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## JUVENILE COURT OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INNOVATION ADOPTION; WHAT PERSONAL AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN LEVELS OF ADOPTION? AN EXPLORATORY MIXED-METHOD STUDY.

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WHAT PERSONAL AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN  
LEVELS OF ADOPTION? AN EXPLORATORY MIXED-METHOD STUDY.

by

Brenda J. Moran

A DISSERTATION

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Under the Supervision of Professor Rochelle L. Dalla

Lincoln, Nebraska

December, 2013

JUVENILE COURT OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INNOVATION ADOPTION;  
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Brenda J. Moran, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska, 2013

Adviser: Professor Rochelle L. Dalla

This exploratory research examined levels of innovation adoption among Juvenile Court Officers (JCOs) in a Midwestern state. The researcher applied Dr. Everett M. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation model as the study's framework. According to Rogers (2003), innovation is "an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (p. 475). The study sought to determine the extent that demographic and work-life variables such as gender, office location, caseload, years of service, personality/temperament and employee engagement contributed to levels of innovation adoption by JCOs. This study examined the characteristics of individuals and contexts in which they operate that make them more or less likely to adopt innovations. Research was conducted using a web-based instrument that combined three previously developed surveys and used Survey Monkey to collect data. Follow-up interviews, developed around six open-ended questions, were conducted with a subset of participants to delve more deeply into JCO's experience of innovation. Survey results were analyzed using t-tests, ANOVAS and correlations. Interviews were analyzed using spiral analyses. The analysis indicated that of the fifty-eight respondents to the web-survey and fifteen

personal interviews, male and female Juvenile Court Officers reported equal levels of innovation. High scores on the employee engagement scale corresponded with higher levels of reported innovation. There were no statistical differences between rural and urban area officers or with openness to innovation between officers with ten or fewer and those with eleven or more years of service. Interviewees' comments, however, suggested that a larger sample might reveal different results. The study had mixed results with respect to the impact of a JCO's temperament on his/her adoption of innovation. A design flaw prevented assessment of the impact of caseload on innovation. Finally, it was anticipated that participants' responses would reflect Rogers' Adoption of Innovation normal-curve (a cumulative percentage of innovation adopters over time). This assumption was not confirmed.

## DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Dedication

This completed work is dedicated to my husband Craig and our four children: Shawn, Sarah, Stephanie and Scott, whose love and support gave me the strength and perseverance to see this process to completion.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their assistance and guidance throughout my doctoral process: a very special thank you to my adviser, Dr. Rochelle Dalla, my doctoral committee members – Dean Marjorie Kostelnik, Dr. Richard Bischoff and Dr. James King, and UNL staff members Eva Bachman and Lisa King. A special thank you to the Chabot, Moran and Kilbride families who mean more to me than I can place into words. I would also like to acknowledge three additional individuals whose support and insights I valued throughout the dissertation process: Jo Allison Taylor, Rosemary Mahoney and Dr. Fred Heismeyer.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	3
LIST OF FIGURES.....	4
LIST OF APPENDICIES.....	5
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
Conceptual Framework	
Statement of the Problem	
Need for the Study	
Significance of the Study	
Statement of the Purpose	
Research Questions	
Research Hypotheses	
Definition of Terms	
Assumption, Limitations, Delimitations and Conclusion	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
Summary of Juvenile Justice System	
Present Day	
Diffusion of Innovation	
Stages of Innovation	

Other Theories of Innovation Adaptation

Expanding Rogers' Theory

Juvenile Court Officer Challenges

Summary

3. METHOD OF STUDY.....	43
Purpose	
Participants	
Procedure	
Instrumentation	
Personal Interviews	
4. RESULTS.....	60
5. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION.....	85
6. REFERENCES.....	109
7. APPENDICES.....	118

### List of Tables

Table 1	Juvenile Court Officer Demographic Information.....	47
Table 2	Juvenile Court Officer Total Scores.....	54
Table 3	Rural and Urban Respondents and Innovation Adoption.....	61
Table 4	Years of Service and Innovation Adoption.....	62
Table 5	Ages of Juvenile Court Officers and Innovation Adoption...	63
Table 6	Male and Female Respondents and Innovation Adoption.....	64
Table 7	Active Cases and Innovation Adoption.....	65
Table 8	Correlations for Big Five Inventory and Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale.....	66
Table 9	Hypotheses Results Table.....	69



### List of Figures

Figure 1 – Organizational Map of Target State’s Juvenile Court System.....	25
Figure 2 -- Rogers’ Normal Curve.....	30
Figure 3 – Prochaska’s Stages in Innovation – Decision Process.....	31
Figure 4 – Havelock’s Theory of Innovation.....	33
Figure 5 – Lippitt’s Stages of Innovation.....	35
Figure 6 – Creswell’s Data Analysis Spiral.....	58
Figure 7 – Juvenile Court Officer Innovation Adoption Scale.....	67
Figure 8 – Juvenile Court Officer Report of Other JCO Innovation Adoption.....	68

## List of Appendices

Appendix A	Participant's E-mail.....	118
Appendix B	Informed Consent for Web-based Survey.....	119
Appendix C	Follow-up Reminders for Web-based Survey.....	120
Appendix D	Informed Consent for Personal Interviews.....	121
Appendix E	Verbal Script for Personal Interviews.....	122
Appendix F	Permission from Carol Savery, M.A. ....	123
Appendix G	Permission from Karen L Wilson, Ph. D.....	124
Appendix H	Savery Adoption of Innovation Survey Questions (Adapted for use with Juvenile Court Officers).....	126
Appendix I	Big Five Inventory Survey Questions.....	132
Appendix J	Wilson Employee Engagement Scale Survey Questions.....	133
Appendix K	Open-ended Survey Questions.....	134
Appendix L	Innovation Adoption Personal Interview.....	136
Appendix M	Additional Survey Questions.....	137
Appendix N	Confidentiality Agreement for Transcription.....	139

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Our nation's youth face many challenges. Efforts to address these challenges require informed decision-making, flexibility and innovation. This is especially true in light of the critical dual role that America's juvenile courts play in addressing youth crime: To protect society as well as engage offenders in programs and processes that will facilitate their rehabilitation and to fulfill both roles with diminishing financial resources.

Probation and parole are integral to juvenile justice in the United States. These programs are administered by Juvenile Court Officers (JCOs), directed toward the offenders themselves and often include family members. JCOs provide a wide variety of services that are critical to the effective and efficient operation of almost every aspect of the justice system, ranging from law enforcement and sentencing to the release of juvenile offenders into the community. Generally, most of the juvenile correctional population in the U.S. is under community supervision.

Juvenile court statistics reveal that probation is imposed in 62 percent of adjudicated delinquency cases and that some 675,000 juveniles are under probation supervision. In addition, probation and parole agencies are part of a large, complex and interdependent array of governmental, non-profit and private agencies and organizations that comprise the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Almost no aspect of the work of probation and parole can be considered in isolation, as they are affected by and have an impact on many other agencies. (Puzzanchera, et. al, 2003, p. 38)

Across the US, it is estimated that there are between 80,000 to 100,000 Community Corrections professionals. This number includes JCO staff, supervisors, and

administrators, educators, residential and non-residential intervention staff, and others who work within both juvenile and adult correctional services. It is important to note that within the United States, there are many occasions when juvenile offenders are treated as adults due to the nature or circumstances of a crime. In the juvenile system, offenders are often placed under the supervision of a probation officer in lieu of serving time in jail or prison; probation is the most common form of sentencing in the United States. At present, six in ten adjudications in juvenile cases result in probation (Puzzanchera, et. al, 2003 p. 38).

