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# Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender: An Exploratory Study

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COMMUNITY SUPERVISION OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDER:  
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Mathilda Spencer

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2015

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Evidence concerning the effectiveness of DVO supervision cannot subsist without understanding how probation officers supervise offenders and implement strategies. Little research exists on what probation officers actually do with the domestic violence offenders they supervise and this study is a first step in that process (Seiter & West, 2003).

In 2000, PCADV funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), took the lead in developing the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (Model) (PCADV, 2003). The research explores if the POs are specifically trained on DVO supervision techniques, use the knowledge obtained through training, and any barriers to effective supervision of DVOs.

The conceptual framework for this study shows how the relationship between the PO and DVO is a direct function of training, awareness of the Model, and how a number of barriers either impedes or enhances the POs ability to supervise the DVO. The data was collected using survey methodology and data analysis using quantitative methods. A total of 132 probation officers from 28 Pennsylvania counties were included in the final sample.

Findings from this study indicate that although the majority of the probation officers were not aware of the Model they used the techniques detailed in the Model to

supervise the DVOs on their caseload. Additional findings demonstrate that gender, training focused on DVO training, specialized probation and a probation officers belief that probation reduces recidivism were statistically significant in predicting supervision techniques described in the Model.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Statement of the Problem**

National studies indicate that one in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) maintains a fatality database based upon media reports. In 2009, 180 fatalities occurred in Pennsylvania due to domestic violence (PCADV, 2010). Domestic violence must be recognized and responded to as a destructive force and a deadly crime.

The social and personal costs of domestic violence make it a critical area for evaluating the practices used by probation officers when supervising domestic violence offenders (DVOs) in the community (Labriola, Rempel, & Davis, 2005). Two areas of exploration deserve attention: a) probation officers' knowledge of domestic violence and b) their related supervision of DVOs. Ensuring proper knowledge requires probation officers receive training on what crimes constitute domestic violence and how to address on-going victimization during caseload supervision. Similarly, a probation officer's lack of adequate supervision of DVOs can result in continued victimization, or worse, a fatality (PCADV, 2010).

Domestic violence presents several complications for effective probation supervision. Specifically, intimate partner violence differs considerably from other forms of violence because of the relationship between the offender and the victim. Often there are strong emotional ties between victims and their batterers. Victims are reluctant to enter into an adversarial proceeding or invoke punishment (Dutton, 1995). Victims may also be financially dependent on the batterer and incarceration may result in the family

being plunged into poverty. The issue becomes even more complex given the historical responses emanating from our criminal justice system, which holds deterrence as its philosophical foundation. Within this purview police arrest, prosecutors prosecute, judges convict and probation officers supervise with the expressed purpose of keeping the victim safe by deterring the offender. Unfortunately, practices commonly employed within the system to deter other offenders do not work with DVOs because batterers and their victims often live together with ongoing unsupervised contact (Fagan, 1996). As a result, adequately responding to domestic violence has become one of the serious challenges facing the criminal justice system today.

Research supports the idea that a coordinated community response offers an effective way to address domestic violence. Cooperation between criminal justice, social service, and victim advocates has proven to be more productive than acting separately to address the problem (Burke, 2002; Center for Court Innovation, 2006; Eley, 2005; Erez, 2002; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001). A cooperative police department, committed prosecutor, engaged advocacy groups, enlightened judiciary, and educated probation officers provide the necessary components of a coordinated community response. Within this context the probation department assumes a pivotal role in keeping the offender accountable for his or her behavior (Reddick & Chapin, 2002). However, a probation officer's ability to accomplish behavior changes, incorporate therapeutic techniques, and coordinate among multiple social service agencies given rapidly increasing caseloads and paperwork remains in question. The research that has focused on the effectiveness of interventions has related to caseload size and intensive supervision. Taxman (2002) submits, "there have been few studies that

have focused on case management, risk assessment or models testing different philosophies of supervision” (Taxman, 2002, p. 2).

This study is the first step for determining if an effective means for probation officers to supervise domestic violence offenders in the community exists. The challenge initially rests with determining what supervision strategies implemented by POs when supervising DVOs. However, only a minimal amount of information on this topic exists thereby supporting the need for this study, which will explore how county probation officers are currently supervising DVOs in the community. The ability to quantify and measure DVO supervision methods becomes the first step in determining an effective community solution for deterring ongoing domestic violence.

## **Contexts of the Study**

### **Historical Context**

Understanding the historical context of domestic violence in the United States is important to understanding probation’s response to domestic violence offenders. Review of events, philosophies, theories, legislation, and court cases aid in understanding the current criminal justice response to domestic violence and the probation officer’s supervision of DVOs.

#### *Domestic Violence in the US*

Domestic violence is a daily occurrence in the United States and is a criminal act; however, this has not always been the case. Colonial settlers brought patriarchal ideas about the proper role of women to the New World (Abramovitz, 1996). Colonial family relations law presumed the supremacy of the husband over his wife and children because they are his property (Abramovitz, 1996). It was a customary part of marriage for husbands to abuse their wives when they scolded, nagged, or talked back. The wife’s

purpose in a marriage was to bear children, tend to the household and all of her husband's needs without question or complaint (Erez, 2002). Old-English common law provided the basis for early American laws and permitted wife beating for correctional purposes (Abramovitz, 1996; Erez, 2002).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, a North Carolina court held that a man could punish his wife without fear of legal involvement as long as the stick was no thicker than his thumb (Erez, 2002). Mississippi's Supreme Court allowed a husband to administer moderate chastisement in the case of emergencies (The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 2006). It was not until the late 1800s that Alabama and Maryland passed laws that made wife beating a crime. However, North Carolina courts continued to uphold the laws of wife beating by declaring that a husband would not face criminal indictment unless the abuse resulted in permanent injury (The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 2006). By the 1870s a major change in the legal rights of women occurred when the right of the husband to chastise his wife was abolished no judge would defend the right of chastisement (Abramovitz, 1996; Erez, 2002).

The feminist movement experienced its first victory when women obtained the right to vote in 1919 because of the women's suffrage movement. During the 1950s and 1960s, the anti-war and civil rights movements challenged the country and laid a foundation for the next feminist movement (The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 2006). The women's liberation movement brought the issue of domestic violence to the public's attention in the 1960s and 1970s (Moser, 2007; The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 2006). As the cultural and political inequalities between the genders diminished, the public began to acknowledge the violence within families (Erez, 2002).

Domestic violence, historically viewed as a family matter, became a social problem (Fagan, 1996). In the 1960s there was public pressure fueled by educational efforts of victims and advocates to recognize domestic violence as a crime. A number of states introduced statutory changes designed for victim protection and expanded the authority of law enforcement (Gregory & Peters, 1998).

Beginning in the 1970s, the criminalization of domestic violence allowed women to demand a correction in the lack of legal protections afforded to battered women. Nevertheless, there remained a higher dismissal rate at the prosecution stage for domestic violence cases than for other violent crimes (Fagan, 1996). During this time, domestic violence did not have a name or a legal identity (Fratini, 2009). Advocacy for victims of rape and domestic violence and the activities of the women's movement created a greater understanding of domestic violence and transformed domestic violence to a public concern that warranted criminal justice intervention (Erez, 2002). The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the United States Department of Justice took the lead in promoting a broader response. This agency funded services that included shelters, treatment programs, special prosecution units, and legal interventions (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). The collaboration between the growing numbers of victim services agencies in the 1970s promoted procedural reforms in the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence (Fagan, 1996).

The criminal justice system continues to pursue an effective response to domestic violence. This persistent search for solutions and ways to combat intimate partner violence has resulted in a revision of policies, practices and the acquisition of new knowledge and training (Erez, 2002). This adaptation has not been easy to accomplish

and the criminal justice system's ability to respond to new reforms, while encouraging, has remained limited (Erez, 2002).

### **Domestic Violence Trends**

Throughout the study, "probation officer" or PO reflects both the probation and parole function. Probation and parole are alternatives to imprisonment. They are the sentencing option where the court releases convicted offenders to serve a sentence, or the remaining portion of their sentence, under court-imposed conditions, for a specified time period in the community (MacKenzie, 1997). Probation is currently the most frequently used sentence in corrections, with two out of every three convicted offenders placed on probation supervision (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

The primary responsibility of the County Adult Probation/Parole Officers is the community supervision of adult offenders released by the court on either county probation or parole. The term "supervision" primarily means that POs attempt to ensure that clients adhere to the rules and regulations of probation or parole and/or the special conditions the Court may impose, such as treatment or restitution (MacKenzie, 1997). Estimates state that 85 to 90 percent of domestic violence victims are females (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2008) therefore in the literature as well as this study the DVO is male and the victim as a female. Domestic violence and intimate partner violence is framed and understood exclusively as a women's issue domestic violence occurs in every segment of society. Regardless of the gender, once convicted the Probation Officer is responsible for the supervision of the DVO.

The common use of probation in domestic violence cases is the result of judges and/or victims not willing to send offenders to jail, but believing that with a sentence of probation, batterers will remain under the eye of the criminal justice system (Ames &

Dunham, 2002). In response, probation has an increased focus on risk management and public protection (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Ames & Dunham, 2002; McNeill, 2006). However, with fewer probation officers and larger caseloads, effective monitoring has become more difficult and, without specialized attention, the risk of recidivism rises. More importantly, the victims remain at risk because most batterers will continue to terrorize, seriously injure, or eventually kill their intimate partners (Mederos, Gamache, & Pence, 2001). Research reveals that supervision providing treatment and not just control has significantly greater rates of success (Abadinsky, 2009). The role of the probation department is pivotal because all roads lead to keeping the offender accountable for his or her behavior (Reddick & Chapin, 2002).

### **Theoretical Contexts**

There are numerous explanations proposed within the literature as an attempt to understand DVOs behavior. Domestic violence researchers have focused on the childhood experiences of the DVO in an effort to link physical abuse and family violence to adult intimate partner violence (Bevan & Higgins, 2002; Ford, Chapman, Mack, & Pearson, 2006; Scudder, Blount, Heide, & Silverman, 1993). Bevan and Higgins (2002) noted in a study to understand domestic violence from a learning-theory approach that witnessing family violence (but not physical abuse) of the parent by the child “was found to have a unique association with psychological spouse abuse and trauma symptomatology” (p. 223).

Social learning theory proposes that reinforcement and punishment have indirect effects on learning. Specifically, in order for a behavior to be reinforced, a reward or punishment must follow the violent behavior. The reward being compliance and submission of the victim and the punishment is imminent arrest (Anderson & Kras,

2005). Social learning theory addresses the problem of intimate partner violence in two ways: (a) the reason for committing the violence; and, (b) how to change the violent behavior. Social learning theory according to Bandura (1962) posits that violence stems from a process called behavioral modeling. The basic proposition is that the learning process produces both conformant and deviant behavior, which addresses why someone would or would not commit a crime (Akers, 1998). The theory implies that violence witnessed by a child between parents or through violent victimization is perpetrated in adulthood on intimate partners. The theory also adds that societal patriarchy and male peer support contribute to intimate partner violence. However, the research testing of these suppositions has been inconclusive. While the specific mechanisms for learned violence are not clear, social learning theory offers a reasonable platform for exploring and explaining such behavior (Akers, 1998). The theory incorporates crime-facilitating variables and a course for uncovering preventive and protective factors. Social learning theory supports the need for assessment and provides a process to determine which factors contribute to learned violence. Additionally, social learning theory also presents a method to address violence factors through cognitive-behavioral intervention (Akers, 1998). The cognitive-behavioral approach was designed to facilitate social learning, with the objective for DVOs to relearn the male role and change their beliefs that violence is a solution to problems (Jenkins & Menton, 2003).

Social learning theory incorporates a concept addressing the deterrence of learned violence by linking “differential reinforcement” or costs and rewards associated with all behavior. A behavior will stop if it elicits more costs than rewards. The reward of intimate partner violence is the domination over another, while the cost may be the fear of arrest (Akers, 2004). This emphasizes the importance of a quick and effective response



by the probation officer to offender violations. The focus of the probation officer then becomes effective supervision methods (i.e., evidence-based practice). Evidence-based practice (EBP) is supported by scientific evidence to guide and inform efficient and effective correctional services (Taxman, 2002).

### **Context in Practice**

In 2000, PCADV funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), took the lead in developing the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (Model) (PCADV, 2003). The Model did not develop in a vacuum, but instead is the result of a debate that began in the 1960s among victim advocates, social workers and the criminal justice system on how to address the problem of the crime of domestic violence. The impetus for this project was to develop and implement a model response by County Offices of Probation and Parole when dealing with domestic violence offenders. After assessing the criminal justice system and its components, it was realized that the STOP grant (Services\*Training\*Officers\*Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program, was not going far enough. This program focused almost exclusively on training police and prosecutors in the unique dynamics of domestic violence, without consideration of the unique needs of probation departments.

Under the leadership of the PCADV, the development of the Model involved the collaborative effort of probation staff, providers of victim services, and those who have worked in batterer programs. There were 13 pilot counties that instituted the Model. Five counties (Adams, Bucks, Erie, Lycoming, and York) began in 2002 with eight more (Allegheny, Berks, Chester, Luzerne, Montgomery, Northampton, Somerset, and Westmoreland) added in 2003. The Model is a resource of directed practices and

procedures that each county can adjust, given its available resources, to reduce the incidence of domestic violence and enhance the safety of victims and the public. A commitment by county probation staff to an understanding of the unique dynamics of violent domestic relationship is vital to the success of this Model.

The Model outlines four key areas of probation and parole supervision:

- Case planning
- Initial contact and interview with the offender
- Case documentation
- Victim confidentiality

The four key areas delineate the specific activities a probation officer would use during supervision of the DVO (see Appendix A). These activities provide the source material for questions in the survey developed for this study.

### **Definition of Terms**

Due to the common use and misuse of related terminology in this field, this section offers the reader a list of terms and associated definitions. This terminology, as defined below gets carried out throughout this study. Hopefully, by organizing common terms in that matter, practitioners and researchers alike can engage in pertinent discussions of exploration and policy with greater discernment, coherence, and consistency.

#### **Domestic Violence Offender (DVO)**

Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, assault, battery, sexual assault, or other abusive behavior perpetrated by one family member, household member, or intimate partner against another (PCADV, 2003). The term “batterer” and “domestic

violence offender” or DVO refer to the perpetrator of domestic violence. For this study, the terms “domestic violence” and “intimate partner violence” are interchangeable.

### **Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)**

Probation and parole supervision practices based on research findings; principles that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism (Abadinsky, 2009; Taxman, 2002).

### **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)**

The focus of this study is intimate partner violence (IPV), a form of domestic violence. IPV is the physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy (PCADV, 2003)

### **Model**

The Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (Model) designed to provide POs with supervision techniques specifically focused on domestic violence offenders (PCADV, 2003).

### **Parole**

When released from confinement, parole is a sentence placing the convict under court ordered community supervision (Alarid & Del Carmen, 2009).

### **Probation**

As a result of a criminal conviction, probation is a community punishment that requires the offender to comply with certain court-ordered conditions (Abadinsky, 2009).

### **Probation/Parole Officer (PO)**

A public official authorized to provide monitoring, supervision, and oversight to offenders residing in the community (Abadinsky, 2009).

## **Researcher Position**

As an adult probation officer working with domestic violence offenders, the extent of the training for my position was to hand me the manual of the Model with no additional support. I have subsequently attended several trainings sponsored by the providers of victim services. It is from this perspective that I am motivated to advocate for training and support of officers charged with the responsibility of supervising offenders in the community.

As a probation officer I developed a respect for my colleagues and strongly embrace the need and goal of transforming how we approach our work. It is also important to note that I am a female and my gender certainly shapes my viewpoint. I have never personally experienced domestic violence and have had to develop an understanding of the victim dynamic of domestic violence. My training has helped me to shape a more sympathetic view towards how destructive IPV can be to individuals and families.

I bring a bias to this study due to my own interest in the research as well as my experiences as a probation officer. This dissertation examines how county probation officers are handling domestic violence offenses and offenders throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. My purpose is not to emphasize flaws but to improve our ability to supervise DVOs. I also want to know if the probation officers are aware of the PCADV Model and if they are currently using it. I want to explore the resources that they have available and the support that they receive from their agency, as well as some of the barriers they identify as reducing their efficiency and thus effectiveness to monitor offenders. The Model addresses the gaps that are often present in responding to DVOs. I have felt the frustration of victims reluctant to prosecute and police unwilling to respond

to violations. My personal experience has supported that in using the Model and its emphasis on a coordination and collaboration with other justice system and community-based services through communication and training reinforces that the Model provides an effective response to domestic violence offenders.

### **Background, Relevance, Purpose and Research Approach**

The aim of this study is to obtain basic information on how county probation and parole officers are supervising the domestic violence offenders on their caseloads.

#### **Background**

Pennsylvania has 67 counties and there 65 individual County Adult Probation and Parole offices. The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) provides all adult probation and parole services in Mercer and Venango Counties), with varied resources and support available to each county department. Each county has unique demographics, economics, and populations (see Appendix B). Each office is a judicial department under the President Judge of the county and each Court of Common Pleas has unique philosophies and procedures that ultimately effect the supervision of offenders.

In a 2010 report to the past Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, there are a number of recommendations for strengthening supervision (Goldkamp, Vilicica, Harris, & Weiland, 2010). Strengthening supervision relates to the effectiveness of supervision by linking supervision to offender risk levels, examination of caseload management procedures, and ongoing input from the field. Further, it is recommended that the “art of supervision” be empirically grounded and tested (Goldkamp et al., 2010, p. 2). With approximately 32, 378 offenders on probation or parole in Pennsylvania (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, 2010) a need exists to identify and

quantify methods of case management and field supervision. This serves as a compelling rationale for the proposed research.

### **Relevance and Purpose**

The relevancy of this research rests in its ability to support the methods of supervision outlined by the Model. The Model requires that the officer be able to talk about domestic violence, be knowledgeable about offender and victim issues, and work collaboratively with treatment providers to ensure compliance with treatment requirements, which are similar requirements to the standards of supervision for sex offenders (English, Colling-Chadwick, Pullen, & Jones, 1996). Therefore, the first purpose of the research is to focus on POs awareness of the supervision methods outlined by the Model.

The second purpose of this research is to examine the barriers to the using the Model in the supervision of DVOs. Community corrections are far less expensive than prison. In 2008 The Pew Charitable Trusts surveyed 33 of the 50 states and found that prisons cost an average of \$79 per day or \$29,000 a year compared to managing an offender in the community which cost about \$3.42 a day or \$1,250 a year (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). Therefore, managing offenders in the community, if done well, has appreciable cost savings and positive outcomes. Finn and Kuck (2003) studied stress among probation and parole officers. They found that the major sources of stress for officers include high caseloads, excessive paperwork, and deadline pressures. The current economic downturn has forced some states to consider cutbacks. Budget shortfalls result in inflated caseloads yielding a high ratio of offenders to officers and a lack of basic resources and technology (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). I anticipate POs to cite these factors as barriers to adequately supervising DVOs in the community.

## **Research Approach**

This study used a quantitative exploratory design in an attempt to gather descriptive data to examine the use of case management, assessment, or contact strategies used by probation officers in various departments across the Commonwealth.

The study consisted of two phases. The first phase was a group of Allegheny County probation officers from the Northern District Office that served as expert reviewers to assess the survey. They gave feedback regarding the wording of the survey questions, the ease of completion, and any need for clarification on the survey items. Phase 2 will involve administering the survey that will measure the use of supervision techniques particular to DVOs. Quantitative analysis identified how many probation officers in the various Pennsylvania counties, including Allegheny, are using the various methods of supervision as outlined by the Model. The research also identified the most significant barriers to the use of each tool.

## **Research Questions and Hypothesis**

One of the goals for this research involves promoting discussion about domestic violence offender supervision. A second goal involves identifying for PO utilization the most effective methods of community DVO supervision. The following questions, based upon the theory and research presented in Chapter 2, guided the inquiry:

1. Are probation officers aware of the Model of Supervision for Domestic Violence Offenders?
2. What, if any, of the parts of the Model do probation officers use when supervising DVOs?
3. What are the specific barriers to using the Model in the supervision of DVOs?

Using the three research questions stated above, the following three hypotheses were developed:

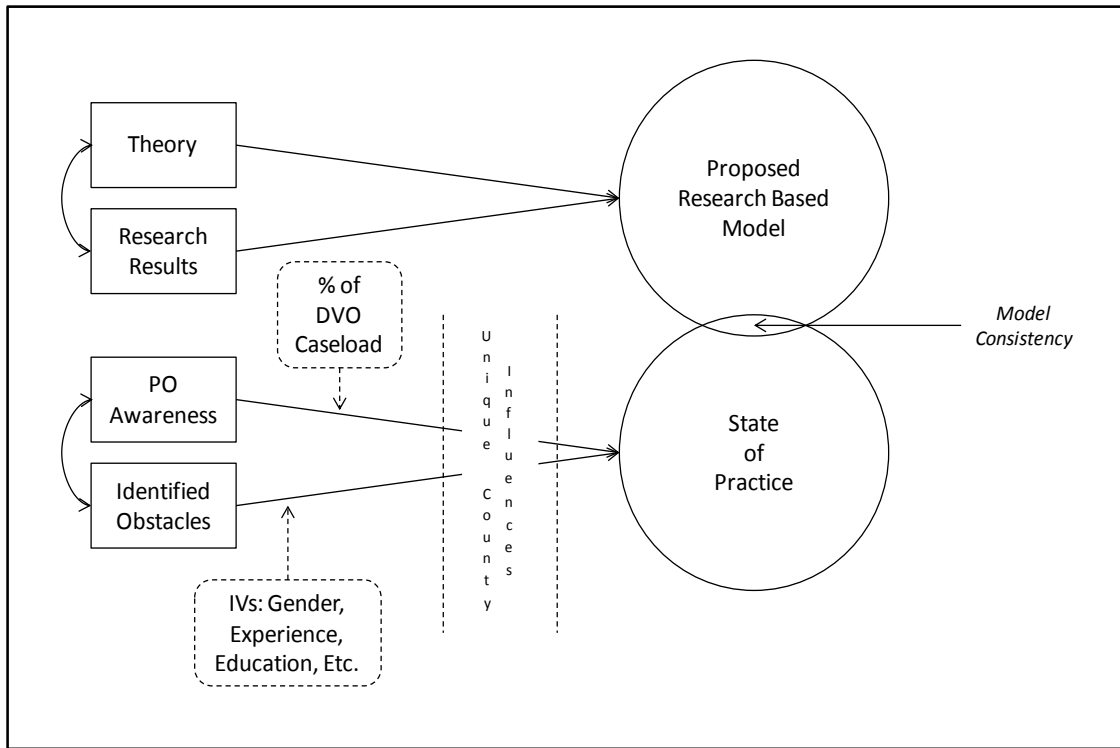
H1: Awareness of the Model will vary depending on the geographical location, population served, services available to DVOs and victims, probation officer caseload levels, and administrative support of training. When exploring the data pertaining to this hypothesis, I expect to find awareness of the Model in agencies where probation officers perceive: a) the administration places a high value on training; and b) agencies support the probation officer.

H2: As the availability of training varies, Model use will vary. I expect to find best practices in training, caseload supervision, and victim contact to be less evident in probation departments: a) with lower numbers of DVOs; b) with higher caseloads; and c) with less community contact levels.

H3: Identified barriers (e.g., caseload size, excessive paperwork, and deadline pressures) will interrelate with the philosophical orientation of the probation officer, case management practices and extent of probation officer training.

The aforementioned hypothesis is the general framework for research depicted in Figure 1. The process begins with the theory and research results of evidence-based supervision practices. There are identified obstacles, numerous independent variables, and the unique influences of their county impact evidence-based supervision awareness. A connection exists between a research-based model and the current state of practice, which is where you will find that the POs supervision methods that are consistent with the supervision practices proposed in the Model.





*Figure 1.* General framework for research: Investigating the state of practice among PA county Probation/Parole Officers with a DVO caseload. Adapted from J.A. Anderson (personal communication, June 20, 2012).

### **Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

The information obtained from this study consists of the practices and opinions of probation officers in Pennsylvania. Therefore, the findings of this study lack generalizability to other states. Pennsylvania has 65 individual County Adult Probation and Parole offices with varied resources and support available to each county department. Each county has unique demographics, economics, and populations. Further, each office is a judicial department under the President Judge of the county with each Court of Common Pleas having unique philosophies and procedures that ultimately effect the supervision of offenders and this are taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this research.

An additional limitation is one that is peculiar to surveys in general with regard to responses. Some of the respondents gave consistently high or low ratings regardless of the survey content. There was the issue of missing data where respondents did not answer a number of questions, especially those related to the agency. These biased reactions may have been a direct result of the organizational ramifications or anticipated use of the survey results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

There are a number of strategies to counteract response bias. The Northern District Probation office of Allegheny County served as expert reviewers of the instrument. This review of the initial survey instrument was to ensure that it is easy to read, understand, and completed in 30-minutes or less. The final computerized surveys used an interspersed pattern where sensitive items are interspersed with positive ones encouraging probation officers to think more carefully about each item (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2005).

With surveys of this nature, many respondents may not answer due to lack of time, interest, or personal organization. Subsequent to approval of the Court Director/Chief (see Appendix C), an email went to the probation officers explaining the surveys purpose and describing the confidentiality and data security protocols. The email includes that participation is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential (see Appendix D).

This study has several delimitations. Delimited in the ability to explain the nuances of probation officer supervision methods because each probation officer brings a different mixture of education, training, and life experiences that is not be captured in this study. Often probation officers function from either a punitive or a rehabilitation model of supervision. In addition, the impact of the culture of the community and its resources play a role in accessing services and the ability to affect the behavior of the DVO.

Questions to capture this vital information include the number of years as a probation officer; areas of experience, education level, and ranking of philosophical orientation (see Appendix D).

The strength of this exploratory design is that it enables the researcher to determine the probation officers awareness of the Model and its current usage. This provides guidance on future trainings and emphasizes the importance of probation officers employing specific supervision methods of DVOs needed to ensure the safety of the victims.

### **Chapter Summary**

The goals of probation supervision are to rehabilitate the offender and protect society. The supervision techniques utilized by the probation officer can greatly enhance the achievement of these goals (Petersilia & Turner, 1991). This exploratory study focused on the probation practices regarding DVOs. Little research exists on what probation officers actually do with the domestic violence offenders they supervise and this study is a first step in that process (Seiter & West, 2003). Evidence concerning the effectiveness of DVO supervision cannot subsist without understanding how probation officers supervise offenders and implement strategies. The object of this study is to determine the method of DVO supervision and the barriers to using the Model. Because so little information exists, quantitative methods allows for the multiple realities and perspectives of the officers.

Given the minimal amount of research regarding the specifics of probation supervision, a need exists for identifying and quantifying the methods and barriers of DVO supervision provided by county probation officers. The next section will provide a review of the literature as a process to both situate the area of study and further

demonstrate the need for probation officers to focus on specific approaches to supervise DVOs. A more detailed description of methodology will follow in Chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Chapter Overview**

A serious challenge for probation departments involves finding an effective response to domestic violence. This doctoral research project explores how their probation officers are supervising domestic violence offenders. The DVO presents unique supervision challenges to the PO because often they continue to reside with the victim of their abusive behavior. Chapter 1 provides the groundwork for understanding that domestic violence is a complex problem and probation officers (POs) must receive specialized training to effectively supervise the domestic violence offender (DVO). In an effort to provide specialized training to probation officers in 2000, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV), funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), took the lead in developing the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (Model) (PCADV, 2003). Under the leadership of the PCADV, the development of the Model involved the collaborative effort of probation staff, providers of victim services, and those who have worked in batterer programs. The Model outlines four key areas of probation and parole supervision are a) case planning; b) initial contact and interview with the offender; c) case documentation; and d) victim confidentiality (see Appendix A). The four key areas delineate the specific activities a probation officer would use during supervision of the DVO (PCADV, 2003). The Model provides evidence-based strategies aiding in the effective supervision of the DVO in the community.

This chapter has three sections. The first section is regarding the theories of domestic violence. Knowledge of theory enables the PO to understand treatment, make appropriate referrals, and utilize appropriate intervention techniques (Abadinsky, 2009). The chapter begins with a summary of the theories related to domestic violence offending and support for the use of social learning theory as a theoretical framework for this study.

The second section of this chapter moves to put theory into practice and includes: a review of the traditions and objectives of probation; an overview of the supervision practices of probation officers; the connection of the Model to evidence-based practice; a discussion of the conceptual framework that helps visualize the concepts of the Model. The Model represents the ideal supervision methods and while the ideal is the most desirable, the reality is that probation officers may encounter significant barriers to the implementation of the Model. The third section discusses the possible barriers that probation officers may encounter while attempting to provide adequate supervision of offenders.

### **Theoretical Perspectives on Domestic Violence**

Various theoretical constructs of domestic violence provide an understanding of prediction, prevention, and treatment of the DVO (Cunningham et al., 1998). Being knowledgeable about both theory and the direct application of theory to supervision methods enables the probation officer to make appropriate referrals, understand treatment modalities, and direct treatment services (Abadinsky, 2009). There are five major schools of thought regarding domestic violence: biological, psychopathology, systems, feminist theories, and social learning theory. The five theoretical perspectives provide some insight for this research; however social learning theory provides a comprehensive theoretical framework and basis to understand the crime of domestic violence and

effective treatment for the DVO. This section will review the relevant theories related to domestic violence offending and treatment and include a description of social learning theory and its direct application to both the criminal and conforming behavior of the DVO.

### **Biological Theories**

The positivist approach to the study of crime attempts to explain the cause of crime by using the tools of science (Abadinsky, 2009). Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), considered the father of the positive school, was a doctor in the Italian army (Cullen & Agnew, 2003). While working as a physician in the army he concluded that the criminal is biologically different than his non-criminal counterpart. The biological theories of criminality were initially based on the assumption that crime is linked to genetics, and therefore inherited. This approach offered a number of different explanations of criminal behavior, including glandular malfunctions, learning disabilities, racial heritage, and nutrition (Cullen & Agnew, 2003).

Raine (1993) argues that criminals appear to differ from non-criminals on a number of biological fronts. Researchers investigated such areas as brain infections, toxic substances, testosterone levels, serotonin levels, and brain trauma; all of which may etiologically relate to criminal behavior (Cullen & Agnew, 2003). Gearan and Rosenbaum (1996) found that many abusive men disclose histories of head trauma. This is important because head trauma can reduce impulse control, increase sensitivity to alcohol, impair judgment, and cause communication difficulties (Gearan & Rosenbaum, 1996). The “biology as destiny” concept as referred to in the literature has been replaced with socio-biology that also acknowledges the social correlates of crime (Raine, 1993).

**Treatment targets.** Biological theories don't argue that biological factors led directly to crime. Rather, they are based on the premise that biological factors impact the nervous system and result in traits conducive to criminal behavior (Cullen & Agnew, 2003). These traits include impulsivity, thrill seeking, and irritability. Most biological theorists acknowledge that the social environment has an influence on how these traits manifest themselves. By recognizing the social environment as an influence, there is an opportunity to develop treatment targets. Within this context proponents of this theory believe cognitive and behavioral interventions would prove effective (Cunningham et al., 1998).

**Empirical support.** Due to the difficulty in implementing human studies, animal studies offer the majority of support for biological theories (Cunningham et al., 1998). Human studies have focused on adoption and twin studies. The hypothesis of adoption studies is that you would expect more criminal behavior from adopted children whose biological parents are criminal than from those whose biological parents are not criminals (Cullen & Agnew, 2003). However research supports that adopted children whose biological *and* adopted parents are criminals have the highest likelihood of criminal involvement versus those whose biological parents only are criminals (Cullen & Agnew, 2003), giving support to biological and environmental influences.

Twin studies compare identical twins to fraternal twins. If crime is genetic, we would expect identical twins to be more similar in criminal activity than fraternal twins. While most studies indicate such findings, others indicate that environmental factors may prove equally important as genetic factors and therefore certain cautions are in order (Raine, 1993).



In a follow-up study Lewis, Lovely, Yeager, and Femina (1989) found that 77% of the more violent and 61% of the less violent juvenile offenders committed adult aggressive offenses. They found that the combination of a family history of domestic violence and two or more neurological problems predicted arrest for serious violent offenders. In a sample of 95 incarcerated juveniles they concluded that certain kinds of neuropsychiatric vulnerabilities in combination with a violent abusive family environment predicted adult violent crime (Lewis, Lovely, Yeager, & Femina, 1989). The study conducted by Lewis and his colleagues was limited due to reliance on retrospective reports of medical and family histories and the absence of a noncriminal control group (Cullen & Agnew, 2003).

**Limitations.** Biological causes of crime imply that we cannot easily change criminal behavior. If genetics determine criminality highly unconventional and ethically debated control policies such as selective breeding and sterilization appear appropriate. Genetics also takes the responsibility away from the perpetrator. Given the severe implications stemming from genetic and other biological theories, most do not lend themselves to practical courses of treatment, or a viable direction for probation supervision.

### **Psychological Theories**

The general perspective surrounding psychological theories is that the causes of criminal behavior reside in the mind of the individual. This approach to family violence has become more prevalent in recent years, and focuses on the individual personality traits of batterers (Cunningham et al., 1998). Personality theorists believe that instead of

developing a conforming, socially appropriate personality, the criminal has developed a personality based on impulsivity, conflict, and aggression (Akers, 2004).

Psychological theories postulate that individual personality traits of identified batterers rather than gender impact their behavior. These theories offer a better explanation of the increased incidence of reported domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships than those simply based on gender (Irwin, 2008).

