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Bridging the Research/Practice Gap: Street-Level Decision Making and Historical - Influences Related to Use of Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Probation.

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

by -

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DEDICATION

For my parents, Thomas and Susan Viglione, for their endless love and support and for always encouraging and inspiring me to follow my dreams.

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events and parties, and even offered me an occasional job. Each of you inspired me in so many ways that will continue to influence my career moving forward. A special shout out to “the professor” – your wisdom and passion for your job is a constant reminder that change is infinitely possible.

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always being interested in my work and supporting me. I promise, this is the last graduation ceremony!

Last, but not least, to my soon-to-be husband, Michael Caudy. Thank you for being my rock throughout this process. You supported me throughout times of extremely high levels of stress, crazy hours of fieldwork, nonstop questions, and talked through ideas with me for hours. Thank you for your edits and feedback on various drafts of this dissertation and for finally teaching me the proper way to format a table. You kept me sane and reminded me things are never as bad as they seem. TTMAB.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence! ..... ACE! -
Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy.....CBT
Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research .....CFIR -
Department of Corrections..... DOC -
Effective Communication/Motivational Strategies.....ECMS -
Evidence-Based Practices .....EBPs -
Medication-Assisted Treatment .....MAT
Motivational Interviewing .....MI -
National Institute of Corrections.....NIC -
Risk and Needs Assessment..... RNA -
Risk-Need-Responsivity ..... RNR -
Probation Officer ..... PO -

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ABSTRACT

BRIDGING THE RESEARCH/PRACTICE GAP: STREET-LEVEL DECISION MAKING AND HISTORICAL INFLUENCES RELATED TO USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES IN ADULT PROBATION.

Jill E. Viglione, MA

George Mason University, 2015

Dissertation Director: Dr. Danielle S. Rudes

Growing empirical research finds that a correctional system devoted to punishment is ineffective and can actually produce criminogenic effects (Nagin, Cullen & Johnson, 2009). As a result, many justice organizations, including probation, are encouraging managers and staff to adopt evidence-based practices (EBPs)—practices supported by scientific evidence, such as validated risk and needs assessments, motivational interviewing, and cognitive-behavioral therapies. Current research finds that when used appropriately, evidenced-based, rehabilitative interventions are effective at reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) and improving overall probation success (Taxman, 2008). Despite this push, justice organizations are often slow to adopt and implement effective practices. Implementation of EBPs falls heavily on street-level workers, like probation officers (POs) as they adopt/adapt and implement policy and practice changes by incorporating them into routines and decisions. Using a mixed method approach

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(ethnography and surveys), this study builds upon traditional street-level decision-making literature, but broadens the scope of inquiry by critically examining how POs understand, define and adapt new practices to their existing organizational routines. Further, this dissertation examines the conditions under which POs make adaptations to policy and the role that organizational culture and the history of the organization plays in shaping adaptation decisions, which ultimately play a critical role in the way in which POs carry out their job and policies designed to improve probation practice and outcomes.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

At present, approximately one in every 31 adults is under some form of correctional supervision in the United States (Pew Report, 2009). Community corrections (e.g., probation and parole) form the largest piece of the overall correctional system with approximately five million adults under community supervision (Chiancone, 2010; Glaze & Bonczar, 2010). With tight budgets and a push toward accountability and results, many justice organizations, including probation, are implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs)—practices supported by scientific evidence, such as validated risk and needs assessments, motivational interviewing, and cognitive-behavioral therapies. Current research finds that when used appropriately, evidenced-based, rehabilitative interventions effectively reduce recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) and improve overall probation success (Taxman, 2008). Existing research documents the challenges associated with implementing and sustaining EBPs within justice agencies alongside existing organizational culture (e.g., Battalino, Beutler & Shani, 1996; Rudes, 2012). Most research in this area focuses on implementation *outcomes* rather than the process decisions street-level bureaucrats make while undergoing change (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). Thus, we know very little about the complex change *process*. Additionally, decisions made by street-level workers are often separated from the organizational context within which they were made, which ignores personal, professional, and cultural influences that

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shape street-level workers' actions to advance or hinder change (Barley, 1986; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000; Watkins-Hayes, 2009).

EBP implementation falls heavily on street-level workers, such as probation officers (POs), as they adopt/adapt and implement policy and practice changes by incorporating them into work routines and decisions. Over the last decade, a substantial body of research documents and analyzes the role of street-level bureaucrats within criminal justice organizations in policy implementation and decision-making processes. Beginning with Lipsky's (1980) foundational work, street-level bureaucracy theory describes street-level workers as front-line policy interpreters with primary responsibility for policy implementation. Following this framework, other scholars note the prevalence of discretionary decision making present in street-level work (e.g., Feldman, 1992; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2000) that affects the interpretation and implementation of new policies. At a critical time for the criminal justice system, characterized by large prison populations and mounting financial strain, EBPs have the potential to improve the system and better serve offenders and communities. However, these beneficial effects are dependent upon street-level workers' decisions when carrying out EBPs. Previous research notes the challenge of changing practices within correctional environments characterized by a punitive, control-oriented culture, towards rehabilitative strategies, despite evidence that punitive strategies are ineffective and potentially harmful (see for example Battalino, Beutler & Shani, 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Rudes, 2012)

Through a mixed method approach (ethnography and surveys), this dissertation builds upon traditional street-level decision making literature, but broadens the scope of

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inquiry by critically examining how POs understand, define and adapt new practices to their existing organizational routines. Further, this dissertation examines the conditions under which POs make adaptations to policy and the role organizational culture and history play in shaping adaptation decisions, which ultimately impact how POs carry out their job and implement policies designed to improve probation practice and outcomes. Existing research examining the processes associated with implementing changes within complex environments such as the justice system largely neglects POs' role in interpreting, defining, adapting and implementing new policies. This project improves upon the existing body of knowledge on decision-making surrounding EBP implementation in probation organizations by examining change at the organizational (messo) and individual (micro) levels yielding a fuller, more contextualized view of how POs understand, define, and adapt new policies. To do this, this project uses a decision making theoretical framework to better understand probation work and the related processes POs use for decision making while also considering innovation within the historical and cultural context of probation organizations. In doing so, this project provides data and analysis to further understanding of complex decision making processes surrounding the use of new practices and how historical and cultural influences shape street-level decisions. This study moves the field towards understanding the reach of the EBP movement through examining the *process* of implementing EBPs. Failure to examine street-level decision making and adaptations of EBPs in practice leaves unanswered questions regarding the continued reliance on ineffective or inadequate

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treatment and services for offender populations, which contradict the very core of the EBP movement.

At a time when effective practice and policy implementation is of utmost importance, this research examines an understudied component of the change process – the PO. Street-level bureaucrats, like POs, are often unheard throughout the change process, yet reform challenges street-level workers to "rethink, redefine, and represent a host of intertwining identities…that shape social and political action in important ways" (Watkins-Hayes, 2009; 12). By framing POs as "socially-situated bureaucrats" (Watkins-Hayes, 2009; 13), this study seeks to understand how the organizational culture of probation agencies interacts with the professional and social identities of POs who interpret and adapt new practices to their current organizational context and routine and enact EBPs at the street-level. Further, this study attempts to understand how the complex culture of probation agencies influences discretionary decision making and how the decisions POs make influence the culture in return. In the following sections, I outline data collection strategies and analysis plans for the present study.

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CHAPTER TWO: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION

"We have to accept the premise that change is difficult. I often tell correctional staff who complain about the difficulty of changing offender behavior to try to change something about themselves. For those who have tried to lose weight, quit smoking, eat fewer sweets, or exercise more, you know it is not easy, and heaven knows many of us try. We would we think that it would be easy for a correctional system or an agency to change, especially given the relative comfort that exists in maintaining the status quo."
-Latessa (2004; 548)

Over the last 40 decades, punitive strategies and philosophies dominated the criminal justice field and correctional work. This emphasis on crime control maintained constancy until recently, as substantial prison populations across the U.S. drew attention to the ineffectiveness of prisons and accompanying financial strain (Rhine, Mawhorr and Parks, 2006). In addition, growing research finds a correctional system devoted solely to punishment is ineffective and can result in criminogenic effects (Nagin, Cullen and Johnson, 2009). Taken together, these factors have led to a recent renewed interested in rehabilitation as a correctional strategy (Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, 1990; Cullen and Gendreau, 2000). As a result, researchers and correctional agencies promote the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs), or practices scientifically proven effective (Sherman, 1998), as "best practices" and tools for correctional agencies to achieve better and more fair outcomes.

The movement towards use of EBPs to guide and structure correctional practice has infiltrated prisons, jails, parole and probation work. In probation specifically, EBPs emphasize "people changing" instead of "people processing" (Viglione and Taxman, 2014), restructuring the work of a probation officer (PO) to focus on short- and long-term

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behavior change rather than solely risk management. In this light, probation agencies train probation staff to motivate probationers to make positive behavior changes, participate in appropriate programming and treatment, and adhere to conditions of supervision (Taxman, 2006). Recent research highlights the importance of a treatment component, finding rehabilitative interventions effectively reduce recidivism (Andrews and Bonta, 2010) and probation without treatment is actually ineffective (Andrews and Bonta, 2010; Cullen and Gendreau, 2000; Taxman, 2008)

To promote EBPs, researchers developed principles of effective intervention, which outline specific strategies and tools correctional practitioners can implement to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes (e.g., Andrews and Dowden, 2006; Cullen and Gendreau, 2000; Lipsey and Cullen, 2007; Smith, Gendreau & Swartz, 2009). These principles reflect assessment practices, individualizing services to target factors associated with criminal behavior, incorporating treatment planning, balancing rewards and sanctions, and providing an integrated approach for offenders with multiple needs (Andrews and Bonta, 2010; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Smith, Gendreau and Swartz, 2009). The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) also synthesized the research on effective practices for community corrections agencies into eight principles (Bogue et al., 2004). These eight principles serve as a resource for many correctional agencies, including the agency in this research, to guide implementation of EBPs. In fact, the agency in this study used the first six NIC principles as the introduction to EBPs across the state. These six interdependent principles include: (a) assess actuarial risk/needs; (b) enhance intrinsic motivation; (c) target interventions; (d) skill train with directed practice;

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(e) increase positive reinforcement, and (f) engage ongoing support in natural communities.

Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs

This principle, assess actuarial risk/needs, suggests community corrections agencies develop a system to assess offender risk level and criminogenic needs. Agencies should select a validated instrument, preferably a third or fourth generation risk assessments[1] as they assess both static (risk of recidivism based on historical factors) and dynamic risk factors (psychosocial factors linked to criminal behavior) and criminogenic needs (which first and second generations do not). Practitioners should conduct assessments as early in the process as possible, as information gained from the risk and needs tool is required for effective supervision and treatment of offenders. Agencies should adequately train staff on assessment administration and organizational policy and procedures should support integration of the assessment tools into routine practice. Practitioners should consider information from standardized risk and needs assessment instruments, along with information gained through routine interactions with offenders to inform supervision and case management decisions and reassessments (Andrews et al.,

[1] Third generation risk and needs assessments are theoretically and empirically grounded instruments that measure criminogenic needs of offenders, or psychosocial factors linked to criminal behavior, such as antisocial peers, and antisocial cognitions/criminal thinking. The intent behind third generation tools are to assist in allocating resources appropriately based on risk level and target interventions based on criminogenic needs. Fourth-generation instruments were developed to emphasize the link between assessment and case management (Andrews & Bonta, 2006). These tools assess responsivity factors, emphasize systematic intervention, and advance the opportunity to assess personal responsivity factors that relate to treatment outcomes (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006).

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1990; Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Bogue et al., 2004; Clements, 1996; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Kropp & Hart, 1995).

Enhance Intrinsic Motivation

Through their interactions with offenders, community corrections staff can enhance intrinsic motivation—a necessary component of creating lasting behavior change. Practitioners can utilize motivational interaction techniques to address lack of motivation to make changes in clients' lives. For example, motivational interviewing provides a strategy for practitioners to use to address ambivalence about change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Motivational interviewing is a "skillful clinical style" (Rollnick, Miller & Butler, 2008; 6) in which the counselor or practitioner guides and listens to clients rather than directing them as a means to activate the client's own motivation to change (Rollnick, Miller & Butler, 2008).

Target Interventions

The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model outlines several principles designed to generate effective interventions for offender populations with the ultimate goals of improving treatment for offenders and reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The principles of the RNR model include: 1) the *risk principle,* which states that the level of service should be matched to the offender's level of risk; high-risk offenders are better suited for treatment programming, 2) the *needs principle,* which identifies what treatment programs should focus on, specifically, offenders' criminogenic needs, or those needs that are directly related to offending behavior, and lastly, 3) the *responsivity principle,* which states that treatment using a cognitive-behavioral approach should be matched to

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the abilities, motivation, and learning style of the offender (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In addition, research notes the importance of *dosage* and *treatment*. Appropriate services should occupy approximately 40 to 70 percent of an offender's free time over a three to nine month time span, modified depending on offender risk level, with higher risk offenders receiving more structured services as compared to lower risk offenders (Gendreau & Goggin, 1995; Palmer, 1995; Steadman, Morris & Dennis, 1995). Finally, supervision strategies should incorporate treatment, especially cognitive-behavioral programming as a means to improve offender outcomes and public safety (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Palmer, 1995; Petersilia, 1997, 2002).

Skill Train with Directed Practice

Successful implementation of EBPs requires that practitioners receive adequate training and have sufficient knowledge (although these terms are undefined within the principles) of the underlying theories behind the practices/principles, including an understanding of antisocial thinking, social learning, and effective communication strategies and ability to identify and address anti-social thinking. Staff should serve as a role model in their interactions with offenders, through utilization and reinforcement of the same pro-social attitudes and behaviors they are encouraging offenders to learn (Aos et al., 1998; Lipsey, 1993; Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

Increase Positive Reinforcement

Use of positive reinforcements help to shape an individual's thinking patterns to encourage them to continue engaging in desired behaviors (Griffith et al., 2000; Lussier

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et al., 2006; Petry & Martin, 2002; Rudes et al., 2012). Specifically, use of positive reinforcement acts as a social learning process where the use of incentives disrupts the influences associated with undesirable behaviors, such as drug use. Effective use of positive reinforcement in conjunction with sanctions is a more effective strategy than relying on sanctions along (Marlowe & Kirby, 1999). For programs to be most effective, research finds rewards should outnumber sanctions by at least a 4:1 ratio (Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Wodahl et al., 2011).

Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities

Pro-social supports play an important role in supporting offender success. Effective interventions integrate pro-social individuals (e.g., family members, spouses, friends) to positively reinforce desired behaviors. In addition, growing research supports restorative initiatives that emphasize developing and strengthening bonds and social ties to pro-social individuals within the community (Bonta et al., 2002; Clear & Sumter, 2002; O'Connor & Perryclear, 2003).

The National Institute of Corrections also suggests two additional principles for EBPs in community corrections. These include appropriate measurement and analysis of offender outcomes and staff performance, including fidelity to the EBPs (Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Dilulio et al., 1993; Henggeler et al., 1997; Miller & Mount, 2001) and providing measurement feedback (Baer et al., 1992; Decker, 1983). Taken together, these principles synthesize much of the research evidence on effective practices within community corrections and suggest strategies correctional agencies can implement in order to become more evidence-based. Despite available research evidence on

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effective practices, implementing these principles in practice presents significant difficulties for both correctional organizations and workers. The challenge of change is a major theme present throughout this dissertation.

Process of Evidence-Based Practice Implementation in the Current Study

In 2006, the study-site state began to support the use of EBPs, including the use of a validated risk and needs assessment, motivational interviewing, cognitive-based therapies such as the program *Thinking for a Change*, and various problem-solving and relationship-building skills (see Table 1). The state provided specialized training and technical assistance to all staff to guide implementation. Training and implementation rollout occurred via progressive designation of units where offices in tier one first received training and information regarding EBPs and so on. The four offices placed into the first tier were either interested in innovation and/or were already starting to think about and implement EBPs. Tier one probation offices voluntarily assigned themselves to be the first to receive EBP education and training, representing classic early adopters of innovation (Rogers, 2003). Tier two probation offices (2009 trainings) consisted of five offices that were similar to tier one offices in size and populations served, but had little experience with implementing innovative practices. Due to growing political pressure and after a push from the state governor, the agency placed the remaining 34 offices in either tier three or four in a non-systematic way. Tier three has eight probation offices (2010 trainings) and tier four has 26 offices (2013 trainings). This systematized rollout of EBPs provides a unique opportunity to study decision-making processes and how staff understand and adapt to change.

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Table 1

Agency Evidence-Based Practice Implementation Timeline

Site	Start Date	Tier	ECMS	Intro to EBPs	Risk and Needs Assessment	MI	Case Planning	Curriculum #1	Curriculum #2
8	2006	1	2007	7/09	1/09	2/11/10	4/11/11	2013	NA
12	2006	1	2007	2008	1/09	11/30/09	4/23/11	2013	NA
2	2006	1	2007	12/08	6/09	7/21/10	5/9/11	2013	NA
7	2009	2	2009	12/09	6/09	8/10/10	4/14/11	2013	2014
1	2009	2	2009	4/09	6/09	4/15/10	5/10/11	2013	NA
6	2009	2	2008	9/09	2010	2/25/10	5/16/11	2013	2014
10	2010	3	NA	5/20/10	2010	5/2/11	3/22/11	2013	NA
4	2010	3	NA	6/15/10	2010	3/21/11	3/22/11	2013	NA
5	2010	3	NA	6/22/10	2010	5/3/11	5/3/11	2013	NA
3	2013	4	NA	2013	2010	2013	2013	2013	2014
9	2013	4	NA	2013	2010	2013	2013	2013	NA
11	2013	4	NA	2013	2010	2013	2013	2013	NA

Table 1 highlights several changes or adaptations the agency made towards its EBP training process. When the agency first began to implement EBPs, they utilized the Effective Communication/Motivational Strategies (ECMS)[2] curriculum to train staff on effective and motivational communication skills. The agency provided this training to sites in tier one and two between 2007 and 2009. In 2009, the agency trained probation staff in site 12 in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and then decided to train all staff in MI

[2] ECMS is a four to five day training providing foundational information and skills needed to assist correctional professionals in preparing for and applying EBPs. This training focuses on training POs in how to apply both behavioral and cognitive approaches to managing and effecting change with offenders, and learning specific listening/communication skills and techniques that assist offenders in increasing internal awareness and motivation for change.

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rather than ECMS. Sites in tiers one and two received a second round of communication training in the form of MI, while all sites in tiers three and four received only MI training for communication skill building. Another adaptation made throughout the tier implementation process was the development of and use of an Introduction to EBPs and Deportment training. This agency designed this training to describe what it means to be evidence-based and the lay the foundation for more comprehensive EBP trainings to follow. For sites in tiers one and two, this agency did not develop this introductory training until after they began the EBP implementation process, but for remaining sites in tiers three and four, this was their first training received as part of adopting and implementing EBPs. Large-scale organizational change, like the changes undergone by the agency in the current study, is a complex task. The tier system of implementation allowed the agency to learn how to tailor implementation efforts through addition and removal of trainings.

In addition to a focus on communication skills, a major change associated with EBP implementation includes a shift from contact-drive supervision, which focuses on the quantity of meetings between POs and probationers and compliance with conditions of probation to a case-plan driven supervision strategy. Case-plan driven supervision requires utilization of an actuarial risk and needs assessment instrument, which the agency implemented in 2009 and 2010 across the study sites. After training all probation staff on use of the instrument, the agency focused on the next step in the process – applying risk and needs information to the creation of a case plan. The case plan is a written document, outlining goals and tasks addressing identified areas of risk and needs

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that the probationer will work on throughout their time on supervision. Each case plan is individualized to the probationer's unique needs and goals and reflects a collaborated agreement and effort on behalf of both the PO and the probationer. The case plan then dictates the quantity as well as content of interactions between POs and probationers. The agency provided training on case planning to sites in tiers one, two and three in 2011 and to tier four sites in 2013.

In 2013, the agency implemented a new correctional curriculum (correctional curriculum #1 below). The focus of this curriculum is to assist POs in translating the principles of effective interventions into practice, specifically focusing on face-to-face interactions with probationers (Smith et al., 2012) and teaching POs how to use structured learning and cognitive-behavioral therapies (CBT) in their interactions with offenders (Latessa, 2012). The curriculum teaches POs how to integrate EBPs into their supervision and case management skills focusing on six specific skill areas: (a) use of an actuarial assessment to drive a structured case plan; (b) interventions provided during in-person meetings; (c) offenders are matched to interventions according to their risk and needs; (d) interventions used are based in scientific evidence; (e) targets are criminogenic, and (f) quality assurance processes are in place to ensure fidelity (Latessa, 2012).

In addition to correctional curriculum #1, the agency is currently piloting testing a second correctional curriculum with three probation sites in the state (also included in this study). This curriculum is delivered through an online, interactive system that incorporates vignettes, real-time feedback, printable resources, audio enhancements, and

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video demonstrations. The curriculum also has tests throughout the various training modules, allowing POs to assess how well they understand concepts and ideas. Similar to the first correctional curriculum, this online training aims to build staff skills in five key areas: (a) appropriate use of risk and needs assessments; (b) supporting and motivating offenders through the behavior change process and dealing with resistance to change; (c) creating individualized case plans; (d) problem-solving skills, and (e) supporting offender desistance.

The state in the current study was progressive in their approach to providing the various EBPs to their staff. The agency provided multiple trainings in person and via computer (correctional curriculum #2). In addition, they developed a system of follow-up trainings or boosters, to refresh trained staff skill and knowledge but also to ensure new staff receive training. The agency required each probation office in the state to select internal coaches, or POs who received additional training to become in-house experts/trainers. For example, each probation site had POs who served as the office "risk and needs assessment coach" or the "MI coach". Coaches provided immediate help or guidance to probation staff in their office to promote knowledge and skill acquisition and support the implementation process. The agency directed each probation office to divide staff members into learning teams, or small groups of probation staff who met monthly to learn new EBP-related skills, practice learned skills, and/or address challenges in using EBPs in practice. In 2013, the agency developed an EBP Operations unit to support the implementation of EBPs across the state. Within this unit, the state hired one Director of Evidence-Based Practices Operations and three EBP managers assigned to each of the

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three regions in the state (Eastern EBP manager, Central EBP manager, Western EBP manager). The Director and EBP managers oversee, develop, and provide EBP training as well as assist individual probation agencies throughout their training and implementation efforts.

As demonstrated throughout this chapter, the state in the current study was very progressive in their attempts to become evidence-based. Since 2006, they designed an implementation process that allowed them to learn and improve upon the process and they openly accepted new practices and styles of trainings. As a whole, the agency devoted a great deal of effort to becoming evidence-based and engaged fully in the implementation process, yet they continued to face challenges with changing the culture of the organization and getting probation staff to integrate EBPs fully into their everyday work. As Latessa (2004) argues, change is a challenging and complex task, even if it is a small change in everyday behavior such as eating fewer sweets. Understanding the challenge of change and ways to promote change are the driving forces behind this dissertation. Why is it that an agency so fully engaged in the implementation process is still facing a number of challenges in becoming evidence-based? This question sparked the creation of this dissertation and underlines the substantive chapters to follow.

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CHAPTER THREE: THE ETHNOGRAPHY

As part of my graduate assistantship with the Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence! (ACE!), I worked on a project with a mid-Atlantic state's Department of Corrections (DOC). The DOC contracted our research center to assist them through a strategic planning process, whereby the goals were to: (a) revitalize the mission and values of the organization to align with an evidence-based approach and (b) devise goals and specific strategies to achieve those goals as part of a strategic plan to move the entire agency forward in their pursuits of improving practice, lowering recidivism and implementing research evidence effectively across the state. As a member of the four-person research team assisting the DOC, I attended all strategic planning meetings held between January 2012 and April 2013. Individuals present at these meetings comprised an array of executive staff and probation agency management staff including Regional Administrators, State Programs Director, Director of Evidence-Based Practice Operations, Probation Chiefs from approximately 10 probation offices, as well as representatives from the research department and training academy. My role in this process was to take detailed, observational notes of meetings, as well as recode and synthesize major issues related to evidence-based practice (EBP) implementation, the organizational structure of the agency and strategic plan development. In total, I attended 13 meetings and spent approximately 85 hours conducting observations of strategic planning meetings.

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It was during these meetings that the idea for my dissertation grew. Through exposure to such a wide range of DOC personnel, I began to recognize discrepancies and challenges present throughout the organization I believed must impact EBP implementation at the street level. For example, executive staff emphasized the importance of collecting data, which mostly requires paperwork and data entry on the part of probation officers (POs) as well as the use of internal POs to provide follow-up training and coaching on various EBPs. On the other hand, Probation Chiefs from different offices expressed concerns relevant to their office – one smaller office was concerned that their limited number of probation officers available to fill the trainer/coach role meant that their officers would be overtaxed and responsible for many additional assignments beyond their job as a PO. Another large office shared different concerns regarding a struggle to determine whether all of their officers were using the desired practices and skills with fidelity. As the strategic planning process continued, it became clear that each individual probation office had unique characteristics that in turn influenced the way in which they interpreted and implemented organizational policies and practices. Ultimately, the agency decided that each probation office would create a unique strategic plan rather than have a single strategic plan for the entire agency. Interested in knowing more about what this process of policy and practice implementation looked like and the implications of variances between probation practices, I began to develop my dissertation.

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Access

Working with the DOC on the strategic plan provided remarkable access to departmental employees. Without these prior relationships, I am not positive my dissertation would have become a reality. In addition to becoming friendly with many Probation Chiefs, who also had to approve my project, I developed a relationship with the Director of Evidence-Based Practices Operations, Mark[3], through this experience. He helped me navigate the tricky bureaucratic processes and red tape and became my dissertation's advocate. After meeting with Mark[4] and his team of three employees at least two or three times, I had their approval for the project. Not only did they approve the project, but also they expressed interest and investment in my study believing that it would help them in their efforts to implement EBPs across the state. Upon receiving their approval, Mark introduced me to several individuals within the research department who explained the procedures for submitting an application to conduct research within the DOC. I completed the application and sent it to Mark, who reviewed my materials and sent them to several executive staff members. Mark informed me that my application had his full support as well as the executive staff, who would express their support in the review process. In addition to working with Mark, I spoke to a Program Administrator within the agency, Laura. She suggested my application would be stronger if I received approval from all 12 Probation Chiefs from the probation offices I wanted to include in my study. I promptly reached out to all 12 Chiefs, and within two weeks had approval

[3] I use pseudonyms throughout this dissertation to protect the confidentiality of study participants.
[4] All names throughout this dissertation are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of research subjects.

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letters and/or e-mails stating they would be happy to participate in my project. In May of 2013, I submitted my complete application package to the DOC's research department.

Next, began the waiting game. The biggest challenge in gaining access to the probation offices came at this point in the process. The agency's research department originally told me would take two to three months for my application to go through the approval process. Exactly three months from that day, I e-mailed to check on the status of my application. The research department informed me they had not yet sent my application out for review, but it was in the queue – it was now August. Panicked and believing I was never going to graduate, I contacted Mark, who was noticeably upset about this news. He explained my project had full support of everyone in the agency, and there was no reason for this delay. He immediately made several phone calls. Later that day, he informed me that he got the ball rolling again and my application should now move quickly through the process. By October, I was still concerned so I contacted three other state departments and began the process to have my project approved in their states, two of which I quickly received approval. In December, I was days away from beginning my project in another state, when I received approval for my original research application.

After this access was granted, I had to go through state mandated paperwork, gang awareness and Prison Rape Elimination Act training, have my fingerprints taken and a full background check completed. Upon completion of these requirements, I received a DOC ID and the green light to begin my research. The agency granted me unrestricted access to the probation agencies included in my proposal. Access within each

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individual probation agency varied. For example, sites one, two, and four gave me open access to come and go as I wished without having to set a schedule in place. At site three, I had to create a set schedule to observe and interview each PO. While more structured than the other three sites, I was still able to alter this schedule weekly or even daily. Beyond receiving initial approval from the DOC's research department, I had no subsequent barriers or limitations to access within the agency.

Site Selection

Study sites consisted of 12 probation offices throughout the state. The state has a four-tiered system of implementation of EBPs. In 2006, the state began to support the use of EBPs, including the use of a validated risk and needs assessment, motivational interviewing, cognitive-based therapies such as Thinking for a Change, and various problem-solving and relationship-building skills. The state provided specialized training and technical assistance to guide implementation. Tier designation occurred in a progressive manner where offices in tier one first received training and information regarding EBPs. The four offices placed into the first tier were either interested in innovation and/or were already starting to think about and implement EBPs. Tier one probation offices voluntarily assigned themselves to be the first to receive EBP education and training, representing classic early adopters of innovation (Rogers 2003). Tier two probation offices (2009 trainings) consisted of five offices that were similar to tier one offices in size and populations served, but had little experience with implementing innovative practices. The agency placed the remaining 34 offices in either tier three or four in a non-systematic way. Tier three had eight probation offices (2010 trainings) and

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tier 4 had 26 offices (2013 trainings). This systematized rollout of EBPs provided a unique opportunity to study decision-making processes and how staff understand and adapt to change.

I selected probation offices after consultation with DOC administration staff. Using purposive sampling, I selected an equal number of offices across the four EBP implementation tiers and the three regions of the state. I also considered office size when selecting sites. Given the unequal distribution of probation offices across the four EBP implementation tiers and three probation regions, I utilized maximum variation sampling. This approach is appropriate in the current study as it allows the researcher to gain broader coverage of the research topic by identifying common themes evident across the range of possible contexts (i.e., tier level, region, and office size) that may be related to adaptations of EBPs (Patton, 1990). While a random sample may have yielded increased generalizability, there was a concern that this approach would not have provided adequate coverage of probation offices across the EBP implementation tiers, regions, and office sizes. Using this method, I selected a range of 12 probation offices, which varied based on implementation tiers (an indicator of innovation and exposure to EBPs), region, and office size.

I conducted maximum variation sampling as follows. First, one main site was chosen from each of the four tier DOC EBP implementation tiers. To do this, I categorized main sites by tier, organized into regions, and then categorized by office size. To best capture contextual differences, two main sites were chosen based on office size representing small offices (main site from tier one = 17 staff members and main site from

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tier three = 18 staff members) while two main sites were chosen representing large offices (main site from tier two = 45 staff members and main site from tier four = 53 staff members). After selecting four main sites, I selected eight additional sites based on similar criteria (see Table 2).

Table 2

Study Site Characteristics

Office	Site	Tier	Region	Total Staff Size	Probation Staff Size
Site 2	Main	1	Eastern	17	14
Site 7	Additional	1	Western	29	24
Site 12	Additional	1	Central	28	24
Site 1	Main	2	Central	45	39
Site 6	Additional	2	Eastern	41	28
Site 9	Additional	2	Western	44	37
Site 4	Main	3	Central	18	14
Site 10	Additional	3	Western	24	17
Site 5	Additional	3	Eastern	38	38
Site 3	Main	4	Central	53	42
Site 11	Additional	4	Eastern	13	10
Site 8	Additional	4	Western	21	19

To augment the purposive sampling procedure and help ensure maximum coverage across the desired contexts, Mark, Director of Evidence-Based Practice Operations provided expertise in selecting additional sites that were comparable to the main site in each tier level based on offender populations, staffing, and location. Using this information, I chose two additional offices in each of the four levels that were most comparable to the main office in that level. Within each level, I selected sites from each

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region of the state. While not random, this sampling procedure results in 12 sites distributed equally across the four EBP implementation tier levels and three probation regions in the state and represent both large and small probation offices. This was appropriate for the current research because study design revolves around EBP implementation, which occurred at different time points across offices in the state.

Data Collection

Data collection for this project occurred in several phases. Phase one included the strategic planning process, which occurred from January 2012 until April 2013 and consisted of approximately 85 hours of fieldwork. Phase two included a pilot study. While strategic planning was ongoing, and I was developing my ideas for my dissertation, I conducted a pilot study that considered how two adult probation agencies (both part of the organization in the current study) implement and use EBPs (Taxman, PI 2011-BX-K010). As part of this study, I conducted over 200 hours of qualitative fieldwork including ethnographic observations with probation supervisors and staff. While this study focused on the use of EBPs more generally, data analysis revealed several themes surrounding risk assessment practices that support the proposed research study. In 2006, the state purchased a validated risk and needs assessment tool in order to move away from gut-level decision making and work towards systematically guiding decisions to lower recidivism. The original assessment purchased is lengthy, so the Department of Corrections' staff and researchers developed two alternative versions of

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the instrument to ease use (a "lite" and "EBP" version)[5], resulting in three different versions of the instrument. There is currently no statewide policy regarding which version to use and under what circumstances. All probation staff received the same training on the assessment instrument that covered the purpose, background, explanation of risk and needs scales and how to interpret and use the results. In addition, probation staff received training that focused on using the results of the assessment collaboratively to create a case plan with probationers. Training emphasizes the inclusion of probationers in the process by giving them a voice in laying out the goals they work towards while on probation as a means to encourage buy-in to the case plan and probation process.

Data from qualitative observations and interviews revealed four major findings regarding the implementation of assessments in the study sites: 1) POs within and across sites used different versions of the assessment tool, 2) administration of the assessment tool with probationers varied greatly, 3) POs rarely referenced the assessment instrument in their interactions with probationers, and 4) POs rarely used the assessment tool to inform the case planning process and rarely collaborated with the probationer. The results from this preliminary research find that while probation offices mandate officers use the standardized risk and needs assessment with probationers to identify possible risk factors associated with criminal behavior, officers retain discretion in terms of how they use assessment-related information. Examples from fieldnotes highlight some of these findings:

[5] 1) The "lite" version measures three subscales only (risk, vocational/education, and substance abuse) while the "EBP" version shortened slightly from the full version, but containing all major needs scales.

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> She does the lite version because she feels like the first visit with an offender is already overwhelming for them and she does not want to slam them with a ton of questions. If the lite shows that the person is medium risk or higher or that they have any area of high needs, on their second visit she will use the EBP version with them.

Another PO within the same office explained why she never used the lite version:

> A major problem with using the lite version, which is what most people use, is that you could do that and they would show up low risk and low needs, but when you did the more extensive version, they would show up with an area(s) of needs that did not previously show up.

These representative examples highlight the discrepancies seen both within and between offices on how POs use the assessment instrument in regards to the version and the varying strategies POs' employ (and how they believe POs should use assessments). Findings suggest that POs make decisions regarding how to adapt assessment practices to their work. This research suggests POs between offices and within the same office interpret and adapt policies differently (Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015). This study did not focus on how POs make sense of new practices and resulting adaptation decisions, thus further data about PO decision making and the conditions under which POs modify EBPs are not available. Phase three of data collection sought to explore this area specifically, focusing on how POs interpret, define and adapt new practices within their organizational and historical context. Data collection during this phase of my research lasted from January 2014 until October 2014. I spent approximately 715 hours

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observing and interviewing probation staff across the 12 study sites. During this time, I observed and interviewed 200 probation staff (front-line officers and supervisory staff), 23 executive staff members, and 31 non-probation staff (e.g., treatment providers, administrative staff). I arranged the 200 probation staff into categories based on the type of contact I had with them, ranging by length and depth of contact: (a) primary subjects, meaning our contact and relationship was extensive, often including observations/interviews on more than one occasion and for extended periods of time (i.e., three hours or more), (b) secondary subjects, meaning our contact and relationship was short in duration or not as deep as those with primary subjects (i.e., observed/interviewed on one occasion for one hour), and (c) periphery subjects, or those who I spoke to for at least ten minutes, but not extensively and often that was the only contact made. In all, 106 POs were primary subjects, 29 were secondary subjects, and 65 were periphery subjects (see Table 3).

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Table 3

Probation Officer Characteristics

Demographic Variables	Primary Subjects (n=106)	Secondary Subjects (n=29)
Gender		
Male	41%	38%
Female	59%	62%
Race		
White	76%	72%
Black	22%	28%
Other	2%	0%
Age		
20-29	19%	17%
30-39	37%	34%
40-49	23%	21%
>50	21%	28%
Position/rank		
PO	62%	76%
Supervisor	38%	24%
Specialized Caseload	37%	10%
Tenure		
1-5 years	36%	34%
5-10 years	26%	27%
11-15 years	15%	15%
16-20 years	8%	12%
>20 years	15%	12%
Education		
Bachelor's	79%	81%
Master's	21%	19%

In addition to EBP trainings provided by DOC staff. The agency often held these trainings in a central location and included more than one probation office, but always at least three of my study sites. I observed approximately 85 hours of training provided to POs in my sample. Total time spent collecting data in the field for the current study totals 1,085 hours. I spent an additional 1,040 hours typing fieldnotes and 800 hours coding and re-coding my data (Table 4).