In their 2007 research, L. E. Glaze and T. P. Bonczar discovered what many JCOs recognized: that workloads have continued to expand while budgets for community corrections contract. The U. S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) echo this view.

While community corrections agencies supervise the vast majority of the offender population and caseloads are overflowing and growing every year, they receive less than 10 percent of correctional funding from state and local government. Changes in the juvenile court delinquency caseload over the years have strained the courts' resources and programs. The volume of delinquency cases handled by juvenile courts rose 41% between 1985 and 2002. (OJJDP, 2006 p. 20)

With expanded caseloads, innovative treatment, time/caseload management and more will be required to keep pace with the increased needs of juvenile offenders and their families.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual research framework will focus on Dr. Everett Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation theory. While some theorists concentrate on change at the organizational level, Rogers emphasizes individual change. Rogers understands that some positions within organizations function more like individual contractors. Much like teachers and counselors, JCOs must assess the rehabilitative needs of each juvenile offender assigned to his or her care, create an individualized approach for each one, periodically review and if necessary, revise or completely revamp the program or process depending on the circumstances. JCOs have great latitude both in constructing programs and determining progress, which is reported to the court through which additional sanctions or freedoms may be given. All of this must be accomplished within the structure and financial constraints of the system. This intense individual and independent approach and the great impact it has on the trajectory of individual offenders requires the researcher to look at each JCO's rate of innovation adoption. In addition to its particular suitability for this research, Rogers' model, with its focus on the individual, is itself well researched having been used in several thousand studies over the years. "These insights (Diffusion of Innovation) have been tested in more than 6000 field tests, so they are among the most reliable in the social science field" (Robinson, 2009, p. 1). "Professor Everett M. Rogers is recognized internationally for his work on the diffusion of innovations" (Singhal & Law, 1997, p. 1). Rogers' time-tested theories therefore offer a solid basis for examining the complex factors in JCOs' consideration an innovation adoption.

According to Rogers, "Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is

communicated through certain channels over a period of time among members of a social system” (Rogers, 2003, p. 474).

Rogers continues:

The individuals in a social system do not all adopt an innovation at the same time. Rather, they adopt in an over-time sequence, so that individuals can be classified into adopter categories on the basis of when they first begin using a new idea. (Rogers, 2003, p. 267)

Rogers suggests five categories to which potential adopters of an innovation can be assigned: Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards. Rogers’s five categories encompass everyone (even the laggards), and assume that each person will ultimately adopt the innovation to some degree. Rogers’ position is similar to that of social psychologist Kurt Lewin as described in his work, *Theory of Change* (1947). However, unlike Rogers, Lewin acknowledges that some organizations or groups of people become “frozen” or “crystallized” in their approach to tasks or problems, where other groups are motivated or more inclined to embrace change (“unfreeze”) in order to learn a new approach to tasks or problems (Smith, 2009).

Within Rogers’ (2003) innovation diffusion research, several elements are identified as influencing each person’s level of innovation adoption including (1) Characteristics of the innovation such as: an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (p. 12). (2) The decision-making process individuals use in considering a new idea, product or practice which includes “an information-seeking and information-processing activity, where an individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of an

innovation” (p. 172). This innovation-decision process involves five steps: (a) knowledge, (b) persuasion, (c) decision, (d) implementation and (e) confirmation. (3) Personal characteristics of individuals that make them more or less likely to adopt an innovation; “Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of a system” (p. 22). (4) The consequences for individuals and society of adopting an innovation which “are the changes that occur in an individual or a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation” (p. 436) and (5) The communication channels used in the diffusion process which is “a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (p. 5).

An innovation is a new concept to the targeted audience, which generates uncertainty, hesitation and skepticism. Before an innovation is implemented, it is often discussed with peers or co-workers in an effort to gain information and greater understanding about the possible risks and benefits. Rogers and Singhal (1996) suggest that,

A person evaluates a new idea and decides whether or not to adopt it on the basis of discussions with peers who have already adopted or rejected the innovation....organizations, like individuals, adopt an innovation in a manner that suggests various degrees of resistance to the new idea. (Rogers & Singhal, 1996, p. 410)

Using Rogers’ levels of adoption and influential elements to form the context of this research study, the researcher focused on understanding how Juvenile Court Officers (whole service units as well as individual officers) perceive themselves, their own and

other service units, as innovative (change-embracing) or laggardly (change-resistant).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In 2011, Promise Partners, an organization that mobilizes communities and empowers people to share resources to fulfill its goals for children, hosted a seminar conducted by the Search Institute (SI). The Search Institute has actively researched innovative methods of positive reinforcement for youth for over fifty years. In 1990, the Institute created Developmental Assets®, now a widely used resource. The Promise Partners seminar focused on The Developmental Assets®: “40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible, successful adults” (Search Institute 2012). These assets are referred to hereinafter as “the 40 D.A.”.

This seminar brought together various youth-serving groups and agencies interested in learning more about the 40 D.A. and interested in working together to seek greater support for area youth. In the audience were three Juvenile Court Officers who attended at the request of their local supervisor. In a small-group setting, they shared many of their challenges and frustrations, including the increasing difficulty they and their colleagues were having adjusting to the state’s mandate to find ways to adopt more asset-rich (as reflected in the 40 D.A.) rather than deficit-focused approaches with juveniles. It also became apparent that in the past 12 months these three officers and their supervisor had been through multiple and varied training sessions which focused on several different styles and approaches to working with youth; seeking, as one JCO offered, a “new way to ‘fix’ our escalating youth violence and delinquency problems” (personal communication 03/03/11). As an attendee, this researcher was intrigued by the



JCO's candid responses and the dilemmas they outlined, which prompted obtaining the name of their supervisor in order to conduct a more in-depth discussion.

After the seminar, I sought out this local supervisor, initially to ask about whether Juvenile Courts in her jurisdiction had implemented asset-based approaches such as those envisioned by the 40 D.A. and also what other programs this area's Juvenile Courts had encountered. She spoke of many management and accountability improvement programs, identifying by name the Carey Guides to Effective Case Management (October 2010) and a more recent training on the Oz Principle, a book and program series aimed at achieving higher levels of personal and organizational accountability (April 2011). She gave few details about each program, but more intriguing were her comments that many of the training programs and new approaches offered were often cluttered with "psycho-babble" or "buzz words," were unusually complicated in scope and breadth, and were crammed into a two-day seminar format with no follow-up component.

The supervisor mentioned that she had sent the three JCOs to the Developmental Assets® seminar because she felt this approach "offered the most common sense approach to youth that she had seen in a long, long time (personal communication, 06/09/11). However, she was doubtful that any new approach under consideration was being embraced by all the JCOs, and knew that some viewed these new ideas with suspicion. She pointed to a large and ever-growing gap in attitudes toward juvenile treatment options between districts, district supervisors, and the eight chief JCOs, as noted in a survey by the group Partners in Leadership.

Partners in Leadership founders and "The Oz Principal" (2004) book authors Roger Connors, Tom Smith and Craig Hickman conducted an individual survey of JCOs

and management of this midwestern state's Juvenile Court Services in April 2011. In the written confidential assessment, Partners in Leadership provided additional feedback that JCOs included on their written surveys. The supervisor noted that several comments clustered around a perception that some districts were much more willing to try the "newest strategy" while other districts were looked down upon or labeled "resistant to change." Perceptions of different districts' willingness to try new approaches were linked to varied explanations such as: young JCOs versus old JCOs; supervisors and chief JCO's comfort level with technology; skepticism about new evidence-based practices; negative attitude from staff; competition for promotion and more. The supervisor was concerned that, like all of the other training, nothing would truly get to the bottom of the issues that surfaced to see what most JCOs (not just a few who commented) really feel about the innovations introduced and the rapid changes that had been made in the past several years.

