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Perceptions of Probation Officers placing Juvenile Sex Offenders in Rural South Carolina

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Abstract

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by

Anthony R. Nelson, Sr.

MSW, University of South Carolina, 1998

BSW, Benedict College, 1996

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Human Services

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Abstract

In the western world, juveniles move through the criminal justice system by the hundreds of thousands. The probation services for many juveniles, however, are lacking due to the limited amount of psychological counseling, mental health facilities, and available mentors. Probation officers face accelerated challenges for juvenile sex offenders, particularly those residing in rural areas where resources are even more limited. Using the attribution theory, this qualitative case study explored the perceptions and decision-making challenges facing four juvenile intensive supervision officers in rural South Carolina when placing youthful offenders. Interviews were coded and analyzed using thematic content analysis. Results showed that the lack of community support creates a hardship on participants' performance to provide needed services for juvenile sex offenders. The prime recommendation resulting from the study is to implement sex offenders' responsive programs for the juvenile offender and their families. Family inclusion is a specific strategy to meet the needs of juveniles in conflict with the law living in rural South Carolina. The benefit of these programs would serve to assist juvenile sex offenders through participation in consistent rehabilitative services which may minimize opportunities for future offenses. Positive social change may occur by informing juvenile justice professionals, especially in rural areas where services may be lacking, to be more inclusive of family members as an integral part of treatment service. Effective rehabilitation services may lead to reduced repeat offences by juveniles.

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Dedication

It has always been my dream to leave a legacy for my children Tony, Anthony, and Kia, that will inspire them to do great things. As my family has grown to include another generation, I am proud to dedicate this dissertation to my beautiful grandchildren, Zai Elizabeth, Tristan Derrick, Zola Rose and baby Summer Malia that is on the way. Thank you for bringing a newfound joy and inspiration into my life to make this process even more meaningful. I hope that as you grow older this process is reciprocal and you are able to gain inspiration from this extraordinary journey in my life. I want each of you to strive for greatness, believe in yourself and always persevere. To my beautiful wife, Karen, you believed in me even when I did not believe in myself. Thank you for being there, loving me and encouraging me to pursue my dream of reaching this educational milestone. Your patience and support have been insurmountable. I love you dearly.

Acknowledgments

This has been a long an arduous process and I am delighted to have reached the finish line in becoming a part of the 1 percent population of this great educational achievement. As with any worthwhile project, it has its legion of supporters. I would like to begin by acknowledging my dissertation chairman, Dr. Gregory Hickman. Thank you for your guidance and continuous support in helping me to navigate this process and see it through to its fruition. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Nicole Hamilton my co-chair for your positive feedback and your thorough critiques and encouraging support, and Dr. Garth den Heyer my URR for the ongoing correspondence. I also appreciate the support from the agency that granted me access to conduct my research study; and the participants that provided their time and support to make this study possible.

Table of Contents

iii

iv

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The intention of the juvenile justice system is dual in that they provide guidance and support services for juvenile offenders, while also protecting the community from further criminal offenses. Juvenile sex offenders already face tough stigmas, but the state of South Carolina has enacted some of the most robust legislation within the country to monitor juvenile sex offenders (Letourneau, Levenson, Armstrong, Bandyopadhyay, & Sinha, 2015). The (S. C. Gen. Laws ch. 23, § 3-462) requires adjudicated juveniles that have committed criminal sexual conduct 1st or 2nd to register as juvenile sex offenders (Sitney & Kaufman, 2019). These youth face consequences and stigmas that have profound effects on their lives as they attempt to assimilate into the community. As a result of being placed on the registry, much of their private information is required to become public, such as their phone number, school enrollment, place of employment, the name/nature of their offense, and the age and gender of the victim at the time the assault occurred (Harris, Walfield, Lobanov-Rostovsky, & Cubellis, 2017). This array of dynamics involving a juvenile sex offender requires a multi-level system of treatment services, which indicates that the successful management of these services cannot rest solely with the juvenile intensive supervision officers (Silovsky, Hunter, & Taylor, 2019). Additional research must be conducted into the management of juvenile sex offender coordination of treatment services, particularly in the context of supervision within rural areas where service options are strained (Grewal, Kataria, & Dhawan, 2016; Silovsky et al., 2019).

The implications of this study relates to several social issues such as the shortage of specialized services for juvenile sex offenders, the stigmas associated with sex crimes, and the lack of community support have contributed to the gap in providing effectives services for this

population (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). The juvenile probation process has been one of the most common measures implemented as a way of balancing rehabilitative treatment services with simultaneously providing safety to the community through this recurrent court sanction.

However, in the last twenty years, probation has transitioned from the initial purpose of youth safety and has become more focused on community governance and security (Schiraldi, Western, & Bradner, 2015). Conventional monitoring and supervision methods have highlighted the necessity of maintaining a monitoring system that adheres to court-ordered sanctions and service provider recommendations (Letourneau et al., 2015). However, there is not a vast amount of information that focuses on the difficulties associated with the juvenile intensive supervision officer deciding on needed services for a Juvenile Sex Offender (JSO), particularly in rural areas (Rhineberger-Dunn, Mack, & Baker, 2016). Only recently, more attention has been given to criminal justice professionals examining the characteristics of community probation officers and determining how these characteristics affect how officers provide services and community support (DeMichele & Payne, 2018).

Background

Studies involving the Sex Offenders found that federal and state mandates for adult sex offenders, community awareness and control, and treatment modules have produced positive outcomes for this population (Levine & Meiners, 2016). In the year 2006, additional guidelines were developed through legislation introduced as the Sex Offenders Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), which formulated the benchmark requiring that states develop policies for sex offenders (Harris, Walfield, Lobanov-Rostovsky, & Cubellis, 2017). Over the years, the juvenile justice court system has made some strides in handling cases involving

juvenile sex offenders. Several states have adopted a mandate for community-based prevention programs opposed to confinement for juveniles (Bontrager, Kristin, Early, & Kosloski, 2017). However, for many rural communities, the lack of resources pose a unique challenge for juvenile intensive supervision officers to provide services for this population (Aizer & Doyle, 2015). Levine and Meiners argued that legislative decisions on juvenile delinquency are not consistent with the emphasis placed on rehabilitation, thus creating a shift in how SORNA policies are interpreted and implemented by many criminal justice professionals (Letourneau et al., 2015).

In the state of South Carolina, the consequences for sex offenders often extend far beyond the scope of the SORNA (Lytle, 2016). These policies can have adverse effects, particularly for juveniles that are registered sex offenders and living in rural areas (Butcher, Day, Miles, & Kidd, 2019). Upon adopting this legislation, South Carolina became one of the few states to enact strong mandates that included juvenile offenders over the age of 14. Juveniles are required to register as a sex offender if they engage in sexually violent acts with minors younger than age 14 (Sitney & Kaufman, 2019). Teens who are mandated to register as sex offenders in South Carolina face additional consequences such as having to provide online information, their home address, school affiliation, and place of employment (Harris et al., 2017). Levine and Meiners also noted that the juvenile recidivism rates, the safety of community and property, and treatment programs that have produced positive outcomes for this population as a result of the SORNA. Despite the research that has been conducted, there is still a considerable gap in the present knowledge. The existing research has not delved into the intricacies of the perceptions that affect the juvenile intensive supervision officer's decision-making process on placing juvenile sex offenders in rural areas.

Problem Statement

Many issues affect social services for JSOs, particularly in rural areas of South Carolina (Letourneau et al., 2015). Outcomes of service delivery are affected by factors such as legislation, perceptions of the juvenile intensive supervision officers toward sex offenders, as well as the quality of service provided to this population (Landström, Strömwall, & Alfredsson, 2016). Landström et al. (2016) noted the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions regarding the lack of adequate services for JSOs particularly in rural locations can produce an adverse effect resulting in these attitudes becoming a foundation for professional standards. It is necessary to evaluate the general perceptions of service providers to obtain a gauge in how probable or improbable those perceptions are to manifest in a therapeutic decision-making process involving services for JSOs (Bustnay, 2019).

The availability of adequate services for JSOs is limited and fragmented based on the nature of their specialized treatment needs, particularly in rural and isolated communities (Walters, 2020). According to Kim, Benekos, and Merlo (2015), some of the disconnects appear to involve the overall perceptions that demonstrate a higher level of focus in treatment committed by adult offenders against a juvenile as opposed to offenses committed by one juvenile on another. Further barriers to sex offenders' treatment include limited financial resources for specialized programs, ineffective family services, and minimal community treatment options which can negatively impact treatment services (Kim et al., 2015).

Although the research regarding the probation officers' perceptions and decision-making problems associated with providing specific juvenile delinquency services illuminates significant findings, I found no research that examined the perceptions and decision-making processes for

juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with JSOs in rural South Carolina. Given such, further research is warranted that could examine the perceptions and decision making influences of juvenile intensive supervision officers regarding providing services for JSOs in an attempt to address the documented problem of the lack of adequate services in the state's rural communities (Anderson, Sample, & Cain, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the perceptions of the juvenile intensive supervision officers on providing effective services for juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina. It was also to gain insight into the decision-making process and various internal and external factors that may influence their decision-making when placing JSOs in rural areas. Attribution theory was used in this phenomenological research that focused on the shared experiences and explanations that describe the causes of the individual's behaviors in certain events. With this study's findings, juvenile intensive supervision officers and administrators will better understand the resources needed and be able to remediate problems that many of juvenile intensive supervision officers face in their rural environments.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with JSOs describe their perceptions regarding the lack of effective treatment services for the JSOs in rural South Carolina?

Research Question 2: What are some of the contributing factors that shape the perceptions and decision-making of the juvenile intensive supervision officers when providing services for JSOs?

Theoretical Framework

The Attribution theory provided the theoretical foundation for this study. This concept helped me examine the perceptions held by the juvenile intensive supervision officers and the decision-making process. One of the primary founders of the attribution theory, Fritz Heider (1958), focused on the reason's individuals explain events the way that they do, but Weiner (1972) is credited with establishing the theoretical foundation that has become a fundamental model for research. Weiner's attribution model references how individuals construct the causes of their behavior and explain the processes in which individuals describe the causes of action and events. Three main properties: locus of control, stable and unstable causes, and controllable or uncontrollable behaviors will provide a different explanation of information processing in a typical work location. Additional detail will be provided in Chapter 2 that explains the implications of using this methodology. The attribution theory narrates to my research approach and questions insomuch that it helps to explain specific attitudes and perceptions that influence participant's feelings as described by the juvenile intensive supervision officers that work with JSOs.

Nature of the Study

The qualitative case study design was used to explore the perceptions of the intensive supervision officer and how these features affect their decision-making process of securing suitable services for juvenile sex offenders. I selected the qualitative case study methodology in my study to gain a strong understanding and create underlying discernments of the juvenile intensive supervision officers within a realistic setting. In effect, the case study paradigm helps to highlight characteristics of human thinking and behavior that would be unethical or impractical

to study in other ways (Yazan, 2015). The qualitative design will also allow me to explore the reasons for individual choices and behaviors while interpreting their responses using words as opposed to numbers (Liu, 2016). The quantitative approach aim is to measure and quantify data, using this method would make it challenging to inquire beyond the primary responses to study the juvenile intensive supervision officers' answers in-depth. The mixed-method approach requires even more resources and more time than the qualitative methods needed to conduct a case study scheme (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018).

Ridder (2017) suggests that the case study method is one of the most commonly used research tools when conducting qualitative research, which delves deeper into the influences that result in behavior, psychological elements, and policy decisions. This study utilized research questions that sought first-hand knowledge from juvenile intensive supervision officers about their perceptions surrounding the decision-making process living in the rural region of South Carolina (Kegler et al., 2019). This study also highlights existing empirical research regarding attributions and the attribution theory associated with individual behavior.

Definition of Terms

It is essential to provide as much clarity to assist with the overall validity of the study. Many vital definitions could be prevalent in other instances, but do not represent the context of this study. The terms are listed below and defined accordingly.

Actor-Observer Bias: is the tendency of an actor to characterize their behavior as it relates to external rather than internal causes (Kulibert & Thompson, 2019).

Attitude: is the feeling or opinion about someone or something or a way of behavior that is caused by specific actions or situations in life (Passafaro, 2020).

Attribution: is a conception of how people understand causal relations and the personality characteristics of others or the general tendency of a person to respond to situations in a stable, predictable way (Wang & Hall, 2018).

Attribution Theory: is a cognitive concept for which the influences are based upon the fundamental reflective attributions which contribute to current and future inspiration and accomplishment (Weiner, 2018).

Behavior: is defined as the response to external and internal stimuli (Burgos, 2018).

Bias: is the act of supporting or unfairly opposing a person or thing (Gerhard-Burnham et al., 2016).

Culpability: is operationalized as an assignment of causality, responsibility, and blame to a juvenile involved in sex crimes (Miller, Copeland, & Sullivan, 2015).

Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officer: is a concept utilized by the juvenile justice system in which probation officers who initiate concentrated collateral contacts with treatment providers within their communities, while simultaneously maintaining frequent contact with the offender and their family members (Assini-Meytin, Fix, & Letourneau, 2020).

Lack of Effective Sex Offenders Treatment Programs: is operationalized as absent treatment approaches that should include individual, group, and family interventions, particularly in rural communities (Miller & Maloney, 2020).

Perception: is our recognition and interpretation of information that is taken from our environment and used to interact with our environment (McLeod, 2018).

Juvenile Custodian: is defined as the juvenile being held in secure custody and receive care consistent with the doctrine of parenting (Kratcoski, Kratcoski, & Kratcoski, 2020).

Juvenile Sex Offender: is identified and defined as any persons 14-20, who are adjudicated for inappropriate sexual contact with a minor two years their junior mandated by federal and state law to be placed on national sex registry notification. These acts usually occur without consent and often involves coercion, manipulation, or deceptive behavior (Lee, Moon, & Garcia, 2020).

Locus of Control: is the tendency for an individual to believe that their behavior is controlled internally, or externally, with others or the situation (Weiner, 2018).

Reliability: occurs when recurrent trials are conducted utilizing a particular research method which produces matching outcomes (Hedge, Powell, & Sumner, 2018).

Saturation: is the point in a qualitative research project when there is ample data to ensure a level of certainty that the research questions can be answered (Nelson, 2016).

Thematic Analysis: is defined as the scientific approach which identifies, analyzes, and report patterns or concepts within the research information (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016).

Validity: is the process in which a scientific research method utilizes a systematic approach in following the requirements to produce research outcomes (Andrade, 2018).

Assumptions

There are many assumptions linked with the qualitative case study strategy that could affect the outcome of my study. For example, one of the most important of these assumptions is that scientific research results should reflect an accurate and forthright measure, which yields consistent results that reinforce validity (Van Dam et al., 2018). Second, it is assumed that the qualitative case study provides an expressive notion that the researcher is concerned about the

research process and any visual understanding expressed through the use of words or pictures (Cox & Benson, 2017; Weiskittle & Gramling, 2018). Another critical assumption is that each of the juvenile intensive supervision officers interviewed will provide honest responses to the interview questions and provide necessary depth into the research study. Last, I assumed that the juvenile intensive supervision officer is trained to offer specialized services and knowledge base and work experience (Wang & Hall, 2018).

Scope and Delimitations

The intent and scope of this research were to focus on a selected sample of juvenile intensive supervision officers in rural South Carolina who were experienced in working with juvenile sex offender's cases. Although these individuals represent an essential source of data, they represent a small sample of the study population. The nature of this qualitative case study, research methods, sample size, and the outcomes cannot be used as a tool to generalize actions of other juvenile intensive supervision officers across various jurisdictions. There is a need to conduct further research as a means of determining if the findings from this study could be generalized in a different setting.

Limitations

Limitations using the qualitative case study approach have many weaknesses associated with the analysis process. Utilizing the case study model can be very time-consuming, and secondly, other vital issues might be overlooked (Bramer, de Jonge, Rethlefsen, Mast, & Kleijnen, 2018). Also, the use of qualitative methodology is an open-ended technique for questioning, thus allowing the participants to have more control over the information's content, which can invariably skew the verifiability of the study's results. Other limitations that may harm

the study outcome involve the issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability. Considering data interpretation and analysis associated with the case study method can make it very difficult to replicate the information in other studies (Nicenboim, Vasishth, Engelmann, & Suckow, 2018).

Significance

This study is critical because the information gained could help to bring about more awareness of the juvenile intensive supervision officers perceptions regarding the availability of services for JSOs. Furthermore, this study presents information on motivational factors that potentially impede the development or growth of sex offender specific programs. Conducting this type of study could have meaningful and substantial influences on the state level regarding outcomes within the juvenile justice system. Useful services in rural South Carolina are vital for encouraging improved social skills and functioning, maturation, and strong bonds with JSO's family, peers, and the community. Therefore, the study contributes to an understanding as to the reason juvenile intensive supervision officers behave and make various decisions. This reasoning will raise awareness into how the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions can affect their efforts to seek JSOs' services in South Carolina's rural jurisdictions.