**Treatment targets.** Psychological theorists recommend various forms of therapy and treatment for fixing disorders. When the underlying psychological or personality disorder is addressed, the violence and aggression should cease. Psychologist Donald Dutton asserts that DVOs have personality disorders that must be approach from a clinical perspective through individualized treatment plans (Cunningham et al. 1998). Risk assessment becomes critical for identifying the DVOs psychological profile and developing a treatment plan. Since one size does not fit all, individual treatment plans may include on-going individual and/or group therapy (Dutton & Starzomski, 1994).

**Empirical support.** Dutton and Starzomski (1994) conducted a study involving 78 self-referred and court-referred men in treatment for domestic violence. Their research concluded that 79% of the entire sample had significant personality disorders. They also found that 37% of the batterers had borderline personality disorder. Greene, Coles, and Johnson (1994), conducted a cluster analysis from a sample of 40 court referred men for anger management therapy. The most pathological cluster type had the highest level of anger, which is tentative support for a positive relationship between psychopathology and anger.

A number of studies based upon the psychological profiles of battering men indicate that antisocial and borderline personalities are greatly over represented. Gondolf

(1999a) used the MCMI-III and tested both court-ordered and self-referred men and found that personality disorders are over diagnosed in batterers.

**Limitations.** Psychological theories are based on mental illness. It is feared that defining the problem of domestic violence as the mental illness of men will divert attention from factors such as attitudes toward women and the prevalence of violence in our society (Cunningham et al., 1998). Successful treatment of a DVO with a personality disorder would require long-term therapeutic intervention. The DVO would be better treated in an institutional setting rather than returning to the community supervision of a probation officer (Cunningham et al., 1998).

### **Family System Theory**

Family system theory emerged from general system theory, and states that family members' actions influence all members of the system. From this theoretical perspective, violence in the family influences the actions and reactions of other family members. Emphasis is on how to regulate and stabilize the system. If violence is rewarded, it most likely will occur again. Violence is maintained through roles, relations and feedback mechanisms that over time become so established that it becomes challenging to interrupt the violence cycle (Cunningham et al., 1998)

**Treatment targets.** Family system theory suggests that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another. Within this framework a family forms an interconnected system and abuse results from a hostile and coercive relationship system. Treatment is focused on changing the abusive behavior and thus changing the relationship dynamic. DVO treatment through family therapy is highly controversial because it appears to imply that there is co-responsibility for the violence. Across the country, jurisdictions that have implemented standards for batterer treatment prohibit the

use of couple counseling (Bograd, 1984). If couple or family therapy is conducted it takes place subsequent to the batterer successfully completing a batterer program and remaining violence-free for one year to ensure that the DVO will not use therapy as another venue to re-victimize the victim(s) (Cunningham et al., 1998).

**Empirical support.** Family system theorists focus their research on the most predictable factors that lead to high levels of domestic violence (Buzawa, Buzawa, & Stark, 2012). Coleman and Strauss (1986) conducted survey research to study marital violence and the power structure of marriage. The researchers asked couples “who has the final say” when it comes to family decisions. With a sample of 2,143 couples they found that the lowest rates of partner violence were in couples that described themselves as “equalitarian” or those that felt that each partner had equal say in family decision making. Interestingly, the female-dominant couples had the highest rate of partner violence. The study suggests that family violence increases when an imbalance of power occurs in the marital relationship (Coleman & Strauss, 1986).

**Limitations.** Research supporting family system theory is difficult to evaluate because the unit of analysis is usually the couple and not the entire family (Cunningham et al., 1998). A large amount of literature exists on the effectiveness of family therapy regarding drug and alcohol problems, but very few studies examine the specific impact of family interventions on domestic violence. Additionally, some state regulations have banned the family systems approach for use with batterers. Without the ability to evaluate the family system approach with DVOs, researchers are unable to supply evidence that family systems theory approaches are effective (Murray, 2006).

### **Feminist Theories**

The fundamental tenet of the feminist movement is that we live in a patriarchal

society. Historically, the laws regarding domestic violence in the United States gave support to husbands that “chastised” their wives through physical force (Cunningham et al., 1998). The feminist activists of the 1960s and 1970s challenged the prevailing beliefs that domestic violence was acceptable and asserted that it was a social problem. The feminist activists and advocates brought the issue of domestic violence as a serious societal problem to the public consciousness. The initial actions of the feminist activists addressed the needs and issues of the women and children who were the victims of domestic violence. Based on what was learned from battered women, two explanatory models of domestic violence emerged: (a) The Cycle Theory of Violence and (b) the Power and Control Wheel (Pence, 1983).

Based on research conducted by Lenore Walker (1979) on battered wives, The Cycle Theory of Violence is based on the cyclical fluctuations between periods of abuse and relative peace in relationships. Specifically, this theory attempts to explain why victims remain in the relationship and how women’s victimization leads to a learned helplessness (Walker, 1979).

The Power and Control Wheel has emerged as the most commonly used model of treatment for DVOs. This model helps explain the overall pattern of abuse and violence used by the DVO to maintain power and control over their partner. The Power and Control Wheel identifies physical and sexual abuse and how batterers use intimidation, emotional and economic abuse to gain and sustain power over their partner. The Power and Control Wheel speaks to women’s lived experiences, and documents the most abusive behaviors used against these women (Pence, 1983).

**Treatment targets.** In order for treatment programs for abusive men to conform to a feminist perspective, they must be based on the assumption that our social

institutions are constructed on patriarchal inequalities (Cunningham, et al., 1998).

Feminist ideas have the greatest influence on current practice in the field where state standards for batterer programs exist (Healey, Smith, and O'Sullivan, 1998).

The Duluth Model is based on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and men are usually ordered to treatment groups. CBT promotes cognitive restructuring of the attitudes and beliefs that reinforce behavior. The Power and Control Wheel is only one of the tools used to challenge DVOs minimization or denial of abuse. Group counseling is one part of a larger system of intervention. When court ordered to group therapy, the DVO must remain compliant to court orders and may have to address other issues such as drug, alcohol, or mental health treatments as a comprehensive approach to the issue of abuse (Gondolf, 2006)

**Empirical support.** Most studies have focused on the effectiveness of groups based on The Duluth Model (Gondolf, 2004; Pence, 1983; Pence and Paymar, 1993). Gondolf (2004) conducted a four-site evaluation of Duluth-type programs. A four-year follow-up of batterer program participants in four cities (N=854) found evidence of positive program effect. They found numerous accounts from both the batterers and the victims of program based change. However the positive outcomes are tempered with the reality that a core group of unresponsive men warrant more intensive and extensive intervention. The Duluth Model is considered a coordinated response to DVO treatment because it includes the accountability components of safety planning for victims, mandatory arrests, judicial oversight, and probation case management (Gondolf, 2006)

**Limitations.** Feminist theory focuses on how men abuse, oppress, or otherwise control women in society. Therefore, domestic violence is attributed to a patriarchal society where men hold the power advantage over women (Bograd, 1984). The history of

domestic violence in American culture provides support for this theory. However, this theory does not account for the violence that females perpetrate against males, or the violence seen in same-sex relationships.

### **Social Learning Theory**

In 1974, sociologist Robert Martinson reviewed 231 prison rehabilitative programs and published the article “What Works? –Questions and Answers about Prison Reform” (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Cullen & Gendreau, 1989). In his article he concluded that most programs were ineffective. Based upon his conclusion to the rhetorical question “what works?” the “nothing works” doctrine regarding rehabilitation began (Stohr & Walsh, 2012).

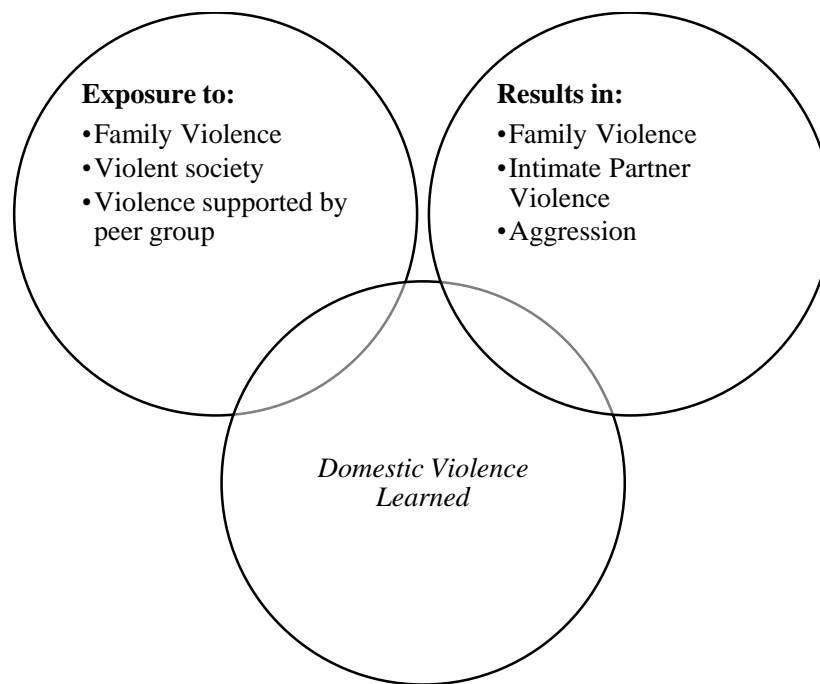
A number of researchers challenged Martinson’s conclusions. They found that many of the of the 231 studies reviewed by Martinson did not work for a variety of reasons. A number of the programs sought to change behaviors unrelated to crime while others were not intense enough (Stohr & Walsh, 2012). In 1979, Martinson published a paper acknowledging errors with his initial conclusion. Specifically he focused on the fact that some people adapt, learn and implement prosocial behaviors, thus some programs do work (Martinson, 1979). It is from this perspective that social learning theory is chosen as the theoretical framework for this study.

Social learning theory proposes that people learn their behavior through observation and modeling. Social learning theory submits that both criminal and conforming behavior are acquired, maintained, or changed through the process of interaction with others (Akers, 2004).

Albert Bandura (1979) a psychologist, applied social learning principles to the acquisition and maintenance of aggressive habits. Bandura suggests that the source of

learning extends beyond the family of origin to include the subculture in which the family lives (Cunningham et al., 1998). Bandura went further and concluded that exposure to violence through television, video games, music, and sports, as well as the overall violent society can result in desensitization (Cunningham et al., 1998). Bandura submits that most human behavior is learned through observation (Bandura, 1977).

Sociologist and criminologist Ronald Akers, along with Robert Burgess, developed the differential reinforcement theory (Akers, 1985). Akers applied social learning theory to criminal, delinquent, and deviant behavior. Akers (2004) proposes that family violence is learned through exposure to and adoption of the behaviors of significant others. Therefore, from a social learning theory perspective violence is viewed as learned behavior.



*Figure 2.* Social learning theory applied to DVO behavior.

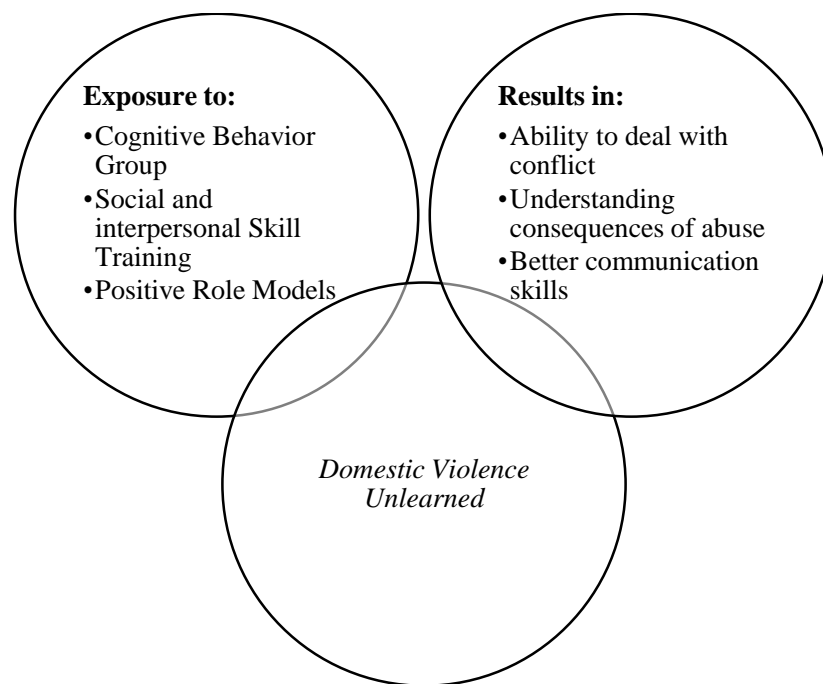
**Treatment targets:** Social learning theory proposes that violent behavior can be modified or eliminated by taking away the reward for the behavior and increasing the



negative consequences. Treatment programs based on social learning theory use the cognitive-behavioral approach similar to those used in the feminist models of treatment (Cunningham et al., 1998).

According to social learning theory, treatment focus is on the DVOs learning strategies for dealing appropriately with conflict, understanding of the consequences of abuse, and acquiring better communication skills (Scott, 2004).

Treatment in the form of cognitive-behavioral group has proven to be an effective intervention technique for correctional programs by using two concepts: (a) restructuring cognitive events and (b) social and interpersonal skill training. Cognitive techniques are used to help DVOs recognize the sequence of events and feelings that precede the onset of violence, use self-monitoring and self-assessment to reinforce the skills being taught in the group, and use educational methods to aid the DVO with understanding of the nature of intimate partner violence (Cunningham et al., 1998).



*Figure 3. Social learning theory applied to DVO treatment*

**Empirical support.** In the literature, Cunningham et.al. (1998) found two approaches to test the validity of social learning explanations of domestic violence: (a) evaluation of the effectiveness of of intervention programs and (b) examining intergenerational transmission of abusive behavior.

Wareham, Boots, and Chavez (2009) surveyed a sample of male batterers to explore the mechanisms of social learning. The data were collected from DVOs enrolled in domestic violence programs that were either court mandated or voluntary. The results of the study suggest that early childhood physical maltreatment may lead some individuals to establish physical and abusive intimate relationships. The research also implies that early relationships between children and their parents set the foundation for acceptable behaviors that may lead some individuals to seek out similar relationships with their intimate partners.

Rahmatian (2009) surveyed a group of 25 male batterers enrolled in an offenders' group and nine women from the Center Against Spousal Abuse, a victim's crisis intervention program. The survey, composed of both closed and open-ended questions, was designed to address social learning theory and domestic violence. The results revealed that domestic violence occurs at a higher rate in intimate relationships where either the offender or the victim has been exposed to domestic violence.

Some research findings suggest that DVOs have witnessed and experienced abuse as children by their parents. Bevan and Higgins (2002) conducted a study that explored the relationships between family functioning, child maltreatment, alcohol abuse, and adult domestic violence. They found that witnessing family violence and experiencing neglect as a child correlated with physical abuse of one's spouse as an adult. Social learning theory suggests that children who experience or witness family violence is at

higher risk of engaging in domestic violence when they reach adulthood (Anderson & Kras, 2005).

**Limitations.** The research studies support the intergenerational transmission of violence, but critics submit that too much emphasis is placed on the association between witnessing and experiencing child abuse leading to violent behavior toward your spouse (Cunningham et al., 1998). Not all men who experienced childhood abuse and violence will go on to be batterers. Nor will all females that experienced childhood abuses choose a batterer as a spouse.

It has been suggested that more work needs to be done regarding protective and risk factors and their influence on outcomes. It is clear that there are intervening variables such as racial, ethnic, and cultural differences must be considered. Violence experienced outside of the family must also be considered (Cunningham et al., 1998; Rahmatian, 2009).

### **Summary of Domestic Violence Theories**

This exploratory research seeks to increase our understanding of the supervision practices of county probation officers across the state of Pennsylvania. Research has not determined that any one approach to the DVO is consistently more effective than others (Cunningham et al., 1998). For this study, social learning theory is chosen as the theoretical framework for understanding the cause and basis of treatment for domestic violence offenders. Whether the root cause of domestic violence offenses is biological or environmental, social learning theory lends itself to incorporating the other theories in understanding how perpetrators learn to use violence in their intimate partner relationships. Table 1 on the next page delineates the treatment targets, empirical support and limitations of the theories in more detail.

Table 1

*Five Theories of Domestic Violence*

Theory Group	Treatment Targets	Empirical Support	Limitations
Biological	Organic, genetic or congenital factors	Based on animal studies	Difficult to detect or treat
Psychological	Individual personality traits	Studies have indicated that DVOs have certain personality profiles	The need for long-term therapeutic intervention
Family Systems	Interpersonal Skills	Outcome information is sparse due to significant drop out rates	Assigns co-responsibility (perpetrator and victim) for violence
Feminist	Attitudes to women, power and control dynamics of relationships, gender inequalities	Lack of consensus on key concepts that feminist argue are patriarchal	Broad range of contradictory viewpoints
Social Learning (aka: <i>behavior theory; differential association</i> )	Thinking styles, behaviors, interpersonal skills	Empirical exploration and support (Akers, 1998, 2001; Akers & Jensen, 2006; Akers & Sellers, 2009)	Research needs to focus on combinations of protective and risk factors and how they impact outcomes

*Note.* Adapted from “Theory-Derived Explanations of Male Violence Against Female Partners: Literature Update and Related Implications for Treatment and Evaluation” by Cunningham, A; Jaffe, P; Baker, L; Dick, T; Malla, S; Mazaheri, N; Poisson, S, 1998, London Family Court Clinic.

Biological, psychological, family systems and feminist theories can be contributors to how a DVO learns to perpetrate violence in an intimate partner

relationship. Biological theory suggests that criminal behavior is genetic. While the theory of “born criminals” has not had empirical support, physical functioning can impact how people interact in their social environment. Psychological theories support that certain personality traits contribute to criminal behavior. Trait theory combines both the physical and psychological theories and suggests that human behavior is a combination of psychological and biological functions (Siegel, 2012).

The environmental theories are family systems and feminist theories. Family systems theory points to family relationships as a determinant of behavior (Siegel, 2012). It has been used to support that DVOs lack of interpersonal skills as the rationale for violence in the interpersonal relationship. Family system theory supports social learning theory because it suggests that the DVO learns that abuse and violence are a part of intimate relationships. Feminist theory provides the perspective that the DVO connects abuse and violence to intimate partner relationships because of society’s patriarchal structure.

Criminologists have come to believe that human traits, both biological and psychological, interact with the environment and affect how social behaviors are learned and perceived (Siegel, 2012). In other words, the biological, psychological, family systems, and feminist theories provide the context for socialization of the DVO. Social learning theory links these theories and provides the foundation to understand why DVOs choose to be violent toward their intimate partners and how they can change their abusive behavior.

The next section will show the evolution of probation and the research that has contributed to probation departments understanding of effective supervision methods.

The next section will also address the Model as it relates to effective supervision, and emphasize the importance of using specialized probation tactics when supervising DVOs.

## **Probation Supervision of the DVO**

### **The Evolution of Probation**

Probation has evolved from a volunteer position, to a professionalized endeavor aimed at providing an alternative to incarceration, practical help to offenders, and protection to victims and the community (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; McNeill, 2006). In the United States, probation is the most common sentence administered by more than 2,000 separate agencies. These agencies are on the municipal, county, state, and federal levels in either the judicial or executive branch of government (Abadinsky, 2009). A number of states combine the levels of probation within one statewide agency (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009).

Pennsylvania counties, under the laws and guidelines established by the state, operate separate probation agencies with individuals paroled from a local jail coming under the supervision of the county probation and parole department (Abadinsky, 2009). The varieties of probation paradigms that have emerged reflect the changes in the philosophy and sociology of crime and punishment (McNeill, 2006). In Pennsylvania, at the county level, the judiciary administers probation; however the day-to-day operation of probation services is at the county level and can result in a significant administrative variance between each of the counties (Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, 2009).

The primary objectives of the probation officer working with the DVO are the safety of the victim and the rehabilitation of the DVO (Abadinsky, 2009). The objectives of probation provides the foundation for understanding the need of probation officers to

have effective strategies that a) hold offenders accountable, and b) reduce recidivism and thus keep victims safe (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009).

### **The Current System of Probation and Parole in Pennsylvania**

The prison population in Pennsylvania continues to increase and the release of offenders results in an increase in parole numbers. Pennsylvania's prison population grew from 36,810 in 2000 to 44,365 in 2006 (Tate & McVey, 2007). The workload of probation and parole officers continues to grow (Appendix B). According to the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (2010) as of December 31, 2009:

- The number of county adult offenders under supervision, 236,553, increased by 3.1%.
- The number of county adult offenders supervised in-county, 212,042, increased by 2.6%.
- Offenders supervised by county adult probation and parole departments represented 87.1% of the total number of adult offenders under supervision.
- The average total caseload was 157 offenders per adult probation officer.
- The number of adult probation officers supervising a caseload, 1,506, increased by 1.3%.

The numbers for Pennsylvania are consistent with trends across states where the number of people on probation or parole has increased from 1.6 million in 1984 to approximately 5 million today (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). This increase means that 1 in 45 adults in the United States are under criminal justice supervision (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). However, the number of adult probation officers is not increasing at the same rate as the number of offenders. With states facing shrinking

budgets and a worsening fiscal crisis there does not appear to be any relief in the near future.

### **Specialized Caseloads and Evidence-Based Practice**

A problem facing agencies stems from the increasing complexity of problems facing offenders released to parole or sentenced to probation. Societal problems manifest in increased offenders with drug and alcohol addictions and mental illness. Many of these offenders are domestic and/or sexually violent (Abadinsky, 2009).

As the number of this specialized population expands probation agencies explore ways to provide more comprehensive services. The professional literature reflects the development of specialized caseloads and the need for treatment strategies and techniques. Probation officers develop expertise to address the needs of this population through experience and training (Burrell, 2004). There is not a typical domestic violence perpetrator and therefore a probation “one size fits all” approach has proven ineffective with offenders. Specialized probation focused on DVOs provides improved supervision quality (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009).

Fay Taxman (2002), a professor of criminology and criminal justice, has argued that surveillance alone is not enough. Taxman asserts that probation supervision must be accompanied by evidence-based therapeutic practices that engage offenders in a process of change and consistently apply sanctions in response to noncompliance. Evidence-based practices (EBP) within the criminal justice system involve using supervision strategies based on scientific evidence of success (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

Evidence-based practices (EBP) are a progressive, organizational use of direct, current scientific evidence to guide and inform efficient and effective correctional services (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Using EBP to manage offenders allows the reduction of



recidivism without compromising public safety (Rowoldt, 2008). The goal of EBP is to use empirically tested practices to reduce recidivism among offenders. These practices include offender classification assessments, case planning, assignment of different levels of supervision, identification of criminogenic needs, and cognitive behavioral treatments (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

### **The Model as Evidence-Based Practice**

With a desire to provide probation officers with evidence-based supervision methods, the Model was developed by PCADV to provide probation officers with supervision strategies for the DVO. The goal of the Model is victim safety, offender accountability, and offender rehabilitation. The strategies provided by the Model move beyond traditional supervision of the DVO and instead focus on the risk factors that foster re-abuse. The Model directs the PO to be proactive through continual appraisal of offender compliance, recidivism risk, and criminogenic needs. The Model also notes that the probation officer understands of the unique dynamics of violent domestic relationships and the significance of on-going victim contact (PCADV, 2003).

The Model represents the ideal strategy when supervising a domestic violence offender. The components of ideal effective probation supervision of a DVO include: (a) an understanding the unique dynamics of violent domestic relationships, (b) offender assessment to determine the appropriate level of supervision, (c) supervision with emphasis on case documentation, (d) ongoing contact with domestic violence victims, (e) and contact and coordination with other agencies (PCADV, 2003). In the following section the components of ideal probation supervision of the DVO are expounded and presented in relation to evidence-based practice.

## **Dynamics of Violent Domestic Relationships**

We understand domestic violence as the use of intentional emotional, psychological, sexual, or physical force by a family member or intimate partner to control another. Offenders use violence to reinforce power and control over their victims and present increased risk to the community (PCADV, 2008).

There are a number of criminal behaviors that are identified by the court as domestic violence. These criminal behaviors may all be domestic in their origin and include assault and battery, harassment, breaking and entering, stalking, and sexual assault. Other crimes such as arson, fraud, or embezzlement may not be as recognizable as domestic in origin. Therefore the police, judges, prosecutors and probation officers need to have a clear sense of the behaviors that constitute battering (Healey, Smith, & O'Sullivan, 1998).

Research suggests that under the category of domestic violence, about 85% of the offenses occur between intimate partners (Erez, 2002). To adequately supervise the DVO, the Model requires that the probation officer is aware of how and why the DVO perpetrates abuse. The probation officer must be willing to openly discuss the problem of domestic violence, be knowledgeable of offender and victim issues, and work collaboratively with treatment providers (PCADV, 2003). The literature reinforces (Abadinsky, 2009; Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Crowe et al., 2009; Finn & Kuck, 2003; Skeem, Manchak, Johnson, & Gillig, 2008; Trotter, 2000) that specialized training is crucial to effective supervision of the DVO.

Domestic violence often involves a series of incidents, sometimes with escalating seriousness, with no witnesses and little physical evidence (Erez, 2002). Domestic violence represents a serious criminal justice problem. The social and personal costs of

domestic violence make it a critical area for evaluating the effectiveness of the criminal justice system's response (Labriola, Rempel, & Davis, 2005).

### **Offender Risk Assessment**

Risk factors point to a likelihood of continued violence. As probation departments move away from the "one size fits all" method of supervision and toward evidence-based practices, the probation officer must classify the probationer (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Classification of an offender determines the appropriate level of supervision, which is important due to ever-increasing probation caseloads. Specialized probation has helped probation officers focus on the offenders that need more attention than the general probation population. However, a risk/needs assessment must occur if probation officers are going to reduce their caseloads and focus on those offenders who are at the highest risk to re-abuse.

Andrew Klein and Ann Crowe (2008) conducted a study of Rhode Island's specialized domestic violence probation program. The purpose of the study was to add to the literature of specialized probation by evaluating if the specialized Rhode Island program reduced batterers re-abuse. The researchers accessed 3,000 misdemeanor male domestic violence probationers and used a representative sample of 552 (Klein & Crowe, 2008). Based on the sample selection of an offender being on either a regular caseload or specialized domestic violence caseload, 10 probation officer caseloads are included. The study made a comparison of the arrest rates for the domestic violence and non-domestic violence charges. It is important to note that those with domestic violence charges were not limited to intimate partner violence, but consisted of offenders who had been convicted of a violent act on a family member. Additionally, there was an analysis of offender characteristics, time on probation prior to re-abuse (survival time) and

regression analysis to determine probabilities for re-arrest for new domestic violence or non-domestic violence charges according to risk (Klein & Crowe, 2008).

The Rhode Island study found that age was the strongest predictor of re-abuse. Teenage probationers had a 50% arrest rate for new domestic violence. The inverse relationship of age as a predictor, or the fact that the older offenders had lower re-abuse rates, is consistently associated with committing new criminal offenses while on probation. This was true for all offenders regardless of the initial offense (Johnson, 2008; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Morgan, 1993). Prior criminal arrest was another factor that determined offenders' success or failure while on probation. In the Rhode Island study, 43% of the men that re-abused had a prior arrest record compared to 22.58% of those that did not (Klein & Crowe, 2008).

Olson and Stalans (2001) conducted a study in Illinois of 411 violent offenders. In their study, they compared domestic batterers with other violent offenders. Their findings indicated that four factors—age, education, sentence length, and substance abuse—were significant influences that contributed to re-abuse in domestic batterers. In this study, race and criminal history were not significant but domestic violence offenders were more likely to commit a new act of domestic violence (Olson & Stalans, 2001).

Hanson and Wallace-Capretta (2004) examined the risk factors in a sample of 320 Canadian male DVOs on probation. Some of these offenders were ordered to complete a domestic batterers counseling program. This study supported the conclusion that offenders who experience residential and employment instability were more like to re-abuse. This study also provided evidence that offenders with prior violent offense charges and longer histories of substance abuse also re-offended at a higher rate than those that did not (Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2004).

Out of the 65 Pennsylvania Adult Probation Departments, 47 (72.3%) indicate that they are using an actuarial instrument. A number of the assessment tools are used for specific subpopulations of offenders. Examples include the Texas Christian University Drug Assessment for drug offenders and the Stable 2007 and Static-99 used for sex offenders (Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, 2008). None of the Pennsylvania counties report using a domestic violence specific assessment instrument, but all of them use some form of a proxy score that is used to pre-screen offenders for the risk to re-offense. The score generated by the proxy tool is comprised of the age of first offense and the offender's current age combined with the number of arrests. The proxy is an eight-point scale designed to determine a risk value of low, medium, or high that is assigned to the offender. Higher numbers indicate the offender poses a higher level of risk and determines the offenders supervision plan (Bouge, Woodward, & Joplin, 2005; PBPP, 2008).

The indicated risk factors of probationers in general appear to be consistent with domestic violence offenders (Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2004; Johnson, 2008; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Olson & Stalans, 2001). However, studies that have focused on domestic violence offenders specifically indicate that factors such as address and employment instability, continued cohabitation with the victim, and prior violent offense convictions have to be considered as risk factors contributing to intimate partner violence (Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2004; Johnson, 2008; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Olson & Stalans, 2001).

Currently only two of the 65 Pennsylvania counties are using the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) (PBPP, 2008). The LSI-R measures both static and dynamic factors, and is designed to aid in measuring both negative and positive offender-change over time (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Bechtel and Woodward (2008) did an overview

of domestic violence risk assessment instruments. In their overview, they recommend that the proxy score or the LSI-R be used before a specific domestic violence assessment tool. They base their recommendation on the ineffectiveness of domestic violence specific assessment tools to: (a) identify multiple offenders; and, (b) identify criminogenic factors that will enhance case management (Bechtel & Woodward, 2008). The DVO needs to be assessed and re-assessed throughout the probation period to evaluate the potential for deadly harm that they present to their intimate partner. The Wisconsin Client Management Classification and the LSI-R do not accurately determine the risk of violence the offender poses (PCADV, 2003). However, based upon longitudinal self-report studies, the LSI-R has shown to have predictive value for offenders that have committed aggravated assault and subsequently progress on to violent crime through predicted patterns of general offending (Bechtel & Woodward, 2008).

There is agreement among experts that risk assessments should be used to determine the intensity of supervision and the types of services offenders require. It is imperative that agencies use reliable assessment instruments and link the results to a supervision case plan (Solomon, Jannetta, Elderbroom, Winterfield, & Osborne, 2008)

### **DVO Specialized Caseload Supervision**

Supervision is the oversight that a probation officer exercises over the defendants assigned to their caseload (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Supervision of the domestic violence offender is similar to that of any offender. Throughout their period of probation, all probation officers consider the offender's danger to the community, compliance with the conditions of probation, need for treatment, and motivation to change (PCADV, 2003). The primary focus of the probation officer that supervises the domestic violence offender is the safety of the victim. In most studies, the successful completion of the

offender's period of supervision is the measure of effective probation. Probation success is based upon the researcher's definition of "success" or "failure" (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Recidivism equals failure and is commonly measured as an arrest and conviction for a new crime while on probation (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Klein & Crowe, 2008). Since the definition of domestic abuse is so broad, probation officers cannot react to another incident of physical violence as they do with other probationers. Probation officers must be able to sanction those identified behaviors within the range of abuse to ensure offender compliance and victim protection (PCADV, 2003).

Specialized supervision of domestic violence offenders in the community means frequent contact. Studies have determined that to merely increase the level of defendant-contact does not reduce recidivism. The bulk of the research indicates that probation is more successful when assessing the risks, and when the officer considers the individual characteristics of the offender (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Bracken, 2003; Petersilia & Turner, 1991). Specialized probation means that the probation officer becomes an expert in working with a subpopulation of defendants (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

A number of studies evaluate the effectiveness of specialized domestic violence probation supervision based upon the recidivism rates of the offenders. All found that there were specific factors that contributed to lower recidivism rates and they are: (a) the training of probation officers, (b) strict enforcement of the offender's attendance of intervention programs, (c) probation officers making victim contact, and (d) the increased level of contact with the offenders (Klien & Crowe, 2008). The literature supports the design of specialized probation and indicates that in order to be effective, the probation officers have to immediately respond to technical violations (Akers, 2004).

A study evaluating the effectiveness of a specialized domestic violence probation unit in Rhode Island found that it produced significantly lower rates of re-offending compared with probationers receiving traditional supervision. This effect, however, appeared only among “low risk” offenders with less extensive criminal records (Klein, Wilson, Crowe, & DeMichele, 2005). The ability of the probation officer to target specific factors or needs that are related to offending behavior (like substance abuse counseling, securing housing and employment, and relationship counseling) enables supervision to be focused and rehabilitative interventions to be applied on a case by case basis (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

### **Domestic Violence Victims**

Intimate partner violence differs significantly from other forms of violence because of the relationship between the offender and the victim. The traditional model of the offender being the client and the victim being an enthusiastic participant seeking retribution does not usually apply in domestic violence cases. Often there are strong emotional ties between victims and their batterers. Victims are reluctant to enter into an adversarial proceeding or invoke punishment (Dutton, 1995). Victims may also be financially dependent on the batterer and incarceration may result in the family being plunged into poverty. The safety of the victim must be the primary goal of supervision even when the victim appears to be working against the probation officer.

