning?..." We have other things we can do for discipline, but that does kind of complicate things sometimes. You really have to talk to the person and figure out what discipline is actually going to make a difference, it's not so much to punish the person but to correct the behavior, and if they have no reason to correct their behavior, they just don't.

Although some inmates could not care less about losing access to Telmate, some inmates may actually get into more trouble with their family at home if they lose visitation privileges in the jail. Roy explained why:

There is a negative point where families aren't blessed monetarily, so those two free visits are very, very valuable to them. And same thing on the phone, when they use the phone, it's kind of expensive using the phone... and a lot of times, families don't have the money to. The wife is usually there trying to feed two kids, not sure if she's getting money from family members. She may not have the best job because she is taking care of the kids.... [There are] many different issues that could be a hardship on the wife... she wants [to maintain] contact with her husband, she's taking care of two kids. So sometimes... if they get in trouble here, they get in trouble from home because they want to make contact with them as well, and they can't because they've lost their privilege.

While the family may not want to lose contact with the inmates, sometimes the inmates also do not want to lose those privileges because communication helps them stay grounded. As will be discussed in the following section, the deputies believe that communication with loved ones helps the inmates manage their stress level while incarcerated.

“And for the inmates it’s hopefully, hopefully it’s their outlet to stay relaxed, try to stay out of trouble”²⁶

In addition to maintaining compliance with jailhouse rules, the deputies felt the use of the system also helps them successfully manage the emotional hardships that come with an inmate’s incarceration:

The most important thing to most inmates is their connection with their outside. So just having that access is a powerful tool to just keep... It’s just a really good tool to just keep them content, you know, connecting with family is something that can just go from a bad day to a really good day or vice versa, honestly. Even if it’s bad news, it’s still a connection and it still makes them feel like a real person. (Alan)

Danny explained that the use of video visitation is “nice for the inmates [because] they can talk to their family, which helps them a lot with stress.” Roy also explained that “everybody has the ability to talk with their family members at least twice [a week]” and “in doing so, that helps them communicate to the outside world so their tensions don’t get built up.”

While the deputies were confident that access to IVV allowed the offenders to stay connected to their families and their communities, they were not so confident that remaining in contact with loved ones would affect their chances of recidivating.

“They’re either going to be a repeat offender or they’re not, I don’t see how their communication with family while they’re here has anything to do with it.”²⁷

As outlined in a previous section, the deputies were all pretty much on the same page referring to the use of the Telmate system as a good management tool for behavior inside the jail; however, they had somewhat different responses when it came to whether

²⁶ Jeremy

²⁷ Alan

or not the maintenance of social ties facilitates successful reentry. As mentioned in a previous chapter, the maintenance of prosocial bonds while incarcerated has been found to help increase an offender's ability to control their behavior and to abstain from deviant acts both while incarcerated and upon release (Bales & Mears, 2008; Hirschi, 1969; Mears et al., 2012; Phillips, 2012). The deputies were asked whether or not they believed the inmates' use of video visitation would affect their likelihood of coming back into the system. Some of the sheriff's deputies' expressed that they had never thought of that question, but that they could see the logic in assuming that, whereas others did not feel that visitation with family would help prevent them from returning to jail:

You know, I never really thought about them being released to the community. I think it mainly keeps them connected to those in the community instead of being kept out of the loop, I guess, and then feeling abandoned, or whatever. You know honestly, I never really think about that. We deal with so many people and a lot of them are already antisocial, or they have other issues too, so I don't know if that really helps. I mean, it might keep them a little bit grounded as far as being in here. You hear that a lot "oh I miss my kids." You try to keep that separated, at least for me, but I mean, we're in an institution for a reason. I guess it could, as far as when they get out, but I don't know, honestly. (Stanley)

Jeremy claimed that while he was unsure of the effect visitation may have, he ultimately believed that maintaining family connections would be the best thing for the inmate if they wish to succeed upon their release:

A lot of them are, well I shouldn't say a lot, there's a select few that come in that are always the same, but I think it's just, it's hard to break that. They have to want to break that cycle...But I think them having access to family members that are good role models in their life is probably the best thing they could have for that, so it is important.

As mentioned above, many deputies spoke to the fact that they had never considered how the use of visitation might affect an inmate's likelihood of returning to jail. Todd stated he felt incarceration would eventually turn into a cycle for the inmate

and that visitation would not prevent that outcome. Meanwhile, Danny expressed that not having communication with family members may actually serve as a deterrent from committing future crimes:

It's really hard to say, because once they leave our custody, we don't know anything more about them until they come back. It seems like people that have support systems do better, just on a very general impression basis than people that don't. But a lot of the people we see that come in, and once they leave, they don't come back because they've gone to prison, or they're going someplace where they're not going to get out for a while. We do see people though that come in that have really good support systems and they talk to their parents every day, or they talk to their significant other every day, and it's kind of a revolving [door] for them. They'll come in, they'll get out, they'll come in, they'll get out, and a lot of times, what we see is an escalation of it; they'll come in for a couple misdemeanors, they'll come in for a couple more misdemeanors, and [then], they'll get their first felony and next thing you know, it kind of snowballs until they lose that support system. And next thing you know, they come back on a serious felony and they wind up going to prison and we don't see them for awhile. It's very hard to say from our end of things if that actually helps them. I can see the logic behind why it would, but I can't give you a definitive answer on it, it's just not within our realm of study I guess. (Todd)

I've never thought about that. I see people coming back, on one hand they come to jail [and] they still talk to their family and that's great. Then I guess it's not a disconnect. If they came to jail and had absolutely no contact with their family, next time they got out they [would] probably think twice, "I was in jail for six months and I didn't get to talk to my wife for six months," that could be a deterrent. I've never thought about it. (Danny)