Summary

In the present research study, I added new information to the current literature on the perception of the intensive supervision officer have regarding placing JSOs in rural South Carolina. In this chapter, I have outlined the study beginning with the introduction, problem statement, the purpose of the study. The research questions presented address the gap in the literature. I also discussed the theoretical framework, along with the nature of the study, key

definitions and concepts, assumptions, limitations, scope and delimitations, and the significance of the research. Chapter 2 includes an examination of current literature related to attributions and attribution theory associated with individual perceptions. In Chapter 3, I described the methodology that I plan to use to respond to my research questions. In Chapters 4 and 5, I provided an analysis, outcomes, and conclusions gained from the research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There is a significant gap between the total amount of juveniles that are imprisoned as opposed to the number receiving quality services (Silovsky, Hunter, & Taylor, 2019). The most significant surge of the problem of providing effective services to JSOs has occurred in rural areas (Aizer & Doyle, 2015). In this qualitative case study, I investigated the perceptions held by juvenile intensive supervision officers regarding placement of juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina and other factors that affect service delivery among system providers of juvenile offenders. Throughout this chapter, I focused on presenting an examination of literature that aligns with my research topic. The order involves an introduction to the subject, followed by the research strategy, the history of the community supervision program, and the roles of the juvenile probation officer and the juvenile intensive supervision officer. The literature also highlights various factors that may influence how decisions are made when placing JSOs. Probation officers and other juvenile supervision professionals could benefit from this research study as they broaden their knowledge of how a lack of services impacts the youths they serve. By synthesizing the research literature and concepts related to the reason individuals behave or make the types of the decisions they do, I raise awareness among juvenile justice professionals for increasing appropriate services for juvenile sex offenders in rural jurisdictions.

Research Strategy

The research approach for this chapter involved searches of several databases including ProQuest Criminal Justice, SAGE, and SocINDEX with full text. These are the primary sources I used for gathering pertinent peer-reviewed scholarly literature. The Walden University online library was used to research articles published within the last 5 years. Supplementary journal

articles and books were also used to amplify the historical framework of this study. My study search included the following terms: *The use and influence of the attribution theory, probation, the role of probation officers, juvenile placement and facilities, probation organizations, family and juvenile relations, race and gender, and community influences*. The objective for using the above literature search will help to describe the theoretical origin of my study and provide a comprehensive analysis related to similar findings.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework provides insight into how individuals perceive societal issues and the influences that can motivate an individual to believe and act in a way that could impede their professional judgment (Miller, Copeland, & Sullivan, 2015). To help explain this subject matter, I relied on the attribution theory, which will be used to underscore my analysis of participants' attitudes, biases, and perceptions regarding how a person might behave and function in specific environments (Cohen, 2018). Using this model as a theoretical framework surmises that the attributions made by individuals regarding particular events and behaviors can be categorized as internal or external. During the internal process of attribution, individuals conclude that an activity or an individual's behavior is an outcome of personal characteristics such as feelings, attitudes, or personality traits. Whereas, external attribution involves examining the cause of actions or events that derive from environmental influences that are out of the individual's control (Weiner, 2018).

The theory of attribution's initial assertion maintained that attribution supports an individual in gaining a confidence level, which allowed them to manage and delve into the origin of behavior and environmental factors (Jackson, 2019). Heider created the theory of attribution

and introduced the concept that an individual's perception is vital in trying to maintain a constant state of balance and harmony as it relates to correlated features. In instances where an individual concludes that an unforeseen event is unacceptable, they become motivated to change the dynamics of the situation to render it more favorable to their expectations. Heider purported that individuals engaging in social situations were regularly involved in assuring a perpetual depiction of others.

Weiner (1972) expanded Heider's (1958) theory of attribution and asserted that the fundamental attributions of accomplishment displayed by individuals constitute an effect on behavior and motivation. He further claimed that individuals would construe elements of their environment in ways that promote a positive self-perception while blaming others for any personal accusations that are viewed as negative behavior.

Weiner developed the theoretical structure that has been used as a significant research model in social consciousness. This construct included three primary elements: the locus of control, stability, and controllability of an individual. Locus of control (LOC) focuses on internal versus external changes. An important aspect when assessing an individual's attributions measures the level of influence that the individual has over the determined outcome. The stability measurement monitors situations to see if there are notable changes associated with a cause over some time. For example, if a competitive swimmer believes they failed a competition because of an unmatched level of expertise, the objective is stable. Further, if the belief is that the lack of ability is permanent, it increases the level of stability. However, if the individual contends they would have won the competition, had there been an evenly matched event, the

cause then becomes unstable because the completion levels are varying which makes the reason a temporary influence (Weiner, 2018).

The third element, controllability, directly examines events that an individual can control, such as skill sets, as opposed to circumstances resulting from the actions of others (Samaraweera, 2016). Kayser, Mitchell, Weinstein, and Frank (2015) believes that a person's LOC is responsible for that person's influence of obtaining achieved results. Kayser et al. (2015) further assessed that individuals could be influenced both internally and externally through their locus of control. Kayser et al. (2015) proposed an individual's LOC can influence their behavior and character, affecting how the individual may react in their environment and their belief that specific actions are under their control or the control of external factors. In other words, people with high internal LOC believe that they influence the accomplishment and disappointment of their efforts, and they are ultimately responsible for themselves. On the other hand, the opposite holds for individuals with an external locus of control and that external factors such as luck, chance, society, or additional forces outside of their power, which in turn influence their success or failure (Gore, Griffin, & McNierney, 2016).

Highlighting the inferences of the attributional dimensions noted above helps to provide some insight regarding the perceptions of the juvenile intensive supervision officer and factors affecting their supervisory processes. Also, the LOC concept illuminates how juvenile intensive supervision officer form judgments and make decisions relative to responsibility and personal biases (Kasanoff, 2017). Individual preferences are often associated with how individuals attribute the behavior of others to something personal about them as opposed to something regarding their particular situation (Gweon, Jun, Finger, & Rose, 2017). In other words, people

tend to blame other individuals for their unfortunate occurrences instead of considering the external or situational circumstances. The actor-observer bias is another form of bias found in social psychology. Kulibert and Thompson (2019) referred to this type of bias as the propensity for an individual to attribute the behavior of other people to his disposition, and his reaction to the situation he is currently facing. Actor-observer bias is typically seen in unfavorable conditions, and it should be noted that it does not come into play, especially when dealing with individuals who are well known.

The central element in comprehending the procedures associated with processing juvenile sex offenders is the function of the juvenile intensive supervision officer in making their assessments of incoming juveniles. The juvenile intensive supervision officer is responsible for establishing the vital elements for presentation to the court of juvenile assessments and presenting proposals that align consistently with the juvenile's assessments. This process provides insight responsible for criminal behavior and the basis to make sentencing decisions (Metcalfe & Chiricos, 2018). The use of this classification is reflective of the probation officers' perspectives as well as the process of the administrative construct, which connects the aspects of a specific case to a general class of nonconformity (Vincent & Lovins, 2015).

Historical Implication of Community Supervision

The following literature review's objective is to describe the theoretical basis of the proposed study, to provide a historical overview describing the development and fundamental role of the juvenile probation officers and their transition into the position of juvenile intensive supervision officers. Community supervision, most commonly referred to as probation,

originated in the mid-1800s and continued from that point to garner widespread acceptance and use by law enforcement (Phelps, 2020).

Nash (2017) indicated that in 1825 a notable historical action took place when New York became the first state to offer protection to juvenile delinquents. It appears that during periods between the 18th & 19th centuries, socioeconomic conditions played a significant role in imposing the same harsh rulings on 17-year-old children, which treated them as adult offenders. Nash noted other changes were seen after the Civil War, where the focus was placed on reform school programs that were designed as a rehabilitative tool for juvenile offenders. According to Yaussy (2019) in 1878, the state of Massachusetts implemented a formal probationary procedure as an alternative disposition for juveniles, which preceded the first juvenile court.

Before this enactment, many courts across the country used a form of probation through suspending the perpetrator's sentences, and much later, the federal government began to disapprove of the use of deferred sentences. Labrecque (2017) concluded in the late 1800s; the Supreme Courts ruled that federal courts do not have the authority to suspend the judgment of an individual indefinitely and suggested that probation legislation be used as a remedy.

The author further indicated that probation was prevalent throughout the state of Massachusetts, and by the turn of the twentieth century, several other states had begun using the probationary process. However, many southern states were slow to adapt to the federal mandates and continued to rely on unproven and harsher forms of rehabilitation. For example, in 1893, South Carolina developed its version of Reform schools for juveniles delinquency located in a wing of the state prison (Trotti, 2020). The refuge houses and reform schools continued to grow into the more modern-day facilities that serve juvenile delinquents. Trotti added that in the

1900s, South Carolina adopted the significant concepts in probation and parole, which included sentencing reductions based on the good behavior of time served. These concepts also included supervision of individuals on parole within community settings, and the use of indeterminate sentencing guidelines to allow the possibility of early release.

By the year 1899, Picart (2018) indicated Chicago open the countries first juvenile court process to address juvenile delinquency in the city, and by the year 1909, twenty states had started their juvenile courts. The author concluded that by the end of 1920, most of the other states had some version of a youth court system. The structure and procedures governing juvenile courts varied by jurisdiction, but all were designed to focus on early intervention and rehabilitation of an individualized approach to youthful offenders (Fortune, 2018). Bontrager, Kristin, Early, and Kosloski (2017) showed that some court cases involving the treatment of juveniles and their rights between the 1930s and 1960s were deemed not appropriate for many states and the juvenile justice system. Thus, in 1968 the U.S. Congress introduced the Juvenile Prevention and Control Act, which is intended to encourage the planning and advancement of community-based prevention programs (Bontrager et al., 2017). A year later, Trotti specified that in 1969 South Carolina legislature created the Department of Juvenile Corrections which was intended for the development and implementation of community based programs to include divisions for placement and aftercare programs (Hanson, Harris, Letourneau, Helmus, & Thornton, 2017).

During the early 1970s, there was a significant emphasis placed on shaping and redefining juvenile services (Hanson et al., 2017). Bontrager et al. (2017) further pointed out that in 1971 the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act developed new limits for

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), and the Law Enforcement Assistance

Administration (LEAA; Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, 1976). The new

boundaries were designed to focus on prevention and rehabilitation strategies that would be

managed at a level outside of the ordinary criminal justice system (Fox, 2016). Fox revealed

during this period; HEW provided these traditional services, which included welfare, health and

well-being, and services aimed at runaway children. LEAA was tasked with developing

programs that would serve primarily within the court and correctional criminal justice systems.

The Crime Control Act (1973) introduced amendments that broadened the range of their

responsibilities, which included requirements to have each state submit an improvement proposal

that incorporated comprehensive measures to address concerns of juvenile justice offenders

(DeVault, Miller, & Griffin, 2016).

In 1974, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA), which

established the Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention (OJJDP; 2018) and the National

Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (NJJDP) used to help states create

standards and procedures for juvenile specific programs (Bontrager et al., 2017). The OJJDP was

instrumental in improving the conditions within the juvenile justice system by emphasizing

rehabilitation and access to community-based programming community as a countermeasure

instead of sending juveniles to jail or juvenile detention centers (Labrecque, 2017).

New mandates were established in the 1980s and throughout the 1990s that required jails

to have a court order to detain eleven and twelve-year-olds (Hanson et al., 2017). State

legislation was mandated in 1993 that prohibited incarceration for more than six hours for youth

being held in the same place as adults. Guidelines were specified for the management of youthful

offenders to be conducted in a juvenile secured facility (Trotti, 2020). The author shared that before a juvenile is remanded to a secured facility, the juvenile courts are required to a juvenile case within 24 hours. These changes allowed the state to move forward with meeting compliance requirements for federal mandates.

Development of Juvenile Sexual Offender Registration Laws

In 1994, a paradigm shift occurred, highlighting legislation geared towards sex offenders in response to the widely publicized death of Jacob Wetterling, an 11-year-old in Minnesota (Bonvillian, 2016). The resulting policy came in the form of a new mandate called the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children Act [1994] (Bonvillian, 2016). It required states to meet the terms of federal guidelines in which state and local registries were created as a mechanism to track the movement of sex offenders. Within the next two years, there was another high-profile murder occurred with the death of seven-year-old Megan Kanka. Megan's death prompted the amendment of the Jacob Wetterling Act, which made it mandatory for states to provide notification to the public about sex offenders that resided in neighborhoods located near schools (Makin, Walker, & Story, 2018; Ricapito, 2017). Also, information about the teens who are mandated to register as sex offenders is required to provide such as the offender's name; demographical information; place of residence, weight, height, and hair and eye color; and their place of employment and school affiliations (Harris et al., 2017). States such as Pennsylvania and Texas require registrants to report detailed information such as body piercing or tattoos, home address, driver's license number, and the make and model of the individual's vehicle for their sex register database (Makin et al., 2018; Stillman, 2016).

Bontrage et al. (2017) pointed out not long after the approval of the Wetterling Act of (1994) was amended later, adding the protection form Children's Sexual Predator Act 1998. The Children's Sexual Predator Act required states to enforce stricter registration requirements for violent offenders and ensure that all states comply with federal guidelines regarding the sex registry mandate (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2016) [USDOJJP]. The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of (2006), Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), was enacted by President George W. Bush (Sacco, 2015). The legislation included comprehensive details that expanded the current sex offender laws. Sacco further clarified that a national sex offender registry was developed and required states to consistently apply to identify criteria for sex offenders via the internet, such as their photo, name, date of birth, residency, and place of employment. The SORNA also applied to juvenile offenders.

By the year 2014, there were at least 41 states that developed a section for adjudicated juvenile sex offenders and stipulated that they would have to complete the process of registering as a sex offender (USDOJJP, 2016). This decision came at a time when federal laws did not have mandates that required juveniles to complete the process of registration as a sex offender requiring juveniles to register as sex offenders. In approximately ten of the 41 states, a judicial review was conducted if needed, and the data was used to determine how the juveniles are handled for registration purposes (Lytle, 2016). USDOJJP noted changes and additions to the law were used to create the Office of Sex Offender Management, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, also commonly referred to as the "Smart Office," which helps states to employ SORNA. The obligation was placed on the states to develop plans for supervision and

monitoring of the federal laws as applicable for each state's justice system. Due to expansions of the federal mandates, the roles of probationer services gained a more significant role as part of the juvenile system, which served as an additional layer of enforcement and specialist care (Davis, 2018).

Structure of Probation Organizations

NeMoyer, Gale-Bentz, Durham, Wagage, and Goldstein (2019) suggested, during the last 50 years, there have been constant changes to the structure of the probationer system serving juvenile offenders. These changes did not occur without conflict regarding the various mandates, which ultimately affected the success and outcomes for youthful offenders (Hsieh et al., 2016). During the earlier years, male law enforcement officers served primary roles within the juvenile probation system (Labrecque, 2017). The police sergeants managed officers within a separate division of the probation department. Labrecque suggested officers were responsible for conducting investigations and petitioned cases that centered primarily on male juvenile delinquency. This structure has developed over the years, and each state currently has its legislation used to govern the juvenile justice system (NeMoyer et al., 2019). The probation areas are quite diverse, consisting of more than 2000 probation organizations nationwide, which all have their distinct characteristics based on geographical, community cultures, and political considerations (Phelps, 2020). The four primary areas that govern probation services are corrections, treatment services, welfare services, and community-based services. The central area of law enforcement includes the prison system, which is the primary area for detainment and oversight of offenders. Phelps indicated that smaller organizations are divided into regions that assist families with social needs such as housing, food, employment, education, and training.

Phelps further stated that treatment services consist of social service professionals that provide counseling and health-related services for the youth and their families.

Organizational components are essential for correctional officers, so they can implement efficient supervision and monitoring services that aid the juveniles in successful progression within the juvenile justice system (Bolin & Applegate, 2018). Blasko, Viglione, Toronjo, and Taxman (2019) conducted a survey that collected responses of 400 juvenile justice professionals from various levels of the organization to include executive and line staff members. Much of the organizational structure included inter-agency coalitions that were adequately staffed and maintained a level of stability to meet the organizational goals and objectives utilizing evidence-based solutions. Therefore, the organizational structure and culture can influence the level of impact during the decision-making process of the officers when coordinating services for juvenile sex offenders. Ellemers, van der Toom, Paunoy, and van Leeuwen (2019) suggest that personality and moral attributes help guide individual behaviors. It also holds that culture guides and constrains the behavior of individuals within probation organizations, especially if members are trained using similar methods with the same values. Although many organizational cultures are heavily associated with retention, commitment, psychological strain, and job satisfaction, the underlying logic of identity can be linked to the values that offer self-esteem (Berkman, Livingston, & Kahn, 2019). In a more specific sense, culture describes the individual and how they should treat others to have a positive feeling about themselves (Berkman et al., 2019).