As what was to be a 15-minute meeting turned into a two-hour discussion, it became clear that further study of this situation would be valuable. This was especially evident as the supervisor explained how, in recent months, the eight districts' different approaches to youth services seemed to be generating unhealthy competition among them, their supervisors and chief JCOs, effectively undermining the level of services provided to youth. She also mentioned that in the immediate future there would be a large turnover in both Juvenile Court leadership and staff as several individuals were nearing retirement age. Given that several new JCOs would be hired, what, if any factors regarding one's ability to adopt various innovations should be considered when hiring?

**Need for the study**

According to a Juvenile Delinquency Probation National Report for 2009,

Courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled more than 1.5 million delinquency cases in 2009. Probation supervision was the most severe disposition in 36% (541,400) of all delinquency cases. The number of cases placed on probation grew 29% between 1985 and 2009. During that time, the overall delinquency caseload increased 30%. These findings are based on national data on delinquency cases that juvenile courts processed from 1985 through 2009. (Livesey, 2012, p. 2)

Some youth are placed on probation after being adjudicated delinquent (similar to being convicted in criminal court). In contrast to court-ordered probation, some youth who are not adjudicated delinquent voluntarily agree to abide by certain probation conditions, often with the understanding that if they successfully complete their probation, their case will be terminated without any formal processing.

In 2009, cases in which adjudicated delinquents were ordered to probation (291,500 cases) accounted for 54% of all delinquency cases placed on probation. In the remaining probation cases, the youth agreed to some form of voluntary, or informal, probation. The number of adjudicated cases that resulted in court-ordered probation rose 51% between 1985 and 2009 (from 193,000 to 291,500). In comparison, the number of cases that resulted in informal probation decreased by 8% (from 189,600 to 174,400), reflecting the trend toward more formal processing of delinquency cases suggesting a “tough on crime” stance. (Livesey, 2012, p. 2)

Based on the above statistics and the stated concerns of several local JCOs, their

supervisors, and the Partners in Leadership survey, there appeared to be a growing tension among these eight units relative to their delivery of services to affected youth in their respective districts. This study sought to identify innovation-embracing and innovation-resistant attitudes present in the districts. Although there were regional differences, the breadth and scope of rehabilitative options presented by JCOs to the youth in their care should fall within a normative range of behavioral and therapeutic options offered. However, if some JCOs and their districts offered new treatment options or programs based on recent research while other districts did not, then a district's distinction as a innovation-resistant or innovation-embracing department could significantly impact the youth offenders they serve. Similarly, JCOs with certain identifiable attitudes toward innovation adoption might positively or negatively impact the treatment and services offered to their districts' youth. The escalating incidence of juvenile delinquency and the corresponding growth of probation caseloads created an urgent need to find the most efficient methods of protecting society and rehabilitating young offenders. Those young persons whose offenses suggest a realistic possibility of emerging from the court system without a blot on their records are particularly in need of sensitive adjudication and creative supervision, which could be influenced by innovation adoption in current practices.

### **Significance of the Study**

The results of this study could provide insight and information for administrators, practitioners, and researchers. Survey findings and interview feedback could assist administrators from the eight subject districts to identify and implement strategies based on participant responses. A more comprehensive picture of their current situation and

potential alternatives would allow administrators to develop and implement or enhance strategies that would improve staff innovation and adaptation in their organization, potentially increasing the overall effectiveness of the agency.

Practitioners may benefit by understanding the process of innovation and partner with administrators to carefully select training programs and adopt new practices.

Additionally, Chief Juvenile Court Officers who function in supervisory positions may benefit by understanding that staff usually adopt the characteristics and attitudes of their leaders. Supervisors could, therefore, seek to embrace innovative thinking themselves and create a work environment that lends itself to innovation by staff. Finally, researchers could use the information to conduct similar studies that would build on the knowledge base about innovation and Juvenile Court Officers.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to determine levels of innovation adoption by Juvenile Court Officers in eight judicial districts of a Midwestern state and to examine the extent to which location, personal characteristics and demographic variables influence innovation adoption. The exploratory research questions and hypotheses were developed following a review of the literature. The assumption of this study was that certain factors may predict adoption of innovation. The factors explored within this study included office location (rural vs. urban), employee's years of service to the district, gender, and the number of juvenile offenders seen in one year (active caseload), personality and temperament, and employee engagement.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent, if any, do Juvenile Court Officer's demographic factors affect their innovation adoption?
  - a. To what extent, if any, do employees in rural and urban office locations differ in their reported levels of innovation adoption?
  - b. To what extent, if any, does an employee's years of service affect his/her reported level of innovation adoption?
  - c. To what extent, if any, do male and female employees differ in their reported level of innovation adoption?
  - d. To what extent, if any, does the size of the JCO's active caseload impact his or her reported level of innovation adoption?
2. To what extent, if any, does the JCO's personality and temperament influence his or her reported level of innovation adoption?
3. To what extent, if any, does a JCO's level of employee engagement influence reported level of innovation adoption?
4. To what extent do the Juvenile Court Officers' responses reflect Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovation adopter categories?

### **Research Hypotheses**

This study tested the following four hypotheses:

1. Juvenile Court Officer demographic factors will affect adoption of innovation.
  - a. Respondents from rural office locations will report lower adoption of innovation than those from urban office locations.
  - b. Respondents with more years of service will report lower adoption of

innovation than those with fewer years of service.

- c. Male and female respondents will report equal levels of adoption of innovation.
  - d. Respondents with greater numbers of juveniles in their active caseloads will report lower adoption of innovation than those responsible for a lesser number of juveniles.
2. A Juvenile Court Officer's temperament and personality will affect adoption of innovation.
  3. Juvenile Court Officer levels of employee engagement will affect adoption of innovation.
  4. Juvenile Court Officers response results will correspond to Rogers' diffusion of innovation adopter categories.

The Independent variables were the employee's number of years of service within a district, the location of the employee's office, his or her gender and the number of active cases per employee, personality and temperament and employee engagement.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purposes of this study, the following words and phrases were defined as follows:

**Innovation:** An idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or another unit of adoption. An innovation presents an individual or an organization with a new alternative or alternatives, as well as a new means of solving problems (Rogers, 2003, p. xx).

**Diffusion of Innovation:** A social process in which subjectively perceived

information about a new idea is communicated from person to person. The meaning of an innovation is thus gradually worked out through a process of social construction. (Rogers, 2003, p. xx)

The following definitions were extrapolated from the 2006 state juvenile justice profiles National Center for Juvenile Justice.

**Juvenile:** A juvenile is a youth at or below the upper age of jurisdiction in the state. In this study, a juvenile is anyone under the age of 18.

**Delinquency:** Offenses are acts committed by juveniles that would be crimes if committed by adults or are juvenile-only offenses (i.e. breaking curfew, skipping school). For the purposes of this study, all offenses will be considered.

**Case:** A “case” represents a juvenile processed by a juvenile court on a new referral, regardless of the number of law violations contained in the referral. A juvenile charged with four burglaries in a single referral would represent a single case. A juvenile referred for three burglaries and referred again the following week on another burglary charge would represent two cases, even if the court eventually merged the two referrals for more efficient processing.