Finally, some did not believe the maintenance of family ties through visitation would have an effect on an inmate's likelihood to recidivate. Rather they felt the individual's personality, the judicial system, as well and drugs and alcohol, would have an affect on that outcome:

Unfortunately, I mean, it's more of a coincidence. I've been here so long, you always dial up what inmates you think might actually be successful and this is one of those years where I've seen almost everybody come back. So I would be really surprised on people that don't come back these days. Unfortunately, I think it has more to do with Idaho and [the] judicial system. I've never lived in a community like this before where people recidivate, recidivism is high. (Chris)

Not really, I haven't seen anything that I've noticed, because that's very muddy. I mean it's, you know, they can see people that... might not be able to get... down to make it to the jail. You can put a computer screen in front of grandma when she is in her wheelchair, you know, I mean that would help them see lots more people. Whether that's going to make any difference as to whether or not they come back to jail, I would say there's like, there'd be no relation. 'Cause they don't care much about those folks when they're out, spun out on drugs anyways because the drugs have taken over whatever they're doing completely. (Wade)

Roy explained why it might be hard for some deputies to believe visitation would help inmates and described why he believes inmates continue to recidivate even when they behaved correctly in jail and had consistent communication with their family members:

That question, about them having to come back or not really depends individually to each person that comes in here. I don't think you can put a blanket statement on everybody... So our population really is the same people over and over and over. I[ve] worked here [over 10 years], most of the population that I interact with, I've seen them multiple times, and every once in awhile, you'll get that person that's never been in here before, and that still happens, and that will happen, but [the] majority of the people that are in here, they just keep coming back. And you tell them... "am I going to see you back here again?" "No, no, no." Sometimes I'll challenge them, I'll be like "I'll bet I'll see you back in two weeks." "No you won't." And then I'll let them know if I see them, "you said you weren't coming back." They respond fairly good... when they're upset I'm not going to put a gasket on the fire, but at some point in time, I'm going to say, "hey, we talked about you leaving, you said you weren't coming back, what was the reason for that?" They were around a friend [they] probably shouldn't of [sic] [been]. If they've got a drug problem they'll hang around with somebody, they'll smell it, they'll see it, urges will come back, they don't have strong enough willpower to say no [to] it and they relapse; alcohol, same thing. I mean, I've seen people, the inmate workers, they're good people, they're off their alcohol and drugs, pretty decent people. And they know what right and wrong is, and then six months later, I'm in booking, they come in, they're high, they're drunk and you're just like (grabs head), and they're a totally different person. I'm angry is too strong, disappointed, because you've seen the good side of them.

Stanley held a unique position, claiming that he might feel that access to visitation actually makes life in jail more comfortable for an inmate and therefore, the inmate is not as worried about recidivating and ending up back in jail:

It probably has some effect; I mean, they're doing it more. If they're able to do it more often, but then again, how comfortable does it make them? Easier for them to be incarcerated than make it easier for them when they get out to go back to do something bad? Knowing if they're in, they're still going to be able to see their families, so really, it could go both ways. And it kind of goes back to if we make things too comfortable, what's really the punishment? "Oh, you're going to send me to jail? I'm gonna [sic] hang out with my buddies, play cards, and watch TV, and talk to my wife or kids or girlfriend." Whatever, it's kind of like it feels that way, like they're in camp. Do we make it too easy? I don't know what the answer is.

Even though the deputies seemed unsure about whether or not the maintenance of family ties does affect recidivism, they did all seem to believe that the use of IVV makes the process of visitation easier for family members.

"It does provide flexibility to the family, makes it easier for them."²⁸

While the focus of this study was to gain an understanding of how sheriff's deputies' perceived the use of a new visitation program, it was also important to understand how deputies thought families might feel about video visitation. Even though the deputies were not sure what sort of effect the maintenance of social ties would have on the inmates' likelihood to recidivate, they all seemed to agree on the fact that video visitation benefited the families on the outside. They explained that the jail standards allow the inmates and their families equal access to visitation, and that this new system, in conjunction with the family having access to the proper technological devices, gives them more opportunities to visit than ever before:

So, per jail standards they get one hour, they should have one hour of visitation with their family and loved ones. Telnate gives two free video visits a week, each

²⁸ Roy

one's 25-30 minutes. So that gets really close to that one hour time period. So they're free visits, those first [two are] free.²⁹ (Roy)

Since the implementation of the video visits, the deputies do not interact with family members but they explained that they believe the video visitation system allows the family a more comfortable visitation experience and one that is more convenient:

It helps give them the opportunity to visit more often. In the past... the people would come in just on the weekends but [now] they have the opportunity to visit from any computer that's enabled, so they can visit family that's not in town... Or it's less stressful for them to have to come into the jail, so more people would be more willing to go on and do visits with their loved ones at the jail, friends that they would normally not do because they didn't feel comfortable coming into the jail. (Stanley)

From the family's point of view, I guess the strength of it is they can visit pretty much anytime and anywhere. They can access it on laptops; they can access it on their home computers. As long as they have a webcam, pretty much they can access those visits, so rather than having to schedule a time where they have to be down at the sheriff's office, they can just kind of do whatever, whenever's available for them." (Todd)

It was mentioned earlier that part of the reason ACSO management wished to implement video visitation was to help keep children out of a negative jail environment. The deputies claimed that they believe video visitation makes the process easier for children and their caretakers:

I think it's more comfortable for them. So they don't, they have kids, if their kids are in their home environment, they can come in for 10 or 15 minutes seeing their loved one, their family member, and then they could be redirected to their [room]. Or they have toys or whatever else to preoccupy them if need be. If they need to use the restroom, it's right there. (Roy)

I actually think the families on the outside kind of like it because they don't have to get all the kids together in the car to come here, plan it out, they can sit at

²⁹ While inmates can pay for additional visits, none of the deputies knew how much each additional visitation cost the inmates.