Juvenile Probation and Intensive Supervision Officer

Designated as the person most directly accountable and responsible to the juvenile court system and the administration of services for juveniles adjudicated for specific crimes, the

Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO) has evolved into an increasingly rehabilitative and comprehensive presence within the community (Battin & Crowl, 2017). During the early inception of the juvenile criminal justice system, it was determined that youthful offenders should receive different treatment than crimes committed by adults. Battin and Crowl noted that the court system assumes the responsibility of care for minors and ensure the maintenance of their rights and welfare in the event their parent or guardians are not able to provide adequate care or oversight. This paradigm shift supports the principle that a community-based environment would promote levels of success and a good foundation for the reintegration of the youth back into a suitable position within their community (Gerhard-Burnham et al., 2016).

The underlying basis has a deeply rooted, biological connection with human development. According to findings from Eriksson, Ghazinour, and Hammarström (2018), youth development is attributed to ecological such elements as family, peers, school, and the community. Hence, it is beneficial for juvenile offenders to receive intervention and treatment within this system of the environmental structure. Throughout this time, the role of the probation officers was in a softer capacity, in which they functioned like social workers. This technique was not successful in reducing juvenile crime rates, as there was a 40% recidivism rate (Labrecque, 2017). Therefore, as adolescent behavior evolved, it was necessary to change the probation officer's role so that the juvenile's needs were adequately met through supervision and support services (Dyck, Campbell, & Wershler, 2018). Short, Wheeler, McCord, and Toby (2020) indicated early reformers believed that the most effective process for managing the psychological component of delinquent behavior was best done through making changes that focused on the individual.

The JPO has three key areas of responsibilities: The intake process, investigation, and supervision of the juveniles (Miller & Maloney, 2020). The intake procedures' goal consists of a screening process that determines the most suitable and least restrictive rehabilitative approach (Ochoa, 2016). The juvenile's initial contact with the court system occurs during the intake process, at which time there is a decision as to whether it will be necessary to file a formal petition with the court.

Investigative strategies are used by the JPO to assist the court with interpreting, verifying, and evaluating the juvenile's background information (Pope & Jones, 2020). Another essential component during the report preparation phase is investigating any possible prior convictions, or the juvenile's participation in any similar uncharged criminal activities (Battin & Crowl, 2017). The role of the JPO also includes a dual responsibility to ensure that the juvenile adheres to all assigned legislative directives and perform them within the least restrictive setting, while collectively working with community resources and maintaining public safety efforts. The researchers revealed that when a juvenile requires more rigorous considerations regarding community probation, the JPO becomes more active in the community. As a result, the JPO now becomes a juvenile intensive supervision officer.

The community is a secure network of support services that promote the juvenile's success as they seek to re-establish themselves within their communities. Pope and Jones indicated that the family's treatment is also an essential component in aiding the juvenile's rehabilitation process, which also contributes to the juvenile intensive supervision officer's success. This approach is necessary to note that the juvenile intensive supervision officer

operates in a transformational role. Still, their efforts to provide essential change can alter dramatically, because of political or community pressures.

Many juvenile intensive supervision officers face difficult challenges are navigating through the criminal justice and social welfare systems in search of specialized services to meet the rehabilitative treatment needs for juvenile sex offenders and their ultimate reintegration success (Kelly, 2018). Kelly noted that many juvenile intensive supervision officers' administrative requirements make it tough to provide needed services for juvenile sex offenders. The researcher also indicated case assignment, determining the best or most appropriate services, appointment scheduling with court officials, and the negative backlash connected to sex offenders' labels are the more prevalent administrative issues. Connor (2020) concluded that because a juvenile can become involved with multiple systems simultaneously, many considerations go into case planning and the most appropriate services needed for that juvenile.

The process can be very daunting, particularly for those juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with registered juvenile sex offenders (JSOs) (Howard, 2017). In many instances, the availability of adolescent services and the organization's priorities may not necessarily align with the preferences and emphasis of the juvenile intensive supervision officer's actual case planning efforts (Glisson, Williams, Hemmelgarn, Proctor, & Green, 2016). Howard further indicated that juvenile offender assessments are used during the development phase when analyzing staffing needs, offender risk factors, and cost determinations.

Juvenile Probation Officers' Perceptions of their Roles

Numerous researchers have found juvenile probation officers (JPOs) that work with juvenile sex offenders see themselves in a role that is merely in place to enforce compliance with

court orders (Hay, Ladwig, & Campion, 2018; Warner, Rorem, Cooke, Pealer, & Smith, 2019).

Based on this view, many JPOs spend most of their time performing administrative tasks, such as

documenting client activity, submitting various reports, and revocation proceedings for juveniles

that are non-compliant with their probation guidelines (Hay et al., 2018; Warner et al., 2019).

The officers did reveal that the administrative role is only one slice of the many intricate portions

of their position as JPOs. Two separate studies conducted by Blankenship and Slate (2016) and

Miller (2015) revealed that a significant number of probation officers felt their role evolving into

an expectation of performing social work activities that seek to rehabilitate juvenile offenders.

Based on the job's evolving demands, many officers indicated that they were regularly

working extended hours beyond their regular schedule. However, they agreed that much of the

extended time included fulfillment of agency administration requirements consisting of

completing massive amounts of paperwork they felt was unnecessary (Salyers, Hood, Schwartz,

Alexander, & Aalsma, 2015). The officers also revealed a level of work-related stress derived

from high demands of the job and low wages, which threaten the security of their own families.

Many of the JPOs admitted that work-related requirements forced them to neglect their family

responsibilities.

The high levels of frustration have led many JPOs to contemplate quitting their current

position or to seek higher-paying wages (Salyers et al., 2015). Even though the officers report

high levels of stress, the agencies that employ them view these stressors as routine occurrences

that are naturally inherent to this type of work. These aspects result in low retention and high

turnover rates (Blankenship & Slate, 2016; Salyers et al., 2015). Less desirable characteristics of

the job, such as long hours and low wages, manifest in negative influences on the quality of

services and juvenile offenders' supervision. The officers' perceptions and attitudes directly correlate with the effectiveness of probation services (Miller, 2015; Salyers et al., 2015). The JPOs have an essential role in orchestrating the offenders' change process and rehabilitative efforts and thus make it imperative that they provide adequate support and supervision services to effectively assist the juveniles in making practical decisions (Jiang, Zhang, Irwin, Yang, & Xing, 2019).

Mullins and Lee (2020) created a scale measuring the probation officers (POs) support for the casework, coordination of services, or police enforcer. The mean scores demonstrated that most POs enacted the part of the broker (mean=36.35) and a (mean=36.03) support for casework and a (mean=32.76). The results revealed that POs were more inclined to support a service coordination role, and support for a treatment style of supervision presented mixed results. At the same time, policing was a less favorable position and was the least embraced by the sample population of 159 probation officers. Similar research was conducted by Keenan and Rush (2019), which probed work beliefs studying 206 juvenile and adult POs and their perspective on support for social service, resource broker, and their law enforcement positioning. The finding revealed significant deference; insomuch the juvenile POs were more disposed to support a common service-oriented approach to treatment as opposed to adult POs.

Tanenhaus and Nystrom (2016) administered a survey to 158 probation trainees utilizing a Probation Strategies Questionnaire instrument consisting of 24 items designed to measure support for caseload management strategy, resource broker, and law enforcement. Over one year, five groups of trainees participated in the questionnaire, and multivariate analysis effectively evaluated the information. Results showed that newly trained POs showed a low rate for law

enforcement orientation and significant support for social services and resource brokers management strategies. Gender was not a factor in the probation strategies and that the trainees were moderately homogenous in their perception of how a probation officer should respond while performing their duties.

Characteristics of Juvenile Sex Offenders

Stiffer sanctions resulted in the incorporation of signing into law the Sex Offenders Registry Notification Act 2006 (SORNA). A federal mandate required 14-year-old juvenile delinquents to register as sex offenders when adjudicated for crimes that were considered graver than aggravated sexual abuse (Klein & Mckissick, 2019). Woodhams, Taylor, and Cooke (2020) suggested that the relevance of age for juvenile sex offenders (JSOs) has become more distinctive by classification of the two primary types of JSOs which target children, and the other target their peers or adults. The determining factor for review by JSOs is the difference in age between the victim and offender. The ones that target children tend to do so merely because they are in various environments involving children, which presents more of an opportunity making it easier to foster abuse (Woodhams et al., 2020).

There are extensive characteristics that outline abnormal sexual behavior patterns that do not necessarily apply to all juvenile sex offenders. Some youth may display distinct preferences regarding their interests, fetishes, and arousal techniques (Bassrsma et al., 2016). These factors are often the motivating influences that drive their need to offend and may be difficult to alter (Kettrey & Lipsey, 2018). Notably, The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers has indicated identifiable traits that separate youthful offenders from adult offenders (Sewall & Olver, 2019). Children who become sexual deviants tend to exhibit characteristics of

poor social skills and low self-esteem. In contrast, adults exhibit more psychopathic traits in terms of their deviant sexual interests (Kettrey & Lipsey, 2018). Kettrey and Lipsey further noted that some juvenile offenders display behavior that compensates for inadequacies, they face socially and with self-esteem issues.

Perone, Ingersoll-Dayton, and Watkins-Dukhie (2020) evaluated juvenile sex offenders and found that more than half of them were loners, and their isolation was a standard behavior pattern. General social inadequacies linked to at least two-thirds of the juveniles to an environment of social awkwardness among their peer group. At least half of this group displayed an overall lack of sexual knowledge, self-awareness, and general education (Perone et al., 2020). These same aspects are common among juvenile offenders that committed other types of violent crimes. Due to the sensitivity and preconceived beliefs, juvenile sex offenders require a unique group of service and service providers. The juvenile intensive supervision officers play an integral role in assisting juveniles with rehabilitation and community reintegration. Additionally, the juvenile intensive supervision officers must effectively manage the rehabilitation efforts while ensuring community safety measures as the juvenile reintegrates back into the community setting (Assini-Meytin, Fix, & Letourneau, 2020). Each of these factors requires the juvenile intensive supervision officer to possess a full training series to address the unique requirements for this populace.

Juvenile Probation officer Perception and Attitudes of Juvenile Sex Offenders

Even with scarce research and mixed conclusions were revealed regarding attitudes towards diverse sex offender classifications. Interestingly, the results also showed that criminal justice workers possessed both positive and negative perceptions regarding sex offenders. For

example, Jones and Chaplin (2017) utilized the Attitude Toward Sex Offenders (ATSO) scale to examine 437 therapists' insights and how they view sex offenders. The researchers utilized a qualitative method that did not identify the specific type of therapists used for the sample but did reference that most of them held a master's degree and worked in private practices or community-based facilities. The mean ATSO scores of the therapists indicated that they possessed a more favorable attitude toward sex offenders. The authors further revealed that therapists involved in experiences with providing treatment services for sex criminals held a more optimistic position towards them than therapists who lacked such knowledge.

Similar findings suggested in Bustnay (2019) quantitative study which incorporated a blend of professionals such as law enforcement officers, psychologists, and correctional officers. All of them have regular interaction with sexual criminals. The research explored the varying perceptions of each individual and how it relates to their prospective disciplines when providing sex offenders services. The study also included viewpoints form the sex offenders themselves by using the Attitudes Toward Prisoners (ATP) measure (Ashworth, Browne, & Tully, 2018). The results revealed that the ATP scale used a 5-point Likert scale and was equivalent to the ATP scale except for the identifying terms that used sex offenders in place of the term prisoners. The score range is 0 to 144, with the high scores representing a more favorable perception towards sex offenders. The outcome revealed that law enforcement was the least positive in their dispositions, while the offenders possessed more of an optimistic view toward sexual deviance (Ashworth et al., 2018).

Karpouza and Emvalotis (2019) performed investing in research involving 236 theorists pursuing a master's degree in education counseling. The participants were given the Counselor

Response Form (CRF) and were requested to provide answers in the demographic sections, which yielded insight into the participant's perceptions towards juvenile sex offenders. The counselors received one of several different case histories involving abuse incidents that they reviewed and responded to the use of the CRF. Each case consisted of a young pre-adolescent male that experienced multiple occasions of sexual assault. Results showed consistently that the participants displayed a more profound motivation in working with battered offenders than those who did not suffer abuse. However, Karpouza and Emvalotis noted other research had demonstrated contradictory findings with negative connotations associated with the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions regarding juvenile sex offenders.

Kewley (2017) performed an analytic interview with a group of professional and subordinate associates, that had experience in providing services for sex offenders. The group included psychologists, probation officers, and law enforcement officers. A thematic content analysis consisted of an interview format through the execution of thematic content analysis. The researcher found that the professionals displayed a mix of positive empathic attitudes or, likewise, negative odious attitudes towards the sex offenders that they worked within their various capacities. Taylor, Fleckman, and Lee (2017) conducted a similar study and concluded that the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of 109 community members, 78 were law enforcement officials, and 82 were law students. After completing a series of questionnaires, the views of the law students and community members were similar in that they were inclined to support sex offenders' rights. The results revealed the officers were most concerned with community safety through the notification process and did not feel that the notification would violate the sex offender's rights.

Most recently, Mustaine, Tewksbury, Connor, and Payne (2015) conducted further studies among various law enforcement officials, such as police officers, court officials, and correctional workers, examining how they view sex offenders law concerning this population. Each of the officials supported enforcement of SORNA and residency restriction laws despite skepticism regarding the requirements' efficiency. The law enforcement officers possessed the most dangerous and stereotypical perceptions of sex offenders and favored punitive actions towards them. The officers believed that SORNA and residency restriction laws were fair and efficient means of preserving public protection while reducing recidivism. They were confident in their beliefs, despite having any supporting empirical evidence. Another exciting concept revealed during this study indicated that educational levels were negatively associated with a stereotypical approach regarding sex criminals and the law that affected these criminals. However, educated professionals with extended years of experience were less likely to hold negative views of sex offenders, and SORNA laws (Mustaine et al., 2015).

The juvenile intensive supervision officer perceptions and knowledge about the juvenile's psychological well-being may also be added to the juvenile intensive supervision officer's evaluation of offender typologies and influence their supervision and decision-making processes. Scott, Dennis, Grella, Funk, and Lurigio (2019) suggested 20 to 60 percent of juveniles on probation have mental difficulties, and minimal studies have delved into exploring these factors. The lack of understanding regarding mental health problems may translate into a wrong decision by the juvenile intensive supervision officers, especially if the juvenile has committed sex offenses with a diagnosis of mental illness (Scott et al., 2019).

Specialized Training

The professionals who work with adjudicated juveniles of sexual misconduct also use their diverse practices to evaluate background information that is useful in determining treatment options (Carl, Schmucker, & Losel, 2019). In South Carolina, the minimum requirements to become a probation officer include a bachelor's degree with an emphasis in the social sciences or the equivalent, and they must pass a rigorous background investigation (Lewis, 2017). The officers also have to complete the Basic Law Enforcement Training Program conducted by the Criminal Justice Academy (Carl et al., 2019). Part of the initial training process juvenile intensive supervision officer in South Carolina involves familiarizing the officers with the numerous varieties of community programs and the categories of services each offers.

Psychological and psychosexual evaluations, treatment records, and pre-sentence investigative reports are vital documents used for evaluation purposes (Cantora, Mellow, & Schlager, 2016). This information provides the juvenile intensive supervision officer with comprehensive background information that helps them develop an understanding of the juvenile they are assisting. The fundamental historical data is an excellent resource for determining the juvenile's risk level and appropriate treatment and intervention options. Juvenile intensive supervision officers that received specialized training in identifying the various types of sex offenders were significantly more effective with interrogation techniques that increased the prospect of obtaining credible information from juvenile offenders. Bolin and Applegate (2018) theorized that juvenile intensive supervision officers receiving exhaustive discipline and who take part in enrichment actions were more widely concerned with the aspects of rehabilitation compared to the typical probation officers who receive minimal specialized instructions.

Hogue (1995), as cited in Herbert and Bromfield (2017), conducted another study with members from various multidisciplinary teams to participate in a three-week training program assigned to perform treatment groups with sex offenders in England. The participants consisted of probation officers, prison officers, and psychologists. The Attitudes toward Sex Offenders (ATS) training took place on a pre-and-post training basis. The outcome revealed that specialized training affords members the means to gain an in-depth understanding of juvenile deviance, and thus began to express a more positive attitude toward this population. They also had a more optimistic outlook that demonstrated their confidence in the clients' treatment and rehabilitative success. A 6-month follow up was conducted by the researchers, and the scores on the ATS remained consistent and unchanged, which suggests that training has a significant influence on attitudes.