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Table 4

Summary of Procedures Used and Data Collected

Research Site	Procedures	Research Activity	Data Collected	Relevancy in Project
Strategic Planning Meetings (01/12 – 04/13)	Observations and informal interviews with executive staff and Probation Chiefs	-Attended 13 strategic planning meetings; took part in phone calls and e-mails -85 hours of fieldwork -78 hours of typing fieldnotes -60 hours of coding Total: 223 hours	-Background on probation across the state -Data on current challenges DOC is facing -EBP implementation; future implementation plans, data on decision making regarding policy and practice changes	-Assisted in project development -Contributes to introduction and background -Provides data on decision making and implementation of EBPs
Probation Office (03/12-08/13)	Observations and informal interviews with probation staff in 2 study sites	-204 hours of fieldwork -189 hours of typing fieldnotes -140 hours of coding Total: 533 hours	-Daily responsibilities and work of POs -PO interactions with offenders -Processual and contextual data relating to EBP adaptations and decision making	-Provides data on how staff carry out their job, make decisions, and implement EBPs
Probation Office (01/14-10/14)	Observations and informal interviews with probation staff in 12 study sites	-715 hours of fieldwork -695 hours of typing fieldnotes -550 hours of coding Total: 1960 hours	-Daily work of POs -PO interactions with offenders -Processual and contextual data relating to EBP adaptations and decision making	-Provides data on how staff carry out their job, make decisions, and implement EBPs
Trainings/Meetings (01/14-06/14)	Observations and informal interviews with executive staff, probation staff, and trainers	-85 hours of fieldwork -78 hours of typing fieldnotes -50 hours of coding Total: 213 hours	-Departmental policies, procedures, and routines -Data on change and PO responses and interpretations of practice/policy changes	-Contributes to introduction and background -Contextual data

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Fieldwork Strategies

While in the field, I relied on an inductive approach to allow all possible themes and patterns to emerge from the data (Thomas, 2006) as well as a deductive approach to guide observations and interviews. I employed semi-structured interviews and direct observations with probation staff (supervisors and POs) in their work environment, observing POs working within each of the 12 probation offices. Semi-structured interviews occurred throughout the observation process and took part with those who agreed to participate in observations. I observed many POs on more than one occasion (primary subjects) often for several hours on each occasion. I accompanied POs throughout the course of their daily routine and duties, spending time with them as they fulfilled a multitude of tasks such as conducting home visits, appearing in court, meeting with clients, and completing paperwork. During this process, I immersed myself in each probation office and whatever the officers were doing that day, I did as well. If it was a training day, I sat through training. If it was a drug-screening day, I sat through, as person after person checking in had to be drug screened. I went on home visits even in the sketchiest parts of town, sat through day-long court sessions, and sat with POs as they answered endless e-mails and phone calls. I never said no or turned down observing any task, no matter how mundane or potentially frightening the situation was. As an ethnographer, it was my goal to make sure staff understood I was genuinely interested in

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their job, even the parts they might find dreadful. I dressed as they did and made sure to refrain from talking about research (a valued tip from Snow & Anderson, 1993), stating that I wanted to know anything and everything about their job. This led to the development of trust and even a sense of purpose for those who welcomed me into their world. Many took on the role of "teacher", explaining every acronym, decision and task. After a few weeks, probation staff would seek me out, hoping I would join them that day. Many probation staff commented that they enjoyed having me there, forgetting how lonely the job could be sometime. After only a few days of fieldwork, I invested in a daily planner so I could keep track of the court hearings, home visits, intake appointments and so forth that officers wanted me to observe. Probation staff taught me everything they could from the formal and informal rules to abide by to how to complete a drug screen and put on an electronic monitoring device. As time progressed and I spent more time in the probation office, officers became accustomed to my presence. When I would return to the office after a day of non-fieldwork, they would question why I had not been there. Probation officers referred to me as "one of them" and "just part of their probation office". In fact, leadership within two of the four main sites gave me my own office.

Occasionally, my role did extend beyond an observer. As probation staff saw how interested I was in every part of their job, many began to treat me like an intern. While out in the field with one PO, he explained, "the way I learned this job was by doing", and he told me I would be conducting the next home visit. Many other officers shared this sentiment, and they walked me through filling out offender risk and needs assessment instruments, completing log notes, filling out drug screen forms, and filing paperwork

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and case files. While still maintaining my student role, these experiences provided some of the best information about how probation staff make decisions in the course of their work. They explained explicitly how to complete each step of the task and why, and explained what I did well and what I should do differently. As Becker and Geer (1957) explained, this method of observation provides a rich experiential context, increasing awareness of unexplained facts and encouraging the revision of one's original theoretical orientation.

While conducting observations and semi-structured interviews, I did not record fieldnotes. Following established practice in ethnographic research (Emerson et al., 1995; Emerson, 2001; Morrill, 1995), I typed detailed fieldnotes as soon as possible after leaving each probation office (always occurring on the same day as observations and interviews) to provide the most accurate account of observations and interviews. This process ensured that participants felt comfortable and were as forthcoming as possible, while maintaining integrity of conversation (Emerson, 2001). Although there were many instances in which I wished I could have recorded entire conversations or interactions, the breadth of information gained from probation staff when they felt comfortable and not threatened far exceeded the benefits of a recording device. In many of the probation offices where I conducted this research, I had access to empty office space. This gave me the opportunity to type notes on my laptop between observations and interviews. In addition, I utilized the "jotting" method (Emerson et al., 1995), where I jotted down quick notes for each observation and informal interview when I was out of sight of the participant (e.g., I will excuse myself to the bathroom for privacy to record jottings).

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Additionally, in today's environment where individuals use cell phones constantly, I was also able to discreetly use my cell phone to frequently text notes to myself while in the field. This method proved extremely valuable and assisted in recording accurate depictions of observations and interviews. Following this method, researchers must type fieldnotes immediately upon exiting the field (Emerson et al., 1995). I followed this best practice as closely as possible, typing my fieldnotes always immediately upon arriving at home, the office, or to my hotel. On travel days where I had long drives home, I voice recorded my fieldnotes and then transcribed them as soon as I arrived. I strictly followed this process and was able to write and complete my fieldnotes on the same day as the observations and interviews occurred. Data collection during strategic planning meetings and trainings was less challenging, as I brought my laptop computer with me and type extensive notes during my observations.

From day one of my qualitative training, Dr. Danielle S. Rudes instructed me "everything is data", so in following this mantra closely through this research, I took copious notes and saved every piece of information I received from anyone working within the DOC – including taking notes during telephone calls, saving e-mails, collecting training materials, gathering pamphlets and handouts from probation office lobbies, and saving all materials given to me by probation staff. When given permission by probation staff, I also took pictures with my cell phones of posters, displays/signs in the probation offices, or documents created by probation staff, referred to as "artifactual displays" (Kunda, 1992; 192). I have several file folders full of documents and photos organized according to probation office.

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To stay organized throughout data collection, I created several excel spreadsheets. These spreadsheets included a fieldwork section which included date and time of fieldwork, total hours spent in the field, which probation staff members I observed that day (by pseudonym) as well as a study participant file including a full list of probation staff whom I had observed and/or interviewed or been introduced to. The study participant file included columns for probation staff characteristics including gender, race, age, tenure, education, background, number of probationers on caseload, and number of POs supervised (if filling a supervisory role). This spreadsheet allowed me to keep track of who I had spent time with and whom I still needed to obtain demographic and/or background information from. These files were integral in maintaining an accurate log of activities and time spent in the field.

Coding and Analysis

Throughout qualitative data collection and analysis processes, I relied on a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), reflecting on time spent in the field and knowledge of previous research to guide future observations, interviews and coding. This allowed consideration of the full range of types and conditions under which something occurs and aids in theory development. Upon completion, I linked all qualitative data files to Atlas.ti, a data management program (Muhr, 1991). Coding began immediately following the start of data collection and was ongoing throughout the duration of the fieldwork to examine and reevaluate my research methods and study aims. For analysis, I first used an inductive, line-by-line coding strategy that linked each line of fieldnotes to specific codes from a list that developed from initial and continual grounded

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theory (Charmaz, 1995) reads of the data. I then recoded data for the individual chapters in this dissertation, a process that is described more in detailed in each subsequent chapter. Generally, recoding required refining and developing new codes throughout the coding process while developing a more thorough coding structure. When the initial coding process was complete, I queried the coded data to look for emergent patterns, which have now become individual chapters within this dissertation. Qualitative analysis alternated between the emergent readings of the data and time in the field, knowledge of previous literature, and allowing for a reflexive and iterative analysis process. An iterative analysis process is especially useful in refining the focus and understanding regarding key concepts within a data set (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

Probation Work in Context

In the state where I conducted this research, the agency refers to POs as "probation and parole officers". In 2009, there were 56,654 probationers and 2,624 parolees on supervision (Glaze and Bonzcar, 2010). Due to the difference in numbers and associated responsibilities, officers commonly refer to themselves as "probation officers" when describing themselves and their position. Most caseloads consist entirely of individuals on probation, with some POs having little or no experience dealing with parole cases. When POs do supervise parolees, they typically viewed the process as a nuisance. One PO explained this in detail:

> PO Jaxson talked about a parole hearing he had gone to yesterday. He said they are a pain. Anyone who was sentenced before 1995 is eligible for parole. For parole hearings, they have to find a PO who is certified (requiring special

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training) as a hearing officer and who also knows nothing about the case at all. During the hearing, they can't mention anything about the past – only the current offense. The guy who this hearing was for was supposed to go to detox, but he showed up late and left after four days. He wrote this up as a parole violation and wrote a separate probation violation, including positive urine screens from the parolee's past that could not be included on the parole violation. This infuriated PO Jaxson.

Beyond the roles of probation and parole officer, the agency expects POs in the state to fulfill a balanced approach in supervising offenders. More specifically, the department mission stated that probation and parole should "enhance public safety by positively impacting offenders so they will lead pro-social and crime-free lives". POs can accomplish this by: (a) assessing offender risk and needs, (b) creating focused case plans based on offender risk and needs, (c) utilizing various treatment services and community resources, and (d) use of purposeful and proportionate sanctions as a response to non-compliance. The mission and expectations for probation staff was only recently updated as a result of the strategic planning initiative, as a means to support the implementation and integration of EBPs across the state.

The risk level and appropriate supervision level are determined through use of a standardized risk and needs assessment instrument. POs are required to conduct the assessment within 60 days of probation initiation and then place probationers in either high, medium, or low risk levels. Special populations, including sex offenders and identified or suspected gang members are automatically placed into an elevated level of

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supervision, which is akin to high supervision. Probation staff has discretion and agency policy allows them to override official assessment recommendations for risk level with supervisor support. Most POs supervise a mixture of high, medium and low cases, with a majority of cases on medium supervision. In some probation offices, caseloads are specialized with POs supervising smaller caseloads of sex offender populations, gang populations, or intensive cases (high risk, severe substance use, severe mental health). During this study, the average caseload was 61 probationers, with caseloads ranging from three to 140 probationers. In addition, POs make decisions to violate probation on a case-by-case basis, with supervisor support, based on a variety of factors (i.e., risk level, compliance to probation conditions, and adjustment to probation). According to state code, POs have the authority to issue a warrant for arrest, also referred to as a "PB15" warrant. State code allows POs to carry a gun, but individual probation offices differ in their policies. For example, agency policy in site three prohibits POs from carrying a gun, while POs in sites one and four can apply to carry. If POs do wish to carry a gun, they must go through an application process and upon acceptance, special training. There is additional safety precautions they must follow, including the gun must be always be transferred directly from work home (this means they cannot go directly from work to after-hours social functions), and the gun must always be stored and locked while at home, in the car, and in the office. The agency issues all POs a bulletproof vest, yet during my fieldwork, I observed only three officers actually utilizing theirs. When going into the field, POs often dress in street-clothes (always wearing sneakers as instructed by many officers) although some do wear an official "probation and parole" blue button-up

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while conducting fieldwork. The agency assigns each office a number of state-issued vehicles, depending on the number of probation staff, for use when traveling out to the field. While some POs refuse to take their cars into the field for safety precautions, many POs prefer to drive their own cars due to the poor condition of state vehicles, paperwork associated with signing out a car, and the mere unavailability of a car. Rigidity and structure of policies governing probation office practices varied depending on Probation Chief discretion. For example, in site six, POs are required to work every day from 8:15 am until 5:00 pm while in site three, POs can start work at 9:30 am or work a ten-hour day on Monday to leave two hours early on Friday.

In addition to these responsibilities, the agency expects POs to complete case openings and case closings, create and monitor case plans, monitor adherence to probation conditions, complete pre-sentence investigation reports, conduct the appropriate number home visits depending on offender risk level, make appropriate community contacts based on offender risk level, attend court, and complete a wide range of paperwork (e.g., transfers of cases, treatment referrals, travel passes). State policy also mandates POs receive 20 hours of Academy training as well as 20 hours of training outside of the Academy. Since the introduction of EBPs throughout the state beginning in 2006, trainings often focus on one of the many different initiatives taken on from the state. These include training on risk and needs assessments, case planning, effective communication and problem solving, Effective Communication/Motivational Strategies (ECMS), Motivational Interviewing (MI), and most recently, two correctional

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curriculums. In all, these initiatives require POs to incorporate additional skills and responsibilities into their daily work with probationers beyond the basic requirements.

Over the last ten years throughout EBP implementation, the supervision strategy in the state has shifted from what officers referred to as "contact-driven supervision" where the emphasis was simply on quantity of contacts to "field-oriented supervision" where emphasis was on making contacts in the community to "case-plan driven supervision" where emphasis is on assessments and creation of case plans incorporating offender goals. In addition to introducing a massive change in probation ideology and philosophy, this shift has results in a reduced emphasis on fieldwork – home visits (announced and unannounced) and community contacts (with family members, friends, neighbors, fellow church goers, etc.) and an increase in the amount of time spent in the probation office. This change has not been easy for many experienced POs. In a typical response to this shift, one PO explained:

> You really see what is going on by getting into the field. I am a fan of field-oriented supervision. I believe in getting out into the community. I believe in EBP and MI and assessments, but only as part of your toolbelt. In the community, I want to get to know his brother, kids, wife, and girlfriend– I want to see what makes this guy tick. If we are going to motivate him, we need to find out what motivates him. That is a tool you can use to change behavior. You see the true person in an unannounced home visit, even though half the guys won't be home. The department think's it is a waste of time, but it's part of the job.

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With the introduction of EBPs to the field of probation, probation work has been re-conceptualized. Never before has the role of a PO been so multi-faceted and complex, emphasizing and integrating components of rehabilitation and clinical work into the existing infrastructure traditionally dominated by control and authority. This dissertation focuses on how front-line staff (POs and supervisors) and organizations respond to such change. Rather than assuming organizational change and evidence-based practice implementation occurs as originally intended or designed, this study takes a rich, contextualized view at the *process* of change – change in policies, practices, ideologies, and philosophies – and the ways in which front-line workers, who are tasked with the daily operations of the organizations, interpret, define and adapt changing policies and practices. Research studies evaluating the effectiveness of a policy or practice often note in their limitations that it is difficult to determine exactly what occurred in practice because researchers did not collect this data specifically. While research of this magnitude is often not conducted in association with evaluation of policy/practice effectiveness or even fidelity due to variety of reasons (requirement of a vast amount of time and resources), my goal in conducting this research is to demonstrate the vast importance of examining the *process* in addition to the *outcome* to provide a greater depth of data surrounding EBP implementation within probation settings.

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CHAPTER FOUR: STREET-LEVEL DECISION MAKING: ACCEPTABILITY, FEASIBILITY, AND USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES IN ADULT PROBATION

At present, approximately one in every 31 adults is under some form of correctional supervision in the United States (Pew Report, 2009). Community corrections (e.g., probation and parole) form the largest piece of the overall correctional system with approximately five million adults under community supervision (Chiancone, 2010; Glaze & Bonczar, 2010). With tight budgets and a push toward accountability and results, many justice organizations, including probation, are implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs)--practices supported by scientific evidence--such as validated risk and needs assessments, motivational interviewing, and cognitive-behavioral therapies. Current research finds that when used appropriately, evidenced-based, rehabilitative interventions effectively reduce recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) and improve overall probation success (Taxman, 2008).

Evidence-based practice implementation falls heavily on street-level workers, like probation officers (POs), as they adopt/adapt and implement policy and practice changes by incorporating them into work routines and decisions. Over several decades, a substantial body of research documents and analyzes the role of street-level bureaucrats within criminal justice organizations in policy implementation and decision-making processes. Beginning with Lipsky's (1980) foundational work, street-level bureaucracy theory describes street-level workers as front-line policy interpreters primarily responsibility for policy implementation. Following this framework, other scholars note

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the prevalence of discretionary decision making present in street-level work (e.g., Feldman, 1992; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2000) that affect the interpretation and implementation of new policies. The beneficial effects of EBPs are dependent on street-level workers' decisions when carrying out organizational policies and practices. Previous research documents the challenge of changing practices within correctional environments, characterized by a punitive, control-oriented culture, towards integration of rehabilitative strategies. This occurs despite evidence that punitive strategies are ineffective and potentially harmful (see for example Battalino, Beutler & Shani, 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Rudes, 2012). While Feeley and Simon (1992) and Simon's (1993) theoretical framework, *New Penology,* suggests the punitive shift in criminal justice policy and practice results in a risk management approach to probation work characterized by a focus on the offense and tailored to the potential risk of recidivism, subsequent research finds street-level workers (POs) often interpret and implement policy in ways that misalign with organizational reforms (see Lynch, 1998; Rudes, 2012). These studies highlight the importance of examining reform beyond the organizational level, at the street-level where policy implementation actually occurs (Lipsky, 1980).

Using over 1000 hours of observation and interview data with probation staff, this study examines modern decision making in the evidence-based practice era in a correctional agency attempting to make these shifts for more than a decade. The goal of this research is to understand *how* street-level workers make decisions regarding EBPs within their organizational context. This study moves the field towards understanding the reach of the EBP movement through examining the *process* of implementing EBPs.

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Failure to examine street-level decision making regarding adaptations of EBPs in practice leaves unanswered questions regarding the continued reliance on ineffective or inadequate treatment and services for offender populations, which contradict the very core of the EBP movement.

Evidence-Based Practices

Over the past decade, mounting pressures to reduce prison populations and associated expenses yielded calls for system reform. In response, researchers and policymakers urge using EBPs, which often bring substantial change in criminal justice agency perception and function. To promote EBPs, researchers developed principles of effective intervention, which lay out specific strategies, and tools correctional practitioners can implement to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes (e.g., Andrews and Dowden, 2006; Cullen and Gendreau, 2000; Lipsey and Cullen, 2007; Smith, Gendreau & Swartz, 2009). These principles reflect assessment practices, individualizing services to target factors associated with criminal behavior, incorporating treatment planning, balancing rewards and sanctions, and providing an integrated approach for offenders with multiple needs (Andrews and Bonta, 2010; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Smith, Gendreau and Swartz, 2009). The National Institute of Corrections has also synthesized the research on effective practices for community corrections agencies into eight principles (Bogue et al., 2004). These eight principles serve as a resource for many correctional agencies, including the agency in this research, to guide implementation of EBPs. In fact, the agency in this study used the first six NIC principles as the introduction to EBPs across the state. These six interdependent

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principles include: (a) assess actuarial risk/needs; (b) enhance intrinsic motivation; (c) target interventions; (d) skill train with directed practice; (e) increase positive reinforcement, and (f) engage ongoing support in natural communities (see Table 5).

Table 5

Summary of National Institute of Correction's Evidence-Based Principles for Effective Intervention

Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs	This principle suggests community corrections agencies develop a system to assess offender risk level and criminogenic needs. Agencies should select a third or fourth generation validated instrument, as they assess both static and dynamic risk factors. Practitioners should consider information from standardized risk and needs assessment instruments, along with information gained through routine interactions with offenders to inform supervision and case management decisions and reassessments (Andrews, Bonta & Hogue, 1990; Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Bogue et al., 2004; Clements, 1996; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Kropp & Hart, 2000).
Enhance Intrinsic Motivation	Through their interactions with offenders, community corrections staff can enhance intrinsic motivation, a necessary component of creating lasting behavior change. Practitioners can utilize motivational interaction techniques to address a lack of motivation to make changes in one's life. For example, motivational interviewing provides a strategy for practitioners to use to address ambivalence about change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). MI is a "skillful clinical style" (Rollnick, Miller & Butler, 2008; 6) in which the counselor or practitioner guides and listens to clients rather than directing them as a means to activate the client's own motivation to change (Rollnick, Miller & Butler, 2008).
Target Interventions	The Risk-Need-Responsivity model outlines several principles designed to generate effective interventions for offender populations with the ultimate goals of improving treatment for offenders and reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The principles of the RNR model include: 1) the *risk principle,* which states that the level of service should be matched to the offender's level of risk; high-risk offenders are better suited for treatment programming, 2) the *needs principle,* which identifies what treatment programs should focus on, specifically, offenders' criminogenic needs, or those needs that are directly related to offending behavior, and lastly, 3) the *responsivity principle,* which states that treatment using a cognitive-behavioral approach should be matched to the abilities, motivation, and learning style of the offender (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In addition, research notes the importance of *dosage* and *treatment*. Appropriate services should occupy approximately 40 to 70 percent of an offender's free time over a three to nine month time span, modified depending on offender risk level, with higher risk offenders receiving more structured services as compared to lower risk offenders (Gendreau & Goggin, 1995; Palmer, 1995; Steadman, Morris & Dennis, 1995). Finally, supervision strategies should incorporate treatment, especially cognitive-behavioral programming as a means to improve

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	offender outcomes and public safety (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Palmer, 1995; Petersilia, 1997, 2002).
Skill Train with Directed Practice	Successful implementation of EBPs requires that practitioners receive adequate training and have sufficient knowledge of the underlying theories behind the practices/principles, including an understanding of antisocial thinking, social learning, and effective communication strategies. Staff should serve as a role model, reinforcing pro-social attitudes and behaviors in their interactions with offenders (Aos, 1998; Lipsey & Wilson, 1993; Miller & Rollnick, 2002).
Increase Positive Reinforcement	Use of positive reinforcements help to shape an individual's thinking patterns to encourage them to continue engaging in desired behaviors (Griffith et al., 2000; Lussier et al., 2006; Petry & Martin, 2002; Rudes et al., 2012). Use of positive reinforcement acts as a social learning process where the use of incentives disrupts the influences associated with undesirable behaviors, such as drug use. Effective use of positive reinforcements in conjunction with sanctions is a more effective strategy than relying on sanctions along (Marlowe & Kirby, 1999). Rewards should outnumber sanctions by at least a 4:1 ratio for programs to be most effective (Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Wodahl et al., 2011).
Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities	Pro-social supports play an important role in supporting offender success. Effective interventions integrate pro-social individuals (e.g., family members, spouses, friends) to positively reinforce desired behaviors. In addition, growing research supports restorative initiatives that emphasize developing and strengthening bonds and social ties to pro-social individuals within the community (Bonta et al., 2002; Clear & Sumter, 2002; O'Connor & Perryclear, 2003).
Measure Relevant Processes/Practices	Alongside evidence-based practice implementation, agencies must collect data regarding offender assessment and case management, develop strategies to measure incremental offender change (cognitive and skill development), and evaluate recidivism. Agencies must also evaluate and assess staff performance, including fidelity to program design, service deliver principles, and outcomes (Dilulio et al., 1993; Gendreau & Andrews, 2001; Henggeler et al., 1997; Lowenkamp, Latessa & Holsinger, 2006; Milhalic & Irwin, 2003; Quay, 1977; Waltz et al., 1993).
Provide Measurement Feedback	Once data collection and measurement processes are in place, agencies should utilize the collected information to provide feedback regarding offender progress to both offenders and staff as a means to build accountability and motivation. Agencies should utilize staff performance data to inform performance evaluation processes, monitor fidelity, and ensure staff are utilizing evidence-based principles (Alvero et al, 2001; Gendreau & Andrews, 2001; Harris and Smith, 1996; Klein & Teilmann 1980; Ludeman, 1991; Quay, 1977).

The National Institute of Corrections also suggests two additional principles for evidence-based practice in community corrections. These include appropriate measurement and analysis of offender outcomes and staff performance, including fidelity to the EBPs (Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Dilulio et al., 1993; Henggeler et al.,

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1997; Miller & Mount, 2001) and providing measurement feedback (Baer et al., 1992; Decker, 1983). Taken together, these principles synthesize much of the research evidence on effective practices within community corrections and suggest strategies correctional agencies can implement in order to become more evidence-based. Despite research evidence available on effective practices, implementing these principles in practice presents significant challenges for both correctional organizations and workers.

The Challenge of Change

Existing research documents the challenges associated with implementing and sustaining EBPs within justice agencies alongside existing organizational culture (e.g., Battalino et al., 1996; Rudes, 2012). Most research in this area focuses on implementation *outcomes* rather than the processual decisions street-level bureaucrats make while undergoing change (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). Thus, we know very little about the nuanced change *process*. Additionally, decisions made by street level workers are often separated from the organizational context within which they were made. This framing ignores cultural influences that shape street-level workers' actions to advance or hinder change (Barley, 1986; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000; Watkins-Hayes, 2009). Historically, the goals of the U.S. correctional system vacillated between rehabilitation and punishment, suggesting shifts in organizational culture. An organization's culture combines ideals, practices, routines, goals, norms, and influences, and represents a combination of the formal and informal structures, and intra- and inter-organizational contingencies (Schein, 1990; King, Steiner & Breach, 2008), creating a normative environment where organizational actors grow and conform to formal and

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informal cultural guidelines. Culture represents the "way things get done" (Deal & Kennedy, 2000), as well as the way things entrench within an organization (Rudes & Viglione, 2013). As such, culture is an important facilitator or barrier to organizational change (Gendreau, Goggin & Smith, 1999; Haney, 2008; Skolnick, 2008).

Altering the existing organizational culture in ways that successfully support new practices and policies presents a considerable challenge. At present, mounting financial strain shifts correctional culture towards rehabilitation and reducing recidivism and prison populations (Rhine, Mawhorr and Parks 2006). In probation agencies, EBPs often require changes in core ideologies from a focus on control and authority to more therapeutic and rehabilitative philosophies. Organizational staff represent a critical component of the development, change and sustainment in organizational culture as they bring the organizations' ideals, practices, and goals to life (Lin, 2000). Particularly at the street-level, staff continuously evaluate information and make strategic decisions about how to incorporate multiple and competing professional, political, and personal interests into their service delivery (Watkins-Hayes, 2009).

One way staff negotiates workplace change occurs through a process of sensemaking, or how staff understand or perceive the current culture alongside how and why it is changing. Sensemaking is an on-going, interpretive process individuals engage in to manage disruptions to their existing ideologies, routines, and activities, playing a central role in influencing the success or failure of implementation efforts (Garfinkel, 1967; Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991; Thomas and Thomas, 1928; Weick, 1995). Organizational studies often focus on sensemaking among top (Gioia & Chittipeddi,

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1991; Gioia & Thomas, 1996) and middle managers (Balogun & Johnson, 2005; Rouleau, 2005) where supervisors reason with change, determine priorities, resource allocation and disseminate their interpretations to street-level workers. These studies rarely emphasize the pivotal role street-level workers' play as policy interpreters and implementers (Balogun & Johnson, 2005; Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Rouleau, 2005). The street-level sensemaking process influences decisions and actions, and ultimately reflects what policy looks like in practice (Lipsky, 1980).

Street-level workers' understanding of current and changing goals as well as individual values and practices, rooted in prior experiences and personal characteristics, influence the sensemaking process (Rudes and Viglione, 2013). The way staff make sense of changing policies relates to how they then think about those policies and behave. Challenges arise when staff try to make sense of organizational change and there is a misalignment between individual perceptions and what the organization is trying to do. In these situations, staff often approach change via resistance (Lin, 2000; Ohlin, Coates & Miller, 1974). Resistance often emerges from difficulty reconciling prior organizational ideologies and goals with new ones (Lin, 2000; Ohlin, Coates & Miller, 1974). The way organizational culture and sensemaking frameworks align with proposed change influences how and why staff resist change (Rudes, 2012). For example, Battalino and colleagues (1996) examined reform designed to transform the organizational culture of a correctional system from fear-based to constructive and supportive. This initiative was unsuccessful, as staff felt it impossible to operate within a correctional environment without an authoritarian style (Battalino et al., 1996). In another study, Ferguson (2002)

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examined the experience of a probation department as they implemented a risk and needs assessment tool noting significant challenges during the change process. Staff worried about losing discretionary decision making abilities and managing their current workload while implementing new protocols (Ferguson, 2002). As a result, the agency modified training protocols, acknowledging staff concerns and focusing on use of the assessment in combination with their professional judgment to conduct an effective assessment, eventually resulting in successful implementation (Ferguson, 2002).

Across these studies examining change within criminal justice agencies, findings suggest potentially deeper themes regarding the acceptability and feasibility of reform. When street-level workers make decisions regarding new policies and practices, they consider how appropriate or tolerable the intervention is (acceptability) and how suitable the intervention is for everyday use (feasibility) (Proctor et al., 2011). Thus, understanding staff responses to organizational change is more nuanced than considering resistant responses, but extends to examining if staff perceive value in the reform and believe it is appropriate and reasonable for routine use (acceptability) and if the staff can incorporate the reform into organizational practice without major modification or adaptations (feasibility) (Proctor et al., 2011). Framing responses to organizational change in this way, allows for a deeper understanding of resistance to change to examine whether staff accept reform and think it aligns within their organizational environment.

Acceptability and feasibility associated with reform are critical to examine alongside organizational change processes within justice environments given the unfailing tension between rehabilitation and punishment complicates the change process

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within correctional settings (Grusky, 1959; Hepburn & Albonetti, 1980; Rudes, Lerch & Taxman, 2011; Thomas & Poole, 1975), parole (Caplan, 2006; Lynch, 1998), and probation (Ellsworth, 1990; Taxman, 2002). The adoption of clinically-based EBPs, aligned within a rehabilitation framework, is often challenging due to the degree to which risk management operates within organizational culture. Thus, street-level workers must reconcile competing goal structures and form professional identities influenced by organizational cues (Watkins-Hayes, 2009) as they try to make sense of changing policies and practices. Within probation, organizational cues are embedded in both a rehabilitation and punishment framework, thus POs have discretion in determining which strategies to align with. Organizational cues play a critical role in developing and shaping differing professional identities among street-level bureaucrats, resulting in inconsistent probation practice at the street-level (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). These disparities suggest differential experiences for probationers and potentially variance in chances for success depending on the way in which POs utilizes discretion. The potential for disparate outcomes contradicts the core of the EBP movement, which attempts to minimize discretion and variance between service deliveries.

With a host of reasons to resist change, examining street-level understanding of and adaptations to reform critical for understanding the ultimate success or failure of organizational change. This line of questioning is critical to move towards more effective implementation of EBPs to better serve offenders and better protect communities. Previous research on sensemaking of and resistance to change highlights the importance of examining EBP implementation at the street-level. This body of research suggests that

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individual street-level workers have agency (active engagement in choice of actions (Embirbayer & Mische, 1998) and do not mindlessly accept policy and practice change (Feldman, 2003). Street-level perceptions of acceptability and feasibility within their organizational environment may significantly influence decisions regarding adoption and implementation of effective practices. Individual interpretations of and responses to change play a significant role in shaping how street-level workers carry out policies. This suggests a need to go beyond examining organizational *outcomes* at the macro-level to examine change and implementation *processes* at the micro-level to understand *how* street-level workers make decisions regarding use of changing policies and practices.

Discretionary Decision Making

In his seminal work, Lipsky (1980) defines street-level bureaucracies as institutions where organizational actors interact with citizens and exercise considerable discretion in exercising authority. Some argue organizational actors use discretion to relieve tensions between law on the books and law in action to interpret and apply law and policy in real-world practice (Hawkins, 1992). This structuralist view of discretion places street-level bureaucrats in a highly constricted role. Watkins-Hayes (2009) argues that street-level bureaucrats actually have a great deal of flexibility in carrying out their professional roles. Professional identities and social identities interact with organizational directives and client issues, influencing the formation and use of discretion. Thus, street-level bureaucrats continuously evaluate and reevaluate their goals and motives to decide how to respond to each unique situation and client (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). In this light, discretion is a "continuation of policy-making by other means" (Lineberry, 1977; 71),

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suggesting that implementation is not complete after an organization sets a new policy or practice in place. Rather, street-level workers use their discretion to interpret and make adaptations to policy long after it is envisioned and administratively implemented.

Discretion, a key component of street-level work, allows street-level workers to make critical decisions that impact the lives of clients. This discretion is bound within the probation agency itself as well as constraints imposed by both internal (e.g., intraorganizational such as rules, policies, resources) and external (e.g., political and environmental) influences (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). Previous research notes a variety of influences on the use of discretion in making decisions. Simon (1945) argues that resource constraints such as time and limited information force street-level workers to use discretion to guide decision making. Rather than making wholly rational decisions, street-level workers, like POs, make decisions based on bounded rationality (Simon, 1972). Previous research on decision making and bounded rationality suggests that street-level implementation of EBPs will be imperfect. POs often have limited information, but are expected to anticipate future behavior and make critical decisions regarding appropriate supervision of offenders (Glaser, 1985; Simon, 1993). Prior work on PO discretionary decision making finds officers make decisions based on personal preferences, organizational pressures, caseload sizes (McCleary, 1975; 1978). Additionally, some research finds POs participate in a holistic decision-making process, taking into consideration the assessment and needs of one case compared to their entire caseload (Emerson, 1983).

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While EBPs attempt to reduce limitations to the level of rationality in decision making by providing additional information to guide decision making and/or limiting discretion, POs situate within existing organizational cultures and environments characterized by risk management. The emphasis on ensuring community safety by managing probationer risk creates challenges for street-level workers in implementing EBPs. For example, an important decision POs make relates to the determination of future risk of reoffending. Historically, POs manage probationers using a variety of risk and classification systems to determine who is most likely to reoffend. Presently, the emphasis is on using validated risk and needs assessment instruments to measure offender traits and past behavior to classify offenders according to their likelihood of recidivism and areas of criminogenic needs (areas linked to criminal behavior) (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006). Contemporary research highlights the advantages structured assessments can bring over traditionally used gut-level decision making, characterized by inconsistency across decisions and limited accuracy in anticipating offender outcomes (Grove et al., 2000; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004). Despite the benefits, implementation of formal risk and needs assessment instruments presents challenges to probation organizations, as implementation of these tools present major changes in the way POs think and carry out their responsibilities. While risk and needs assessments aim to provide scientific calculations to guide decision making, Viglione and colleagues (2015) suggest POs rarely use a risk and needs assessment tool as designed and continue to rely on previous experiences and risk-management strategies to guide practice.

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The New Penology

Feeley and Simon (1992) and Simon's (1993) theoretical framework illustrates a shift in organizational culture to accommodate the punitive shift in criminal justice ideology. They argue the emphasis on punishment creates a demand for POs to manage their caseloads based on assessment of their level of risk to society, resulting in decisions geared towards minimizing risk while setting aside other sentencing goals (e.g., rehabilitation, retribution), aligning probation practice with a people processing approach (Hasenfeld, 1972; Prottas, 1978). Lynch's (1998) ethnographic research suggests while these shifts occur at the organizational level, at the street-level POs do not embody the characteristics of a people processing organization. Rather, POs interpret policy in ways that allows them to continue to employ an individualistic approach, viewing interactions with probationers as a top priority in their daily work (Lynch, 1998). Lynch's (1998) work suggests a disconnect between the systems management approach present at the organizational level and the way in which POs adapt their supervision style, regardless of policy and practice reform (Lynch, 1998). Recent research reports similar findings as Rudes (2012) examines how POs manage technical violations in response to a rehabilitation-focused reform that discourages such violations, finding POs resist reform and continue to ensure technical violations and parole revocations occur. These studies highlight the importance of examining street-level worker's behaviors and responses to policy implementation within criminal justice agencies.