home. They can be relaxed at home and do it from home, so they don't have to go anywhere. (Jeremy)

Additionally, the video visitation program allows family and friends to visit who would not have been able to do so easily during the period of in-person visitation, such as those who are disabled or who do not live in Idaho:

Individuals that are now doing video visits, that's cross-country. As long as somebody has the Internet and has a means basically of doing this, you know, the face-to-face portion... less individuals were coming from out of state. Was there even that possibility of a special visit? To get somebody from out of town, you know, to do the video portion. I mean the individual, like I said, can be anywhere throughout the country as long as they have means of the Internet and all that. (Mathew)

I think one of the main strengths for the inmates is [that] there's a lot of inmates here that don't have family that live nearby and that gives them an opportunity. If they had just physical visits, they wouldn't be able to visit with their family. Having the video visits, that's really easy because most everyone has Internet now, and email, so it gives those inmates an opportunity to actually, even though it's through a screen, it gives them an opportunity to interact with their family. (Craig)

Well I guess it helps the inmates too if they have people out of state, or if they're from out of state and they get arrested here. Kind of a comfort thing, that they can actually have visits with family or a phone call... overall, it's more accommodating to more people. Just because there's so many people arrested from out of state or people can't make it to the facility, all sorts of people... or you know, a lot of people are disabled, or can't make it here, whatever their situation may be. It keeps them wired in with the inmates. (Chris)

The system gives family members, both in the Ada County community and those throughout the country, more opportunities for visitation. However, the deputies recognized that all families have different backgrounds and that for some who are not so financially well off, it might be difficult for them to find access to the Internet. Despite

this, the deputies reflected that it would still be easier for those families to find Internet in the community than it would be to travel to the jail³⁰:

I tell them McDonald's offers free Wi-Fi. Go to [an] Internet cafe, go to McDonald's, libraries. So somebody who doesn't have a computer, if you went to a library, they'd have a more up to date [computer] and you can go check it out at a certain time, do your visit and that would be available to do it. (Roy)

I think it's a lot easier for family members on the outside to find Internet if they don't have it versus people who literally couldn't come in person. 'Cause every once and a while you'll hear "my family doesn't even have Internet!" That's easy, go to the library, you know, there it's way eas[ier] for people to find Internet. But I'm positive there's way fewer people that are, or way more outside, that could not come. (Alan)

When video visitation was implemented, it took some family members awhile to adjust to not seeing the inmates in-person, and they did not initially like the system:

For families and inmates, probably the biggest [issue] is it's not an in-person visit, it is online. So it's kind of like, it is basically [like] Skype. You can [communicate with] a family member that lives in Florida... but you don't necessarily get the same connection as having somebody right in front of you. You can sit down, you can talk to [them] and all that. That's probably the biggest thing for inmates and their families is [that] there's some distance. There's still a disconnection right there that you would probably not see as much of with the physical visit. I mean, [during in-person visitation] you still have to do a physical visit through the glass, but at least the person's right in front of you. There's something to be said for seeing a person sitting down and talking with them rather than talking into a phone over the top of the kiosk. So that's probably the biggest weakness for them, it doesn't give them quite as much of an emotional response to it, I would say. (Todd)

Nevertheless, the deputies expressed that they believed the families and inmates began to prefer the new video visitation after an initial transition period. Wade went on to explain why this feeling of disconnect may be phasing its way out of inmate and family members' feelings towards video visitation:

³⁰ It is important to note that family members, for privacy reasons, may feel uncomfortable visiting in a public space, such as McDonald's or in a library.

There was more when we first started with all of this, but I haven't noticed a whole bunch because pretty much every jail is starting to go to something like this and so they've been fairly [good]; that's just the way it is. And then a lot of the younger ones are used to doing that all the time anyway with your computer-y, Instagram's, and whatever all the other stuff is. (Wade)

The information presented up to this point has explained, from the deputies' perspectives, how the ability to communicate via video has benefited themselves, the inmates, and their families. The following section discusses how the Telmate system has become so much more than a remote video visitation program; inmates can also instant message, play games, and submit inmate request forms through the system.

"They can do the same thing, where it's kind of like a Facebook."³¹

As technology has advanced outside the jail walls, so too has the Telmate system inside the facility. Over time the Telmate system has grown into a system that allows inmates to communicate in more ways with their family than just through video visits. In fact, some of the deputies have likened the newest version of the Telmate system to something akin to Facebook, which allows the inmates more opportunities to communicate with their loved ones:

They can also do messages. So like instant messages like we do on the phone. They can do the same thing, where it's kind of like a Facebook [message].³² So they can instant message a person one-on-one, or they can do a post and just [write] "hey, how is everybody doing today?" And they can have people sign up for those posts, or go in and look at it and then they can look [at] the message board and they'll say "what's up?" or they can inform all their family members in one message. (Roy)

³¹ Roy

³² There is not a set limit to the number of messages the inmates can send. However, each message does come with a cost. None of the deputies were able to recall how much the cost of a message was.