A similar study by Patterson (2018) conducted a two-day training for probation officers and residential hotel workers. All of them had previous experience working with sex offenders but had not received prior specialized training. The training goal design developed a platform to create an awareness and understanding of prevalent issues when working with sex offenders. The topics covered include descriptive information about sex offenders, cognitive behaviors, risk assessment, sex offender myths, and treatment options. A comparison that analyzed the ATS pre-training and post-training results consisted of 73 participants. The results revealed no significant difference between the two scores, which further indicated that the training did not have a bearing on the individual's perceptions toward sex offenders. However, Patterson revealed significant changes with the scores that pertained to seven ATS items before training and after

completion of training. Four elements did, however, notate a positive shift in attitudes among the participants.

In the event an agency or territory decides against developing specialized caseloads designed to work with youthful sex offenders' distinctive needs, it is still a prudent notion to at least consider offering specialized training to workers (Battin & Crowl, 2017). Many professionals, such as juvenile intensive supervision officers, have preconceived beliefs regarding sex offenders. They often do not have a full understanding of treatment options that would be the most beneficial for sex offenders. The insight provided through training helps break down barriers created by preconceived attitudes and behaviors toward sex offenders. Battin and Crowl ultimately concluded specialized training allows the juvenile intensive supervision officer to enlist in mutual communication and meaningful interactions with the JSO, other treatment providers, and community members regarding risk valuation and management of youthful crimes.

Relationship Between Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officer and the Juvenile

A comprehensive collection of pragmatic exploration suggests the client-provider affiliation influences treatment commitment, obligations, and psychotherapy outcomes (Gaab, Brazil, Vries, & Bulten, 2020). Therefore, it is critical for the juvenile intensive supervision officer to develop a stable relationship with offenders by assisting them with rehabilitation efforts and simultaneously displaying diligence in managing their priority to maintain community safety and security (Sheidow, McCart, Chapman, & Drazdowski, 2020).

Vidal, Oudekerk, Reppucci, and Woolard (2015) performed a probe geared at directly examining the relationship between probation officers and female offenders, and how those links

impact the recidivism rate with supervised youthful offenders. Positive behaviors such as support, trust, and encouragement are all conducive to elements that juvenile intensive supervision officers use as a predictor. Those youthful offenders are likely to have lower rates of violent offenses occurring after institutional release and parole monitoring. Thus, it appears that positive interactions with juvenile intensive supervision officers may help juvenile offenders refrain from engaging in disruptive or criminal activities. Osher, Cantor, Berg, Steyer, and Rose (2020) conducted further research exploring the quality of the relationships between juvenile intensive supervision officers and youthful offenders. It also revealed that higher-quality officer-offender relationships predicted greater compliance with probation services. This study also suggests that juvenile intensive supervision officers would have a more substantial influence on reducing recidivism rates when they displayed attributes such as trust, fairness, and caring (Osher et al., 2020).

During a comparable study, Trotti (2020) found similar observations that also yielded an influence on lower recidivism rates based on praise and rewards techniques used by the officers. However, a balanced level is needed for the juvenile intensive supervision officer to perform their various duties, such as positive reinforcement and the use of authority and supervision. The information provided indicates there must be an equal level of collaboration and participation of the juvenile offenders and the juvenile intensive supervision officers during the development of problem-solving concepts. These strategies strengthen the relationship between the juvenile intensive supervision officer and the juvenile, thus creating a more positive platform that can promote positive behavior. However, the critical element in developing this positive response stems from the juvenile having a positive and trusting relationship with the juvenile intensive

supervision officer (Becan et al., 2020; Vidal et al., 2015). Becan et al. (2020) conducted research that examined the probationary influence that juvenile intensive supervision officers have on deterring juvenile offenders from committing criminal acts. During the examination, a semistructured interview consisted of twenty individuals that were receiving probation supervision services. The results revealed that the juvenile intensive supervision officer's role was substantial in fostering positive motivation that encouraged the juveniles to abstain from re-offending behaviors. The positive interaction between the juvenile intensive supervision officers and the juveniles also strengthened social actions needed to limit negative impulses linked to re-offending behavior.

Community-Based Programs

There are numerous types of community programs aimed at reintegration for juvenile offenders, where the most common are mentoring, cognitive/behavioral, and therapeutic applications (Bouchard & Wong, 2017). Sex offender management through reintegration efforts is a design that slowly reintroduces the offender back into the community while having a monitoring system that offers accountability and screen for internal risk factors (Keenan & Rush, 2019).

According to Bouchard and Wong (2017), community-based programs offer a typical blend of individual, group, and family therapy services. Many of the programs also provide educational group support for families with additional issues with the youthful offender, such as psychiatric needs or substance abuse. The suggested treatment program consists of individualized assessment of the juvenile, family, and the home environment (Ribeiro da Silva et al., 2020). The outlining and execution of controlled services are reflective of the collective

effort between juveniles, their family. Service providers that offer care for the juvenile's rehabilitative progress function as the central authority in managing community-based treatment services. The board's diversity includes a range of institutions from the juvenile justice courts, the department of social services, and the public defender's office. The board also serves in a mediator role between the service provider groups and the community. Individuals on the committee are responsible for ensuring that the service providers effectively meet the juveniles' needs while monitoring and enforcing community safety. Juvenile misbehavior often occurs within the juvenile's community. Thus, community-based treatment is a viable option that receives support from various community layers, such as families, schools, and service providers. Bontrager et al. (2017) argued that juveniles who participated in residential-based day treatment programs were not as prone to be adjudicated for additional offenses within a 12-month timeframe of their release.

In effect, juveniles who received treatment services in the community were less inclined to re-offend and become incarcerated as compared to youth that was not part of the residential treatment program (Bontrager et al., 2017). Bouffard, Cooper, and Bergseth (2017) found mixed results and noted that various community programs produce varied results. The researchers indicated that although community-based treatment models had noteworthy effects on a juvenile receiving new charges for sex violations but did not affect offenses or convictions for damaged property, narcotics, or other civic crimes. However, Crawford and Evans (2017) indicated the most effective programs for youthful offenders are those managed within the community, with the higher capability to promote positive life outcomes.

Worling and Langton (2015) conducted an empirical examination to explore the performance of programs specifically designed for juveniles who displayed inappropriate sexual behaviors, their families, and the recidivism rate. The study consisted of 58 youths (5 females and 53 males) and a comparison group composed of 90 juveniles (4 females and 86 males) which included of three subgroups: juveniles who refuse to participate in treatment, those who only received an assessment for their achievements in the curriculum as well as those juveniles who failed to complete the program mandates. The treatment process included family involvement and participation and therapeutic progress. Results revealed that after a 10-year follow-up, those juveniles who participated and completed the community-based program showed better outcomes than the comparison group by a significant margin in determining recidivism factors.

Influence on Decision Making

Several clinicians have revealed several aspects that may impact the juvenile intensive supervision officer's judgment when making decisions that reach outside of the requirements' legal parameters. A myriad of these elements includes case management, individual personality characteristics, isolation/demographics, the relationship between the juvenile intensive supervision officer and the juvenile, race, gender, and the public's influence (Espinosa, Sorensen, & Walfield, 2019). These aspects can directly influence the juvenile intensive supervision officer's management and decision making that affects service delivery to juvenile sex offenders. The juvenile intensive supervision officer's management and decision-making strategy relevant to their caseload size can also change how the juvenile intensive supervision officer determines and facilitates treatment methods.

The execution of their supervision techniques suggests that the juvenile intensive supervision officer utilizes an approach that is the best fit for their caseload size. Surveys indicate that the usual caseload size of juvenile intensive supervision officers ranged from 50 to 200+ cases, with 40 being the average (Picart, 2018; Hachtel, Vogel, & Huber, 2019). Unfortunately, due to dwindling resources, many juvenile intensive supervision officers are tasked with managing caseloads for exceeding 30 clients, which is an optimal caseload size (Hachtel et al., 2019). There are also several monitoring stages involved placing youth under court orders containing probationary supervision provisions. Juvenile intensive supervision officers assigned a specific number of juvenile cases in their district are responsible for securing resources devoted to those needing particular care (Crawford & Evans, 2017). According to Picart representatives of the juvenile court system, the juvenile intensive supervision officer has a coercive legal duty to practice monitoring and surveillance strategies to ensure that youth probationers comply with the terms and conditions.

In the event the juvenile does not satisfy the court's order, the juvenile intensive supervision officers' involvement will require subsequent court hearings. The juvenile intensive supervision officers' will provide recommendations for further service alternatives. Based on this, juvenile intensive supervision officers' values and attitudes can profoundly affect the treatment process. However, the correlation between behavior and character traits is essential even when minimal (Sulitzeanu-Kenan, & Zohlnhöfer, 2019). The authors indicated that a fundamental element of the attributional perspective is the juvenile intensive supervision officers' ability to make accurate interpersonal decisions dependent on the personality constructs of the juvenile intensive supervision officer.

Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officer Personality Traits

The term personality traits reflect individual thought patterns, awareness, and conduct (Mitsopoulou & Giovazolias, 2015). The most frequently documented personality traits are those that constitute the Big Five Inventory which includes: extraversion or characteristics such as sociability or confidence and emotional expressiveness; agreeableness or attributes such kindness, trust or the tendency to be empathetic and supportive of others opposed to being antagonistic; conscientiousness or exceptional impulse control and goal-orientated behaviors; neuroticism or the propensity to experience moodiness, sadness and having a low tolerance for stress; and openness or possessing a broad range of interests, creative and prefers variety (Schei, Fuks, & Boudreau, 2019). Gerlach, Teodorescu, and Hertwig (2019) inferred that by understanding that personality traits are a systematized scheme within that individual that slowly develops over time, it affects the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions services delivery for juvenile intensive supervision officers. Unlike some other personality measurement tools, the Big Five inventory individually measure traits rather than personality states or preferences. Not all jobs are the same, the demands of the juvenile intensive supervision officer require a particular set of essential personality traits for most criminal justice professionals (Schei et al., 2019).

In this instance, the researcher is more focused on the individual characteristics in this research, such as personality and character qualities, which contribute to the effectiveness of the juvenile intensive supervision officers service delivery. The perceptions of the juvenile intensive supervision officers are consistent with the Attribution theory, which strives to discern the cause and behaviors that affect aspects which, affect the juvenile intensive supervision officers during

their decision-making process (Wan & Wyer, 2019). Farina, Holzer, DeLisi, and Vaughn (2018) conducted an experimental research study that delved into the minds of juvenile offenders examining their psychopathic characteristics, and how these traits impacted the decision-making process of the juvenile intensive supervision officer. The researchers supplied 260 officers with a sequence of eight parts, which they focused on comparing detrimental conduct with that of interpersonal, emotionally driven traits of psychopathic behavior. Also included was a mental diagnosis of some juveniles versus juveniles that did not have a psychological disorder. The juvenile intensive supervision officers' were asked to provide ratings in two primary categories in which they predicted the possibility of the juveniles participating in future violent or disruptive behavior.

The questionnaire asked if these individuals would benefit from mental health services, psychological services, or a recommendation to transfer to adult court (Farina et al., 2018). The findings revealed that the juvenile's past deviant actions contributed to the activities regarding the juvenile intensive supervision officer's ratings and recommendations, followed by strong traits of juvenile psychopathic behavior. The juvenile intensive supervision officers believed that juveniles with psychopathic traits were more prone to engage in violent behavior, likely following them into adulthood. Therefore, they felt these juveniles would have the most benefit from psychological services. However, psychopathic traits did not seem to have a bearing that led to recommendations for the juveniles transferred into the adult court system.

Phelps, Strype, Le Bellu, Lahlou, and Aandal (2016) conducted a quantitative study to determine if personality characteristics directly impacted how police officers managed conflict in various situations. The study sample included 513 college graduating students from the

Norwegian Police University. There was one-third of the students in favor, one third against and remaining were undecided. The results showed that male students significantly favored armament as opposed to female students. They further examined the officers' attitudes and behavior to see if these influences lessened the situational stimuli such as social or group norms. The personality of the officers was reviewed under the psychological paradigm to determine if they shared any similarities leading them into the field of law enforcement, or if these individuals simply shared occupational socialization under the sociological paradigm effects (Phelps et al., 2016).

Wirkus (2015) performed a statistical analysis on the ramifications of employment pressures, burnout, other fitness, and health concerns frequently related to personality traits. The researcher highlighted several liability features that affect probation officers (POs), including the job's overall stressors, displeasure with the situation and exasperation with agency mandates, and contacts that include the juveniles. In effect, POs who experienced elevated levels of burnout and depression will often respond to their job obligations will react by shutting down emotionally and adopt a punitive attitude toward the juvenile. The results revealed that, on average, a PO would usually experience burn out between two to five years of professional experience and begin to declare feeling burdened and show a lack of job fulfillment.

Race and Gender Influence

Race and gender play a pivotal role in the attribution assignment (Tukachinsky, 2020). Metcalfe and Chiricos (2018) revealed that probation officers demonstrated a consistent pattern used to describe black and white offenders differently, even though the offenses were the same. The descriptions of white offenders were more likely described regarding negative external

attributions, whereas black offenders' descriptions leaned more towards internal attributions. These findings have severe consequences during sentencing. Researchers argue that these negative connotations are exacerbated by the court system, thus resulting in harsher sentencing for black juveniles based on the negative biases. Essentially, the combination of race and gender is the framework in which attribution assignment may sway more towards the individual's traits and characteristics rather than in their personal case history.

Cavanagh and Cauffman (2017) conducted a qualitative study with probation officers and their perception of why juvenile males and females engage in criminal activities. The results revealed that the sex of the officer was an influencing factor for their depictions of male and female juvenile offenders. Officers of the same sex as the juvenile were more likely to portray the juvenile in an increasingly negative capacity. Both male and female officers had similar thoughts in which they believed opposite sex offenders displayed higher self-esteem levels. Cavanagh and Cauffman further suggested that male and female law enforcement officials typically portrayed males in a lighter sense of merely being more fun-loving and adventure-seeking. On the other hand, the female juveniles represented malicious and destructive behaviors. The stereotypical gender roles applied as the female juveniles displayed rebellious acts, but the boys exhibited traditional boy-like behavior. Overall, this complex combination of factors contributes to the influences that have a significant effect on the juvenile sex offender population. The researchers reflected how the perceptions from the service providers, the community, and the criminal court system could have a weighted influence on how these individuals are treated. Moreover, Barrett, Katsiyannis, and Moore (2015); Metcalfe and

Chiricos (2018) suggests even more significant disparities than the crime itself, through the race, gender, and stereotypical biases.

Claus, Vadal, and Harmon (2017) conducted a quantitative study on the self-reliant and collaborative accounts in which gender and race impact the POs as they make treatment-related decisions for juvenile offenders. Juvenile court referrals contained information regarding males and females divided by race from two mid-western juvenile courts. Descriptive statistics with weighted data included used with the majority sample size of White males, who had charges relating to property crimes but did not attend a final court hearing. However, young women who charged with property offenses had their cases dismissed. In contrast, African Americans' had a more significant rate of receiving court referrals and be accused of some other crime compared to White females. In effect, White females were most likely to receive a mild disposition, while African American males received the maximum distribution. Similar research performed by Claus et al. (2017) showed an influence associated with gender, race, family issues, and mental health status using a group of African Americans and white males and females via five different juvenile court systems. Several groups were used in comparison procedures to assess the hypothesis that the family setting intervenes with the relationship between gender and mental health issues. The researchers used a multivariate analysis of variance. The results showed a significant interaction for the family and notating factors such as they relate to gender, race, ethnicity, and mental health matters. Conversely, only the sample of African American juveniles benefitted from this model, suggesting a robust mediating family environment module amongst African American families only.

McCutcheon and Morrison (2015) studied how the gender of both POs and juveniles influences the allocation of new cases coupled with pre-sentencing practices. The results revealed that male POs received more criminal cases and received a majority of cases involving armed robbery, burglary, and drug offenses. The investigators also suggested male POs were more likely to record motivations such as "delinquent values and unemployment" (p. 140). By contrast, female POs received more female delinquents cases who had committed fraud and forgery and other thefts. Additionally, Liu (2016) recorded motivations like "lack of leisure facilities, financial concerns, and oppressive behavior" (p. 141). Male and female POs identified and recorded similar problems and motivations as causes for juvenile crime. Results revealed that varying concerns and motives of the POs had less the do with the officers' gender, and more so to do with the dissemination of the case to each PO.

Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officers and Parents of Juvenile Sex Offenders

While it is critical for the juvenile intensive supervision officer to develop a stable relationship with the juveniles' family, it is equally essential for them to develop trusting relationships with the juveniles. These relationships are necessary because both the parents and the juvenile intensive supervision officers play a significant role in how juveniles display behavior on probation.