Using a decision making framework, this research examines two understudied components of the change process – the PO and the series of processes used to adapt

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EBPs to real world settings. Street-level bureaucrats, such as POs, are often unheard throughout the change process, yet reform challenges street-level workers to "rethink, redefine, and represent a host of intertwining identities…that shape social and political action in important ways" (Watkins-Hayes, 2009; 12). This framework moves beyond whether an EBP is implemented correctly and consistently to examine *how* EBPs align with the existing correctional environment. Further, the current study frames POs as "socially-situated bureaucrats" (Watkins-Hayes, 2009; 13) and seeks to understand how POs interpret and adapt new practices to their current organizational context and routine.

Methods

Study Sites

Qualitative data collection took place at 12 probation offices throughout one mid-Atlantic state. In 2006, the state identified a core set of EBPs, including motivational communication strategies, validated risk and needs assessment instrument, case planning, cognitive-based therapies such as Thinking for a Change, and various problem-solving and relationship building skills, and began the implementation process. At the start of this process, the state pilot-tested EBP implementation efforts by providing specialized training and technical assistance to guide implementation in a select group of probation offices (n=4). The agency referred to these four offices, the first to receive training and information regarding EBPs (2006) trainings, as "tier one." These tier one offices were either interested in innovation and/or were already starting to think about and implement EBPs. Three years later, the state began to expand implementation and developed

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additional implementation tier groups. Tier two probation offices (2009 trainings) consisted of five offices that were similar to tier one offices in size and populations served, but had little experience with implementing innovative practices. The agency placed the remaining 34 offices in either tier three or four in a non-systematic way. Tier three has eight probation offices (2010 trainings) and tier four has 26 offices (2013 trainings) (see Table 6).

Table 6

Implementation Tier and Training Timeline

Tier	Number of Probation Offices	EBP Implementation Start Date
1	4	2006
2	5	2009
3	8	2010
4	26	2013

The researcher selected probation offices after consultation with a DOC administrative unit specifically designed to guide EBP implementation throughout the state. Given the unequal distribution of probation offices across the four EBP implementation tiers and three probation regions, the researcher utilized maximum variation sampling. This approach is appropriate in the current study as it allows the researcher to gain broader coverage of the research topic by identifying common themes evident across the range of possible contexts (i.e., tier level, region, and office size) that relates to adaptations of EBPs (Patton, 1990). Maximum variation sampling was conducted as follows. First, one main site was chosen from each of the four tier DOC

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EBP implementation tiers. To do this, the researcher categorized main sites by tier, organized into regions, and then categorized by office size. To best capture contextual differences, two main sites were chosen based on office size representing small offices (main site from tier one = 17 staff members and main site from tier three = 18 staff members) while two main sites were chosen representing large offices (main site from tier two = 45 staff members and main site from tier four = 53 staff members). After selecting four main sites, eight additional sites were selected that were comparable to the main site in each tier level based on offender populations, staffing, and location. Using this information, the researcher selected two additional offices in each of the four levels that were most comparable to the main office in that level. Within each level, the researcher selected sites from each region of the state. This sampling procedure resulted in 12 sites distributed equally across the four EBP implementation tier levels and three probation regions in the state and represent both large and small probation offices (see Table 7).

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Table 7

Study Site Characteristics

Office	Site	Tier Level	Region	Total Staff Size
Site 2	Main	1	Eastern	17
Site 7	Additional	1	Western	29
Site 12	Additional	1	Central	28
Site 1	Main	2	Central	45
Site 6	Additional	2	Eastern	41
Site 9	Additional	2	Western	44
Site 3	Main	3	Central	18
Site 10	Additional	3	Western	24
Site 5	Additional	3	Eastern	38
Site 4	Main	4	Central	53
Site 11	Additional	4	Eastern	13
Site 8	Additional	4	Western	21

Evidence-Based Practice Training

Study sites received training based on tier designation, with tier one sites receiving training in 2008-2009, tier two in 2009, tier three in 2010 and tier four in 2013. The Department of Corrections utilized external consultants and internal research staff members to provide the majority of trainings early on in the implementation process. As EBP implementation progressed, the agency trained probation staff to provide many of the EBP-related trainings as well. Across the state, all probation staff received "Introduction to EBPs in Community Corrections" training. This internal training provides a definition of EBPs as "practices that experience and research show works better for a particular outcome/purpose." The training explains that EBPs include

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"specific strategies used in offender supervision", "a theory of how treatment should be approached," and "an implementation system of various programming elements." The training outlines specific EBPs to be implemented throughout the state: motivational interviewing, risk and needs assessment, case planning, and appropriate referrals to evidence-based treatment and services. The training is short and basic, providing a brief overview without linking EBPs to empirical evidence and explaining the purpose for this shift in practice, and delivered in a few hours. The agency designed this training to lay the foundation for more specific EBP training (e.g., motivational interviewing, risk and needs assessment) to follow.

In addition to an introductory training, the agency trained probation staff in the National Institute of Correction's (NIC) effective practices for community corrections agencies (Bogue et al., 2004). Throughout the implementation process, the agency provided a number of specific, comprehensive trainings addressing individual principles for effective intervention. As a means to address NIC's principles *enhance intrinsic motivation* and *increase positive reinforcement,* the agency provided training on Effective Communication/Motivational Strategies (ECMS) as well as motivational interviewing. Additionally the agency dedicated a number of trainings to educate staff in *assessing actuarial risk/needs* and *targeting interventions,* including trainings on risk and needs assessments, case planning, and appropriate treatment and service referrals. Sites in earlier tiers (one and two, and some of three) received refresher trainings on these topics and all individual probation offices selected their own internal coaches amongst probation staff who help their co-workers with specific EBPs (e.g., a risk and needs

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assessment coach, case planning coach). Additionally, during the third phase of fieldwork in 2013, the agency was slowly implementing a correctional curriculum designed to build staff knowledge and skills regarding the principles for effective intervention in a more structured manner, including the provision of scripts to guide use of cognitive behavioral therapy techniques to change criminal thinking patterns and building rapport, as opposed to focusing on compliance in their interactions with offenders.

As part of this change process, the state shifted to "case-plan driven supervision" to move away from focusing on frequent contacts with probationers to focus on information gained from a validated risk and needs assessment to structure decisions regarding level of supervision, contact requirements, and creation of the case plan. This shift resulted in less frequent home visits and more time in the probation office and on the computer. As a result, the agency restructured their policies to outline the following expectations: (a) POs must conduct the standardized risk and needs assessment within 45 days from the start of probation and (b) POs must complete a case plan, using risk and needs assessment information, within 60 days from the start of probation. Additionally, training specifically directed POs to focus resources on higher risk offenders with criminogenic needs. Training explained the purpose of this is to maximize the investment of resources and prevent over-supervision, which could potentially cause more harm than good (according to agency training). Starting in 2012, agency policy shifted to support the use of EBPs in practice through the creation of an agency-wide strategic plan. The strategic planning process encouraged each office to create strategies they would

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implement to become evidence-based and align their practices with EBP trainings and new initiatives.

Data Collection

Qualitative data collection for this project occurred in several phases. Phase one included the participation in and observations of the Department of Correction's strategic planning process, which occurred from January 2012 until April 2013 and consisted of approximately 85 hours of fieldwork. Phase two included a pilot study considering how two adult probation offices (both part of the organization in the current study) implement and use EBPs (Taxman, PI 2011-BX-K010). Phase two included data from over 200 hours of qualitative fieldwork including ethnographic observations with probation supervisors and staff. Phase three of data collection sought to specifically explore on how POs interpret, define and adapt new practices within their organizational context. Data collection during this phase of the research occurred from January 2014 until October 2014. Phase three includes data from approximately 715 hours of observations and interviews with probation staff across the 12 study sites. During this time, the researcher observed and interviewed 200 probation staff (front-line officers and supervisory staff), 23 executive staff members, and 31 non-probation staff (e.g., treatment providers, administrative staff). Table 8 illustrates the total number of probation staff observed and interviewed per probation office. This phase of data collection includes observations of approximately 85 hours of various evidence-based practice trainings provided by DOC staff. The agency held these trainings in a central location and included more than one probation office, but always at least three of the study sites included in this research.

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Analysis presented in this article results from all four phases of fieldwork. Total time spent collecting data in the field for the current study totals 1,085 hours.

Table 8

Probation Staff Observed/Interviewed by Site

Office	Site	Probation Staff Size (n=306)	Probation Staff Observed/Interviewed (n=200)
Site 2	Main	14	14
Site 7	Additional	24	12
Site 12	Additional	24	9
Site 1	Main	39	39
Site 6	Additional	28	16
Site 9	Additional	37	11
Site 4	Main	14	14
Site 10	Additional	17	7
Site 5	Additional	38	19
Site 3	Main	42	42
Site 11	Additional	10	10
Site 8	Additional	19	7

Site visits occurred Monday through Friday, covering all operating hours. This included time in the field prior to office opening and evening treatment programming and drug testing. Each individual site visit lasted between four and ten hours. Observations included accompanying staff throughout the course of all work activities including court, home visits, jails, treatment programs, and housing shelters. Observations focused on the behaviors and interactions between POs, supervisors, and probationers as well as semi-

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structured interviews during observations. Time spent with each individual staff member ranged from 30 minutes to several hours, and often the researcher observed multiple probation staff in one day as well as on more than one occasion. Table 9 provides characteristics of probation staff who participated in all phases of the current study.[6] Participants were mostly female (60 percent), white (75 percent), and between 30 and 39 years old (36 percent). Approximately 65 percent of probation staff were non-supervisory POs who supervised an average of 61 probationers. Supervisory staff supervised an average of 11 POs. Job tenure of probation staff ranged from three months to 42 years, with the average experience in the field 11 years. Lastly, the majority of the sample holds a Bachelor's degree (80 percent), while 20 percent holds a Master's Degree, with approximately 5 percent receiving clinical training.

[6] I provided informed consent to each PO employed in the study sites following appropriate Institutional Review Board guidelines. No PO opted out of this study.

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Table 9

Probation Officer Characteristics

Demographic Variables	**Percentage**
Gender	
Male	40%
Female	69%
Race	
White	75%
Black	23%
Other	2%
Age	
20-29	19%
30-39	36%
40-49	23%
>50	22%
Position/rank	
PO	65%
Supervisor	35%
Specialized Caseload	31%
Tenure	
1-5 years	35%
5-10 years	27%
11-15 years	15%
16-20 years	8%
>20 years	15%
Education	
Bachelor's	80%
Master's	20%
Clinical training	5%

During the course of observations, informal, semi-structured interviews with probation staff covered a variety of topics including: (a) main job responsibilities, (b) work strategy, (c) background and prior experience, (d) explanation and perceptions of EBPs, (d) types of EBPs used, and (e) perceptions of offenders and offending. These topics guided interviews with POs without limiting interviews to a structured set of

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questions. The flexible structure of informal interviewing allowed for the introduction of new questions throughout the interview process and for full consideration of stories and experiences relevant to probation staff. I did not plan and/or schedule time to specifically interview individual POs, rather informal interviewing occurred throughout the course of observations. Interviewing was not always constant, as there were times in which I was purely an observer, but this informal nature of interviewing allowed for deeper probing regarding the behavior's and actions of participants as well as the introduction of new questions as different situations are encountered. This is consistent with an inductive approach, to allow additional possible themes and patterns to emerge from the data (Thomas, 2006). The researcher also used a deductive approach to guide observations and interviews, focusing specifically on EBP implementation processes.

While conducting observations and informal interviews, the researcher did not record fieldnotes. Following established practice in ethnographic research (Emerson et al., 1995; Emerson, 2001; Morrill, 1995), detailed fieldnotes were typed as soon as possible after leaving each probation office to provide the most accurate account of observations and interviews. This process ensures that participants feel comfortable and are as forthcoming as possible, while maintaining integrity of conversation (Emerson, 2001). In many of the study sites, the researcher recorded fieldnotes during breaks in the day (e.g., lunch hour). In addition, the researcher utilized the "jotting" method (Emerson et al., 1995) to record quick notes for each observation and informal interview when the researcher was out of sight of the participant. Finally, relying on the current cultural trend to use ones cellphone regularly throughout the day, the researcher recorded quick notes

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while in the field on a frequent basis. The combination of these methods resulted in valuable and accurate depictions of observations and interviews. The researcher typed all fieldnotes and linked them to Atlas.ti, a commonly used data management program for coding and analysis of qualitative data (Muhr, 1991).

Coding and Analysis

Throughout qualitative data collection and analysis processes, the researcher relied on a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), reflecting on time spent in the field and knowledge of previous research to guide future observations and interviews and coding. This allowed consideration of the full range of types and conditions under which something occurs and aids in theory development. Coding began immediately following the start of data collection and was ongoing throughout the duration of the fieldwork to examine and reevaluate research methods and study aims. First, the researcher used an inductive line-by-line coding strategy to link each line of fieldnotes to specific codes from a list that developed from initial and continual grounded theory reads of the data (Charmaz, 1995), allowing theoretical analyses to develop. After initial line-by-line coding, the researcher recoded each set of fieldnotes using componential data analysis to code large portions of data (e.g., paragraphs) for attitudinal and behavioral processes and patterns to analyze how research participants experience and define their working environment (Rudes & Portillo, 2012). The analysis process alternated between the emergent readings of the data and time in the field, knowledge of previous literature, and allowing for a reflexive and iterative analysis process. An iterative analysis process is especially useful in refining the focus and understanding

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regarding key concepts within a data set (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). Findings are presented below. When the coding process was completed, the researcher queried the data to examine emergent patterns. While many themes emerged in coding, the focus of this article is on how street-level workers make decisions regarding EBPs within their organizational context.

Findings

Understanding, Defining, and Interpreting Evidence-Based Practices

The changes and shifts in probation work across the state permeated probation staff[7] conversations and conceptualizations of how the agency expected them to carry out their daily work. Evidence-based practices, trainings, initiatives and other changes infiltrated interviews with POs as well as conversations between probation staff daily. To gauge the most basic understanding of the transportability of best practices across the state, the researcher asked 108 POs to define EBPs in order to examine how POs understand and interpret the meaning of the reforms as a precursor to examining their attitudes towards implementing those reforms in practice.

In response to this line of questioning, probation staff often provided simple, non-descriptive explanations. The most common definition included simply "motivational interviewing (MI)," while others defined EBPs using specific skills or pieces of various EBPs. For example, probation staff used definitions such as "communication," "open-ended questions," "the way you talk to people," "relationships," "rapport," "engaging

[7] Probation staff, including probation officers and supervisors are referred to as POs for the remainder of the text.

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offenders," "sanctions and incentives," or "giving choices." Few POs provided definitions that were not in alignment with effective practices, such as PO Kline[8] who explained, "EBPs are all about manipulating people" or PO Stine's definition of giving probationers "free passes." Two POs provided definitions more closely aligned with the definition provided in the introductory training, with PO Hardy explaining EBPs involve "using practices proven to work" and PO Clarence's explanation of "doing what works best."

While some explanations suggest POs understand components of effective practices (e.g., open-ended questions as part of motivational interviewing), POs commonly did not articulate specifically what being "evidence-based" means. Additionally, very rarely did POs differentiate between specific types of EBPs, rather using the term as if it were a singular practice or approach to supervision. At times, POs vocalized their understanding, interpretation, and definition of EBPs through an explanation of what is not considered "EBP". POs often argued an evidence-based approach meant they should not use their power and authority to sanction offenders. They perceived the new initiatives as a shift away from punishment entirely, with control-oriented techniques in direct conflict with EBP-related expectations. For example, in reference to a lengthy violation report PO Garcia had just written, she explained, "EBP went out the window with this probationer." She added, "He had violated several conditions of his probation, thus a probation violation was the only acceptable response"; which she did not consider an EBP. PO Scarlette explained that POs are given bulletproof

[8] To protect the confidentiality of study participants, pseudonyms are used throughout this text.

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vests when they first start on the job, but they do not utilize them because, "it is not EBP to wear vests." Other explanations of what is not an EBP, included cursing on the job and complaining about the way probationers smelled.

In the majority of circumstances, POs did not differentiate between various EBPs. Rather, they talked about EBPs as a universal concept understood throughout probation. As a result, probation staff commonly used the term as a verb, interpreting EBPs to represent a singular policy or practice. The following fieldnote provides a representative example:

> PO Kim said she has a guy who got charged with drunk driving recently who isn't even 21. He had been going to treatment though, so they are keeping him out of jail since he is doing what he is supposed to be doing [going to treatment]. We are "EBP-ing him".

In this example, PO Kim suggested her decision to forgo a probation violation at this time is an example of her implementing EBPs. Other POs use phrases such as "I am EBP-ing them" or as PO Cast put it, "I EBP'ed the shit out of that person." These examples further illustrate how probation staff often spoke about EBPs as if they were a single, standalone practice. For example, in explaining the succession of new initiatives across the state, PO Gergins explained that MI came first and then EBPs.

As probation staff often talked about EBPs and their supervision strategies, several explained they were supposed to "meet offenders where they are." After hearing this phrase several times, I asked PO Jessay to explain what she meant:

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> PO Jessay said you can't expect someone who has a certain background or certain functioning level to be up here with other people. Barbara [her probationer] comes from a good family, she is smart and can read, but her issue is different from someone who was raised in a crack house. If they aren't ready, they aren't ready [for EBP intervention].

This explanation of effective probation practice suggests staff must evaluate the "condition" of their probationers to determine the appropriate supervision strategy. This initial finding led to further analysis regarding how this interpretation of EBPs might influence probation supervision strategies, with findings presenting in the following section.

EBPs and Discretionary Decision Making

While EBPs are a widespread concept across the state and the agency provided formal training on EBPs for all probation staff, adoption and implementation varied. Although probation staff across the 12 probation offices completed a risk and needs assessment with all probationers supervised, probation staff developed strategies to adapt utilization of assessment information as well as use of motivational interviewing skills, case planning, and the skills outlined by the National Institute of Corrections (Bogue et al., 2004). Extending upon the strategy to "meet probationers where they are," probation staff engaged in discretionary decision making to determine whether EBPs would be effective with their probationers. Analysis revealed 90% of POs in the current study considered a range of factors in making decisions regarding both whom they can use EBPs with and the situations in which EBP use is appropriate. To better understand

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probation staff decision making regarding appropriate EBP use, the researcher recorded the data according to the specific factors POs consider when making decisions regarding whether EBPs were appropriate according to their interpretation and understandings. Coding revealed six major factors influencing PO decision making: risk, offender functioning and mental health, communication/relationships, job-related factors, and liability. POs relied on these factors to determine if EBPs generally were an effective strategy for use with specific probationers or in certain situations, suggesting a fluid approach to EBP use.

Risk. With the implementation of a validated risk and needs assessment tool, the concept of risk permeated probation practice. Risk in this sense, included both assessed risk levels via an assessment tool, but also includes informal PO perceptions of potential risks for reoffending and risky situations, becoming an overarching framework guiding much of PO decision making surrounding their work. In particular, an offender's criminal history impacted attitudes towards EBP use with POs believing offenders who have been in the system for a longer period of time were so engrained in the institutional culture that it was a waste of their time to use an evidence-based approach. These decisions tied into the perceived ease of interaction and supervision of probationers as PO Moyer stated, "Offenders with less of a criminal history are easier to do EBPs with." Many POs argued the demeanor and antisocial personality (not clinically assessed) of riskier probationers make them an inappropriate candidate for EBPs, despite agency training emphasizing the importance of appropriating resources to higher risk offenders. Probation officers linked these decisions to perceptions that higher risk probationers were completely entrenched

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in a criminal lifestyle and/or had too many risk factors. They argued the prevalence of these conditions meant they must spend a disproportionate amount of their time ensuring probationers complied with their probation conditions due to public safety concerns. This finding is highlighted below in a representative example as PO Shaine explained:

> With the challenging cases, like my guys with oppositional defiant disorder, you have to put safety first. You can't always use MI or EBPs. The safety of the individual and the safety of the community come first.

In this example, PO Shaine discussed prioritizing control-oriented techniques over use of EBPs as a means to promote safety for the individual probationer as well as the community at large. Imbued within these decisions are PO beliefs that use of EBPs can potentially result in a reduction in public safety.

Additionally, high risk probationers often scored high in criminogenic needs such as criminal thinking or criminal personality, which POs believed were needs incapable of changing. As one PO put it, "I can't do anything with a probationer with a criminal personality because there isn't anything you can do about that. That is just who a person is." POs couched these explanations in the belief that high risk offenders and/or offenders with specific criminogenic needs cannot change. As found in research stemming from phase two of the current study and an associated publication, POs often display little comprehension regarding risk and needs and attempt to hide their confusion behind explanations regarding ineffectiveness and powerlessness to generate meaningful change (Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015).

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While POs focused on the identification of appropriate risk levels utilizing the risk and need assessment tool, POs often tied decisions to informal, subjective perceptions of risk. Based on these perceptions of risk, POs believed they could not effectively utilize an evidence-based approach with probationers they perceived to be risky, regardless of formal assessment results. For example, POs argued certain types of offenders are too risky to use non-control and directive techniques. These offender populations include gang members, sex offenders and substance users. Across these populations, POs often argued they needed to maintain a "shorter leash" to effectively control them and protect the safety of the community. The use of EBPs is perceived to be "too soft," especially for offenders prone to violence, hostility, or victimization of vulnerable populations. For example, PO Jones described his strategy:

> With sex offenders, I am very contact-driven. The case-plan driven strategy is for non-sex offender populations. I can only work with them so much because they are a risk to the community. Especially with sex offenders, changing the way they think is unlikely.

With special populations, it is common for POs to resist using evidence-based approaches and revert to contact-driven supervision. POs justify this behavior by couching their decisions in a risk-averse framework, with public safety the ultimate goal. This decision making framework not only influences how POs treat entire groups of offenders, but also sometimes results in unequal treatment of probationers in similar situations. Supervisor PO Miranda explained this best:

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> An issue with EBPs is applying it evenly. One of the POs I supervise recently wrote a violation report for a pedophile who came in to the office and tested dirty. If this had been just a substance user, she would not have violated her. She would have been much more patient with a probationer who was just a substance user and not a sex offender also.

PO Miranda also explained that the probationer's status as a sex offender changed her opinion about violations and intervening with an evidence-based approach because "the sex offender is at a higher risk level." Also perceived as higher risk are probationers who are gang members or noted as potential gang members. Their differential treatment is often based on a common assumption that "they have nothing to lose" due to their gang status. Due to this anticipated resistance, POs reverted to a contact-driven strategy to maintain control over the perceived riskier population. According to agency training, a major goal of EBPs is to reduce inconsistencies and biases in decision making. Despite this emphasis, POs, including supervisors, relied on perceived risk to inform decision making regarding EBPs resulting in more punitive treatment of certain types of offenders.

POs voiced similar concerns for specific types of drug use. This varied by region, as certain drugs were more of an issue in specific parts of the state. For example, in the western part of the state, heroin overdoses have been a major issue over the past year. As a result, probationers who tested positive for heroin received a different response from POs as compared to probationers who tested positive for other types of drugs. This suggests perceptions of risk and decisions regarding appropriate EBP use and supervision

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strategies are fluid and influenced by variations in offending patterns and regional contexts.

Regardless of the specific type of special population, POs argued offenders perceived as riskier for recidivism are less amenable to change. These beliefs allowed POs to justify resistance to EBPs and a retreat to the "way things used to be," focusing on compliance and control. As PO Pines put it:

> In the area of EBPs, sometimes you have to say I am concerned about public safety so it is just time you go to jail. You don't back up and say let's talk about this. We violate a lot of people. Certain situations you have to do that, because our motto is "no more victims".

These perceptions regarding offending provide justification for POs to rely on a risk management strategy to do their job effectively and generate the better outcomes. In this light, POs in the current study often operated under risk management framework, resulting in decisions regarding appropriate supervision strategies linked towards controlling risk (based on a variety of factors) and protecting public safety.

Offender Functioning and Mental Health. A majority of the probation offices across the state have specialized caseloads, one being a mental health caseload. POs who carried this caseload supervised the most severe mental health cases, as assessed through a combination of formal and brief mental health screening, information provided by a treatment provider, and/or informal assessment of mental health status. Despite allocation of mental health cases to a specialized caseload, almost all POs admitted they too, supervised individuals with mental health issues. Across study sites, POs complained

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about a lack of resources to address mental health issues, often feeling as though their hands were tied and they had to just do damage control. Even when given tools to work with more challenging caseloads, POs perceived EBPs were ineffective for probationers with a range of mental health issues including anxiety, schizophrenia, low IQ, and low functioning individuals. POs believed they had to be directive with mental health probationers because they would be unable to follow concepts incorporated into the various EBPs. The following representative fieldnote highlights this:

> PO Marks talked about how you can't use EBPs or MI with mental health cases. They aren't wired right. Their brain does not work that way. She will not use those skills with them. They might be effective with someone who just has ADHD, but she is not sure.

Beyond this example, POs argued they are uncomfortable responding to and working with mental health issues. They view the status of having a mental health condition as detrimental and one that limits their ability to do their job. In a similar example, PO Barnes suggested using EBPs with probationers who have mental illnesses might actually result in negative consequences:

> PO Barnes did not think it was fair that he had to use MI skills with a mentally ill, low IQ client because they can't think globally and conceptually. If you use some of these techniques with them, you actually lose rapport and upset them.

This reasoning goes beyond effectiveness and suggests POs believe using EBPs with certain offenders can actually create harm. In this light, POs revert back to contact-

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driven, directive strategies as a means to manage the perceived risks associated with offender functioning and/or mental health issues.

Communication/Relationships. A third factor influencing PO decision making regarding EBP use relates to their perceived relationship and ability to communicate with a probationer. If POs believed probationers would challenge them or present any difficulties in their interactions, they argued EBPs were inappropriate. In this light, POs relied on a variety of offender characteristics to make EBP-related decisions including perceived probationer resistance, indifference, and dishonesty. Especially when POs believed an offender would be resistant to their supervision strategy. In these cases, they regularly maintained a directive and authoritarian relationship with resistant offenders as a means of control. POs believed probationers who are resistant often do not listen to them or care about their probation sentence. A representative example from fieldnotes highlights this:

> PO Gerald explained some probationers will respond to EBPs and talk to you and others will just give you one word answers. With those people, you take a control approach. You cannot motivate them, so you just work to get them out of probation. These are people you can't tell the difference between day one and their last day with you on probation. Nothing is changing.

In addition to resistance, POs also argued they could not utilize EBPs with indifferent probationers. In these situations, POs often revert to a containment approach, which emphasizes both control and risk management. POs were increasingly aware of the importance of offender choice, thus many believed if a probationer did not care, there

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was nothing they could do to change their behavior or thinking. Along the same lines, POs also believed they could not use EBPs with probationers who would not be honest with them. The following example highlights a situation in which PO Dawes decided she could not use EBPs with her probationer:

> PO Dawes said many of her probationers do not take responsibility for their actions and are not truthful. One of her probationers was put on GPS and she warned him they would know where he is at all times. Despite this, he still lied about where he was, even though they had proof. EBP and MI does not work for guys like this. There is only so much you can do if they are going to lie and aren't going to take responsibility for their actions.

POs embedded the criteria for these decisions in the interest of limited time and resources. Subjectively, POs calculated the difficulty of interacting with individual probationers, determining use of EBPs and behavior change strategies with resistant, indifferent, or dishonest probationers would be too challenging. From a policy standpoint, this suggests POs believe some offenders will not respond to EBPs no matter what strategies they try. Engrained in these decision making processes are the inherent beliefs that offender change is unlikely as well as misunderstandings regarding the true intent and design of the reforms.

Lastly, POs believed they simply could not use EBPs with everyone or in every situation. This generalized belief allowed POs to draw upon their professional opinion, previous experiences and gut feelings of whether they could (and should) rely on best practices to guide their supervision strategy. Often, POs felt their communication

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strategies should vary based on the individual offender. For example, PO Miller explained some probationers talk too much, which restricted his ability to use effective communication. Some probationers "don't think like you and I", thus they require a directive and contact-driven supervision approach. POs also view EBPs as situational, with certain situations inappropriate for an evidence-based approach, such as if a probationer has violated a term of their condition or if they are using drugs.

Job-Related Factors. As is often true with organizational change, POs made decisions regarding EBPs based on factors relating to workload and resources which was often one of the first complaints staff had when told they must attend a training or try out a new practice. Paperwork, large caseloads, and other job requirements coupled with limited willingness to consider integrating EBPs into their supervision strategy, POs expressed concerns that engaging in EBPs with probationers "opened the flood gates" and they did not have time for that amongst their many responsibilities. Most common, POs linked their decision to use EBPs to job functionality. For example, no PO who specialized in pre-sentence investigations (PSI) believed they needed to use an evidence-based approach. PO Melnick, a PSI supervisor explained this finding:

> PO Melnick said EBPs are not relevant for PSI writers. I don't pay attention to EBPs. He rolled his eyes and said I am required to go to trainings "of course," but rapport and relationships for a PSI writer is not important.

While PSI writers commonly interacted with probationers on a single occasion, in many situations they were an individual's first introduction to probation. A rather telling example was of a 20 year old female who came in for her PSI. She was shaking with

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nerves and talked quickly. She indicated she had no idea what probation was or what was in store for her, admitting her nervousness. The PO did not acknowledge her concerns or explain to her what probation was, but rather went right into the interview, which often included a range of personal questions. The newcomer to probation left the office as nervous as she walked in. Beyond PSI writers, other POs who knew they would only see a probationer one or two times also argued EBPs were unnecessary. For example, after conducting several interviews at the local jail with individuals soon to be released to probation, PO Fellow explained she, "could have used EBPs there" but she did not because the probationer would likely be put on someone else's caseload. Probation officers also avoided using EBPs when probationers were transferring to another probation office in the state or another state altogether. Commonly in these situations, POs would refrain from conducting a risk and needs assessment or creating a case plan. Interestingly, when POs received a transfer from another jurisdiction without their risk and needs assessment or case plan completed, the POs in the office where they transferred complained that the other office was incompetent. Overall, these findings suggest POs viewed EBPs as effective and worthwhile only if they will have ongoing relationships with individuals.

Lastly, some POs expressed concerns about using an evidence-based strategy because they worried about potential fraternization. Probation officers linked this concern to trainings provided at the training academy warning about the harms of fraternization, the ability of offenders to manipulate or from stories passed down from friends who worked in the state prison system. In addition, state police recently arrested a PO working

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in one of the probation offices for fraternizing with her probationers. POs were often unclear on where boundaries should be set and as a result, would err on the side of caution. The following representative example from fieldnotes highlights this finding:

> I [PO Hadley] try to build rapport with probationers but I have to be careful. Correctional officers often get in a lot of trouble for fraternization because they have so much contact with offenders. I care about them, but I know they are manipulative.

POs expressed concerns that EBP-related trainings do not help them negotiate this struggle, leaving them unclear how they are supposed to maintain clear and appropriate boundaries while building relationships and rapport with probationers they supervise. This uncertainty often results in incomplete adoption and implementation of effective practices.

Liability. A major factor influencing PO decisions regarding EBP use related to perceived liability. Liability concerns were prominent throughout the probation offices. POs often worried if something went wrong (e.g., probationer committed a major new offense), they would be left on their own to defend their decisions and corresponding actions, without agency support. In this regard, POs believed it was safest to exert control and authority, especially with those probationers most likely to take part in risky behavior. At one point during fieldwork, there was a situation in which a current probationer attacked local law enforcement and was on the run from the authorities. POs throughout the state articulated concern for the supervising officer, expressing their worry for his wellbeing while also relieved it was not an individual on their caseload. This situation served as a reminder to officers that anything can happen and they needed to

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remain "on guard" at all times. POs perceived this necessity to protect themselves in conflict with the goals of EBPs, especially when it comes to supervising offenders perceived to be the most risky.

Associated with continuous liability concerns, historical factors played a significant role in PO decision making regarding EBP use. PO Lin explained these frustrations:

> One of my probationers tried to adulterate their drug test yesterday. I had just spent 20 minutes doing EBP with her – we had gone over her goals and I had given her affirmations. I spend this time doing EBP with these people and then this kind of stuff happens. Why spend all this time doing what they say is positive and evidence-based when probationers just turn around and be so manipulative and deceiving? Why spend my time with them when I have stacks and stacks of paperwork?

Unsuccessful or negative experiences associated with attempts to implement EBPs influenced future decisions to use newly learned skills. In this light, POs constructed their memories within the institutional culture, contributing to future institutional action (Zerubavel, 1996). Memories of perceived failures influenced PO decisions to engage in EBPs, making them more likely to revert to contact-driven supervision techniques, which are less time-consuming and feel more appropriate given the nature of probationer behavior. This suggests the challenge of thoroughly explaining what being "evidence-based" means and translating the idea that because something is evidence-based, does not protect against failure in every situation, with every offender (Sherman, 1998). Thus, POs

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consider perceived failures and the associated liability with offender failure (e.g., reoffending) when making decisions regarding appropriate EBP use.

Overall, the current findings suggest POs used a host of criteria to make decisions relating to EBP use. As part of the rigorous analysis process, the data were analyzed for negative cases or those instances in which data contradicts emergent patterns. Analysis revealed only nine POs (out of 200) believed they could integrate EBPs into their supervision strategy, even with riskier and challenging offender populations. In fact, three of these POs believe EBPs are best suited for high risk and difficult probationers. These three POs all serve as "EBP coaches" in their offices and received more training regarding evidence-based approaches. In the following quote, PO Samuels explained the benefit of using EBPs with riskier populations:

> High risk offenders or the most risky offenders are actually the best offenders to use EBPs with. Those are often the ones POs will say EBPs can't work for though. Sex offender POs often work within the containment model, but they still need to address offender ways of thinking. This is where EBPs can really be useful because they have a lot of room to try different things and make a difference, but even with sex offenders people believe EBPs don't work.

PO Samuels went on to explain resources and time should be expended on high risk offenders first. In his coaching sessions with fellow POs, he provided an analogy to try to get this strategy across to other staff:

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> What happens when you get to the hospital triage or emergency room? They treat the riskiest patient first. They let the guy with the broken arm wait a little bit so they can help the guy with the heart attack. This is all we have to do as POs also.

While the remaining five POs stated they could use EBPs with all of the offenders on their caseload, they still mentioned criteria suggesting use was inconsistent. Often, this involved the belief that certain skills were inappropriate to use with certain offenders or in certain situations. For example, PO Vox explained that she can use EBPs with her entire caseload, but there are some specific evidence-based skills (e.g., problem solving) that she cannot do with everyone.

Discussion and Implications

Several decades into a renewed emphasis on rehabilitative correctional policies and practice, the current research highlights the pervasiveness of the risk management model related to PO decision making. While the agency utilized in-depth trainings and various strategies, including follow-up training, internal experts or coaches, and specialized curriculums to improve adoption and implementation of best practices, POs consider a variety of factors when implementing EBPs throughout their everyday work. Overall, findings suggest probation staff continue to operationalize risk management supervision techniques based on discretionary determinations of whether an evidence-based approach is an effective strategy to utilize with their probationers, linked to perceptions of acceptability of feasibility of EBPs.

Although EBPs theoretically provide POs with skills and tools to standardize decision making and improve the overall likelihood of probation success (i.e., recidivism

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reduction, successful completion, violation reductions), the current study highlights many individual and organizational barriers preventing POs from implementing EBPs as intended. POs largely believe rather than working with probationers to generate change, they must "meet probationers where they are," resulting in decision making based on perceived risk of both the probationer as well as PO liability associated with a case. As a result, POs consider multiple factors in making decisions regarding how to utilize EBPs within their existing organizational routine, highlighting the challenges and complexities associated with the acceptability and feasibility of best practices in real world correctional settings.

Theoretical Implications

The New Penology. Findings from the current study suggest elements of the *New Penology* framework (Feeley & Simon, 1992) dominate probation practice in these study sites. That is, POs couch their decision making and alignment to agency reform in a risk management framework. Probation officers view certain types of offenders, offenders with specific characteristics, and certain situations as risky and creating a potential liability they must counteract or prevent by adapting a risk management strategy. These beliefs allow traditional, control-oriented thinking and supervision strategies, as suggested by the *New Penology* (Feeley & Simon, 1992; Simon, 1993), to permeate modern probation practice.