In addition to being able to video chat and instant message with their families, inmates can also access music, games, and some websites on the kiosks through the secure Telmate system:

Telmate has tablets where they can do their instant messages... A lot of them use the Internet, or they go to music sites and they'll listen to music, or they'll play games, or they can go to the news [sites]. Telmate restricts where they can go on the Internet, so they don't have free liberty to any site on the Internet, so it's censored where they can go. (Roy)

One relatively new development, which has benefited both inmates and deputies, was the shift from using paper request forms to electronic forms on the Telmate kiosk. Craig and Todd explained how a shift in the processing of inmate request forms has allowed the deputies to work more efficiently. Additionally, Todd explained that inmates can now put in as many request forms as they wish:

You can also submit inmate request forms on [the kiosks]. We used to have paper copies, which was very time consuming. You'd go through them, sign, and then you have to run them through three different places. So that is kind of new to the Telmate system and that's a big benefit because you're able to look at their request online and actually respond back to them in a message. So when they log in to the Telmate station, they can see their response to their request. (Craig)

We've made a large shift here recently from using, we call them inmate request forms or 'kites,' and they were paper for a long time. So when we'd come in, we'd check the mailbox, we'd have a ton of those kites in there we'd have to check. And now we've moved to these electronic ones where they go in on the kiosk, and it's been, in my opinion, it's been both beneficial and detrimental because it kind of necks them down because they have to go through a specific order of what they can request on there. So it focuses their request more, so we're not getting these vague kites that we're not quite sure how to answer. But at the same time too, they have access to the kiosk all the time, so... if they want to sit up all night and put in kites, [they can]... so we'll see people that put in just these kites that, just because they have nothing else to do, so they'll sit there and use them...for years we did bubble sheets for commissary. They had to go through and circle [what they wanted] and commissary would have to go through and collect all of them and now it's all done electronic. They order all of their commissary on the kiosks, which is a lot less work for us and a lot less work for

commissary because they can just pull the report off the kiosk and fill the order; they don't have to sift through all the bubble sheets. (Todd)

Alan further explained that the new kite system cuts down on the time it takes to process the inmate requests because it has essentially cut out the "middle man," which makes their jobs more efficient:

I think it's good just because, well [we] save paper of course. We can just give them quick shortcut answers [and] they can check it on the kiosk... I don't mean this to sound in a negative way because obviously we're interacting with the inmates all day long anyways, but it just cuts back. It just cuts up if you want to consider that piece of paper a middleman, where we have to route it to the right people. I think from their perspective, they might get their answers faster. And I don't want to make it sound like, "oh less interaction with the inmates," but really, to me, it's a quicker, more effective way.

Todd goes on to explain that cutting down on the time spent processing the paperwork has allowed the deputies to focus on other important jobs, such as maintaining institutional security:

It's saved us a lot of paperwork time; of sitting there at a desk trying to sort through paperwork. It's something now that is either taken care of by somebody else off site, or it's something we can do immediately on a computer and that gives us more time to watch inmates, to go out and search, to do the things we need to do as security personnel.

Since the online request form system is relatively new, all of the deputies were able to speak to the change from the paper to electronic request forms. Jeremy explained that the requests now go to the appropriate departments within the jail and the deputies only have to check the ones that are relevant to their job duties:

I've noticed that it's kind of streamlined a lot of things. Before they did a lot of paper requests and we had to give it out to the right people so it could get answered and get [it] back. They've allowed it now to where they can type on there their requests and send it to whoever they need to. And if it goes to us, then first thing in the morning I'll write down all the requests and I can take care of

them. It's basically allowed us to answer their requests a lot quicker; get them out and get answers to all [of] the other people that come in too.

This has made the deputies' job more efficient because in the past, under the paper request system, the deputies had to sift through each request and get it to the appropriate department:

Before we would have to go through each kite, read it, say, "this goes here." Now you just click the button and the email sends it to the right spot. And the commissary, not having to pass out bubble sheets in certain parts of the jail. Certain parts you still have to do it by bubble, [but] the dorms they just log on during the week and order. (Danny)

The deputies did not mention many weaknesses with the new electronic kite system. As it is a new system, they stated it could perhaps be a little more user friendly but that overall, it works well. The only challenge some deputies' reflected on encountering is when other deputies do not check for kites during their shift and leave them waiting for the next person who takes over their post:

It's kind of hard to complain about it anymore. I still think some things would be easier, or they could make them more user friendly for us. So when we go to pull for kites for the day or whatever, it seems a lot of deputies will just check on it and depending on how proactive they are, they won't necessarily do anything with it so you have to go back farther and you kind of make sure it's gotten done or something. So kind of accountability for somebody ahead of you maybe, but that's more of something that would happen no matter what if you're using it. That's the only thing I can really think of. (Stanley)

According to these 10 deputies', the use of IVV has been a beneficial program, for the most part, for inmates, families, and themselves. While the deputies' did not have many negative comments about the system, a few of them did have some suggestions regarding how to improve the program in the future.

Improvements

As presented above, ACJ sheriff's deputies' had mostly positive feedback regarding IVV. At the conclusion of each interview, all 10 deputies were asked to reflect back on the discussion and think about any improvements they wish to see with the Telmate system; whether for themselves, inmates, or their families. By and large, the deputies expressed being satisfied with the current system but they did provide a few suggestions of ways to improve the program. The following section discusses the deputies' suggestions of increasing deputy training, adding a Telmate kiosk for public use, and opening up the Telmate system to probation and parole officers and attorneys. "I think sky's the limit...there's always room for improvement"³³

A few of the deputies reflected that it might be nice to see an increase in the amount of training they receive:

I am horrible with technology. I am not computer savvy. I am terrible at everything like that. We were given basically like a 'how to' thing that we can relate to the inmates of how to work it, but I would almost like my own tutorial because the inmates ask me questions constantly and I'm like "I don't use it, you use it!" I seriously, like just a simple tutorial, even if it was just like a PowerPoint or a link that they could give us, just "here's the basics of how it works." 'Cause we're given some information but they're kind of assuming that we're good at stuff like that. I'm not, I'm not, I'm horrible. I can barely use my own cell phone.
(Alan)

I wish we had a little more training on it, where somebody would sit down and show us, walk us through how to do exactly what the system can do so we can utilize it to its full potential. Because I feel like sometimes we only use 10 percent of the entire system because we just don't know about the other 90 percent.
(Todd)

³³ Mathew

Despite multiple requests for more training, the deputies seemed to understand why ACSO management does not provide more initial training on the system. Rather, the deputies are comfortable using alternative avenues to get their questions answered:

It would be nice if we could get some more training on it, but with several hundred deputies in the jail, that's kind of hard to fund again. Getting all those people, hav[ing] them sit down through like a three-hour class and go through how to use it. So a lot of stuff we pick up on our own, or we bounce back and forth between each other, or we get ahold [of] a Telmate deputy and they kind of can walk us through how to do things. (Todd)

One deputy, Danny, did not feel that additional training would be necessary. He reflected that he is fine contacting Telmate if something goes wrong with the system; he does not feel he needs to know how to fix the system:

That would just be one more thing you'd have to deal with. Right now, it's just, I watch the videos and if I catch something great, and if not, then it's fine. If something major goes wrong then you just let someone know and they call Telmate and it gets fixed eventually.