According to Walker, Bishop, Pullmann, and Bauer (2015), parents must have an active role in their child's process to develop an alliance between the juvenile and the juvenile intensive supervision officer. Successful juvenile intensive supervision officer relationships may provide the catalyst for creating a positive probationary experience for the juvenile and the juvenile's parents. Such positive experiences may influence the juvenile's perceptions of probation. Support

and encouragement from parents can lead to constructive factors that encourage and motivate the juvenile to make positive changes and avoid criminal activities (Seivert, Cano, Casey, & May 2018). Simons et al. (2016) documented that juveniles who have sustained encouraging relationships with family members did better with reintegration efforts than those who did not. Fundamentally, parents can provide a source of social control through helpful guidance, nurturing, and encouragement. The positive effects of this family leadership can help to yield a successful probation experience. Seivert et al. (2018) revealed that most juveniles have relationships with their parents, and their juvenile intensive supervision officers have exposed a consistent correlation. Based on the results, it is practical to note that parent-child relationships could also impact the youth's relationship with their juvenile intensive supervision officer.

Bontrager et al. (2017) suggest that juveniles often confide and collaborate with individuals that are significant in their lives, such as their peers, which unfortunately can lead to risky negative behavior. In instances where there are strained relationships between the youth and family members, the juvenile intensive supervision officers' use of mentoring and family support helps repair and strengthen family care for the juvenile (Fine et al., 2019). Pronk et al. (2018) specified mentoring activities that interact with at least one positive individual can have a beneficial impact on the juvenile and help them stay clear of engaging in negative behaviors. The effects of the juvenile intensive supervision officers' presence in the youth's life are probably more substantial when the youth is experiencing tension with their family members. Although, there may be parents with a distinct perspective on interaction with their child and the juvenile intensive supervision officer, viewing the juvenile intensive supervision officers interactions as intrusive, and feeling that their presence is a direct interference within their family affairs. This

unfavorable view from the parents can easily lead to a contentious relationship between the parents and the juvenile intensive supervision officer, which is more apt to have a negative effect on the juvenile and the juvenile intensive supervision officers' relationship (Fine et al., 2019).

Isolation/Demographics

Many states experience hardships and variations in services needed for individuals in specific geographical locations scarce in resources (Bolin et al., 2015). By definition, rural jurisdictions usually consist of a low population and small settlements that have the potential for information regarding juveniles who have their victim's account circulated in a manner in which a JSO may experience higher levels of stigma (Ward & Merlo, 2016). Additionally, Zajac, Sheidow, and Davis (2015) examined issues that hinder newly released juveniles from reintegrating into their rural Pennsylvania communities. After interviewing several state-level correctional personnel, the researchers found that the most significant concerns confronting rural offenders were the lack of transportation, ineffective housing, low employment levels, and substandard program availability. In many small towns, the residents often exhibit high mistrust in the federal and state governments. They may perceive as not serving the best interests of the community needs (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020).

Similarly, Ward and Merlo revealed that many rural populaces are hesitant to ask for outside assistance, and often fail to report community problems or concerns, assuming that they can address them using their resources. Feld and Moriearty (2020) conducted a study comparing several juvenile legal mandates from various geographical locations around the country and the benefit urban areas opposed to rural regions and discovered that each court disposition varied by

location. Feld and Moriearty also established that several court decisions, both the urban and suburban courts were more prone to enact punitive provisions that those courts in rural areas.

However, note that this study does not suggest that supervision of sex offenders is not challenging in urban areas, but rather to recognize the differences in the community characteristics between rural sex offenders and their urban counterparts. Ceccato and Ceccato (2017) argued that many rural jurisdictions share exceptional qualities that reflect ineffectiveness in social, financial, and culturally based policies and programs for juvenile offenders, which prove more beneficial for urban-based juvenile offenders. Ward and Merlo contend that individuals living in rural areas tend to have less access to private or public services easily obtainable in urban regions. Based on the distinct geographical differences, it is necessary to structure juvenile supervision to meet the individual needs of the juvenile intensive supervision officers, and the families (Zajac et al., 2015).

Public Attitudes

The public is a sturdy unit with the power to influence legislative decisions, influence funding, and make strong political statements as it relates to community regulation and management of sex criminals. Wiersma and Hossain (2017) claimed that current literary works indicate reviews from the general public regarding sex criminals, and sex offender laws demonstrate a consensus which is mostly in favor of legal sanctions imposed on convicted sex criminals. The researchers also indicated that sex criminals, particularly those that sexual vomit violations against children, are viewed as moral degenerates, dangerous, mentally unstable, or violent. Rosselli and Jeglic (2017) showed that students, police, and prison officials who do not work in a therapeutic environment with sex criminals tend to have negative attitudes.

Sex criminals face a litany of challenges that stem from the sensitive nature of sex crimes and members of the community who possess negative feelings towards sex criminals. Rydberg, Grommon, Huebner, and Pleggenkuhle (2017) conducted a quantitative survey of roughly 400 members of Washington's urban and rural areas, which revealed some of the specific challenges that sex offenders face in this area. The study concluded that 75% of the participants were under the impression that the state's SORNA legislation created a harsh environment for individuals convicted of sex offenses and made it difficult for them to reintegrate into their communities successfully. They reportedly have difficulty finding employment, establishing housing, or functioning in social settings. Less than half of the Washington participants favored allowing convicted offenders opportunities to gain a fresh start as upright, law-abiding citizens. As such, it appears that the public has a view of SORNA as a suitable form of retribution, which affects how the juvenile intensive supervision officers conduct their decision-making process regarding youthful sex offenders.

A decade later, Connor (2020) performed subsequent research on a Washington state group resident regarding their attitudes and general beliefs about the SORNA legislation. They solicited feedback from 643 residents from metropolitan and rural provinces within the state. The results concluded that 84% (compared to 75% ten years earlier) felt that SORNA have difficulty finding employment, establishing housing, or functioning in social settings. As SORNA legislation continued to gain momentum, the Washington residents did acknowledge that SORNA regulations contributed to the detrimental implications that are potentially linked directly to the SORNA policies. Harris et al. (2017) reviewed community perceptions that have been the most arduous completion date. Their experimental method contained a sample size of

1,000 participants throughout the United States. A group of 502 randomly selected individuals assigned to the control condition revealed that 72% of them strongly or slightly concurred that sex criminals need to show their identities via the Internet.

In essence, there is a myriad of complex facets that contribute to methods used in the juvenile intensive supervision officers process in determining the level of probationary services for juvenile offenders. It is beneficial to carefully examine each of these factors when engaged in deciding for this population to ensure that the best possible options are available (Bustnay, 2019).

Areas for Future Research

Future studies would benefit from gearing the focus towards improving effective measures of juvenile intensive supervision officer disposition regarding community supervision practices, particularly in rural or isolated areas. Also, further studies are needed to advance the efforts of the effectiveness of the juvenile intensive supervision officers' role of supervision within communities of rural areas. Understanding the characteristics required to work in this field helps forecast rehabilitation outcomes for the probation professionals that work with youthful offenders. A vital component that could be beneficial in performing future research is examining the new role of socialization and prior experiences of the juvenile intensive supervision officer professionals that work individually in the rural regions of South Carolina.

Family background, educational achievement, and social status are key demographic variables that help develop motivating concerns that could impact participation in various community treatment programs. Examining the programs that are specific to the JSO is useful in implementing effective programs designed to reduce juvenile crimes, thus minimizing their risk

of reoffending. Additionally, future research could generate a cohesive, comprehensive framework that makes it easier to establish the construct validity of the causal linkage assumed in the Attribution theory (Robinson, 2017). Furthermore, the Attribution theory and other theoretical outlines should be used to provide ongoing development to enhance awareness of probation strategies. I recommend having juvenile intensive supervision officers review current literature that is relative to behavior motivation when providing specific services for juveniles.

The use of current research information would help the probation professionals identify gaps in services, which is particularly essential when working with a specific population with limited geographical resource options. Further investigations using the various research designs (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) could offer more in-depth insight into how responsive the juveniles, their families, and the juvenile intensive supervision officers are to various treatment options. Feedback from the perspective of juvenile offenders and their juvenile intensive supervision officers could provide vital information in the creation of targeted services or enhancements to existing facilities, therefore increasing the probability of successful outcomes. These actions can also provide the catalyst for lawmakers to revisit issues concerning juvenile issues, leading to possible legislative changes that encourage more positive relationships within the community.

Emphasis should be placed on several essential elements such as the use of qualified staff, increasing financial resources and offer staff development and training to enhance and improve the quality of support in rural areas of South Carolina. The overall recommendation is to expand upon this qualitative case study and follow up on the significant components identified within the research.

Summary

There is a central spot in social psychology that offers profound visions into the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perception and attribution. Heider (1958) noted that individuals have a natural method that explains the connection between behavioral and social occurrences and how they lead to the understanding of relationships, self-regulation, and the aspects of social influence. The current theme phases the structure of how individuals assess and interpret behavior related to how a person may react and function in a particular environment (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, & Duan, 2015). Chapter 2 introduced the study topic, followed by the research strategy, history of the community supervision, juvenile probation officer (JPO), and the juvenile intensive supervision officer. Included in this outline, I highlight the theoretical concept and literature related to the ideas and a summary of the theme, plus what is known and not known about the topic. Chapter 3 will describe the research methodology used to conduct the study. Chapter 4 will illustrate the specific codes, categories, and themes and present the results. In Chapter 5, the data will be interpreted, including a discussion on the limitations conducting this type of study.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

I used the qualitative case study method to examine the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions of providing services for JSOs in rural South Carolina. To gain insight into the decision-making process and various internal and external factors that may influence their juvenile intensive supervision officer's decision-making when placing JSOs in rural South Carolina (Salyers, Hood, Schwartz, Alexander, & Aalsma, 2015). My data came from multiple sources, including interviews with those juvenile intensive supervision officers who work JSOs in rural areas. The information was related to factors associated with the juvenile intensive supervision officer perception. This study is needed and very important because it will provide more knowledge of the juvenile intensive supervision officer and how internal and external factors affect their understanding of services for JSOs. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology, design, and rationale that I applied to this study. I discuss the sampling strategy, data saturation, data collection and analysis, and issues related to the trustworthiness and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

The qualitative case study design was applied to the review of juvenile services and sought answers to the questions involving the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions and decision-making process on providing JSOs' services within a rural setting. The individuals involved in the study responded face-to-face to a fixed number of questions about their years and role with the juvenile criminal justice system, sense of personal accomplishment working with juvenile sex offenders, and factors that may impact their decision-making regarding services. My rationale for utilizing the qualitative methodology is because it allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the core reason, beliefs, and motivations individuals display (Liu, 2016). The

methodology is also highly structured, maintains consistency during data collection, and uses a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Concisely, using the qualitative case study tradition allowed me to attain the best possible information for my research questions (Massaro, Dumay, & Bagnoli, 2019).

Role of the Researcher

The qualitative researcher is responsible for presenting research that displays a comprehensive commitment to deliver conclusions that are substantial for the readers (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016). The qualitative researcher develops the entire structure and design methodology used in the study. This technique is a significant part of the researcher's role in the data collection and analysis process. I found it quite rewarding to exercise my abilities in this role because it allowed me to establish my credibility in qualitative research. It was essential to me as a researcher to share candid depictions of my professional experience, perspectives, and biases to provide a comprehensive view of the study data. Flexibility is another crucial aspect that the researcher faces ensuring that the research does not stagnate. For example, the narrative can become quite unpredictable within the face-to-face dialogue, which sometimes navigates, takes the researcher's data collection, and analyzes a slightly unanticipated sequence. These instances may include the emergence of new proportions within the study, which could render some of the more favored theories indefensible.

Although I am employed by the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) as a Social Worker, my role and the participants' role were separate in terms of the programs involved and service delivery methods. My role had no supervisory responsibility connected with the participants. I am responsible for providing services for institutionalized juvenile

offenders. The focus of the juvenile intensive supervision officers is to implement effective intensive supervision approaches to assigned juvenile offenders placed in the community by the juvenile court system; create case plans; assess the juvenile risk level to ascertain appropriate level of care; and promote compliance using evidence based practices. The potential for researcher bias existed due to the vast amount of material involved in this research process. As a means to address this issue, I placed myself within the framework of the study using the reflexivity process (Palinkas et al., 2015). In later portions of this summary, I provide details discussing other strategies and techniques that I used to offer trustworthiness and stave off potential biased views and perceptions that I may have possessed. I was able to adequately reflect upon my extensive background working with youthful sex offenders in which I was already keenly familiar with the sensitivity involved with this population. The pressures and challenges encountered by the juvenile intensive supervision officers such as unpredictable conditions and stress were also common factors to me.

The topic of JSOs is a sensitive topic that often aligns with a myriad of personal opinions and perceptions. To address the potential for researcher bias, I collectively reflected upon partiality areas such as my interactions with the juvenile intensive supervision officers, my methodological attentiveness, and past research, all of which I utilized to enlighten the study (Morse, 2015). My first-hand knowledge included analytic documented written notes of my personal views and how they could influence the study. During my interviews with the participants, I engaged in a conscientious effort to ensure that my approach was respectful, attentive, and credible. I compiled their fundamental values and beliefs regarding JSOs. I reached

out to my colleagues and committee members to review my raw data to determine if my results were conceivable.

Sampling strategy

I used the criterion sampling strategy the involved selecting juvenile intensive supervision officers' that work juvenile sex offends in rural South Carolina (Fisher, Guha, Heller, & Miller, 2020). The sampling strategy also offered the benefit of utilizing an extensive range of techniques within the qualitative research methodology (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). Participants for this case study were selected based upon their roles and activities as juvenile intensive supervision officers within the South Carolina Juvenile Justice System. Who also had experience working with adjudicated juvenile sex offenders from rural areas. The sampling approach incorporated detailed case summaries that outline the issues and include cases that best exemplify decisive factors. It includes data collection conducted through restrictive sampling periods (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The juvenile intensive supervision officer represents a population of participants with a wealth of information, which allowed me to gain substantive details regarding the experiences and challenges involved in the decision-making processes. I used a time-specific parameter of four weeks to input information that included in-depth interviews from the officers.

Etikan et al. (2016) proclaim that there is no specific model to follow when conducting qualitative research and that the data's fruitfulness is the most pertinent. Etikan et al. (2016) further assert that the sample size evolves and is open to change. The researchers agree that the minimum sample size is necessary to establish funding and forecasting efforts based upon the purpose of the study. Palinkas et al. (2015) proposed that the maximum amount of individual

cases should not exceed 5 when examining a single study. He further asserts that this amount

will adequately provide sufficient data to support the research and the opportunity to perform

cross-case analysis.

Based on the recommendations made by these researchers, I settled on using a sample

size consisting of four cases. This number of cases allowed me to perform a vivid,

comprehensive study highlighting patterns and allowed cross-case analysis (Massaro et al.,

2019). The criterion included juvenile intensive supervision officers who work individually with

a caseload of juvenile sex offenders. Additionally, the officers needed to be willing to participate

in a one-hour tape-recorded interview and display a genuine interest in examining opportunities

that will close the gap in services within the rural areas they serve.

Recruitment

Recruitment efforts included an email notification sent to the Regional Managers of the

Department of Juvenile Justice that work in rural areas. The information determines if the

juvenile intensive supervision officers' approval is to participate in the Department of Juvenile

Justice regional offices' research study. Each of the regional managers received a descriptive

narrative depicting the research contained in the consent form provided by the Institutional

Review Board. I included an email attachment notification providing contact information

regarding the researcher. If the Regional Manager grants permission to conduct the research,

they received instructions to forward the link and summary to the juvenile intensive supervision

officer for their review and consent to participate in the study. In the form of a signed Letter of

Cooperation, I received formal approval from the appointed designee in the Office of the

Management and Research Statistic Strategic Operations to conduct the research study while

using juvenile intensive supervision officers recruited from within the agency. Subsequently, upon receiving approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (# 04-25-19-0368705), I began the data collection process.

Data Collection

I gathered using a semistructured face-to-face interview method, an open-ended questionnaire, and an interview schedule to help explore juvenile probation officers' perceptions. This method helped to expose detailed descriptive information on the personal experiences of the juvenile intensive supervision officer. I provided informed consent forms to each participant, along with a few sample questions used in the study. To help me mitigate some of the threats to validity and sample size, I used saturation to ensure that there was no new information related to my research questions. The data was determined to adequate given there was ample information to effectively repeat the study (Clarke & Braun, in press).

Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size of the quantitative analyses. Although the participants for my study consist of a small number of participants, I realize that to achieve saturation; my sample sizes had to be large enough to obtain feedback for most if not all participants (Wang, Zhang, & Ahn, 2020). Thus, I interviewed individuals who would otherwise not meet the study criteria to achieve research data saturation. The concept of saturation is essential because failure to obtain data saturation will have an undesirable impact on my research quality and hamper the content validity (Nelson, 2016). I used a recording device to help transcribe verbatim what each juvenile intensive supervision officer said, which provided a permanent record of the actual recording.

Data Analysis Plan

Interviews were conducted at the Department of Juvenile Justice in a secured conference room where each participant was employed across the state. I used a case study approach to aid in exploring the juvenile intensive supervision officer's perceptions and decision-making processes influenced their behavior when placing juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina. Before contributing, the participants were provided information on the study's objective and informed on the possible consequences of the study. During the interview process, a recording device was used, and the recordings transcribed into typed notes. I also used member checking procedures by restating the participant's responses back to them to confirm the accuracy of the data gathered. I used the inductive method to examine the interviewees' transcripts and questionnaire notes to pinpoint patterns and themes introduced during data collection (Vindrola-Padros, & Johnson, 2020).

Furthermore, I used the comparative method to review transcribed interviews and questionnaire notes line-by-line and analyze sentences and paragraph segments to determine appropriate codes revealed by the data (Lester, Cho, & Lochmiller, 2020). The interview data had the most significant weight in the analysis. In summary, data were reduced and analyzed using thematic codes and concepts in a two-level process. Themes gradually emerged due to becoming intimate with the data, making logical associations with the interview questions, and considering what was learned during the initial literature review. These emerging themes and patterns with the substantive attribution theory became the significant findings of my study.

Issues of Trustworthiness

My research study used the qualitative inquiry paradigm, along with my interview questions geared toward the juvenile intensive supervision officer's perceptions and attributes that affect their decision when acquiring needed community services. To ensure reliability in qualitative research, the examination of trustworthiness is vital (Leung, 2015). Conceptualized as rigor and quality in the qualitative paradigm, reliability, and validity can be achieved by eliminating bias. To help increase my proposition's truthfulness, I used a combination of strategies such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Moon et al., 2016).

Credibility

Creditability is one of the most critical aspects of demonstrating the research discoveries' trustworthiness and authenticity (Moon et al., 2016). The researchers described various approaches that will increase the credibility of the research conclusions. I used numerous peer-reviewed documents to assist with my data's authenticity and limit the number of predisposed beliefs. I also incorporated a reflective approach to analyzing my personal biases, opinions, and experiences related to my study. I examined various literature reviews to frame my research and discoveries.

Transferability

In a general sense, transferability relates to a broader range involving the study (Schloemer & Schröder-Bäck, 2018). My research included many aspects of the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions and decision-making that can easily transfer to organizational subgroups to accomplish transferability. Replacing the word for juvenile intensive

supervision officer for any organization and my approach can be transferred to the study of other organizational cultures. Strategies for creating transferability include continuous observation, peer review, bracketing, member checking, and the use of current technology are also applicable for studies of other organizational cultures (Haskins, Hermann-Turner, Pignato, Moses & Olds, 2020). Using a digital recorder each interview was recorded and transcribed exact to produce accurate information for synthesis. My goal is to provide a means to duplicate my research for comparison purposes utilizing the reader's particular environment.

Dependability

Dependability is crucial when conducting research, especially because most research involves mixed-method approaches and data gathering and analysis techniques (Hedge, Powell, & Sumner, 2018). Based on these aspects, consistency in research is a heavily weighted factor to the research study's dependability. Exhaustive, in-depth studies allow an opportunity for other researchers to reproduce data with similar conclusions. My research goal is to enrich my study's dependability, focusing on producing a level of understandable and worthwhile data for the reader. I provided descriptive data that outlines the research design methods and my thoughts regarding my study's value within the juvenile justice system.

Confirmability

Confirmability in research is the acknowledgment and accuracy of the study's results reflected by the participants (Renz et al. 2018). The most accepted strategies of confirmability for research included reflexivity. Probst (2015) suggested reflexivity is commonly recognized as awareness of the impact the researcher has on the participants in the study, while at the same time acknowledging how the research event is influencing the researcher.

To nullify bias that might occur in this study due to my experience as a mental health practitioner counseling youth with problem sexual behaviors, I used bracketing as a preventive measure while remaining impartial (Renz, Carrington, & Badger, 2018). McWhorter (2019) discussed bracketing involves the investigator to set aside subjective ideas about the event under investigation so as not to influence the participants' decision-making processes. In conclusion, I sought trustworthiness to ensure an in-depth analysis of the participants' interviews that validated the truthfulness from participants' experience of the event.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues can be a source of vulnerability within a comprehensive research study. To ensure that I addressed any critical ethical concerns, I first sought approval from the Intuitional Review Board (IRB) before collecting any data. One of the first fundamental aspects of my data collection was obtaining the necessary consent for individuals to participate in my study actively. Confidentiality is vital when conducting research studies by ensuring that the participant's rights are adequately protected. In this research, the study's descriptive context provided a verbal and written format to the juvenile intensive supervision officers' that provide services to juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina. The participants will also receive a written description of the study. Additional information for the participants will include the risks and benefits of the study confidentiality and the reassurance that participants can withdraw from the study without consequence during the process. As an added measure, I did not request any data that could reveal the participant's identity. Completion of the questionnaire by the participants served as their consent for participation in the research study.

Summary

Chapter 3 described the research methodology and research design I plan to use to conduct my study, including components of credibility and ethical concerns. I feel that there was a need to develop this research to bring about awareness regarding the gap in services for juvenile sex offenders living in rural South Carolina. It will help to dissect the internal and external issues that affect the juvenile intensive supervision officer's perceptions that can directly influence service delivery. Chapter 4 will describe the specific codes, categories, and themes and present the results, and in Chapter 5, the data will be interpreted, including limitations, recommendations, implications, and conclusions to this study.

Chapter 4: Results

This qualitative case study explored the perceptions of juvenile intensive supervision officers regarding the lack of services for JSOs living in rural South Carolina. I also sought insight into the various internal and external factors that may influence decision-making when placing juvenile sex offenders. Experienced juvenile intensive supervision officers participated in a comprehensive interview session that provided the information used in the data analysis process. Chapter 4 highlights the specific details of the data collection and management process. Using the two research questions developed for this study, I was able to perform data analysis.

Research Question 1: How do juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with juvenile sex offenders describe their perception regarding the lack of effective treatment services for juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina?

Research Question 2: What are some of the contributing factors that shape the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions and decision-making when providing services for juvenile sex offenders?

The responses to interview questions revealed a pattern of emerging themes. Chapter 4 explores the depth of these themes and how they align with the research questions. I provided explanations to describe the measures taken to ensure the quality of the data. I used precise responses from the participants to exemplify the various themes that emerged during data collection. The findings in this chapter are the results of the analysis of the following components: setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of data, and data results. I also provided a summary at the end of Chapter 4, which outlines the findings and demonstrates the evidence of quality.

Setting of the Study

After receiving IRB approval (Approval Number 04-25-19-0368705), I began recruitment for the study. The participants interviewed for this study were from various counties from around the state. I interviewed two of the participants in their perspective county offices located in the main conference room. One participant interviewed in a counseling office within their county department. Another participant interview took place in isolated conference room located at the Department of Juvenile Justice state office. I conducted each meeting in a safe area for privacy, which also helped to minimize outside distractions. I met with each participant different days of the week, and the duration of the interviews lasted approximately 50-60 to minutes. The full list of interview questions is in Appendix A.

Demographics

A total of four juvenile intensive supervision officers from rural areas in South Carolina participated in this study. Equally represented, the participants consisted of two males and two females, one African American male, one White male, and two African American females with ages ranging between 34 and 64. The range of the work experience among the participants was varied, although each participant possessed a minimum of 3 years of experience. The educational background described by the participants were primarily either in criminal justice or some form of human services (Table 1).

Table 1

Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic	Number
Gender	
Female	2
Male	2
Position	
Probation officer III	1
Intensive supervision officer I	2
Intensive supervision officer II	1
Education Level	
Bachelor's degree in criminal justice	1
Bachelor's degree in human services	1
Master's degree in criminal justice	1
Master's degree in family counseling	1
Work Experience	
Participant 1	7 years
Participant 2	3 years
Participant 3	11 years
Participant 4	6 years

Data Collection

Pilot studies performed before an investigation is a beneficial tool for the researcher in determining the substance of the data, as well as various fine-tuning features of the research process such as assembling the interview questions, clarifying the theory, and production of the data collection and analysis (In, 2017). Given that my study used a small number of participants, I decided to forego conducting a pilot study. However, I did seek progressive level professionals' counsel to conduct a review of my interview questions to determine if there were any notable biases entrenched within the items.

Upon being told the way I initially posed; the research questions appeared that I was leading the questions rather than objectively presenting them. Furthermore, I took caution of having my inquiries to appear to influence any personal interactions I may have encountered while working with this juvenile population. All questions needed to reflect precisely to the experiences of the actual participants. I revised my initial questions based on the professional recommendation presented to me, thus alleviating perceived biases.

Data was collected using a semistructured face-to-face interview process with four juvenile intensive supervision officers. I used open-ended questions that allowed each participant to provide more detailed information. Each participant received an informed consent agreement, along with a sample of the interview questions used in the study. To help me mitigate some of the threats to validity and sample size, I used the concept of saturation to ensure that there was no new information related to my research questions. I determined the data was adequate, given ample information to effectively repeat the study (Clarke & Braun, in press). Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Although my research consisted of a small number of participants, I was cognizant that my sample size needed to be large enough to obtain feedback from nearly all participants to achieve saturation (Wang, Zhang, & Ahn, 2020).

The concept of saturation is essential because it offers a relatively easy-to-use method of assessing and reporting it during or after an inductive thematic analysis. I used this process because it shows how much information (i.e., the number of interviews) is needed until there is no new information found (Nelson, 2016). The juvenile intensive supervision officers'

responses were recorded with a portable recording device to ensure accuracy and to have a permanent transcript of their account.

The participants were allowed to withdraw their participation at any point during their interview process. Each interview took place at the participant's respective Department of Juvenile Justice's main social work conference room in a secured building. The participant's interviews lasted approximately 50-60 minutes in length. I structured the interview questions (Appendix A) in an open-ended format, which allowed us to have a more conversational style interview. The participants were allowed to add additional information they felt was relevant to juvenile sex offender services. A digital recorder was used and was visible to the participants throughout the interview process. As an added measure of accuracy, I took detailed handwritten notes in a malfunction with my recording device. Following the initial interview, member checking was used with each participant to enhance their responses' accuracy.

Data Analysis

During the analysis phase of this study, I used the thematic analysis model (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016) to understand the data collected from the juvenile intensive supervision officers working with juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina. Thematic Analysis was used to simplify mutual data that defines shared practices and interpretations (Clarke & Braun, 2018). It also delves deeper into how qualitative data is systematically analyzed and related to a broader theoretical and conceptual notion.

The thematical analytical process requires the researcher to read the data multiple times to which common concepts and ideas were coded accordingly within the data (Rubin, 2019). At this point, I categorized each code through indistinguishable collections that resulted in a

relevant theme. According to Rubin specified that a theme derives from the thematic analysis

through words or phrases that depict pertinent information within the data related to the research

question. Themes can be abstract or descriptive but should capture the essence of the concept

provided by the participants as they expound on their experiences (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). I

reread the data and made notations outlining the essential themes and determined how they align

with each lesson. Any new ideas that emerged, I united them within the data.

In the broader sense of examining the research data, I reviewed each theme to see if there

was any correlation to previous studies (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe, & Young, 2018). During the

data review, I was able to identify the essence and diversity of the information, and each idea

was then linked together to provide an expressive overview of the topic (Vasileiou et al., 2019).

I developed a meaningful rendering of the emergent concepts and themes that emerged

during the interviews conducted with the participants. I utilized Microsoft's Office 2010 Pro

Word Cloud program to develop a source to illustrate and affirm the relationships and show their

relevance to the various themes emphasized within the study (see Chang, Kuo, & Ramachandran,

2016). In utilizing this program, I developed a concept that captured a collection of words and

the associated themes. Figure 1 is a visual representation showing the key topics that emerged

from the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officers' interviews. Color coding demonstrates the

relatedness between issues. The terms and themes are color-coded, explaining the ideas through

the use of color (see Figure 1). I produced this visualization as a tool that helped to highlight my

most prevalent concepts. It is important to note that this program was developed in the absence

of a specific context and does not include the origin or definitions pertaining to my study.

However, the process of creating this figure took on an analytical approach, which helped to

engage my thought process on a more systematic basis. I felt this was a useful tool that was able to showcase a level of imaginative creativity.

Figure 1. Word cloud of concepts and relationships.

The inductive approach was used to analyze the participants' transcripts and questionnaire notes to identify patterns and themes introduced during data collection. I used the NVivo 12 qualitative analysis module to sort, organize, and code the information. All of the participant responses to the interview questions were coded and stored using the NVivo module into a container known as a 'node.' The node served as the compilation of references concerning the emergent themes resulting from the coding.

I used the comparative method to review transcribed interviews and questionnaire notes line-by-line to ascertain suitable codes uncovered by the data. Each code was compared to all other codes to identify likes, differences, and general patterns (Russo, Confente, Gligor &

Cobelli, 2019: Weed, 2017). Using this method produced a total of 10 nodes, which I revised after a brief period of reflection involving memory and additional reviewing of the written and audio transcriptions for any missed information (Table 2).

Table 2

Nodes
1) Community isolation
2) Experience
3) Age and gender
4) Juvenile intensive supervision officer duties
5) Caseload
6) Personal attitude toward juvenile sex offenders
7) Family involvement with treatment
8) Racial factors
9) Attitude toward Sex Offenders
10) Lack of funding for additional programs for juvenile sex offenders

The thematic analysis model (Clarke & Braun, 2018) was also used to gain an understanding and knowledge of the data collected from the juvenile intensive supervision officer. I used a line-by-line analysis of each paragraph segments to determine appropriate codes revealed by the data (Weed, 2017). Each code was compared to all other codes to identify likes, differences, and general patterns. Initial coding consisted of identifying different terms and descriptions used by the participants. As noted above, I read and re-read the transcription to

helps create essential themes and assumptions about the data overall. The second step consisted

of interpreting the themes into manageable information (Renz et al. 2018). Also, I used some

memory techniques to record the participants' thoughts while organizing the data (Renz et al.,

2018). Table 3 shows the thematic analysis linking the research questions to each theme, but also

demonstrates how many occurrences theme appeared throughout the data.

Table 3

Thematic Analysis

Research Questions	Codes/Themes	# of Occurrences
R1: What is your perception of the lack of effective treatment services for juvenile sex offenders in rural SC?	CI: Community Isolation	4
	OD: Juvenile intensive supervision officer duties	4
	AG: Age, Gender	3
	WE: Work Experience	4
	CL: Caseload	4
	FI: Family Involvement	4
	RF: Racial Factors	3
R2: What are the contributing factors that shape the perceptions and the decision-making ISO's when providing effective services?	ASO: Attitude toward Sex Offenders	4
	LF: Lack of funding for additional programs for juvenile sex offenders	4

Thematic Survey

Analyzing the text from interview transcripts several steps were followed that included:

(a) become familiar the text by reading and re-reading and generating codes, (b) discover themes

through repetition, similarities and differences, (c) build hierarchies of themes by defining and

naming each item, (d) apply themes to text, and (e) link themes to the theoretical framework in the study (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2016). Each theme's total occurrences were plotted with the use of post-it notes and placed into categories for ease of presentation. For example, two coded themes that repeatedly emerged: AG: Age, Gender, and RF: Racial Factors were found through the deductive approach, whereby the themes in the data were identified from the top down (Aljaroodi, Chiong, & Adam, 2020).

The remaining themes that emerged from the data characterized the inductive approach to the thematic analysis described themes from the bottom up (Adjaroodi et al., 2020). According to Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017), the inductive approach aims to permit research findings to occur from significant themes. Several vital themes become apparent within the data form the interviews. The most commonly cited themes dealt with perception and decision making. They were themes such as community isolation, lack of available services, caseload and family involvement, and the lack of funding for programming. Each theme identified throughout both inductive and deductive data analysis is common in case studies (Nowell et al., 2017).

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I endeavored to inspire confidence in my research study and derive outcomes that were ethical and trustworthy. To ensure the study's trustworthiness, I used the constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Rose & Johnson, 2020; Moon et al., 2016).

Credibility

I used numerous peer-reviewed documents to assist me with my data's authentication and limit the number of predisposed beliefs. I incorporated a reflective approach to examine my personal biases, opinions, and experiences related to my study. In effect, the questions used for

the interviews (Appendix A) helped me to gain an understanding of the services offered to

juvenile sex offenders living in rural areas. There were no known personal or organizational

circumstances identified by the participants that influenced their responses to their experiences. I

used the Attribution theory as my theoretical framework, which helped me examine the

perceptions of juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with JSOs in rural South

Carolina and factors related to their decision-making process (Braidotti, 2019). I used the

concept and the foundation to help me develop the research questions used throughout the

interview process. I also incorporated a reflective approach to analyze my personal biases and

opinions so that it would not impede my study's overall credibility.