Research indicates that the standard criminal justice response may only have a modest effect on preventing recidivism among domestic violence offenders (Klein & Crowe, 2008). The criminal justice response is based upon deterrence. Police arrest, prosecutors proceed, judges’ convict, and probation officers supervise with the expressed purpose of keeping the victim safe by deterring the offender. This is extremely difficult to



accomplish, because batterers and victims often live together with ongoing unsupervised contact (Fagan, 1996). These issues represent the historic challenge to the criminal justice system to adequately respond to domestic violence.

### **Contact and Coordination With Other Agencies**

It has been confirmed that a coordinated community is an effective way to address domestic violence. Domestic violence has historical roots that cannot be addressed through the criminal justice system alone (Erez, 2002; Fratini, 2009). Cooperation between the criminal justice system, social services, and victim advocates has proven to be more productive than acting separately to address the problem (Burke, 2002; Center for Court Innovation, 2006; Eley, 2005; Erez, 2002; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001). A cooperative police department, committed prosecutor, engaged advocacy groups, an enlightened judiciary, and educated probation officers are the components necessary to address intimate partner violence. The role of the probation department is pivotal because keeping the offender accountable for his or her behavior is of the utmost importance (Reddick & Chapin, 2002).

In many jurisdictions, batterer are required to attend intervention programs monitored by the Court as part of a condition of probation or as an alternative to incarceration (Healy & Smith, 1998). In theory, judicial monitoring enables a swift and consistent response to noncompliance. In San Diego, a study focused on four specialized violence courts and included judicial monitoring components (San Diego Superior Court, 2000). In Pittsburgh, court-mandated counseling completion rates were assessed before and after a 30-day post-sentence mandatory court appearance (Gondolf, 1991). In both studies it is suggested that judicial monitoring as a part of a coordinated community

response to domestic violence may have contributed to improved compliance outcomes (Rempel, Labriola, & Davis, 2008)

Heckert and Gondolf (2005) suggest that the way to improve long-term prediction of re-assault is to incorporate the dynamic factors as well as changes in the levels of risk. This will translate into proactive case management and will be the most effective in reducing the risk to potential victims (Heckert & Gondolf, 2005). Byrne and Pattavina (2006) contend that there is a need to combine individual and community risk assessment. They submit that an individual's risk for re-offending is affected by their community and the treatment resources available to them (Byrne & Pattavina, 2006). While not an exhaustive overview, Table 2 on the next page details each of the categories and subcategories of the Model, and links each category to some of the relevant literature.

Table 2

*The Model Linked to the Literature*

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Literature</b>
Understanding the unique dynamics of violent domestic relationships	Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Bracken, 2003; Petersilia & Turner, 1991; Healey, Smith, & O'Sullivan, 1998; Erez, 2002; Labriola, Rempel, & Davis, 2005; The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009
Offender risk assessment	Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Bechtel & Woodward, 2008; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Olson & Stalans, 2001; Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2004; Johnson, 2008
Supervision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a swift response to non-compliance</li> <li>• case documentation</li> </ul>	Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Bracken, 2003; Petersilia & Turner, 1991; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Fagan, 1996; Akers, 2004; Klein, Wilson, Crowe, & DeMichele, 2005; Solomon, Jannetta, Elderbroom, Winterfield, & Osborne, 2008
Ongoing Contact with Domestic Violence Victims	Dutton, 1995; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Fagan, 1996
Contact and Coordination with Other Agencies	San Diego Superior Court, 2000; Erez, 2002; Fratini, 2009; Burke, 2002; Center for Court Innovation, 2006; Eley, 2005; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001; Reddick & Chapin, 2002; Healy & Smith, 1998; Gondolf, 1991b; Rempel, Labriola, & Davis, 2008

**Summary of Evidence-Based Supervision of DVO**

The literature supports the idea that the supervision methods delineated by the Model to supervise DVOs are evidence-based practices. However these supervision methods are useless if a) the probation officers are not aware; or b) if aware, they are not implemented by the probation officer. The next section will discuss the barriers a

probation officer may encounter when attempting to utilize evidence-based practices to supervise the domestic violence offender.

### **Barriers to Effective DVO Supervision**

Most of the studies regarding domestic violence recidivism focus on batterer intervention program outcomes. In these studies, researchers have relied on re-assault versus no re-assault as the measure of recidivism (Heckert & Gondolf, 2005). When victims' studies are longitudinal and they are interviewed directly, recidivism rates are reported at 40% to 80% of repeat violence by batterers. There have been a number of studies focused on specialized probation for domestic violence offenders. A comprehensive study was completed in Quincy, Massachusetts. The Quincy study found that 57% of those offenders placed on probation for domestic violence are rearrested for a new crime within two years of the initial arrest. Of the 57% rearrested, 43.6% of them are rearrested for domestic violence (Buzawa, Hotaling, Klien, & Byrnes, 1999).

High probation revocation rates ranging from 42% to 60.9% have been reported in a number of studies of specialized domestic violence probation programs and suggest that without probations specialized efforts, recidivism rates of domestic violence would be much higher than currently reported (Hayler, Ford, & Addison-Lamb, 1999; Klein & Crowe, 2008; Spence, 2001). The results of the studies are troubling, and should not be considered conclusive. These studies measure recidivism rates and due to incomplete measures of re-assault, comparison groups, and methodological design flaws, it is difficult to make firm conclusions on the success or failure of probation supervision of the DVOs, but may be indicative of barriers probation officers experience when supervising DVOs.

The primary responsibility of the county adult probation/parole officers is the community supervision of adult offenders released by the Court on either county probation or parole. In the United States, probation and parole play a critical role in the administration of criminal justice. Probation and parole officers contribute to all aspects of the criminal justice system from law enforcement to sentencing, to supervision of the offender in the community (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Increased caseloads, specialty courts, results driven management, and the re-emergence of rehabilitation all impact the community supervision function of probation/parole officers (Abadinsky, 2009). Finn and Kuck (2003) identify that the primary barriers of effective probation supervision are high caseloads, excessive paperwork, and meeting deadlines. These three conditions may make it difficult for officers to find the time needed to properly supervise offenders. Finn and Kuck (2003) further identify other less pervasive barriers that impact the officer's ability to effectively supervise offenders. These less pervasive barriers include lack of community resources and the organizational stress of inadequate supervision and inconsistent demands (Finn & Kuck, 2003).

The American Probation and Parole Association (2009) published "Community Corrections' Response to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Practice". This manual cites caseload burdens, lack of support from agency administrators, and insufficient time and resources to hold offenders accountable, as some of the frustrations that may arise for probation officers (Crowe et al., 2009). Finn and Kuck (2003) further cite that caseload size, excessive paperwork, and deadline pressures are identified sources of probation officer stress.

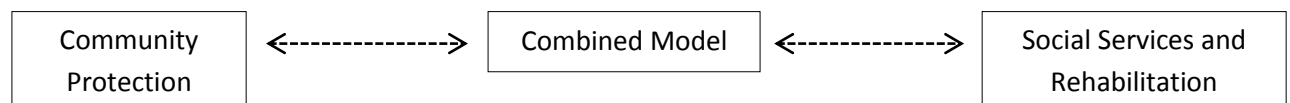
The focus of this study is to uncover what supervision methods the probation officers across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are utilizing to supervise DVOs. Of

equal interest is to identify their barriers to effective DVO supervision. Exploratory in nature, the assumption of this researcher based on the literature and practical experience is that the identified barriers will interrelate with the philosophical orientation of the probation officer, case management practices, and the extent of probation officer training.

### **Philosophical Orientation**

The major objective of probation and parole supervision is to provide public protection however the probation officer is also expected to prepare the probationer for an independent, law-abiding life. The probation officer develops a plan with the offender for treatment, education, and/or employment. The probation officer must also enforce the conditions placed on the probationer by the court such as restitution or community service and respond accordingly when any violation of the conditions occurs (Abadinsky, 2009; Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Therefore, the objective of probation is twofold: community protection and rehabilitation of the offender (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

So what role will the probation officer assume when supervising an offender? Abadinsky (2009) submits that the probation officer requires a combination of community protection and social service skills focused on rehabilitation.



*Figure 4.* Probation supervision of the offender, adapted from (Abadinsky, 2009, p. 255)

The philosophical orientation of the probation officer has an impact on whether they supervise offenders with an emphasis on community protection or on offender rehabilitation. This issues fuels the debate on whether probation officers should carry firearms, and it will influence whether a probation officer wants to work with a specialized caseload. When probation officers supervise sex offenders, drug offenders,

mental health or domestic violence offenders, they must receive additional training to be effective and have a commitment to be involved in the offender's rehabilitation (Abadinsky, 2009).

### **Case Management Practices**

Extremely high caseloads make it difficult for officers to adequately supervise offenders in the community. It has been widely recognized that an officer with a caseload over 100 offenders will not be able to provide the appropriate monitoring and oversight or establish the rapport necessary to improve offender outcomes (Taxman, 2002). However, a series of studies on caseload size have concluded that caseload size does not make a difference (MacKenzie, 2000; Glaze & Bonczar, 2008; Petersilia & Turner, 1991). The quality of the contacts, focused on the purpose of supervision and the development of a rapport between officer and offender instead of a simple exchange of information are going to make supervision more successful (Abadinsky, 2009; Andrews et al, 1990; Bouge, Diebel, & O'Connor, 2008; Bracken, 2003; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001; Petersilia & Turner, 1991; Seiter & West, 2003; Taxman, 2002).

Due to the nature of domestic violence the Model emphasizes the importance of the PO avoiding collusion with the DVO. The Model notes that the DVO is a master of manipulation and may attempt to divert the focus of his offense onto the victim (PCADV, 2004). Based upon the literature, the development of a rapport between an offender and PO is important to the successful supervision of the DVO.

Gender is one of the issues that could impact a POs ability to build a rapport with the DVO. Patetrillo (2007) examined the gender issues for female POs working with high risk offenders. In her study she noted that there is a power dynamic that results from the

stereotypes imposed on females by society. She further states that the offenders try to assert control over the supervisory relationship and female POs must maintain control of the supervision.

In a newsletter published by American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), Reddick and Chapin address the gender issue specific to female POs supervising DVOs. They note that female POs should ensure that any DVO manipulation should immediately result in a sanction further emphasis that the female PO should not have the expectation that the victim will behave the same way that she would. In the newsletter addressed to POs working with high risk offenders they warn that female POs dealing with the victim of the DVO allow the victim to do whatever she thinks will keep her safe (Reddick & Chapin, 1999).

### **Training**

It is a state requirement that probation officers receive 40 hours of training each year (PBPP, 2009). However with the increased focus on the probation officers safety, 47 of Pennsylvania's 65 counties authorize probation staff to carry firearms (PBPP, 2009). Therefore the bulk of training hours may be dedicated to firearm training. Probation officers can also receive training on self-defense or in specialized areas like sex or drug offenders. This may leave limited time to focus on the importance of effectively supervising the DVO. Moreover, there is the issue of availability of training. As noted earlier, victim services have been the impetus for probation staff to focus on specialized supervision of the DVO. If victim services are not available in a county, there may not be an emphasis on the training required to successfully manage DVOs in the community. Therefore, I assume that an administration that places a high value on training and support the probation officer in their supervision efforts will at least be aware of the



Model as a tool for evidence-based practice. This study seeks to determine if Pennsylvania probation officers (POs) have access to such training. Lack of training is one of a number of barriers that impede probation supervision of the DVO.

It is important to understand how probation officers are trained to implement successful supervision strategies. Most jurisdictions require probation officers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and, as the emphasis of probation changed from treatment to public safety; most departments prefer individuals with degrees in criminal justice, criminology, or sociology (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Once an officer is hired the initial training provides the basic knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to supervise offenders. Offender supervision is one of a number of skills that a probation officer must possess to be successful. In-service training provided by the agency allows officers to keep current with new developments in the field (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009).

Trotter (1996) hypothesized that probation officers would be more effective if they used certain supervision skills such as modeling pro-social behaviors and working through problem solving processes with offenders. His findings indicated that the probationers receiving supervision from trained probation officers demonstrated a recidivism rate of 46% while offenders under supervision by untrained probation officers had a recidivism rate of 64% (recidivism was measured at four years) (Trotter, 1996; Trotter, 2000). The data suggest the training that the probation officers received made a difference in the recidivism rate (Trotter, 2000). An example of recent trainings that enable POs to work through problem solving processes with offenders is motivational interviewing. Motivational interviewing was developed in the field of addictions and is a way of talking with people about change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Training in motivational interviewing when used by POs is a way to handle resistance and make

interactions between the PO and offender more change-focused and place the responsibility for behavior on the offender (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006).

Domestic violence offenders are unique, possibly dangerous and occasionally lethal. Probation officers need specialized skills to be effective when working with DVOs. Research on the effectiveness of probation officer training is limited, but there have been a number of studies focused on police officers. One study evaluated a family violence training program involving 16,000 police officers, justice system staff members, and community service providers. The evaluators concluded that the training resulted in improved attitudes toward victims and enhanced working relationships among agencies (Crowe et al., 2009). This limited evidence suggests that an understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence promotes an effective response and supports the use of the Model as the guide for DVO supervision.

### **Additional Barriers**

According to Finn and Kuck (2003) all of the cumulative barriers result in stress because officers cannot get their jobs done in a satisfactory manner. There are additional barriers to getting the job done that are not as significant as those previously mentioned, but do contribute to the inability of officers getting their done.

When DVOs are released by the Court to be supervised by probation, the judge usually imposes the special condition of treatment. Unfortunately, there may be a number of communities that do not have the resources necessary to meet this special condition. As previously noted, cognitive behavioral groups have shown to be a successful treatment modality for DVOs. Therefore a lack of community resources may be another barrier to effective probation supervision.

Some DVOs like some sex offenders have engaged in abusive behavior for years prior to being brought to justice. A victim may fear retaliation if the abuse is brought to the attention of law enforcement. An uncooperative victim can pose another barrier to effective supervision of the DVO. Often the victim of the DVO is dependent on the DVO for financial support. If the couple has children, the issue of family abuse arises and there is a threat that the children may be taken away due to the DVOs ongoing battering (Keilitz, 2000). The focus of the probation officer is to keep the victim safe while holding the DVO accountable. Without victim cooperation the implementation of safety plans or the enforcement of protection orders makes it difficult if not impossible for the probation officer to hold the DVO accountable.

Another identified barrier to effective probation supervision is organizational. Probation departments are part of a larger government system and therefore are not autonomous entities. The philosophy of the judiciary, limited funds, and inadequate supervision, are the basis for a lack of organizational support and present a barrier to caseload management and effective supervision (Thompkins, 2005).

### **Summary of Barriers to Effective DVO Supervision**

This section reviewed some of the barriers to effective offender supervision. Probation officers are generally attracted to the work because they can simultaneously help people and protect the community. A career as a probation officer can yield a great deal of satisfaction. The ability to have a positive impact on an offender's life and witness numerous positive outcomes can make the supervision efforts of a probation officer rewarding.

When working with DVOs, probation officers must help offenders get through their period of supervision while holding them accountable for the consequences of their

offending behaviors (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Police officers, fire fighters, and probation officers are careers that are people centered instead of data center. The barriers probation officers encounter when attempting to provide adequate supervision and protect the community have been noted. In the next section the conceptual framework of this study is presented and Figure 2 illustrates how the model impacts supervision and the outcomes for the DVO.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework in Figure 5 shows how effective probation/parole supervision of the DVO is a direct function of awareness, training and implementation of evidence-based practices. Social learning theory provides the framework to understand the behavior of the DVO. Evidence-based practice provides a useful application of social learning theory for the probation officer to effect change in the DVOs behavior. A POs ability to supervise will be impacted by their awareness of the Model, the availability of training, and a number of identified barriers such as support of the agency, caseload size and paperwork demands.

For the probation officer, the conceptual model is used to visualize the goals of probation and the factors that might affect their ability to intervene. Specifically, the conceptual framework for this study shows how the relationship between the PO and DVO is a direct function of training, awareness of the Model, and how a number of barriers either impedes or enhances the POs ability to supervise the DVO.

The starting point of the conceptual framework is the Model. We see that the Model is comprised of evidence-based practices and requires that the probation officer be trained in order to incorporate the Model into their supervision practices. We note that if there is a direct connection between training and effective supervision, resulting in

positive supervision outcomes. However, there are barriers, and the focus of the research is to determine probation officers supervision practices, but the barriers encountered that impede effective supervision.

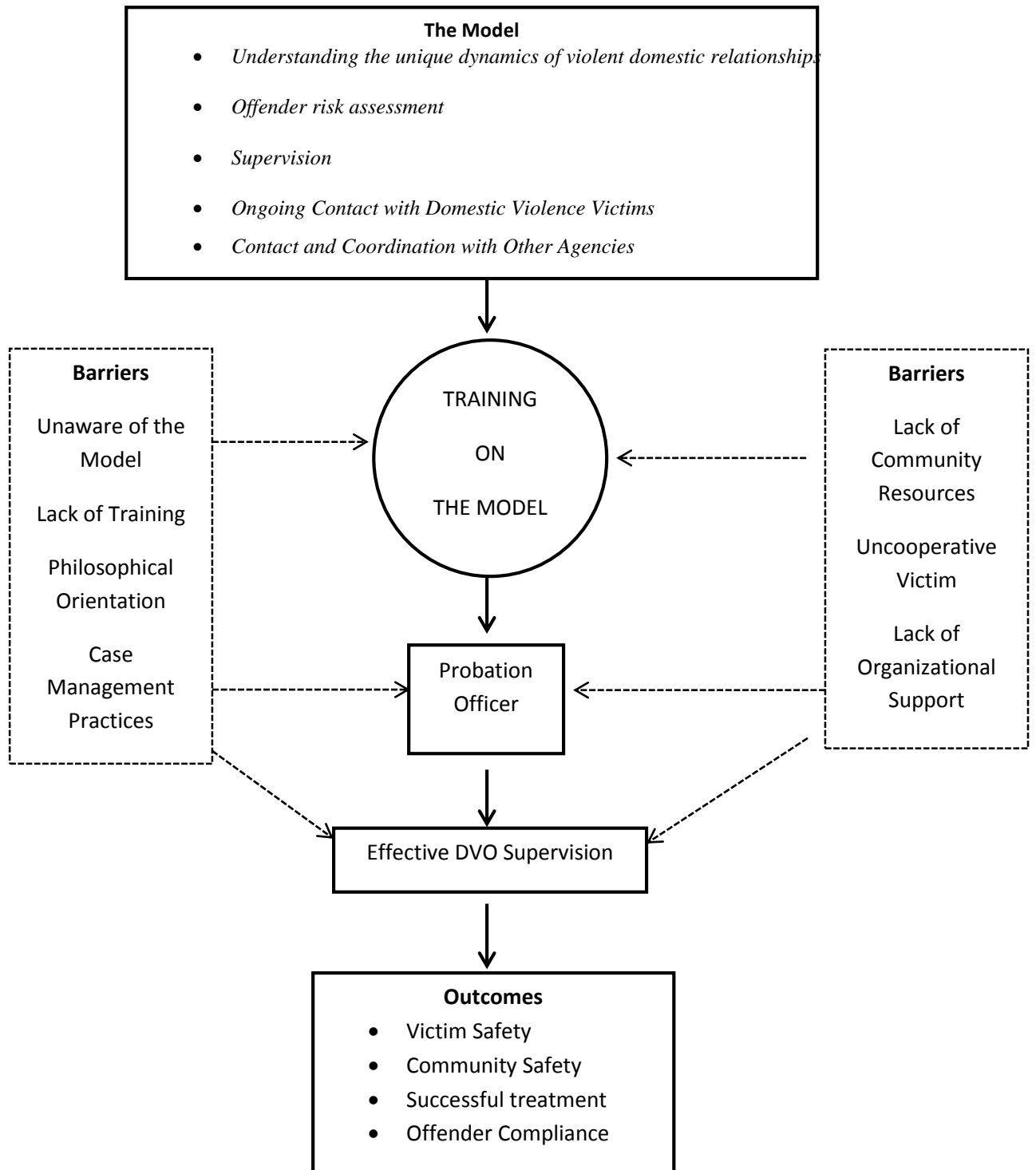


Figure 5. Conceptual framework of effective DVO supervision

## **Chapter Summary**

The supervision of domestic violence offenders on probation can be difficult, challenging, and often dangerous (Johnson, 2001). Criminal justice research has focused primarily on the arrest and prosecution of DVOs. Theories of violence have not been integrated with theories of domestic violence, and research and evaluation designs thus far have been weak (Fagan, 1996). Research on post-conviction supervision of DVOs suggests that intensive supervision, coupled with treatment, promotes accountability of the offender and safety of the victim (Andrews et al., 1990).

Safety planning and the prompt response to offender misbehavior will reduce victimization. Additionally, a community-coordinated response has proven successful with batterers, when the members of the system work together to address issues, ensure the safety of victims, and hold offenders accountable (Probation Officers Association of Ontario, 2001).

Assessment as the key element to this approach, prior to sentencing and/or before diversion is ever considered. A risk assessment tool chosen by a probation officer should address risk related to victim and public safety issues. In cases of repeat domestic violence offenders, imposing further probation in the absence of custody does not protect the victim, or hold the offender accountable for his/her behavior. Further sentences, therefore, should reflect a history of non-compliance. Assessments require a comprehensive collection of data from the offender, the victim, the police, and others that are related to the case (Probation Officers Association of Ontario, 2001).

Currently, EBP calls for probation officers to use risk levels to determine the level of supervision, develop their recommendations to the court for the length of probation, frequency of contact with probation officers, fines, and completion of batterers'

rehabilitation programming. EBP recommends that POs use the assessment tools available to make recommendations that address three factors: (a) offender accountability, (b) victim safety and (c) offender rehabilitation (Mederos, et al., 2001). Moving toward a proactive model of supervision, probation staff must be able to: (a) identify the offender's criminogenic need and risk factors, (b) conduct assessments, diagnosis, and case planning, (c) establish ground rules and gain offender compliance and, (d) develop interviewing and observational skills. A review of the literature found scant systematic examination of probation officers' use of DVO-specific interventions.

The conceptual framework (Figure 2) provides the preferred approach to effective DVO supervision. The focus of my research efforts will be to uncover the training the probation officers have received specific DVO supervision and the barriers encountered in their efforts to provide effective DVO supervision. The following questions, based upon the theory and research presented in Chapter 2, will guide the inquiry:

1. Are probation officers aware of the Model of Supervision for Domestic Violence Offenders?
2. What, if any, of the parts of the Model do probation officers use when supervising DVOs?
3. What are the specific barriers to using the Model in the supervision of DVOs?

The goal of this exploratory research is to develop a foundation for continued study of effective DVO supervision. Based upon the research questions, the conceptual framework generates the strategy for research. This study uses a quantitative survey methodology detailed in Chapter 3.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

#### **Chapter Overview**

The overall purpose of this study encompasses determining how probation officers supervise domestic violence offenders. Chapter 1 introduced the need to examine how probation officers supervise domestic violence offenders. It established the importance of probation officers having a plan to address domestic violence and introduced the Model of Domestic Violence Supervision (Model) as an effective strategy. Chapter 1 also included the goals of the research, the research questions and the proposed assumptions of the study.

Chapter 2 presents the literature related to the criminal justice system and research supporting evidence based supervision strategies when supervising the DVO. The literature review establishes the Model as evidence based practice. This current study is to determine the extent that probation officers are using the Model, or any aspects of it, in DVO supervision. This study further investigates perceived barriers to the use of the Model in DVO supervision.

Included in Chapter 2 is an overview of the various theories that relate to domestic violence. Based on the strengths and weaknesses of the various theories, social learning theory provides the theoretical basis to understanding the crime of domestic violence. Social learning theory also provides a foundation for the Model and treatment necessary to address the criminal behavior. In the conclusion of Chapter 2, a conceptual framework allows a way to visually comprehend how the probation officer can use the concepts and supervision strategies of the Model as well as some potential barriers to effective probation supervision.

This exploratory study focused on the supervision practices among probation officers and their agencies in Pennsylvania. Quantitative analysis will provide insight on the implementation of case management, assessment, or contact strategies used by probation officers in various departments across the Commonwealth. This study aims to discover how probation officers in the state of Pennsylvania use the various methods of supervision as outlined by the Model. This chapter provides readers with a clear and concise explanation of the research methodology by detailing the data collection process, operational definitions of variables, and analyses.

### **Research Design**

Exploratory in nature, the goals for this research are to promote discussion about domestic violence offender supervision and to identify the most effective methods of community DVO supervision. It was necessary to create an instrument that empirically measures the functions performed by probation officers and the identified barriers to adequate supervision. The study had two phases. Phase 1 convened expert reviewers to assess the survey. The Northern District Office of the Allegheny County Adult Probation department staffed with nine probation officers and one supervisor reviewed the survey relative to their gender, race, age, length of service, training, area of specialization and education. Phase 2 involved administering the revised survey to probation officers across the Commonwealth. The sequential design for this study included five steps:

Step 1: Create a survey that identifies the tasks performed by probation officers based on the Model.

Step 2: Expert review of the survey by Allegheny County probation officers.

Step 3: Revise survey.

Step 4: Survey officers across the Commonwealth and identify the activities that they utilize during supervision of DVOs.

Step 5: Analyze the data.

### **Measures and Instrumentation**

Surveys offer a varying flexibility to a targeted population, and a variety of questions are placed in a single survey (Maxfield & Babbie, 2006). By asking multiple choice questions of respondents, significant information is gathered from the population and yield substantive inferential analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Using computer program Qualtrics, each survey was confidential and in a self-report style so that the respondents can easily and honestly answer all questions.

The basis of the survey questions are a culmination of the literature review and the Model, following an evidence-based practice approach. Using this approach in conjunction with the expert review provided for a content valid survey. Key survey domains best categorize the formulation of the survey questions. These domains include the following:

- **Demographic Information:** The County of employment and other questions relating to age, race, education, and experience are also included. Demographics do not represent a dimension of the Model but they can impact access to services, training, and how a probation officer conducts supervision of DVOs. For example, a probation officer assigned to a rural area may have a lack of treatment services available for the DVO, and a lack of treatment services may impact supervision techniques. Additionally, years of experience may prove to have a larger impact on supervision techniques than specific training.

- **Supervision/Case Management:** This domain is the primary area of interest for this survey because it describes how the probation officers handle their cases. It details the responder's caseload size and experience with domestic violence offenders. Another question in this domain focuses on the philosophical orientation of the officer. The philosophical orientation determines if a PO focuses on the punitive or treatment aspects of the job. A more punitive reaction to a DVO is the desire to incarcerate, while a treatment oriented PO may desire group therapy and reconciliation.
  - In this section the Model provides the key components for the questions. A sample question is "Do you make contact with the victim of a domestic violence offender?" Generally, probation officers do not have to maintain contact with victims; therefore this question regarding victim contact may act as an indicator that the probation officer has received training focused on supervision of the DVO. However, if the probation officer identifies a lack of training, but still indicates that they maintain victim contact, they may do so from the experience of working with DVOs. Logically, therefore, both experience and training can be indicators of the POs use of specific supervision methods.
- **Assessment:** Assessment is such an important element of evidence based practice that it has its own section. This section includes questions about the use of assessments and the types of assessments employed by the responder. There is a question regarding the use of specific domestic violence assessments. There is also a question regarding any training on how to use the instruments. The final

question in this domain asks if the basis for the conditions of probation is on an actuarial risk or clinical assessment.

- **The Court:** These questions concern the court functions. Questions regarding specialty court, offender review hearings, and the specific treatment ordered are included in this section. There are also questions addressing the use of a specialized prosecutor for domestic violence offenses.
- **Treatment:** The completion of a batterer treatment program that holds the DVO accountable is imperative (Babcock, Green, & Robie, 2004). This section explores the treatment available to the offender, who provides the treatment, and how the responder monitors compliance.
- **Your Agency:** Based upon Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of human ecology, the supportiveness of the agency contributes to how committed the probation officer is to his or her position and the overall objectives to the organization (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002). This section is included because the support, or lack thereof, of the agency can help or hinder the adequate supervision of the DVO.

### **Summary of Measures and Instrumentation**

This section provided an overview of the survey design and the information to be gathered. The first part of the survey gathers demographic information and responder characteristics. There are seven demographic questions to obtain information on the following: (a) age; (b) gender; (c) ethnicity; (d) years of education; (e) years of probation experience; (f) years of probation/human service employment; and, (g) current probation responsibilities.

In the following section details the demographic information, DVO supervision, use of assessment, function of the Court, availability of treatment and the overall supportiveness of the agency.

## **Measurement and Assessment Considerations**

### **Measuring Supervision Methods**

Faye Taxman (2002) defines supervision as “a means to engage the offender in a process of improving compliance with general societal norms including the conditions of release.”(p. 20). Because supervision is an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance, the Model includes a number of dimensions to supervision. These dimensions of supervision based upon concepts supported by evidence-based practice, and consist of: (a) assessment (b) constructive communication (c) identification of criminogenic factors (d) the utilization of programs and services (e) establishing pro-social contacts in the community and, (f) routine monitoring and assessing the offender through victim contacts.

For the proposed survey (see Appendix D), three instruments are adapted to measure the variables of interest: (a) 2006 Probation Sex Offender Management Survey (English, Colling-Chadwick, Pullen, & Jones, 1996); (b) Court Mandates to Batterer Programs: A National Survey (Labriola, Rempel, O'Sullivan, Frank, McDowell, & Finkelstein, 2007), and (c) Effectiveness of Probation in West Virginia (Waller, 2003).

The questions to measure the dimensions of supervision are similar to those used by English, Colling-Chadwick, Pullen, and Jones (1996). Their 16-page questionnaire examines how various states approach and sanction sex crimes. In their study, the unit of analysis was probation and parole agencies with respect to adult sex offender case management. Two changes were necessary in order to incorporate their questions into

this proposed study's survey. Instead of probation and parole agencies and adult sex offenders, the unit of analysis for this study is the individual probation officers and their supervision of domestic violence offenders who commit intimate partner violence. The questions did not change meaning after they were adapted for this survey. One example of the question adaptation involves assessment. Instead of asking if the "department" used specific assessment instruments in regards to sex offenders, this study asked the same question referencing the probation officer.

Pre-tested at several sites, the survey administered to probation staff by English, et al. is a mixture of Likert scale, open-ended, and dichotomous (yes/no) questions (English et al., 1996). Key findings of the study support the effectiveness of evidence based practice and thus the Model in a number of aspects. Specifically, probation and parole agencies with specialized caseloads were more likely to emphasize victim protection and reparation for victims. Additionally, the evidence-based process of sex offender supervision seeks treatment for offenders and uses collaborative strategies that rely on intra- and inter-agency teams. Intimate partner violence, similar to sex crimes, often goes undetected. The findings of this earlier study indicate that adults who commit sex crimes are different from other criminals, needing intensive supervision and treatment engagement and oversight (English et al., 1996). DVOs and sex offenders have the commonality of requiring treatment and on-going attention to their victims. Their findings support the need for specialized supervision of offenders that require treatment and POs ongoing victim contact.

Court Mandates to Batterer Programs, A National Survey, is the second adapted survey based on research conducted by Melissa Labriola, Michael Rempel, Chris S. O'Sullivan, Phyllis B. Frank, with Jim McDowell and Rachel Finkelstein. As a report

submitted to the National Institute of Justice in March 2007, the researchers were exploring how criminal courts nationwide were holding DVOs accountable when they were noncompliant with a batterer program mandate. The researchers identified 2,265 batterer programs nationwide and sent a preliminary survey requesting basic program information. Based upon the 543 programs that responded to the preliminary survey, they selected 260 communities in 26 states and then surveyed the courts, victim assistance agencies, and batterer programs in the selected communities.

The researchers report a response rate of 53% from the courts, 62% from the victim assistance agencies, and 75% from the batterer programs. The researchers defined “accountability” as the court enforcing a number of mandates regarding DVO compliance and when not compliant the court then imposing the proper consequences and sanctions on the DVO (Labriola et al, 2007). Based upon their survey, the researchers discussed a number of findings, however of relevance to this study was the finding that 94% of the courts that responded mandate that probation be in some or all of the mandates placed on DVOs (Labriola et al, 2007).

With regard to the philosophical orientation of the PO, the third adapted survey is derived from a Master’s thesis completed at Marshall University. In 2003, Jennifer Waller surveyed adult probation officers in West Virginia to determine the efficiency of probation (Waller, 2003). Her findings indicate that probation officers believe achieving effective practice includes three key elements: (a) protecting the community, (b) providing treatment for offenders, and (c) reducing recidivism. These elements, supported by evidence-based practice, are also present in the Model.



## **Assessment**

Out of the 65 Pennsylvania Adult Probation Departments, 47 (72.3%) indicate that they use an actuarial instrument. A number of the assessment tools exist for specific subpopulations of offenders. Examples include the Texas Christian University Drug Assessment for drug offenders and the Stable 2007 and Static-99 used for sex offenders (PBPP, 2008).

None of the Pennsylvania counties report using a domestic violence specific assessment instrument, but all of them use some form of a proxy score for pre-screening offenders for the risk of re-offense. The score generated by the proxy tool is comprised of the age of first offense, the offender's current age, combined with the number of arrests to generate a number. The proxy employs an eight-point scale: the more risk the offender poses, the higher the number. This tool's purpose is to determine a risk value of low, medium, or high. The score is assigned to the offender and the supervision plan is based on the risk category (Bouge, Woodward, & Joplin, 2005; PBPP, 2009). A section in the survey asks the PO to indicate the tools used for assessment, if they had formal training on the instruments, and if conditions of probation are based on a risk assessment tool.