Wade reflected that while he did not feel additional training would be necessary, he did think it would be helpful if the jail provided more communication about who the Telmate deputies are on each team:

It helps if we know who our Telmate deputies [are] because a lot of times it's like well, this guy was on my team last time and he's [a] Telmate deputy, but that was two rotations ago and I'm not sure who our Telmate deputies are on this team. That would, yeah, that would be kind of a handy thing just to flop in some place and, you know, like, maybe your team rosters or something. Some things say SRT [Special Response Team] officer behind them, you know. So we should just have Telmate, I don't know they might actually have that somewhere, but I don't know if that's been done. So on occasion it'll come out in an email, "hey, these are the Telmate deputies on the shift," but that doesn't seem to be updated as much... Yeah, know[ing] who it is you actually need to contact.

Other suggestions for improvements included adding a kiosk somewhere in the jail lobby that would provide family members who may not be able to access the Internet at home a way to communicate with their loved one:

We don't really have a place where they can come in and use a video station. I know some facilities have a couple of booths or stations where they could use it on site because some people don't have the Internet. That's really, I think, the only drawback is we do have, some people that are maybe not as fortunate and don't have the ability to say have a computer that's accessible to them, and so they can[not] use video visit[ing]. I think that might be the only one. But like I said, I don't know if we even have, just thinking about it when I worked up there, I don't know if we've ever had the space that can accommodate that, but maybe in the future. (Stanley)

One thing that we could do better is, I know some other jails in the state of Idaho have a Telmate kiosk, like in their lobby area for family that, like I said, doesn't have the Internet. I get the pros and the cons of that, but I kind of see how that would be nice to offer. (Alan)

Similar to the idea of increasing training, Stanley explained why installing a lobby kiosk may be difficult for ACSO at this time:

At this point, realistically, we probably can't do that [because we] just don't have the space, don't have the funds, and obviously, everything's on a budget. But you know, in realistic terms, I'm assuming that down the road that might be something that's on the table. (Stanley)

The deputies' expressed that it might be nice to expand the use of the system to also allow attorneys and probation and parole officers to use video visitation. Roy explained that allowing these individuals use of the system would, similar to inmates' families, save them driving time, allowing them to do more efficient work at their offices:

With video visiting, to have probation and parole and have attorneys, they're looking at doing video visiting, [so] they won't have to come in. But, I think [one of] the long term goals [for video visitation], [so] attorneys can stay in their office [and] probation and parole can stay in their office, so they don't have the drive time, [and] they can be more productive, [not] fighting traffic for an hour just to

get here [for] a five minute meeting, ten minute meeting. So they can be more productive, way more productive if they can use the video visiting option. (Roy)

By and large however, most of the deputies reflected Jeremy and Mathew's conclusion that while there is always room for improvement, the system is running as best it can for the time being:

We [have] come leaps and bounds, but I would always say there's always that room for improvement... I think Ada County was one of the first ones though to introduce the video visits, so we're pretty well kind of set in that. (Mathew)

If there's an issue that arises or whatever, Telmate is really good with taking that and trying to improve on it. There's always room for improvement, but so far, I think it's getting better all the time, so I think that it pretty much meets a lot of the objectives we have...Right now, I can't think of anything off the top of my head ...they've done a really good job of improving. (Jeremy)

All 10 deputies reflected on the idea that they believe the switch from in-person to video visitation has been a success at ACJ. Based on the opinions they shared in their interviews, it would appear as though ACSO has been successful in achieving the five agency objectives the Sheriff of ACSO sought to achieve with the implementation of IVV (Murdoch et al., in progress). The deputies believe that, firstly, the program has prevented the desensitization of kids to the jail environment, as children are no longer required to travel to the jail for visitation purposes. Secondly, they perceived that it has increased jail security and order in that the deputies are able to use the system as a behavioral management tool. Third, the deputies believe IVV has increased institutional security in that the public is no longer passing through the secure walls of the jail . Fourth, according to the deputies, it seems to have reduced resource and space requirements in that ACSO no longer needs to hire and pay for deputies to run visitation. Finally, the deputies believe the use of IVV has increased both inmates' and their

families' access to, and frequency of, visitation, all while allowing the family the chance to communicate with their loved ones from the comfort of their own home. However, as will be discussed in the next chapter, further research is required to more clearly understand the effects of IVV on recidivism, institutional security and order, the desensitization of kids to the jail setting, public safety, and access to visitation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

ACSO stakeholders made the decision to move from in-person visitation to video visitation for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, they felt that moving to a system in which the public no longer entered the facility for visitation would ultimately cut down on the possibility of contraband breaching the jail walls (Murdoch et al., in progress). This reflects the agency objectives of both promoting public safety and increasing the security of the jail. Secondly, the deputies and the key stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of IVV reflected that they wanted to see fewer children come into the jail, as they believed it was a negative environment for children to be in. According to the deputies, the implementation of IVV has met this objective since children no longer enter the facility. They also discussed the fact that they believe it is beneficial for children to be able to spend only 15 or 20 minutes talking to a parent, rather than having to sit in a holding room for one hour.