As argued by Feeley and Simon (1992), POs in the current study organized their workload and decisions around considerations of risk (both formally assessed and perceived), with their decisions to utilize EBPs representing a people processing

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approach in which they sorted and classified probationers based on risk, needs, and other individual characteristics. The prevalence of a risk management approach in probation and parole settings is documented in previous research (e.g., Feeley & Simon, 1991; Feldman, 2003; Kemshall et al., 1997; Robinson, 1999; Taxman, Shepardson & Byrne, 2004). This body of literature found POs often quickly assess risk and then work within those initial risk scores (based on validated assessments and/or perceptions) continually throughout the probation process. This actuarial or technocratic approach to supervision controls rather than empowers probationers (Simon, 1993) and ignores important dynamic risk factors or criminogenic needs. As seen in research conducted in phase two as part of this study and reported by Viglione and colleagues (2015), POs often avoid addressing criminogenic needs, particularly criminal thinking or criminal personality. This may be because these needs are complicated in nature and potential responses to high scores in these areas are not always clear-cut across the various probation offices. As a result, POs argue (a) probationers are incapable of changing in these need areas and (b) there is little they can do as a PO to address criminogenic needs or promote behavior change more generally. This suggests agencies should incorporate strategies to empower their POs while implementing new policies and practices.

Empowerment. Empowerment involves improving an individuals' belief in their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986), often associated with underlying motivational processes (Conger & Kanugo, 1988). Process theory approaches to empowerment, combining ideals from expectancy theory (Lawler & Suttle, 1973) and self-efficacy theories (Bandura, 1977; 1986), suggests empowerment involves expectations that an individual's

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efforts will result in a desired level of performance (self-efficacy expectation) and that their performance will produce desired outcomes (outcome expectation) (Bandura, 1986). Achieving outcome expectation is not always necessary in order to empower individuals though, as enhancing one's belief in their own abilities to successfully execute desired behaviors can lead to increased empowerment even if the desired outcome is not achieved. For example, leadership can empower individuals who fail to achieve the desired outcome through reinforcing their performance throughout the process (Bandura, 1986).

Research across a range of disciplines (i.e., health, management, psychology) suggests a number of processes important in enhancing empowerment: (a) developing the necessary knowledge and fostering competence (Gibson, 1995); (b) making individual's voices heard, sharing information, and encouraging participation (Blanchard, Carlos & Randolph, 2001; Gibson, 1995; Goodkind & Foster-Fishman, 2002; Peterson & Reid, 2003; Terblanche, 2003); (c) developing teams to replace the old hierarchical structure and emphasizing team-building to strengthen relations (Blanchard, Carlos & Randolph, 2001; Terblanche, 2003), and (d) emphasizing relationship building and developing social supports (Ibanez et al., 2003; Rossing & Glowacki-Dudka, 2001). Taken together, empowering staff to recognize their own self-efficacy and the role they play in implementing reform is complex and requires creating conditions within the organization is conducive to empowerment. In specifically discussing organizational change within criminal justice agencies, Taxman and Belenko (2012) emphasize the importance of

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creating a hybrid model of change, incorporating individuals from every level of the organization as well as external stakeholders.

The agency in the current study did not incorporate street-level workers throughout the change and implementation process. Incorporating a vertical slice of the organization, or representatives from all levels, is a strategy that can advance staff acceptance and use of reform (Taxman & Belenko, 2012) and is one way agencies can align staff sensemaking with reform attempts. Incorporating street-level workers within change processes provides the opportunity to increase knowledge, understanding and clarity regarding reforms as well as empower staff. The current study highlights the importance of examining the sensemaking process at the street-level as staff continuously evaluates information and makes strategic decisions about how to implement reform (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). As highlighted throughout this study, the way in which street-level workers both manage change to their ideologies, routines and activities and believe in their ability to effectively implement change to achieve the desired outcomes influences decisions and actions, and ultimately reflects what policy looks like in practice.

Policy/Practice Implications

As evidenced in the current study, POs, situated within an environment characterized by risk management, do not mindlessly accept new reforms. Rather, they make decisions regarding how to adapt new practices and policies to align with their supervision strategies and conceptualization of probation work. These adaptations have significant implications in defining "transported EBPs" or how street-level workers

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actually implement and use best practices in everyday probation work. Transportability, an emerging area of implementation science, provides a framework to consider how an intervention aligns or fits within a real-world setting (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). Due to potential conflicts between the need to adapt interventions to local settings as well as practitioner preferences while maintaining fidelity, the transportability of an EBP is critical to examine (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). In case of the current study, POs working within a risk management framework make decisions on how to implement EBPs that may significantly alter the intended design, related to both acceptability and feasibility.

As findings suggest, in making decisions regarding use of EBPs, POs think about different components of the practice as well as the situations in which they can effectively use an EBP. In particular, POs considered the feasibility of using EBPs based on the population (offenders) and perceptions of risk – whether linked to assessed risk or perceived risk tied to offending patterns, type of offender and potential failure to comply with conditions of probation. Despite the fact that agency training included research evidence documenting the importance of effectively treating and allocating resources to higher risk offenders and offenders with criminogenic needs, POs continued to view these populations as too risky. Rather than open themselves up to potential liability, POs maintained a control-oriented supervision strategy with more difficult cases. With correctional agencies across the nation facing pressures to implement EBPs, these findings suggest barriers to the transportability of effective practices in justice settings. Embedded within the current findings are additional themes related to EBP transportability: challenge of risk and needs, and historical factors.

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Challenge of Risk and Needs. POs in the current study felt overwhelmed when probationers had high risk levels, more identified criminogenic needs (e.g., mental health, substance abuse), or were resistant in their communications. In these scenarios, they believed there was very little they could do for that individual. As a result, POs prioritized other tasks, such as paperwork or probationers who might be less challenging to work with. This not only suggests POs do not have a thorough understanding of offender risk and needs, it also suggests they may not be expending their own resources (e.g., time and energy) as well as limited agency resources in the most effective ways. Additionally, many of the EBP initiatives are complicated and require clinical training and/or expertise, which the majority of POs in this study did not have. Specifically relating to offender functioning and mental health issues, the EBP-related trainings provided little guidance on handling these types of issues. The risk and needs assessment training directs POs to use "other relevant experience and information" to deal with mental health. Addressing mental health issues in this way creates a grey area open to interpretation and discretion, leaving POs to believe EBPs may not be feasible for use with mental health populations. This is problematic, as many POs believed probationers on their caseloads have mental health conditions. Additionally, it was somewhat surprising that POs grouped substance abusers and individuals with functioning/mental health issues into the same category as gang members and sex offenders as being too high-risk for EBP supervision. This further highlights the challenge between understanding and differentiating between risk and needs and suggests POs may use needs as a means to further manage risk. Taken together, the findings regarding the

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perceived acceptability and feasibility of utilizing more rehabilitative, EBP supervision with probationers with substance abuse or mental health issues suggests a significant gap in training provided to probation staff in the current sample. It is possible that POs who supervise regular caseloads as opposed to a mental health or substance abuse caseload do not receive an adequate level of education and training, but even those responsible for specialized caseloads expressed uncertainty and challenges in supervision such populations. This suggests a need beyond general EBP training, to focus more specifically on applying research evidence with specific populations as well as directly addressing the challenges and conflicts found between risk and needs within probation work.

Research continues to recognize the challenge of integrating the concepts of risk and needs into correctional practice. Recent studies in probation settings find POs often do not integrate risk and needs assessment information into decisions (Bonta et al., 2008; Flores et al., 2004; Luong & Wormith, 2011; Miller & Mahoney, 2013; Schwalbe, 2004; Taxman, 2006; Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015), over-classify offenders according to perceived risk (Oleson et al., 2012), and focus on risks and pay little attention to identifying and addressing criminogenic needs (Oleson et al., 2012; Flores et al., 2004; Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015). Given that the principles of risk, need and responsivity underlie many of the EBPs for correctional practice (Andrews, Bonta & Hogue, 1990; Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Gendreau, 1996), the repeated misalignment between theory and practice highlight issues related to acceptability and feasibility potentially impacting important outcomes (i.e., recidivism reduction). Rather than

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continuing to implement EBPs, such as risk and needs assessments, and identifying issues with alignment and fit afterwards, researchers and criminal justice agencies should critically evaluate issues of transportability *prior* to even designing implementation efforts (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). In justice settings, this includes assessing issues related to the setting, population, client and practitioner buy-in, organizational fit, fidelity, and core outcomes as means to understand how the criminal justice environment may affect how an intervention is delivered (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). This strategy allows agencies to design and tailor their implementation strategies to address issues of alignment and fit *before* they might occur in practice. This may allow researchers and agencies to build a stronger foundation to implement EBPs and overcome recurrent challenges present with transporting EBPs to real-world practice.

Historical Factors. POs are often discouraged by failure. They expect EBPs to work when they actively try to implement them and equate continuous struggles with probationers as ineffectiveness, affecting future use of EBPs. This finding is in line with previous research reporting high rates of probation violations undermines confidence in the feasibility of probation as an effective response for offending (Langan & Cuniff, 1992; Taxman, Soule & Gelb, 1999). Similar to the work of Fine (1996) and Zerubavel (1996), POs accumulate knowledge based on their previous direct and indirect experiences with EBPs, which in turn shapes their current perceptions and behaviors. This suggests an important component associated with organizational change that typically goes unaddressed in research and implementation strategies. The historical influence of prior failures suggests a target for future trainings to build a more clear and

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stronger foundation for EBPs – that because a practice is "evidence-based" does not mean they are guaranteed to work every time, but that it increases the odds of the practice achieving the desired outcomes (Butts, 2012). This suggests an issue within the inner setting of the organization as well as the overall organizational capacity to absorb, implement, and sustain EBPs (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). As a means to address barriers related to historical factors, agencies should reconcile their history with policy and practice implementation with their present state to both identify common patterns as well as address perceived failures. Agencies should recognize and openly communicate regarding previous and existing challenges and work with street-level staff to understand how new policies and practices fit within the existing organizational context given previous difficulties. Acknowledging and addressing historical factors that may delay or hinder change attempts is a relatively new and unexplored way of understanding issues related to organizational change and street-level responses to change. More work in this area is needed to develop a framework for understanding how street-level workers activate prior experience with EBPs and incorporate them into decision making processes. Future research should also examine how differential experiences of street-level workers impact the influence of previous experience on decision making, such as whether they ran treatment groups for probationers, received specific training and certifications (e.g., trained in Thinking for a Change or other cognitive-behavioral program), or received prior education on EBPs and effective practices (e.g., in college courses or previous employment).

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Internal Training. The training strategy used in the state studied relied frequently on a "train the trainer" method. In this regard, expert trainers were brought in from either the DOC research department or an outside agency to provide the first round or several rounds of training. In an attempt to build a more financially sustainable model, the original trainers focused on training internal probation staff to become the official trainers for all DOC initiatives moving forward. Additionally, with each new initiative, "coaches" from each probation office were chosen to become the in-house specialists. In the future, these coaches provided refresher trainings for staff in their office and helped staff troubleshoot as challenges arise. The issues associated with the "train-the-trainer" and "internal coach" method is that the socialization process is not accounted for. That is, it is unclear how the process of training is adapted and altered as probation staff infused their own norms, customs and ideologies within the original training design. Further, it is unclear how this process of peer training and coaching impacted the sensemaking process. Questions remain regarding whether and how peer trainers/coaches acted either as a facilitator or as a barrier towards understanding EBPs and the influence on street-level perceptions of acceptability of feasibility of incorporating effective practices into daily routines. In a recent systematic review, Pearce and colleagues (2012) identified 18 studies of train-the-trainer techniques, with 13 reporting positive outcomes regarding increased knowledge and skills of clinicians trained by their colleagues. In a deeper examination of the sustainability of this training method, Martino and colleagues (2011) examined the effectiveness of the train-the-trainer method for motivational interviewing, finding that after 12 weeks when monthly support calls with expert trainers and financial

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incentives ended, the trained trainers returned to supervision-as-usual practices, failing to continue coaching and providing feedback to their colleagues. This study highlights how the organizational culture can influence trainers and coaches as well as reinforce the status quo. While creating a system of training within an organization has potential benefits in terms of sustaining reform efforts, this suggests a challenge in creating and sustaining lasting skills and expertise that may require a more deliberative change process. Future research should consider the implications and influences this method of training has for the implementation and sustainability of best practices.

Balancing Expectations and Requirements. Throughout this study, it was very challenging for POs to balance mandates from the judiciary and legislature and what agency policy dictates, highlighting conflicts within and between the inner and outer setting of the organization. With the EBP movement, PO legal responsibilities were unchanged and POs were aware they are accountable for upholding the law. While the judiciary and legislature dictates POs were responsible for ensuring probationers abide by their probation conditions, which supports a compliance-driven strategy, the changing nature of the agency and associated policies emphasize a case-plan driven strategy. Thus, while trying to make sense of changes associated with reform, POs perceived a misalignment between the agency (inner setting) and judiciary/legislature (outer setting). As a result, POs struggled through the sensemaking process, ultimately impacting their perceptions regarding the appropriateness or acceptability of EBPs given external pressures.

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Adding to the confusion, agency policies varied both between probation offices in the state and within them, depending on the views and philosophies of each individual supervisor. Thus, it is very confusing for POs to know who will hold them accountable for what actions and/or decisions. This left POs uncertain and fearful of liability, which underlined many decisions made by POs in the current study. While little research examines liability within probation agencies, Drapela and Lutze (2009) found community corrections officers commonly worry they will be held accountable if they do not respond to offender noncompliance or minor criminal behavior. Therefore, officers must balance and negotiate external pressures to immediately respond to noncompliance punitively with the knowledge presented by EBP – "that offender change is complex and may be better served by non-punitive remedies that tend to take more time" (Lutze et al., 2012:51). Tensions between pressure to hold offenders accountability and pressure to implement effective practices can result in negative consequences such as role conflict and job stress as well as a concerns over legal liabilities which may hinder EBP implementation efforts (Drapela & Lutze, 2009; Slate, Vogel, & Johnson, 2002; Slate, Wells, & Johnson, 2000, 2003). As a means to address these tensions, Lutze and colleagues (2012) suggest a shift in the conceptualization of community corrections agencies from a criminal justice profession to a human service one, allowing for a greater understanding that officers and offenders are only human and mistakes as well as negative outcomes are inevitable (Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Lutze et al., 2012). This suggests system-wide change including judiciaries, legislatures, politicians, and

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community members to recognize the changing nature of probation work and expectations for POs and supervision strategies.

Organizational Reinforcements. Findings demonstrate the challenges associated with failing to formally support the use of new practices in organizational policies and procedures. At the time of this study, performance reviews and raises are not formally tied to the use of EBPs. While supervisors conduct case reviews, reviewing each offender file to ensure POs complete the necessary paperwork, a checked box does not mean POs or the agency has fully implemented the desired practice, as this study suggests. This review strategy results in POs concentrating on having paperwork and data entry completed on time, but they do not emphasize utilization of the skills in the intended ways. Further, many of the EBPs require more than evaluating whether or not a box has been checked. They require actual observations of the interactions between the PO and probationers, which would require leadership to take additional measures to conduct the observations as well as learn and become familiar with EBPs. Additionally, within the structure of this statewide community corrections system, a probation chief, followed by middle management teams, leads each individual probation office. Within this system, chiefs and middle managers retain discretion in terms of how policies and practices play out in their office and what they expect from the individual POs they supervise and review. Throughout this study, POs often complained that performance reviews and case reviews often differed depending on who their immediate supervisor was. This highlights the existence of discretion and differential application and expectations tied to EBPs that may influence attitudes and use of EBPs at the street-level. In addition to formalizing

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supervising of PO performance and performance review processes tied directly to effective practices, less formal incentives and rewards can assist with EBP implementation. Agencies should incentivize POs for achieving positive outcomes with their probationers, such as treatment enrollment and completion (Lutze et al., 2012) as a means to encourage behavior change amongst staff. Taken together, agencies can support use of desired practices through both formal and informal incentive structures.

Conclusion

Changing organizational routines is difficult, especially when the existing organizational culture supports old routines, which infiltrate the way people think about and carry out their jobs. The organization in the current study was not expecting a one-time training to work. Rather, they implemented a variety of training methods and implementation strategies (e.g., coaches) to support EBP adoption, implementation, and sustainability throughout the state. Regardless, the approach is an example of a top-down change strategy. Considering the work of Feldman (2003) on the performative perspective, street-level workers are not mindless. Instead, they are mindful and present. If the agency can convince them or teach them a new routine, then change is infinitely possible (Feldman, 2003). A more holistic approach to change occurs from the bottom-up as well, where the street-level workers at the bottom create change by changing their own routines. These new routines then become the existing normative culture. Agencies can routinize this change by providing rewards through promotions and raises, but only need to do so for a short period of time until the changes become routine and staff do not

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remember the old way of doing business. Taxman and Belenko (2012) highlight several strategies agencies can use to initially motivate and incentivize staff use of EBPs: (a) modify or discard outdated practices as part of the implementation process; (b) provide financial support for staff to attend and/or present at professional conferences; (c) administrative leave days, or (d) bringing in well-known speakers associated with EBPs in correctional settings.

In the current study, the agency and POs at the street-level put forth effort into EBP implementation. Many POs across all study sites volunteer for extra responsibilities and take on additional roles (e.g., coaches). They have an engaged, captive workforce, but POs do not know how to fully integrate EBPs into the existing organizational environment. While the organizational change strategy utilized in the current state was multifaceted and progressive, the agency paid little attention towards issues related to the transportability of EBPs. That is, throughout implementation, the agency did not adequately assess the degree the which EBPs might align within the correctional setting, what aspects of the environment might act as a facilitator or barrier towards implementation, and street-level perceptions of the acceptability of feasibility of new practices. While POs are interested in EBPs, they struggle to change their routines in support of the changing policies and practices. Probation officers serve as front-line policy interpreters (Lipsky, 1980) and face daily pressures and often have to make tough decisions, which influence their perceptions of whether or not an EBP might fit within their world.

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One strategy to improve staff acceptability of and compliance in organizational change efforts is to utilize quality improvement (QI) processes to guide and structure organizational change efforts (Powell, Rushmer & Davies, 2008; Rudes, Viglione & Porter, 2012; Rudes et al., 2012), such as the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) (Langley et al., 1996). The PDSA model is a QI process designed to improve operations by identifying goals and processes to integrate those goals into existing organizational activities. The PDSA model incorporates an ongoing process of identifying goals for change, developing a process to achieve change, studying the outcomes and results of this process, and finally adopting, adapting, or abandoning new practices based on outcomes (Langley et al., 1996). This process allows organizations to look for ways to improve fit and alignment as well as give staff opportunities to learn about organizational processes, increase their confidence in new practices, and assist in the adaptation process to fit their needs (Cox, Wilcock & Young, 1999). In this sense, QI processes like the PDSA model may assist agencies in both facilitating the change process as well as addressing barriers to the acceptability and feasibility early on in the implementation process as well as throughout implementation.

While in theory, implementing practices based on scientific research is sound, researchers must examine the process of implementation and the way in which effective practices function within the real-world environment and context. The ways in which new practices and policies are modified have significant implications for the ultimate effectiveness of EBPs as well as the feasibility for widespread implementation and sustainability. As research on the significance of EBPs for improving correctional

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practice grows, more attention must be given to transportability and the processes associated with implementation. Additionally, the current study suggests full integration of EBPs within a risk management environment is complex. As POs make sense of changing policies and practices, they continue to rely on a variety of factors tied to managing risk (e.g., perceived and actual risk levels, offender characteristics, communication and relationship issues, job-related factors, and liability). Probation staff often questioned the appropriateness and suitability of EBPs for use with certain offenders or in certain situations. As a result, an overarching concern regarding risk and managing risks influences both the perceived acceptability and feasibility of EBPs as well as PO decisions to utilize EBPs within the current probation setting. Remaining questions surround whether movement away from a risk management approach is possible or how EBPs can be adapted to fit within the existing correctional framework, while maintaining integrity to the original design and intent. Further, future research must acknowledge and address whether it is possible in a criminal justice environment, where no matter how many EBPs, rehabilitative strategies or treatment programs are implemented, POs still have to exert authority and control measures to uphold the law and protect public safety.

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CHAPTER FIVE: TELEPHONE MONITORING: TRANSPORTABILITY OF THE RISK-NEEDS-RESPONSIVITY FRAMEWORK TO ADULT PROBATION

Over the last several decades, significant shifts characterize policy and practice changes throughout probation and parole work. Originally working directly for judges, early probation incorporated tenents of both rehabilitation and law enforcement orientations (Dressler, 1962). During this time, the dominant model of probation work emphasized rehabilitation and linking probationers to resources in the community, while others emphasized compliance or enforcement (Taxman, 2008). This trend in probation work continued until the emergence of the "get tough" movement in criminal justice ideology following the publication of several reports documenting the apparent failings of probation and correctional treatment interventions (Bailey, 1966; Martinson, 1974; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). At this time, probation shifted towards the more punitive, control model of supervision. As a result, probation officers (POs) emphasized monitoring and enforcement in their supervision strategies (Taxman, 2002; 2008) and managing risk as opposed to attempting behavior change (Feeley & Simon, 1992).

While this punitive, control-oriented model dominated probation work for several decades, increasing attention towards the unintended consequences and ineffectiveness of punishment-oriented responses to criminal behavior (Nagin, Cullen & Jonson, 2009; Rhine, Mawhorr & Parks, 2006) as well as growing research suggesting little evidence traditional probation and parole models effectively reduce recidivism (Bonta et al., 2008; MacKenzie, 2006; Petersilia, 1998; Sherman, Gottfredson, MacKenzie, & Eck, 1998), led to a resurgence in efforts to alter the correctional landscape to incorporate

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rehabilitative ideals. The present focus on integrating rehabilitative strategies within correctional models has led to an emphasis on using evidence-based practices (EBPs), or practices that are scientifically proven to be effective in reducing recidivism (Sherman, 1998).

In line with the EBP movement, increasingly gaining attention in the correctional field is the *Risk-Needs-Responsivity* (RNR) model, which combines an actuarial, managerial approach with a rehabilitative, clinical model for supervision (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Taxman, 2008). The RNR model outlines the basic principles of risk, need and responsivity to generate effective interventions for offender populations with the ultimate goals of improving treatment for offenders and reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The risk principle states that practitioners should match the level of service to the offender's level of risk while prioritizing treatment programming for high-risk offenders. While research emphasizes the importance of delivering intensive interventions to high risk probationers (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews & Dowden, 1999; Andrews et al., 1990; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta & Rooney, 2000; Dowden & Andrews, 1999a; 1999b; 2000; Hanley, 2002; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002), there is little evidence surrounding appropriate supervision techniques for low risk offenders. Based on these studies though, researchers emphasize the need to expand more resources on higher risk offenders through programming and interventions. This results in interpretations and actual applications of the risk principle to inform correctional supervision strategies. That is, in devoting fewer resources to lower risk offenders,

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correctional agencies utilize strategies to decrease the amount of supervision and attention paid to lower risk offenders.

The current study examines the operationalization of the risk principle in correctional practice through implementation of one technology---the voice-recognition telephone monitoring for low-risk probationers. This research considers how: (a) probation staff implement telephone supervision in their supervision and case management decisions; (b) factors related to the intervention influence implementation; (c) factors related to the inner setting influence implementation, and (d) factors related to the outer setting influence implementation across the study sites. The study goal is to better understand the processes associated with transporting research to practice. The study also has theoretical and practical implications of utilizing the risk principle to guide probation practice for a population typically ignored throughout the research - low risk offenders.

Risk-Needs-Responsivity Framework

First formalized in 1990, the *Risk-Needs-Responsivity* model consists of three main principles to guide correctional practice (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990). The principles of the RNR model include: (a) the *risk principle,* which emphasizes reliably predicting criminal behavior and appropriately matching the level of treatment to the offender's level of risk; (b) the *needs principle,* which identifies the target(s) for treatment and programming, specifically, offenders' criminogenic needs, or those needs directly related to offending behavior, and lastly, (c) the *responsivity principle,* which states treatment using a cognitive-behavioral approach should match the abilities,

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motivation, and learning style of the offender (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Since 1990, researchers expanded upon these core theoretical principles, including an emphasis on building collaborative and respectful working relationships with clients, the provision of organizational policies and leadership to facilitate use of effective interventions, and use of a cognitive social learning approach (e.g., prosocial modeling, use of reinforcement and disapproval, problem solving) (Andrews, 2001; Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Taxman, 2002; Taxman, 2008). Additionally, recent research expands the *responsivity* principle to consider *systemic responsivity,* or the availability of appropriate treatment and services for offenders in a given jurisdiction (Taxman, 2014). In a meta-analysis of 80 studies of adult and juvenile treatment interventions, Andrews and colleagues (1990) test the validity of the RNR model, finding effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral treatment interventions vary based on their adherence to the RNR principles. Those programs adhering to the model more closely resulted in greater reductions in recidivism, while programs failing to adhere or adhering less resulted in increased recidivism. Recent meta-analyses confirm these findings (Andrews et al., 2010; Prendergast et al., 2013).

Risk Principle

The risk principle has two important components: (a) use of a reliable and validated risk assessment to predict criminal behavior and (b) appropriately matching level of service to the assessed level of risk. According to this principle, the amount of treatment needed to reduce recidivism increases as an offender's risk level increases (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Research demonstrates the link between risk level and

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program effectiveness, with many research studies and meta-analytic reviews concluding intensive correctional programs are more effective when delivered to higher risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews & Dowden, 1999; Andrews et al., 1990; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta & Rooney, 2000; Dowden & Andrews, 1999a; 1999b; 2000; Hanley, 2002; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). Inappropriate matching of treatment intensity with offender risk level can actually result in increased criminal behavior. For example, in a meta-analysis of 80 studies, Andrews & Bonta (1998) find programs delivered to higher risk offenders are five times more effective in reducing recidivism than programs delivered to lower risk offenders. Bonta, Wallace-Capretta and Rooney (2000) confirm these findings, reporting low risk offenders placed in minimal treatment programming have a recidivism rate of 15% while those placed in intensive treatment programming have a recidivism rate of 32%. Additionally, high risk offenders who receive intensive treatment programming have a recidivism rate of 51%, while those who do not receive intensive services have a recidivism rate of 32%. Similarly, Lowenkamp and colleagues (2003) conducted a meta-analysis reviewing the effectiveness of drug court programs, reporting overall recidivism reductions of 7.5%. When examining by risk level, the authors find a 10% reduction in recidivism in studies with high risk samples and 5% recidivism reduction in studies with low risk samples. As a whole, the literature base on the relationship between risk level and programming highlights the importance of targeting riskier offenders in correctional programming. However, it should be noted that the definition of risk is not well defined throughout the literature and various risk and needs assessment instruments measure risk in different ways.

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This body of literature pinpoints the potential harm that can result when placing lower risk offenders in intensive correctional interventions and supervision, suggesting several possible iatrogenic effects. First, supervising low risk offenders at a higher supervision level or placing them in programs they might not need may disrupt their prosocial ties and networks in the community (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Dishion et al., 1999; Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2005; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004). Supervising a low risk offender at a higher risk level is problematic as, specifically in community corrections, increased supervision and enforcement of conditions increases the likelihood that violations will occur and/or be detected (Petersilia & Turner, 1993). Second, placing low risk offenders in programming with riskier offenders exposes them to high risk offenders from whom they could learn antisocial behavior and form new peer associates (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2005; Lowenkamp, Latessa & Holsinger, 2006; O'Leary & Clear, 1984). Placing low risk offenders in more intensive programs may negatively impact both program effectiveness and recidivism (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2005).

Despite the vast research in support of the risk principle, there are two major challenges facing the field. Traditionally, research reports community corrections practitioners engage and focus on low risk offenders due to the ease of supervision as compared to more challenging, higher risk offenders (Bonta, 2000; Wormith & Olver, 2002). Practitioners often exclude higher risk offenders from programming for these reasons. First, community treatment providers and institutional programs may be less likely to accept higher risk offenders into their programs due to anticipated challenges in treatment (Gordon & Nicholaichuk, 1996; Duffee and Carlson, 1996). Second, while

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research on the risk principle demonstrates the importance of focusing intensive programming and resources on higher risk offenders, little attention focuses on identifying appropriate treatment or supervision for low risk offenders. One study suggests practitioners should divert low risk offenders to interventions that will minimally disrupt their prosocial ties and networks, focusing on employment, relationships with prosocial others, and shortening length of residential treatment (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Other research vaguely defines appropriate treatment of low risk offenders. For example, Lowenkamp and colleagues (2006) argue practitioners should utilize traditional levels of supervision for low risk probationers, while Latessa and Lowenkamp (2005) posit low risk offenders may require some intervention, but emphasizing accountability and imposing minimal sanctions may be sufficient.

As a means to manage limited agency resources while aligning with scientific evidence, correctional agencies make a concerted effort to divert or limit the number of resources expended on low risk offenders. As part of this shift, probation agencies are beginning to incorporate various technologies to deliver low-intensity supervision while allowing POs to focus their time and resources on higher risk offenders. For example, the New York City Department of Probation pilot-tested an automated kiosk reporting system in the mid-1990s with a small group of probationers, expanding use for all low risk probationers in 2003. Researchers find use of the kiosk system allows the department to reallocate resources to focus on higher risk cases. Since implementation, they found a reduction in two-year arrest rates for probationers assigned to the kiosk (Wilson, Naro & Auston, 2007). Other jurisdictions also adopted kiosk technology as an aid to supervision

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strategies, including probation and parole in Utah (Ogden & Horrocks, 2001) and Texas (Belshaw, 2011), yet there are few studies examining the impact of kiosk technology beyond the work of Wilson and colleagues (2007) in New York. A recent experiment tested a low-intensity supervision practice based on the New York model, examining the effects of randomly assigning parolees to contacts once per month or once per six months in Philadelphia (Barnes et al., 2010; Barnes et al., 2012). Findings suggest no significant differences in rates of reoffending, arrest, and incarceration resulted from lowering the intensity of supervision (measured through number of contacts with PO) at 12 month (Barnes et al., 2010) and 18 month follow-up (Barnes et al., 2012). The authors conclude reallocating resources away from low risk offenders, in conjunction with valid and reliable risk forecasting, is an effective management strategy that allows correctional agencies to focus on higher risk offenders (Barnes et al., 2010; Barnes et al., 2012). Beyond the research conducted by Wilson and colleagues (2007) in New York and Barnes and colleagues (2010; 2012) in Philadelphia, scant empirical research examines reduced supervision strategies and implementation, use and effectiveness of various techniques and technologies with low risk populations.

While previous research documents the importance of allocating programming and resources to higher risk offenders, little is known about appropriate supervision strategies with lower risk offenders. This line of questioning is critical, because correctional agencies interpret the risk principle as a management tool, using it as a means to allocate resources and workload (O'Leary & Clear, 1984), with the current trend to pay less attention to supervising lower risk offenders. Since is especially

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problematic as some lower risk offenders might have higher levels of criminogenic needs, for which appropriate intervention may reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes in the future (Taxman, 2006; Taxman & Caudy, 2015). It is possible low risk offenders may benefit from treatment in ways recidivism data does not capture, such as family reintegration (Gordon & Nicholaichuk, 1996). Thus, research must examine the implications for interpreting and applying the risk principle to limit supervision of low risk offenders.

The current study seeks to add to the existing literature on supervising low risk offenders by examining both *how* probation agencies and staff implement an alternative supervision strategy for low risk offenders. The current study also examines the processes associated with implementation utilizing domains and constructs identified in The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (Damschroder et al., 2009). This research aims to better understand processes associated with the movement of research to practice in an era characterized by doing what works best.

The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research and Transportability

The current study examines transportability, a framework to consider how efficacious practices can align to the desired setting, an emerging area of implementation science (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). Transportability identifies the need for a series of processes to adapt EBPs with the desired environmental context (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001) and explores the alignment, fit and adaptation of scientific evidence to practice (Portillo, Rudes & Taxman, 2014; Schillinger, 2007; Shapiro, Secor & Butchart, 1983; Taxman & Belenko, 2012). The concept of transportability suggests that after EBP

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designation, agencies typically adapt the practice to the setting based on a variety of factors such as characteristics of the intervention, practitioner and/or client characteristics, organizational characteristics, the model of service delivery, and characteristics of the service system (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). In justice settings, this includes assessing issues related to the setting, population, client and practitioner buy-in, organizational fit, fidelity, and core outcomes as means to understand how the criminal justice environment may affect how an intervention is delivered (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). Thus, the current study examines the street-level processes associated with implementing research on the RNR model, specifically the risk principle, to correctional practice as a means to understand transportability at the organizational level.

To examine the contextual and processual factors related to street-level EBP implementation and larger organizational-level issues of transportability, the current study utilizes The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFRI) (Damschroder et al., 2009). The CFIR identifies five major domains: 1) characteristics of the intervention itself; 2) outer setting; 3) inner setting; 4) characteristics of individuals involved, and 5) the implementation process that influence implementation of innovations within organizations. The first domain, *characteristics of the intervention*, recognizes that interventions are complex and multifaceted, with many interacting components. Interventions often have critical "core components" and an "adaptable periphery" which contain components that can be modified for the desired setting (Damschroder et al., 2009). The next two domains are the *inner* and *outer setting*. These

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dynamic organizational settings can influence one another (Institute of Medicine, 2001). The *outer setting* involves the economic, political, and social context within which an organization resides while the inner setting includes features of structural, political, and cultural contexts through which implementation processes will proceed (Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron, 2001). Examples of factors in the outer setting include the level of interagency collaboration and networking, as organizations with higher levels are more likely to quickly implement new practices (Rycroft-Malone et al., 2002). There may also be external pressure to change via isomorphism (pressure to look like other, similar organizations) if other organizations implemented innovative practices already (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Other possible factors within the outer setting include external policies, regulations, mandates, guidelines, and collaboratives (Damschroder et al., 2009).

Within the *inner setting*, organizational variables such as the quality of informal and formal communication channels within an organization, including collaboration, open feedback, clear communication of mission and goals, and cohesion amongst staff, can contribute to effective implementation (Simpson and Dansereau, 2007). The culture and climate of an organization are critical in implementation efforts. Implementation of EBPs in probation organizations often means shifting the core ideology and mission of the agency from control-oriented to service-oriented. The culture of an organization, or "the way things get done," (Deal and Kennedy, 2000) signals to staff what is expected of them (Scott and Bruce, 1994). Additionally, the implementation climate or the organization's absorptive capacity for change, individual receptiveness, and

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organizational can influence efforts to change within an organization (Damschroder et al., 2009; Greenhalgh et al., 2004; Klein & Sorra, 1996). Characteristics of a positive implementation climate include a perceived need for change, compatibility of change with existing norms and values, perceived priority for change, incentives and rewards linked to change, clearly articulated goals and feedback, and a learning climate (Damschroder et al., 2009).

The fourth domain, *characteristics of individuals* involved, is a function of the inner setting. The extent to which staff understand the innovation and its purpose as well as their attitudes and value placed on the intervention are critical (Ajzen, 1991; Rogers, 2003; Saint et al., 2009). The degree to which staff holds positive or negative perceptions of an innovation relates to whether or not staff actually change their behavior to align with the innovation (Ajzen, 1991). In addition, readiness to change, self-efficacy or the belief that one is capable of enacting changes and commitment to the organization are all important staff-level factors that can influence innovation implementation (Bandura, 1977). The final domain is the *implementation process* itself. This domain suggests successful implementation requires an active change process aimed at both the individual and organizational level (Damschroder et al., 2009). The process may contain a series of interrelated sub-processes, planned or unplanned, that may progress simultaneously at multiple levels within the organization with the ultimate goal of effective implementation (Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron, 2001).