Transferability

Transferability is achieved when the research finding can be replicated in other research

studies (Rose & Johnson, 2020). The inquiries on the juvenile intensive supervision officers'

perceptions and decision-making can be transferred to different organizational cultures. The

juvenile probation model is essentially an organization based on most criminal justice

organization protocols. Technology is also appropriate for studies of other corporate cultures due

to improved technology such as the use of a digital recorder. Each interview was recorded and

transcribed verbatim to produce accurate data for synthesis. Using my research strategy and

procedures can be transferred and used in parallel organizational research.

Dependability

Ensuring dependability within this case study, I demonstrated the data collection, data

analysis, and the report results in detail, consistently providing ease of replication. I used several

simple methods to augment the dependability of my study. I took written notes and used a voice

recorder to maximize the accuracy of the participant's responses. During my research on this topic, I found that there was not a vast amount of information about the juvenile intensive supervision officer perceptions and decision-making process to provide quality services for JSOs in rural South Carolina. I feel that my in-depth research into the juvenile intensive supervision officer perceptions of rural service delivery for juvenile sex offenders will be invaluable for other researchers who may have similar research interests. This study reveals a lack of relevant research information, explicitly addressing perceptions and decision-making processes among juvenile intensive supervision officers working in rural areas of South Carolina.

Confirmability

I was mindful of ensuring that I remained unbiased so that the data's integrity remained uncompromised through preconceived thoughts or personal viewpoints. I reached confirmability in my study by processing the participants' data, as opposed to the researcher (Rose & Johnson, 2020). During my research, I was mindful of maintaining objectivity throughout the full process. Independent use of the data analyzed revealed no indication of partial viewpoints.

Study Results

The participants were asked approximately 24 interview questions in a semistructured interview format (Appendix A). As the participants shared their experiences, I present them with additional questions to clarify my understanding of the individual's skills. Each participant explained their experiences working with juvenile sex offenders and some of the challenges they face. During the interview, the questions used extrapolated information regarding the participant's perceptions and decision-making regarding the lack of treatment options for juvenile sex offenders in rural areas. The information disclosed consistency in themes and patterns among

the four juvenile intensive supervision officers who participated. In the ensuing paragraphs, I discussed an emergent theme concerning the two research questions and provided data to support the findings.

Research Question 1

What is your perception of the lack of effective treatment services for juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina?

Theme 1: Community Isolation Challenges on the Delivery of Services

Interview question: *What are some of the challenges of living and working in rural South Carolina that may influence your behavior and ability to perform professionally?*

Participant1 stated:

> Working in a rural community, especially with juvenile sex offenders, has probably been some of the most challenging cases. I have learned that the higher the isolation, the greater the vulnerability, and lack of services. Moreover, people living in our small communities are not very trusting of others and are slow to accept new ideas. Most of the individuals residing in the local area know each other very well and, in many instances, are related to each other through family ties. I feel that real resources are lacking for families and juveniles throughout the state, which hinds a lack of funding. The lack of resources makes it more difficult for me to achieve community support for programming for juvenile delinquents and even more complicated if it is an adjudicated juvenile.

> Research conducted by Huber et al. (2016) revealed a limited amount of resources

available within isolated communities. The community members received questions asking them to describe their role within their communities with their assistance in delivering services. The

researcher discovered many of the study participants suggested support for needed JSO services was being passed along to the communities by local and state governments. While not providing those communities with the necessary resources to facilitate problem-solving solutions. Many of the community members felt as though they were being overwhelmed with having too much-added responsibilities added all at once.

Participant 2 indicated:

> There are unique challenges that are associated with living and working in rural areas of South Carolina. It has been historically challenging to hire quality experienced staff members to work in rural, isolated regions plagued with limited resources. The juvenile intensive supervision officers who are not from the surrounding areas displayed difficulty adjusting to their new surroundings and work environment. Typically, this means they no longer have the support of their families and friends. By not being familiar with the area also becomes a hiring issue resulting in frequent staff turnover. The lack of infrastructure in rural areas can be quite devastating for the more isolated regions with scarce populations.

Participant 3 stated:

> One of the overriding issues of working in a small community is the distance between one community and another and from the Department of Juvenile Justice's main campus. The small number of juvenile offenders involved with the juvenile system can create high costs per client to provide youth services and even more difficult for the stakeholders to justify operating expenses. Do to the isolated environment, distance, and the lack of adequate services readily available places a lot of strain on a juvenile being successful.

Participant 4 stated:

> To be honest, I have never advocated for services in my workplace, simply because
>
> juvenile sexual crimes are few and far. Many of the services, especially sex-specific, are
>
> located near larger cities. Many of these small rural communities are unaware of how the
>
> juvenile justice system works and does not always accept juvenile offenders' programs in
>
> their areas. The lack of knowledge of the juvenile justice system makes it even harder to
>
> provide needed and often mandated services. Over the years, I have learned how to work
>
> with minimum resources, especially after living and working where resources are scares.
>
> To meet one of my primary job functions, I often transport many of my clients and their
>
> family members to different appointments or meetings, especially if they aren't able to
>
> provide transportation.

Individually participants agreed that living and working in rural South Carolina creates hardship on their performance to provide needed services for JSOs. However, participant 2 noted that not having the availability of appropriate juvenile services within the community negatively affects the town. Participant 1 and participant 4 agreed that people living in rural areas of South Carolina, frequently unit together on various causes. Still, most are mistrusting if you are considered an 'outsider.' participant 3 also stated, "the distance between facilities that offer a minimum of JSO services often generates an additional cost that can place further on the juvenile and their family." The participants shared some new dynamics about the thoughts and perceptions of rural, small-town residents. These community members do not understand the scope of treatment and therefore tend to shun these individuals. Obtaining support from

community members is especially daunting in these small areas where everyone is familiar. This community isolation has a negative impact on an already sensitive and complex subject matter.

Theme 2: Personal Experience for Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officer Requires Education and Work Experience

Interview question: *What are the requirements to become a juvenile intensive supervision officer? How long have you been in your current role?*

Participant 1 stated:

I have a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and seven years of work experience as a probation/supervision officer. One of the biggest concerns that I have is there are not enough qualified probation officers or juvenile counselors within the juvenile justice system that work in rural areas. The job can be extremely frustrating, especially during juvenile arrests for a violation; they often cannot help. There is a lot of paperwork required for each juvenile on my caseload. If the juvenile is in the community, I have to conduct home, school, and employment visits twice a month. Although the agency provides some resources, many referrals for services are generated by me, which requires experience in multiple areas, frequently associated with a person with employment tenure. Other factors I feel that inhibit the variations in quality responsiveness to our community problems is the lack of quality measures in the hiring and training of new probation officers. Hiring quality employees is an area that needs immediate attention because these diminish the quality of service delivery.

Participant 2 noted:

I serve as a primary care manager for juveniles assigned to my level of supervision. My position as a probation officer III mirrors that of the intensive supervision officer, which requires that I meet with the juvenile at any given time, whether in the evening, early morning, and weekend hours, while maintaining detailed file notes. I have a bachelor's degree in human services and have worked with this population for over three years. When I initially meet with a family, I like to build rapport with the juvenile and family to promote a collaborative effort between myself, the juvenile, and family members.

Participant 3 stated:

I serve as the primary care manager for juveniles assigned from probation to intensive supervision. I have a master's degree in criminal justice and eleven years of services with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). I feel that it is imperative to have the appropriate education and a significant level of experience to be successful in this field. For example, as part of my job duties, I am required to meet with various treatment facility managers related to the juveniles I serve at least once a month regardless of the location throughout the state. Meeting face-to-face with each juvenile allows me to know what is going on in their communities, but then I also work closely with the juveniles' families.

Participant 4 stated:

I maintain various juvenile case files. Commonly I use the organizations Juvenile Justice Management System (JJMS) database that allow me to keep updates and all interaction with the juvenile and family according to the agency policy and procedures. I possess a master's degree in family counseling and a bachelor's in criminal justice and worked with

the agency for six years. As an intensive supervision officer, I conduct pre-release assessments for appropriate services, living arrangements, and formulates plans for client's reintegration to the community setting. Although I have not worked with this population long, it does require a lot more work to find a suitable placement.

The experience was central for each participant in this study as a primary factor contributing to the juvenile intensive supervision officer perceptions and the types of services needed for juveniles adjudicated in their district. Each of the participants is professionals who have been educated in theoretical knowledge and have a general skill set in criminal justice. Hanson, Harris, Letourneau, Helmus, and Thornton (2017) indicated that human service workers who work with adolescent sexual offenders should have the proper education, knowledge, and instruction for effective counseling and treatment.

Theme 3: Family Involvement and Challenges Associated with Compliance

Interview question: *What is your perception about the family member's support and compliance with mandates?*

Participant 1 pointed out:

I have experienced that perceptions play a significant role because the families that I serve do not want the stigma of the crime from juvenile attached to them. These families tend to demonstrate more attention to a façade than to the needs of the juvenile. There are strained communications due to gaps in understanding juvenile sex offenders; therefore, my views of family support are less than enthusiastic.

Participant 2 explained:

One challenge that I face is poor communication or when the families fail to adhere to the court-ordered directive. Many of the families lack an understanding and do not seek guidance in bridging this communication gap. Often, family involvement will determine the outcome of a juvenile court case. Their role is vital in the success of the juvenile's treatment, which seems to be an ongoing issue due to the lack of community.

Participant 3 stated:

When there is little to no family involvement makes my job more frustrating and challenging. Through my experience, I am aware of how vital family involvement is with the treatment needs of the JSO. There seems to be an avoidance because of the type of offense involved, and families are reluctant to talk about these issues for fear of shame or embarrassment.

Participant 4 indicated:

One of the many challenges that I sometimes face is having to enforce sanctions when juveniles and their families fail to comply with the law. As previously mentioned, transportation is a real issue in our rural areas because there is no mass transit system. Living so far from an urban city limit can be costly for many families, especially those with limited or no transportation.

All of the juvenile intensive supervision officers interviewed agreed about the need for improved communication skills with the families. Better communication is needed as well with the juvenile to help create a more successful outcome. Each participant expressed a definite need for active family involvement and consistent communication during the treatment process. In their experiences, they notated that reduced family involvement contributed and potentially

compromised the juvenile's treatment's success. Whereas, the participants revealed they viewed positive effects from active family when they are involved. They also noted that when a juvenile shows a desire to succeed and reintegrate with his family and the community, it is successful.

Research Question 2

What are some of the contributing factors that shape juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions and decision-making when providing services for juvenile sex offenders? During the interviews, the participants elaborated on their experiences, which revealed the emergence of my study's fourth and fifth themes.

Theme 4: Attitude Toward Sex Offenders

Interview question: *What are your perceptions and attitude toward juvenile sex offenders, and does race play a factor?*

Participant 1 stated:

I have never been caring for anyone who intentionally violates others' rights, especially those that involve inappropriate sexual behaviors. Working in a small community, you have to know the layout, the culture, and how people think about crime in their area. By understanding this fundamental community attitude, it reminds me that my opinion needs always to be unbiased. My role as a juvenile intensive supervision officer, I am always mindful of my personal biases, and how they can interfere with my better judgment when providing services for JSOs. Still, I must admit it can be very hard working with juveniles charged with sex crimes living in rural South Carolina, especially when there are little to no resources. Listen, I am willing to do whatever is necessary to help my client succeed with their treatment needs. You asked the question if race played a factor with the

juveniles to whom I provide service. No, given there are very few families from different ethnic backgrounds living in the surrounding area where I work. It has been my experience that African American youth are arrested and incarcerated more frequently; however, the white juveniles have been identified with committing more inappropriate sexual acts. Still, the number of juvenile crimes registered through my office shows a slight disadvantage of juveniles of color.

Participant 2 stated:

After working in the field for a little more than three years, I have learned that the stereotypical images in my head can affect my perceptions and attitudes about sex offenders. I have also learned that if I am going to give my all to this profession, I cannot allow my biases to directly or indirectly affect my efforts when I am providing services for my juveniles. In fact, working with this population, I have become more understanding of how the community views sex offenders and how robust their biases are toward this population. It has not always been easy for me to be unbiases because the attitudes and behaviors of the community can influence aspects of the decision-making process. The community has a considerable influence on its residents' temperament, I have noticed a great divide regarding how African American juveniles opposed to white juveniles are treated. However, when it comes to juveniles who are adjudicated for sex crimes, they seem to be treated similarly for the most part. I don't think that race is a significant factor that comes to these types of crimes committed within the community.

Participant 3 indicated:

> Coming from a small area, the community is generally very involved in the rehabilitative process of the youth within the community. However, I have noticed that the community support for sex offenders is different in terms of their comfort level. It seems that moral standards are more stringent, which reduces their level of support for these individuals. As a professional, I have to view the offender's crime based on the criminal justice system standards rather than the community's moral views. Race plays somewhat of a factor because the majority of the juveniles that I serve are non-minority offenders. However, the stigma of this crime even less supportive base on the type of offense in conjunction with the race of the child.

Participant 4 stated:

> I think every juvenile deserves a chance to redeemed themselves with a little help from families and communities to include those who commit sex offenses. I do have my biases, and my moral compass does not move very much; however, I know that I have a job to do and must fulfill those obligations for DJJ. Given I am a resident of the local area, the news of these types of offenses travel fast, as well as the stigma attached to sex offenders. The general expectation is that most African American juvenile are expected to be sexual deviants and with this attitude it places these youth in an almost hopeless situation to receive the services they need. Unfortunately, the juveniles are aware of these stigmas as well, and if they and the community have given up it is much harder for me to do my job.

Theme #5 Public Support for JSOs Treatment Services

Interview question: *What are your experiences regarding public support for juvenile sex offender's treatment services?*

Participant 1 stated:

Sex crimes are not common in the region of the state where I work. However, it has been my experience after working with other youth programs outside of DJJ, applications in the private sector struggle, and funding support. While simultaneously, budgets are being cut or funds are diverted to areas with a higher priority of need. As we all know, funding is the backbone of every juvenile program, whether publicly or privately owned. Increasingly, I think that the general attitudes regarding appropriate measures needed for juvenile sex offenders in our rural communities have produced little to no consistency. Despite some of the considerable changes, DJJ has made real public support is lacking.

Participant 2 specified:

Not many sexual crimes happen in my jurisdiction, and this is a topic that most people don't talk about in this area. Consequently, people do not generally get involved, and I think that support for any sex offender services will probably not be welcomed. The same stigmas that people have about adult programs carry over to the juvenile. Thus, people are not inclined to want to help these individuals because it is such a sensitive topic dealing with such intimate issues. Issues concerning sex offenses make my job harder because this limits my access to possible resources that my clients might be more willing to trust.

Participant 3 stated

Although my office is located in a tiny township, obtaining community support has

repeatedly proven positive, especially when there is an issue affecting the whole

community. However, juvenile sex offenses happen somewhere else and are given little

attention in this area. We are a rural area and I do not face many challenges with this

particular group. However, my experience in general with juvenile offenders has been

supportive because each community works together through the local churches and other

civic organizations to keep the young people on a productive path.

Participant 4 stated:

To be honest, I have never advocated for services in my workplace, simply because

juvenile sexual crimes are few and far, and many of the services, especially sex-specific,

are located near larger cities. I often use various transportation services to take the client

to multiple appointments if transportation cannot be provided otherwise. I know that our

youth services are faced with several issues, and several influential power struggles

contribute to the lack of community members' willingness to embrace the concepts and

delivery of youth service options. The primary factors stem from local governments, the

lack of funding, and the general infrastructures or the lack thereof. Nonetheless, more

attention should be given to the lack of services in rural communities, and the obstacle

probation officers are faced with as a result.

Summary

Chapter 4 provides a systematic guideline describing the data collection and analyzation

process. I conducted an in-depth examination of the participants' perceptions, knowledge, and

direct experiences. I presented the data analysis and coding using the NVivo 12 qualitative

analysis module. Additionally, I used the Thematic analysis approach as a systematic process

used to identify data similarities and transfer this information into specific categories (Etikan et

al., 2016; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). I also recognized the emergence of four themes and provided

descriptions that aided in understanding the participant's interviews' results. The identified

themes emerged identified as *(a) the personal experience for juvenile intensive supervision*

officers that require education and work experience; (b) family involvement and challenges

associated with compliance; (c) public support for JSOs' treatment services, and (d) community

isolation that places a hardship on the delivery of services. In the initial phase of the research

study, each theme directly relates to the research questions. In Chapter 4, I included a review of

the strategies used to enhance the study's trustworthiness. Also included in the chapter is the use

of creditability, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To ensure creditability, I

sought literature that reflected peer-reviewed content. Transferability emerged as I summarized

my findings, making it available for use in other research settings. I utilized methods of

dependability through maintaining consistency in my research. Finally, I used conformability

methods that captured and analyzed my data in a non-biased manner.