The sheriff's deputies also believe the implementation of IVV has led to an increase in order maintenance within the facility because they no longer move inmates around the facility for visitation purposes and they do not process any visitors inside the jail. Further, they believe the implementation of IVV and the provision of two free visits per week incentivizes inmates to follow institutional rules. The sheriff's deputies' believe the shift to IVV met the agency objective of reducing resource and space requirements by creating a decrease in visitation-related tasks for the deputies, such as processing visitors into the facility and moving inmates throughout the jail. The agency no longer needed to

hire deputies solely for the purpose of running visitation after the program was implemented. Finally, the sheriff's deputies also explained that they felt the use of IVV has increased an inmate's ability to access visitation as every inmate has the opportunity to receive two free visits a week and the system allows inmates with family members who live out of state and have access to technology, the opportunity to visit.

For those five deputies who worked at the sheriff's office prior to and during the switch to video visitation, the transition to the new system seemed to have happened almost overnight. As noted earlier, part of the purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how the management of the jail helped get deputies to "buy-in" to the use of the system. Some research, especially research focusing on criminal justice organizations, speaks to how difficult it is to bring about large-scale change (Porporino, 2003). What is perhaps the most unexpected finding of this study is that the deputies actually had very little to say about the 'buy-in' process when switching from in-person to video visitation. While not explicitly stated, the deputies at ACJ reflected almost the polar opposite ideal in that they did not speak at all about what the management team did to help them to become supportive of the change.

Their narratives show that they believed switching to video visitation would benefit them in their daily work, so they were fully supportive of the transition. Literature on organizational change, especially in corrections, speaks to the fact that employees generally claim that 'no new programming works,' so they think, 'why bother with change' (Porporino, 2003)? Porporino's (2003) research focuses on whether or not corrections workers will support new programming designed to promote a change in inmate behavior. It may be that the deputies at ACJ were more supportive of this shift in

programming than deputies at other facilities because they saw how significantly it would impact their daily lives, making their job less tedious by not having to manage security when the public is brought in and when inmates are moved around the facility.

Furthermore, the sheriff's deputies might have been so supportive of the change because the outcome of the program was not to change offender institutional behavior, but rather to make visitation practices more convenient for staff, inmates, and their families. In summary, perhaps ACSO deputies' were supportive of the shift without much explanation from management given how the program inevitably made their jobs less stressful. Since the deputies were able to speak to the objectives of the shift from in-person to video visitation, one may infer the deputies were fully informed about the reasons for the change, and perhaps, were able to ask management any questions they may have had about the transition.

ACJ is widely known to be a well-run facility (Murdoch et al., in progress) and the deputies may feel they had, and continue to have, the support of management, which means they were more supportive of the transition and continue to support the use of IVV. Relatedly, when the program initially started, the organization used a 'train-the-trainers' model in which a few deputies would go to a training session, and once they came back to work, it was their job to train their coworkers. All of the deputies expressed feeling that this was an adequate way to learn the system, as they know the budget and time constraints of the organization prevent additional training from happening. This also lends credibility to the idea that the management fully explained to the deputies how the transition would occur and why all of the deputies were not going through long Telmate training sessions.

On a related note, the five deputies who had only worked at ACSO since the implementation of IVV explained that they too were mostly satisfied with their level of training on the Telmate system. While a few deputies reflected that it may be nice to receive just a bit more training on the logistics of the program, overall, they felt their initial training session focusing on the basics of the system was enough for them. Perhaps the deputies were not concerned with an increase in training since they are not required to troubleshoot technological issues. The sheriff's deputies explained that inmates can contact Telmate directly when there is a computer-related issue and Telmate is then charged with fixing any problems that arise, which is one of many reasons why the deputies described being satisfied with the Telmate system.

That being said, the deputies reflected that there were quite a few challenges with the first system ACSO implemented. From the sheriff's deputies' perspective, the original system was more work than it was actually worth due to the many technological malfunctions. They said there were times when the original technology simply would not work and that, on occasion, inmates were able to 'hack' the system and access sites such as Facebook, which should have been blocked by the company. Furthermore, the portable machines³⁴ the agency bought to conduct the visits broke quickly, which could cause the inmates to become angry and act out. Additionally, the laptops allowed the inmates to show their family members the layout of the inside of the jail, which posed a potential security risk. The combination of all of these difficulties actually made the deputies' jobs more difficult, because, not only did they have to deal with the broken technology and the

³⁴ \$300 portable laptops from Costco

security breaches, but they also had to manage the behavior of the inmates when they got upset that their visit did not occur as originally planned.

Eventually, the organization made the switch to Telmate, a national company that installed and currently manages the video visitation system not only at ACJ, but also at other prisons and jails around the country. It is possible the Telmate system, founded in 1998, encounters only minimal technological issues due to their long history of use in correctional facilities. The deputies spoke very highly of Telmate, explaining the company actually came in and installed permanent kiosks for the video visits. This was beneficial because the inmates cannot show their loved ones how the inside of the jail is laid out and the kiosks are sturdier and do not break as easily as the laptops did. According to the deputies, Telmate also has better security measures in place so inmates can only visit with their families, instant message, and get on approved music, game, and news websites.

All 10 deputies claimed to enjoy the use of video visitation because they are not required to deal with visitation at all; in fact, they stated they are not required to know the ins and outs of how the system functions in terms of scheduling appointments and troubleshooting. Lambert et al. (2009) found that role ambiguity could increase the amount of stress a correctional officer feels in their daily work. However, the findings in the current study contradict the conclusion reported by Lambert and his team in that the deputies actually felt *less* occupational stress because they were required to know very little about the Telmate visitation system. The deputies reported that they felt less stress with video visitation because the elimination of in-person visitation was one less thing they had to worry about on a daily basis.