Researchers hypothesize that dynamics within these five domains can influence EBP alignment in justice settings (Taxman and Belenko, 2012), but it is not known

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exactly how factors at these varying levels impact the transportability of EBPs. The current study uses this framework to examine how factors within and across two of these domains - characteristics of the intervention and inner setting – affect implementation, alignment and adaptation of telephone monitoring within adult probation settings

Study Sites and Background

Study Sites

In 2006, the state where this study took place began to support the use of EBPs, providing specialized training and technical assistance to guide the implementation process. The state evolved into a four-tiered system of implementation, occurring in a progressive manner. Four offices placed in tier one first received training and information regarding EBPs, including an introductory training, motivational interviewing, use of a validated risk and needs assessment, case planning, cognitive-based therapies, and problem-solving and relationship building skills. (2006 trainings). Tier one probation offices were either familiar with EBPs or demonstrated innovative thinking and practices already. Tier two consisted of five offices similar to tier one offices in size and populations served, but had little experience with innovative practices (2009 trainings). The remaining 34 offices were placed in either tier three or four in a non-systematic way, with eight placed in tier three (2010 trainings). In 2013, administration decided all probation offices must become evidence-based and grouped the remaining 26 offices into tier four (see Table 10).

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Table 10

Implementation Tier and Training Timeline

Tier	Number of Probation Offices	EBP Implementation Start Date
1	4	2006
2	5	2009
3	8	2010
4	26	2013

With the assistance of Department of Corrections' administrative staff, this study utilized maximum variation sampling to select an equal number of offices across the four EBP implementation tiers and three regions of the state. Given the unequal distribution of probation offices across the four EBP implementation tiers and three probation regions, maximum variation sampling allowed for broader coverage of the research topic by identifying common themes evident across the range of possible contexts (e.g., tier level, region, and office size) that may be relevant (Patton, 1990). This sampling procedure resulted in 12 sites distributed equally across the four EBP implementation tier levels and three probation regions in the state, representing both large and small probation offices (see chapter four for a detailed explanation of sample selection).

The Intervention: Voice-Recognition Telephone Monitoring

As part of their effort to become evidence-based, this state Department of Corrections--the first correctional agency to implement voice-recognition telephone monitoring in the United States—began implementation in 2007. The agency pilot-tested the system in two probation offices, where probation staff utilized the tool with select probation cases. In 2009, after some success in the pilot sites, the agency began a slow

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expansion of the tool throughout probation offices across the state, with approximately 6,500 probationers enrolled by 2011 and over 10,000 in 2014. While on telephone monitoring, probationers called in once a week to an automated system to check-in and once a month completed a series of interview questions based on their conditions of supervision during a randomly selected call. The program automatically notified the supervising officer when their probationer did not call-in during their allotted time. The original intent of implementing voice-recognition telephone monitoring was to reallocate resources by seeing lower risk offenders face-to-face less frequently, but enhancing reporting information through frequent updates of probationer information.

The DOC provided an orientation for telephone monitoring as a short addition to existing training on risk and needs assessment and case planning for POs. The explanation for the rationale of telephone monitoring in the orientation was "low risk requires little supervision and benefit the most from low intensity interventions or no interventions at all." As part of the implementation process, the agency provided several documents to probation staff including: (a) an enrollment form to activate probationers in the program; (b) a short one-page document outlining when probation staff should deactivate or deny placement on telephone monitoring, and (c) a "cheat sheet" with pre-written text POs use in their log notes for probationers moved to telephone supervision. Probation supervisors and managers may provide more in-depth training and procedures/protocols informally within their respective offices.

Current agency policy dictates POs are to place all low risk probationers onto voice-recognition telephone monitoring. To do so, the supervising officer must first

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complete the required risk and needs assessment instrument to assess for risk level and assessed risk must be low (as opposed to medium or high). For probationers originally assessed as medium or high risk, POs must conduct a case supervision review every six to 12 months. If this reassessment indicated the PO should drop the probationer's supervision level to low risk, the officer must place that individual on voice-recognition supervision per agency policy. Prior to placement on telephone monitoring, the supervising officer must confirm the probationer's personal information (e.g., address) and ensure their restitution and fine payments are up to date.

Statewide agency policy dictated how POs should handle new criminal offenses and probation violations that occurred during use of telephone monitoring. When probationers failed to call in to the system on three consecutive occasions, the supervising officer must submit a letter to the court informing of non-compliance. The administrative staff members or PO supervising the telephone monitoring system should handle minor probation violations. A new criminal offense or felony charge required the removal of the probationer from telephone monitoring and a return to the original supervising officer's caseload. Additionally, agency policy outlined a broad list of 13 situations in which probation staff should remove the probationer from telephone monitoring and place back on traditional supervision. These included when: (a) the probationer was deceased; (b) the probationer absconded (c) the probationer failed to appear; (d) the probationer failed to comply with conditions; (e) a judge terminated probation; (f) the probationer was rearrested; (g) the case was adjudicated; (h) the case was adjudicated and the probationer was found guilty; (i) the case was adjudicated and the probationer was found not guilty;

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(j) the case was dismissed; (k) the probationer failed to complete court-ordered programming; (l) the probationer met conditions of probation, or (m) the probationer's sentence was completed. Additionally, POs who supervised temporarily incarcerated probationers or those who were ill, on work-related travel, or serve in the military should not utilize telephone monitoring.

Methods

Data Collection

Qualitative data collection for this project occurred from January 2012 until October 2014. During this time, ethnographic observations and interviews occurred at 12 probation offices throughout one mid-Atlantic state. Fieldwork included the participation in and observations of the Department of Corrections strategic planning process (85 hours of fieldwork), ethnographic observations and interviews with probation supervisors and staff throughout their daily routine (915 hours of fieldwork), and observations of various EBP trainings provided by DOC staff (85 hours). Total time spent collecting data in the field for the current study totals 1,085 hours. Fieldwork occurred Monday through Friday, covering all operating hours including prior to office opening and evening treatment programming and drug testing. Each individual site visit lasted between four and ten hours.

As part of the ethnographic method, informal interviews with probation staff and supervisors occurred throughout the course of observations, which included accompanying staff throughout the course of all work activities (i.e., court, home visits,

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jails, treatment programs, housing shelters). Observations focused on the behaviors and interactions between POs, supervisors, and probationers. Informal interviews with probation staff covered a variety of topics including: (a) main job responsibilities; (b) perception of role and work strategy; (c) demographic information and prior work-related experience; (d) types of EBPs used, (e) perceptions of EBPs; (f) changes in the agency, and (g) perceptions of offenders. The benefit of informal interviewing is their flexible structure, which allowed for the introduction of new questions throughout the observation and interview process and deeper consideration of stories and experiences relevant to study participants.

Time spent with each individual staff member ranged from 30 minutes to several hours, often on more than one occasion. Observations and interviews often took place with multiple staff members on any given day. During fieldwork, observations and interviews took place with 200 probation staff (front-line officers and supervisory staff), 23 executive staff members, and 31 non-probation staff (e.g., treatment providers, administrative staff). Table 11 provides characteristics of probation staff who participated in the current study. Participants were mostly female (60%), white (75%), and between 30 and 39 years old (36%). Probation officers supervising an average of 61 probationers comprised 65% of the sample, while supervisory staff comprised 35% of the sample and supervised an average of 11 POs. Job tenure of probation staff ranged from three months to 42 years, with the average experience in the field 11 years. Lastly, the majority of the sample holds a Bachelor's degree (80%), while 20% holds a Master's Degree.

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Table 11

Probation Officer Characteristics

Demographic Variables	**Percentage**
Gender	
Male	40%
Female	69%
Race	
White	75%
Black	23%
Other	2%
Age	
20-29	19%
30-39	36%
40-49	23%
>50	22%
Position/rank	
PO	65%
Supervisor	35%
Specialized Caseload	31%
Tenure	
1-5 years	35%
5-10 years	27%
11-15 years	15%
16-20 years	8%
>20 years	15%
Education	
Bachelor's	80%
Master's	20%
Clinical training	5%

Following established practice in ethnographic research (Emerson et al., 1995; Emerson, 2001; Morrill, 1995), the researcher did not record fieldnotes while conducting observations and interviews. Rather, the researcher typed detailed fieldnotes as soon as possible after leaving each site visit to record the most accurate account of observations and interviews. This ensures study participants feel comfortable and are as honest as

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possible, while maintaining integrity of conversation (Emerson, 2001). The researcher often recorded fieldnotes during breaks in the day (e.g., lunch hour) and utilizing the "jotting" method (Emerson et al., 1995) in which quick notes for each observation and interview were recorded. Fieldnotes were typed and linked to Atlas.ti, a commonly used data management software for qualitative data (Muhr, 1991).

Coding and Analysis

The researcher utilized the constant comparative method throughout qualitative data collection and analysis processes (Glaser & Straus, 1967), reflecting on time spent in the field and knowledge of previous research to guide future observations and interviews and coding. This allowed consideration of the full range of types and conditions under which something occurs and aids in theory development. Coding began immediately following the start of data collection and was ongoing throughout the duration of the fieldwork to examine and reevaluate my research methods and study aims. First, the researcher utilized a line-by-line coding strategy to link each line of fieldnotes to specific codes from a list that developed from initial and continual grounded theory reads of the data (Charmaz, 1995). While it was not the original intent of this study to examine low-risk offender supervision strategies, after line-by-line coding was complete, it was evident probation staff engaged in a variety of decision making processes regarding low risk offenders and in implementing voice recognition telephone monitoring. When the coding process was completed, the researcher queried the data to examine emergent patterns regarding use of this technology across the 12 study sites.

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Findings

Adoption and Use of Telephone Monitoring

At the time of observations and interviews, all individual probation staff in the current study were familiar with telephone monitoring supervision, and commonly referred to the practice as "unsupervised probation." In defining what telephone monitoring means and the process for use, PO Stark explained,

> Level three is the lowest level of supervision. If they score low, they will report to the telephone monitoring system. This allows the offender to report in by telephone and have minimal contact with the PO.

Another PO explained the benefits of telephone monitoring for probationers:

> I am moving the probationer off supervised probation and onto unsupervised probation and telephone monitoring. This means he can now travel anywhere he wants without getting my permission first – even out of the country – which you cannot do when you are on supervised probation.

Probation staff commonly conceptualized telephone monitoring as a means of reducing the burden on both the supervising officer and the probationer. After placing probationers on telephone monitoring, POs involvement in the case was minimal and often they were not involved at all.

As illustrated in Table 12, all 12 probation offices in the current study utilize telephone monitoring. In each office included in this study, the number of probationers supervised on telephone monitoring is lower than the number of low risk probationers currently supervised in the office. Across the 12 study sites, there are 2,996 low risk

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probationers supervised on telephone supervision (74%), with 1,061 low risk probationers not currently on telephone supervision. Six offices have a designated administrative staff member to fully supervise and monitor the call-in reporting system, while six offices rely on the original supervising officer to continue to supervise their low risk cases while on telephone monitoring.

Table 12

Telephone Monitoring Use by Office

Site	Total Low Risk	Low Risk on TM	%	Tier	Region	Average Caseload	Administrative Staff Monitor
1	475	387	81%	2	C	98	No
2	176	151	86%	1	E	67	No
3	650	405	62%	4	C	69	Yes
4	133	74	56%	3	C	61	Yes
5	467	318	68%	3	E	102	Yes
6	337	270	80%	2	E	113	No
7	360	341	95%	1	C	146	Yes
8	355	144	41%	4	W	77	Yes
9	226	222	98%	2	W	82	Yes
10	298	294	67%	3	W	84	No
11	143	83	58%	4	E	100	No
12	437	401	92%	1	W	90	No

When examining use and adoption of telephone monitoring by site, it is evident not all probation offices utilized telephone monitoring at a similar rate. To better illustrate differences in use of telephone monitoring for low risk probationers, the offices were split into groups depending on whether they engaged in low-moderate use (utilization of

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telephone monitoring for 70% or less of total low risk probationers) or high use (71% or more of total low risk probationers).

Table 13
Low-Moderate Use of Telephone Monitoring by Office

Site	Total Low Risk	Low Risk on TM	%	Tier	Region	Average Caseload	Administrative Staff Monitor
3	650	405	62%	4	C	69	Yes
4	133	74	56%	3	C	61	Yes
5	467	318	68%	3	E	102	Yes
8	355	144	41%	4	W	77	Yes
10	298	200	67%	3	W	84	No
11	143	83	58%	4	E	100	No

Table 14

High Use of Telephone Monitoring by Office

Site	Total Low Risk	Low Risk on TM	%	Tier	Region	Average Caseload	Administrative Staff Monitor
1	475	387	81%	2	C	98	No
2	176	151	86%	1	E	67	No
6	337	270	80%	2	E	113	No
7	360	341	95%	1	C	146	Yes
9	226	222	98%	2	W	82	Yes
12	437	401	92%	1	W	90	No

As illustrated in Tables 13 and 14, offices that utilized telephone monitoring at a low-moderate rate consisted of all tier three and four offices. Thus, the probation offices that had received less EBP-related training were less likely to utilize telephone monitoring with low risk probationers. High use occurred in probation offices in tiers one and two,

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reflecting the offices in the study that received training in the early stages of the EBP implementation process and thus have received a greater dosage of EBP-related trainings. Low-moderate use offices had slightly lower average caseloads (ranged from 62-102; M=82) compared to high use offices (ranged from 67-146; M=99). Only two of the high use offices had administrative staff monitor low risk probationers on telephone monitoring, whereas the majority of low-moderate use offices (n=4) had administrative staff fill this role. Lastly, both low-moderate and high use offices equally represented the three regions (Eastern, Central, Western), suggesting regional administration and related policies may not have influenced differential adoption and use.

While all 12 probation offices in the current study implemented voice-recognition telephone monitoring, implementation varied both within and between offices. Despite agency policy to supervise all probationers assessed as low risk via a validated risk and needs assessment instrument, all 12 probation offices reported supervising fewer probationers on telephone monitoring than total number of low risk probationers supervised in the office. While, probation staff placed approximately 74% of identified low risk cases on telephone supervision in alignment with agency policy, use varied across the probation offices (total low risk probationers placed on telephone supervision ranged from 41% to 98%). Additional data analysis reveals varying patterns of use and misuse of telephone monitoring as intended by the agency related to factors within three CFIR domains that affect alignment and adaptation of EBPs in probation offices: *characteristics of the intervention, inner setting, and outer setting.*

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Characteristics of the Intervention

The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research identifies a number of constructs related to the characteristics of the intervention that may influence implementation including the intervention source, strength and quality of evidence related to the intervention, relative advantage, adaptability, trialability, complexity, design quality, and cost. Analysis revealed two of these constructs played an important role in influencing transportability of telephone monitoring in the current study: adaptability and relative advantage.

Adaptability. Given the complex and multi-faceted nature of most EBPs, attempts at implementing interventions without making adaptations to local context often resulted in a poor fit (Damschroder et al., 2009). While interventions have "core components" or elements that are indispensable, agencies can adapt elements, structures, and systems associated with the intervention in the "adaptable periphery", allowing the agency to improve fit to the local setting without undermining integrity of the intervention (Damschroder et al., 2009). In the current study, individual probation offices had discretion to adapt their policies and procedures guiding use of telephone monitoring within their specific organization. Often, these policy and procedural adaptations restricted use of the technology rather than promoted it.

Across the entire state, the Department of Corrections implemented one formal policy limiting use of telephone monitoring, enacted in every individual probation office. This policy dictated that probation staff could not place a low risk probationer on telephone monitoring if they received a new charge. The presence of a new charge required the PO

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to conduct a reassessment of the probationers' risk level to determine if they needed to increase the level of supervision. Probation officers must halt any attempt to reduce the level of supervision and placement on telephone supervision until a judge made a decision on the case in court. Once the judge made a decision, the officer must conduct a second reassessment of risk level. The following representative fieldnote highlights this process:

> The probationer was low and on telephone supervision, but he got a new charge. PO Beckett had to do a reassessment that suggested she move him to medium supervision. The probationer told her the Judge dropped the charge, so PO Beckett did a reassessment, which confirmed she could place him back on telephone supervision. She reactivated him in the system.

Beyond this state-mandated restriction, several of the individual offices further adapted the policies and procedures associated with telephone monitoring, restricting its use. For example, in several of the probation offices, policies prohibited POs from supervising probationers whom the court places on deferred disposition via telephone monitoring. One probationer supervisor explained, "We do not place probationers with a deferred disposition, or those the judge takes under advisement and places on probation in lieu of sentencing on telephone monitoring". Individuals given a deferred disposition by a judge are generally first-time offenders as well as lower risk. Probation staff upheld this policy, even when probationers were doing well on probation and were in full compliance. The following representative fieldnote highlights this finding:

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> The probationer is low risk, but he was a five for substance abuse. He has gone through treatment even though he did not need it and he has been testing clean. He shows up for all of his obligations and I have had no issues with him at all. He is a deferred disposition though, so I cannot place him on telephone monitoring or terminate his probation early.

Exclusion of probationers with a deferred disposition did not occur in all 12 study sites, with probation supervisors in sites one, seven and ten implementing this policy. In the other nine study sites, agency policy gave probation staff the option to place probationers with deferred dispositions on telephone monitoring if appropriate. A PO from site four explained how she used telephone monitoring in this situation:

> One probationer I supervise is a deferred disposition and has to be on supervision for two years. He still has to complete 100 hours of community service as well as a substance abuse program. Once those are complete and he has paid his financial obligations, I will put him on telephone monitoring and he will check in once a month on his own. I will just have to check his criminal history every six months until his probation term is completed.

While this officer was not immediately placing the probationer on telephone monitoring, she highlighted the intent to do so, an option unavailable in other probation offices in the state.

Informal, unwritten agency policy also governed PO use of telephone monitoring. In these instances, probation staff argued they could not place a probationer who had less than six months left on their probation term or if the officer is requesting an early

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termination of probation. Probation officers preferred this strategy, as it was often easier for them to continue to physically supervise the probationer rather than complete the paperwork and system activation required for set up in the monitoring system. Probation staff utilized these informal policies/procedures limiting the use of telephone monitoring in sites one, five, seven and ten.

Besides adapting formal or informal agency policy and procedures, probation staff (supervisors and officers) shared concerns regarding whether telephone monitoring would result in an increase in work required to supervise low risk probationers. As a result, the state agency suggested individual probation offices adapt their policies as needed to assign administrative staff to supervise and monitor all probation cases placed on telephone monitoring. Probation offices included in the current study implemented the monitoring system differently, with 50% designating administrative staff to supervise probationers on telephone monitoring. In these offices, as soon as a PO assessed a probationer to be low risk utilizing the standardized risk assessment, they turned the file over to the administrative staff member who then met with the probationer, explained the rules, and activated them in the system. One of the offices (site three), adapted this policy further, as illustrated below:

> One of the first changes she [PO Ray] made to their policies was to have PSI writers, the first contact probationers have with their office, do the "lite" risk assessment. This just made sense to me – the PSI writer can do the assessment quickly and then if the probationer comes up as low risk, they can immediately assign them to administrative staff.

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In this office, leadership adapted policy to have their POs responsible for conducting pre-sentence investigations (PSI) also conduct a shortened version of the standardized risk and needs assessment. For probationers who were low risk at this point in the process, the PSI writers immediately assigned them to the administrative staff member for telephone supervision, completely bypassing a PO at all. See Table 15 for policy adaptations by site.

Table 15

Use/Adaptations to Telephone Monitoring Policy by Site

	Site 1	**Site 2**	**Site 3**	**Site 4**	**Site 5**	**Site 6**	**Site 7**	**Site 8**	**Site 9**	**Site 10**	**Site 11**	**Site 12**
Policies Limiting Use	x				x		x			x		
Deferred Disposition	x						x			x		
<6 months on probation	x				x		x			x		
Admin staff monitor			x	x	x		x	x	x			
Bypass PO completely			x									
Use as a reward	x											
Use to decrease caseload sizes		x	x									
Drug screen all on TM					x							

Core Components. Despite being able to make adaptations to local context, core components of the intervention limited both PO perceptions and receptivity to the intervention as well as overall ability to monitor probationers. One of the core components associated with telephone monitoring was the removal of the face-to-face

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interaction between probationers and POs. This resulted in several unintended consequences. Movement of low risk probationers to telephone monitoring resulted in probation staff failing to adequately supervise probationers. The following excerpt from fieldnotes illustrates this pattern:

> When the Department of Corrections first implemented telephone supervision, they did not make it clear to probation staff they still had to supervise and manage the probationers. They are supposed to check in weekly with the system and see when probationers were not calling in and not in compliance. Probation staff got e-mails from the telephone monitoring system reporting non-compliance and they would just delete the e-mails.

This lack of communication and adequate training surrounding implementation of telephone monitoring created a need for individual probation offices to revise their current protocols. Probation staff complained these changes actually increased their workloads as previously, they only checked in with a low risk probationer once every three months face-to-face. Now, they had to monitor the system weekly.

The removal of the face-to-face interaction with POs presented a challenge for probation staff. This eliminated opportunities to build relationships with probationers, address probationer needs, or be familiar with one's probationers. For example, during a home visit with a PO where several other probationers were present, the supervising officer did not recognize one of her probationers when he said hello:

> As we were leaving the probationers' home, the man sitting outside said hello to PO Painter, who did not recognize him. The probationer explained he was on her

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> caseload, but he was on call-in supervision. PO Painter laughed and explained she does not keep a close eye on the good ones.

This finding demonstrates the lack of relationship and familiarity between PO and probationer. As a result, probation staff argued it was sometimes difficult to track down non-compliant probationers on telephone supervision. One PO described his experience with this challenge:

> PO Byrnes was trying to find one of his probationers on telephone supervision. He e-mailed her explaining who he was and that he needed to get in touch with her, but she had not responded. PO Byrnes did not think he would ever see her in person again. She is a low level offender and he does not think she was at risk of being an offender again, but she will probably end up in jail for being non-compliant with her current probation.

Due to the reduced direct communication, PO Byrnes was unable to find a mechanism by which to reach the probationer (via e-mail, phone, or in person). Due to this inability to communicate, PO Byrnes argued he would eventually violate her probation for failing to comply, despite the fact he did not view her as a risk for reoffending. Other POs faced similar situations when probationers on telephone supervision changed their phone number or other personal information and did not report it into the monitoring system. While a major goal associated with implementation of telephone monitoring was the ability to easily track probationer information, it was often difficult for officers to stay informed on probationers they were responsible for supervising.

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In addition to challenges locating and monitoring probationers on telephone supervision, POs argued they no longer had the opportunity to positively influence probationers. PO Alvarez argued a negative consequence of telephone supervision is the inability to empower the probationer throughout the process:

> Even though the probationer scored low and I [PO Alvarez] had to place him on telephone supervision, I wish I could do a case plan with him. Case planning allows me to ask probationers what they want, gives them a say in the process, and is a technique to motivate them, she explained.

With this inability to case plan, POs were generally unable to address criminogenic needs identified by the risk and needs assessment instrument with low risk probationers. The following representative examples highlight this pattern:

> After PO Sully finished the risk and needs assessment, she told the probationer he scored low in risk but medium and high on several criminogenic needs, including substance abuse. Because of his low risk level, she was going to put him on telephone monitoring though.

This finding demonstrates a conflict between simultaneous applications of the risk principle with the needs principle with lower risk offenders. While commonly, this conflict was caused by agency policy requiring POs to place low risk probationers on telephone monitoring, it was also the result of limited resources within a particular office. For example, PO Supervisor Lineman explained they sometimes consider addressing identified criminogenic needs with lower risk probationers in their office, but this was dependent on the type of need and availability of resources:

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> Probationers who come back as low risk do not need any programs. If they are low risk, but come out with thinking errors, we will try to address them if we have the resources to do so before placing them on telephone supervision.

As a result of applying the risk principle via telephone monitoring, probation staff gave priority for treatment programming and other resources to medium and high risk probationers, which aligned with both research evidence and agency policy.

Relative Advantage. Even though offices in the current study made various adaptations to policy/procedures and probation staff in all study sites experienced unintended consequences associated with the core components of the telephone monitoring, probation staff placed and supervised 74% of low risk probationers on telephone supervision. Probation officers argued these probationers are the "easy" ones, often first-time offenders or individuals who are "motivated and already doing what they need to do" and POs moved less risky and more compliant cases to telephone supervision more quickly. In these circumstances, POs often perceived use of telephone supervision positively and as a means to supplement their supervision strategy through utilizing telephone monitoring as an opportunity to reward probationers. The following representative fieldnote highlights this finding:

> She likes to reassess her probationers and utilize telephone monitoring because it provides a way to reward people by reducing their level of supervision. Now, we know we can do more harm than good if we supervise someone who should be on low supervision. For low risk people, we just need to check on them occasionally. We do not assess or work on needs because that can make things worse.

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While rewarding probationers with telephone supervision varied between probation staff, site one developed a policy to reward all probationers who successfully completed cognitive behavioral programming with placement in the program. Additionally, within two of the probation offices in the current study (site two and three), probation staff shared a common goal to reduce their caseloads through utilization of telephone monitoring for low risk probationers. In site three, this was a priority set by the management team, and they actively encouraged and at times, scolded, POs to move all low risk cases to telephone supervision. Probation staff in both sites argued their strategy was to move probationers to telephone supervision as quickly as possible. The following representative example highlights this finding:

> PO Lozada has an active caseload of 30, but 11 of those are on telephone supervision. As soon as her supervisor assigns her a case, she tries to get them on telephone supervision immediately.

Probation staff argued they worked arduously to get probationers decreased to low supervision. Probation staff linked this strategy to the need to reduce caseloads to lighten the amount of work and burden placed on officers. Two representative examples from fieldnotes highlight this perceived advantage:

> I [PO Watkins] just started using telephone monitoring and have some of my low risk cases there. This helps with my caseload, so I am giving it a try. I think it will be okay as long as the guys are straight.
>
> Really, the only probationers I [PO Haldane] supervise on telephone monitoring are on because of court costs or restitution. They have a hard time paying so they

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can be on probation forever. I do not want to keep seeing them, even every three months, so telephone monitoring is helpful for those cases and to get my caseload down.

These excerpts highlight the perceived relative advantage of telephone monitoring as a means to reduce caseload and frequency of contact with probationers who have minimal requirements. Additionally, one supervisor explained, "during the EBP implementation process, we tried to help officers by reducing their caseloads through use of telephone monitoring so they can do more [with other probationers] and feel like they have less on their plate." This demonstrates the potential utilization of telephone monitoring to visibly reduce workload for officers as a means to simultaneously promote adoption and implementation of EBPs. Finally, two POs cited the potential harm in supervising probationers too closely, arguing they moved low risk probationers to telephone supervision because "over supervising was a waste of time" and can cause "more harm than good".

Inner Setting

Implementation climate. Within the inner setting, one factor relating to the implementation climate, or the overall absorptive capacity for change within an organization and the shared receptivity towards an intervention among individuals involved (Greenhalgh et al., 2004) affected staff use of telephone monitoring – compatibility.

Compatibility. Compatibility refers to the degree of fit between the meanings and values associated with an intervention and individuals' norms, values, and perceived risk

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and needs (Greenhalgh et al., 2004; Klein & Sorra, 1992). Probation staff in the current study continually assessed whether or not telephone supervision was compatible with their existing supervision strategy. Three major concerns surfaced continuously regarding the compatibility of telephone monitoring: (a) compliance; (b) special population status, or (c) level of comfort with probationer, all of which related to concerns regarding liability and potential high stakes associated with a particular situation or probationer. Probation staff considered these compatibility concerns as they related to the perceived risk associated with utilizing telephone supervision for particular probationers.

Compliance. Probation staff resisted use of telephone monitoring based on actual and perceived compliance with probation supervision. The most common concern of probation staff regarding moving low risk probationers to the telephone supervision caseload surrounded fine and restitution payments. Probation staff refrained from moving probationers to telephone supervision in one of two scenarios: (a) if they were not currently making consistent payments towards their fines/restitution or (b) if they had any existing fine/restitution payments left. The following representative example from fieldnotes highlights this finding:

> PO Spiller asked the probationer about her fines. The probationer said she has not been able to pay them. PO Spiller explained if she could find a way to start paying off her fines, she would put her on telephone supervision.

After placing probationers on telephone supervision, POs emphasized payment of fines and restitution. With the exception of a new criminal offense, consistent payment of fines and restitution were the primary concern of probation staff once they placed probationers

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on telephone supervision. The following representative example from fieldnotes highlights this finding:

> PO McBurnie told the probationer she was going to place him on their call-in caseload. She explained he would have to call in rather than come to the office for visits, but he would definitely have to keep up with his monthly fine payments. If he failed to make a payment, she would revoke his probation.

When on traditional probation supervision, a missed fine payment would hardly result in a revocation. Yet, after placing their probationers on telephone monitoring, this requirement became a greater concern to probation staff.

In addition to fines and restitution payment, probation staff emphasized steady employment before they placed probationers on telephone supervision. For example,

> PO Wheeler told the probationer she would not reduce his supervision level and place him on telephone supervision because he does not have employment. The probationer complained he has a job cutting hair where he makes a lot of money. PO Wheeler said she does not consider this job as enough and told him he needs to continue to look for employment.

Probation officers commonly argued probationers must have steady employment prior to lowering their level of supervision. Often, fine and restitution payment and the need for employment were concurrent concerns for probationers and their supervising officers. This frequently created a challenging cycle by which probationers were stuck in place and could not find stable employment or struggled to balance small paychecks from minimum wage jobs with living expenses and fine/restitution payments, often failing to

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meet one or multiple expectations of their supervising officer. The following fieldnote highlights this challenge:

> PO Sawyer explained the probationer was doing really well, but he needed to bring in his pay stubs to verify his current place of employment. If he reassessed the probationer right now, it would recommend he place him on low. PO Sawyer wanted to reduce his level of supervision to telephone monitoring, but he cannot do that until he holds full time employment and can begin to pay off his court costs.

Lastly, probation staff argued some probationers would not be compliant with a self-report style of supervision. In these scenarios, probation staff contended it was best to keep them on a traditional style of supervision and required them to report to the office. The following representative example highlights this strategy:

> PO Delaney places most of her lows on telephone monitoring. She has a few that it is not a good idea. For example, she supervises an elderly female who is on probation for stalking her church priest. She is low risk and keeps to herself, but she would not make it on phone supervision. She would not call in and would forget, so it is easier to see her in the office.

PO Delaney went on to explain she knew this was against formal agency policy, but this is how she preferred to manage her caseload as a means to maintain adequate control and supervision of her probationers. Keeping probationers off telephone supervision due to existing financial responsibilities, lack of full time employment, or perceived ability to comply is not part of formal agency policy nor was it a consistent

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informal policy within specific offices. Rather, individual probation staff developed their own strategies for assessing whether telephone supervision was appropriate.

Special Populations. In addition to issues related to compliance, probation staff consistently refrained from placing low risk probationers who fulfilled a special population status. These special populations largely included probationers with functioning and/or mental health issues and sex offenders and less frequently included gang populations. The underlying concern across all three special populations was identical – a belief that low level supervision, especially "unsupervised" probation was not adequate to manage the risk these populations pose to either themselves and/or the community, representing a conflict with the potential liability associated with supervising particular probationer, especially those who may commit a crime associated with higher stakes (e.g., sex offense). The representative example illustrates this pattern:

> The probationer PO Mintz was about to bring back was a transfer from another jurisdiction in the state. The probationer was on telephone supervision in that jurisdiction, but PO Mintz heard the probationer hears voices so she is not comfortable placing him on telephone supervision. She will not put anyone on the call-in caseload if they have a mental health issue.

In this example, PO Mintz resisted use of the tool despite the fact that the probationer was doing well and in compliance while on telephone supervision in the previous jurisdiction. PO Mintz argued presence of a mental health condition requires a more intense level of supervision and interaction than the call-in caseload provides. In a second

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representative example, PO Holder expressed similar concerns regarding the intensity of supervision needed for sex offenders:

> I have a lot of discretion and can supervise probationers according to their offense and how they are doing on probation. Sex offenders are on a continuum and their progress can fluctuate. The lowest level I would supervise a sex offender at is medium supervision. I am old school though, the level of supervision does not mean much to me in how I will supervise someone.

Consistent with POs who supervised sex offenders across study sites, this example highlights resistance towards linking assessment-identified appropriate levels of supervision to resulting supervision strategies. This finding reveals a deeper pattern underlying probation staff level of trust in both risk and needs assessment instruments as well as telephone monitoring. These strategies were often emotionally driven, with probation staff making additional considerations based on the nature of the offense and victims. The representative example from fieldnotes highlights this finding in which PO Kanter requested to reduce the level of supervision for a sex offender he supervised:

> After conducting a reassessment, PO Kanter wanted to move one of his sex offender probationers who was doing very well off high supervision, but when he tried to do so, PO Ruben (supervisor) denied this request because the probationer's previous victims were children. PO Ruben explained the denial was not because the probationer was more likely to reoffend, but because young children cannot process crime as well as adults can and it has a much greater impact on them.

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In this example, PO Rueben's decision making process misaligned with agency policy as well as findings from the risk assessment. While according to probation staff, "the risk and needs assessment instrument commonly identifies sex offenders as low risk", formal agency policy required probation staff to override and supervise sex offenders at an "elevated level of supervision" where they must make three contacts per month. Despite supervising all sex offenders the same when they first begin probation, agency policy allowed probation staff to reduce the level of supervision following the same protocol in place for general probationers. Despite this, it was uncommon for probation staff to lower the level of supervision for sex offenders and there were no instances recorded in which a PO placed a sex offender on telephone supervision.

Level of Comfort. In addition to special population status, probation staff also relied on their level of comfort with specific probationers to determine whether to utilize telephone supervision. Consistent across probation offices, probation staff purposively did not move low risk probationers to telephone supervision in order to "watch them first", often for months. The following representative example highlights this pattern:

> PO Caldwell explained the probationer was low risk and he was going to try to move him to telephone supervision. He will keep him on regular supervision first to watch him and make sure he is not just trying to slip through.

A second example emphasizes the hesitancy POs shared regarding use of telephone supervision:

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> PO Pickett explained if a probationer's case has expired but he has a gut feeling they should not be off probation, he would not close their case. The same goes for probationers who come back as low on the risk and needs assessment. If he has a weird feeling about them, he will monitor them for a while before he decides to move them to call-in supervision.

While some probation staff admitted they did not immediately move low risk probationers to telephone monitoring as agency policy dictates, many argued they must "initially monitor probationers to assess their adjustment to the change" in level of supervision. POs couched much of this resistance in a deep mistrust in the risk and needs assessment instrument and the idea that any probationer is actually a "low risk". Again, this theme highlights a significant conflict between risk and liability permeating decision making in probation practice and at times influencing symbolic implementation of telephone monitoring. Despite placing probationers in the program, probation staff continued to require probationers to come to the probation office for monthly meetings. The following observed interaction between PO Browne illustrates this pattern:

> As PO Browne finished the risk and needs assessment, she told the probationer he scored low risk. She was going to put him on the telephone supervision program, but he will still need to come in once a month for follow-up meetings.

In a more overt form of resistance, PO Sandy explained, "If an offender scores low, of course we are not going to supervise them that way. We still treat them as higher risk". While it appeared as though these POs complied with agency policy, their compliance was surface level. While this varied largely from officer to officer, and was not uniform

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within or across study sites, one site implemented a policy reinforcing this misalignment. In site five, management implemented a policy that all probationers must be drug screened, including those who are low risk and on telephone supervision. PO Sloane explained the purpose of this policy:

> We have not been able to figure out a way to get probationers on telephone supervision into the office since they only call-in. To address this, we now require everyone to come to the office at least once a month to be drug screened.

Implementation of this policy increases the frequency of contact as well as the intensity of supervision of lower level offenders, which misalign with the original intent and purpose surrounding telephone monitoring. One PO in site five argued this policy "directly contradicts the purpose of telephone monitoring" as drug screening these probationers would result in either failed drug tests or a failure to appear for the drug screen. During fieldwork, one PO offered a potential explanation for the resistance towards telephone monitoring across the agency:

> It really comes down to internal beliefs about people and whether they can change. Even if you tell people it means they do less work with low risk people and in fact can do nothing with them but hand them over to the person monitoring the telephone supervision program, they still will not do it. Even though it is less work, they are not on board because they are offenders and anyone who has committed a crime needs to be supervised.

This example suggests individual-level perceptions and experiences continued to influence supervision strategies and alignment with agency policy.

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As highlighted throughout this section, within the three identified domains within the compatibility of telephone monitoring (compliance, special population status, and level of comfort), are underlying themes relating to a tension between risk and liability. Thus, when applying the risk principle to probation practice, probation staff bounded their decision making within a risk-oriented framework. That is, they make decisions regarding probationers they supervise and interventions based on the potential liability and associated risks for not only reoffending, but also based on the uncertainty of human behavior and potential threats to public safety.