## **The Court**

In *Testing the Effectiveness of Batterer Programs and Judicial Monitoring* (Labriola, Rempel, & Davis, 2005), the authors' study focuses on how criminal courts nationwide are holding batterer programs accountable. This study included 260 communities and the sample included criminal courts, batterer programs, and victim assistance agencies. They intentionally selected a range of communities and acknowledge that while the program's mandates originated with the court, the probation officer had to supervise according to the mandate. Emphasis on the criminal justice system taking the

crime of domestic violence and the requirement of offender treatment seriously supports the dimensions of the Model and the need for specialized supervision. It also supports the premise that the ultimate responsibility rests with the court, acting through probation officers to hold the DVO accountable for any non-compliance (Labriola et al., 2005).

### **Treatment**

Cognitive-behavioral group is the intervention technique used by correctional programs. Two concepts form the basis of its effectiveness: (a) the restructuring of cognitive events and (b) social and interpersonal skill training. Cognitive techniques help DVOs recognize the sequence of events and feelings that precede the onset of violence, use self-monitoring and self-assessment to reinforce the skills taught in the group, and use educational methods to aid the DVO with understanding of the nature of intimate partner violence (Cunningham et al., 1998). Survey questions focus on the type of treatment, if any, available for the DVO. Questions also focus on the communication and documentation that the PO receives from the treatment provider. When examining the POs supervision of the DVO, the PO takes into account the ability for a DVO to access treatment, and the relationship of the treatment provider establishes with the PO.

### **Agency**

To determine the level of supportiveness of the agency, Section 6 of the survey includes questions from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (POS). The POS was originally a 36-item scale, but its popularity grew and variations of the POS have emerged. The proposed survey includes 11 items adapted from the original 36-item scale as recommended by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002, p. 699), who state:

Because the original scale is one-dimensional and has high internal reliability, the use of shorter versions does not appear problematic. Prudence nevertheless

dictates that both facets of the definition of POS (valuation of employees' contribution and care about employees' well-being) be represented in short versions of the questionnaire.

The Likert Response Scale offers a choice of answers from Strongly Disagree (0) to Strongly Agree (5). For the 11-items, the minimum possible score would be 0 and the maximum score would be 55. Three of the items are reverse coded (R).

## **Sampling**

### **Phase 1: Allegheny County Probation Officers**

The Director of Allegheny County Probation and Parole gave permission to use the Northern District Office for expert review of the proposed survey. The expert review involved a diverse group of probation officers who vary in race, gender, age, years of service and caseload responsibilities. Along with the demographic variation of the probation officers, the Northern District Office also has variation in the areas of Allegheny County that they supervise. Some of the probation officers supervise primarily urban districts while others have supervision responsibilities in rural areas of Allegheny County. The variation of the group allows for a variety of perspectives

Conducted in order to confirm content validity and to investigate the reliability of the survey via testing, the survey needs to be easy to read, understandable, and completed in 30 minutes or less. The questions were designed for a computerized survey and answerable with the use of a drop down button. This approach increased the ease of response, which can minimize the threat to validity due to a low response rate (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2005).

This group of probation officers (N=10) received a copy of the survey and were asked to provide feedback on the clarity of questions and response options, as well as the

length of time it takes to complete the survey. As a result of this expert review several questions were reworded for clarity and the survey was prepared for distribution.

## **Phase 2: Pennsylvania County Probation Officers**

Based on information from the Office of Probation and Parole Services (2009) the sample for Phase 2 of this study was to be comprised of the 1,932 Pennsylvania County Probation/Parole Officers, with 1,506 supervising caseloads (Appendix B). The average total caseload is 157 offenders per adult probation officer. Caseloads range from a low of 41 to a high of 364. The demographics of the caseloads are: 60% White, 29.6% Black, 6.1% Hispanic/Latino, and 4.3% are Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American or identify themselves as two or more races. Only three of Pennsylvania's 65 counties have domestic violence specialty courts, and with 11 counties not reporting their numbers, there are 4,579 identified domestic violence offenders statewide (Office of Probation and Parole Services, 2009). To get a usable sample size from a population of 1,932 Pennsylvania County Probation/Parole Officers of 50% or 966 would prove adequate for analysis, 60% or 1,159 would be good and 70% or 1,352 would be very good (Maxfield & Babbie, 2006; Monette, et al., 2005). While ideally the sample would have consisted of the entire state, each County Director/Chief Probation Officer had to give approval to survey their probation officers (Appendix C).

## **Data Collection Procedures**

The first phase of the study was to refine the survey instrument (Appendix D) using feedback from the expert reviewers with regard to the content, design, and organization of the survey instrument.

The expert review helps to "identify and enrich the researchers' understanding of a problem by providing judgmental statements amenable to quantification" (Van de Ven

& Delbecq, 1972). The basis of the expert review process is research that finds that it is an orderly procedure that allows for focusing on the major areas of inquiry and then using this information to modify interview or questionnaire instruments in greater detail (Van de Ven & Delbecq, 1972). The expert reviewers are Allegheny County probation officers, who serve in a variety of positions. Nine probation officers and their supervisor reviewed the survey instrument. As previously noted in greater detail, the Model of Supervision of Domestic Violence Offenders acted as a guide in the creation of the survey (see Appendix D). The expert reviewers provided necessary feedback to modify any statements or questions that are confusing or not interpreted the same way by each member of the sample group (reliability). The desired outcome was an instrument that reliably collected the information for this study.

Implementation of the survey involved a web-based format using an online survey program. The online format using Qualtrics online software enabled this researcher to program automatic skip-patterns, so that each respondent would only see those questions requiring an answer based upon previous responses.

Subsequent to receiving approval from all of the Court Director/Chief probation officers a letter (see Appendix C) to the Court Director/Chief informed them of the survey and explained the survey's purpose. The Director/Chief then asked each probation officer to complete the survey online. The Director/Chief received an email to forward to their probation staff with a link enabling them to take the survey online, explain that the entire survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete, that there are no individual identifiers, and the research is in its aggregate form.

## **Response Rate**

The survey population for this research included the sixty-five of the sixty-seven counties in Pennsylvania that operate adult probation and parole departments (Mercer and Venango are operated by PA State Probation and Parole) (PBPP, 2009), with the unit of analysis being the individual probation officers. I contacted each Director/Chief probation officer explaining the purpose of my study and requested permission to survey his/her probation staff (See Appendix C). The initial information and request was to Robert W. McCullough, III, Executive Director, County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association, who forwarded the survey information and my contact information. The second contact with the Director/Chief probation officers was via email. The interested respondents sent a letter to the IRB committee giving permission for their PO's to receive the survey. There were a total of 3 emails and one phone call for a total of 4 attempts to contact Director/Chief probation officers requesting their permission to survey their staff. The survey was available from February 2013 to August 2013. There was a follow-up email sent to Director/Chief probation officers that had given permission to survey their staff to encourage their POs to take the survey.

The final survey sample obtained was 36 of the 65 possible counties. There are a total of 1506 adult supervision probation officers in Pennsylvania; with an initial response of 245 probation officers this puts the response rate above the 16% with a 5% margin of error. However because only 36 of the 65 possible counties responded to the survey the total population is reduced to 770 respondents. Using the Raosoft® sample size calculator (Raosoft, 2004), Table 3 shows total number of probation officers required to achieve the 90%, 95% and 99% confidence intervals along with the initial sample of respondents.

Table 3

*Study Sample with Associated Confidence Intervals*

Population	Total Possible	90% C.I.	95% C.I.	99% C.I.	Initial Response
800,000 to 1,499,999	125	86	95	106	28
500,000 to 799,999	48	41	43	45	13
210,000 to 499,999	319	147	175	216	68
145,000 to 209,999	77	61	65	70	22
	55	46	49	51	28
90,000 to 144,999	119	83	92	102	63
45,000 to 89,999	18	17	18	18	5
20,000 to 44,999	9	9	9	9	4
less than 20,000					
Totals	770	201	257	357	245

Under representation (below the 90% CI) is noted in all of the counties. Despite numerous attempts to gain access to respondents using email and telephone contacts, PO non-response occurred in all of the counties and is a potential source of error in analysis.

Further reducing our sample size, the final sample consisted only of those probation officers who currently supervise DVOs. Stratified random sampling is the final sampling plan for this research. Strata are non-overlapping, homogenous groupings of population elements. Theoretically, this design provides greater precision due to the ability to organize the population into homogenous subsets (Maxfield & Babbie, 2006). There were a total of 245 probation officers that responded to the survey; however the final sample is 132 probation officers that indicated that they are currently supervising DVOs.

## **Missing Data**

Missing data are a common occurrence in social science research, however missing data can have several adverse impacts: a) it reduces the sample size; and b) it can distort the data analysis (Little & Rubin, 2002). With missing values, I needed to make some assumptions about the underlying process that produced the missing values (Acock, 2012). I identified the missing data by returning to the original Excel spread sheet downloaded from Qualtrics. There were a number of questions that only one or two of the answers on the Likert scale were missing, however the questions that had the most values missing were those regarding agency support.

To correct the missing values with relation to agency support, imputation and the creation of a new dichotomous variable consistent with the observed data. Imputation was not possible for some of values because the respondents did not answer any of the Likert scale questions. This reduced the final sample from 132 to 124. I found no large differences in findings with or without the missing values.

## **Validity and Reliability**

Survey questions based on a culmination of the literature review and the Model, which includes following an evidence-based practice approach and linked to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks support content validity. Using this approach in conjunction with the expert review of the survey provided additional assessment of content and support for measuring the dimensions of DVO intervention. Research and theory indicate that the DVO intervention scale has face validity in that the items appear to cover the items considered significant for successful DVO supervision.

The items forming indices to measure DVO intervention were subject to factor analysis and measures of internal consistency thereby ensuring reliable measures.



Multiple regression provided evidence of construct validity when the independent variables (dimensions of DVO intervention) and the predictor variables operated as logically anticipated.

### **Strengths, Weaknesses, and Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are critical to consider in every phase of the research process. There were minimal risks to participants in this study since individuals were anonymous and free to decline involvement. Careful data management procedures maximize confidentiality in both the pilot and survey design. Standard research procedures were followed as outlined by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Upon receipt of IRB approval data collection procedures commenced.

### **Data Analysis**

John Tukey and his associates developed methods for exploratory data analysis (EDA) (Hamilton, 2006). Tukey likened EDA to detective work because the goal is to discover patterns in the data (Behrens, 1997). Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, correlations, and exploratory graphics describe the aspects of the dimensions of supervision based upon the Model. The dependent variable “DVO Intervention” includes ordinal variables such as case planning, fieldwork, monitoring and case supervision practices. The survey questions comprising the dependent variable were factor analyzed to uncover the existence of possible dimensions. Each identified dimension will consist of an additive index constructed by summing the specified survey questions. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for internal consistency measures the reliability of the indices. The final analysis uses multiple regression to predict and explain the impact that the predictors have on the outcome variables.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided readers a clear description of key methodological issues considered for this study. The information outlined seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the research design, survey construction, data analysis and a concise overview of the systematic procedures that will be followed in the context of this research. Employing quantitative methods, the study begins with an expert review of the survey. The expert review will use nine Allegheny County probation officers and their supervisor from the Northern District Office. Allegheny County Probation and Parole comprises a diverse group and as expert reviewers they were able to offer a variety of viewpoints regarding the survey. Their input was primarily focused on the clarity of the survey questions.

Based upon the feedback of the expert reviewers, the survey was revised and the revised survey was formatted for web-based administration to the Pennsylvania County Probation/Parole Officers supervising caseloads. There were a total of 245 probation officers that responded to the survey; however the final sample is 132 probation officers that indicated they currently supervise DVOs. Underrepresentation (below the 90% CI) is noted in all of the counties. Despite numerous attempts to gain access to respondents using email and telephone contacts, PO non-response occurred in all of the counties and introduces a potential source of error into the study.

Initial data management, data analysis, and diagnostic statistics were accomplished using STATA IC version 12.1 from STATA CORP LP of College Station, TX. Data analysis included testing a multi-level multiple regression modeling over a fixed multiple regression model for assessing relationships between the independent, dependent, and control variables. Chapter 4 details the analysis of data.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### **Chapter Overview**

The purpose of this study was to explore Pennsylvania County Adult Probation Officers' awareness of the Model of Supervision (Model) recommended by the PCADV (2003). This study used a quantitative exploratory design to gather descriptive data to examine the use of case management, assessment, and contact strategies by probation officers in various departments across the Commonwealth. This chapter reports on findings from the analysis of quantitative data collected from February to August, 2013 using Qualtrics survey management software. To find a connection between the proposed research-based model and the current state of practice data analysis using STATA IC, this researcher began with a preliminary analysis, including frequencies, correlations and exploratory data analysis. Because the Model embraces a multidimensional concept, factor analysis aided in the creation of multi-item scales. Predicting and explaining DVO intervention is complicated and requires the use of multiple predictors; therefore, I used multiple regression to determine the influence of predictors on the supervision practices proposed in the Model. Regression rests on certain assumptions and I used regression diagnostics to evaluate these assumptions (Hamilton, 2006).

#### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

I presented three research questions and three hypotheses in the first chapter. Below I re-state and discuss them in terms of the survey results.

##### **Research Question 1**

The first research question asks if probation officers aware of the Model of Supervision for Domestic Violence Offenders? There were 132 POs that responded to the

survey and 74% indicated that they were not aware of the Model. The final sample of 28 counties included the eight counties (Adams, Allegheny, Bucks, Erie, Luzerne, Northampton, Somerset and Westmoreland) that had participated with PCADV in the creation of the Model for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments. Table 4 depicts PO awareness of the Model by county.

Table 4

*Number of Probation Officers Aware of the Model by County*

County	Model Aware: No	Model Aware: Yes	Total
<b>Adams</b>	5	1	6
<b>Allegheny</b>	7	1	8
Armstrong	3	0	3
Blair	5	1	6
<b>Bucks</b>	5	3	8
Cambria	2	1	3
Carbon	2	1	3
Crawford	6	4	10
Dauphin	12	1	13
Elk	1	1	2
<b>Erie</b>	1	0	1
Franklin	5	2	7
Fulton	1	0	1
Huntingdon	3	1	4
Indiana	3	1	4
Juniata	2	0	2
Lehigh	4	1	5
<b>Luzerne</b>	0	8	8
Mifflin	1	1	2
<b>Northampton</b>	6	1	7
Northumberland	3	1	4
Schuylkill	3	1	4
<b>Somerset</b>	2	0	2
Sullivan	1	1	2
Union	1	0	1
Warren	2	0	2
Wayne	3	0	3
<b>Westmoreland</b>	9	2	11
Totals	98 (74%)	34 (26%)	132 (100%)

*Note.* PCADV Model pilot counties are shown in boldface.

There are a total of 43 POs from the eight counties that had participated in the creation of the Model, and of that 43 only 17 or about 40% stated they had an awareness of the Model.

**Hypothesis 1.** The first hypothesis states that awareness of the Model will vary depending on the geographical location, population served, services available to DVOs and victims, probation officer caseload levels, and administrative support of training. As noted in Table 4 the majority of the POs that responded to the survey indicated that they were not aware of the Model. The exception is Luzerne County where 100% of the respondents indicated that they are aware of the Model.

With regard to services available to DVOs, 52% of the respondents indicated that there were not enough services for DVOs. This is in contrast to 83% of the respondents indicating that available services exist for victims of domestic abuse in their county.

It has been widely recognized that an officer with a caseload over 100 offenders will not be able to provide the appropriate monitoring and oversight or establish the rapport necessary to improve offender outcomes (Taxman, 2002). The question regarding caseload level focused on the number of DVOs that the PO supervised. Most of the POs indicated that they supervised less than 20 DVOs, however there were 7 POs that supervise on DVOs and 5 of the POs that only supervise DVOs noted that they supervise more than 80 DVOs on their caseloads.

As noted in Chapter 3, the questions with the most missing data were the ones focused on agency support. In the final analysis 17% of the POs failed to answer the question so I took a non-answer to indicate a lack of support. Based upon this assumption 81% of the POs indicated that they felt supported by their agencies.

## Research Question 2

For research question 2, I explore what, if any, of the parts of the Model do probation officers use when supervising DVOs? Although 74% of POs indicate they were not aware of the Model, 61% of POs affirmed that they used parts of the Model. Table 5 depicts the parts of the Model used by POs.

Table 5

### *Parts of the Model used for DVO Supervision*

Parts of the Model	Percent of Use
Home visits	87%
Curfew checks	23%
Monthly office visits	92%
Home confinements	28%
Day treatment referrals	29%
Drug tests	91%
Completes assessment on defendants	74%
Supervision based on appraised risk	82%
Fieldwork includes employment visits	70%
Fieldwork includes surveillance	58%
Fieldwork includes treatment facility visits	58%
Fieldwork includes education facility visits	57%

**Hypothesis 2.** I also addressed this research question 2 within the context of hypothesis 2 which posits that as the availability of training varies, Model use will vary.

Table 6 shows results relating to POs receiving training specific to DVO supervision, motivational interviewing, and evidence-based practices.

Table 6

*Modalities of Probation Officer Training*

Training	No/%	Yes/%
Evidence-based Practice	42/32%	90/68%
Motivational Interviewing	39/30%	93/70%
DVO	87/66%	45/34%

Because supervision is an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance, the Model includes a number of dimensions to supervision. These dimensions of supervision were based on concepts supported by evidence-based practice. Scale development for this study increased the researcher's ability to capture the complexities associated with the outcome variables by creating indicators that included items reflecting constructs grounded in both theory and experience. Discussion of the results of the analysis appear later in this chapter.

### **Research Question 3**

**Hypothesis 3.** Research Question 3 asks what are the specific barriers to using the Model in the supervision of DVOs? Using hypothesis 3, to address the research question I ask what identified barriers (e.g., caseload size, excessive paperwork, and deadline pressures) will interrelate with the philosophical orientation of the probation officer, case management practices and extent of probation officer training. Used as independent variables, multiple regression allowed me to determine the influence that a POs philosophical orientation, case management practices and training had on DVO intervention. In the following narrative, I speak to this analysis in detail starting with a discussion addressing the sample.

### **Description of the Sample**

The survey population for this research included the County Adult Probation and Parole Officers supervising DVOs in 65 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. While ideally the sample would have consisted of the entire state, each County Director/Chief Probation Officer had to give approval to survey their probation officers (Appendix C). The class of a county is not determined by status, money or prestige, but by the size of the population. Pennsylvania has 9 classes of counties; however this survey has 8 because Philadelphia is the only Class 1 county and did not respond to the IRB request to complete the survey. The population of a county can influence a number of variables including the number of offenders and the budget available for probation/parole services.

Of the respondents, 82% are from counties with less than 500,000 inhabitants. Counties are delineated using population density, which I calculated using the total population of a specific area divided by the total number of square land miles of that area. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania (2014) defines rural and urban based on population. According to the Center's definition, Pennsylvania has 19 urban counties and 48 rural counties. Of the 65 counties, Berks and Allegheny are the only two that report having domestic violence specialty court; however Berks County is not included in the final sample. The final sample comprises 20 rural counties and 8 urban counties. On the next page Table 7 shows the counties and the size of their populations and Figure 6 presents a map of Pennsylvania that clearly notes the location of the counties.

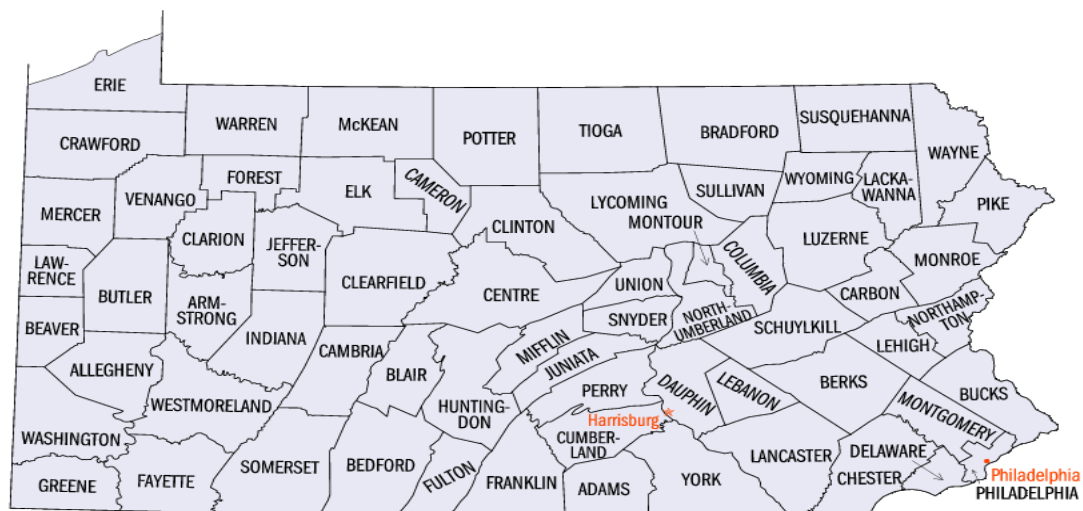


Table 7

*The Sampling Frame*

Population	County of Employment
800,000 to 1,499,999	<b><u>Allegheny</u></b>
500,000 to 799,999	<b><u>Bucks</u></b>
210,000 to 499,999	<b><u>Berks, Chester, Dauphin, Erie, Lehigh, Luzerne, Northampton, Westmoreland</u></b>
145,000 to 209,999	Beaver, <u>Cambria</u> , <u>Franklin</u> , <u>Schuylkill</u>
90,000 to 144,999	<b><u>Adams</u></b> , <u>Blair</u> , <u>Northumberland</u>
45,000 to 89,999	<u>Armstrong</u> , Bradford, <u>Carbon</u> , <u>Crawford</u> , <u>Elk</u> , <u>Huntingdon</u> , <u>Indiana</u> , Jefferson, <u>Mifflin</u> , <b><u>Somerset</u></b> , <u>Warren</u> , <u>Wayne</u>
20,000 to 44,999	<u>Juanita</u> , <u>Union</u> , Wyoming
less than 20,000	Cameron, Forest, <u>Fulton</u> , <u>Sullivan</u>

*Note.* PCADV Model pilot counties are in boldface; underlined indicates county included in the survey.



*Figure 6.* Pennsylvania counties. Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, United States Census Bureau (2010). 11/23/13 [http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/pennsylvania\\_map.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/pennsylvania_map.html)

On the next page Table 8 provides a detailed summary of the sample of probation officers who participated in this study. Of the total sample of 132 participants, four males and three females had DVO supervision as their primary caseload responsibility.

Although all in the final sample currently supervise DVOs, 98 supervised a general caseload, 6 supervised offenders on the electronic monitor, 13 supervised a high impact caseload, 7 supervised sex offenders and 1 had the primary responsibility of supervising a drug and alcohol caseload.

Table 8

*Characteristics of Probation Officers Supervising DVOs*

Variables	N	%
Age		
22 and under	1	.76%
23-40	83	62.88%
41-50	31	23.48%
51 and older	17	12.88%
Race		
White	126	95.46%
African American	2	1.51%
Hispanic	1	.76%
Asian	0	0%
Native American	2	1.51%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
Other	1	.76%
Gender		
Male	78	59.09%
Female	54	40.91%
Education level		
2-year college degree	2	1.51%
4-year college degree	109	82.58%
Master's degree	18	13.64%
Doctoral degree	1	.76%
Professional degree (JD, MD)	2	1.51%
Employment as a Probation Officer		
Less than a year	11	8.33%
1 to 5 years	36	27.27%
6 to 10 years	29	21.97%
11 to 15 years	24	18.18%
16 to 20 years	14	10.61%
More than 20 years	18	13.64%
Caseload Responsibility		
General	98	74.24%
Electronic Monitor (EM)	6	4.55%
High Impact	13	9.85%
Sex Offender	7	5.30%
DVO	7	5.30%
Drug and Alcohol	1	.76%

Note. N=132

Table 9 shows that educationally, the sample was representative of the general population. Both education and years of experience were included as independent variables in the analytical models for this study.

Table 9

*Sample Compared to Pennsylvania Adult Probation and Parole*

Demographic Probation/Parole	Sample	PA
<b>Education</b>		
2-year college degree	1.52%	1.5%
4-year college degree	82.58%	85.3%
Master's degree	13.64%	12.7%
Doctoral degree	.76%	.1%
Professional degree (JD, MD)	1.51%	.4%
<b>Employment as a Probation Officer</b>		
Less than a year	8.33%	5.7%
1 to 5 years	27.27%	25.5%
6 to 10 years	21.97%	22.1%
11 to 15 years	18.18%	17.1%
16 to 20 years	10.61%	10.5%
More than 20 years	13.64%	19.1%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	59%	54%
Female	41%	46%

*Note.* All data obtained from the County Probation and Parole Annual Statistics Report, 2011

There were a total of three emails and one phone call for a total of four attempts to contact the Director/Chief probation officers and request permission to survey their staff. The survey was available from February 2013 to August 2013, and there was a follow-up email sent to Director/Chief probation officers that had given permission to survey their staff to encourage their POs to take the survey (Appendix C). The final survey sample obtained was 28 of the 65 or 43% of possible counties. The final sample included counties that had participated with PCADV in the creation of The Model for

## Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult

Probation and Parole Departments (Model) designed to provide POs with supervision techniques specifically focused on domestic violence offenders (PCADV, 2003). Table 10 shows the counties represented in the final sample.

Table 10

### *The Final Sample*

County of Employment	<i>N</i>	Percent
<b>Adams</b>	6	4.55
<i>Allegheny</i>	8	6.06
Armstrong	3	2.27
Blair	6	4.55
<b>Bucks</b>	8	6.06
Cambria	3	2.27
Carbon	3	2.27
Crawford	10	7.58
Dauphin	13	9.85
Elk	2	1.52
<b>Erie</b>	1	0.76
Franklin	7	5.30
Fulton	1	0.76
Huntingdon	4	3.03
Indiana	4	3.03
Juniata	2	1.52
Lehigh	5	3.79
<b>Luzerne</b>	8	6.06
Mifflin	2	1.52
<b>Northampton</b>	7	5.30
Northumberland	4	3.03
Schuylkill	4	3.03
<b>Somerset</b>	2	1.52
Sullivan	2	1.52
Union	1	0.76
Warren	2	1.52
Wayne	3	2.27
<b>Westmoreland</b>	11	8.33
Total	132	100%

*Note.* PCADV Model pilot counties are in boldface; italics indicates currently have specialized domestic violence court.

By examining the frequencies on a univariate level, in the final sample the majority of the probation officers ranged in age from 23 to 40 (n=83), possess a Bachelor's degree (n=109), and were males (n=78). An overwhelming majority of the respondents were white (95%) and employed in a rural county (74%), therefore race and county of employment were not included in the final analytical model.

## **Variables and Measures**

### **DVO Intervention Scale**

With a desire to provide probation officers with evidence-based supervision methods, PCADV developed the Model to provide probation officers with supervision strategies for the DVO. The goal of the Model is victim safety, offender accountability, and offender rehabilitation. The Model represents the ideal strategy when supervising a domestic violence offender. Faye Taxman (2002) defines supervision as “a means to engage the offender in a process of improving compliance with general societal norms including the conditions of release.”(p. 20). Because supervision is an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance, the Model includes a number of dimensions to supervision. Therefore, based upon the literature, the survey obtained information related to the intervention techniques used by POs.

To measure the underlying construct of DVO Intervention, five composite variables, Perceived Adequacy of Services, Monitoring, Fieldwork, Case Supervision, and Case Planning, provide measures of the extent that probation officers intervention techniques matched evidence-based practices as presented in the Model. The development process of DVO Intervention scale progressed through (a) factor analysis; and (b) the creation of summative variables based on patterns of factor loadings.

**Developing DVO intervention scale through factor analysis.** Supervision of the domestic violence offender is similar to the supervision of any offender. Throughout their period of probation, all probation officers consider the offender's danger to the community, compliance with the conditions of probation, need for treatment, and motivation to change (PCADV, 2003). With support from the Model on DVO supervision practices and from the theoretical literature summarized in Chapter 2, I determined the best practices of DVO Intervention to create the survey questions that are then used as the latent variables in the factor analysis.

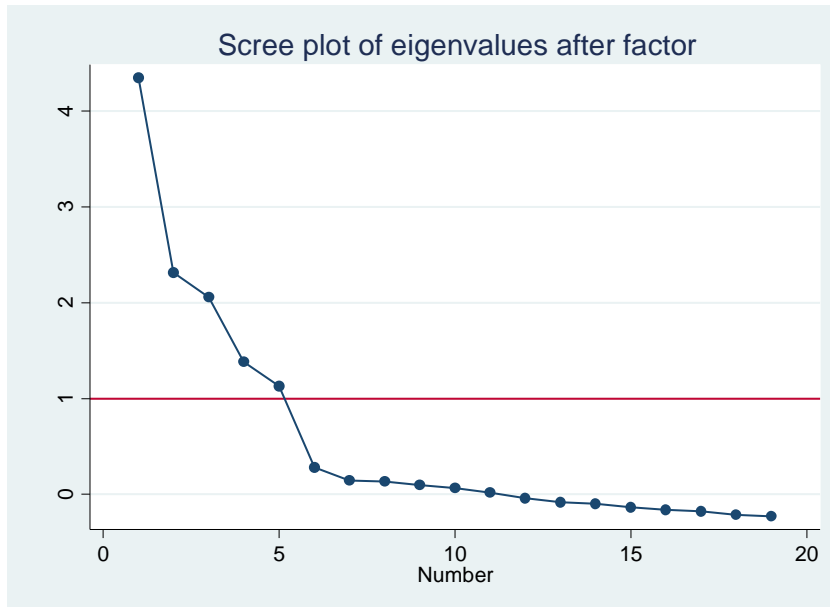
**Composite variable development.** To better understand how these variables may relate to one another, Table 11 illustrates the initial results after conducting a factor analysis.

Table 11

*Eigenvalues for DVO Intervention Survey Scale Indices (unrotated)*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	4.34830	2.03461	0.4013	0.4013
2	2.31368	0.25562	0.2135	0.6148
3	2.05806	0.67616	0.1899	0.8047
4	1.39190	0.25202	0.1275	0.9322
5	1.12988	0.84863	0.1043	1.0365

The results indicate that the five retained factors explain 100% of the variance. Figure 7 is a visual representation of factor loadings.



*Figure 7.* Scree plot following factor analysis: outcome variables.

Five of the factors have eigenvalues  $>1$ . In combination with the scree plot, this supports the retention of five factors as dimensions of DVO Intervention. Table 12 shows the factor loadings of the five retained factors after orthogonal rotation. I chose orthogonal varimax rotation because the rotated loadings promote a “more interpretable” solution (Acock, 2012, p. 345).



Table 12

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation*

Variables	Factors					Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of home visits		0.849				0.262
Number of monthly curfew checks				0.697		0.493
Number of monthly office visits		0.779				0.387
Number of monthly employment visits				0.692		0.313
Number of home confinements				0.742		0.415
Number of monthly day treatment referrals				0.619		0.476
Number of monthly drug tests		0.898				0.181
Ample county services for DVO	0.880					0.194
Appropriate treatment available for DVOs	0.797					0.322
Services in county meet offenders' needs	0.877					0.222
Access to presentence investigation					0.594	0.636
Completes assessment on defendants					0.574	0.623
Supervision based on appraised risk					0.621	0.563
Aware of Protection from Abuse papers filed					0.472	0.608
Access of offense reports					0.512	0.650
Fieldwork includes employment visits			0.635			0.333
Fieldwork includes surveillance			0.707			0.453
Fieldwork includes treatment facility visits			0.844			0.273
Fieldwork includes education facility visits			0.787			0.355
Eigenvalues	4.348	2.313	2.058	1.381	1.129	
Proportion of the Total Variation	0.228	0.225	0.221	0.210	0.150	

*Note.* n=132. Retain factors = 5. Only eigenvalues >1 displayed. Only loadings <0.4 are used in final analysis.

The generated multi-item scale reflects the underlying construct embedded in DVO supervision. I identified and generated the five composite variables as outlined and referenced below. A description of the calculations supporting the generation of these variables then follows.

**Perceived adequacy of services.** Cooperation between the criminal justice system, social services, and victim advocates has proven to be more productive than

acting separately to address the problem (Burke, 2002; Center for Court Innovation, 2006; Eley, 2005; Erez, 2002; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001). The survey was used to ask the probation officers if ample county services existed and if treatment and services in the county met offenders' needs. Table 13 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 13

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation for Perceived Adequacy of Services*

Variables	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
Uniqueness					
Ample county services for DVO	0.880				
0.194					
Appropriate treatment available for DVOs	0.797				
0.322					
Services in county meet offenders' needs	0.877				
0.222					
Eigenvalues	4.348				
Proportion of the Total Variation	0.228				

**Monitoring.** It has been widely recognized that an officer with a caseload of over 100 offenders will not be able to provide the appropriate monitoring and oversight or establish the rapport necessary to improve offender outcomes (Taxman, 2002).