Much of the current literature states that in order for there to be smooth organizational change, management must make sure that employees are fully informed about the reasons behind a change, they need to be able to voice their concerns, and they need to be made fully aware of how the process will occur (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Porporino, 2003). Moreover, Lambert et al., (2006) claim employees in correctional settings will feel less stress if they believe they are working for a well-run organization and are easily able to communicate with upper management about any concerns they may have.

Given its somewhat recent implementation, it seems interesting that during their interviews, more deputies did not speak to the process that management went through to inform them about the transition from in-person to video visitation. Perhaps the deputies were not too concerned about the switch given that their role in the new visitation process would be minimal. Deputies were only charged with monitoring videos for rule violations and with contacting Telmate or a Telmate deputy if something went wrong with the system. Deputies are also able to restrict inmate access to IVV if they are not maintaining compliance with jail rules.

If an inmate is acting out, the deputies have the ability to restrict their access to Telmate, which is often effective if the inmate regularly uses the system for visitation. The deputies agreed that the ability to restrict Telmate privileges does keep inmates in line and works well as a behavioral management tool. According to the sheriff's deputies, the system works well to correct offender behavior because so many of them use the system. The sheriff's deputies reflected that only a small number of inmates do not utilize IVV. Deputies noted that most inmates really look forward to those two free visits a week

because it is how they are able to stay connected with the outside world. They also believe it made the visitation process easier for families and children, but they did not believe those contacts would prevent inmates from returning to the system.

They reflected that access to visitation allows the inmates to maintain family ties; but in regards to whether or not this communication gave them a lower chance of recidivating, they were largely unsure. A few of the deputies reflected that they did not believe IVV would have any affect on recidivism, while one deputy believed that access to IVV may actually increase the likelihood of recidivating. Ultimately, while the deputies understood the logic in maintaining a support system through visitation while incarcerated, they did not believe that this would determine the individual's fate at returning to the system. The deputies claimed that the idea of recidivism and visitation being linked was hard to believe in practice given that they continually see the same people returning to jail. Rather, they believe that once inmates are released and are back hanging out with their old friends and around drugs, they will wind up resorting to their antisocial ways.

All of the deputies expressed that they believed the switch to video visitation, while perhaps slightly less personal than video visitation, was a beneficial switch for families. In part, it made it easier for families with children, as the caregivers no longer need to transport them to the facility or bring them inside such a negative environment. Additionally, it allowed those who lived out of state to visit their loved one; something that would have been much more difficult and costly under the old system. While the deputies recognized that some families might not be able to afford Internet at home, they noted that it would be easy enough to find Wi-Fi at the local McDonald's, or to access a

computer at the library. In the end, the deputies felt that the benefits of video visitation also outweighed the negatives for the families.

The deputies gave overwhelmingly positive feedback about the use of the video visitation system. In fact, they spoke about very few weaknesses and had minimal suggestions for improvements. Some deputies mentioned that it might be nice to see the technology improve a bit, as it is sometimes an annoyance to deal with inmate complaints when the technology fails. Nevertheless, the deputies reflected that the technology issues the inmates run into are no different than what someone who lives outside the jail would run into, so they did not view it as a major concern. Another major improvement the deputies mentioned was installing a kiosk somewhere in the lobby that would allow those families who did not have access to the Internet the ability to visit with their loved ones. Lastly, a few of the deputies also mentioned changing the system to allow both attorneys and probation and parole officers the ability to use video visits. The deputies mentioned this might make the job of those individuals easier, as they would not have to spend the time driving to the jail when they could be doing other work. Currently, ACSO is working to develop a system that would allow for this; however, they are challenged with implementing it in such a way that allows the inmates a greater level of privacy. The kiosks need to be in a separate location of the jail and the system cannot have the ability to record the visits due to attorney-client privilege (Murdoch et al., in progress).

In the end, video visitation appears to have benefited the deputies at ACJ immensely, and for a multitude of reasons. They no longer have to process visitors into the jail, nor do they have to manage inmate movement for visitation. The deputies also reflected that they can spend more time focusing on inmate behavior because they are not

searching the public or inmates for contraband, which means they have more time to interact with the inmates and monitor the video visits to ensure the inmates are following jail rules. Furthermore, the deputies noted the implementation of IVV appears to have made the visitation process easier for the family and friends of the inmates. While it appears as though, from the perspective of the sheriff's deputies who were interviewed, IVV has been successful, there are certain limitations of the study that must be discussed. Furthermore, the results of this exploratory secondary data analysis highlight many areas in need of further research, in addition to identifying policy implications.

Study Limitations

While this study reveals several important findings about the implementation and use of remote video visitation from the perspective of Ada County Sheriff's deputies, there are some limitations that must be considered. First and foremost, as nonprobability sampling was used, the deputies who self-selected to participate in the study may have done so because they had strong, positive feelings about the program, which affects the generalizability of the results. Relatedly, the conclusions drawn from this analysis are also not generalizable due, in large part, to the small sample of sheriff's deputies who were interviewed and due to the fact that deputies at only one jail were studied. Nevertheless, generalizability is not the goal of qualitative research, and was therefore not a goal of this study.

On a related note, while 10 deputies were interviewed in total, only five of those deputies actually experienced the transition from in-person visitation to IVV. In order to have a more concrete idea of what the transition was like from the sheriff's deputies' perspective, it would have been beneficial to interview more individuals who worked for

ACSO during the transition. Another limitation of the small sample is the fact that only one female deputy was interviewed. Further given the amount of time that passed between the implementation of IVV and the interviews, the deputies may have had a difficult time remembering everything ACSO did to implement the change, which is a potential limitation of this study.

Moreover, as this is a secondary analysis of interview data that was collected for a different purpose, it is also possible that the questions asked of the sheriff's deputies were not specific enough to answer the research questions regarding organizational change and employee buy-in in the current study. This is a common limitation in conducting secondary data analysis; the researcher is unable to tailor the interview questions to their specific study and research questions. As this was also an exploratory study, the researcher had no other methodology or results to compare these outcomes to. The researcher was not able to establish causality via internal validity due to the nature of this qualitative study. An experimental design would have been necessary if causality was a goal of this study. As will be discussed in the following section, future research should be conducted that focuses on how other COs at ACJ, and working for other correctional agencies, perceived the change to IVV.