Outer Setting

Within the current study, probation staff perceived expectations of the judiciary and the community influenced probation staff attitudes towards applying the risk principle utilizing telephone monitoring with probationers. One probation supervisor explained his hesitancy to support use of telephone monitoring in his office:

> PO Pane said he was not sure about telephone monitoring. He does not think the judges would approve because it is like putting them on unsupervised probation. He does not think when judges hear they [probation staff] are putting them on low supervision it means a probation officer never actually sees them face-to-face.

Often, perceptions surrounding judicial support stemmed from interactions with judges and other courtroom personnel. For example, one probation supervisor discussed a meeting she held with courtroom staff, including all six judges, in their jurisdiction:

> The judges were very concerned that a probationer might be on low supervision and on telephone monitoring. They did not understand how it was a good thing

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> not to supervise someone and they did not support telephone monitoring as an appropriate form of supervision.

The purpose of this meeting was to explain the probation agency's current initiatives and strategies for supervising different types of probationers. As illustrated in the example above, judges expressed resistance towards use of the technology as an appropriate supervision technique. Further complicating matters, probation staff articulated a loosely coupled system operating between probation and the judiciary arguing, "Judges and attorneys have no idea what probation staff do" and are not familiar with the levels of supervision and what they dictate in terms of probation supervision. This became especially problematic when a probationer committed a new offense or violated their probation. The following example from fieldnotes highlights this finding:

> The definition of probation has changed drastically, but when something happens people revert to old expectations. For example, one low risk probationer committed a DUI while on probation. The Judge and Commonwealth Attorney immediately asked, "Why weren't you drug testing them?"

Despite following agency policy, probation staff shared concerns regarding how to balance expectations and requirements of the judiciary. While probation supervisors emphasized moving lower risk probationers to the telephone supervision caseload, POs were often reluctant to do so as a result of this conflict. One PO explained this hesitancy in his office:

> We struggle with telephone monitoring in this office due to the insecurity of probation staff who do not want to be "chewed out" by the Judge. Judges are not

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> fond of telephone supervision, but this is what the Department of Corrections wants, so it has to be a give and take.

Periodically, judges publicly chastised probation staff when they did not agree with their supervisory decisions. In one observation, a PO was so distraught after the Judge humiliated her in court for not violating a low risk probationer earlier; her supervisor removed her from the case so she would not have to face that Judge again.

The expectations of the judiciary and courtroom actors were not the only factor within the outer setting influencing probation staff implementation of telephone monitoring. Probation staff also managed the expectations of the community and public opinion. These concerns heightened with probationers who committed serious, violent offenses or sexual offenses. The following representative example from fieldnotes highlights the way in which probation staff adapted agency policy to fulfill perceived expectations:

> There is a lot of angst surrounding people with more serious offenses, especially when they score low on the risk and needs assessment. I [PO Blane] had a female who committed a robbery. I could not put her directly on phone supervision even though she scored low. The community expects we will supervise these individuals, so I will watch them for at least six months to see how committed they are to probation and if they want employment.

In a similar example, PO Stark explained how he supervised a probationer convicted of murder:

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> Everyone was really nervous about this probationer but he actually scored low on the risk and needs assessment. The family of the victim was especially concerned and could not believe PO Stark was going to supervise him in the same area where they lived. PO Stark ended up putting him on high supervision and on GPS so they could give the family peace of mind. He ended up being a model probationer and was very motivated.

In these examples, the perceived expectations and fears of community members influenced PO decision making, providing additional evidence of an existing tension between risk and liability. Not only do POs consider factors related to the compatibility of the intervention, they also consider how factors external to the organization may influence or heighten the stakes associated with decisions they make regarding how to supervise probationers on their caseload.

Discussion

This study examined one state's efforts to implement evidence-based policies and practices and improve allocation of resources through use of telephone monitoring for low risk probationers. Since the agency began to enforce this policy, probation staff placed 74% of low risk probationers on this form of electronic monitoring, although this rate varied significantly across probation offices in the study. Given previous literature documenting the difficultly with implementation of new policies and procedures within correctional settings (see for example, Ferguson, 2002; Steiner et al., 2011; Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015), this finding demonstrated initial success. Upon deeper analysis, data from the current study suggests factors associated with the intervention itself

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(telephone monitoring) and the inner and outer settings influenced transportability and implementation. In practice, probation offices and officers did not uniformly alter the ways they implemented telephone monitoring, supervised probationers, and made decisions regarding low risk offenders.

The current study is one of the first to examine the process of transportability, through an examination of how factors within two domains within the CFIR – characteristics of the intervention itself and inner setting – influence agency and street-level adaptations of organizational policies dictating use of an intervention aligned with the *Risk-Need-Responsivity* model. Transportability requires researchers to gather evidence that an intervention will produce the desired outcomes when operationalized in real world practice (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). While ideally assessed prior to implementation occurs, the current study identified several factors related to transportability post-hoc, that further our knowledge surrounding practical applications of the RNR model in practice.

Within the characteristics of the intervention itself, data analysis suggests individual offices modified and enforced varying policies dictating use of the telephone monitoring, including policies to restrict use and policies removing any interaction between low risk probationers and POs. Data analysis also finds a core component associated with telephone monitoring, removing face-to-face contact with probationers, resulted in POs believing they could no longer adequately perform their job responsibilities. Despite this challenge, POs utilized telephone monitoring as a reward for probation compliance. Analysis within the inner setting highlighted a number of

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compatibility issues within the implementation climate. These compatibility issues resulted in POs making decisions regarding use of telephone monitoring to align with the way they conceptualized their job responsibilities and expectations. While no PO completely refused to utilize telephone monitoring, POs utilized the technology differently for different types of probationers and did not use at all for specific types of offenders (i.e., sex offenders).

These findings highlight the complexity of the process of moving research evidence to real-world practice, which often results in various adaptations to fit the existing organizational context. The current study identifies a number of adaptations that both complicate the application of the risk principle in probation practice and suggest areas for researchers and correctional agencies to consider in future implementation efforts. For example, the impact of agency and street-level adaptations for both offender and agency outcomes (i.e., recidivism, probation completion, technical violations) as well as perceptions of the probation process (i.e., fairness, justice, equality) is unclear. Identification of implementation issues associated with telephone monitoring allow for a deeper, contextualized examination of implications for transportability as well as both theory and practice/policy, discussed below.

Theoretical Implications

In the present case, implementation of telephone monitoring represented a strategy to manage selected risk populations through a reallocation of resources and workload. In line with the *Risk-Needs-Responsivity* (RNR) model, which combines an actuarial, managerial approach with a rehabilitative, clinical model for supervision

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(Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Taxman, 2002; Taxman 2008) as well as the early work of O'Leary and Clear (1984) suggesting application of risk levels to determine resource allocation, utilization of telephone monitoring addressed the risk principle by filtering out low risk probationers which require little or no intervention (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Findings from the current study suggested several challenges to the *Risk-Needs-Responsivity* theoretical framework.

While the *Risk-Needs-Responsivity* model emphasizes the importance of allocating resources to higher risk offenders, little attention focuses on how probation agencies should manage and supervise those assessed as low risk. Data from the current study highlight nuances associated with classifying and separating probationers based on static risk alone. As highlighted throughout the findings section, determining supervision strategies for low risk offenders based on static risk rather than incorporating dynamic risk factors or criminogenic needs, placed a limitation on POs to address potentially important areas such as criminal thinking and substance abuse. This created a conflict between interpreting and applying the risk principle and the need principle simultaneously for lower risk offenders. Application of the risk principle to limit supervision of lower risk probationers, outweighed POs ability to address criminogenic needs, create a case plan, and build a relationship/rapport with probationers. While literature examining the impact of treatment programming on low risk probationers finds their recidivism rate can increase (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta & Rooney, 2000), this research primarily examined placement of low risk probationers in intensive programming, which is a different issue compared to supervision of lower risk

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probationers. Remaining questions surround how reducing or limiting supervision of lower risk probationers impacts effectiveness of probation supervision and probationer outcomes. While the research of Barnes and colleagues (2010; 2012) presents preliminary evidence that reducing frequency of contacts between POs and probationers did not result in increased reoffending, arrest, or incarceration, this research included face-to-face contacts and reports little on processual measures (e.g., whether POs addressed needs, case planning, relationship between PO and probationer). Little is known regarding the impact case planning and relationship building has on outcomes for low risk probationers and whether and how various components of supervision may increase or decrease recidivism for probationers of various risk levels. While placement of low risk probationers on telephone supervision aligns with the risk principle, this supervision technique removed the rehabilitative component the RNR model integrates with the risk management approach, resulting in a purely people processing supervision strategy. Future research must examine the impact of this approach on probationer perceptions regarding important measures including perceived legitimacy and procedural justice and how those ultimately impact probationer outcomes.

While theoretically, telephone supervision provides correctional agencies with a strategy to manage risk levels, resources, and workloads, probation staff struggled with removing themselves completely from the supervision equation. The notion of risk continued to underlie supervision strategies, complicating full implementation. While probation staff resisted the technocratic rationalization of supervision associated with

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telephone monitoring, much of this resistance stemmed from perceptions that low risk probationers are still too risky to do so.

Policy/Practice Implications

At the practice and policy level, data from the current study suggest a number of important considerations for both researchers and correctional agencies, including unintended consequences associated with implementation of telephone monitoring. First, upon initial implementation, management discovered POs were not actively monitoring the telephone monitoring system. This resulted in probationer non-compliance that went unaddressed by the supervising officer, suggesting a challenge with the design of the intervention itself. This finding is critically important, as the unintended consequences equated to complete lack of supervision of probationers, some of whom did violate their terms of probation in some manner during this time. While the agency has dedicated efforts to reduce occurrence, this is an ongoing issue. As a result, management promoted movement of monitoring responsibilities to administrative staff, adapting the design of the original intervention. This adaptation post-implementation highlights the importance of studying transportability. One of the key questions associated with understanding such processes is a consideration of who can versus who will implement the intervention in everyday practice (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). In the case of the current study, upon initial implementation the agency determined they might be able to more effectively implement telephone monitoring if the responsibility of use was moved from POs and towards administrative staff. Theoretically, if the goal of telephone monitoring is more targeted resource allocation and to allow POs to focus more of their time and energy on

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high risk cases, then use of administrative staff to monitor low risk probationers on telephone supervision may be a positive adaptation. While in the current study, POs argued this policy adaptation did with workload requirements; offices with this policy in place were more likely to engage in low-moderate use of telephone monitoring compared to high use offices, which were more common to keep low risk probationers on PO caseloads. This suggests POs may have been less likely to place low risk probationers on telephone supervision if it meant they would have to turn the case over to administrative personnel. It could be POs were uncomfortable turning over their cases to non-probation staff who have not received training in monitoring probationers. Future research should explore how this policy impacted PO decisions to use and implement telephone monitoring. Additionally, it is not clear how monitoring by administrative staff affected the effectiveness of supervision and future research should examine the impact this strategy has on quality of supervision and probationer outcomes.

Office Characteristics. Probation offices in tiers one and two were more likely to utilize telephone monitoring with low risk probationers compared to offices in tiers three and four. This finding suggests a potential effect of training exposure and dosage, including both total amount of exposure to EBPs as well as amount of training received. Probation offices in tiers one and two have been receiving EBP-related information and training several years longer than tiers three and four, and as expected have also received more trainings and follow-up/refresher trainings as a result. This increased exposure to EBPs and the greater changes occurring within the organization may have made probation staff more familiar with policies to address issues of risk and also might have

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made them more open and willing to utilize an intervention in general. This suggests adoption and implementation may require long and sustained change efforts and agencies may consider increasing the amount and frequency of trainings.

In addition to implementation tier of the office, average caseload varied between offices in the low-moderate use category compared to high use category. While the difference was not extreme (average of 82 in low-moderate use offices and 99 in high use offices), probation staff in high use offices may have felt a greater need to utilize the intervention due to workload constraints. Future research should further explore in-depth how office characteristics, including training exposure and caseload impact adoption and implementation of interventions such as telephone monitoring. Additionally, research should examine whether these characteristics interact with one another or if one particular characteristic is driving decision making surrounding adoption and use, as this significantly impacts policy implications. For example, if caseload is driving high use of telephone monitoring, increased attention on training may not make much of an impact.

Risk, Liability, and Stakes. PO use of telephone monitoring across types of probationers was inconsistent. Probation officers were more cautious and less willing to move sex offenders, probationers with functioning/mental health conditions, and probationers who committed serious, violent offenses to telephone supervision, despite being assessed as low risk. This hesitancy extended beyond use of telephone supervision and influenced willingness to supervise these special populations at a lower level of supervision altogether. This pattern surrounding resistance towards use of low level supervision with special populations suggests continued reliance on discretionary

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decision making by probation staff. While discretion is a key component of the job, the way in which probation staff employed their discretion as highlighted throughout this study may result in biased and inconsistent decision making across probation offices and probationers and resulted in probation staff treating entire groups of probationers more punitively than others. This finding highlights a major theme underlying much of the findings in the current paper surrounding risk, liability, and the stakes associated with an individual probationer or situation. Particularly with perceived riskier offender populations, such as sex offenders, the stakes of the crime are higher as they may receive more publicity or pose a greater threat to public safety. As a result, POs adapted application of the risk principle via telephone monitoring to include an elevated level of supervision, regardless of assessed risk level. This adaptation may serve to protect both the agency from outside scrutiny should a high stakes re-offense occur as well as the individual PO who wishes to protect the stability of their employment. Individually, POs may over-supervise certain probationers to protect themselves, as they may feel personally responsible when a re-offense occurs. That is, if a PO supervises a sex offender at a lower level of supervision and reoffends, they have to live with their decision to do so versus if they supervised that same sex offender at a higher risk level and they reoffend, the PO may feel less responsible because they did everything possible. While agency policy should protect POs if such a re-offense occurs and they supervised the offender according to policy, it was often a challenge for POs to believe there would be no repercussions to themselves or their job, especially associated with a high stakes crime such as a sex offense. Regardless, agency protection against professional liability

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does not necessarily protect individual POs from personal responsibility they may attach to probationers they supervise.

Risk, Need, Responsivity. POs in this study made supervision decisions based on a variety of factors related to the intervention itself and both the inner and outer settings. Within these domains, POs considered both characteristics of the probationers they supervise (namely their ability to comply) as well as factors related to risk – a probationer's criminal history, likelihood of re-offense, and the stakes associated with a potential re-offense. Findings highlight a practical challenge in implementing policies based on the risk, need, and responsivity principles. As seen in the findings section, in applying the risk principle, the need principle went unaddressed with lower risk probationers. But, POs did not uniformly or automatically supervise all probationers assessed as low risk in a corresponding manner, especially those who may be perceived as riskier (e.g., sex offenders, violent offenders). While some of these decisions may be linked to responsivity considerations, more research is needed to untangle the relationship between decision making linked solely to managing risk versus decision making linked to a need to provide and match appropriate interventions and treatment. Findings from the current study suggest the need for more research to understand how practitioners make decisions regarding the application of the risk, need, and responsivity principles across the range of probationers they supervise (e.g., low vs. high risk, sex offender vs. non-sex offender).

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Limitations

An important consideration is examining the types of probationers and their characteristics (e.g., criminal history, type of offender, age, and race) placed on various levels supervision compared to telephone supervision. Analysis of these data were not possible in the current study, due to restricted access to probationer data. As a result, the current study is limited in that consideration of probationer outcomes was not possible. While research demonstrates the harm of doing too much with low risk offenders in regards to programming, research must examine the impact of supervision strategies such as telephone monitoring on offender outcomes, including recidivism and rate of technical violations. Additionally, the agency in the current study has become stricter with enforcing movement of low risk probationers to telephone supervision, regardless of additional circumstances (e.g., needs). Future research should examine how this policy influences PO compliance with reassessment policies and decisions to reduce probationer supervision levels from medium to low. There was not enough data from the current study to adequately address this question, but findings from the current study warrant this additional consideration.

Conclusion

The current study represents one of the first attempts to examine *how* probation offices and officers utilize an intervention designed for lower risk probationers, based on the risk principle. Following the *Risk-Need-Responsivity* model, telephone monitoring represents a first step towards managing caseloads according to scientific evidence emphasizing the allocation of resources towards medium and high risk offenders

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(Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Findings from the current study demonstrate a challenge that arises with implementing such a policy, without full consideration of potential complexities associated with transportability including: (a) the danger in focusing solely on static risk; (b) the removal of the face-to-face relationship aspect of probation supervision, and (c) inconsistent application across probationer types. Probation officers tried to manage the risk level of probationers in line with agency policy, but as a result, criminogenic needs were ignored or treated as a mechanism to manage risk further. Thus, implementing the risk and needs principles in correctional practice did not align with the fact that probationers have both risk and needs, highlighting a key challenge to transportability. Further, perceptions of public safety and associated liability with specific types of probationers or situations complicated or even prevented the application of the risk and needs principles across the probation offices. Taken together, findings suggest a challenge in transporting the risk and needs principle to practice, especially taking into consideration correctional agencies create policy and make decisions based on resources and experience ongoing pressures from external sources (e.g., judiciary, community).

With many correctional agencies facing financial struggles as well as pressures to become evidence-based, telephone supervision represents a promising option. More research is needed to fully understand the consequences of implementing policies and practices aligned with the RNR model, more specifically the risk principle, and the impacts those policies and practices have on offender outcomes. This line of research is necessary to inform research as well as understand how EBPs align within existing

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correctional environments, with an ultimate goal to better inform correctional agencies as they determine how to best manage and supervise correctional clients.

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CHAPTER SIX: A MULTI-LEVEL EXAMINATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT ON ADULT PROBATION OFFICER ATTITUDES TOWARDS EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Community corrections agencies represent a critical opportunity to provide effective services and treatment for offenders, as there are approximately five million adults under community supervision (Chiancone, 2010; Glaze & Bonczar, 2010). Over the past decade, mounting pressures to reduce prison populations and associated expenses yielded calls for system reform, with many justice organizations, including probation agencies, emphasizing use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) to reduce recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) and improve overall probation success (Taxman, 2008). Evidence-based practices, or practices supported by scientific evidence (e.g., risk and needs assessment instruments, targeting treatment interventions, cognitive behavioral therapies), often bring substantial change in criminal justice agency perception and function. Existing research documents the challenges associated with introducing EBPs, which suggest changes in the organizational culture of correctional agencies and traditional risk management strategies (Battalino et al, 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Rudes, 2012; Steiner et al., 2011).

Street-level workers play a critical role in the development, sustainment and change in organizational culture as they bring the organizations' ideals, practices, and goals to life. Ultimately, they contribute greatly to how organizational cultures develop and endure over time (Lin, 2000). Street-level workers continuously evaluate information and make strategic decisions about how to incorporate professional, political, and

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personal interests into their service delivery, which are often multiple and competing (Watkins-Hayes, 2009). Thus, staff plays an important role in change and implementation efforts within organizations and can act in ways that advance or undermine goals of reform (Barley, 1986; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000). Additionally, growing research suggests the importance of staff attitudes towards EBPs regarding the ultimate success of implementation efforts (Aarons, 2004; 2005; 2006; Aarons, Cafri, Luho & Sawitzky, 2012; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Aarons, McDonald, Sheehan & Walrath-Greene, 2007; Aarons & Palinkas, 2007; Alonso-Coello et al., 2009; Flores, Lee, Bauchner & Kastner, 2000; Knops, Vermeulen, Legemate, & Ubbink, 2009; McColl, Smith, White & Field, 1998; McKee, 2014; Melas et al., 2012; Patterson, Maguin, Dulmus & Nisbet, 2013; Reding, Chorpita, Lau & Innes-Gomberg, 2014; Rogers, 2003; Stahmer & Aarons, 2009; Young & Ward, 2001). This body of research overwhelmingly suggests practitioner attitudes towards EBPs can either facilitate or impede adoption and implementation of EBPs.

While research cites the important role attitudes towards EBPs play in implementation efforts as well as factors influencing attitudes, the bulk of this work has been done in non-criminal justice settings such as medical and clinical settings. The current study examines variation within and between 12 probation offices in probation officer (PO) attitudes towards EBPs as well as the impact of four factors that prior work suggests predict adoption and implementation of EBPs in other human service agencies: organizational climate, commitment, leadership, and cynicism for change.

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Adoption and Implementation of EBPs

Previous research documents the importance of staff perceptions of their organization in relation to EBP adoption and implementation in various human service agencies including substance abuse, mental health, and correctional settings (Glisson et al., 2008; Glisson & Green, 2006; Henderson et al., 2007; Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011; Taxman, Henderson & Belenko, 2009; Taxman & Kitsantas, 2009). This previous research identifies a number of organizational variables that influence adoption and implementation of EBPs including climate, commitment, leadership, cynicism for change, adequacy of training, available resources, and interagency collaboration.

Climate. An organizational climate represents organizational actor's shared meanings attached to the organizational environment or perceptions and responses to the characteristics of the environment (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Glisson & James, 2002). The climate of an organization can influence actor's attitudes (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006), the overarching social context of an organization that can support adherence to organizational policies and procedures (Glisson, 2002), as well as attitudes towards adoption and implementation of innovation and EBP (Aarons, 2005). Research finds the organizational climate influences staff overall job satisfaction as well as commitment to their organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Morris & Bloom, 2002). Concerning implementation of EBPs, research in treatment settings finds organizations with positive climates characterized by cooperation, role clarity, personalization and low levels of conflict are more likely to adopt and implement effective practices (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998). Additionally, Glisson and Green (2006) find supportive climates

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promoting positive interpersonal relationships and staff ability to succeed and develop skills encourage adoption and implementation of EBPs. In community corrections settings, research finds organizations with a learning climate, or climates prioritizing and supporting knowledge development and learning new skills (Friedmann, Taxman & Henderson, 2007) and climates characterized by management emphasis on treatment quality predicting use of EBPs (Henderson, Taxman & Young, 2008).

Commitment. Organizational commitment reflects the degree to which an individual identifies with and is involved in his/her organization (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). An individual who is strongly committed to their organizational typically holds three main characteristics: (a) they believe in and accept the goals and values of the organization; (b) they are willing to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) they confidently wish to preserve their membership within the organization (Atchison & Leferts, 1972; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). Research finds organizational commitment influences training effectiveness as staff levels of organizational commitment predispose them to view training as valuable or not (Tannenbaum et al., 1991). Additionally, criminal justice practitioners with higher levels of commitment to their organization and satisfaction with their jobs are more likely possess positive attitudes and behaviors (Clegg and Dunkerly 1980; Ostroff 1992; Wycoff and Skogan 1994) which relates to positive perceptions of rehabilitation (Kerce, Magnusson and Rudolph, 1994). A variety of factors can positively influence levels of organizational commitment amongst correctional workers, including inclusion in decision-making processes, autonomy, communication, perceptions of equity, trust in

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management, quality leadership, and organizational support (Griffin, Armstrong & Hepburn, 2005; Griffin & Hepburn, 2005; Lambert, 2004; Lambert et al., 2006; Stohr et al., 1994; Wright, 1997). Fewer research documents factors associated with lower levels of organizational commitment, including role conflict and role ambiguity (Griffen, 2006; Hogan et al., 2006; Lambert et al., 2005). Within criminal justice settings, research finds high levels of organizational commitment among correctional workers relate to positive outcomes, such as increased levels of job performance (Culliver, Sigler & McNeely, 1991) while low levels of commitment relate to absenteeism and job turnover (Camp, 1994; Lambert, 2001; Stohr, Self & Lourich, 1992).

Leadership. A number of studies cite the importance of organizational leadership on a number of organizational processes, including overall workplace performance (Aarons, 2006), individual officer performance (Dale & Trlin, 2010), attitudes towards adoption and implementation of EBPs (Aarons, 2005; 2006; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006), goal clarification (Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011). Several studies note the important role leadership attitudes and actions surrounding EBPs plays in the success of failure of adoption and implementation efforts. For example, positive attitudes of leadership towards EBPs can positively influence staff attitudes (Aarons, 2006; Taxman & Sachwald, 2010) and leaders who are more educated regarding best practices and perceive training positively also influence the adoption and implementation of EBPs within an organization (Taxman & Sachwald, 2010).

Cynicism. Cynicism for change reflects a negative or pessimistic perspective that organizational change efforts will succeed (Wanous, Reichers & Austin, 2000). Cited as a

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common problem associated with criminal justice reforms, cynicism can significantly influence staff receptivity (Cochran, Bromley & Swando, 2002) and resistance to organizational change attempts (Bazemore, 1994; Lurigio & Skogan, 1994; Lynch, 1998; Miethe & Moore, 1988; Lawrence & Johnson, 1990; Sadd & Grinc, 1996). Staff with higher levels of cynicism are less motivated to learn new skills and techniques (Tesluk et al., 1995) while staff with lower levels of cynicism for change are more likely to use EBP reforms implemented by their organization (Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011).

Practitioner Attitudes towards EBPs

Given the existing gap between research and practice, researchers often characterize practitioner attitudes towards use of new practices as potential barriers to change. Consideration of attitudes can assist agencies to better tailor implementation efforts according to staff characteristics and/or needs (Aarons, Cafri, Lugo & Sawitzky, 2006). Additionally, many trainings build on the assumption of a link between attitudes and behavior (Shaneyfelt et al., 2006) and attitudes can predict human behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes towards EBPs can be an important precursor to an individual's decision to try a new practice or disregard it (Melas et al., 2012). Attitudes are also potential predictors of uptake and sustainability of and fidelity to EBPs (Aarons et al., 2011) as well as the successful dissemination of innovations (Aarons, 2004; Rogers, 2003). Further, Nelson and Steele (2007) found practitioner attitudes towards EBPs predict self-reported use of EBPs.

As a means of assessing provider attitudes towards adoption and implementation of EBPs in mental health and social service settings, Aarons (2004) developed the

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Evidence-Based Practice Attitude Scale (EBPAS). Aarons and colleagues validated and normed the EBPAS, providing a comprehensive set of attitude dimensions with a reliable factor structure (Aarons et al., 2007; 2012). Previous research examining the EBPAS, finds both individual and organizational characteristics influence attitudes towards EBPs. At the individual level, practitioners with higher educational attainment report more positive attitudes towards EBP adoption (Aarons, 2004; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006) and fewer years' experience (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Stahmer & Aarons, 2009) hold more positive attitudes towards EBPs. At the organizational level, higher levels of perceived agency bureaucracy and policies increase negative attitudes towards EBPs (Aarons, 2004). Other studies find implementation and change more successful in organizations where staff are autonomous and have a sense of control over their day-to-day routines (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Herron, 1996; Isaksen & Ekvall, 2010). Additionally, the organizational culture and climate (Aarons, 2005; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Aarons et al., 2012) can influence attitudes towards EBPs. For example, Aarons and Sawitzky (2006) suggest a constructive organizational culture associates with positive attitudes and openness to EBPs while an organizational climate imbued with role conflict, depersonalization, and emotional exhaustion associates with negative attitudes towards EBPs. Research also finds transformational supervisor leadership (motivational and inspirational leadership) (Aarons & Sommerfeld, 2012), and EBP training experiences (Lim et al., 2012) can influence attitudes towards EBPs.

Existing research on attitudes towards EBPs typically focuses on practitioners in mental health, medical and treatment settings. Several studies examine criminal justice

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practitioner attitudes towards specific practices/interventions. For example, Murphy and colleagues (2012) surveyed criminal justice practitioners from a variety of settings (probation, defense attorneys, prosecutors, judges, treatment) regarding their attitudes towards use of incentives with criminal justice clients. While respondents were mostly accepting towards incentive use, females and POs viewed use of incentives as less acceptable compared to lawyers, judges, and treatment personnel (Murphy, Rhodes & Taxman, 2012). In another study examining the use of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) within community corrections settings, Friedmann and colleagues (2015) found training on MAT in addition to a year-long strategic planning and implementation process including both community corrections staff and addictions treatment staff resulted in more positive attitudes regarding use of MAT compared to community corrections staff who only received training.

To date, one study examines the EBPAS and attitudes towards EBPs generally within a justice setting. McKee (2014) examines the EBPAs amongst a sample of juvenile justice professionals, finding individual predictors such as age, tenure, educational attainment and gender has no significant effect on staff attitudes. One individual factor – college major—influences attitudes, with staff holding social work degrees more likely to possess positive attitudes towards EBPs (McKee, 20114). Little research examines PO attitudes towards EBPs generally, where theoretically, attitudes potentially play a significant role in adoption and implementation of best practices given the deeply challenging and contextual environment. The current study takes the first step

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towards understanding PO attitudes towards EBPs, through exploring the influence of individual and organizational factors on the EBPAs.

The Current Study

To date, research suggests a handful of individual and organizational level factors associate with practitioner attitudes towards EBPs. The current study examines several research questions: (a) Do PO attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation vary across the 12 probation offices studied here?; (b) Do PO attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation vary after controlling for probation staff perceptions of organizational functioning - organizational climate, commitment to the organization, cynicism, and leadership - to assess whether perceived office context influenced probation staff attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation?; (c) Does perceived office context still influence probation staff attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation after controlling for key demographics and individual characteristics of the probation staff?, and (d) Which PO demographics and attitudes are significantly associated with predicting variation in PO attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation? It is hypothesized that probation staff attitudes towards EBP adoption and implementation vary across offices and that this variation persists even after controlling for key demographics and individual officer characteristics. Additional hypotheses propose that staff members who report positive perceptions of their organization are more likely to report positive attitudes towards adopting and implementing EBPs.

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Method

Study Sites and Background

The current study took place in 12 probation offices in one mid-Atlantic state. This research is part of a larger, mixed method study examining the transportability and implementation of EBPs within adult probation offices. As part of this study, the researcher utilized maximum variation sampling to select a range of 12 adult probation offices that varied based on region, office size, and time period in which the office began to implement EBPs (implementation tier). In 2006, the state began to support the use of EBPs and designed a four tier implementation system to gradually introduce the use of best practices across the state probation offices, with tier one trainings taking place in 2006, tier two in 2009, tier three in 2010, and tier four in 2013. Training consisted of: (a) foundation in EBPs; (b) motivational interviewing; (c) communication and relationship skills; (d) problem solving; (e) appropriate use of a standardized risk and needs assessment instrument; (f) quality case management and case planning, and (g) appropriate treatment and service referrals. The state utilized an in-depth and comprehensive training strategy consisting of in-person trainings, computerized trainings, follow-up or refresher trainings, identification of experts or coaches within each probation office, and formation of learning teams to practice newly learned skills. Probation offices in earlier tiers received more EBP-related training, including multiple refresher/follow-up trainings and as a whole, have been engaging the EBP implementation and associated change process for a longer period of time. The sampling procedures for this study results in 12 sites distributed equally across the four

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implementation tiers, representing offices with varying ranges of exposure to EBPs. In addition, the 12 study sites equally represent the three probation regions in the state and as well as both large and small probation offices.

Survey Procedures

After all probation staff received some EBP education and training (amount and type varies based on implementation tier and job tenure within the agency), staff in the 12 study sites also received a survey. The survey assessed probation staff attitudes and beliefs regarding the use of EBPs as well as self-reported participation in various evidence-based strategies. All POs and supervisors (N = 284) within the 12 probation offices received an email from the principal investigator inviting them to complete a survey via QuestionPro (2005), an online survey software system. Then, staff received follow-up e-mail reminders every two weeks for two months until the survey link was deactivated. Of the 284 probation staff members invited to complete the survey, 251 responded (88% response rate). Following the standardized definitions promoted by the American Association of Public Opinion Researchers (AAPOR, 2011); the overall survey response rate reflects the maximum response rate (RR6) as defined by the AAPOR and is considered a high response rate for an online survey (Nulty, 2008).

The Sample

On average the respondents in the current study were 40 years old (SD=9.89, range=23 to 65 years). Of the sample, approximately 68% were female and 81% were white. The majority of respondents completed a Bachelor's degree (74%), whereas

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approximately 26% completed a Master's degree. The majority of the sample were POs (62%), while the remaining participants fulfilled supervisory roles (38%). On average, respondents had 10 years (*SD*=7.84, range=1 month to 34 years) experience working in probation and supervised roughly 60 probationers (*SD*=36.54, range=0 to 140) each.

Outcome Variable

Evidence-Based Practice Attitude Scale (EBPAS). The EBPAS consists of 50 items designed to measure general attitudes toward the adoption and implementation of EBPs. Respondents indicate their agreement with the items pertaining to their attitudes about adoption and use of new or different types of interventions and practices (1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent, 4=to a great extent, 5=to a very great extent). According to Aarons (2004), the EBPAS consists of 12 subscales: Appeal, Requirements, Openness, Divergence, Limitations, Fit, Monitoring, Balance, Burden, Job Security, Organizational Support, and Feedback. The *appeal* scale contains four items that assess the extent to which POs would adopt an EBP if it were intuitively appealing (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$). The *requirements* scale consists of three items that assess the extent to which POs would adopt an EBP if it were required by a supervisor, the agency, or the state (Cronbach's $\alpha = .98$). The *openness* scale contains four items assessing the extent to which the PO is open to trying new interventions (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). The *divergence* scale contains four items assessing the extent to which the PO perceives EBPs as clinically useful and as less important than clinical experience (Cronbach's $\alpha = .58$). The *limitations* scale includes seven items assessing the extent to which EBPs are unable to address client needs (Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$). The *fit* scale consists of seven items to assess

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the extent to which POs perceive EBPs fit with their values and needs as well as their clients (Cronbach's α = .93). The *monitoring* scale consists of four items assessing the extent to which POs believe they do not require oversight by supervisors (Cronbach's α = .92). The *balance* scale consists of four items assessing attitudes towards the role of science in case work (Cronbach's α = .60). The *burden* scale, consisting of four items, measures perceived administrative burdens associated with implementing EBPs (Cronbach's α = .86). The *job security* scale consist of three items measuring the extent to which learning EBPs helps staff keep their current job or find a new job (Cronbach's α = .77). The *organizational support* scale contains three items that assess the extent to which training, ongoing support, and education credits influence willingness to learn EBPs (Cronbach's α = .92). Lastly, the *feedback* scale contains three items assessing the extent to which staff value and utilize feedback from a supervisor (Cronbach's α = .93). The primary outcome of interest in this analysis is a global attitude index (referred to as the EBPAS) is calculated by averaging the item scores after reverse scoring the negatively worded items of the Divergence, Limitations, Monitoring, and Burden subscales (Cronbach's α = .91) (Melas et al., 2012; McKee, 2014).

Individual (Level-1) Variables

Probation staff demographics. The survey included respondent gender (female = 0, male = 1), racial group (white = 0, non-white = 1), educational level (graduate degree = 0, bachelor's degree or below = 1), and job tenure (total number of years working for the agency). Age was excluded from the models because it was significantly correlated with job tenure ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.000$).

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Commitment to the organization. The organizational commitment scale averaged 12 survey items that reflect probation staff identification with the agency and agency values (e.g., "I talk up this organization to my friends as a great place to work," "I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization") (Caldwell, Chatman & O'Reilly, 1990). Each item is rated on a Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$).

Organizational climate. The organizational climate scale averaged 20 survey items that reflect the degree to which probation staff feel their organization is open to change and supportive of new ideas (Taxman et al., 2007). This scale uses a five-point Likert scale (from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree") and measures items such as the extent to which "ideas and suggestions from employees get fair consideration by management" and "employees are always kept well informed" (see Taxman et al., 2007 for more information) (Chronbach's $\alpha = .96$).

Cynicism. The cynicism scale captures cynicism about agency change among corrections staff (Tesluk, Farr, Mathieu, & Vance, 1995; Taxman, et al., 2007). This scale comprises five survey items: (a) I've pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here; (b) changes to the usual way of doing things at this office are more trouble than they are worth; (c) when we try to change things here they just seem to go from bad to worse; (d) efforts to make improvements in this office usually fail, and (e) it's hard to be hopeful about the future because people have such bad attitudes (Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$).

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Leadership. The leadership scale captures respondents' perceptions regarding the quality of their immediate supervisor (Arnold, Rhoades, and Drasgow, 2000; Bass and Avollio, 1995). The scale comprises eight survey items regarding "My immediate supervisor": (a) inspires others with his/her plans for this agency for the future; (b) leads by example; (c) treats each of us as individuals with different needs, abilities and aspirations; (d) takes time to listen carefully to and discuss people's concerns; (e) encourages new ways of looking at how we do our jobs; (f) gives special recognition to others work when it is very good; (g) provides well-defined performance goals and objectives, and (h) stays well-informed on what is being done in my work group (Cronbach's $\alpha = .96$).