Chapter 5 will be reflective and will provide an in-depth summarization of my research

study. I conducted a review of the purpose and nature of the research and presented its key

findings. I showed the study's relevance as it relates to the literature review. I also include a

discussion about the study's limitations, recommendations for future research studies, and the

desired impact for social change.

Chapter 5: Findings

This study aimed to examine the perceptions of juvenile intensive supervision officers concerning the lack of treatment options for JSOs and the contributing factors that influence their decision-making when securing services for these youthful offenders. In the rural areas of South Carolina, the availability of effective treatment services for JSOs is mostly nonexistent. The lack of services for this population is due to local, and challenges associated with legislated polices and family and community support (Mulder, Brand, Bullens, & van Marle, 2019). Based on these challenges, it suggests that the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions about the lack of services in rural areas can adversely contribute to their decision making when procuring services for JSOs (Landström et al., 2016).

The study involved four participants from different rural areas within the state of South Carolina. I interviewed the participants using a semistructured face-to-face interview process, which allowed them to provide more detailed information. The participants were allowed to withdraw their participation at any point during their interview process. Each interview took place at the participant's respective DJJ county office conference room in a secured building, with each interview lasting approximately 50-60 minutes. Both males and females displayed were equal representation, consisting of one African American male, one White male, and two African American females with ages ranging between 34 and 64. The range of the work experience among the participants was varied, although they possessed a minimum of three years of experience. The educational background described by the participants were primarily either in criminal justice or some form of human services. The participants provided detailed summaries of their overall day-to-day experiences which influenced the emergence of the four themes

presented in the study which are as follows: Theme 1: Community isolation challenges on the delivery of services; Theme 2: Personal experience for juvenile intensive supervision officers require education and work experience; Theme 3: Family involvement and problems associated with compliance; Theme 4: Attitude toward Sex Offenders and Theme 5: Public support for JSOs' treatment services.

I used the Thematic coding method to identify similarities or reoccurring patterns from the participants' interview transcripts, which produced five themes (Etikan et al., 2016). To analysis the data, I used the NVivo 12 qualitative analysis module to helped to develop a system of coding known as a 'node.' The nodes helped organize and sort the information that I used as a reference point. The primary goal of Chapter 5 is to examine the study's results using a combination of dialogue, recommendations, and a conclusion of the study's findings. An analysis of the findings resulted from the use of the attribution theory, which provided the foundation for the actual research questions. Also included are the study's limitations, suggestions, and potential implications.

Interpretation of Findings

I discussed the interpretation of my study's findings in Chapter 4. I structured my data so that the common elements and pertinent ideas categorized into themes that correlated with the literature presented in Chapter 2 of the study. The findings confirmed that probation officers working with juvenile offenders in rural areas encountered numerous challenges when providing sex offender's treatment for this population.

It is prevalent within the research that probations officers tend to develop attitudes that adversely affect their judgment and decision-making process when providing treatment services

for these individuals (Hanson et al., 2017). In this study, the participants offered explanations that described their perceptions and factors that could improve their attitudes, positively impacting their decision-making strategies. I used the NVivo 12 software program to help establish and code data text into a more manageable context while adding credibility and reliability. I reviewed the study's data collected from the face-to-face interviews and the evaluation of the emergent themes. My chief strategy used to conduct the research was focused on the participants to include an emphasis on seeking detailed information on their varying perceptions.

Each participant received 24 foundational questions, which opened the lines of communications and allowed them to discuss their perceptions and decision making concerning the lack of treatment for JSOs. Each of the participants involved in the study had various experience levels of working with juvenile offenders. There was an interesting parallel among the participants. They notated that while their caseloads were comprised primarily of juvenile males, they had relatively little experience working with juvenile sex offenders. This lack of expertise remains consistent with Worling and Langton's (2015) comments, who indicated that vast knowledge and experience is necessary for a juvenile community worker to be successful.

The first question was: What is your perception of the lack of effective treatment services for juvenile sex offenders in rural South Carolina? Among the 4 participants, experience and education contributed to two of the primary factors associated with the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions. Each of the participants has acknowledged that having formal knowledge and general skill set to work with juveniles is necessary for positive outcomes. Additionally, Participant 4 stated, "I feel that a bachelor's degree alone will limit opportunities

for the Probation Officer the autonomy to seek services for juveniles. Hanson et al. (2017) suggested that human service workers who work with adolescent sexual offenders should have the proper level of education, knowledge, and instruction for effective counseling and treatment. All of the participants interviewed agreed that substandard family involvement and inconsistent communication help compromise the success of the juvenile's treatment. The second question asked the following: What are the contributing factors that shape the perceptions and the decision-making of the juvenile intensive supervision officers when providing sex offender services for juveniles? Participant 4 shared that one of the most common problems he noticed is the lack of community support and recognition of the need for services, the close relationships to the juvenile offender in rural communities and influences not to report criminal activities.

Each of the participants elaborated on their experiences working with the public in rural South Carolina with limited to no resources. Their responses provided greater insight and understanding of their perceptions and views towards the lack of public support for juvenile sex offenders. One of the most common problems is the lack of community support and acknowledgment of the need for services, the close relationships to the juvenile offender that exist in rural communities and influences not to report criminal activities. All agree that a lack of community support creates hardships on their performance to provide needed services for JSOs. The participants 2 and 3 shared some interesting dynamics about rural, small-town residents' thoughts and perceptions. These community members do not understand the scope of treatment and therefore tend to shun these individuals. The lack of knowledge by community members is especially daunting in these small areas where everyone is familiar with each other. This community isolation has a negative impact on an already sensitive and complex subject matter.

Limitations

Four primary limitations presented themselves in this study. The first limitation is the lack of available services for juvenile sex offenders in rural areas of South Carolina. Secondly, this limitation has a deepening effect on juvenile intensive supervision officers who work with juvenile sex offenders. Thirdly, one of the study's limitations was the sample size, which was intentionally limited to reflect the juvenile intensive supervision officers' specific knowledge of working with juvenile sex offenders. The small sample size utilizing only four juvenile intensive supervision officers restricted the transferability of the study results. The small group was not reflective of other juvenile intensive supervision officers who may have had smaller caseloads or worked in different geographical areas of DJJ. Finally, there was the issue that I was the single researcher responsible for the research design methods, data collection process, and study analysis. As the researcher, this could pose the possibility of displaying researcher bias. The data interpretation and analysis associated with this type of case study can also make it hard to replicate information relevant to future case studies (Nicenboim et al., 2018).

Recommendations

Many juvenile intensive supervision officers face difficult challenges navigating through the criminal justice systems in search of specialized services to meet the rehabilitative treatment needs for juvenile sex offenders, and their ultimate reintegration success (Battin & Crowl, 2017). In this study, I was able to capture the thoughts, perceptions, and personal experiences of the individuals who participated in the study through the interview process. Each participant exhibited enthusiasm in their work and shared the same sentiment about their ongoing frustration with aspects of the juvenile justice system and method. Their specific concerns were chiefly

applicable to juvenile sex offenders who work in rural South Carolina. They unanimously agreed that services for this population need to be enhanced so that more specialized treatment options are available, making the services more effective. The participants had a range of experience working with juvenile sex offenders. They had ideas and suggestions about what type of services were best suited to help these youth sustain within their communities. Upon completing an analysis of the interviews, there were a total of ten themes that emerged. However, there were four primary themes that the participants agreed were most important as it relates to the treatment services, they provide which include: Theme #1: Personal experience for juvenile intensive supervision officers require education and work experience; Theme #2: Family involvement and challenges associated with compliance; Theme #3: Public support for JSOs' treatment services; Theme #4: Community isolation provides hardships on the delivery of services.

After a careful review of the study results, I have several recommendations to address the improvement of treatment services for juvenile sex offenders residing in rural areas of South Carolina. The proposals include: *(a) the need for a comprehensive legislative review of sex offender programs; (b) examine current programs that have the most proven potential, and identify specific gaps in services; (c) organize a strategic plan that would contain enhanced legislative support to reduce the gaps in service significantly; (d) strengthen the collaborative dialogue between the juvenile justice organizations and community partnerships; (e) offers specialized training for probation officers that provide tools for decision making tailored to the needs of juvenile sex offenders, and (f) seek funding assistance from other rural organizations that also address juvenile reform.*

Experts in the juvenile justice field have also offered recommendations to help improve the services in the area of juvenile justice reform. Malovic, Rossiter, and Murphy (2018) indicated that: *(a) A primary consideration is the creation of a group of stakeholders that creative ideas for juvenile reform and the processes for implementation of these ideas; (b) Develop programs that specifically address the gaps in services; (c) Provide training opportunities for staff that work with juvenile sex offenders.* Overall, the recommendations' collaborative scope is relatively consistent with an emphasis on measures to address gaps in services within rural areas, legislative changes, and specialized training to aid professionals in their knowledge and decision-making processes. I feel that all of these elements have great potential to bring about some much-needed positive changes for juvenile sex offenders, particularly within the rural communities.

Implications

This study is critical because the information gained could bring about more awareness about the juvenile intensive supervision officers' perceptions concerning the lack of treatment services for JSOs and the challenges associated with their decision-making processes. This study's implications could add to the existing literature by providing in-depth insight into motivational factors that could impede the development or growth of sex offender specific programs. The findings for this study have theoretical implications for the Attribution theory. The results expand on the existing conceptual framework. It will provide insight into how individuals perceive societal issues and the influences that can motivate an individual to believe and act in a way that could impede their professional judgment (Miller, Copeland, & Sullivan, 2015). To help explain this subject matter, I relied on the Attribution theory, which will

underscore a person's attitudes, biases, and perceptions regarding how a person might behave and function in specific environments (Cohen, 2018).

Using this model as a theoretical framework surmises that individuals' attributions regarding particular events and behaviors can be categorized as internal or external. During the internal process of attribution, individuals conclude that an activity or an individual's behavior is an outcome of personal characteristics such as feelings, attitudes, or personality traits. Whereas, external attribution involves examining the cause of actions or events that derive from environmental influences that are out of the individual's control (Weiner, 2018).

This research study explored juvenile intensive supervision officers' lived experiences working with youth adjudicated for sexual crimes. Each participant declared the need for effective services in pastoral South Carolina is vital for encouraging improved social skills and functioning and strong bonds with their family and the community. The study also revealed that the juvenile services system needs a system overhaul and review to ensure that there are adequate treatment options available for juvenile sex offenders who reside in rural areas. It suggested that the procedure is a required method of use for the current population and the future services and service professionals that work with this group of youthful offenders. Much of the data indicates that a strong foundation of specialized training would help assist supervision officers in understanding working with juvenile sex offenders and navigating the juvenile justice system process (Hanson et al., 2017).

More specifically, during the study's interview process, one of the participants noted the benefits of receiving specialized training, which could increase a consciousness that will help them understand these youth's unique nature and the drawbacks associated with the lack of

services in rural communities. Specialized training could also prove beneficial in developing a consistent theme when the supervision officers are working with other multi-disciplinary treatment team members. There is a perception that juvenile intensive supervision officers are a group of stern law enforcement officials primarily concerned with returning unlawful individuals to penal institutions. However, the most successful supervision officers understand the importance of developing a collaborative, positive, trustworthy relationship with the juveniles they serve and other service providers, community members, and the juvenile's family members. The probation officer has an integral role in encouraging the juveniles to engage in law-abiding activities to aid in their progress to live crime-free (Weill, 2020).

The supervision officer's ability to encourage and motivate provides vital advantages as the juveniles work their way through the juvenile criminal justice system. Many offenders are unsure of what to expect when they begin the probation process and feel despair. For example, juvenile sex offenders often feel high levels of anxiety when returning to their communities, particularly in rural areas where most residents know each other. The concern deepens from the stigma and perceptions of the sensitive nature of sex-related crimes. Encouragement from the probation officer can help the juvenile set goals and assist them in developing realistic strategies for achieving these goals. Positive reinforcement and behavior-driven strategies are useful tools to help avoid criminal behavior.

Critical thinking and decision making are quality traits that enable probation officers to render decisions promptly. The officer needs to be able to assess the offender's sincerity to fulfill their probation obligation. In some cases where the officer perceives imminent risks, it requires mandatory court contact and makes recommendations for stricter guidelines. The process should

require mandated guidelines for the protection of the juvenile and members of the community. In other instances, the court-appointed judge will contact the juvenile intensive supervision officer requesting their input for recommendations on sentencing (Kendall, 2020). Before making recommendations, the juvenile intensive supervision officer's decision-making skills need to have a well-rounded background. They should consider vital aspects of each juvenile case, such as the factual elements and the prospect of reoffending.

Both the probation and intensive supervision officers agree that there is a definite need for enhanced resources to address the gaps in services experienced in the rural areas that they serve. The recommendations and efforts to improve the juvenile justice system of reform will help juvenile intensive supervision officers build their understanding of the perceptions and factors that influence their decisions while providing services to juvenile sex offender clients. Further studies are needed to advance the efforts of the effectiveness of the juvenile intensive supervision officer role of supervision within communities in rural areas. This process could improve an understanding of the characteristics that forecast rehabilitation outcomes for the probation professionals who work with youthful offenders. A vital component that can be beneficial in performing future research is examining the new role of socialization and prior experiences of the juvenile intensive supervision officer professionals that work individually in the rural regions of South Carolina.

Conclusion

I focused this study on identifying themes that clarified how and why services are in place for female juveniles at the probation level in rural jurisdictions. I conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants while a simultaneous review of document notes. I presented

themes that emerged from the study, whether it is supplementary or contradictory to what it proclaims is much needed. I anticipate applying the findings to broaden the body of knowledge on the lack of JSOs' specific services and increase awareness of the need for such services.

Streamlining the focus on the perceptions and decision-making of the juvenile intensive supervision officers who work directly with the JSOs in rural areas helps provide useful insight into the challenges the juvenile intensive supervision officers encounter when working with limited resources. A way to successfully address these issues, attention should be placed on the existing laws and legislation that govern sex offender policies. Secondly, there should be an emphasis placed on programming needs that address the gaps in services for juvenile sex offenders that reside in rural areas. Finally, there needs to be action is taken that will strengthen family and community support for juvenile sex offenders as they receive treatment services. The recommendations made from the analysis of this study suggest there is a benefit to understanding how the thoughts and perceptions impact any successful performance of juvenile intensive supervision officers that work with juvenile sex offenders in rural areas. The information obtained from each participant notated that additional services needed implementation through a collaborative effort. To enrich services for juvenile offenders, it also garners a healthy level of community support and commitment to aid in successful treatment and reform for juvenile sex offenders.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Describe your role/duties in the supervision of juveniles as defined by your department.
2. How long have you been with the organization?
3. What are the requirements to become a juvenile intensive supervision officer? How long have you been in your current role?
4. What is your age range and what is your gender classification?

5. What rural areas of the state do you serve?
6. How many cases are currently on your caseload?
7. Are there different guidelines or specifications that you follow when making a referral for JSOs?
8. How do you manage court ordered mandates with limited resources?
9. What part of your professional skill set do you feel that is most important to be successful given the limited resources?
10. What are some of the challenges of living and working in rural South Carolina that may influence your behavior and ability to perform on a professional level.
11. Do you believe funding alone is the primary reasons for the shortage of juvenile programs your area?
12. What are your perceptions and attitude toward juvenile sex offenders?
13. What is your perception about the family member support and compliance with mandates?
14. Do you believe that there is a difference regarding JSO's treatment in rural areas opposed to urban areas?
15. Is there a treatment program that you believe JSOs would benefit from that you do not currently offer?
16. Please describe some of the challenges you have faced when obtaining community support.
17. What is your assessments of the racial and socioeconomic demographics of the JSOs you serve in your area?
18. What are your experiences regarding public support for juvenile sex offender's treatment services?
19. At what stage, if any, do you think that your relationship with the juvenile are conducive to producing support, trust and encouragement as a predictor for juvenile success?
20. How do you motivate, encourage and communication with the parents of juvenile offenders to participate in the treatment processes?
21. What approach do you used when addressing a strained relationship between yourself, the Youth, their family members and to community to strengthen support for the juvenile success?
22. Do you believe that living in rural and isolated communities are places of real hardship, especially when it comes to the delivery of services for JSO's?
23. How have you handled the public's perceptions and negative attitude toward sex offenders?
24. Are there other facets that you believe might hinder you from providing adequate services for juvenile sex offenders in your area?