**Disposition of a Case:** Case disposition means that a definite action was taken as the result of the referral—i.e., a plan of treatment was selected or initiated. It does not necessarily mean that a case was closed or terminated in the sense that all contact between the court and the juvenile ceased. For example, a case is considered “disposed of” when the court orders probation, not when a term of probation supervision is completed.

**Measurement of caseload:** The unit of count used in *Juvenile Court Statistics* is



the number of “cases disposed.”

### **Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations**

A major assumption of this study was that all participants would answer the survey questions truthfully. Additionally, it was assumed that the various juvenile correctional districts operate in a similar manner with respect to policies and practices despite the fact that they are located in different geographical areas spanning the state.

There are limitations to this study. It is understood that biases exist in self-reported information, for instance. Additionally, the perceptions of the Juvenile Court Officers surveyed are specific to the corrections field and may differ from the opinions of staff working in other disciplines; caution is urged regarding external validity. With the survey being conducted using an internet-based program, privacy and confidentiality of the JCOs’ responses may be a concern, causing fewer to participate fully (Couper, 2000). Another limitation associated with Internet surveys is that not all homes have Internet access. However, in this study, the survey was sent to the employee’s work site and every JCO has access to a computer with Internet access. Participants were given permission by each Chief Juvenile Court Officer to answer the survey during working hours. The survey was in a simple, easy to follow format and took only minutes to complete.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter described the overall purpose and direction for this study. Chapter Two will present the literature review. Chapter Three will outline the methodology. Chapters Four and Five will provide a detailed description of the study, its findings and a discussion of its implications for policy, practice, and research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **History and Purpose of the Juvenile Justice System**

A keen interest in youth and their needs relative to criminal justice issues began to surface in the United States in the 1820s. According to Samuel Walker's (1998) study of the history of the American criminal justice system, there were "no special legal institutions devoted to children (prior to 1820)" (p. 104). In fact, youth between the ages of 11 and 18 were not viewed as "completely human, in and of themselves with needs, rights and responsibilities" but simply as a part of a family, someone "...to be apprenticed, worked or possibly educated" (State of Louisiana Youth Services, 2010). As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, it became apparent that when dealing with juvenile offenders, there was a need for separate facilities/ institutions, definitions of what comprised illegal juvenile actions, and a differentiation between structured and unstructured enforcement of judgments. Changing social attitudes were reflected in the advent of "Houses of Refuge" and other early juvenile institutions about 1824. Ultimately, the goal was to create productive citizens, whether through rehabilitation or punishment.

A history of the US Juvenile Justice System compiled in 2010 by the State of Louisiana Youth Services Office of Juvenile Justice focuses on key developments in two states: An individual in Massachusetts who introduced the concepts of probation and rehabilitation, and a new type of court in Illinois heralded an emerging juvenile court system. In the early 1840s, John Augustus, a Boston shoemaker, conceived and gradually implemented a plan for diverting offenders with appropriate backgrounds from incarceration to rehabilitation; in effect he became what is now known as a probation officer. Augustus bailed people out of court, adults and juveniles alike, and while their

court cases were pending, he kept an eye on these people, most of whom he did not know. As his reputation grew, more judges were inclined to allow Augustus the opportunity to do his work: Augustus vowed that if the judge would release a person to him he “would note their general conduct, and see that they were sent to school or supplied with some honest employment” (p. 1). At the time of his death in 1859, Augustus had successfully shepherded over 1900 adults and youth through his self-made rehabilitation program. From that point on, more and more courts began to develop a system of probationary supervision for juvenile offenders, due in large part to Augustus’s pioneering spirit and word of mouth reports of his successes. However, the court system as a whole continued to treat juvenile and adult offenders as in the past with formal sentences and incarceration in mixed prisons. Illinois legislators took a bold step in 1899 when they established a special court in Cook County that relied less on formal mandates and sentences for juvenile offenders. Through more informal procedures, the court focused on the needs of the children rather than stigmatizing them with a criminal record. This decision was a response, in large part, to women’s groups who embraced a Progressive Party platform of social activism and reform. The Progressive movement’s stance on juvenile criminal reform was influenced heavily by the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century work of psychologists such as G. Stanley Hall. Hall advocated that children and adolescents had distinct developmental stages that needed specific guidance, especially when the child became “wayward.” The initiator of the child study movement in the United States, Hall advocated “research on child and adolescent development and the improvement of conditions...in the family, school and workplace” (Arnett, 2001, p. 11).

In earlier times, sending adolescents to prison for criminal offenses became a routine form of institutionalization, destroying individual development and making it unlikely that young offenders would receive the individual guidance necessary to restore them to a positive developmental trajectory. As the 20<sup>th</sup> Century approached, however, there was a growing belief that if judges and juvenile court officers were allowed greater sentencing and follow-up flexibility than was present in adult courts, youth could be rehabilitated to become the productive adults desired by society.

A 1904 juvenile justice report by the International Prison Commission states, “such a (juvenile) court cannot be run on automatic or mechanical methods” (p. xiii). The role of the Probation and Parole Officer (PPO) began to take shape, with a national organization (the National Probation Association) formed in 1907. Between the extremes of institutionalization or release, a judge could assign offenders to the watchful eye of a Juvenile Probation Officer, just like John Augustus, to learn more about the adolescent and seek new opportunities for his or her rehabilitation (State of Louisiana Youth Services, 2010)

In the Midwest as elsewhere in the United States, legislators began to consider separate courts for juveniles in the early 1900s. In the subject Midwestern state, as the Progressive Movement began to influence the thinking of mother’s groups – most especially the newly formed National Congress of Mothers (NCM) chapters that were taking shape in communities throughout the United States – local leaders began to advocate for legislative reform for youth offenders (O’Connor, 2002).

By 1910, 32 states, including several in the Midwest, had enacted juvenile justice laws. Generally, they created new social control by special courts over dependent,

neglected and delinquent youth, casting a jurisdictional net that included youth who were destitute as well as those who actively committed crimes. In the subject Midwestern state and others, it also allowed for a broad range of sentencing options and ways to monitor youth who became a part of their new Juvenile Justice System.

### **Present Day**

A 2011 National Center for Juvenile Justice compilation on State Juvenile Justice Profiles written by Puzzanchera, Adams and Hockenberry stated that, “the [subject state’s] Juvenile Court Service administers detention screening, delinquency intake screening, diversion, predisposition investigation, probation supervision and aftercare services through eight judicial districts. Practices in the districts vary and have a strong local flavor” (p. 1). A Chief Juvenile Court Officer (JCO) who is a Supreme Court employee staffs each of the eight districts. These eight Chief JCOs meet periodically to coordinate their practices, but there is not one state administrator. Districts may appoint supervisors who are also JCOs to coordinate the caseloads of their specific districts. (see Figure 1