Monitoring is a critical technique included in DVO intervention and in order to assess the level of monitoring POs were asked about the number of home visits, office visits, and drug test they conduct on a monthly basis. On the next page Table 14 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 14

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation for Monitoring*

Variables	Factors					Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of home visits		0.849				0.262
Number of monthly office visits		0.779				0.387
Number of monthly drug tests		0.898				0.181
Eigenvalues		2.313				
Proportion of the Total Variation		0.225				

**Fieldwork:** Field contact, while the most time consuming is considered to be the most valuable type of contact (Alarid & del Carmen). Fieldwork allows quality of the contact, focused on the purpose of supervision and the development of a rapport between officer and offender instead of a simple exchange of information are going to make supervision more successful (Abadinsky, 2009; Andrews, et al, 1990; Bouge, Diebel, & O'Connor, 2008; Bracken, 2003; Fernandez-Lanier, Chard-Wierschem, & Hall, 2003; Johnson, 2001; Petersilia & Turner, 1991; Seiter & West, 2003; Taxman, 2002). Because the PO has options on where to make contact with the offender fieldwork explores if the PO conducts employment visits, surveillance, treatment facility visits and education facility visits. Table 15 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 15

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation for Fieldwork*

Variables	Factors					Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	5	
Fieldwork includes employment visits			0.635			0.333
Fieldwork includes surveillance			0.707			0.453
Fieldwork includes treatment facility visits			0.844			0.273
Fieldwork includes education facility visits			0.787			0.355
Eigenvalues			2.058			
Proportion of the Total Variation			0.221			

**Case Supervision.** Supervision involves the oversight that a probation officer exercises over the defendants assigned to their caseload (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Different than fieldwork, this part of the survey specifically asks the number of curfew checks, employment visits, home confinements, and day treatment referrals that occur on a monthly basis. Table 16 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 16

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation for Case Supervision*

Variables	Factors					Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of monthly curfew checks				0.697		0.493
Number of monthly employment visits				0.692		0.313
Number of home confinements				0.742		0.415
Number of monthly day treatment referrals				0.619		0.476
Eigenvalues				1.381		
Proportion of the Total Variation				0.210		

**Case Planning.** Since one size does not fit all, individual treatment plans may include on-going individual and/or group therapy (Dutton & Starzomski, 1994). Case planning entails having the information needed to supervise a particular offender. Questions regarding case planning included the POs access to presentence investigation reports, Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders, and access to offense reports. Risk assessment becomes critical for identifying the DVOs psychological profile and developing a treatment plan. Therefore, the survey questions ask if the PO has access to the presentence investigation, completes an assessment on the offenders and if their supervision of the DVO is based on appraised risk. Table 17 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 17

*Factor Loadings after Orthogonal Rotation for Case Planning*

Variables	Factors					Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	5	
Access to presentence investigation					0.594	0.636
Completes assessment on defendants					0.574	0.623
Supervision based on appraised risk					0.621	0.563
Aware of Protection from Abuse papers filed					0.472	0.608
Access of offense reports					0.512	0.650
Eigenvalue					1.129	
Proportion of the Total Variation					0.150	

Uniqueness is the variance that is unique to the variable and not shared with the retained factors (Hamilton, 1992). Uniqueness is equal to 1 – communality (Acock, 2012). The five questions that show factor loadings on the composite variable *Case Planning* had high uniqueness values ranging from 0.563 to 0.650. These variables, however, were

included because they make theoretical sense and logically fit together to describe case planning.

**Cronbach's alpha.** To test the internal consistency or reliability of each factor, I computed Cronbach's Alpha coefficients as reported in Table 18.

Table 18

*Cronbach's Alpha: DVO Intervention Variables*

Item	Result
<b>Factor 1: Perceived Adequacy of Services</b>	
Number of items in the scale:	3
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.8958
<b>Factor 2: Monitoring</b>	
Number of items in the scale:	3
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.8795
<b>Factor 3: Fieldwork</b>	
Number of items in the scale:	4
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.8292
<b>Factor 4: Case Supervision</b>	
Number of items in the scale:	4
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.8111
<b>Factor 5: Case Planning</b>	
Number of items in the scale:	5
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.7123

*Note.* Test scale = mean (unstandardized items)

Alpha reliability coefficients of .89, .88, .83, .81, and .71 indicate consistency of the subparts for each factor. I was now able to construct individual multi-item scales in addition to the total DVO Intervention multi-item scale, which consisted of summing all Likert items from the DVO intervention scale thereby generating a broad-spectrum composite measure. The alpha reliability coefficient for this one overriding index representing DVO Intervention is .8067, which indicates an adequate level of internal consistency (Carmin & Zeller, 1979).

## **Independent variables**

There are a number of independent variables that include the actions and activity of the probation officer that have an influence on the dependent variables. The individual factors that probation officers were asked and included as independent variables are gender, years as a probation officer, caseload responsibility, and the POs level of education. Because 126 of the 132 probation officers in the final sample were white, race was not included as a predictor. Consistent with evidence-based practice literature, as well as current practice, years as a probation officer and level of education were important to the analysis versus the age of the PO.

County of employment was available as an identifier. However, because the unit of analysis was the probation officer, and because a multi-level model that included a random component was not significantly better than a fixed model, this identifier was not included in the final linear regression model. The following independent variables are defined for this study:

**Male.** Each individual respondent is coded as male or female. For clarity, this variable is specifically labeled Male with the final sample being 59% male and 41% female.

**Probation reduces recidivism.** Designed to evaluate the philosophical orientation of the PO, this refers to whether the probation officer believes that probation reduces recidivism. This is a categorical variable based on a Likert scale with 5 indicating that the survey respondent strongly agreed that probation reduces recidivism and 1 indicating that they strongly disagreed that probation reduces recidivism.

**PO has an advanced degree.** Each respondent was asked their level of education. The categorical responses were then made into a dichotomous variable identifying

advanced degree or not advanced degree. Table 19 is the percentage breakdown for each educational level. Based upon these percentages, 15.91% of the respondents possess an advanced degree and 84.09% do not.

Table 19

*Education Level of PO*

Education Level	% of Respondents
2-year college degree	1.51%
4-year college degree	82.58%
Master's degree	13.64%
Doctoral degree	.76%
Professional degree (JD, MD)	1.51%

**Supervise a general caseload.** Although all of the respondents currently supervise DVOs, 98 supervised a general caseload, 6 supervised offenders on the electronic monitor, 13 supervised a high impact caseload, 7 supervised sex offenders and 1 had the primary responsibility of supervising a drug and alcohol caseload. Based upon these numbers 74.24% of the respondents supervise a general caseload and 25.76% supervise a specialized caseload. I then generated a dichotomous variable to represent this distribution.

**>10 years' experience.** The respondents were asked how long they have been employed as probation officers. The responses fell into six possible categories. In the final sample 57.57% of the POs have less than 10 years' experience and 42.43% have more than 10 years' experience. I generated a dichotomous variable to reflect this distribution.

**Agency support.** This variable refers to the perceptions of the survey respondent regarding the level of support they receive from their agency. In the final sample 81% of



the respondents noted their agencies as supportive. I then generated a dichotomous variable to represent this divide.

**Importance of probation services.** POs identified the importance of providing probation services to the DVOs they supervised. Probation services is multifaceted and therefore the respondents were asked the importance of public safety, rehabilitation, compliance, monitoring, accountability, reintegration, training, and education. To better understand how these variables relate to one another I conducted an exploratory factor analysis. On the next page Table 20 illustrates the results of this factor analysis, which indicates simplifying these responses into one composite variable.

Table 20

*Eigenvalues for Importance of Services Scale Indices (unrotated)*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	4.86898	4.31713	0.9507	0.9507
2	0.55185	0.47314	0.1078	1.0585
3	0.07871	0.09572	0.0154	1.0738
4	-0.01702	0.01673	-0.0033	1.0705
5	-0.03375	0.05427	-0.0066	1.0639
6	-0.08803	0.01324	-0.0172	1.0467
7	-0.10127	0.03678	-0.0198	1.0270
8	-0.13805	.	-0.0270	1.0000

Results indicate that over 95% of the variance is explained by the one retained factor.

Figure 8 shows the factor loadings in a scree plot and visually provides strong evidence for a single factor solution.

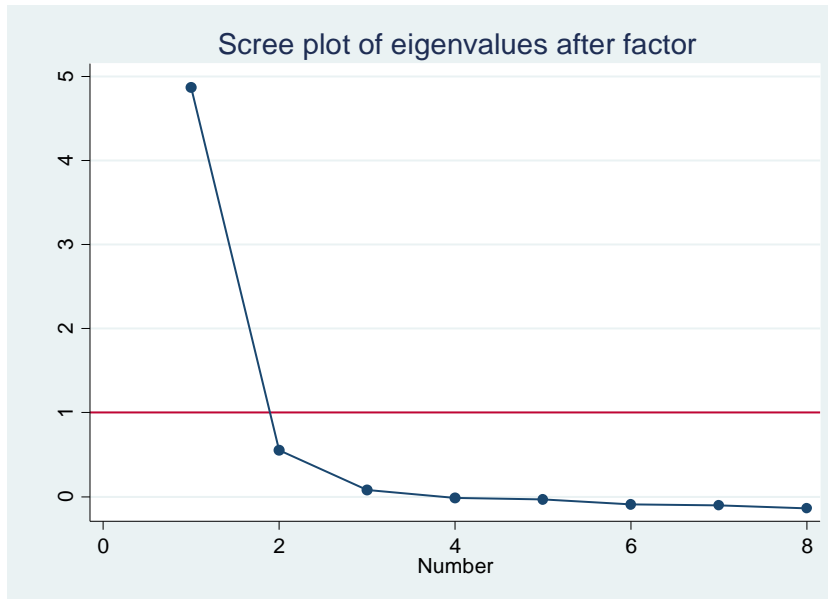


Figure 8. Scree plot following factor analysis: importance of services.

To test the internal consistency or reliability of the scale I computed Cronbach's Alpha as reflected in Table 21. Cronbach's Alpha for Importance of Services is .9207, which is an adequate level of internal consistency (Carmin & Zeller, 1979). I therefore generated a single composite variable by summing the 1 to 5 Likert scale responses for each variable.

Table 21

*Cronbach's Alpha: Importance of Services*

Item	Result
Importance of Probation Services	
Number of items in the scale:	8
Alpha reliability coefficient:	0.9207

**Training: Evidence-based practices.** Evidence-based practices (EBP) within the criminal justice system involve using supervision strategies based on scientific evidence of success (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). Respondents to this study indicated that 68%

had received evidence-based training and 32% did not. This formed the basis for generating this dichotomous variable.

**Training: Motivational Interviewing.** POs use motivational interviewing as a way to handle resistance and to make interactions between the PO and offender more change-focused thereby placing the responsibility for behavior on the offender (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006). Respondents to this study indicated that 70% had received training focused on motivational interviewing techniques, which formed the basis for generating this dichotomous variable.

**Training: DVO supervision.** A review of the literature suggests that an understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence promotes an effective response and supports the use of the Model as the guide for DVO supervision. Respondents to this study indicated that 34% had received training specifically on how to supervise DVOs.

On the following page Table 22 provides a summary of the name, coding and measure for each of the independent variables used in the regression analyses.

Table 22

*Summary of Independent Variables*

Variable Name	Coding	Measure
Male	0=Female; 1=Male	Gender
Probation Reduces Recidivism	2= <i>Disagree</i> ; 3=Neither agree or disagree; 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree	Philosophical Orientation
PO has Advance Education	0=Bachelor's degree; 1=Masters, PhD, JD	Level of Education
Supervise a General Caseload	0=Specialty caseload; 1=General Caseload	Types of offenders PO supervises
>10 years' experience	0= >10 years; 1=< 10 years	Years as a PO
Agency Support	0=No; 1=Yes	Does the PO feel that the agency is supportive?
Importance of Services	Continuous variable ranging from 8 to 40	The importance of providing services to the DVO
Training: Evidence-based Practices	0=No; 1=Yes	Has the PO received evidence-based practices training?
Training: Motivational Interviewing	0=No; 1=Yes	Has the PO received motivational interviewing training?
Training: DVO Supervision	0=No; 1=Yes	Has the PO received training specific to DVO supervision?

*Note.* Probation reduces recidivism is in italics with 1= strongly disagree and 2= disagree were combined due to low cell counts.

### Data Analysis

#### Multiple Regression

I used multiple regression to test the effects of the predictor variables on the outcome variable. There was a need to address two major issues prior to running the

regressions. As noted earlier, the independent variable probation reduces recidivism was initially a variable based on a 1-5 Likert scale. As an ordinal categorical predictor variable with minimal low-end responses, probation reduces recidivism was recoded into an ordinal variable with four levels by merging the two lowest items due to only two respondents indicating the lowest score. The second issue pertains to the county of employment. Due to the clustering potential by county, I tested a multi-level mixed effects model to determine if it was more appropriate than a fixed Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression. At the .05 level, the multi-level mixed effects model was no better than the OLS regression model and therefore I used OLS regression.

**Multicollinearity.** Prior to running the regression models I checked for multicollinearity. A variance inflation factor (VIF) assesses the extent to which multicollinearity exists. Chatterjee, Hadi, and Price (2000) argue that when the largest VIF is greater than 10 or the mean VIF is greater than one, multicollinearity may be of concern. In this model, there are no single VIFs greater than 10. However, the mean is a little over 1 at 1.25. Tolerance scores, otherwise known as  $1/VIF$ , are excellent with values over .70, suggesting a reasonable degree of independent variation (Hamilton, 2006). On the next page Table 23 shows the variance and inflation factor tolerance for DVO intervention.

Table 23

*Variance and Inflation Factor Tolerance for DVO Intervention*

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Male	1.11	0.90
Probation Reduces Recidivism	1.40	0.71
PO has Advance Education	1.19	0.84
Supervise General Caseload	1.15	0.87
Years as a PO	1.14	0.88
Agency Support	1.15	0.87
Importance of Services	1.24	0.81
Training: Evidence-based Practice	1.32	0.76
Training: Motivational Interviewing	1.40	0.71
Training: DVO Supervision	1.37	0.73
Mean VIF	1.25	

**Regression Analysis on DVO Intervention**

Using multiple regression analysis to investigate the study's research hypothesis helps arrive at an analytical model that best portrays the current state of probation practice. On the next page Table 24 shows the initial multiple regression output of the DVO Intervention scale regressed on ten independent variables.

Table 24

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis Summary for Variables Predicting DVO Intervention*

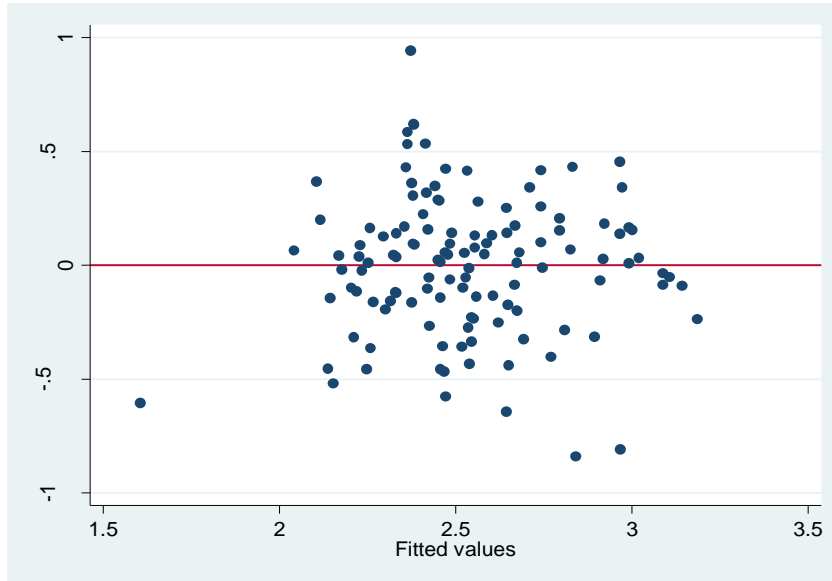
Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	1.52	.25	5.84	0.000	[1.00, 2.03]
Male	.23	.06	3.76	0.000***	[0.11, 0.35]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	.11	.14	0.79	0.433	[-0.02, 0.37]
4	.19	.01	1.52	0.131	[-0.06, 0.45]
5	.39	.01	2.50	0.014*	[0.08, 0.70]
PO has Advance Education	-.06	.08	-0.69	0.491	[-0.23, 0.11]
Supervise General Caseload	-.13	.07	-1.90	0.060	[-0.2, 0.00]
> 10 years' experience	-.00	.06	-0.10	0.921	[-0.13, 0.12]
Agency Support	.09	.06	1.51	0.133	[-0.03, 0.22]
Importance of Services	.01	.00	2.82	0.006**	[0.00, 0.03]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.05	.07	0.71	0.476	[-0.09, 0.19]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.01	.07	-0.19	0.846	[-0.16, 0.13]
Training: DVO Supervision	.19	.07	2.60	0.011*	[0.05, 0.34]
R-squared	.44				
Adjusted R-squared	.38				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.32				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI=confidence interval for B

In exploratory research a  $R^2$  less than 0.1 is considered weak, between 0.1 to 0.2 are moderate, and an  $R^2$  greater than 0.3 is strong (Acock, 2012). In this regression model, the ten included variables together explain about 44% of the variation in DVO intervention and an adjusted  $R^2$  value of .38 which takes into account the complexity of the model, also indicates a relatively strong relationship and that POs are using the Model when supervising their DVOs. This model also indicates that there is a relationship between the gender of a PO, their belief that probation reduces recidivism, the importance of services, training specific to DVO supervision and DVO intervention. I

will address these relationships in more detail subsequent to the OLS model being assessed.

**Regression Criticism.** To further assess the OLS model, Figure 9 shows the graph of the residuals-versus-fitted values results.



*Figure 9.* Residuals-versus-fitted values plot

The scatter in Figure 9 reveals a slight heteroskedastic pattern and possible outliers. I conducted further analysis of what might be influencing the regression line using partial regression leverage plots. One coefficient indicated potential leveraging. Figure 10 shows the added variable plot for importance of services.



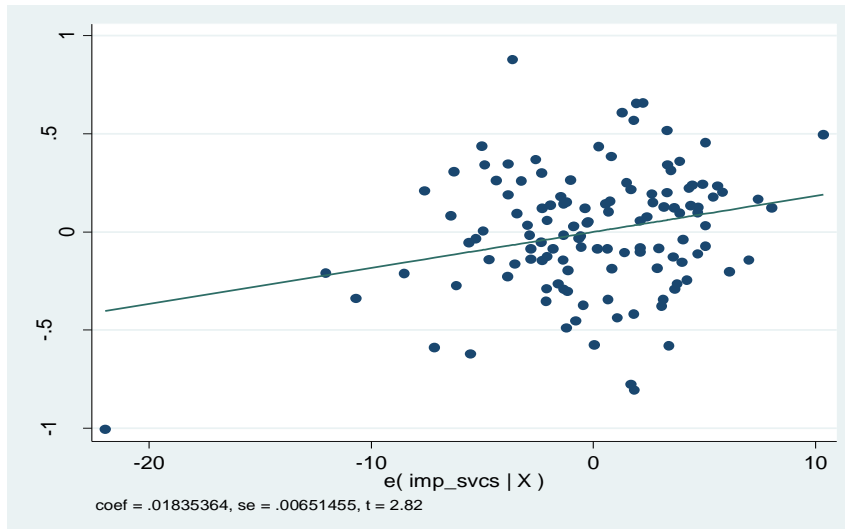


Figure 10. Added variable plot: importance of services

To further analyze influence on the model as a whole, leverage versus squared residual plot depicts each case with a researcher derived case number and Figure 11 shows the results.

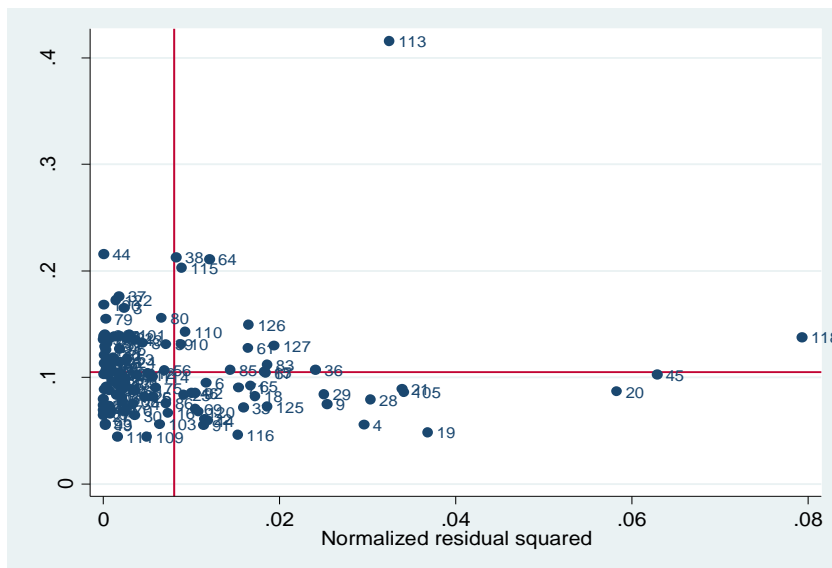
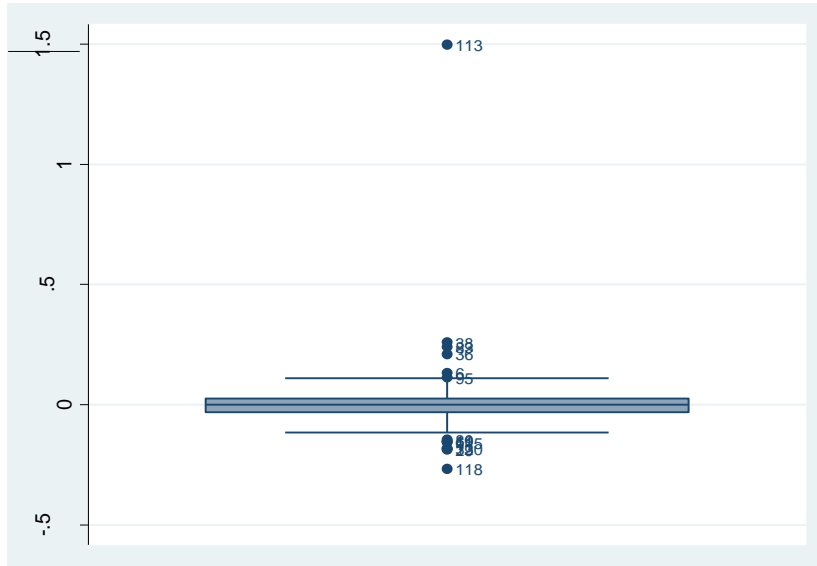


Figure 11. Leverage-versus-squared residuals plot.

Respondent 113 is the outlier. A review of the original data notes that respondent 113 answered all of the Likert questions with the extreme of either a 1 (strongly disagree) or a 5 (strongly agree) depending on the question. This suggests that an invalid response

set exists for this respondent as the responses were unusually polarized compared to the other responders.

DFBETAs measure the influence of respondent 113 on the coefficient. Figure 12 on the following page shows the box plot for the DFBETAs.



*Figure 12.* Box plot of DFBETA

The box plot of the DFBETAs shows that the outlier is exerting leverage on the coefficient. To explore the effects of respondent 113, Table 25 shows the results of this OLS regression with the case removed.

Table 25

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis Summary for Variables Predicting DVO Intervention (case 113 removed)*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	2.02	.32	6.29	0.000	[1.38, 2.65]
Male	.20	.06	3.31	0.001***	[0.08, 0.32]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	.00	.14	0.06	0.956	[-0.26, 0.28]
4	.11	.13	0.85	0.395	[-0.15, 0.37]
5	.34	.15	2.18	0.031*	[0.03, 0.64]
PO has Advance Education	-.05	.08	-0.64	0.524	[-0.22, 0.11]
Supervise General Caseload	-.16	.06	-2.43	0.017**	[-0.31, -0.03]
> 10 years' experience	-.02	.06	-0.38	0.706	[-0.15, 0.10]
Agency Support	.10	.06	1.52	0.132	[-0.03, 0.22]
Importance of Services	.00	.00	1.20	0.234	[-0.00, 0.02]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.03	.07	0.47	0.642	[-0.10, 0.17]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.04	.07	-0.51	0.610	[-0.18, 0.11]
Training: DVO Supervision	.19	.07	2.68	0.009**	[0.05, 0.34]
R-squared	.40				
Adjusted R-squared	.33				
Prob > F	.00				
No. Observations	124				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI=confidence interval for B

Upon review of the findings listed in Table 25, the removal of the influential respondent resulted in changes to the coefficient values and reduced the coefficient of determination. It should also be noted that the relationship between importance of services and DVO intervention is no longer significant; however there is now a relationship between male, probation reduces recidivism, supervision of a general caseload, training specific to DVO supervision and DVO intervention. To further assess the OLS model, residuals-versus-fitted values in Figure13 shows the graph of these results. Also a leverage-versus-squared-residual plot in Figure14 shows fit in terms of squared residuals and leveraging of these regression results.

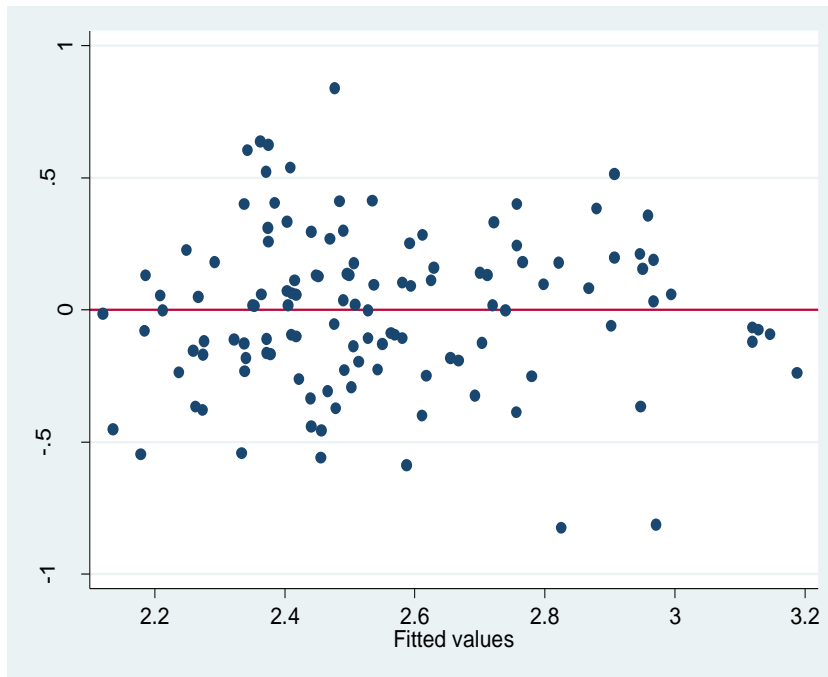


Figure 13. Residuals-versus-predicted values plot.

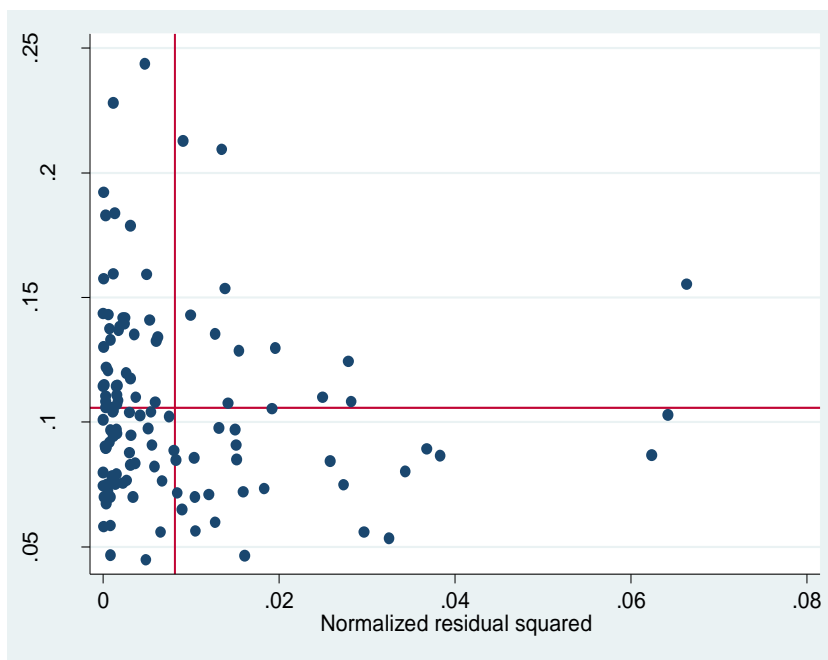


Figure 14. Leverage-versus-squared residuals plot.

Figure 13 appears to have some distortion of the normal independent identically distributed (i.i.d.) error assumption, but as seen in Figure 14, a significant reduction in the severely influential case (i.e., case 113) resulted. I choose to exclude case 113 because

the responses were extreme compared to the rest of the sample and therefore not representative.

Robust standard errors give accurate assessments of the sample-to-sample variability of the parameter estimates even when the model is misspecified (Hamilton, 2006). Because of the error assumption being slightly violated, regression using the Huber/White sandwich estimator. Table 26 shows the results of this regression.

Table 26

*Regression Using Sandwich Estimator for Variables Predicting DVO Intervention*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	2.01	.28	7.20	0.000	[1.46, 2.57]
Male	.20	.06	2.96	0.004**	[0.06, 0.33]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	.00	.11	0.06	0.949	[-0.22, 0.24]
4	.11	.10	1.08	0.281	[-0.09, 0.31]
5	.33	.13	2.56	0.012*	[0.07, 0.59]
PO has Advance Education	-.05	.07	-2.64	0.470	[-0.20, 0.09]
Supervise General Caseload	-.16	.06	-0.38	0.009**	[-0.29, 0.04]
> 10 years' experience	-.02	.06	-0.10	0.702	[-0.14, 0.09]
Agency Support	.09	.06	1.42	0.158	[-0.03, 0.23]
Importance of Services	.00	.00	1.27	0.206	[0.00, 0.02]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.03	.06	0.51	0.615	[-0.09, 0.15]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.03	.07	-0.52	0.607	[-0.18, 0.00]
Training: DVO Supervision	.19	.06	3.01	0.003**	[0.06, 0.32]
R-squared	.40				
Prob > F	.00				
Root MSE	.31				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI=confidence interval for B

The use of the robust sandwich estimator did not change the significance of any variable and 40% of the variance in DVO intervention remains explained by the predictor variables contained within the model. This reinforces that while the POs indicate unawareness of the Model, they nonetheless employ the supervision methods that the Model suggests.

All things being equal, the regression output for this model shows that male, a belief that probation reduces recidivism, supervision of a specialized caseload, and training specific to DVO significantly relate to DVO supervision practices.

To further look into the relationship between POs that do and do not believe that probation reduces recidivism, I calculated predicted margins and analyzed them using Fisher's protected Least Significant Difference method. Fisher's protected Least Significant Difference verifies that the joint test for probation reduces recidivism, a categorical ordinal variable, is significant before proceeding with pairwise comparisons. Table 27 shows the results of the contrasts of marginal linear predictions for the joint effect.

Table 27

*Test of Joint Effects of Probation Reduces Recidivism*

	df	F	P>F
Probation Reduces Recidivism	3	3.49	0.0181
Denominator	110		

This effect is significant indicating that the independent variable probation reduces recidivism has a relationship with the dependent variable DVO intervention. The predicted margin in Table 28 contrasts the differences between the means of the probation reduces recidivism groups controlling for the other variables. Table 28 shows that significant differences exist between POs who strongly agree and those that do not agree that probation and DVO intervention reduces recidivism. Figure15 helps illustrate this, by highlighting the predicted margins for each level of the variable.

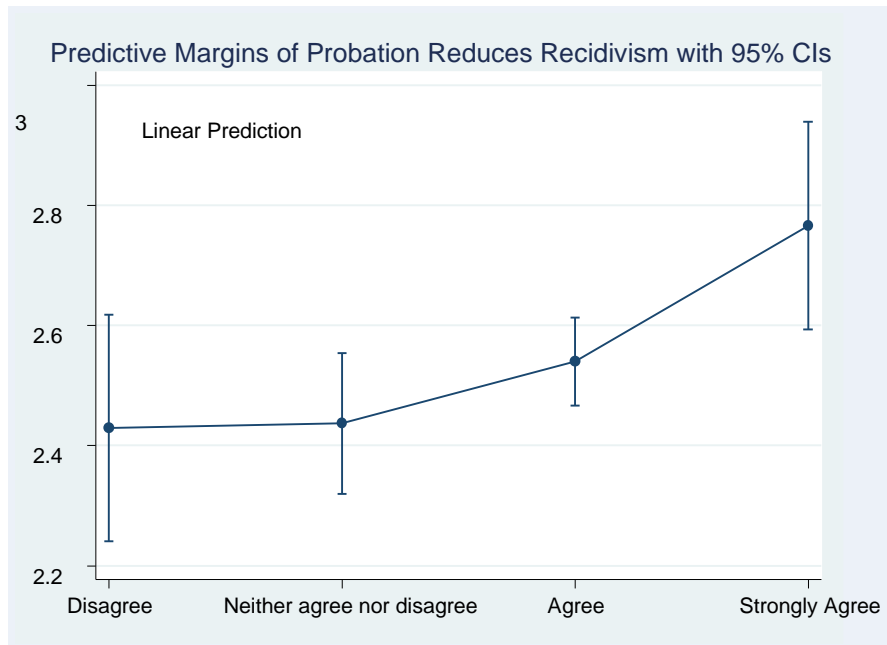


Figure 15. Predicted margins for response categories of probation reduces recidivism and DVO intervention with 95% confidence intervals.