Office Level (Level-2) Variables

At the probation office level, the sole variable is: tier. Tier represents the timeframe the probation offices participated in EBP training. The first tier ($n = 3$) received training during the first year of implementation (2006), tier two ($n = 3$) received training during 2009, tier three ($n = 3$) during 2010, and tier four ($n = 3$) received training during 2013. Additionally, the tier also represents the amount and duration of exposure to EBP-related knowledge and associated trainings, with tier one offices receiving the greatest exposure and dosage of training and tier four offices receiving the least exposure and dosage of training.

The number of offices included in the current study limits the sample size at level-2. As a result, probation office attributes beyond implementation tier are not included in the models due to HLM's limited ability to tolerate a low ratio of level-2 cases to

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variables (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) (see Hoffman & Johnson 2000, Welsh, Greene & Jenkins 1999, Welsh, Jenkins & Greene 2000).

Weighting

The current study also uses a probability weight variable to weight the sample back to the population from which the sample was drawn. The sampling weight equals the total number of surveys received divided by the total number of surveys distributed (251/284; 0.88) and the probability weight equals 1/0.88 (1.14). Utilization of sampling weights compensates for differential nonresponse and frames undercoverage, weighing sample data to correct for the disproportionality of the sample with respect to the target population of interested (Pfeffermann, 1993). As part of the current analysis, weighted and unweighted models were run. There were no significant differences between these models, thus the current study reports results from the weighted model.

Model Specification and Analytic Plan

Given the hierarchical nature of the data (251 probation staff nested within 12 probation offices) and the interest in examining the association of individual and organizational characteristics with probation staff reported attitudes towards EBPs, Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) is used. Level-1 variables describe individual PO attributes and their perceptions of the probation agency in which they work. Level-2 represents the probation office context.

A null model with no predictors except the random effect for probation office confirmed significant outcome variation across probation offices in attitudes towards

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EBPs (p = <0.001); r_{icc}=0.160). The average office interrater reliabilities suggested relatively strong intra-office consistency in attitudes (see Bliese, 2000; Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992; LeBreton et al., 2003). The null model does not include predictors at level-1 or level-2 as a means to assess total variance in the outcome measure and evaluate whether the data are appropriate for multilevel analysis. A second model adds PO perceptions of their organization (organizational commitment, organizational climate, cynicism, and leadership) at level-1 to examine whether there is variance in attitudes towards EBPs based on officer perceptions of their organization. A third model adds tier at level-2 to examine the extent that perceptions of the organization influence PO attitudes towards EBPs, controlling for the varying ranges of exposure to EBPs (implementation tier). A fourth model contains all fixed effects, including implementation tier at level-2, to assess the extent that perceptions of the organization influence PO reported attitudes towards EBPs, controlling for the varying ranges of exposure to EBPs (implementation tier).

To gauge a deeper understanding of attitudes towards EBPs, additional models were run to examine the subscales of the EBPAS. Twelve individual null models were run, with six confirming significant outcome variation across probation offices in attitudes relating to EBP appeal, requirements, fit, burden, job security, and feedback (p = <0.001). The same modeling strategy was used as described in the primary analyses above.

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Results

As shown in Table 16, the average attitude towards EBPs was 3.49 (*SD*=0.48), reflecting moderately positive attitudes among probation staff in the sample. Probation staff also reported moderately positive attitudes regarding adoption of EBPs if they were intuitively appealing (M=3.76; *SD*=0.66) and required by a supervisor, the agency, or the state (M=3.50; *SD*=0.82). Probation staff reported moderately positive attitudes towards EBPs when they believed EBPs fit with their values and needs (M=3.6; *SD*=0.75) and would enable job security (M=3.15; *SD*=0.90). Probation staff reported low scores regarding perceptions of EBPs as an additional burden to their existing workload (M=1.85, *SD*=0.78). Lastly, probation staff reported low scores regarding the extent to which staff valued and utilized feedback to improve their job performance (M=1.90; *SD*=0.39).

Descriptive statistics for the organizational measures are also presented in Table 16. In this sample, the average organizational commitment score was 3.21(*SD* = 0.42), reflecting moderate levels of commitment to their organization. The average perceived organizational climate score was 3.51 (*SD* = 0.61), also reflecting moderate perceptions. Probation staff in this sample reported low to moderate levels of cynicism with regard to change in their organization, reporting an average score of 2.28(*SD* = 0.76). Lastly, on average probation staff reported moderately positive perceptions of leadership quality (M=3.82, *SD*= 0.72).

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Table 16

Summary Statistics of Level-1 and Level-2 Variables

Variable	Mean or %	*SD*	Min	Max
Outcome				
EBPAS	3.49	0.48	1	5
Appeal	3.76	0.66	1	5
Requirements	3.50	0.82	1	5
Fit	3.60	0.75	0.43	5
Burden	1.85	0.78	0.25	1
Job Security	3.15	0.90	1	5
Feedback	1.90	0.39	0.25	5
Level 1				
Race				
White	81.2% (n=95)			
Nonwhite	18.8% (n=22)			
Tenure	9.92	7.84	0.1	34
Education				
Bachelor's or less	35.5% (n=89)			
Master's degree	12.4% (n=31)			
Gender				
Female	67.8% (n=78)			
Male	32.2% (n=37)			
Management				
Supervisor	38.8% (n=46)			
Probation Officer	61.7% (n=74)			
PO Caseload	60.3	36.54	0	140
Specialized Caseload				
Yes	35.6% (n=42)			
No	64.4% (n=76)			
Organizational Commitment	3.21	0.42	1	5
Organizational Climate	3.51	0.61	1	5
Cynicism	2.28	0.76	1	5
Leadership	3.82	0.72	1	5
Level 2				
Tier				
1	23.9% (n=60)			
2	29.1% (n=73)			
3	23.9% (n=60)			
4	23.1% (n=58)			

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Descriptive Analyses

Preliminary analyses, utilizing independent t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA), were run with the global attitudes towards EBPs outcome variable and all of the categorical predictor variables. In examining demographic variables, females report slightly more positive attitudes towards EBPs (M=3.54, *SD*=0.62) compared to males (M=3.51, *SD*=0.61), those with a graduate degree report slightly more positive attitudes towards EBPs (M=3.57, *SD*=0.67) compared to those with a Bachelor's degree or less (M=3.52, *SD*=0.60), and nonwhite respondents report slightly more positive attitudes towards EBPs (M=3.58, *SD*=0.59) compared to whites (M=3.53, *SD*=0.57), although none of these differences were significant. When examining tenure, respondents with a job tenure between six and ten years reported the least positive attitudes towards EBPs (M=3.38, *SD*=0.64) while those with a job tenure between 11 and 15 years reported the highest attitudes towards EBPs (M=3.63, *SD*=0.50), although differences in tenure were not significant. There were significant differences in attitudes towards EBPs based on implementation tier though ($F(0.273\text{-}0.492) = 3.34$, $p = 0.021$). A Tukey post-hoc test revealed attitudes towards EBPs were significantly higher in tier one offices (M=3.65, *SD*=0.33) compared to tier three offices (M=3.38, *SD*=0.55) (See Table 17).

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Table 17

Mean Differences in Evidence-Based Practice Attitude Scale Scores by Categorical Predictor Variables.

		EBPAS		
Predictor	n	M	SD	t/F
Gender	115	3.53	0.611	0.215
Female	78	3.54	0.62	
Male	37	3.51	0.61	
Education	120	3.53	0.55	0.405
Graduate Degree	31	3.57	0.62	
Bachelor's Degree or Less	89	3.52	0.60	
Race	117	3.54	0.57	-0.354
White	95	3.53	0.57	
Non-White	22	3.58	0.59	
Tenure	116	3.52	0.61	0.547
0-5	43	3.53	0.62	
6-10	26	3.38	0.64	
11-15	20	3.63	0.50	
16-20	13	3.60	0.50	
20+	14	3.52	0.76	
Tier	251	3.49	0.48	3.33*
1	60	3.65	0.33	T1>T3
2	73	3.43	0.51	
3	60	3.38	0.55	
4	58	3.51	0.48	

*p<0.50

Correlation Analyses

Examination of correlations among level-1 variables reveals significant relationships between attitudes towards EBPs and organizational commitment (r=0.38), organizational climate (r=0.27), cynicism for change (r=-0.33), and leadership (r=0.16) (Table 18). Correlations suggest respondents who are more committed to their agency,

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perceive a more positive organizational climate, and hold positive perceptions regarding their supervisors have more positive attitudes towards EBPs, while those reporting cynical views regarding organizational change within their agency is related to less positive attitudes towards EBPs. To gauge potential multicollinearity among level-1 and level-2 variables, regression models are used (Darlington, 1968). Multicollinearity is not a concern (largest Variance Inflation Factor [VIF] = 3.77 and smallest Tolerance [tol] = 0.265).

Table 18

Level-1 Variable Correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Female	-	-0.056	-0.015	-0.061	0.006	0.174	-0.175	0.164	-0.024
2. White		-	-0.145	-0.180	0.025	-0.138	0.085	-0.044	0.033
3. Graduate Degree			-	0.047	-0.004	-0.049	0.005	-0.059	-0.037
4. Tenure				-	0.061	0.046	0.050	-0.041	0.053
5. Commitment					-	-0.477**	0.125**	0.210*	0.383**
6. Climate						-	-0.786**	0.621**	0.265**
7. Cynicism							-	-0.513**	-0.328**
8. Leadership								-	0.158*
9. EBPAS									-

**=p<0.01; *=p<0.05

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PO Attitudes towards Evidence-Based Practices

Table 17 includes means and standard deviations for the EBPAS scale by each of the predictor variables. The model with all fixed effects, except PO demographics and controlling for probation office context, appears in the middle section of Table 19.

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Table 19

Fixed Effects Model: Outcome Variation and Factors Predicting Attitudes towards Evidence-Based Practices

	Individual Level Organizational Predictors Only				Full Fixed Effects Model Organizational Predictors Only				Full Fixed Effects Model			
	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*
Individual Level												
Intercept	3.49	0.06	62.04	<0.001	3.61	0.11	34.20	<0.001	3.67	0.13	27.66	<0.001
Commitment	0.28***	0.05	5.27	<0.001	0.28***	0.05	5.21	<0.001	0.52***	0.10	5.23	<0.001
Climate	-0.05	0.13	-0.37	0.712	-0.05	0.13	-0.39	0.696	-0.11	0.15	-0.69	0.493
Cynicism	-0.12	0.09	-1.37	0.174	-0.13	0.09	-1.40	0.164	-0.15	0.12	-1.21	0.230
Leadership	0.06	0.06	1.07	0.285	0.06	0.05	1.08	0.283	0.05	0.07	0.68	0.498
Female									-0.01	0.10	-0.05	0.957
White									0.09	0.09	1.01	0.316
Graduate degree									0.04	0.09	0.41	0.683
Tenure									0.00	0.00	0.45	0.653
Office Level												
Tier					-0.04	0.03	-1.37	0.200	-0.07	0.05	-1.74	0.112
Variance Components	Variance	x^2	df	*p*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*
Between probation staff	0.40586***	55.41	11	<0.001	0.40217***	55.47	10	<0.001	0.46560*	18.52	10	0.046

Note: Outcome is PO attitudes towards evidence-based practices. Results from HLM, POs ($N = 251$) nested within probation offices ($N = 12$). Individual-level continuous predictor variables grand mean centered, except for White, Female, and Graduate Degree which were uncentered. S.E. = Standard Error. $T = t$-ratio.
*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

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The only significant factor, before adding items representing individual PO characteristics, is commitment (B = 0.28, SE = 0.05, *t*-ratio = 5.12). In terms of commitment, 25% of respondents report low-moderate levels of commitment, 70% report moderate levels of commitment, and 3% report high levels of commitment to their organization. Results of the multilevel model suggest respondents reporting higher commitment to their organization report significantly higher positive attitudes towards EBPs. The mean attitude toward EBP increases by 0.28 points with each one unit increase in commitment scores. Of the organization factors considered in the model, commitment demonstrates the highest *t*-ratio, suggesting that the effect of commitment is stronger than other organizational factors considered in the model. When individual level characteristics are added to the model, commitment to the organization remains significant (B = 0.52, SE = 0.10, *t*-ratio = 5.23), with attitudes towards EBPs increasing by 0.52 with each one unit increase in commitment scores after controlling for demographics.

In order to examine whether the impact of organizational commitment on attitudes towards EBPs varies across the 12 probation offices (level-2), a random effects model was run by setting the level-2 slope to vary (results not shown). The effect of organizational commitment on EBP attitudes, however, did not prove significant. Allowing the slope to vary also did not significantly alter the pattern of results derived from the fixed effects model shown previously. These results suggest the impact of organizational commitment on attitudes towards EBPs between the probation offices may vary slightly (as the minimum attitude towards EBPs was 1.57 and the maximum attitude

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towards EBPs was 4.5), but that this variance is not significant within the offices examined in the current study.

To investigate the extent to which organizational factors may differentially predict the various dimensions of attitudes towards EBPs, separate HLM models were estimated. Final fixed effects models are presented in Tables 20 and 21. Consistent with the overall attitudes towards EBPs outcome, organizational commitment predicted attitudes towards EBP fit, appeal, feedback, job security, and requirements. In contrast to the overall model, while cynicism was not significant in the overall model, it was a significant predictor of perceived burden. A one unit increase in cynicism for change was related to an increase in perceived burden of 0.34. Another difference that emerged was the finding that in addition to commitment, organizational climate negatively predicted perceptions of job security (B=-0.50; p=0.034).

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Table 20

Fixed Effects Model: Outcome Variation and Factors Predicting Attitudes towards Evidence-Based Practices Subscales: Fit, Appeal, Burden

	Fixed Effects: Fit				Fixed Effects: Appeal				Fixed Effects: Burden			
	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*
Individual Level												
Commitment	0.28**	0.09	2.99	0.003	0.21*	0.10	2.24	0.026	-0.10	0.13	-0.77	0.445
Climate	-0.04	0.13	-0.30	0.795	0.01	0.11	0.10	0.922	-0.03	0.14	-0.24	0.812
Cynicism	-0.05	0.09	-0.48	0.633	-0.07	0.09	-0.83	0.407	0.34***	0.08	4.01	<0.001
Leadership	0.05	0.09	0.517	0.605	0.05	0.07	0.727	0.468	0.05	0.07	0.65	0.516
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Graduate degree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tenure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office Level												
Tier	-0.14	0.07	-2.00	0.073	-0.05	0.08	-0.74	0.479	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.956
Variance Components	Variance	x^2	df	*p*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*
Between probation staff	0.49706***	29.26	10	<0.001	0.36251***	45.55	10	<0.001	0.47214***	34.11	10	<0.001

Note: Outcome is PO attitudes towards evidence-based practices. Results from HLM, POs ($N = 251$) nested within probation offices ($N = 12$). Individual-level continuous predictor variables grand mean centered, except for White, Female, and Graduate Degree, which were uncentered. S.E. = Standard Error. $T = t$-ratio. *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

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Table 21

Fixed Effects Model: Outcome Variation and Factors Predicting Attitudes towards Evidence-Based Practices Subscales: Feedback, Job Security, Requirements

	Fixed Effects: Feedback				Fixed Effects: Job Security				Fixed Effects: Requirements			
	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*	B	SE	*t*	*p*
Individual Level												
Commitment	0.11*	0.05	2.38	0.018	0.86***	0.23	3.74	<0.001	0.39**	0.13	3.04	0.003
Climate	-0.03	0.09	-0.32	0.749	-0.50*	0.23	-2.15	0.034	-0.05	0.16	-0.35	0.725
Cynicism	-0.02	0.06	-0.26	0.794	-0.21	0.15	-1.35	0.182	-0.13	0.12	-1.07	0.286
Leadership	0.06	0.05	1.21	0.229	0.11	0.11	0.98	0.330	0.06	0.10	0.60	0.548
Female	-	-	-	-	0.18	0.21	0.82	0.413	-	-	-	-
White	-	-	-	-	0.00	0.36	0.01	0.991	-	-	-	-
Graduate degree	-	-	-	-	-0.01	0.24	-0.03	0.975	-	-	-	-
Tenure	-	-	-	-	0.00	0.01	0.31	0.754	-	-	-	-
Office Level												
Tier	-0.02	0.04	-0.72	0.486	0.09	0.13	0.67	0.516	-0.05	0.08	-0.68	0.514
Variance Components	Variance	x^2	df	*p*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*	Variance	x^2	df	*P*
Between probation staff	0.13158***	44.64	10	<0.001	0.86659*	20.66	10	0.023	0.53836***	48.39	10	<0.001

Note: Outcome is PO attitudes towards evidence-based practices. Results from HLM, POs ($N = 251$) nested within probation offices ($N = 12$). Individual-level continuous predictor variables grand mean centered, except for White, Female, and Graduate Degree, which were uncentered. S.E. = Standard Error. $T = t$-ratio. *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

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Discussion

The current study examines the influence of individual and organizational characteristics on PO attitudes towards EBPs. Data suggests staff report relatively positive attitudes towards EBPs, with probation staff who report being more committed to their organization more likely to have more positive attitudes. Prior research suggests when staff are committed to their organization they develop intrinsic motivation to do their job well (Kunda, 1992). This, in turn, may influence how probation staff respond to new practices and how willing they are to accept change. While organizational research suggests the important role commitment to one's organization plays in accepting change (Iverson, 1996), previous research on EBP implementation in community correctional settings does not specifically explore the relationship between one's commitment to their organization and their attitudes towards new policies and practices. Further, the finding that individual characteristics, such as gender, education, tenure, and race are unrelated to attitudes towards EBPs, illustrates the importance of organizational commitment. This suggests implementation of effective practices may be more challenging in probation agencies—and in fact all organizational environments--where staff do not feel committed to their organization. Surprisingly, staff perceptions of organizational climate, cynicism and quality of leadership are unrelated to EBP attitudes in the present study. This suggests PO beliefs regarding whether change efforts will succeed (cynicism), perceptions of leadership quality, and perceived shared meanings attached to the organizational environment (climate) do not independently affect PO attitudes towards

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EBPs. While previous research on juvenile POs found lower levels of cynicism and more favorable perceptions of leadership were significantly related to greater use of evidence-based supervision practices (Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011), it may be that attitudes towards EBPs (compared to use) are more strongly influenced by an individual's commitment levels. This may explain why the other organizational factors were unrelated to attitudes towards EBPs, as staff may not be concerned with factors relating to the climate, leadership or ability to change if they are struggling to identify with the core values and goals of the organization. Further research and replication is needed to determine if this finding remains consistent across samples and settings.

Given the vast amount of research documenting the challenge of change within criminal justice organizations (see for example, Battalino et al., 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Latessa, 2004; Steiner et al., 2004; Rudes, 2012; Taxman, 2008; Taxman & Belenko, 2012; Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015), it is not surprising that organizational commitment influences PO attitudes towards reform (EBPs). The random effects models examining whether the impact of organizational commitment on attitudes towards EBPs varies across the 12 probation offices, finds commitment influences attitudes similarly between the study sites. This suggests that regardless of the specific probation office one works in, commitment to the organization similarly influences attitudes towards EBPs (i.e., a high level of commitment in site one has a similar influence on attitudes towards EBPs as a high level of commitment in site 12). Thus, the Department of Corrections can potentially focus on identifying and developing organizational-wide strategies to build and sustain commitment for use across the probation offices in the state.

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Developing and sustaining commitment within an organization can be a challenging task. To foster organizational commitment, organizations must create an environment, in which its employees identify and accept the goals and values of the organization, so much so that they are willing to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization to do so (Atchison & Leferts, 1972; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). Thus, while reforming organizational policies and practices, it cannot be assumed that an individual staff member's level of commitment remains constant. Rather, organizations must ensure staff understand, agree and identify with changing policies in the first place. This requires agency administrators to make a concerted effort to thoroughly explain the rationale for change to staff members. For example, rather than sending out mass e-mails simply stating a policy change or a new training staff must attend, administrators could carefully identify what was not working or why a change was necessary and how the proposed policy/trainings are an improvement upon prior practice. Additionally, agency administrators can also include front-line staff throughout implementation efforts, which increases both engagement and commitment to organizational efforts (Cross et al., 2012). Engaging staff from all levels of the organization in implementation efforts ensures that staff voices are heard, which can increase understanding and identification with changing policies and practices, perceptions of justice associated with change, and can increase their buy-in towards reform (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). Increasing staff participation in decision making can result in increased perceptions of value as well as understanding and buy-in towards organizational efforts and reform (Hemmelgarn, Glisson & James, 2006; Maynard-Moody, Musheno & Palumbo, 1990; Taxman & Belenko, 2012).

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Previous research documents several factors associated with one's commitment levels, including morale (Glisson & Durick, 1988), perceptions of organizational justice (Lambert, 2003), and feeling valued within the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Scholl, 1981). Employees with high levels of morale have an attachment to their organization, which influences attitudes towards their specific job responsibilities, as well as the overall organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988). Further, individuals who perceive they are treated both fairly and with respect report higher levels of commitment to their organization (Lambert, 2003). Additionally, individuals are more committed to their organization when they feel valued and believe their skills are a valuable asset to their organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Scholl, 1981). Thus, commitment is more than identification with an organization's goals and values, but it encompasses issues related to morale, justice, and perceived worth. Thus, part of promoting and sustaining commitment to an organization likely starts as early as hiring practices. Effective employee selection allows agency administrators to identify potential employees who are best suited for the job and existing values and goals of the organization and can encourages long-term commitment (Vance, 2006).

Implementing EBPs within probation agencies suggests significant shifts in the way POs conceptualize and carry out their job responsibilities. Previous research documents common challenges associated with EBP implementation, including lack of knowledge, understanding and trust in the reform, as well as believing EBPs removes professional discretion (Ferguson, 2002; Steiner et al., 2004; Rudes, 2012; Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015). These common occurrences may result in staff feeling as

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though their existing skills are no longer needed or valued, and as a result, they may perceive a decline in their ability to contribute meaningfully to their organization. These perceptions may result in decreased levels of commitment to the overall organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Scholl, 1981) and may undermine attempts to implement EBPs. While more research is needed to unpack the mechanisms associated with organizational commitment to understand how agencies can best frame and target implementation efforts correctional agencies may benefit from dedicating time and resources towards building staff knowledge and understanding regarding the purpose, content, and value-added of the reforms (Lin, 2000). Additionally, agencies can help mitigate potential challenges through carefully framing reform efforts by: (a) emphasizing change as an improvement upon existing practice, rather than a complete divergence, (b) explain changing policies and practices does not mean staff were inadequately performing their jobs, (c) demonstrate how existing skills of staff play a critical role in ensuring the success of both EBP implementation and the organization as a whole. Perhaps if it is clear to staff how they fit and even play a critical role in the new direction of the organization, staff will feel valued and hold increased perceptions of morale, justice and overall organizational commitment.

The additional HLM models run on the subscales of the EBPAS revealed several interesting findings. As was expected, given the primary analyses examining the global attitude towards EBP scale, commitment also predicted attitudes towards perceived EBP fit, appeal, feedback, job security, and requirements. Surprisingly, cynicism for change emerged as a significant predictor of attitudes related to burden. Thus, when staff believe

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change is less likely to be successful in the organization, the more likely they are to believe that: (a) they do not have the time to learn anything new; (b) they already cannot meet their other work-related obligations; (c) do not know how to fit EBPs into their existing administrative work, and (d) believe EBPs will cause too much paperwork. Thus, when staff hold cynical beliefs about their organization and change efforts, reforms may be viewed as a burden rather than an improvement or adding value to the organization. Previous research suggests agencies address organizational cynicism through resource support efforts, including development and use of on-site work teams, team meetings, and dedicated training efforts (Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011; Friedmann et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007). The second difference revealed through additional analyses is that in addition to commitment, organizational climate negatively predicts PO perceptions that learning EBPs will result in job security. Thus, negative perceptions of organizational climate related to increased perceptions of job security associated with learning EBPs. Perhaps in organizations where there is a negative perception of climate, staff feel extra pressure to learn new skills and align with organizational policies and practices as a means to secure their current position or prepare to exit the organization to find a new position. This finding requires additional replication and further analyses to better understand the relationship between perceptions of climate and use of EBPs as a means of job security.

The current study has several limitations. The statistical power to test organizational factors at level 2 is limited due to the number of cases sampled at level 2 (n=12). In addition, results are cross-sectional and may not inform longitudinal patterns

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in PO reported attitudes. Despite these limitations, the current study is strengthened through use of the analytic approach appropriate for nested data. Additionally, the EBPAS measures attitudes towards EBPs broadly, rather than identifying attitudes towards specific practices. Future research should considering adapting the scale to identify attitudes towards a range of EBPs (e.g., risk and needs assessment, motivational interviewing). This specification can deepen our understanding regarding how attitudes might vary based on the specific practice/policy their organization may be implementing. Additionally, survey data captures only the current office in which the respondent works, therefore it is possible to account for whether a PO was trained or working in an office in a different implementation tier. This may have made identifying the effects of implementation tier challenging. Future research should attempt to control for this by collecting more data regarding training and previous work experience.

As attention towards EBP implementation grows, it is critical to understand factors that facilitate successful adoption and implementation. More research is needed to understand staff attitudes towards EBPs and how those attitudes influence the adoption, implementation and sustainability of effective practices. The current study adds to the existing body of literature focusing on understanding individual and organizational factors related to attitudes, highlighting the importance of organizational context – namely staff commitment to their organization. Findings suggest the need for organizations to incorporate strategies to improve staff morale perceptions of organizational justice, and perceived value through participation in decision making processes as a means to increase understanding and buy-in towards implementation of

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EBPs. The current study takes a first step towards understanding the role staff attitudes and organizational characteristics plays in influencing organizational change efforts. Future studies should examine the degree to which attitudes towards EBPs influences PO reported use, fidelity, and continued use of EBPs to better understand how attitudes influences the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of effective practices.

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CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

This dissertation provides a comprehensive examination of how probation officers (POs) make sense of and adapt evidence-based practices (EBPs). This work addresses the research-service gap and adds to emerging literature on factors affecting EBP use in real world settings. EBP adoption is often slow and incremental, yet very little research examines factors affecting EBP alignment with existing work processes. To address this literature gap, the current study investigates the use of EBPs in adult probation settings by analyzing the ways POs interpret, define, and adapt EBPs. The goal of this research is to better understand the size, scope, and reach of EBPs in practice. This study has a number of theoretical, policy, and methodological implications, discussed throughout this chapter.

Theoretical Implications

Throughout this dissertation, findings suggest decision making linked to a risk management framework continues to permeate probation practice. As other scholars note, the language of "risk" in association with crime and criminal behavior began during the "get tough" era in the United States (Garland, 1996; Robinson, 2002). During this time, research and correctional agencies began to emphasize use of actuarial techniques, emphasizing preventative systems of prediction and surveillance (Cohen, 1979; Simon, 1988). In their *New Penology,* Feeley and Simon (1992), argue criminal justice practice shifted from a focus on reforming individuals to managing quantities of offenders as efficiently as possible. As a result, prisons became warehouses and probation became a

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mechanism to maintain control over those offenders who did not necessarily require imprisonment (Feeley & Simon, 1992). As a means to sort probationers into risk profiles, use of technocratic tools, such as actuarial risk assessments, increased. As a result, POs organized their supervision strategies according to assessed risk level, resulting in a risk management style of supervision (Feeley & Simon, 1992; Simon, 1993).

The introduction of EBPs to correctional work challenges this existing technocratic, risk management framework of probation work. While not directly at odds (EBP requires using actuarial assessment tools and allocating resources/programming based on risk levels), the integration of an evidence-based approach within a risk management framework at-times results in conflicting goals of transforming the individual and regulating risky probationers (Bullock, 2011). In contrast to Feeley & Simon's (1993) framework, recent research finds a risk management perspective in probation work does not necessarily mean POs do not consider individual characteristics and appropriately tailor their response (Robinson et al., 2014). As reported throughout this dissertation, POs consider individual characteristics (e.g., criminal history, type of offense, disposition) determinative of whether or not to use an evidence-based approach with them. The resulting challenge occurs when POs assess certain types or groups of offenders as risky (whether formally assessed or based on perceptions); they respond with a risk management approach. This response ranges from avoiding use of new policies and practices (e.g., motivational interviewing, case planning, treatment placement), to focusing on frequent contacts and refusal to supervise probationers at a lower risk level. As such, risk management in probation work is more nuanced than previously discussed

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by Feeley and Simon (1992). In this study, POs do not simply manage caseloads based on assessed risk level, but continue to make individual, informal assessments of probationer characteristics and risk-related behaviors to determine how to appropriately supervise and/or manage probationers. Probation officers view certain types of offenders, offenders with specific characteristics, and certain situations as risky and creating a potential liability they must counteract by adapting a risk management strategy. This continued reliance on control and punitive-oriented supervision techniques contradicts the goals of the EBPs implemented by the agency in the current study over the last eight years.

Although POs consider individual characteristics and dispositions to determine whether or not to utilize EBPs, POs often did not address dynamic risk factors (i.e., criminogenic needs) or focus on including and/or empowering the probationer throughout the probation process (chapter four and five). The continued focus on static risk resulted in the sorting out those who POs perceived to be too risky (chapter four), even sorting out the riskier among low risk probationers (chapter five). Probation officers commonly relied on the special population status to guide decision making regarding classifying probationers and determining their supervision strategy. As a result, POs often sorted out sex offenders, individuals with mental health or functioning issues, gang members, drug users, and those who committed serious or violent crimes. This often leaves "easy" cases – first-time offenders, low risk offenders or individuals who have a history of compliance with their PO, suggesting POs may be more apt to utilizing and evidence-based approach with those individuals who are more likely to respond positively anyway. It is unknown how this adaptation of EBPs affected offender and agency outcomes, but previous

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research finds strategies aligned with risk management of special populations can result in higher rates of technical violations (Louden & Skeem, 2013; Porporino & Motiuk, 1995), suggesting a critical consideration for future research.

Given the important role historical factors played throughout this dissertation (chapters four and five), it is not surprising that POs may rely on accumulated knowledge of challenging interactions with a resistant probationer (e.g., recalling that time a sex offender violated his or her probation). It is possible that perceived failed attempts to work with a particular probationer influences POs' future willingness to work with individual or related populations they perceive as challenging. Focusing on easy or low risk cases directly contradicts agency reform, as recent policy directs POs to focus resources and time with riskier and challenging populations. This dissertation marks a first step towards understanding the impacts of historical factors on decision making regarding best practices. Future research should explore the relationship between history, accumulated knowledge/experiences and utilization of EBPs within probation practice as a means to understand how to move away from and/or better integrated and evidence-based approach within a risk management framework.

A second major theoretical implication of this work relates to the transportability of the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) to probation practice. While research emphasizes allocation of correctional resources to higher risk populations, this theoretical framework provides little conceptual guidance as to how to best supervise low risk populations. For example, the agency in the current study determines supervision level via static risk only. This results in probationers sorted out to

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low risk supervision and placed on telephone monitoring, regardless of whether the risk and needs assessment identified high levels of needs. It is unknown how this classification process impacts offender and agency outcomes. It is important to consider whether probation agencies may be missing opportunities to intervene in some way (not necessarily with intensive programming) with individuals who may benefit from addressing dynamic risk factors, case planning, building a relationship/working alliance with a PO, and having a voice in the probation process. While Andrews and colleagues (2011) argue, "most low-risk offenders in our experience do not object to being deprived of access to the maximum interpretation of the criminal penalty (or of access to human services that have little to offer but the possibility of increased chances of reoffending)" (pp.743), researchers have not yet examined this empirically. While there is substantial research suggesting low risk offenders do not benefit from intensive programming, we do not know how "little" intervention low risk offenders should (or do) receive. Especially given findings in chapter five demonstrating potential bias associated with determining whether an individual is supervised at low risk and *how* that individual is supervised on low risk, more research is needed to understand appropriate criminal justice responses and the associated impacts on individual outcomes and perceptions of the probation process (e.g., legitimacy, justice, fairness, equality).

Findings from chapters four and five highlight a conflict between three major themes: (a) concerns regarding the perceived *risk* that an offender presents; (b) the *stakes* associated with an offender or situation in terms of the potential impact on public safety, and (c) the personal, professional, and legal *liability* associated with one's decisions and

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actions. The ongoing conflict between risk, stakes, and liability suggests challenges to the transportability of the RNR theoretical framework to correctional practice. Researchers in Canada developed the RNR model based on the "psychology of criminal conduct", a human services perspective, which incorporates a client-centered model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). While US-based research supports the RNR model and individual components across a variety of settings (see for example Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005; Smith, Gendreau & Swartz, 2009; Lipsey & Cullen, 2007), this research does not address the tensions of implementing these principles in real-world settings, especially enforcement and punishment-oriented settings. The probation agencies included in this study represent organizations traditionally not aligned with a human service delivery model. In these environments, POs and leadership make decisions surrounding EBP implementation linked to the potential liability (legal, professional, and personal) associated with their decisions and actions as well as the perceived risks of reoffending and stakes associated with a re-offense or supervision of a particular offender. These three concerns (liability, risk, and stakes) present key contextual factors that affect transportability as well as the fidelity to the RNR approach.

To improve the translation of research to practice, there may be a need to modify the RNR framework to account for the prominent concerns of liability, risk and stakes. For example, the RNR framework should consider several key considerations such as (a) how correctional agencies can implement practices based on a theoretical model grounded in a human service/therapeutic approach; (b) how correctional agencies and staff can implement RNR principles with perceived riskier populations (e.g., sex

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offenders, gang members); (c) how correctional agencies and staff can apply the risk, needs, and responsivity principles simultaneously with various populations (e.g., low risk populations, special populations), and (d) how correctional agencies can implement the RNR model while also balancing external influences (judiciary, legislature, public opinion).

Within each of the RNR principles, considerations for risk, stakes, and liability should be made to recognize the additional factors influencing PO decision-making and the perceived acceptability and feasibility in implementing associated policies and practices. Additionally, there are also important dynamics internal and external to the organization influencing these challenges and conflicts influencing the implementation of RNR principles and EBPs. For example, when a probationer violates his or her probation, the first question asked by supervisors, executive management, and the judiciary is often "When did the PO see them last?" This line of questioning reinforces an emphasis on risk and liability, while deemphasizing the importance of the RNR framework. An existing challenge is moving past this line of questioning and changing rhetoric and expectations, so the first question asked upon violation is "*How* was the PO supervising them?" and "Did their supervision practices align with the RNR principles?" This suggests the need for greater shifts in the definition and expectations associated with RNR-based probation work as well as the surrounding rhetoric to further support and transport the RNR model in real world practice.

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In summary, findings from this dissertation highlight the prevalence of a risk management framework within probation work, characterized by attention to individual characteristics, dispositions, and situations. Situated within an environment focused on static risk, consideration of dynamic risk factors and participation in various EBPs promoted in this agency over the last eight years (e.g., motivational interviewing, case planning, treatment matching) often take a back seat, especially for riskier or more challenging populations, the very populations for which these services are geared for. Future research must both assess the impact of these factors related to transportability and examine how researchers and practitioners can better align EBPs within existing correctional practice.

Policy/Practice Implications

This dissertation highlights a number of factors related to transporting EBPs to every day probation work that have important implications for both policy and practice, including leadership, risk/needs, historical factors, reinforcements, and organizational commitment.

Leadership. While leadership did not emerge as a significant predictor of staff attitudes towards EBPs through an analysis of survey data, it did emerge as a potential influence of staff use of EBPs throughout the qualitative data. Leaders within these probation offices have the ability to enact formal policies within each individual office. These policies influence the shape and utilization of reform at the street-level. As seen in chapter five, leadership in several of the offices enacted policies that either completely circumvented reform or severely limited its application. In these instances, the actions of

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leadership send important messages to staff regarding the goals and values of the agency, which may align or misalign with the overall EBP implementation process occurring within the state. Previous research documents the important influence leadership has on staff use of EBPs (Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011), with successful implementation depending on their authority and commitment to the innovation (Klein & Sorra, 1996). This commitment includes creating, enforcing and sustaining a culture supportive of new policies and practices. This theme, throughout the qualitative portion of this dissertation, suggests the need for specialized training to target (a) leadership knowledge and understanding regarding reforms, their purpose, and their benefits; (b) development of protocol/policies to align reform within the existing organizational context, and (c) development of leadership skills in promoting and sustaining change within an organization.