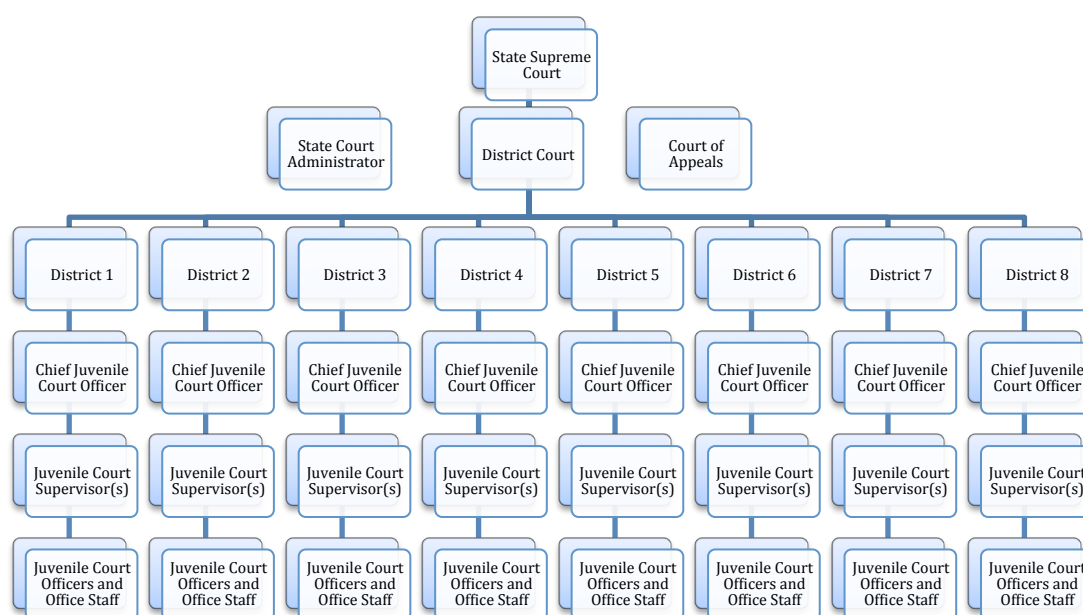


Figure 1: Organizational Map of Target State's Juvenile Court System

Juvenile Court Officers are required to have a Bachelor degree in law, criminal justice, social work or a related field of study. Although not professionally certified by the state, JCOs attend intensive pre-service training conducted by the Supreme Court and are encouraged to attend juvenile court conferences or other training as determined by the chief JCOs or supervisors.

From entering into informal adjustment agreements to recommendations for incarcerating youth under the age of 17 (or sometimes the extended age of 18), Juvenile Court Officers have a wide range of treatment options. Once court sanctions are enacted a JCO cannot change the verdict without further court approval; a review occurs by law every 6 months. In practice, however, most juvenile cases are reviewed more often. In the intervening months, JCOs supervise and make further recommendations for release or continued treatment (which could include such actions as restitution, community service,

participation in treatment for drug/alcohol usage, anger management or remand to a youth detention facility) based on their work with the youthful offender.

Recommendations and decisions regarding youthful offenders are based in large part upon the JCO's and district's approach to training, flexibility and creativity - three areas that can be enhanced by the various workshops, programs and practices offered throughout their careers. As a district and individually, adoptions of new correctional practices have yet to be researched in this midwestern state. The possibility exists to use Dr. Everett Rogers' model associated with the diffusion of innovations to better understand adoption or non-adoption issues.

### **Diffusion Research**

In Everett Rogers' 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2003) of his groundbreaking book *Diffusion of Innovations*, he explains how he first became interested in this research:

I became interested in the diffusion of agricultural innovations by observing farmers in my home community near Carroll, Iowa, who delayed for several years in adopting new ideas that could have been profitable for them. This behavior was puzzling and frustrating to me. Why didn't farmers adopt innovations? Factors other than just economic explanations must have been at work. (Rogers, p. xv)

After military service, Rogers returned to Iowa State University to complete a graduate degree in agricultural diffusion. During his literature review, he began to find other studies (notably a medical study on the adaptation of tetracycline and another about diffusion of learning among kindergartens) of situations involving the process of adopting an innovation. Rogers was "convinced that the diffusion of innovations was a kind of universal process of social change" (Rogers, 2003, p. xvi).

From this belief, Rogers began to write extensively about the diffusion of innovations, not only in agriculture but also well beyond. In his first edition of the *Diffusions of Innovations* published in 1962, the preface boasted, “more than five hundred publications on the diffusion of innovations are reviewed here” (Rogers, 2003, p. vii). In subsequent editions, Rogers notes the exponential growth in the number of studies linked to the conceptual model of diffusion of innovation. For the second edition, released in 1971, there were approximately 1500. With the third edition in 1983, about 3100 publications based on innovation diffusion were in existence. Estimates of up to 4000 studies existed at the time of the fourth edition in 1995; and with the 2003 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Rogers estimated the number to be 5200 studies and growing (p. xviii).

Within these thousands of studies, there has been scant diffusion of innovation research specifically related to Juvenile Court Officers in particular or the area of corrections in general. The researcher discovered a total of four studies that included information about youthful offenders: two studies of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program (see Ennett, Tobler, Ringwalt & Flewellin, 1994; and Lynam, Zimmerman, Novak, Logan, Martin, Leukefeld & Clayton, 1999), a study of collective violence and mass media (Meyers, 2000) and innovation in education and criminal justice (Emschoff & Blakely, 1987).

### **Categories of Innovation Adoption**

According to Rogers (2003), “Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over a period of time among members of a social system” (p. 474). Rogers suggests five categories to which adopters of an innovation can be assigned: Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards.



Roger's five categories assume that everyone (even the laggards) will ultimately adopt an innovation.

Each of the members of a group falls into one of five "categories":

1. Innovators – venturesome, able to cope with high levels of uncertainty, with a willingness to be daring or risky. Innovators represent 2.5% of the population. According to Rogers (p. 283), innovators import an innovation from outside of the group or system, allowing them to be "gatekeepers" of new ideas. The Innovator is often viewed as a bit of an oddity and needs Early Adopters to gain respect and momentum for an idea. However, innovators seek out other innovators like themselves, therefore seeking their peers from beyond their locales.
2. Early Adopters – respected, the "individual(s) to check with" and are not too far ahead of the average person with regard to innovativeness. Early adopters represent 13.5% of the population. Early Adopters "help trigger critical mass when they adopt an innovation" (p. 283). They critically evaluate the new idea and judiciously chooses those innovations that they can place their "stamp of approval" upon.
3. Early Majority: provide interconnectedness needed between the early and late adopters and account for 34% of the population. It could be said that Early Majority members live this statement by Alexander Pope "Be not the first by which the new is tried, nor the last to lay the old aside" (1711, part II). The Early Majority "follow with deliberate willingness in adopting innovations but seldom lead" (Rogers, 2003, p. 284).

4. Late Majority – a bit more skeptical and cautious, eventually adopt due in large part to peer pressure or economic necessity and are about one-third (34%) of the population. The Late Majority need, “most of the uncertainty about a new idea (to) be removed before (they) feel that it is safe to adopt (Rogers 2003, p. 284).
5. Laggards: traditional, not usually opinion leaders, isolated in their group, suspicious of change agents, and resistant to innovations, comprise about 16% of a group. Laggards are extremely cautious in adopting any innovation. This may be for a variety of reasons (culture, religion, suspicion, cost), and it cannot be assumed that Laggards will remain so with each innovation: any person may adopt any of the five categories of innovation with each proposed innovation. (Rogers 2003, p. 284).

Visually, the way that groups adopt innovation follows a sigmoid, better known as an “Normal-shaped” curve or simply “Normal” curve. A “Normal” curve is described as one of a number of possible models of probability distributions (and) is a widely used and important theoretical tool. All members of the family of normal curves, although different, have a number of properties in common. These properties include: shape, symmetry, tails approaching but never touching the X-axis and area under the curve. (Also), all members of the family of normal curves share the same bell shape, given the X-axis is scaled properly. Most of the area under the curve falls in the middle. The tails of the distribution (ends) approach the X-axis but never touch, with very little of the area under them. (Lastly), all members of the family of normal curves are bilaterally symmetrical. That is, if any normal curve was drawn on a two-dimensional surface (a piece of paper), cut out, and

folded through the third dimension, the two sides would be exactly alike (i.e.