Table 28

*Pairwise Comparisons of Predictive Margins of Probation Reduces Recidivism*

	Contrast	Delta-Method Std. Err.	Unadjusted z	Unadjusted P> z	Unadjusted 95% CI
3 vs 2	.0076	.1175	0.06	0.949	[-0.22, 0.24]
4 vs 2	.1111	.1026	1.08	0.281	[-0.09, 0.31]
5 vs 2	.3372	.1317	2.56	0.012*	[0.08, 0.60]
4 vs 3	.1035	.0737	1.40	0.163	[-0.04, 0.25]
5 vs 3	.3296	.1090	3.02	0.003**	[0.11, 0.54]
5 vs 4	.2260	.0009	2.37	0.019*	[0.04, 0.41]

Note. Model VCE: OLS Note. \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. CI = confidence interval.

The predicted margins support that the more a PO believes that recidivism is reduced via probation the higher they rate DVO intervention and therefore the use of the Model.

**Regression analysis summary.** The DVO intervention scale was regressed against ten predictor variables. In this analytical model, the predictor variable supervises

a general caseload has a negative coefficient of -.16 and is significant at the .01 level indicating that for those POs with a specialized caseload rate DVO intervention was higher than for POs with a general caseload. This is consistent with the professional literature that reflects the development of specialized caseloads and the need for treatment strategies and techniques.

Probation officers develop expertise to address the needs of this population through experience and training (Burrell, 2004). It appears that if the PO receives training specific to DVO supervision they are more likely to use DVO intervention than those who do not receive training specific to DVO supervision. These findings support the hypothesis that as the availability of training varies, Model use also varies.

Overall it appears that POs, who strongly agree that probation reduces recidivism, are male, supervise a specialized caseload, and receive specific training on how to supervise DVOs; are also more likely to use DVO intervention techniques as outlined in the Model.

Because supervision is an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance, the DVO Intervention Scale includes a number of dimensions to supervision. Multiple regression is used to examine the potential impact of the predictor variables on each of the factored dependent variables. Based upon the previous regression model criticism for DVO intervention, the following regressions on the outcome variables will not include respondent 113.

### **Regression Analysis on Perceived Adequacy of Services**

Three survey questions posed to probation officers specifically addresses if ample county services that provide appropriate treatment and services to meet offenders' needs existed. On the next page Table 29 shows the results of the regression.



Table 29

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Perceived Adequacy of Services Outcome*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	1.28	.94	1.36	0.175	[-0.58, 3.15]
Male	.46	.01	2.57	0.011*	[0.10, 0.00]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	.86	.40	2.10	0.038*	[0.05, 1.67]
4	.94	.38	2.43	0.017*	[0.17, 1.71]
5	1.21	.45	2.68	0.008**	[0.32, 2.11]
PO has Advance Education	-.23	.25	-0.93	0.356	[-0.73, 0.27]
Supervise General Caseload	.06	.20	0.30	0.764	[-0.34, 0.04]
> 10 years' experience	.08	.18	0.45	0.654	[-0.28, 0.44]
Agency Support	.32	.18	1.79	0.076	[-0.03, 0.05]
Importance of Services	.00	.02	0.39	0.698	[-0.03, 0.05]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	-.16	.20	-0.79	0.434	[-0.56, 0.24]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	.31	.00	1.45	0.150	[-0.11, 0.73]
Training: DVO Supervision	.14	.00	0.67	0.506	[-0.28, 0.05]
R-squared	.22				
Adjusted R-squared	.14				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.93				
No. Observations	131				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI = confidence interval for B

In this regression, all things being equal, it appears that male and probation reduces recidivism have significant relationships to perceived adequacy of services. To assess the OLS model, residuals-versus-fitted values were examined. Figure 16 shows the graph of these results. The residuals for the model indicated that the assumption of normal i.i.d. errors was not met. To address this matter, robust standard errors were used. Additionally a leverage-versus-squared-residual plot was examined. Figure 16 shows the graph of these results and indicates that influential leveraging does not exist.

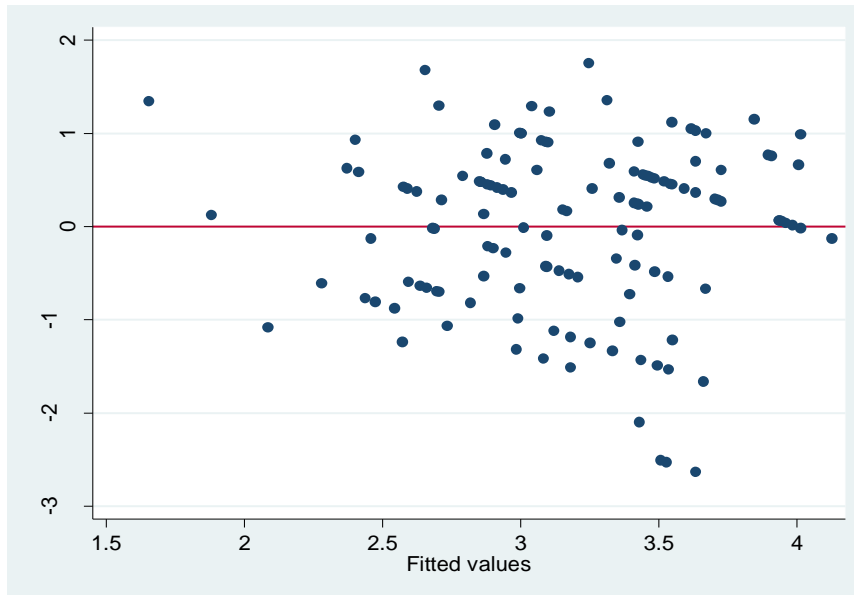


Figure 16. Residuals-versus-predicted values plot: Perceived adequacy of services

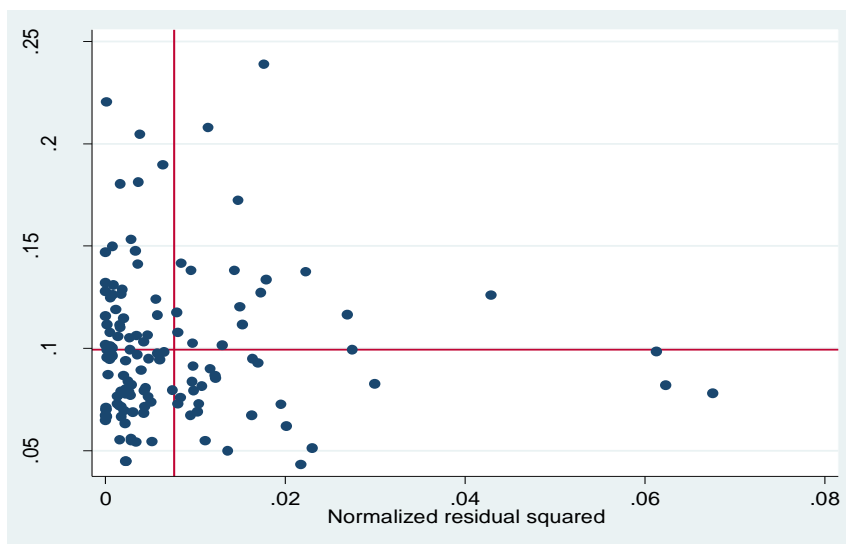


Figure 17. Leverage versus squared residuals plot: Perceived adequacy of services

The Huber-White-sandwich estimator was applied to the regression model to help address heteroskedasticity (Hamilton, 2006). The following table displays the results.

Table 30

*Regression Using Sandwich Estimator for Variables Predicting Perceived Adequacy of Services Outcome*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	1.28	.86	1.48	0.142	[-0.43,3.00]
Male	.45	.19	2.35	0.020*	[0.07, 0.84]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	.86	.40	2.16	0.032*	[0.08,1.64]
4	.94	.37	2.51	0.013*	[0.20,1.68]
5	1.21	.43	2.85	0.005**	[ 0.37,2.06]
PO has Advance Education	-.23	.26	-0.91	0.362	[-0.74,0.27]
Supervise General Caseload	-.06	.21	0.30	0.767	[-0.34,0.47]
> 10 years' experience	-.08	.19	0.43	0.667	[-0.29,0.46]
Agency Support	.32	.17	1.89	0.061	[-0.02,0.65]
Importance of Services	.00	.02	0.45	0.653	[-0.03,0.04]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	-.16	.19	-0.85	0.400	[-0.54,0.21]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	.31	.22	1.40	0.163	[-0.13,0.74]
Training: DVO Supervision	.14	.00	0.64	0.526	[-0.29,0.58]
R-squared	.22				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.93				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI = confidence interval for B

In this regression model, the ten included variables explain about 22% of the variation in perceived adequate services with an estimated adjusted  $R^2$  value (taken from the previous regression without robust standard errors) of .14 indicating a moderate relationship that POs perceive that there are services available to meet the offenders' needs. This regression model also indicates that, all things being equal, there appears to exist a relationship between the gender of the PO and perceived adequacy of services and the POs belief that probation reduces recidivism and perceive adequacy of services.

To investigate the relationship between how POs believe probation reduces recidivism and perceived adequacy of services I used Fisher's protected Least Significant Difference method, which verifies that the joint test for probation reduces recidivism is

significant before proceeding with pairwise comparisons. Table 31 shows results relating to the test of the joint effect.

Table 31

*Test of Joint Effects of Probation Reduces Recidivism*

	df	F	P>F
Probation Reduces Recidivism	3	2.82	0.0420
Denominator	118		

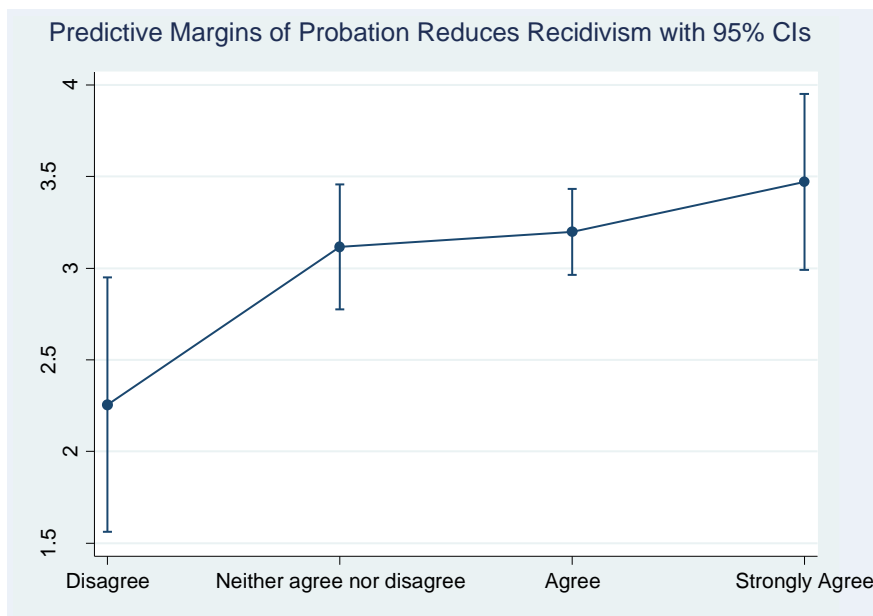
Table 31 shows that the joint effect of probation reduces recidivism is significant which indicates that this variable has an influence on our dependent variable perceived adequacy of services. Table 32 shows that POs who disagree that probation reduces recidivism (2=disagree) have demonstrated significantly lower perception of adequate services than POs who indicated any of the other belief categories (3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). Figure 18 helps illustrate this, using the pairwise comparison of predicted margins.

Table 32

*Pairwise Comparisons of Predicted Margins of Probation Reduces Recidivism*

	Contrast	Delta-Method Std. Err.	Unadjusted z	Unadjusted P> z	Unadjusted 95% CI
3 vs 2	.8605	.3960	2.17	0.032*	[0.08, 1.64]
4 vs 2	.9428	.3750	2.51	0.013*	[0.20, 1.68]
5 vs 2	1.2154	.4272	2.85	0.005*	[0.37, 2.06]
4 vs 3	.0823	.2111	0.39	0.697	[-0.33, 0.50]
5 vs 3	.0035	.3211	1.11	0.271	[-0.28, 0.99]
5 vs 4	.2728	.2876	0.95	0.345	[-0.29, 0.84]

*Note.* Model VCE: OLS *Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p<.05$ ,  $p<.01$ , and  $p<.001$  level, respectively. 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.



*Figure 18.* Predicted margins for response categories of probation reduces recidivism and perceived adequacy of services with 95% confidence intervals.

The predictive margins support that if the PO believes that probation reduces recidivism they are also more likely to perceive that adequate services are available for DVOs. In this regression model, all things being equal, gender also remains significant such that male POs and POs who strongly agree that probation reduces recidivism also perceive that adequate services are available for DVOs.

**Perceived adequacy of services analysis summary.** When the Court releases DVOs to probation for supervision, the judge usually imposes the special condition of treatment. Research reveals that supervision providing treatment and not just control has considerably greater rates of success (Abadinsky, 2009). This outcome suggest that male POs that believe probation reduces recidivism also perceive that the resources necessary to address the needs of the offenders on their caseloads are adequate.

### **Regression Analysis on Monitoring**

Another dimension of DVO intervention is monitoring. Questions regarding how POs monitor their DVOs focused on the specific number of home visits, office visits, and

drug test they conducted on a monthly basis. The OLS regression results indicated that one of the independent variables, supervise general caseload appears to be significant. To further assess the OLS model, I examined the residuals-versus-fitted values. This examination indicated that the assumption of normal i.i.d. errors was not met. To address this matter, robust standard errors were used. The  $F(12, 117)$  was 0.86 and the associated P value was .5887 therefore no relationship between these ten variables and monitoring existed.

### **Regression Analysis on Fieldwork**

In order to assess fieldwork, survey questions focus on the number of times POs conduct surveillance, employment, treatment facility, and education visits with their DVOs. The OLS regression results indicated that none of the variables was significant. The  $F(12, 111)$  was 1.27 and the associated P value was .2458 therefore no relationship was observed between the ten independent variables and fieldwork.

### **Regression Analysis on Case Supervision**

The outcome variable case supervision is an attempt to determine the oversight that a probation officer exercises over the defendants assigned to their caseload (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). These questions specifically investigate the number of curfew checks, employment visits, home confinements, and day treatment referrals that occur on a monthly basis. Table 33 displays the results.

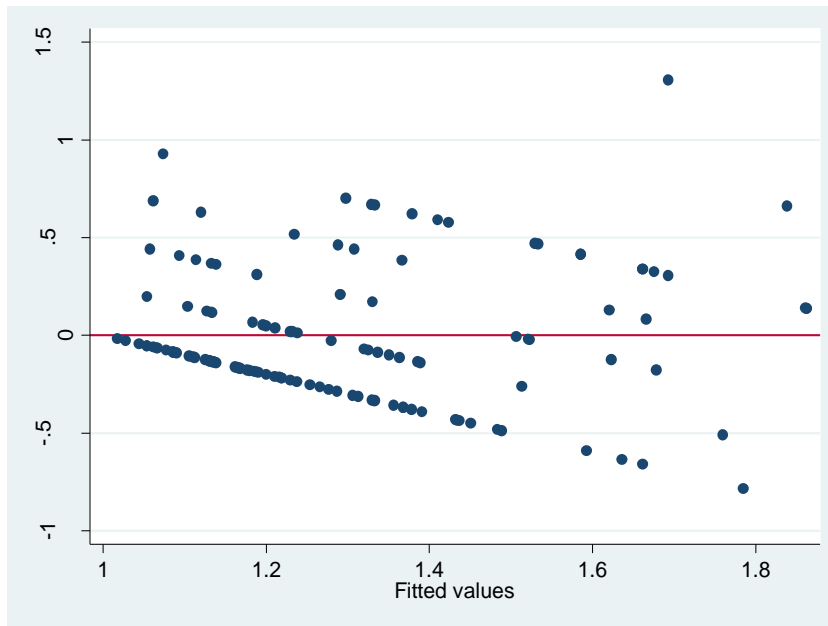
Table 33

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Case Supervision Outcome*

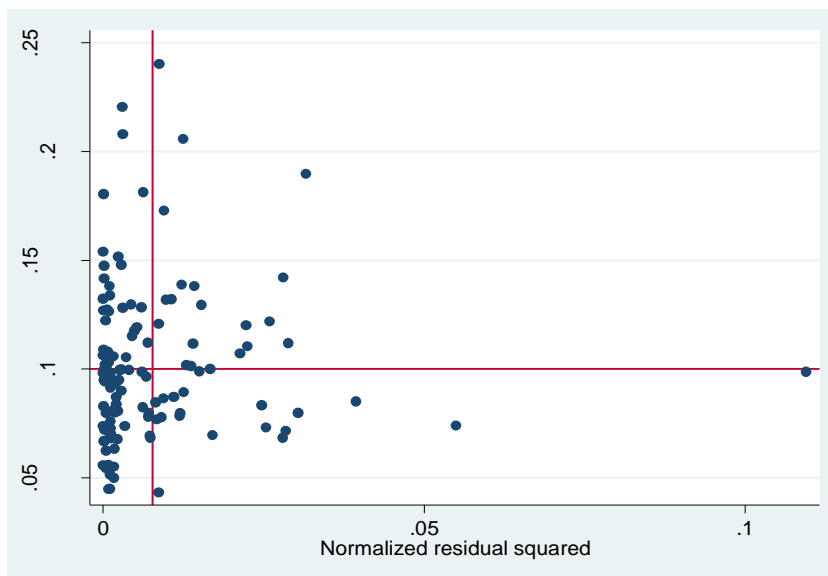
Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	1.37	.37	3.70	0.000	[0.64, 2.10]
Male	.07	.07	1.08	0.281	[-0.06, 0.21]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	-.09	.16	-0.56	0.573	[-0.41, 0.22]
4	-.04	.15	-0.29	0.771	[-0.34, 0.26]
5	.14	.18	0.78	0.436	[-0.21, 0.00]
PO has Advance Education	-.01	.10	-0.14	0.891	[-0.21, 0.18]
Supervise General Caseload	-.20	.08	-2.50	0.014*	[-0.36, -0.04]
> 10 years' experience	.10	.07	1.40	0.163	[-0.04, 0.24]
Agency Support	-.03	.07	-0.48	0.630	[-0.17, 0.10]
Importance of Services	-.00	.00	-0.05	0.959	[-0.02, 0.02]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.03	.08	0.33	0.745	[-0.13, 0.00]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.05	.08	-0.55	0.582	[-0.21, 0.12]
Training: DVO Supervision	.24	.08	2.93	0.004**	[0.08, 0.41]
R-squared	.28				
Adjusted R-squared	.20				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.36				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI = confidence interval for B

Relationships appear to exist between supervision of a general caseload and the level of case supervision and between training specific to DVO supervision and case supervision. Additionally, 28% of the variance in case supervision is explained by the independent variables contained within the analytical model. To assess the OLS model, I examined residuals-versus-fitted values. Figure 19 shows the graph of these results. The residuals for the model indicated that the assumption of normal i.i.d. errors was not met. To address this matter, I ran a regression with robust standard errors. Additionally, I examined a leverage-versus-squared-residual plot. Figure 20 shows the graph of these results and indicates that influential leveraging does not exist.



*Figure 19.* Residuals-versus-predicted values plot: Case supervision



*Figure 20.* Leverage-versus-squared residuals plot: Case supervision

The Huber-White-sandwich estimator was applied to the regression model to help address heteroskedasticity (Hamilton, 2006). The following table displays the results.



Table 34

*Regression Using Sandwich Estimator for Variables Predicting Case Supervision Outcome*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	1.37	.34	3.97	0.000	[0.69, 2.05]
Male	.07	.07	1.10	0.273	[-0.06, 0.21]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	-.09	.17	-0.53	0.598	[-0.43, 0.25]
4	-.04	.00	-0.28	0.783	[-0.36, 0.27]
5	.14	.21	0.66	0.509	[-0.28, 0.55]
PO has Advance Education	-.01	.08	-0.16	0.873	[-0.00, 0.15]
Supervise General Caseload	-.20	.09	-2.23	0.027*	[-0.37, -0.02]
> 10 years' experience	.10	.07	1.36	0.175	[-0.00, 0.24]
Agency Support	-.03	.08	-0.43	0.667	[-0.19, 0.12]
Importance of Services	-.00	.00	-0.06	0.952	[-0.01, 0.01]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.03	.08	0.33	0.739	[-0.13, 0.18]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.05	.07	-0.65	0.515	[-0.13, 0.18]
Training: DVO Supervision	.24	.07	3.15	0.002**	[0.09, 0.40]
R-squared	.28				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.36				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI = confidence interval for B

Both supervision of a general caseload and training specific to DVO supervision remain significant when using the robust estimator. Given the very intense scatter demonstrate in Figure 19, I also decided to run a robust regression using Maximum Likelihood Estimation and involving both Huber and Biweight iterations (Hamilton, 1992). Given that this regression also produced the same significant relationships the results for the other regressions were validated.

**Case supervision analysis summary.** Case supervision is the oversight that a PO exercises over defendants assigned to their caseload (Alraid & del Carmen, 2009). In this model, all things being equal, a POs with specialized caseloads and POs having training specific to DVO supervision use case supervision techniques as outlined in the Model.

A number of studies evaluate the effectiveness of specialized domestic violence probation supervision based upon the recidivism rates of the offenders. These studies found that specific factors of case supervision contributed to lower recidivism rates and that two of the primary factors were the training of probation officers and the increased level of contact with the offenders (Klien & Crowe, 2008). The outcome from the analysis validates that research finding.

### **Regression Analysis on Case Planning**

Case planning entails having the information needed to supervise a particular offender. Questions regarding case planning included the POs access to the presentence investigation, completes an assessment on the offenders and if their supervision of the DVO is based on appraised risk. On the following page Table 35 shows the results of the OLS regression.

Table 35

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Case Plan Outcome*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	3.86	.53	7.26	0.000	[2.81, 4.92]
Male	.27	.10	2.74	0.007**	[0.77, 0.47]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	-.25	.23	-1.08	0.284	[-0.70, 0.21]
4	.14	.00	0.64	0.524	[-0.29, 0.57]
5	.41	.25	1.62	0.107	[-0.09, 0.92]
PO has Advance Education	-.35	.14	-2.44	0.016*	[-0.63, -0.06]
Supervise General Caseload	-.24	.11	-2.11	0.037*	[-0.47, -0.01]
> 10 years' experience	.00	.10	0.01	0.989	[-0.20, 0.00]
Agency Support	.00	.10	0.84	0.405	[-0.11, 0.28]
Importance of Services	.00	.00	0.36	0.723	[-0.02, 0.03]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.05	.11	0.44	0.663	[-0.18, 0.28]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.32	.00	-2.68	0.008**	[-0.56, -0.08]
Training: DVO Supervision	.38	.00	3.23	0.002**	[0.14, 0.62]
R-squared	.38				
Adjusted R-squared	.31				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.53				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI = confidence interval for B

In this regression model, the ten independent variables together explain about 38% of the variation of case planning and an adjusted  $R^2$  value of .31 indicates a relatively strong relationship, which indicates that POs use case planning when supervising their DVOs. Specifically, gender, the POs level of education, supervision of a specialized caseload, and training on DVO specific supervision and motivational interviewing were shown to be significant. To assess the OLS model, I examined residuals-versus-fitted values. Figure 21 shows the graph of these results. Additionally, I examined a leverage-versus-squared-residual plot. Figure 22 shows the graph of these results and indicates that influential leveraging does not exist.

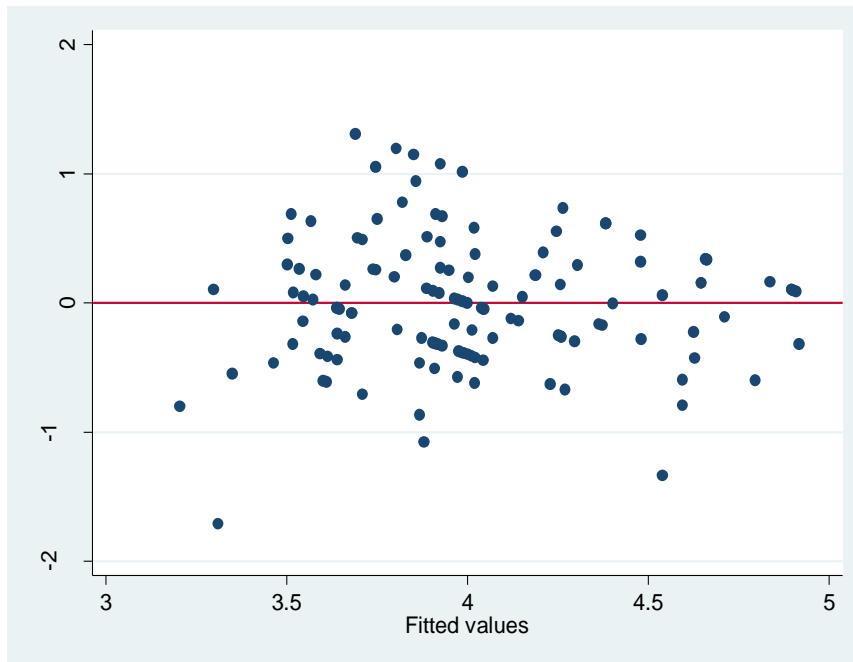


Figure 21. Residuals-versus-predicted values plot: Case planning

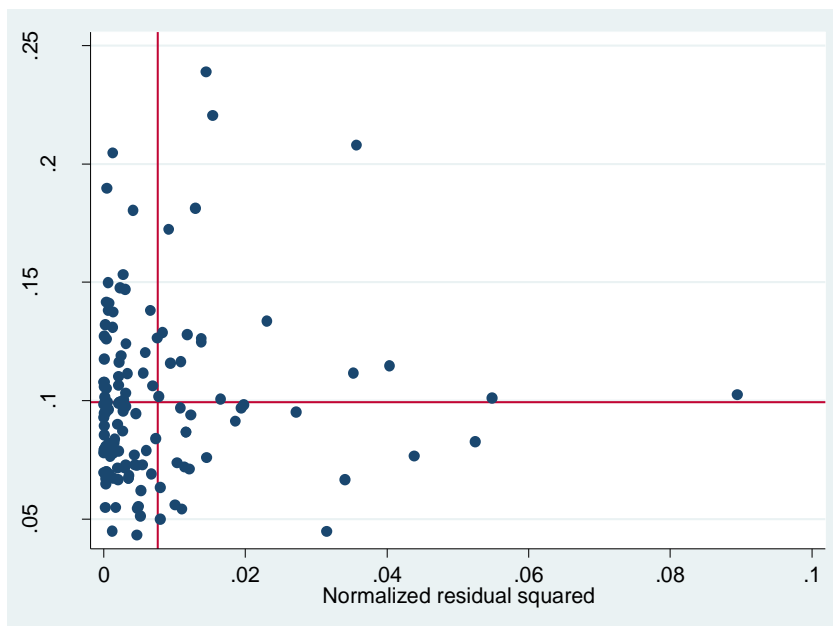


Figure 22. Leverage-versus-squared residuals plot: Case planning

The Huber-White –sandwich estimator was applied to the regression model to help address heteroskedasticity (Hamilton, 2006). The following table displays the results.

Table 36

*Regression Using Sandwich Estimator for Variables Predicting Case Planning Outcome*

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95% CI
Constant	3.86	.48	8.09	0.000	[2.91, 4.81]
Male	.27	.11	2.40	0.018*	[0.48, 0.50]
Probation Reduces Recidivism					
3	-.25	.29	-0.85	0.399	[-0.83, 0.00]
4	.14	.26	0.53	0.599	[-0.38, 0.66]
5	.41	.29	1.41	0.160	[-0.16, 0.99]
PO has Advance Education	-.35	.12	-2.88	0.005**	[-0.58, -0.10]
Supervise General Caseload	-.24	.11	-2.29	0.024*	[-0.45, -0.03]
> 10 years' experience	.00	.11	0.01	0.990	[-0.21, 0.21]
Agency Support	.00	.11	0.77	0.440	[-0.13, 0.30]
Importance of Services	.00	.01	0.39	0.698	[-0.02, 0.03]
Training: Evidence-based Practice	.05	.12	0.41	0.685	[-0.19, 0.29]
Training: Motivational Interviewing	-.32		.13	-2.57	0.012* [-0.57, -0.00]
Training: DVO Supervision	.38		.11	3.54	0.001** [0.17, 0.00]
R-squared	.38				
Prob > F	.00				
RMSE	.53				

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $p < .001$  level, respectively. CI=confidence interval for B

The use of the robust sandwich estimator did not change the significance of any variable and 38% of the variance in case planning remains explained by the ten independent variables contained within the regression model. This indicates that POs are aware and using case planning as the Model suggests.

**Case planning analysis summary.** The regression output for this model, while controlling the effects of all other variables in the model, indicates that male POs without an advanced education, who do not supervise a general caseload, did not receive training on motivational interviewing but did receive training specific to DVO supervision are more likely to conduct case planning.

Gender has had a relationship with a number of the dependent variables and I will address this further in Chapter 5. For most county probation departments a bachelor's degree is a job requirement. A number of the departments require an advanced degree for POs who wish to move into administrative roles. One can only speculate why those with advanced degrees would do less case planning. This result requires additional research to explain.

Supervision of the domestic violence offender is similar to that of any offender. POs who supervise a general caseload demonstrated significantly lower case planning than POs with specialized caseloads. Throughout their period of probation, all probation officers do case planning and consider the offender's danger to the community, compliance with the conditions of probation, need for treatment, and motivation to change (PCADV, 2003). Specialized probation means that the probation officer becomes an expert in working with a subpopulation of defendants (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). As per the Model, the components of ideal effective probation supervision of a DVO include offender assessment to determine the appropriate level of supervision i.e. case planning and these results support that some POs are using the supervision methods that the Model suggests.

First developed in the field of addictions, motivational interviewing is a way of speaking to offenders about change. Instead of just gathering information, motivational interviewing trains staff in basic listening and speaking strategies (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006). Motivational interviewing is consistent with the Model and 70% (see Table 5) of the respondents of this study indicated that they received motivational interviewing training. However, POs indicating that they had received motivational interviewing training report significantly lower case planning than POs who

had not received the training. This appears to be counterintuitive and raises questions regarding the utility of motivational interviewing in relation to DVO supervision.

However, the probation officer must be willing to openly discuss the problem of domestic violence, be knowledgeable of offender and victim issues, and work collaboratively with treatment providers (PCADV, 2003) and from this perspective motivational interviewing would be useful. This result also requires additional research to explain.

To adequately supervise the DVO, the Model requires that the probation officer is aware of how and why the DVO perpetrates abuse. The literature reinforces (Abadinsky, 2009; Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Crowe, et al., 2009; Finn & Kuck, 2003; Skeem, Manchak, Johnson, & Gillig, 2008; Trotter, 2000) that specialized training is crucial to effective supervision of the DVO. Consistent with the Model, the results of the regression indicate that those who receive DVO specific training are more likely to do case planning.

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this study was to explore how county probation officers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania supervise their domestic violence offenders and specifically to determine if they were aware of the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments. The study further investigated what parts, if any of the Model that POs use in the supervision of DVOs on their caseloads. Additionally, this researcher wanted to explore if there were any barriers the POs experienced when supervising their DVOs. I conducted the analysis within this chapter in support of the following research questions:

- Are probation officers aware of the Model of Supervision for Domestic Violence Offenders?

- What, if any, of the parts of the Model do probation officers use when supervising DVOs?
- What are the specific barriers to using the Model in the supervision of DVOs?

The results section includes a large amount of data concerning the quantitative analysis conducted in order to evaluate the hypotheses presented in this study. I summarize these results below providing a descriptive analysis, reviewing variables and measures, recapping the regression analysis and presenting a summary table of significance and direction of relationship of the variables.

### **Descriptive Analysis**

The purpose of this study was to explore Pennsylvania County Adult Probation Officers awareness of the Model of Supervision (Model) recommended by the PCADV (2003). I describe the counties in the sample compare to the all of the Pennsylvania counties. The final sample of 28 counties included eight of the 21 counties that had participated with PCADV in the creation of the Model. The final sample was comprised of 20 rural counties and 8 considered urban.

The unit of analysis was the individual probation officer. There was a total of 132 participants in the survey, all currently supervising DVOs. An overwhelming majority of the respondents were white (95%) and employed in a rural county (74%). I ran a multi-level model using county as the clustering variable and found it was no better than a fixed model. For these two reasons I did not include race and county of employment in the final analytical model. I completed a detailed descriptive analysis in order to learn if the POs were (a) aware of the Model; and (b) if they were using any of the supervision methods described in the Model. In the final analysis, 26% of the POs indicated that they



were aware of the Model, but 61% of the POs indicated that they are using supervision methods described in the Model.

### **Variables and Measures**

Because supervision is an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance, the Model includes a number of dimensions to supervision. The DVO Intervention scale was developed to measure the extent that probation officers intervention techniques matched evidence-based practices as presented in the Model. The process of the DVO Intervention scale development progressed from (a) literature review; (b) subject matter expert review; (c) factor analysis; to (d) creating additive variables from factors based on their loadings. I compiled a single overall scale measuring DVO intervention as well as five sub-scales, each of which served as a unique dependent variable. The ten independent variables included the actions and activity of the probation officer.

### **Regression Analysis**

To analyze the dependent variables (i.e. DVO Intervention, perceived adequacy of services, monitoring, fieldwork, case supervision, and case planning) I used ordinary least squares multiple regression and regressed each dependent variable on the ten identified independent variables. When appropriate I also used regression with robust standard errors and robust regression. In order to evaluate whether the assumptions for OLS were met, I used a series of regression diagnostics to examine the residuals, and identify concerns such as homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, and case influences on variables and the model as a whole. All things being equal, the results were as follows:

**DVO intervention.** Male POs and POs who strongly believe that probation reduces recidivism, POs who supervise a specialty caseload, and POs specifically trained

to supervise DVOs are all more likely to use DVO intervention as described in the Model.