Future Research and Policy Implications

Of the four research questions explored, it was surprising not to find any information in the interview transcripts regarding how the ACSO management team was able to get the deputies to buy-in to the use of the system. As mentioned above, this may simply be the result of the small sample that was chosen for this study, and further, the small number of individuals within the sample that were present for the transition from

in-person visitation to video visitation. Thus, researchers who examine this topic in the future – either at ACSO or elsewhere – should consider employing a more methodologically robust design, using probability sampling to obtain a larger number of participants who can speak to the tactics different administrators utilize to gain employee buy-in when transitioning to IVV. Additionally, it may prove useful to conduct research within a facility as the transition is happening; this may prove feasible as different administrations continue to switch to IVV. Additionally, future research should ensure an equal balance between male and female participants to control for any gender disparities in responses. Finally, in an attempt to gain more truthful and less biased responses, future studies should be conducted using anonymous methods, such as researchers administering an anonymous survey.

While the system received positive feedback from ACSO deputies, it would be useful for future research to look at how video visitation is perceived in other jails and in prison settings, as inmates are generally in prison for longer periods of time than are those in a jail. It is possible, given ACSO's positive reputation, that the transition was so easy for ACSO deputies due to the level of support they receive from management and their understanding of how it would positively change their roles. Since it is possible the ease of transition discussed herein is unique to ACSO, additional research should be conducted in other correctional settings.

It is important to understand why management wants to implement IVV and how deputies, in addition to families and inmates, feel about the change. ACSO hoped that IVV would increase access to visitation for inmates and families; thus, more research should examine whether families do in fact feel more connected to their incarcerated

loved ones due to increased opportunities for visitation. Or alternatively, if families would prefer having fewer visits but in-person, as some anecdotal evidence suggests in-person visits are more intimate (Phillips, 2012; Rabuy & Wagner, 2015). If future research does find that increased access to IVV helps inmates and their families' feel more connected, it may prove useful to implement these programs in more correctional facilities.

Furthermore, research should be conducted to find out whether or not stronger family bonds are maintained through IVV or in-person visitation; this is an especially important topic to focus on given the increased use of IVV across the nation. While IVV may better suit the needs of correctional administrations, more information is needed on how it suits the needs of inmates, including research focusing on whether or not this type of visitation does, or does not, have an effect on recidivism. Due to the lack of research on this topic, and the apparent increase in use of these programs, it is important to study whether or not those who use video visitation more frequently have lower recidivism rates. If these programs are found to reduce recidivism, future legislation may want to focus on requiring the use of IVV in both prisons and jails.

Additionally, since one of the purposes of implementing this program was to increase institutional security, more research should be conducted surrounding whether or not the security of the facility, and other facilities that have implemented IVV, increased once video visitation was implemented. For example, future studies should seek to understand whether or not the level of contraband entering facilities increased, decreased, or stayed the same after the implementation of the program. While not discussed in this study, it may be interesting to study whether or not the implementation of video visitation

is correlated with decreased inmate-on-inmate or staff-on-inmate violence given the belief IVV may improve institutional behavior. If future research supports the notion that the implementation of IVV increases institutional, staff, and inmate safety, other correctional administrators, particularly those experiencing high levels of institutional insecurity, may find it advantageous to implement IVV.

It is important to continue to research the use of new technologies in correctional settings, including IVV, so administrators can begin thinking about what sort of advancements they can implement to improve not only the lives of the inmates who are in the facility day-in and day-out, but also the correctional staff. While this study was exploratory in nature, it lays the groundwork for future research regarding how the advancement in technologies could impact how jails and prisons function. In addition to the maintenance of social bonds, future advancements in technology could make the process of reentry easier for inmates, as new technologies might allow inmates more access to educational, job, and post-release housing resources, ultimately serving to ease their transition back into society.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions: Stakeholders

1. In your opinion, what are the objectives of the inmate video visitation system?
2. Do you believe these objectives are being met?
Probe: reasons for believing yes or no
3. What dynamics did you experience in the creation phase of the inmate video visitation system?
4. What dynamics did you experience in the implementation stage of the inmate video visitation system?
5. How did these dynamics affect how the program was designed?
Probe: modifications made?
6. What challenges did you experience in the creation phase of the inmate video visitation system?
7. What challenges did you experience in the implementation stage of the inmate video visitation system?
8. How did these challenges affect how the program was implemented?
Probe: modifications made in terms of inmate access to the system?
9. Do you have any final comments or thoughts you would like to share?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions: Detention Staff

1. In your opinion, what are the objectives of the inmate video visitation system?
Probes: maintenance of family ties, cost savings, institutional security
2. Do you believe these objectives are being met?
Probe: reasons for believing yes or no
3. In your opinion, how can ACSO revise the video visitation system to better meet its objectives?
4. How does the use of video visitation affect you in the completion of your day-to-day activities?
Probe: feelings of safety, efficiency
5. In your opinion, how can ACSO revise the video visitation system to better meet the needs of ACSO personnel?
6. What types of challenges, if any, do you experience in managing the inmate video visitation system?
7. Do you have any concerns about the process of inmates accessing the video visitation system?
Probe: if so, how do you recommend the procedure be modified?
8. Do you think inmate access to the video visitation system results in more desirable inmate behavior in the institution and in the community?
Probe: recidivism
9. Overall, what do you perceive as the strengths of using the video visitation system?
10. Overall, what do you perceive as the weaknesses of using the video visitation system?
11. Do you have any final comments or thoughts you would like to share?