Human beings are approximately bilaterally symmetrical, with a right and left

side) (Stockburger, 1998, Normal Curve).

According to Rogers, diffusion of innovation adopter categories follows a normal curve (see Figure 2).

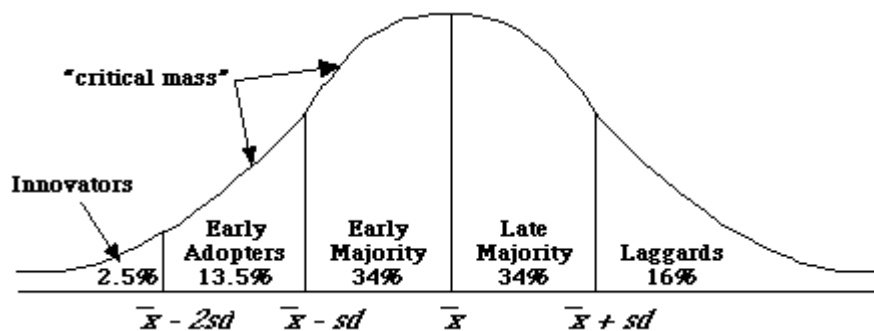


Figure 2: Normal diffusion curve (Rogers, 2003, Figure 7-3, p. 281)

### Stages in the Innovation Decision Process

One could also consider the different stages an individual would pass through while considering whether to adopt an innovation. According to the Five Stages in the Innovation Decision Process, (Rogers, 1995, pp. 169, 199) Rogers outlines five stages in the innovation-decision process. The five stages include: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation and reflect Prochaska's Stages of Change Model. (Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, 1992, see Figure 3)

Rogers' Stages of Innovation Decision Process	Prochaska's Stages of Change
Knowledge Stage Recall of information Comprehension of messages Knowledge or skill for effective adoption of innovation	Precontemplation
Persuasion Stage Liking Discussion new behavior with others Acceptance of the message Formation of positive image of the message and innovation Support for the innovative behavior from the system	Contemplation
Decision Stage Intention to seek additional information about the innovation Intention to try innovation	Preparation
Implementation Acquisition of additional info about innovation Use of innovation on regular basis Continued use of innovation	Action
Confirmation Stage Recognition of the benefits of using the innovation. Integration of the innovation into ongoing routine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of innovation to others</li> </ul>	Maintenance

Figure 3: Stages of Innovation

(Adapted from Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (1995, p. 190)).

According to studies conducted by Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross (1992), there

are five stages of change. These are described as follows:

1. Precontemplation –an individual is aware that a problem exists and begins to think about overcoming it.
2. Contemplation –an individual is aware that a problem exists and is seriously thinking about overcoming it but has not yet made a commitment to take action.
3. Preparation – the individual intends to take action in the immediate future but has not yet done so.
4. Action –an individual changes behavior in order to overcome the problem.
5. Maintenance – the individual consolidates and continues the behavior change that was made previously.

Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross assert that individuals contemplate change and enter different stages of change much as do those who consider adoption of innovation – a small number are at the action stage (similar to the Innovators), a third at the contemplation stage (similar to the Early Adopters), and over half are considering (pre-contemplation) the problem (Early Majority, Late Majority and Laggards).

### **Other Theories of Innovation Adoption**

Rogers' diffusion of innovation framework has been scrutinized and studied over the years by several leading educational and social scientists. Not all agree with Rogers' classifications of adopters or how change is implemented. Criticism of his work is generally based either on a belief that his approach is incorrect or that his theory is simplistic. For example, Dr. Roland Havelock and colleagues of the University of Michigan support the notion that Rogers' model needs to be broadened to reflect the two-

way communication that happens when an individual or organization decides to adopt a change. Havelock's Two-Way Transmission theory focuses not so much on the individual but rather the environment where "the manner in which individuals react to their environment and to the way others attempt to influence them is very much dependent upon their own feelings of confidence or sense of competence" (Havelock, 1969, p. 42). Roland Havelock uses the following diagram to explain this model.



Figure 4: Havelock's Stages of Innovation

He states that it is important

To be open to one another, willing to change our own ideas about the process from listening to colleagues in research, development and practice. Above all, we should be open to the consumer, sensitive to his needs and appreciative of his goals and values. (Havelock, 1969, p. 44)

According to Havelock, planning is essential for innovation adoption before change can be undertaken. His six elements include (Adapted from Bryson & Scheid, 2010, p. 1):

1. Relationship. Havelock states that a relationship with the system in need of change needs to be established. This could be regarded as a stage of "pre-contemplation" where things are going along as usual.
2. Diagnosis. The person or entity being evaluated or needing change is evaluated to see if there is any awareness of a need for change, similar to Prochaska et. al's contemplation phase, where the subject of change must decide whether or not change is needed or desired.
3. Acquire resources for change. The need for change is understood and the process of developing solutions begins.
4. Selecting a pathway. A pathway of change is selected from available options and then implemented.
5. Maintain and accept change. Individuals and organizations are often resistant to change, so careful attention must be given to make sure that the change becomes part of new routine behavior.
6. Stabilization and separation. Now that the change is successful, the change agent should monitor the affected system to make sure that it is successfully maintained.

Researchers Bryson and Scheid (2010) contend:

Change often embodies a noble desire to improve self or a system, but often people fail to recognize the amount of work that is required in order to effect lasting positive change. Havelock's theory of change helps you recognize this as you work as an agent of change. (p. 2)

For Gordon Lippitt, creating change is a process that needs specific actions or processes

to take place. Without one aspect of the change process, adopting change would often be frustrating at least and impossible at worst. Whereas Rogers emphasizes changes at the individual level, Havelock and Lippitt focus more on a functioning whole. The Lippitt Model consists of five areas: Vision, Skills, Measure/Rewards, Resources and Action Plans (Lippitt, 1986). When one element is missing, the people involved cannot move forward. Instead of solely focusing on the person as change adopter, Lippitt focuses on the process of change. Lippitt states: "If change is to occur, it must come about through hard work within the organization itself." (Twitoaster, 2011, p.1). The diagram below shows the progress of change and the consequences of missing elements.



Figure 5: Lippitt's Stages of Innovation (reprinted from online magazine Supply Chain Digest, December 17, 2009).



## Expanding Rogers' Theory

In Rogers' (2003) publication *Diffusion of Innovations* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), the innovation-diffusion process is described as “an uncertainty reduction process” (p. 232) and proposed attributes of innovations that help to decrease uncertainty about the innovation. These attributes of the innovation include: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Rogers continues, “individuals' perceptions of these (five) characteristics predict the rate of adoption of innovations” (p. 219). These attributes can continue to focus on the individual him or herself rather than the organization as a whole. Rogers (2003) defines each of these as:

Relative Advantage: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea it supersedes.

Compatibility: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters.

Complexity: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use.

Trialability: the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis.

Observability: the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others.

Understanding these attributes as well as the characteristics of individual adopters may not yet be enough. Rogers does caution, “getting a new idea adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is difficult” (p. 1). Understanding these attributes helped the researcher choose certain JCO personality traits, such as openness (as measured by the

Big Five Inventory), demographics, level of employee engagement and the individual's self-assessment of his or her proclivity for innovation adoption, as variables to be the subject of this study.