**Perceived adequacy of services.** Male POs who strongly believe that probation reduces recidivism are more likely to perceive that there are adequate services for DVOs.

**Monitoring.** None of the ten variables are significant predictors of monitoring.

**Fieldwork.** None of the ten variables are significant predictors of fieldwork.

**Case supervision.** POs who supervise a specialized caseload and POs who received training specific to DVO supervision were more likely to conduct case supervision.

**Case planning.** Male POs with a bachelor's degree, POs who supervise a specialty caseload, POs that have not received motivational interviewing training and POs that have received training specific to DVO supervision are more likely to use case planning when supervising their DVOs. On the next page Table 37 displays a summary of the significance and direction of the relationship between the dependent and predictor variables.

Table 37

*Summary Table of Significance and Direction of Relationship*

Variables	DVO Intervention		Perceived Adequacy of Services		Monitoring ( <i>Nothing Significant</i> )	Field Work ( <i>Nothing Significant</i> )	Case Supervision		Case Planning	
Male	**	+	*	+					*	+
Probation Reduces Recidivism (joint)	*	+	*	+						
Adv. Ed									**	-
Supervise Gen Caseload	**	-					*	-	*	-
>10 years' experience										
Agency Support										
Importance of Services										
Training: Evidence- Based										
Training: Motivational Interviewing									*	-
Training: DVO Supervision	**	+					**	+	**	+
R <sup>2</sup>	.40		.22		--	--	.28		.38	
Alpha	.81		.89		.88	.83	.81		.71	

*Note.* \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicates significant at the p<.05, p<.01, and p<.001 level, respectively.  
+/- indicates the direction of the coefficients

In Chapter 5 the results of the data analysis are elaborated and interpreted in sequence and relative to each research question. Further, Chapter 5 findings are linked to

existing research and implications of the findings are discussed. Finally, limitations of the research are indicated and recommendations for future research are offered.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### **Chapter Overview**

The purpose of this research was to explore Pennsylvania county adult probation officers' awareness of the Model of Supervision recommended by PCADV (2003). In 2000 PCADV, funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), took the lead in developing the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (Model) (PCADV, 2003). The research explores if POs are specifically trained on DVO supervision techniques, if they use the knowledge obtained through training, and if barriers to effective supervision of DVOs exists.

Evidence concerning the effectiveness of DVO supervision cannot subsist without understanding how probation officers supervise offenders and implement strategies. Little research exists on what probation officers actually do with the domestic violence offenders they supervise and this study is a first step in that process (Seiter & West, 2003). The data was collected using survey methodology and data analysis using quantitative methods. A total of 132 probation officers from 28 Pennsylvania counties were included in the final sample.

This chapter presents a review of the findings and implications of the study in relation to both theory and practice. I devote the majority of the chapter to the research questions and hypotheses that were tested. The chapter culminates with a discussion of the limitations and delimitations of the study and suggestions for future research and concluding remarks.

## **Summary of the Study and Methodology**

The social and personal costs of domestic violence make it a critical area for evaluating the practices used by probation officers when supervising domestic violence offenders in the community (Labriola, Rempel, & Davis, 2005). Domestic violence presents several complications for effective probation supervision. Specifically, intimate partner violence differs considerably from other forms of violence because of the relationship between the offender and the victim. A probation officer's lack of adequate supervision of DVOs can result in continued victimization, or worse, a fatality (PCADV, 2010).

In 2000 PCADV, funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, took the lead in developing the Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision for Pennsylvania County Adult Probation and Parole Departments (PCADV, 2003). The aim of the study in hand was to obtain information on how county probation and parole officers supervise the domestic violence offenders residing on their caseloads based upon this Model.

In order to discover how POs across the Commonwealth supervise their DVOs, I identified those factors that comprise supervision techniques based on the Model and theory outlined in Chapter 2. I chose to use cross sectional quantitative survey methodology as an appropriate design to explore the research questions.

Predicting and explaining DVO intervention is complicated and requires having multiple predictors. The dependent variable, DVO intervention was a scale with five composite variables: perceived adequacy of services, monitoring, fieldwork, case supervision, and case planning. The scale development for the dependent variables progressed from (a) literature review; (b) subject matter expert review; (c) factor analysis;

to (d) creating additive variables from factors with high loadings. The independent variables account for the actions and activity of probation officers that have an influence on the dependent variables. The individual variables obtained from the survey of probation officers included gender, years as a probation officer, caseload responsibility, and the POs level of education. Consistent with evidence-based practice literature and current practices, I also gathered data to formulate the following independent variables: training, agency support, importance of probation services, and if the probation officer believed that probation reduces recidivism.

It is important to note that except for the initial research question, the methodology of this study departs from awareness of the Model and measures POs use of Model. I used multiple regression to determine the influence of independent variables on supervision practices as defined by the dependent variables. These variables explained 40% of DVO intervention, overall. The Model, however, appeared in the literature as multidimensional, so I used exploratory factor analysis to define pertinent multi-item scales. I also measured other variables using multiple indicators and used exploratory factor analysis to help aggregate the indicators into single multi-item scales.

### **Evaluating the Hypotheses**

In the first chapter I presented three research questions and three hypotheses. Here I restate them and discuss them in terms of the results reported in Chapter 4.

**Research question 1.** The first research question asks if probation officers are aware of the Model and 26% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the Model. The counties received the Model in 2000; over 14 years ago. In the state of Pennsylvania 1.3% of all offenders are DVOs, with only Allegheny and Berks counties having domestic violence specialty courts. However, Berks County was not included in

the sample. While trainings conducted by PCADV are ongoing, it seems reasonable to assume that if a PO is not responsible for a caseload comprised primarily of DVOs they would lack awareness of the Model. The sample included 43 POs from the eight counties that had participated in the creation of the Model, and of those that participated in the Models creation, about 40% stated they had an awareness of the Model. The exception was Luzerne County where 100% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the Model. This noteworthy variation may be attributed to the hyper-vigilance in Luzerne County due to the “jailing kids for cash” scandal that heightened all judicial actions in the county and across the state of Pennsylvania (Chen, 2009).

***Hypothesis 1.*** The first hypothesis states that awareness of the Model will vary depending on geographical location, population served, services available to DVOs and victims, PO caseload size and administrative support. In the previous section, percentages were used to detect overt awareness. Initially I had three hypothesis related to the research questions, however because the study focused on the state of practice I cannot address geographical location, population served, services available to DVOs and victims, and PO caseload size in terms of Model awareness. Due to the Model introduction some 14 years ago, it seems reasonable that many POs actually use aspects of the Model, but do not think of these practices in terms of a specified “Model” per se. Logically, if a PO practices aspects of the Model, they are aware of those aspects. With this in mind, I discuss independent variables noted in this hypothesis below with respect to research questions 2 and 3 where the dependent variables and regression address the use of the Model and provide pertinent findings that align with the research questions.

**Research question 2.** The second research question asks what, if any, of the parts of the Model do probation officers use when supervising DVOs? The Model represents



the ideal strategy when supervising a domestic violence offender. DVO supervision serves as an intervention rather than a tool to monitor compliance. To adequately measure the use of the Model a DVO intervention scale was developed. The DVO intervention scale includes a number of dimensions to supervision. With support from the Model on DVO supervision practices, personal experience, and from the theoretical literature summarized in Chapter 2, I determined the best practices of DVO intervention to create the survey questions that were then determined as latent variables via factor analysis. The results indicate that the five retained factors explain 100% of the variance. A single generated multi-item scale reflects the underlying construct embedded in the Model. I also identified and generated five composite variables: perceived adequacy of services, monitoring, fieldwork, case supervision, and case planning.

The ten independent variables used in the regression analyses are predictors of DVO intervention. In order to answer this second research question I performed six multiple regressions. The unit of analysis for this study was the individual probation officer. The results are detailed below.

I first investigated variation in Model use due to geographical locations. There were 132 participants from the survey; all currently supervising DVOs. An overwhelming majority of the respondents were white (95%) and employed in a rural county (74%). The final sample was comprised of 20 rural and 8 urban counties. Part of the rationale for this portion of the analysis is that I expected to find a difference between the POs employed in rural counties and those employed in urban counties. I also believed that random differences among the counties could potentially interfere with the results and so I ran a multi-level model using county as the clustering variable. I found the multi-level model with a random component was no better than a fixed model. Similarly, the only

observable difference among counties at the bivariate level was Luzerne (as noted above), yet as a whole the county as a variable, was not significant as no other counties differed in terms of the DVO intervention scale. These findings support the notion that DVO intervention practices do not vary by geographic location. For these reasons, and for purposes of developing parsimonious regression models, I did not include county of employment in the final regressions.

To determine the population served, POs noted if they supervised a general or specialized caseload. All of the respondents supervised DVOs, and 98 supervised a general caseload, 6 supervised offenders on electronic monitors, 13 supervised a high impact caseload, 7 supervised sex offenders, 7 supervised DVOs, and one had the responsibility of supervising a drug and alcohol caseload. Therefore, only 5% of the respondents were responsible for DVOs exclusively, with 74% supervising a general caseload.

The regression analyses indicate that POs who supervise specialized caseloads are more likely to use DVO intervention techniques, case supervision, and case planning than the POs that supervise general caseloads. POs with a specialized caseload rated DVO intervention higher than POs with a general caseload. This is consistent with the professional literature which reflects the development of specialized caseloads and the need for treatment strategies and techniques.

The primary responsibility of the County Adult Probation/Parole Officers is the community supervision of adult offenders released by the court on either county probation or parole. Specialized probation means that the probation officer becomes an expert in working with a subpopulation of defendants (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). The term case supervision primarily means that POs attempt to ensure that clients adhere to

the rules and regulations of probation or parole and/or the special conditions that the Court may impose such as treatment or restitution (MacKenzie, 1997). In this study, all things being equal, POs with specialized caseloads use case supervision techniques as outlined in the Model.

While case supervision is the oversight of the DVO, case planning involves the assessment process for determining an offender's danger to the community, compliance with the conditions of probation, need for treatment, and motivation to change (PCADV, 2003). POs who supervise a general caseload demonstrated significantly lower case planning than POs with specialized caseloads. Specialized probation helps probation officers focus on the offenders that need more attention than the general probation population and to focus on those offenders with the highest risk to re-abuse. A risk/needs assessment must occur if probation officers are going to focus on those offenders who are at the highest risk to re-abuse (PCADV, 2003). An encouraging finding from this study shows that 82% of POs indicated that they base their DVO supervision on appraised risk.

As per the Model, it appears that POs with a specialized caseload are using the components of ideal effective probation supervision as indicated by the DVO intervention scale which includes case supervision and case planning. These findings support that POs use the supervision methods that the Model suggests and thereby appear to support the effectiveness of specialized caseloads in the supervision of DVOs.

A fair number of the POs (52%) stated that there were not enough services for DVOs but 83% said that enough services for victims existed. These results coincide with the fact that the government continues to fund advocacy and treatment efforts for rape and domestic violence victims. The criminal justice system, with a limited budget, must supervise the DVO on probation or parole. The initial percentages indicate that a lack of

programs for DVOs exists. Assuming that this lack of programs for DVOs does exist, as indicated by this survey, it follows that a lack of treatment options for the DVO most likely also exists. This supports that training POs to specifically supervise DVOs is vital to victim protection. If POs do not have the ability to rely on outside agencies for treatment, training becomes the only avenue to ensure that the PO gains an understanding of the unique dynamics associated with violent domestic relationships.

An apparent contradiction to these surface findings rests with the POs gender. While in general the POs indicated that not enough services for DVOs existed, the results of the regression indicated that irrespective of other indicators the male POs actually do perceive an adequacy of available services. This finding contradicts the results of the more simple percentage result and remains a subject for additional research.

This gender difference is an important finding because the literature cites concern regarding DVO supervision and female POs (Petrillo, 2007; Reddick and Chaplin, 1999). The Model specifically addresses the manipulation of the DVO, characterizing the DVO as a master manipulator (PCADV, 2004). Petrillo (2007) addresses the issue of gender and the supervision of the high risk offenders and states that while it is important to build a rapport with the offender it is imperative that the female PO be mindful of the manipulation of the DVO. Reddick and Chaplin (1999) also admonish female POs to be mindful of the DVOs manipulation. Both studies recommend that a female PO assert supervisory control over the DVOs. They further note that female POs should ensure that any DVO manipulation immediately result in a sanction (Petrillo, 2007; Reddick & Chaplin, 1999). It seems probable that male POs do not consider this matter as serious a threat, therefore they assume more responsibility and perceive less of a need for additional community services designed to treat DVOs.

The court identifies a number of criminal behaviors as domestic violence. These criminal behaviors may all be domestic in their origin and include assault and battery, harassment, breaking and entering, stalking, and sexual assault. Due to the DVOs propensity to violence, and especially violence toward females, one can infer from these findings that female POs have a heightened awareness of the needs of the DVO. Based upon the literature, and the results of this study I highly suspect that female POs may feel more of a need for support via programs and treatment than male POs. This would account for the difference in the female POs perception that services for DVOs are not adequate.

In line with this thinking, POs who strongly believe that probation reduces recidivism are also more likely to perceive that adequate services for DVOs exist. While it is difficult to interpret these findings, the perception that adequate services exist corresponds with the belief that probation is effective. Male POs may feel more secure in their ability to supervise the DVO and this may in turn result in the perception that there are adequate services for the DVO. In light of these findings, the disparity between male and female respondents in this study arguably supports further research on the topic.

In summary, respondents indicated that they perceive adequacy of services for DVOs and their victims, they use case planning when making decisions regarding a DVOs case, and they incorporate a number of monitoring and fieldwork techniques. In reviewing the findings of this study, these practices are significant and support that whether or not POs are overtly aware of the Model, a significant number of POs use the strategies outlined in the Model; this leads to Hypothesis 2.

***Hypothesis 2.*** The second hypothesis states that as the availability of training varies, Model use will vary. Research in the literature supports that educated and trained

POs are going to have lower recidivism rates (Trotter, 1996). This study explores four independent variables involving the assessment of knowledge attainment; the education level of POs, DVO supervision training, evidence-based practice training and training in motivational interviewing. The results on education were less definitive than those addressing training. Below I discuss PO education and then address two of the three areas of training.

In the final sample the majority of the probation officers were ages 23 to 40 (n=83), possessed a Bachelor's degree (n=109), and were males (n=78). The independent variable advanced education was significant to case planning in that POs who held a bachelor's degree were more likely to engage in case planning than those POs with advance degrees. However, only 18% of the respondents stated that they held an advance degree and therefore the results concerning this aspect of the study come into question. Possibly future research with a larger group of POs with advanced degrees would help to validate this finding. As it stands, the issue remains noteworthy because case planning includes treatment plans, access to presentence investigation reports, and completing risk assessments. We can infer from this finding that those with an advance degree are less likely to adhere to this dimension of the Model, which is key to offender supervision. This outcome may stem from a belief suggesting that due to advanced education POs use subjective instead of objective assessment methods and thus do not require all of the tools case planning offers. Another possible explanation might rest with the desire of POs with advanced degrees to be more clinical and less administrative. This exploratory study can only raise such questions and does not offer enough data to provide a logical explanation and therefore the results suggest another area for future research.

Survey questions related to training focused on three areas i.e., evidence-based practices, motivational interviewing and training specific to DVO supervision. While probation officers affirmed receiving training on evidence-based practices and motivational interviewing, training specific to DVOs resulted in the most significant predictor of Model use. Surprisingly, however, motivational interviewing had a negative effect on case planning which I will discuss when I address specific barriers to using the Model under the next section, Research Question 3.

Training focused on the supervision of the DVO had a positive relationship with the overall DVO intervention scale and the dimensions of case supervision, and case planning. Trotter (1996) hypothesized that probation officers would be more effective if they used certain supervision skills such as modeling pro-social behaviors and working through problem solving processes with offenders. His findings indicated that the probationers receiving supervision from trained probation officers demonstrated a recidivism rate of 46% while offenders under supervision by untrained probation officers had a recidivism rate of 64%, where recidivism was measured at four years (Trotter, 1996; Trotter, 2000). The data suggest the training that the probation officers received made a difference in the recidivism rate (Trotter, 2000). The data from the current study suggests that POs who receive DVO supervision training are more likely to use the supervision techniques as measured by the DVO intervention scale. This may offer one explanation for Trotter's findings; POs receiving DVO specific training use DVO supervision techniques and therefore have better DVO recidivism rates than POs who do not.

Support for the effect of training specific to DVO supervision continues with DVO training positively relating to case supervision practices. The outcome variable case

supervision is an attempt to determine the oversight that a probation officer exercises over the defendants assigned to their caseload (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009). A number of studies evaluate the effectiveness of specialized domestic violence probation supervision based upon the recidivism rates of the offenders. These studies found that specific factors of case supervision contributed to lower recidivism rates and that two of the primary factors were the training of probation officers and the increased level of contact with the offenders (Klein & Crowe, 2008). The outcome from this study associating DVO specific training with case supervision backs up these research findings.

Similarly, case planning entails having the information needed to supervise a particular offender. Questions regarding case planning included the POs access to the presentence investigation, completes an assessment on the offenders and if their supervision of the DVO is based on appraised risk. Consistent with the Model, the results of the regression indicate that those who receive DVO specific training are more likely to do case planning.

To adequately supervise the DVO, the Model requires that the probation officer develops and maintains awareness of how and why the DVO perpetrates abuse. The literature reinforces that specialized training is crucial to effective supervision of the DVO. This suggests that the use of the Model will impact recidivism, which in turn supports the notion that training specific to DVO supervision should be mandated to all POs who have DVOs assigned to their caseloads.

Training on DVO supervision had a significant relationship with DVO intervention, case supervision, and case planning. Based upon the literature this could infer that training addressing DVO supervision has a direct impact on a POs use of the Model. While 68% of the POs indicated that they had received training on evidence-



based practices, it was not a significant predictor of any of the dependent variables, which further supports that not just training, but DVO specific training remains a reasonable explanation for the use of practices outlined in the Model.

**Research question 3.** The third research question asks what are the specific barriers to using the Model in the supervision of DVOs? This study focuses on uncovering what supervision methods probation officers across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania use to supervise DVOs. However, identifying barriers to effective DVO supervision holds equal interest and leads to Hypothesis 3.

**Hypothesis 3.** The third hypothesis in this study states that identified barriers (e.g., caseload size, excessive paperwork, and deadline pressures) will relate with the philosophical orientation of the probation officer, case management practices and extent of probation officer training. Lack of Model awareness and lack of training create barriers to adequate DVO supervision. In the final analysis, only 26% of the POs indicated that they were aware of the Model, but 61% of the POs indicated that they use some of the supervision methods described in the Model. These results support that although POs in this study did not directly indicate an awareness of the Model a majority of the POs do use some of the suggested techniques of supervision. Nonetheless, DVO specific training, which would increase awareness of the Model, similarly increases Model consistent practices. Hence, a lack of training and the consequential lack of Model awareness inhibit DVO intervention practices. Below I discuss findings suggesting other possible barriers to Model based practices.

One of the survey questions evaluated the philosophical orientation of the PO. It addressed whether the PO believes that probation reduces recidivism. The question followed a Likert scale with 5 indicating that the survey respondent strongly agreed that

probation reduces recidivism and 1 indicating that they strongly disagreed that probation reduces recidivism. Philosophically, 69% of the POs agreed that probation reduces recidivism. This is an important finding because it indicates that the majority of POs believe that their job is essential to maintaining offender accountability and victim safety.

The primary objectives of the probation officer working with the DVO include the safety of the victim and the rehabilitation of the DVO (Abadinsky, 2009). The objectives of probation provides the foundation for understanding the need of probation officers to have effective strategies that (a) hold offenders accountable, and (b) reduce recidivism and thus keep victims safe (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). Recidivism equals failure and is commonly measured as an arrest and conviction for a new crime while on probation (Alarid & del Carmen, 2009; Klein & Crowe, 2008). Focus on recidivism prevention is a primary part of the POs job description.

Overall, respondents who indicated that they strongly agreed probation reduces recidivism rated DVO intervention higher. Those POs also indicated that they perceived that adequate services for the DVO existed. DVO intervention is the generated multi-item scale reflecting the underlying construct embedded in the Model. The findings of this study indicate that POs who strongly agree that probation reduces recidivism rate DVO intervention significantly higher than those who do not strongly agree. Therefore, for POs who believe that probation reduces recidivism are also more likely to use DVO intervention techniques as outlined in the Model.

As previously noted the results of the regression indicated that irrespective of other indicators the POs who believe that probation reduces recidivism also perceive an adequacy of available services. The relationship between the belief that probation reduces recidivism and the perception that adequate DVO services exist supports the finding

addressed under research question 2 where the results indicated that male POs perceived an adequacy of available services. Combining these findings suggests that male POs believe that probation reduces recidivism, and perceive an adequacy of available services for DVOs thereby, linking gender to this finding and suggesting the possibility that male POs do not consider the DVO a serious threat. Possibly, they assume more responsibility via standard probationary practices and perceive less of a need for community services designed to treat DVOs. Nonetheless, irrespective of gender, the POs who believe probation reduces recidivism also believe that adequate services exist. Hence, male POs and POs who believe that probation reduces recidivism perceive that adequate DVO service exist.

This study has revealed the relationship of gender and its potential impact on offender supervision. A study that includes interviews of POs may provide further explanations about the differences between male and female POs with regard to their DVO practices and beliefs.

The survey inquiry regarding caseload level focused on the number of DVOs that the PO supervised. Due to thin cells occurring across response categories, the related analysis took place on the univariate level. Most of the POs indicated that they supervised less than 20 DVOs, however there were seven POs that supervise only DVOs and five of the seven noted that they supervise more than 80 DVOs on their caseloads.

Extremely high caseloads make it difficult for officers to adequately supervise offenders in the community. The recommended caseload size varies depending upon the offender population under supervision. For specialized DVO supervision the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) recommends that the assessed risk act as the basis for the number of DVOs on a caseload. APPA specifically recommends that a

caseload of 20 is appropriate for intensive cases and 50 is an appropriate number for offenders assessed as moderate to high risk (DeMichelle, 2007). It has been widely recognized that a large caseload prohibits the PO from providing the appropriate monitoring and oversight or establish the rapport necessary to improve offender outcomes (Taxman, 2002). The troubling finding that a few POs supervise more than 80 DVOs on their caseload suggests that supervision and oversight of the offender may suffer due to the caseload size. Without additional data, it is difficult to understand the direct connection between caseload size and use of the Model, or the impact that caseload size has on supervision of the DVO. However, it appears that there are POs with a large number of DVOs who, by the nature of their crime are considered high risk. For a PO to supervise more than 80 DVOs on their caseload diminishes the POs capability to effectively supervise their caseload. The agency holds responsibility for determining caseload size. Assigning POs such large numbers of DVOs produces threat to the public safety which requires addressing.

Probation departments exist as part of a larger government system and therefore not considered autonomous entities. The philosophy of the judiciary, limited funds, and inadequate supervision, are the basis for a lack of organizational support and present a barrier to caseload management and effective supervision (Thompkins, 2005). With regard to agency support, 17% of the POs failed to answer any of the survey questions that measured agency support. Of the POs that answered, 81% indicated that they felt supported by their agencies. The concern remains that 17% of the POs who responded to all of the other survey questions failed to respond to any of the questions related to their agencies. One must wonder what the basis for the unanswered questions was. It may be that the POs feared their responses would get back to their departments. One may surmise

that the basis for the lack of response resides with POs experiencing a lack of support from their agency. Coupled with the other research findings regarding caseload size and the high risk associated with DVOs, the omitted data suggests that agency leadership should improve support for POs and consider working with the judiciary to ensure that POs have manageable caseloads. Certainly, the data invite additional inquiry on POs and their agencies.

The POs were responded to questions asking if they had received training in any of three areas: motivational interviewing; evidence-based practices; DVO supervision. The majority of the respondents (70%) indicated receiving motivational interviewing training.

Motivational interviewing originated in the field of addictions and has become popular with probation departments because by design it places the responsibility for behavior change on the offender (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006). The results of this survey show that those POs who received motivational interviewing training report significantly lower case planning than those who had not received the training.

Case planning entails having the information needed to supervise a particular offender. While the motivational interviewing approach aligns with evidence-based practice and the Model as an effective tool for handling offender resistance, this result calls into question the utility of this training for POs supervising DVOs since case planning is such an important dimension of DVO supervision. However, the PO must be willing to openly discuss the problem of domestic violence, be knowledgeable of offender and victim issues, and work collaboratively with treatment providers (PCADV, 2003) and from this perspective motivational interviewing would be useful.

An explanation for the negative relationship between motivational interviewing and case planning might be that case planning involves the gathering of information apart from the DVO while motivational interviewing is a therapeutic interaction with the DVO. The skill set needed for case planning involves the investigation of documents where the skill set needed for motivational interviewing is to have a communicative interaction between the PO and offender (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006). From this vantage point, we can explain the negative relationship because motivational interviewing emphasizes therapeutic interaction over planning. Conducting a study that focuses specifically on how training impacts offender supervision and how motivational interviewing impacts DVO recidivism would likely yield more informative results.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

In summary, this study primarily focused on the use of the Model and addressed Model awareness to a lesser degree. Key findings support that POs are using parts of the Model in their supervision of DVOs. In this section I will address the limitations and delimitations of the study, followed by a final section that offers conclusions and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 1 presents a discussion on the potential limitations and delimitations of this study, and while some of the items came to fruition, some did not. Pennsylvania counties, under the laws and guidelines established by the state, operate separate probation agencies with individuals paroled from a local jail coming under the supervision of the county probation and parole department (Abadinsky, 2009). The judiciary administers probation; however, the day-to-day operation takes place via county level personnel and can result in a significant administrative variance between each of the counties (PBPP, 2009). However, in this study the respondents' county was not a

statistically significant predictor of any of the dependent variables measuring DVO intervention. Nor did I find significant variance among the counties when treated as a clustering variable in a multi-level regression model.

A major delimitation of this study was securing the permission from each county Director/Chief to survey their staff. The survey population for this research included sixty five of the sixty seven counties in Pennsylvania that operate adult probation and parole departments (Mercer and Venango are operated by PA State Probation and Parole) (PBPP, 2009). There were three emails and one phone call for a total of four attempts to contact the Director/Chief probation officers and request permission to survey their staff. The survey was available from February 2013 to August 2013, and there was a follow-up email sent to Director/Chief probation officers that had given permission to survey their staff to encourage their POs to take the survey (Appendix C). The difficulty in securing permission from the Director/Chief probation officers resulted in a limited sample size that negatively impacted some of the measures.

For example, I initially assumed that a difference would exist between POs who supervised in a rural versus urban county. However, the lack of responses from the urban counties limited the ability to compare and contrast responses based upon this geographic characteristic.

An additional delimitation peculiar to surveys in general relates to some of the responses. Respondents that consistently gave high or low ratings irrespective of the survey's scaled questions impacted the data analysis. I noted one of these respondents as an outlier and after closer examination, I determined that a severe lack of variability in responding yielded polarized responses, consequently this case was dropped. Similarly, some respondents did not answer all of the survey questions. The majority of unanswered

questions were the questions focused on how the PO perceived the support from their organization. While I am uncertain, I suspect that anticipated organizational ramifications and a perceived chance for misusing the survey results biased responses toward missing values (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

One of the major delimitations of this study involves the choice of the population of probation officers to study. The decision to study county probation officers was borne out of the intimate knowledge I have regarding the supervision of DVOs. However due to the need for IRB approval from each county, the population was significantly reduced. A study conducted with State or Federal Probation Officers that needed only one approval from the Chief may have yielded a larger and more diverse population.

The structure of the survey was also somewhat limiting. A skip pattern eliminated POs who did not currently supervise DVOs on their caseload. In hindsight, it would have been interesting to note if differences existed between POs that currently supervise DVOs and those that do not. Of further interest would be the discovery of what POs identify as the cause of domestic violence. Their answers would provide a stronger link between the theoretical framework and the study's findings.

Finally, a number of respondents indicated that they did not find any of the supervision techniques effective in reducing recidivism. As discussed previously, it would be noteworthy to determine how POs define recidivism and if this definition had an impact on their responses to the survey.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This exploratory study focused on the probation practices regarding DVOs. Little research exists on what probation officers actually do with the domestic violence offenders they supervise and this study offers a first step in that process (Seiter & West,



2003). Domestic violence offenders are unique, possibly dangerous and occasionally lethal. Probation officers need specialized skills to be effective when working with DVOs. To better meet the needs of the DVOs and the protection of the victims' future research warrants a deeper focus on how POs supervise their DVOs.

One of the unexpected outcomes of the study was the gender impact. Male POs appear to feel more secure in their ability to supervise the DVO and have the perception that adequate services for the DVO exist in the community. Most of the studies on gender differences in supervision methods have focused on the offenders desire to control the female PO and the need for female POs to take a strong stance when supervising offenders (PCADV, 2003; Petrillo, 2007; Reddick & Chaplin, 1999). In this study, gender appeared to have significance to DVO intervention in terms of perceived adequacy of services, and case planning. In light of these findings, the disparity between male and female respondents in this study arguably supports further study on the topic.

These findings suggest that further research may further help to determine the impact that gender has on DVO supervision. A qualitative design would enable this researcher to delve deeper into the gender differences. PCADV continues to conduct trainings with county POs. Partnering with PCADV to gain access to the training participants would supplant the need for agency approval. With permission from the PO, questions would focus specifically on perceived adequacy of services and case planning and provide a clearer understanding of the impact gender has on these variables.

The study findings uncovered that POs value the work that they do and that the agencies that employ them generally provide their POs with support. However, due to the study's limitations noted above, specifically the large number of missing values associated with this portion of the inquiry, I would suggest a somewhat cautious

interpretation of these findings. A study that focuses more closely on probation officers and their agencies would likely yield more informative results.

Training focused on DVO supervision proved a strong predictor of how POs intervene with their offenders. There has been an initiative to focus on evidence-based practices and motivational interviewing, but this study supports for a PO to effectively supervise specialized DVO cases they need specific training.

The majority of the respondents (70%) indicated receiving motivational interviewing training. The results of this survey show that those POs who received motivational interviewing training report significantly lower case planning than those who had not received the training. The skill set needed for case planning involves the investigation of documents where the skill set needed for motivational interviewing involves communicative interaction between the PO and offender (Clark, Walters, Gingerich & Meltzer, 2006). Perhaps the negative interaction stems from the emphasis of motivational interviewing on therapeutic interaction over planning. However, making statements about the results must take place with care. Conducting a study that focuses specifically on how training impacts offender supervision would yield stronger results that are more informative.

A dearth of information on how POs supervise their caseloads exists in the literature. It is worth noting the strength of the dependent variable. The DVO intervention scale and its five composite variables measures the extent that probation officers intervention techniques match the evidence-based practices as presented in the Model. The survey in this study proved adequate for specifically exploring how POs supervise their DVOs, however this small piece of instrumentation in the form of a shorter survey might be useful for a study including all of the POs and not just the ones that supervise

DVOs. This would enable a comparison and lend insight into which supervision techniques have common usage across the areas of supervision.

PCADV might find the DVO intervention scale a useful tool in evaluating the use of the Model by county POs. The Model represents the ideal strategy when supervising a domestic violence offender and the resulting evaluation can focus training efforts on the gap between the “ideal” and the interventions used by POs on a daily basis.

Probation officers who work with DVOs have important experiential knowledge and the DVO intervention scale offers evidence-based interventions to enhance their supervision efforts. Most probation departments are functioning with limited resources and the DVO intervention scale enables the department to eliminate ineffective practices and implement focused interventions. The DVO intervention scale can be used by supervisors as an evaluative tool, practical DVO supervision strategies, and program development. Finally, the DVO intervention scale can impact policy ensuring that there are adequate services for DVOs and their victims, and ensure training specific to DVO intervention for probation officers.

One final recommendation is to enlist the cooperation of all of the counties. Implementation that included a panel of probation officers who would help design the instrument might have proven invaluable. Additionally, a more extensive review process and support from across the Commonwealth would yield an increase in sample and provide an opportunity to improve the reliability and validity of outcomes.

Each PO comes to supervision with a unique skill set. This study sought to investigate a small part of it. Additional research seems warranted to ensure that the results of this study are not unique to this particular sample. Results of this study lead to

the conclusion that how probation officers view their role can act as an important element in the type of intervention they provide to their offenders.

This survey collected information on how probation officers throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania supervise the DVOs on their caseloads. The analysis provided insight into how POs manage their caseloads and the importance that they place on a variety of supervision techniques. The primary strength of this exploratory study rests in enabling the reader to determine the POs awareness of the Model and its current usage. This knowledge provides guidance for future trainings that addresses the importance of probation officers employing specific supervision methods with DVOs to further ensure the safety of their victims.

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## Appendix A

### Model for Domestic Violence Intervention and Supervision

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The Model is a true collaboration of probation staff, providers of victim's services, and those that have worked in batterer programs. The Model is a resource of directed practices and procedures that each county can adjust and follow, given its available resources, to reduce the incidents of domestic violence and enhance victim and public safety.

The impetus for this project was to develop and implement a model of supervision to be used by County Offices of Probation and Parole when dealing with domestic violence offenders. The STOP grant (Services\*Training\*Officers\*Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program focused almost exclusively on training police and prosecutors in the unique dynamics of domestic violence but ignored county probation departments. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV), funded by a grant made possible by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), took the lead in helping the county probation staff to gain a better understanding of the unique dynamic of violent intimate partner relationships.