Risk/Needs. As demonstrated throughout this chapter already, the assessment and corresponding supervision of probationers based on risk and needs presented a challenge to POs in this study. Overall, findings highlighted three major themes relating the transportability of risk and needs principles for probation practice. First, POs are overwhelmed when probationers are high risk or have many identified dynamic risk factors or criminogenic needs. In these situations, they revert to what they know or the "safe" route and emphasize risk management supervision techniques. In some cases, the reluctance to respond to criminogenic needs may relate to a lack of understanding the criminogenic need itself, appropriate ways to respond to that need, and/or available resources to adequately respond. This suggests simply training POs on how to conduct

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risk and needs assessments, interpret the results and create a case plan as the state did in the current study, may not be enough to help transport this complicated and complex process to practice. It may be that agencies must also develop a matrix consisting of the assessed needs areas, appropriate interventions, programs, and the specific availability of such programming in that jurisdiction. This needs-resource matrix may help newly trained POs visualize appropriate responses and understand how they can realistically address different needs areas.

While a needs-resource matrix may assist with this challenge, the practice of conducting an assessment, interpretation of results, and appropriate intervention is a highly clinical skill. The large majority of POs participating in this study are not trained clinicians (only two were trained clinicians), and many come from unrelated fields (e.g., exercise science, police, military), yet EBP reform requires they both understand and perform skills very clinical in nature. Thus, it should not be surprising that transportability is challenging, given the field consists of individuals with a wide range of expertise, backgrounds, and perspectives. Even though POs in this study received training aligned with best practices (e.g., multi-day, follow-ups, coaches), this training may not equate to the many years of additional schooling and training clinicians typically receive. It is possible we have not yet reached the appropriate threshold of knowledge and skill building to successfully transport EBPs to correctional settings.

Additional training needs may be required to address the inconsistent use of EBPs across various types of probationers reported in chapters four and five. POs were more cautious and less willing to use EBPs with a wide range of special populations, even

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when formally assessed as low risk. This differential treatment of special populations is important to note, as it resulted in treating entire groups of probationers more punitively than others, contradicting the aims of EBPs to remove bias and structure decision making. This pattern suggests the need for additional education and training focusing on the relative influence of various risk factors as a means to increase accuracy when making assessments of risk and potential risk as well as increasing PO ability to target risk factors known to affect recidivism (Louden & Skeem, 2013). Researchers and agencies should develop more comprehensive and long-term knowledge and skill building trainings centered on specifically addressing PO beliefs regarding special populations compared to empirically supported methods for assessing and managing risk.

Historical Factors. This dissertation is one of the first to examine historical factors as they relate to EBP implementation within a criminal justice setting. Building off the work of Fine (1996) and Zerubavel (1996), this study finds previous experiences impact the transportability of EBPs. POs accumulate knowledge based on either direct or indirect experiences with probationers, and operationalize this knowledge through a process that makes "historical sense' and follows a "cultural logical" (Fine, 1996), contributing to resulting institutional action. In this light, POs tend to remember experiences categorized as failures, using those memories to support a continued reliance on risk management techniques as well as a resistance to full integration of EBPs within the existing organizational culture. As suggested in chapter four, attention to historical factors prior to or at the very beginning of implementation efforts may assist in a more smooth transport of EBPs to probation practice. Probation agencies should directly

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acknowledge and address their past, reconciling their history with current implementation efforts as a means to identify and address common patterns and acknowledge and address resulting challenges or barriers to successful reform. This reconciliation may assist in identifying patterns not previously recognized as well as open the lines of communication and allow both leadership and street-level workers to confront negative experiences and fears that may be holding them back from forward progress.

With this reconciliation process, comes the need to better balance expectations and requirements of the law (judiciary/legislature) with individual offices. The existing tension between holding offenders accountable while implementing EBPs often results in a stalemate or attention to the law winning out. Concerns of liability are widespread amongst street-level POs, yet the agency in this study did not adequately addresses this concern as related to EBP implementation. Evidence-based practice implementation requires a drastic shift in the conceptualization and business mentality associated with probation work, yet this reconceptualization has only occurred partway. This suggests the need for greater system-wide change and a call for stronger interagency communication and participation throughout the change process.

Reinforcements. As noted throughout this dissertation, the agency did not link a system of reinforcements to the EBP implementation process. Performance reviews, raises, and reviews of PO case files remained linked to old policies and procedures, which reinforces the status quo rather than promoting changes within the existing environmental and cultural context. This finding highlights the need for agencies to simultaneously implement structures of review and feedback directly linked to policy and

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practice change. For example, reviews of PO work should focus on the quality of assessment and response to assessment results rather than simply whether or not the PO conducted the assessment (chapter four) or the quality and information influencing PO decision to place a low risk probationer on telephone monitoring rather than the number of probationers placed on telephone monitoring. While agencies may want to test out EBPs prior to revamping systems of review and reinforcements, this logic is flawed. It is those very same systems of review and reinforcements that sends a message to staff as to which behaviors, actions and decisions the agencies values and expects out of its employees. Previous research notes the importance of formal policies and procedures on shaping individuals self-perceptions (March, 1994), use of discretion (Feldman, 1992), and expectations (Feldman, 1992; March 1994). Thus, agencies should consider policies guiding official provision of feedback and reinforcements linked to EBP implementation as a means to clarify expectations for staff and promote alignment with reform.

Organizational Commitment. As highlighted in the substantive chapters of this dissertation, probation staff participating in this study shared generally positive views of EBPs and engaged themselves in change efforts (chapters four and five) and also reported relatively positive attitudes towards EBPs (chapter six). As the findings from chapter six suggest, probation staff who are more committed to the organization demonstrate more positive attitudes towards EBPs. For staff to exert effort on behalf of their organization, they must both identify with and accept the values and goals of that organization (Atchison & Leferts, 1972; Mowaday, Porter & Steers, 1980). Thus, it is not surprising that challenges relating to the transportability and alignment of EBPs exist within the

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probation offices studied here. When an organization implements EBPs, as the agency in this study did, it suggests major changes to policy, practice and the conceptualization of probation work. If POs previously identified with the goals and values of the organization, this commitment or identification might not automatically transfer as the organization undergoes change. As organizations experience major change such as this, it is imperative staff can understand and identify with changing policies and practices. It should not be assumed that commitment levels remain unchanged during times of reform. Rather, organizations should take proactive steps to frame reform efforts as a means to promote, sustain and even increase commitment levels. For example agencies can: (a) emphasize change as an improvement on practice rather than complete divergence; (b) explain that change does not mean staff were inadequately performing their job, but is a natural part of the growth and improvement process, and (c) demonstrate how existing staff and their skill sets play a critical role in the success of reform and the organizational overall. Additionally, pervious research emphasizes the importance of increasing staff participation in decision making (Hemmelgarn, Glisson & James, 2006; Maynard-Moody, Musheno & Palumbo, 1990; Taxman & Belenko, 2012) as a means to increase perceptions of value as well as understanding and buy-in towards organizational efforts and reform.

Commitment to the organization and its goals and values may be a key component of the transportability process and something organizations should attend to *prior* to implementation efforts. Promoting and sustaining commitment during reform requires alignment and fit of changing values and goals with the ways in which staff

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identify with the very same organization and values of the organization. Perhaps if agencies include street-level workers in the change process from the very start, they can better identify alignment issues and adaptations needed to fit reforms to the existing organizational environment. This early attention to transportability concerns may help to promote both commitment to the organization as well as provide structure to the adaptation process, which varied drastically by individual POs in the current study. Research finds the transportability of reforms is often hampered by a lack of input from staff during the development phase of implementation and suggests allowing for bidirectional input to create practitioners who are engaged and active in the change process, rather than passive recipients of change (Beidas et al., 2011). Including street-level workers in designing change and related efforts may help with both maintaining and increasing commitment, while also assisting with the sensemaking process. Including practitioner input into EBP implementation design and processes is a recommended means by which to enhance transportability and acceptability of reform (Weisz et al., 2009).

Methodological Implications

The current study highlights the importance of mixed method approaches. While the organizational survey provides a great deal of data on probation staff perceptions regarding EBPs and reported use of various EBP-related strategies, the qualitative data provides a depth of data which allows for deeper consideration of the factors associated with transporting and implementing EBPs within nuanced and complex correctional environments. Recent research highlights the importance of qualitative methods in

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studying implementation processes, including studies examining the implementation of risk and needs assessments in adult probation (Viglione, Rudes & Taxman, 2015), the New Parole Model in California (Rudes, 2012), and contingency management in problem-solving courts (Portillo, Rudes & Taxman, 2014; Portillo, Rudes, Viglione & Nelson, 2013). This dissertation is one of the few to employ ethnographic methods to examine issues related to implementation at the street-level. Often researchers examine client-level outcomes in effectiveness studies, but do to not consider alignment and street-level adaptations within the environmental context (Heffner et al., 2010; Henggeler, Pickrel, & Brondino, 1999; Ishikawa et al., 2012; Van Igen & Novicki, 2009; Vismara et al., 2009; Weisz et al., 2009; Werch et al., 2003).

The lack of qualitative methods exploring the *process* of *how* organizations and their workers adapt and align research-based best practices into existing practices is a gap in knowledge surrounding EBP implementation and use within criminal justice agencies. Using a mixed qualitative *and* quantitative approach, this study examines organizational change and decision making as a *process,* instead of a desired *outcome.* Traditional street-level bureaucracy theory highlights the important role street-level bureaucrats play in shaping how policy plays out on a day-to-day basis (Lipsky, 1980), yet this study is one of the few to critically examine decision making and adaptation processes at the street-level to better understand the challenging nature of change within punitive, control-oriented correctional cultures. With continued emphasis on effective implementation of EBPs, research must continue this line of questioning to critically examine street-level workers throughout the process of change. Probation is an integral part of the criminal

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justice system, with probation agencies having possibly the most comprehensive involvement with offenders (Petersilia, 2011). Examining decision making and adaptation processes at the street-level is a necessary step towards understanding how to lessen to the gap between research and practice, and how probation agencies can better adopt and implement effective practices

Findings from this dissertation support the idea that it is no longer enough to focus solely on outcomes measures in implementation research. To advance the field and EBP use in real-world practice, we need to study the processes associated with transportability and implementation. Through examining the process of transporting EBPs and implementation, this study highlights various adaptations made to policy and practice changes occurring at the street level as well as management level within all 12 study sites. Adaptations varied both between sites and within sites depending on the individual probation worker, suggesting significant nuances exist within implementation processes that warrant critical examination. Examining implementation and effectiveness of EBPs only as outcomes and not as a process ignores these important factors related to transportability, which ultimately may influence whether or not an EBP is sustainable and/or produces the outcomes intended.

Future Research

The previous chapters in this dissertation suggest a number of suggestions for future research to lessen the research-practice gap. First, chapters four and five suggest a need to better understand how researchers and correctional agencies can transport, implement, and integrate EBPs within cultures characterized by risk management tendencies. While

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this dissertation as well as recent research suggests promising findings suggesting current probation practice does not reflect true risk management perspective as argued by Feeley and Simon (1992), more research is needed to understand how PO decision making can better balance offender accountability with the goals of an evidence-based approach.

Second, it is imperative to examine the impacts of EBP adaptations on the overall integrity of the practice. While it is necessary for organizations to adapt EBPs to fit within the existing organizational context (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001), the resulting adapted practice may or may not reflect an EBP. As seen in chapters four and five, POs and managers sometimes make substantial adaptations to the EBP they originally received training on. The impact of these adapted practices for agency-level and offender outcomes is not known. Thus, after identifying features and characteristics of EBPs adapted to local conditions, researchers must go a second step to examine important variables such as recidivism rates, probation completion rates, rate of technical violations, and perceptions of the probation process. Especially taking into consideration the differential use of EBPs based on probationer characteristics (e.g., special populations), future research must examine the impact of adaptations as they relate to important measures of justice, fairness, legitimacy, and equality.

Third, chapter six examines PO attitudes towards EBPs through examining the influence of individual and organizational factors on attitudes. The second step in this line of work is to examine how attitudes towards EBPs influences PO reported use of EBPs. As explained in chapter six, research examining attitudes as they relate to EBP implementation within criminal justice agencies is in its infancy. To date, one other study

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examines the EBPAS and attitudes towards EBPs within a justice setting (McKee, 2014). Theoretically, attitudes potentially play a significant role in adoption and implementation of best practices given the deeply challenging and contextual environment of correctional agencies. The current study took a first step towards understanding correctional worker attitudes towards EBPs, but more research is needed to understand both how attitudes influence use of EBPs as well as adaptations of EBPs in practice.

Finally, chapter six identifies commitment as an important predictor of probation staff attitudes towards EBPs. More research is needed to adequately develop, promote and sustain organizational commitment as a means to support the transportability and implementation of EBPs in probation work. It is suggested correctional agencies begin to address issues of commitment during the design phase as a means to promote simultaneous shifting and understanding of organizational goals and values, but this strategy has not yet been tested.

Conclusion

Transportability suggests that for EBPs to fit or align within real-world practice settings, EBPs require modification in their design and service delivery (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). This dissertation explores a number of factors related to transportability that may hinder implementation and organizational change efforts. While this study highlighted a number of challenges that limit the integration of EBPs fully into existing probation practice, these identified challenges and associated adaptations of EBPs can inform future implementation efforts. Tailoring implementation efforts to address issues of fit before implementation begins may be a necessary precursor for

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wide-scale dissemination efforts (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). The concept of transportability suggests the importance of identifying alignment issues prior to implementation begins, thus if correctional agencies want to move forward with becoming evidence-based they must attend to issues of transportability as a first step in the process.

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APPENDIX: ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEY

1. Identify the district in which you are currently working.

-- Select --

SCREENING & ASSESSMENT

2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about screening and assessment.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. A brief, scored screen at intake is the best way to identify probationers who need further formal standardized assessment.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Scored, standardized assessment tools are necessary to determine the severity of a probationer's substance abuse problem.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Standardized assessments take too long.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Assessments should only be done by trained clinicians and not DOC probation staff.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. The main purpose of formal assessments is to provide the paperwork needed by managers.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. The best way to ensure that probationers are placed in a treatment program appropriately is through the use of standardized assessment instruments.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. Standardized assessments are not worth the effort given the limited number of staff we have.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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h. Standardized assessments usually indicate all probationers have similar needs.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

TREATMENT PLANNING AND PLACEMENT

3. For each of the following types of probationers in your office or program, please estimate the proportion for which a *formal treatment planning meeting* takes place (including the case manager, supervisor, resource coordinator or other specialist, etc.). *(For each row, check the one box closest to the estimated percentage of those probationers for whom a formal treatment planning meeting is held.)*

	% of Probationers in Your Office or Program				
	Used with 10% or less of probationers	Used with about 25%	Used with about 50%	Used with about 75%	Used with 90% or more of probationers
a. Petitioned probationer residing in community awaiting adjudication.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Probationer assigned to probation	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Probationer assigned to residential placement	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Probationer leaving placement and entering the community on standard aftercare.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

4. For each of the following types of probationers in your office or program, please estimate the proportion for which a formal *treatment service plan* is created and tracked. *(For each row, check one box closest to the estimated percentage of those probationers with formal service plans.)*

	% of Probationers in Your Office or Program				
	Used with 10% or less of probationers	Used with about 25%	Used with about 50%	Used with about 75%	Used with 90% or more of probationers
a. Petitioned probationers residing in community awaiting adjudication	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Probationers assigned to probation	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Probationers leaving placement and entering the community on standard aftercare.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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5. **To what extent are the following used routinely in creating treatment service plans for probationers on your caseload or in your program?** ***(Please check one for each row)***

	Not used	Used some of the time	Used about half the time	Used most of the time	Used all of the time
a. Court-ordered evaluation report or social history.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Screen or assessment done upon probation placement	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Meeting with clinician/evaluation specialist	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Interview with probationers family	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Other, specify: _____	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

7. **Please indicate the proportion of probationers on your caseload or in your program who *actively participate* in each of the following activities.** ***(For each row, check the one box closest to the estimated percentage of probationers.)***

	% of Probationers on Caseload or Program				
The probationer actively participates in….	10% or less of probationers	About 25%	About 50%	About 75%	90% or more of probationers
a. A formalized treatment or service planning meeting (such as a staffing).	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Determining which treatment services s/he is referred to.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Specifying case management and treatment/service goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Specifying sanctions for non-compliance with case management or treatment plan.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Specifying incentives for compliance with case management or treatment plan.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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8. To what extent do you employ each of the following procedures in referring and monitoring probationers on your caseload to non-residential treatment or services? ***(Please check one for each row)***

	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
a. Schedule a specific date/time for probationer's initial appointment with service/program.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Discuss with the probationer's parent/guardian what to expect at initial admission to program (e.g., paperwork needed, who probationer will meet with, how to behave, etc.).	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Accompany probationer to admission/intake appointment.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Establish a schedule with the service provider to report the probationer's progress and attendance in the program/service	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Talk or meet in a 3-way conversation with probationer and service provider	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Probationer returns and submits to me slip or other documentation of attending program/service	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

CASE MANAGEMENT & MONITORING

9. To what extent do you use the following case management practices with probationers on your caseload or in your program? ***(Please check one for each row)***

	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
a. Provide the probationer with a written case plan that includes rules and conditions of supervision and addresses their criminogenic needs.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
b. Review the written case plan with probationer.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Probationer signs a written copy of the case plan.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Graduated sanctions	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Graduated incentives	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

10. In monitoring the progress of a probationer on your caseload who is attending a treatment program or other service, how frequently do you typically engage in each of the following activities? ***(Check one for each row)***

	Never	Every 2-3 months	Once a month	Every 2 weeks	Weekly or more
a. Face-to-face contact with probationer	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Telephone or face-to-face contact with program staff	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Review urinalysis results	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

11. Please indicate the extent to which you feel comfortable in doing the following. ***(Check one for each row)***

	Very Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Very comfortable
a. Acknowledge when an offender on my caseload makes a valid point.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Tell an offender on my caseload they would be better off taking my advice.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Ask offenders how they are handling a difficult situation.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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	Very Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Very comfortable
d. Keep lengthy conversations to a minimum.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Ask the offenders on my caseload if they want to attend treatment.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Review the offenders' case plans on my own and tell the offenders what they need to do.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. Brainstorm with the offenders on my caseload about ways they can replace unhealthy activities with pro-social activities.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. Ask the offenders on my caseload what sort of activities they participate in.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
i. Challenge the offenders on my caseload when I think they are lying.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
j. Collaborate with offenders on my caseload to set individual goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
k. Review the offenders' case plan with them.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
l. Confront an offender on my caseload if he/she says they have no changes they wish to make.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
m. Tell the offender he/she has to tell their friends about their problems.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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	Very Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Very comfortable
n. Ask offenders on my caseload what their long-term goals are.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
o. Discuss ways to handle a difficult situation with offenders on my caseload.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
p. Ask open-ended questions that allow the offender to comment on perceptions of their own progress.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
q. Discuss with the offenders on my caseload any difficult situations they are currently experiencing.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
r. Repeat the exact words the offender said to get feedback from him/her.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
s. Establish a case plan for each offender on my caseload.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
t. Tell the offender an area they should desire to change.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
u. Help the offenders on my caseload develop a plan for where they want to be in the future.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
v. If an offender on my caseload experiences a difficult situation, I would discuss how the offender could handle the situation differently in the future.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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	Very Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Very comfortable
w. Ask offenders on my caseload if they want to make changes in their lives.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
x. Praise the offender for successful completion of a goal.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
y. Tell the offenders on my caseload if they are doing something unacceptable.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
z. Remind the offenders on my caseload they should be more committed to change.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
aa. Tell the offenders on my caseload they do not really need to attend treatment if they do not want to.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
bb. Ask the offenders on my caseload to provide ideas about how they can make changes in their life.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
cc. Remind the offenders on my caseload they are under supervision.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
dd. Tell the offender they will be violated if they do not change their behavior.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
ee. Reward offenders for taking steps towards changing unhealthy circumstances in their lives.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
ff. Confront the offenders on my caseload when I think they are lying.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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	Very Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Very comfortable
g. Tell the offender he/she has to tell their family about their problems.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. Tell the offenders on my caseload it is okay to ask for help.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

12. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. ***(Fill in one for each row)***

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. We should show offenders who use drugs they will be punished severely if they don't stop.	O	O	O	O	O
b. We should make sure offenders get effective treatment for addictions and other problems while they're on supervision in the community.	O	O	O	O	O
c. We should keep offenders in jail/prison and off the streets.	O	O	O	O	O
d. We should use the "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" principle.	O	O	O	O	O
e. We should deter future offenders by severely punishing people who are caught and convicted.	O	O	O	O	O
f. We should provide offenders with treatment to address addiction, mental health, or other problems.	O	O	O	O	O
g. We should make sure that the treatment provided is matched to the offender's needs.	O	O	O	O	O
h. We should keep offenders in jail/prison to prevent them from committing new crimes.	O	O	O	O	O
i. We should provide more treatment, jobs, and educational programs in a correctional setting to address problems that often contribute to crime.	O	O	O	O	O

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	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
j. We should keep drug users under DOC supervision and off the streets.	O	O	O	O	O
k. We should punish addicts to stop them from using drugs.	O	O	O	O	O

13. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your role as a probation officer (or the probation officers you supervise if you are a supervisor). (Check one for each row.)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. My primary concern as a probation officer is monitoring offenders to ensure that they are complying with court orders.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Spending a lot of time trying to help offenders deal with personal and psychological problems is useless.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. My position is really a type of police officer.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. I stress a one-to-one counseling relationship between myself and offenders on my caseload.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. My job is to act as a broker for services since I don't have the time or skills to help all offenders with every problem.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. My goal is to change the offender's behavior through a helping relationship.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. Without a wide range of available community resources for offender, I am ineffective as a probation officer	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. My primary concern is to comply with court orders.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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i. My job is to find out what's wrong and who can fix it.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
j. Trying to rehabilitate offenders is a hopeless task.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
k. Offenders should "walk the line" or "do the time".	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
l. My primary aim as a probation officer is to reintegrate offenders back into the community by linking them to community resources.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
m. People in my position should be trained in alcohol and drug counseling.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
n. My job is to identify the problem and then refer the offenders to agencies that can address that problem.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
o. My job is to control, regulate, and document.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
p. My primary responsibility is to ensure public safety by keeping close tabs on the offender's activities.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
q. My job is to match the needs of the offender to available community resources.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
r. Counseling is the most essential part of my job.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
s. I have a meaningful counseling-type relationship with offenders on my caseload.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
t. I help offenders by referring them to appropriate community resources.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
u. My job is to actively monitor the offender's behavior and ensure that the conditions set forth by the court are met.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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v. The key to my job is community services.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
w. I should be as tough as I can with offenders, and when they screw up, make them pay.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
x. I function as a social worker.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

PARTNERSHIPS

14. Below is a list of common activities between agencies. Please check all activities that apply to your district's working relationship with the judiciary and other community-based agencies on issues specific to assessment, treatment planning, service referrals, and placement. ***(Check all that apply for each row.)***

	Judges	Community-Based Substance Abuse Service Providers	Community-Based Mental Health Service Providers	Other Community-Based Service Providers	Local Police Department	Not Sure
a. We share information on probationer needs for treatment services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. We have agreed on specific requirements probationer must meet to be eligible for programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. We hold joint staffings/case reporting consultations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. We have developed joint policy and procedure manuals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. We have pooled funding for some	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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probationer services.						
f. We share operational oversight of some treatment programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Our organizations cross-train staff on treatment issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. We have written protocols for sharing probationer information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. Please rate the quality of your district's relationship with the following agencies. ***(Check one for each row)***

	Quality of Relationship				
	Very unfavorable	**Unfavorable**	**Neutral / Unsure**	**Favorable**	**Very favorable**
a. Community-based substance abuse service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Community-based mental health service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Other community-based service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Judges	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Local Police Department	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Other, specify:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ABOUT THE PROBATION DISTRICT WHERE YOU WORK

16. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your district. ***(Fill in one for each row)***

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	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great place to work.	O	O	O	O	O
b. Since joining this organization, my personal values and those of the agency have become more similar.	O	O	O	O	O
c. The reason I prefer this organization to others is because of what it stands for; that is, its values.	O	O	O	O	O
d. My attachment to this organization is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by the office.	O	O	O	O	O
e. How hard I work for this organization is directly linked to how much I am rewarded.	O	O	O	O	O
f. In order for me to get rewarded around here, it is necessary to express the right attitude.	O	O	O	O	O
g. My private views about this organization are different from those I express publicly.	O	O	O	O	O
h. Unless I am rewarded for it in some way, I see no reason to expend extra effort on behalf of this organization.	O	O	O	O	O
i. What this organization stands for is important to me.	O	O	O	O	O
j. If the values of the organization were different, I would not be as attached to this organization.	O	O	O	O	O
k. I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.	O	O	O	O	O
l. I feel a sense of "ownership" for this organization rather than just being an employee.	O	O	O	O	O

17. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the condition in and functioning of your district. ***(Fill in one*** O ***for each row)***

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We have few difficulties in adequately staffing our office.	O	O	O	O	O
b. We have funding available to introduce new programs and/or initiatives if they are needed.	O	O	O	O	O
c. We have had to cut or significantly reduce programs and/or services due to funding constraints.	O	O	O	O	O
d. We have enough staff to meet the needs of this office.	O	O	O	O	O
e. We have trouble retaining highly competent staff.	O	O	O	O	O
f. Our staff frequently say that they are overworked and/or don't have enough time to get done what they need to do.	O	O	O	O	O
g. Our staff lacks access to the training and development programs they need.	O	O	O	O	O
h. Our staff integrates new knowledge and techniques into their work to improve the way in which services are provided.	O	O	O	O	O
i. Our staff stays current with new techniques that relate to their jobs.	O	O	O	O	O
j. The training and development programs for our staff are of very high quality.	O	O	O	O	O
k. Attending training and development programs is made a priority for our staff.	O	O	O	O	O
l. We would significantly expand/enhance certain	O	O	O	O	O

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programs and/or services if funding were available.					
m. Our offices are designed to meet the specific needs of most of the important services and programs we run.	O	O	O	O	O
n. Our offices are well maintained and are kept fully functional.	O	O	O	O	O
o. We have the necessary physical space for the services and programs we run.	O	O	O	O	O
p. We have computers and information technology tools/resources to efficiently access offender records.	O	O	O	O	O
q. Our staff feels very comfortable using computers and information technology tools to do their jobs.	O	O	O	O	O
r. Our staff lacks the computer skills necessary to proficiently access offender records.	O	O	O	O	O
s. We regularly integrate new services, programs, and/or initiatives into our office operations.	O	O	O	O	O
t. Our programs, services, and/or initiatives are designed to address multiple offender needs.	O	O	O	O	O
u. We have a high level of coordination across districts and/or departments when it comes to delivering services and programs to offenders.	O	O	O	O	O
v. We have significant challenges in generating the necessary political support for important priorities, new programs, and/or initiatives for offenders.	O	O	O	O	O

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w. We have the support we need from communities for important priorities, new programs, and/or initiatives for offenders.	O	O	O	O	O
x. We have extensive collaborations/partnerships with external groups (e.g. outside service providers) that facilitate important priorities, new programs, and/or initiatives for offenders.	O	O	O	O	O

18. **Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the conditions and functioning of your district.** ***(Fill in one for each row)***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Ideas and suggestions from employees get fair consideration by management.	O	O	O	O	O
b. Managers and staff periodically meet and talk about what is working well and what isn't to improve our performance.	O	O	O	O	O
c. Learning new knowledge and skills and using them in your job is highly valued by supervisors and managers.	O	O	O	O	O
d. We systematically measure important outcomes for this office that assess our performance.	O	O	O	O	O
e. Staff feel comfortable promoting different ideas or suggestions, even if they conflict with established policy or practice.	O	O	O	O	O
f. We have well-defined performance outcomes and specific plans in place for how to achieve them.	O	O	O	O	O
g. The formal communication channels here work very well.	O	O	O	O	O

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
h. Opportunities are provided for staff to attend training or other developmental opportunities.	O	O	O	O	O
i. Innovative actions and initiatives undertaken by staff are highly valued.	O	O	O	O	O
j. The informal communication channels here work very well.	O	O	O	O	O
k. Employees are always kept well informed.	O	O	O	O	O
l. Information on new or best practices is made available to staff to use in their work.	O	O	O	O	O
m. Managers are open and willing to try new ideas or ways of doing things.	O	O	O	O	O
n. Employees always feel free to ask questions and express concerns in this facility.	O	O	O	O	O
o. There is a shared understanding of the changes needed to help CSU to achieve its long-term objectives.	O	O	O	O	O
p. There are discussions involving all of the staff about the vision of the office and ways to achieve it.	O	O	O	O	O
q. Staff generally feel comfortable discussing mistakes, errors, or problems with supervisors and managers.	O	O	O	O	O
r. Most staff here believe that they can have open discussions with supervisors and managers about work-related difficulties or problems.	O	O	O	O	O
s. Most staff are aware of and agree about where we should be in the future.	O	O	O	O	O

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
t. When mistakes or errors are made, managers tend to treat them as opportunities to learn rather than respond by using punishment.	O	O	O	O	O

19. **Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about efforts to make changes in your district.** ***(Fill in one for each row)***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I've pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here.	O	O	O	O	O
b. Changes to the usual way of doing things at this office are more trouble than they are worth.	O	O	O	O	O
c. When we try to change things here they just seem to go from bad to worse.	O	O	O	O	O
d. Efforts to make improvements in this office usually fail.	O	O	O	O	O
e. It's hard to be hopeful about the future because people have such bad attitudes.	O	O	O	O	O

20. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the need for additional guidance or training in your district. ***(Check one for each row)***

My office needs additional guidance or training in…	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Matching probationer needs with services.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Developing more effective case management strategies.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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My office needs additional guidance or training in…	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
c. Using probationer assessments to guide case management decisions.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Using probationer assessments to track probationer progress.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Assessing probationer's problems and needs.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Increasing probationer participation in treatment.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. Monitoring probationer progress.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. Improving rapport with probationer.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

21. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your immediate supervisor. ***(Check one for each row)***

My immediate supervisor…	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Inspires others with his/her plans for this district for the future.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Leads by example.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Treats each of us as individuals with different needs, abilities, and aspirations.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Takes time to listen carefully to and discuss people's concerns.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Encourages new ways of looking at how we do our jobs.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Gives special recognition to others' work when it is very good.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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g. Provides well-defined performance goals and objectives.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. Stays well-informed in what is being done in my work group.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

22. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about coordination between different departments or districts within this agency. ***(Check one for each row)***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. People from different districts who have to work together do their jobs properly and efficiently without getting in each other's way.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Staff from different departments in this agency work well together.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Staff from other departments help out case management staff in ways that keep things running smoothly.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Staff from different departments work together to solve problems involving case management services as they arise.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Staff in the field offices feels supported by staff at CSU administration.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Staff from CSU administration communicates well with staff in the field offices.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

23. In the past three years, can you identify any major initiatives to improve service delivery in your district:

☐Established new memorandum of agreement with other agencies. Please indicate which agencies: _____

☐Adopted a new screening and assessment tool. Please indicate which tool: _____

☐Hired new clinical staff to address the behavioral health needs of offenders.

☐Adopted a new evidence-based practice(s). Please indicate which evidence-based practice(s): _____

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☐Started one or more interagency teams to address gaps in services in our jurisdiction.

The following questions ask about your feelings about using new types of therapy, interventions, or treatments. Manualized therapy refers to any intervention that has specific guidelines and/or components that are outlined in a manual and/or that are to be followed in a structural /predetermined way. Evidence-based practice refers to any intervention that is supported by empirical research. (Aarons et al., 2010)

24. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

	Not at all	Slight extent	Moderate extent	Great extent	Very great extent
a. I like to use new types of therapy/interventions to help my probationers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. I am willing to try new types of therapy/interventions even if I have to follow a treatment manual	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. I know better than academic researchers how to care for my probationers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. I am willing to use new and different types of therapy/interventions developed by researchers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. Research-based treatments/interventions are not clinically useful	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Clinical experience is more important than using manualized therapy/treatment	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. I would not use manualized therapy/interventions	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. I would try a new therapy/intervention even if it were very different from what I am used to doing	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

25. If you received training in a therapy or intervention that was new to you, how likely would you be to adopt it if:

	Not at all	Slight extent	Moderate extent	Great extent	Very great extent

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a. It was intuitively appeal?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. It "made sense" to you?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. It was required by your supervisor?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. It was required by your agency?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
e. It was required by your state?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. It was being used by colleagues who were happy with it?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. You felt you had enough training to use it correctly?	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. Your probationers wanted it	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
I. You knew more about how your probationers liked it	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
j. You knew it was right for your probationers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
k. You had a say in which evidence-based practice was used	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
l. You had a say in how you would use the evidence-based practice	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
m. It fit with your clinical approach	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
n. It fit with your treatment philosophy	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

26. To what extent to you agree with the following:

	Not at all	Slight extent	Moderate extent	Great extent	Very great extent
a. Evidence-based practice detracts from truly connecting with your probationers	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
b. Evidence-based practice makes it harder to develop a strong working alliance	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
c. Evidence-based practice is too simplistic	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
d. Evidence-based practice is not useful for probationers with multiple problems	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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e. Evidence-based practice is not useful for families with multiple problems	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
f. Evidence-based practice is not individualized treatment	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
g. Evidence-based practice is too narrowly focused	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
h. I prefer to work on my own without oversight	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
i. I do not want anyone looking over my shoulder while I provide services	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
j. My work does not need to be monitored	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
k. I do not need to be monitored	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
l. I am satisfied with my skills as a therapist/case manager	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
m. A positive outcome in therapy is an art more than a science	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
n. Therapy is both an art and a science	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
o. My overall competence as a therapist is more important than a particular approach	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
p. I don't have time to learn anything new	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
q. I can't meet my other obligations	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
r. I don't know how to fit evidence-based practice into my administrative work	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
s. Evidence-based practice will cause too much paperwork	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
t. Learning an evidence-based practice will help me keep my job	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
u. Learning an evidence-based practice will help me get a new job	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
v. Learning an evidence-based practice will make it easier to find work	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
w. I would learn an evidence-based practice if continuing education credits were provided	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
x. I would learn an evidence-based practice if training were provided	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

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y. I would learn an evidence-based practice if ongoing support was provided	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
z. I enjoy getting feedback on my job performance	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
aa. Getting feedback helps me to be a better therapist/case manager	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
bb. Getting supervision helps me to be a better therapist/case manager	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

ABOUT YOU

27. What is your job title?
☐ Probation Officer
☐ Supervisor

28. Do you work in a special unit?
☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please specify: _____

29. What are your primary job responsibilities? ***(Fill in all that apply)***
O Conduct searches on offenders person
O Assess appropriate services for probationers
O Provide resources to help probationers find work
O Conduct home visits
O Complete state mandated paperwork
O Serve as a role model for good conduct
O Encourage probationers to discuss challenges faced at school/work
O Discipline probationers
O Encourage probationers to get a job
O Encourage probationers to discuss challenges faced at home
O Report to the court
O Other (Specify)_____

30. What is your average caseload size? _____

31. How long have you worked for this DOC?

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_____ years _____ months

32. How long have you worked with offenders (within this DOC and other agencies)?

_____ years _____ months

33. DOC staff wear many hats. Please check only one of the following which you would consider as your primary role in the DOC. We are interested in how you define your work and not your actual job title, training, education, or certifications. *(Check one)*

☐ Probation agent that enforces the orders of the court.
☐ Counselor
☐ Case manager
☐ Support staff
☐ A supervisor/manager of other DOC staff
☐ Administrator
☐ Other _____

34. What is the highest academic degree you hold? (*Check one*)

☐ HS diploma ☐ Associates
☐ Bachelors ☐ Masters
☐ RN/LPN ☐ PhD
☐ Other (Specify) _____

35. How would you describe yourself? *(Check all that apply)*

☐ White/Caucasian ☐ Black/African-American
☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Other (Specify): _____

36. What is your age? _____

37. What is your gender? (*Check one*)

☐ Male
☐ Female

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