As outlined by the model, there are four key areas of probation and parole supervision:

1. Case planning
2. Initial contact and interview with the offender
3. Case documentation
4. Victim confidentiality

What follows are the four key areas and some important components the probation officer must be aware of and implement in order to adequately supervise the domestic violence offender.

**1. Case planning: Information needed to supervise a particular offender**

- Safety needs of the domestic violence victim
- Conditions of probation
- Present criminal conviction information
- Prior criminal history
- History of violence
- Any offense reports for arrests due to crimes committed against the same domestic violence victim
- Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders
- Court findings of indirect criminal contempt for violations of Protection From Abuse orders
- Tactics of control and intimidation used by the offender the domestic violence victim
- Pre-sentence Investigation (PSI)

**2. Initial contact and Interview with offender**

- Any violence that the offender perpetrates constitutes a violation
- The probation officer will initiate contact with the victim throughout the period of supervision
- The probation officer will not disclose information to the offender unless a court action requires that the probation officer do so.
- Supervision will focus solely upon the offender's actions, not upon the actions of the victim or anyone else.
- The probation officer will require that the offender refer to the victim in a respectful manner.
- The probation officers will not "sympathized" with the offender.

- The probation officer will challenge the offender's minimization and denial of abusive actions.
- The probation officer will determine if the offender has access to firearms through family or family members
- The probation will find out whether weapons were ever used in the present or past incidents
- The probation officer will determine the offender's drug and alcohol abuse and history.
  - The probation officer will determine if the offender has mental health issues.
  - The probation officer will inform the offender that the officer will make home visits.
  - The probation officer will inform the offender, with the victim's permission, that the officer will be contacting the victim and the victim's family through the length of supervision.
  - The probation officer will remain in contact with the offenders' treatment providers during the course of supervision.
  - The probation officer should have the offender sign an appropriate release of information as necessary.

**3. Case documentation: Every case file should contain accurate and current information and documentation.**

- Offender demographics
- Photograph
- Fingerprints
- Present law enforcement offense report
- Pre-sentence investigation (if applicable)
- Sentence and conditions thereof
- Criminal history
- Criminal and Civil Protection From Abuse orders (temporary and permanent)
- Institution reports

- Medical and psychological evaluations or reports
  - Mental health history
  - Addiction history
  - Contacts with offender, family members, treatment and intervention service providers.
  - Agency/program reports
  - Violations of sentence
  - Probation/parole revocation
- 4. Victim information: Probation officer should take steps to ensure that the offender never has access to any victim information. All information received from victims should be treated as “confidential”.**



# Appendix B

Table B1

## Overview of Pennsylvania Counties

County	Total Population	White	Black	Hispanic/Latino	*Other	Median Income	Metropolitan Area	Probation Superv Officers	Average Active Caseload
Adams County	102,232	90.9%	2.1%	5.5%	1.5%	\$55,124	Gettysburg	17	87
Allegheny	1,218,494	81.7%	13.2%	1.5%	3.6%	\$48,778	Pittsburgh	119	153
Armstrong	67,851	97.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%	\$41,055	Pittsburgh	10	83
Beaver	171,673	91.1%	6.2%	1.1%	1.6%	\$45,393	Pittsburgh	15	206
Bedford County	49,579	97.6%	0.5%	0.8%	1.1%	\$39,754	None	6	111
Berks County	407,125	79.5%	5.2%	14.1%	1.2%	\$54,492	Reading	38	155
Blair County	126,122	96.2%	1.6%	0.8%	1.4%	\$40,135	Altoona	19	110
Bradford County	61,131	97.0%	0.6%	0.9%	1.5%	\$40,033	Sayre	10	51
Bucks County	626,015	88.4%	3.8%	3.5%	4.3%	\$75,701	Phila	48	126
Butler County	184,694	96.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.6%	\$57,398	Pittsburgh	19	152
Cambria County	143,988	93.8%	3.5%	1.3%	1.4%	\$37,927	Johnstown	23	124
Cameron County	5,163	97.7%	0.6%	0.8%	1.9%	\$37,538	None	2	57
Carbon County	63,865	93.9%	1.8%	3.1%	1.2%	\$47,425	Allentown	6	125
Centre County	146,212	88.9%	3.1%	2.4%	5.6%	\$47,843	State College	15	228
Chester County	498,894	84.3%	6.5%	4.9%	4.3%	\$85,547	Phila	48	120
Clarion County	39,479	97.1%	1.2%	0.6%	1.1%	\$42,092	None	8	76
Clearfield County	82,324	94.9%	3.1%	1.0%	1.0%	\$37,324	DuBois	9	105
Clinton County	36,797	96.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.3%	\$37,444	Lock Haven	5	119
Columbia County	65,111	95.5%	1.3%	1.9%	1.3%	\$43,399	Bloomsburg	8	99
Crawford County	88,521	95.6%	2.0%	1.0%	1.4%	\$40,336	Meadville	19	56
Cumberland County	232,483	90.8%	3.3%	2.3%	3.6%	\$60,534	Harrisburg	24	86
Dauphin County	258,934	72.6%	17.5%	6.3%	3.6%	\$52,149	Harrisburg	60	58
Delaware County	558,028	73.5%	18.6%	2.5%	5.4%	\$64,688	Phila	60	156
Elk County	32,011	98.1%	0.3%	0.6%	1.0%	\$43,848	St. Marys	3	112
Erie County	280,291	88.5%	6.7%	2.9%	1.9%	\$44,006	Erie	28	86

County	Total Population	White	Black	Hispanic/ Latino	*Other	Median Income	Metropolitan Area	Probation Superv Officers	Average Active Caseload
Forest County	6,775	76.7%	18.0%	2.9%	0.6%	\$35,029	None	2	24
Fulton County	14,852	97.0%	1.3%	0.6%	1.1%	\$43,314	None	4	81
Greene County	39,245	93.8%	3.9%	1.0%	1.3%	\$40,589	None	4	145
Huntingdon County	45,395	92.0%	5.6%	1.3%	1.1%	\$41,568	Huntingdon	6	87
Indiana County	87,450	95.7%	2.0%	0.7%	1.6%	\$41,358	Indiana	13	86
Jefferson County	44,634	97.9%	0.4%	0.6%	1.1%	\$37,551	None	8	85
Juniata County	23,118	96.1%	0.7%	2.2%	1.0%	\$42,705	None	4	80
Lackawanna County	208,801	92.5%	2.3%	3.5%	1.7%	\$41,880	Scranton/Wilkes- Barre	35	90
Lancaster County	507,766	86.6%	3.7%	7.7%	2.0%	\$55,824	Lancaster	106	62
Lawrence County	90,160	93.5%	4.1%	0.9%	1.5%	\$41,594	New Castle	10	174
Lebanon County	130,506	88.8%	2.1%	7.8%	1.3%	\$52,273	Lebanon	20	65
Lehigh County	343,519	74.5%	5.8%	16.9%	2.8%	\$53,894	Allentown	31	126
Luzerne County	312,845	91.3%	2.9%	4.5%	1.3%	\$41,791	Scranton/Wilkes- Barre	35	66
Lycoming County	116,840	92.8%	4.6%	1.0%	1.6%	\$42,005	Williamsport	16	97
McKean County	43,196	94.5%	2.5%	1.6%	1.4%	\$38,749	Bradford	6	85
<i>*Mercer County</i>									
Mifflin County	45,937	97.5%	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	\$38,571	Lewistown	9	67
Monroe County	166,355	72.4%	11.8%	12.7%	3.1%	\$56,854	E.Stroudsburg	13	92
Montgomery County	782,339	81.6%	8.6%	3.3%	6.5%	\$77,993	Phila	54	163
Montour County	17,715	94.6%	1.6%	1.5%	2.3%	\$46,982	Bloomsburg	2	90
Northampton County	298,990	83.3%	4.6%	9.3%	2.8%	\$59,771	Allentown	20	80
Northumberland County	91,311	94.8%	2.3%	2.1%	0.8%	\$40,265	Sunbury	16	109
Perry County	45,502	97.0%	0.8%	1.1%	1.1%	\$54,078	Harrisburg	4	211
Philadelphia County	1,547,297	39.7%	43.7%	11.7%	4.9%	\$37,090	Phila	244	154
Pike County	60,529	83.2%	5.9%	8.7%	2.2%	\$57,558	New York City	9	50

County	Total Population	White	Black	Hispanic/ Latino	*Other	Median Income	Metropolitan Area	Probation Superv Officers	Average Active Caseload
Potter County	16,714	96.5%	0.9%	0.9%	1.7%	\$36,175	None	3	80
Schuylkill County	146,952	93.8%	3.0%	2.3%	0.9%	\$42,705	Pottsville	17	106
Sullivan County	6,140	93.8%	3.3%	1.6%	1.3%	\$37,113	None	1	40
Susquehanna County	40,646	97.1%	0.6%	1.2%	1.1%	\$43,467	None	6	83
Tioga County	40,875	97.0%	0.9%	0.8%	1.3%	\$38,699	None	8	60
Union County	43,560	85.6%	8.0%	4.7%	1.7%	\$45,545	Lewisburg	8	82
<i>*Venango County</i>									
Warren County	40,638	97.8%	0.3%	0.6%	1.3%	\$41,193	Warren	7	84
Washington County	207,389	94.0%	3.4%	1.0%	1.6%	\$50,791	Pittsburgh	15	155
Wayne County	51,337	93.4%	2.5%	2.9%	1.2%	\$45,736	None	6	57
Westmoreland County	362,251	95.1%	2.5%	0.8%	1.6%	\$46,994	Pittsburgh	39	150
Wyoming County	27,808	96.6%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	\$45,470	Scranton/Wilkes-Barre	5	53
York County	428,937	88.1%	5.4%	4.5%	2.0%	\$56,848	York	55	140
<b>PA TOTALS</b>	<b>12,604,767</b>	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>\$50,702</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>1506</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Note: Mercer and Venango Counties do not maintain Adult Probation and Parole Departments; however, they do provide court supervision of those offenders either sentenced to Intermediate Punishment (IP) or placed on Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD). The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) provides adult probation and parole supervision in these Counties (Office of Probation and Parole Services, 2009).

Appendix C  
Communication with County Chief Probation Officers

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Ronald J. Seyko  
Director-**Adult Probation**  
564 Forbes Avenue- 12th floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Seyko:

I am a former Allegheny County probation officer who is also an Indiana University of Pennsylvania graduate student. I am interested in examining how adult probation officers are supervising their caseloads, and specifically what practices and techniques are being used in the supervision of domestic violence offenders. In order to make this research possible I am requesting permission to survey the probation officers in your agency.

The project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. John Anderson, PhD. As a first step, I will be asking a select group of Allegheny County probation officers to review the survey. Their input will contribute to the final survey that will be administered to all of the Pennsylvania county probation officers. I am interested in obtaining your staffs knowledge and opinions on the subject. Their participation in the initial group and the survey is voluntary and anonymous. They are under no obligation to participate in this research and at any point may opt to withdraw their consent to participate without consequence.

There are no foreseeable physical risks associated with their participation. While they will not directly benefit from their participation, their participation may help the investigator better understand the supervision of domestic violence offenders across the state. The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual participant will be identified. If you have any questions you may contact Mathilda Spencer at 412-779-5532 or Dr. John Anderson, Program Coordinator at 724-357-2956 or [jaa@iup.edu](mailto:jaa@iup.edu).

Please find enclosed a brief overview of the research proposal as well as a consent form. Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely,  
Mathilda Spencer  
PhD Candidate  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Enclosures



**COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

ADULT PROBATION OFFICE - ADM UNIT

MANOR BUILDING, 564 FORBES AVENUE, SUITE 1212

PITTSBURGH, PA 15219

(412) 350-2320 Fax (412) 350-2316

*Ronald J. Seyko*  
Director

*Frank Scherer*  
Deputy Director

February 25, 2013

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP, Chairperson  
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
School of Graduate School and Research  
Stright Hall, Room 113  
210 South Tenth St.  
Indiana, PA 15705-1048  
Dear Dr. Mills:

It is my understanding that Mathilda Spencer has proposed conducting a research study entitled "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender" (Log No. 13-007) and that she specifically wants to conduct the pilot with Allegheny County Adult Probation.

Ms. Spencer has informed me of the design of the study, as well as the targeted population. I approve of her using Allegheny County as the research site for her pilot study. I support this effort and am willing to assist in its successful implementation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. I can be reached at (412) 350-2341.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Seyko  
Director  
cc: Mathilda Spencer

Robert W. McCullough, III  
Executive Director  
County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association  
1041 Pleasant Hills Road  
Williamsport, PA 17701

Dear Mr. McCullough:

I am a former Allegheny County probation officer who is also an Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) graduate student. I am interested in examining how adult probation officers are supervising their caseloads, and specifically what practices and techniques are being used in the supervision of domestic violence offenders.

The project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. John Anderson, PhD. As a first step, I will be asking a select group of Allegheny County probation officers to review the survey. Their input will contribute to the final survey that will be administered to all of the Pennsylvania county probation officers. I am interested in obtaining the probation officers knowledge and opinions on the subject. Their participation in the initial group and the survey is voluntary and anonymous. They are under no obligation to participate in this research.

There are no foreseeable physical risks associated with their participation. While they will not directly benefit from their participation, their participation may help the investigator better understand the supervision of domestic violence offenders across the state. The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual participant will be identified.

In order to make this research possible I am requesting permission to survey the probation officers statewide. To that end, I am asking your assistance in securing the permission of all of the county Chief probation officers. I have included with this email a copy of permission received from Allegheny County, which can serve as a template. I will need from the county Chief a letter on their county letterhead and then the letter faxed to Dr. John Mills at 724-357-2715 and emailed to me at [m.spencer@iup.edu](mailto:m.spencer@iup.edu). Additionally, I have attached the IRB approval from IUP and a copy of the proposed survey. If you have any questions you may contact Mathilda Spencer at 412-779-5532 or Dr. John Anderson, Program Coordinator at 724-357-2956 or [jaa@iup.edu](mailto:jaa@iup.edu).

Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely,  
Mathilda Spencer  
PhD Candidate  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Dear CHIEF'S NAME

Several weeks ago Bob McCullough was kind enough to send out a request to all of the county Chief Adult Probation Officers requesting that they submit a letter that would allow me to survey your probation staff. To date, I have not received your approval. I know with the first email there were some problems opening the letter. I have taken the liberty to attach a letter that you would just have to copy and paste on your letterhead. Once completed you can send the letters to the attention of John Mills, or fax it to him at 724-357-2715.

As a former probation officer I am fully aware how busy you are, and I truly appreciate you taking the time to complete this because without your authorization I am not permitted to survey your staff.

Thank you again for your support as I pursue my PhD.

Sincerely

Mathilda Spencer  
PhD Candidate  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

LETTERHEAD

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP, Chairperson  
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
School of Graduate School and Research  
Stright Hall, Room 113  
210 South Tenth St.  
Indiana, PA 15705-1048

Dear Dr. Mills:

It is my understanding that Mathilda Spencer has proposed conducting a research study entitled "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender" (Log No. 13-007) and that she specifically wants to conduct the survey with *COUNTY NAME* Adult Probation.

Ms. Spencer has informed me of the design of the study, as well as the targeted population. I approve of her using *COUNTY NAME* as the research site for her study. I support this effort and am willing to assist in its successful implementation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. I can be reached at *CONTACT NUMBER*

Sincerely,

*NAME*  
Chief Adult Probation Officer



Dear Chief *NAME*-

Thank you so much for allowing me to survey your staff regarding how they supervise their domestic violence offenders. This survey is completely anonymous; the data collected will be compiled in aggregate and used to complete my dissertation. If you would forward this email to your probation staff they will be able to click on the link that will take them to the survey.

[https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_5yzWhrpcUnZyY9n](https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5yzWhrpcUnZyY9n)

Thank you again for your support

Mathilda Spencer

PhD Candidate-Indiana University of Pennsylvania

## Appendix D

### Survey

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#### **Consent to participate**

You are being invited to participate in a dissertation research project conducted by Mathilda Spencer from School of Graduate Studies and Research of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. John Anderson, PhD.

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time. You may also refuse to answer any question.

This project is an attempt to measure supervision practices by probation officers of domestic violence offenders in the state of Pennsylvania.

You are one of 1,960 probation officers asked to participate in this project. Your participation consists of voluntarily answering the survey questions available. It should take you about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation in the project is anonymous. Please do not identify yourself in any of your responses to this survey.

There are no foreseeable physical risks associated with your participation. While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help the investigator better understand the supervision of domestic violence offenders across the state.

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual participant will be identified.

If you have any questions you may contact Mathilda Spencer at 412-779-5532 or Dr. John Anderson, Program Coordinator at 724-357-2956 or [jaa@iup.edu](mailto:jaa@iup.edu).

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS AT 724-357-7730.

## **Research Survey**

**For the purposes of this survey, we define domestic violence in terms of intimate partner violence. By doing so, this acknowledges that the victims of the abuse can be male or female, married or not, in a hetero or homosexual relationship. The key is that they are intimate partners, with one partner subjected to violent victimization by the other partner (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2008).**

Your participation in this survey is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Please be sure not to include any identifying information on this survey, including your name.

Section 1: Demographic Information

Please use the below listing of PA counties completing Question 1

01 Adams County	23 Delaware County	45 Monroe County
02 Allegheny County	24 Elk County	46 Montgomery County
03 Armstrong County	25 Erie County	47 Montour County
04 Beaver County	26 Fayette County	48 Northampton County
05 Bedford County	27 Forest County	49 Northumberland County
06 Berks County	28 Franklin County	50 Perry County
07 Blair County	29 Fulton County	51 Philadelphia County
08 Bradford County	30 Greene County	52 Pike County
09 Bucks County	31 Huntingdon County	53 Potter County
10 Butler County	32 Indiana County	54 Schuylkill County
11 Cambria County	33 Jefferson County	55 Snyder County
12 Cameron County	34 Juniata County	56 Somerset County
13 Carbon County	35 Lackawanna County	57 Sullivan County
14 Centre County	36 Lancaster County	58 Susquehanna County
15 Chester County	37 Lawrence County	59 Tioga County
16 Clarion County	38 Lebanon County	60 Union County
17 Clearfield County	39 Lehigh County	61 Venango County
18 Clinton County	40 Luzerne County	62 Warren County
19 Columbia County	41 Lycoming County	63 Washington County
20 Crawford County	42 McKean County	64 Wayne County
21 Cumberland County	43 Mercer County	65 Westmoreland County
22 Dauphin County	44 Mifflin County	66 Wyoming County
		67 York County

1. County of Employment:\_\_\_\_\_ (Please use number from above list)
2. What is your race?  
\_\_\_\_\_Caucasian/White  
\_\_\_\_\_African American  
\_\_\_\_\_Hispanic/Latino  
\_\_\_\_\_Asian  
\_\_\_\_\_Native American
3. What is your gender?  
\_\_\_\_\_Male \_\_\_\_\_Female
4. What year were you born?
5. How long have you been a probation officer?
6. Please check the one that best describes your current position/responsibilities:  
\_\_\_\_\_General Caseload  
\_\_\_\_\_Electronic Monitoring  
\_\_\_\_\_High Impact  
\_\_\_\_\_Specialized Sex Offender Supervision  
\_\_\_\_\_Specialized Domestic Violence Offenders (DVOs)  
\_\_\_\_\_Specialized Drug/Alcohol Supervision  
\_\_\_\_\_Day Treatment Center
7. How many years of education do you have?  
\_\_\_\_\_completed Bachelor degree  
\_\_\_\_\_completed Master's degree  
\_\_\_\_\_completed Doctorate

Section 2: Supervision/Case Management
--

8. Have you ever supervised domestic violence offenders on your caseload?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (*survey is completed*)

9. Do you currently supervise domestic violence offenders on your caseload?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (*survey is completed*)

*If Yes how many domestic violence offenders do you currently supervise?* \_\_\_\_\_

10. On the average for your DVOs, how many times per month do you conduct the following techniques

<b>Technique</b>	Never	1-7	8-15	16-23	24-31
Home visits					
Curfew Checks					
Office Visits					
Drug/Alcohol rehabilitation					
AA/NA meetings					
Employment visits					
Home confinement					
Day reporting centers					
Drug Testing					

11. To what extent do you feel the following issues are important to you supervision DVOs

<b>Philosophical Orientation</b>	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Of Little Importance	Unimportant
Public Safety					
Offender Rehabilitation					
Offender Compliance					
Offender Monitoring					
Offender Accountability					

Offender Reintegration					
Offender Training					
Offender Education					

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding case management practices

<b>Case Management Practice</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
a. Probation is an effective practice in reducing recidivism.					
b. Overall, there sufficient services available in your county to assist offenders?					
c. There is appropriate treatment available for domestic violence offenders?					
d. The services available in your county are effective in meeting the needs of the offenders you supervise.					
e. In the course of a normal working day, most of my time is spent in the office setting.					
f. I have access to any pre-sentence investigation information.					
g. I complete an assessment on the defendants?					
h. The level of supervision I provide is determined by the level of appraised risk.					
i. I am aware when Protection from Abuse papers are filed against offenders under your direct supervision.					
j. I have access to offense reports for arrests.					
k. I specifically explain to the offender what “no violent contact” means?					

l. I have received training specifically on how to supervise domestic violence offenders in the community.					
m. There is a Model of Supervision for Domestic Violence Offenders					
n. I have received training on evidence-based practice?					
o. I have received training on motivational interviewing?					
p. There are women's shelters in your county?					
q. I contact the victims of domestic violence offenders?					

13. Are POs assigned to supervise domestic violence offenders provided with additional training on the topic?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

14. Are domestic violence offenders on a specialized caseload for their entire period of supervision?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

15. Are domestic violence offenders ever placed on any type of administrative caseload?

<b>Administrative caseload</b>	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Minimum supervision					
Restitution only					
Telephone contact					
Mail					



Other: _____					
--------------	--	--	--	--	--

16. Are there any caps placed on your DVO caseload?

\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

*If Yes caseload cap of:* \_\_\_\_\_

17. In the course of supervising your DVOs, do you conduct additional fieldwork beyond home visits?

<b>Supervision Technique</b>	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Employment visits					
Surveillance					
Treatment facility visits					
Education or training facility visits					

18. Do you perform home visits/field work primarily

<b>Fieldwork</b>	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Alone					
With a partner					
As part of team					

19. When supervising a domestic violence offender do you interview the victim?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

20. When conducting home visits, whenever possible you talk to the victim, family members, or any others that reside with the offender to evaluate compliance?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

21. Do you carry:

<b>Equipment</b>	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Firearms					
Defensive Spray, such as pepper					
Baton					
Stun gun or other electrical immobilization device					
Handcuffs					
Radio (departmental or police)					
Cell Phone					
Other, please identify:_____					

22. Does your Department have any specific policies/procedures for dealing with the victims of domestic violence?

\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_No

23. Is your Department involved in any partnerships with other agencies or community groups regarding the management of domestic violence offenders (other than treatment providers)?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

24. Are there any offender supervision issues, arrangements, or techniques unique to your Department that was not captured in these questions? If so, please explain.

Section 3: Assessment
-----------------------

25. Do you use any risk or needs assessment?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No (Skip to Question 28)

*If yes, please indicate the ones that you use:*

\_\_\_\_\_ COMPAS

\_\_\_\_\_ Proxy score

\_\_\_\_\_ Wisconsin Client Management Classification

\_\_\_\_\_ Static 99

\_\_\_\_\_ YASI

\_\_\_\_\_ CMC

\_\_\_\_\_ LSI-R

\_\_\_\_\_ Abel

\_\_\_\_\_ DSI-PPMS  
system

\_\_\_\_\_ In-house point

\_\_\_\_\_ TCU

\_\_\_\_\_ Stable 2007

\_\_\_\_\_ Oklahoma Supervision Matrix

26. Do you use any of the domestic violence specific assessments?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

*If yes, please check the ones used:*

\_\_\_\_\_ Lethality Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ SARA-Spousal Assault Risk Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ Victim Interviews

\_\_\_\_\_ MCMI-Millon Multiaxial Inventory-III

\_\_\_\_\_ DVI-Domestic Violence Inventory

\_\_\_\_\_ DVSI-Domestic Violence Screening Instrument

\_\_\_\_\_ Clinical Assessments

27. Are the conditions of probation recommended based on actuarial risk assessment tool(s) or clinical assessment?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Section 4: The Court
----------------------

28. Does your court handle intimate partner domestic violence cases in a specialized domestic violence court?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

29. Does the court in your county utilize post-sentence return appearances (reviews) to assess the adjustment of the domestic violence offenders?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

30. Does the court have a set of recommendations, orders and conditions, or supervision strategies specific to domestic violence offenders?

<b>Court Recommendations</b>	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No recommendations or orders and conditions specific to domestic violence offenders					
Participation in domestic violence treatment					
Confidentiality waiver with treatment providers					
Prohibiting contact with victim					
Prohibiting violent contact with victim					
Prohibiting alcohol consumption					
Monitoring computer use					
Employment restrictions to limit access to victims					
Residential restrictions to limit access to victims					
Restriction of movement (e.g. home detention, house arrest, electronic home monitor)					

31. Does the court discharge offenders before their maximum expiration date?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

32. Does your county District Attorney's office have a specialized domestic violence offense prosecutor?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (Skip to question 34)

33. If a domestic violence offender violates probation, does that specialized prosecutor handle the VOP proceedings?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

34. What is the usual outcome of a violation regarding domestic violence offenders

<b>Violation</b>	Continued on Probation	Revoked-Incarcerated, Placed or other
Technical		
New Conviction (any):		
New Conviction (domestic violence):		

35. Does your court have dedicated probation officers to handle intimate partner domestic violence cases?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

36. Does your court ever order domestic violence defendants to attend a batterer program?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Section 5: Treatment

37. Who provides domestic violence offender treatment for your Department?

<b>DVO Treatment</b>	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
No treatment provided					
Probation Officer(s) alone					
Co-facilitated by PO and qualified staff or clinician					
Qualified Probation staff only (e.g. clinician, MSW, etc.)					
Qualified non- probation staff only (e.g. clinician, MSW, etc.)					

38. Does your department have any contractual or other affiliations with treatment providers that provide domestic violence (batterer)-specific services?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

*If yes how many* \_\_\_\_\_

39. Is it a requirement of the court that the program report on offender compliance?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No-If the batterer program does Not report on compliance to the court or probation, please skip to Question 44

40. When does the batterers' program report on compliance?

<b>Program Discharge</b>	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
When the defendant completes the program					
When the defendant is terminated from the program					
When the defendant is not cooperating with program rules but is not yet terminated					
Whenever the defendant returns to court for periodic compliance monitoring					
On some other schedule-Please specify:					

41. How satisfied are you with the timeliness of reports submitted by the batterer program?

5	4	3	2	1
Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied



42. How often does the court impose sanctions in response to noncompliance with a batterer program?

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

43. Does your court ever order domestic violence defendants to attend another type of program instead of a batterer program?

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (Check all that apply)

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Alcohol treatment

b. \_\_\_\_\_ Anger Management

c. \_\_\_\_\_ Couples counseling

d. \_\_\_\_\_ Mediation

e. \_\_\_\_\_ Mental health  
treatment/counseling

f. \_\_\_\_\_ Parenting class

g. \_\_\_\_\_ Substance abuse treatment (not  
just for alcohol)

#### Section 6: Your Agency

Listed below are statements that represent possible opinions that YOU may have about working at your agency. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by filling in the circle on your answer sheet that best represents your point of view about your agency. Please choose from the following answers:

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

44. \_\_\_\_\_ cares about my opinions

45. \_\_\_\_\_ encourages involvement in decisions regarding my position

46. \_\_\_\_\_ cares about my general satisfaction with my work

47. \_\_\_\_\_ is concerned with my safety

48. \_\_\_\_\_ strongly considers my goals and values

49. \_\_\_\_\_ fails to appreciate any extra effort from me

50. \_\_\_\_\_disregards my best interest when decisions are made that affect me
51. \_\_\_\_\_would ignore a complaint from me
52. \_\_\_\_\_provides adequate training opportunities
53. \_\_\_\_\_would consider my input in organizational decision-making
54. \_\_\_\_\_tries to make my job as interesting as possible.
55. How important are the following in helping you fulfill your duties as a probation officer

<b>Agency Help</b>	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Of Little Importance	Unimportant
Officer Safety					
Staff development training					
Additional staff					
Reduced caseload					
Increased salary					
Equipment upgrades					

**Thank you very much for your participation and assistance! If you have any further questions, please call Mathilda Spencer at 412-795-8394 or email at [mspencer@iup.edu](mailto:mspencer@iup.edu).**

## Appendix E

### IRB and RTAF Approvals

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[www.iup.edu/irb](http://www.iup.edu/irb)

February 26, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

Thank you for submitting your research site approval from the Allegheny County Adult Probation Office for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved your project for the period of February 26, 2013 to February 26, 2014 and will so inform the Board at the next meeting. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

It is also important for you to note that IUP adheres strictly to Federal Policy that requires you to notify the IRB promptly regarding:

1. any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented),
2. any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects, and
3. any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

Should you need to continue your research beyond February 26, 2014 you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at (724) 357-7730 or come to Room 113, Stright Hall for further information.

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form before you can begin your research. If you have not yet submitted your RTAF, the form can be found at <http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=91683>.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor  
Ms. Brenda Boal, Secretary



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March 4, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer

Thank you for submitting your research site approval from the Armstrong County Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved your site and will so inform the Board at the next meeting. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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March 7, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approvals from Beaver County Probation Department and Somerset County Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research sites and will so inform the Board at the next meeting. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson Dissertation Advisor



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March 19, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Erie County Adult Probation/Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of March 18, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 2, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approvals from Blair County Adult Parole and Probation Department, Bradford County Probation and Parole Department, Cambria County Adult Probation Bureau, Elk County Probation and Parole Department, Lehigh County Adult Probation and Parole Department, Northumberland County Adult Probation and Parole Department, and Wyoming County Adult Probation and Parole Department, for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research sites for the period of April 30, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor





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May 3, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approvals from Adams County Adult Probation and Parole Department, Berks County Adult Probation and Parole Department, Dauphin County Adult Probation and Parole Department, Jefferson County Probation and Parole Department, Juniata County Probation and Parole Department, Union County Probation and Parole Department, Warren County Probation and Parole Department, and Wayne County Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research sites for the period of May 2, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor





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May 7, 2013

Matilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Fulton County Probation and Parole Department, Mifflin County Probation and Parole Department, and Sullivan County Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 3, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 7, 2013

Matilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Bucks County Probation and Parole Department and Huntingdon County Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 6, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 9, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Schuylkill County Adult Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 9, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 22, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Crawford County Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 18, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 22, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from Luzerne County Department of Probation Services for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 22, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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May 29, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Westmoreland County Adult Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of May 29, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



## Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Institutional Review Board for the  
Protection of Human Subjects  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Stright Hall, Room 113  
210 South Tenth Street  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1048

P 724-357-7730  
F 724-357-2715  
[irb-research@iup.edu](mailto:irb-research@iup.edu)  
[www.iup.edu/irb](http://www.iup.edu/irb)

June 13, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Northampton County Adult Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of June 12, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor





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June 13, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Indiana County Probation Department Adult Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of June 12, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor





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June 13, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Chester County Adult Probation and Parole Department and Cameron County Probation and Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of June 13, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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June 19, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Franklin County Adult Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of June 17, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Mills', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



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June 19, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Forest County Probation Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of June 19, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



# Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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July 1, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The IRB office received research site approval from the Carbon County Adult Probation/Parole Department for your proposed research project, "Community Supervision of the Domestic Violence Offender," (Log No. 13-007). On behalf of the IRB, I have approved the research site for the period of July 1, 2013 to February 26, 2014. Please forward additional letters of research site approval as you receive them so they can be added to your IRB file. As you know, data can only be collected and analyzed from sites with official research site approval on file.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'J. Mills'.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects  
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

Cc: Dr. John Anderson, Dissertation Advisor



# Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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210 South Tenth Street  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1048

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F 724-357-2715  
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July 9, 2013

Mathilda Spencer  
710 Twin Oak Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Dear Ms. Spencer:

Now that your research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, I have reviewed your Research Topic Approval Form and approved it.

Your anticipated graduation date is August 2014. You must apply for graduation by August 1, 2014. This means that your thesis or dissertation must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research by July 15, 2014.

**The Thesis/Dissertation Manual, additional resources, and information to help you start writing can be found at <http://www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/thesis/default.aspx>.**

You are now eligible to receive a FREE copy of Adobe Professional! This software will help you to create an electronic thesis or dissertation. Attached is a copy of the Adobe Agreement form that you need to print, fill out, and sign. Once you have completed the form, you can take it to the IT Support Center in G35 Delaney Hall to obtain a copy of the software. If you are not able to come to campus, you will need to scan the completed form and send it as an attachment from your IUP e-mail account to [it-support-center@iup.edu](mailto:it-support-center@iup.edu). You can also fax the completed form to 724-357-4983. Please indicate in your email or fax that you are a graduate student requesting the Adobe Professional software and include your Banner ID and mailing address so the software can be mailed to you.

Finally, if you change your topic, the scope or methodology of your project, or your committee, a new Research Topic Approval Form must be completed.

I wish you well and hope you find this experience to be rewarding.

Sincerely,

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.  
Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Research

xc: Dr. Yaw Asamoah, Dean  
Dr. John Anderson, Graduate Coordinator  
& Dissertation Committee Chair  
Ms. Julie Bassaro, Secretary

TPM/bb