### **Innovation Adoption**

Even though some of the people may adopt a certain idea or program, adoption of an innovation may not suit everyone. According to Richerson (2001), professor of Human Ecology at the University of California, Davis:

On the one hand, there are certainly innovations “out there” that would be beneficial to the potential adopter. On the other hand, there are plenty of bad ideas out there, or at least ideas not suited to a particular decision-maker's situation. The trick is to use appropriate decision-making rules that increase one's chances of adopting good innovations and rejecting bad ones—always remembering that making decisions is a costly business. (p. 355)

This “costly business” is especially true when one considers the vulnerable juvenile offenders and their families whom the Juvenile Court Officers serve. On the online survey, when asked to comment on innovation one JCO wrote:

“I don't think change in and of itself is always good. I often see it as cyclical and if enough time passes things often change back to the way they previously were. Nearly all leaders want to make changes and be known for being an innovator and without their knowledge they make changes that were once the rule years before. I think it is important to make changes that are carefully selected and researched before making changes just for the sake of change.”

With ever growing challenges, what innovations one adopts or does not adopt from the

many training opportunities provided to individuals and district-wide is subjective. For this research study, Rogers' model as outlined in *Diffusion of Innovations*, with its keen focus on the adopter him or herself, creates an opportunity to study change at the level of the individual. Moreover, if a JCO or district makes innovation a priority in order to adopt elements or best practices from cutting-edge research about juvenile offenders, what factors would enhance or deter their willingness and ability to do so?

### **Juvenile Correctional Officer Challenges**

The juvenile population in the United States is expected to rise significantly. According to Census Bureau estimates, the juvenile population is expected to increase by 14% between 2000 and 2025. By 2050, the population of juveniles in the U.S. is expected to be 36% larger than in the year 2000 (U. S. Census, 2008). Moreover, among this rapidly increasing group are a growing number of "displaced youth" in the U.S. According to a 2012 study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation entitled "Youth and Work: restoring Teens and Young Adult Connections to Opportunity", the researchers noted,

Overall, 6.5 million people ages 16 to 24 are both out of school and out of work, statistics that suggest dire consequences for financial stability and employment prospects in that population. More and more doors are closing for these young people. Entry-level jobs at fast-food restaurants and clothing stores that high school dropouts once could depend on to start their careers now go to older workers with better experience and credentials. (p. 2)

With a lack of connection to work or school, the report details many possible long-term impacts for a youth's life (i.e. entering or re-entering a cycle of poverty due to a growth in single-family households, lack of self-esteem, hopelessness, etc). The Youth

and Work report continues:

More youth than ever—2.2 million teenagers and 4.3 million young adults ages 20 to 24—are neither in school nor working. Additionally, 21 percent—1.4 million—of those young people out of school and out of work are young parents who must take care of their own needs and those of their children. (p. 5)

Additionally, these children of disconnected youth live in impoverished homes where the household income is at or below \$20,000 (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012).

The Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report, authors Snyder and Sickmund state that juveniles face more challenges than ever before:

In the last half of the 20th century, the proportion of juveniles living in single-parent households increased. A recent study by McCurley and Snyder (2006) explored the relationship between family structure and self-reported problem behaviors. The central finding was that youth ages 12–17 who lived in families with both biological parents were, in general, less likely than youth in other families to report a variety of problem behaviors such as running away from home, sexual activity, major theft, assault, and arrest. In addition, although the dropout rate fell over the last 30 years, nearly a half million youth quit high school in 2000.

Educational failure is linked to law-violating behavior. (p.10)

This desperate situation increases the chance for disconnected youth to be involved in crime. In a report entitled *The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth*, Belfield, Levin and Rosen (2012) note “(Disconnected) youth are more likely to be involved in crime, in part because their incomes are lower” (p. 13). They further state that the cost for victims is substantial as crimes by youth are often perpetrated on other youth:

Yet, far more important than these fiscal costs is the psychological and monetary burden on the victims of crime. Indeed, the victims of youth crimes are often youths themselves, and many experience lifetime social and psychological costs related to their victimization. (p. 13)

What does this mean for a Juvenile Court Officer? With a rapidly increasing youth population as well as educational, work, parental and parenting challenges, JCOs can expect ever-expanding caseloads. In an issue paper on caseload standards published in the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) professional journal “Perspectives”, Matthews (1991) notes,

The issue of the ideal size for a probation or parole caseload has been discussed for as long as there have been professionals in the field. To the casual observer, it seems to be a rather straightforward question. Why can't a definitive answer be given to the question of how many offenders a caseload officer should carry? As with so many things, it is not so simple. Not every offender needs the same type or amount of supervision. To be effective and efficient, there must be varying amounts of supervision provided to offenders. The more serious or higher priority cases are assigned a greater level of supervision, meaning that the officer will be expected to have more frequent contact with that offender. Lower priority cases demand less time of the caseload officer. The policies and procedures of probation and parole agencies across the U.S. vary so that there is not enough consistency of practice to support national workload standards. (pp. 34-35)

In another APPA publication entitled “A Force For Positive Change” one key message presented was that,

Juvenile court caseloads have grown and changed. In 2002, U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled an estimated 1.6 million cases in which the juvenile was charged with a delinquency offense—an offense for which an adult could be prosecuted in criminal court. Thus, U.S. juvenile courts handled more than 4,400 delinquency cases per day in 2002. In comparison, approximately 1,100 delinquency cases were processed daily in 1960. (2009, p. 9)

It has long been recognized that, in order to deliver effective, research-based services, caseload sizes must be manageable. Historically in the field of corrections, probation officer caseloads have been much too large to use best-practice approaches. Priority for supervision and services is given to higher-risk cases that satisfy the risk principle of effective correctional interventions. In addition, supervision priorities are directly proportional to available probation resources, including funding and staff.

In the Midwestern state targeted for inclusion in this study, all youth involved in major and minor crimes, from shoplifting to underage drinking to assaults, are referred to juvenile court services. The 169 juvenile court officers responded to over 20,000 complaints involving youth in 2012. Once a youth is a ward of the juvenile court, he or she is subject to one or all of the following (abstracted from the Delinquency Services Report, 2009, p. 3):

1. Supervised Treatment: provides supervised educational support and treatment during the day to children who are experiencing social, behavioral, or emotional problems that place them at risk of group care or state institutional placement. This can include incarcerating an offender in one of the youth detention centers to electronic monitoring (ankle bracelet) to track an offender's whereabouts. This

program is designed for high-risk youth who need intensive rehabilitation.

2. Tracking and Monitoring: provide individualized and intensive one-to-one intervention. Here, a JCO will have increased contact with the youth throughout the term of his or her probation. Ultimately the goal is to help a youthful offender to establish positive behaviors as well as achieve greater personal accountability in a community-based setting. This program is designed for moderate-risk youth.
3. Lifeskills services: provide individual or group therapy or instruction which can include training to develop and enhance personal skills, problem solving, accountability, acceptance of responsibility, victim empathy, activities of daily living and job skills. This program is designed primarily for low risk youth.

### **Summary**

What programs, processes, and treatment plans the 169 Juvenile Correctional Officers choose to offer juvenile offenders in their care is flexible and myriad. How and with whom JCOs choose to implement these programs may be influenced by location (rural vs. urban), gender, years of service, active caseload numbers, temperament and personality and level of employee engagement, on the individual and district level and may consequently impact innovative ideas and practices. This was what this study was endeavoring to discover.

### CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF STUDY

#### Purpose

As noted in Chapter One, the purpose of this study was to determine levels of innovation adoption by Juvenile Court Officers in eight judicial districts of a Midwestern state and to examine the extent to which location, personal characteristics and demographic variables influence innovation adoption. The researcher utilized a mixed-methods study. According to Creswell in his 2011 publication *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, mixed-method research is:

A research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of the research problems than either approach alone. (p. 5)

In order to explore variables that might influence JCOs' adoption of strategies or programs that required a change from their current approaches, the researcher used a mixed-method design combining a quantitative online survey with qualitative interviews. It was predicted that JCOs' attitudes toward change would be influenced by office location (rural vs. urban), years of service to the district, gender, caseload, personality and temperament, and employee engagement. Research questions, with attendant hypotheses associated with this study are outlined below.



Research Question 1: To what extent, if any, do Juvenile Court Officers' demographic factors affect their innovation adoption?

Research Question 1a: To what extent, if any, do employees in rural and urban office locations differ in their reported levels of innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 1a: Respondents from rural office locations will report lower levels of innovation adoption than those from urban office locations.

Research Question 1b: To what extent, if any, does an employee's years of service affect his/her reported level of innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 1b: Respondents with more years of service will report lower levels of innovation adoption than those with fewer years of service.

Research Question 1c: To what extent, if any, do male and female employees differ in their reported levels of innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 1c: Male and female respondents will report equal levels of innovation adoption.

Research Question 1d: To what extent, if any, does the size of the JCO's active caseload impact his or her reported level innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 1 d: Those Juvenile Court Officers with larger caseloads will report lower levels of innovation adoption than those with smaller caseloads.

Research Question 2: To what extent, if any, does the JCO's personality and temperament influence his or her reported level of innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 2: Respondents reporting greater levels of openness on the Big Five Temperament Inventory will report higher levels of innovation adoption.

Research Question 3: To what extent, if any, does a JCO's level of employee engagement influence reported level of innovation adoption?

Hypothesis 3: Respondents reporting greater levels of employee engagement on the Wilson Employee Engagement Scale will show higher levels of innovation adoption.

Research Question 4: To what extent do the Juvenile Court Officers' responses reflect Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovation adopters categories?

Hypothesis 4: Respondent's responses will align with Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovation adopter categories.

## **Participants**

Study participants were Juvenile Court Officers located in a Midwest region of the United States. The population included approximately 169 JCOs distributed across 8 districts contained within the Juvenile Justice system for the region. Of the 169 employees in the agency, 58 ( $n = 58$ ) completed and submitted the survey, an overall response rate of 34.3 percent. Two respondents did not answer the first question "permission to use the questionnaire for research" prompt, therefore, their surveys were not considered for the statistical analysis, leaving a sample of 56 respondents ( $n = 56$ ). Additionally, some of the respondents did not answer all of the questions. Their surveys were dropped only from the statistical test for questions that addressed the missing

variable. There are no populations with which to compare this sample as no other studies were found to have examined innovation adoption specifically among Juvenile Court Officers.

Survey respondents were 38 percent ( $n = 21$ ) female and 62 percent ( $n = 35$ ) male. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents ( $n = 30$ ) were employed zero to 10 years and 41 percent ( $n = 21$ ) were employed 11 or more years; five individuals did not respond to this question. Fifty-two percent ( $n = 28$ ) of the total sample indicated that they worked with a mix of more urban than rural offenders and 13 percent ( $n = 8$ ) indicated working with a mix of more rural than urban offenders, 19 percent ( $n = 11$ ) of the sample indicated that they worked in a non-urban, rural area and 16 percent ( $n = 9$ ) said they worked in a wholly urban office setting. Eighty-four percent ( $n = 47$ ) reported having achieved a Bachelor's degree, twelve percent ( $n = 7$ ) reported achieving a Master's degree and four percent ( $n = 2$ ) reported receiving a Professional Degree or Ph.D. Including themselves, fifty percent ( $n = 28$ ) of the JCOs indicated that there were between one and five individuals who worked at their office location, twenty-one percent ( $n = 12$ ) worked in offices of between six and ten, twenty-three percent ( $n = 13$ ) in offices housing 11 to 15, two percent ( $n = 1$ ) in an office of 16 to 20, and four percent ( $n = 2$ ) in an office of 21 or more (see Table 1 for complete demographic information).

Table 1  
*Juvenile Court Officer Demographic Information*

Gender:		
Male	<i>n</i> = 35	(62%)
Female	<i>n</i> = 21	(38%)
Years of Service:		
Ten or less years	<i>n</i> =30	(59%)
More than ten years	<i>n</i> = 21	(41%)
Education		
BA	<i>n</i> = 47	(84%)
MA	<i>n</i> = 7	(12%)
PhD or Professional Degree	<i>n</i> = 2	(4%)
Office Population		
1 – 5 JCOs	<i>n</i> = 28	(50%)
6-10 JCOs	<i>n</i> = 12	(21%)
11 – 15 JCOs	<i>n</i> = 13	(23%)
16 – 20 JCOs	<i>n</i> = 1	(2%)
20+	<i>n</i> = 2	(4%)
Office Location		
Urban	<i>n</i> = 9	(16%)
Rural	<i>n</i> = 11	(19%)
More Urban than Rural	<i>n</i> = 28	(52%)
More Rural than Urban	<i>n</i> = 8	(13%)

Table 1: JCO Demographic Information

## **Procedure**

To address the research questions, the study used a mixed methods design. It incorporated a web-based survey distributed to the total JCO population and follow-up face-to-face interviews with a subset of the sample. Prior to data collection, approval was granted from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board for this investigation (IRB # 20130413247 EX). The researcher then sent e-mails (see Appendix A) to the Chief Juvenile Court Officers, who then forwarded the e-mail to the work email addresses of employees of a Midwestern Juvenile Court system. Each Chief decided if the e-mail was to be forwarded to each JCO by him or herself, by the Chief's administrative secretary or other designee. The email included information about the investigation, a note from each Chief indicating approval to complete the survey during work hours, a request for informed consent and a link to a secure survey website hosted by Survey Monkey that included the self-report survey. Once participants clicked on the link they were able to complete the instrument online. Participants were given 10 business days to complete the survey with reminder e-mails about the survey sent on the fifth and ninth days. Results were sent to the researcher via the Survey Monkey tool in aggregate and anonymous form and were downloaded into SPSS 2011 for analysis at the Nebraska Evaluation and Research (NEAR) Center on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

When a JCO completed his or her online survey, he or she was able to select whether or not he/she wished to be interviewed for this study. Each subject indicated his/her informed consent through providing his or her e-mail address for the researcher to use to contact him or her via e-mail. Once permission for the interview was received, the

subject received a copy of the interview questions via email to familiarize him or herself with the six open-ended questions. The interviewee had the choice of being interviewed face to face at his or her office, online via Facetime, Skype, or other online applications (Blackboard, etc.) where the subject and interviewer could respond to each other in real time, or via telephone. Whatever interview method the subject chose, the interview was recorded electronically and also through the interviewer's notes. Participants agreed that the interviewer could re-contact them to ask for further clarification of a comment or answers provided in the interview if necessary.

The researcher developed the Innovation Adoption Survey to assess the level of innovation adoption in the eight districts of a Midwestern state by helping to identify influences, obstacles, attributes and possible advantages within and among Juvenile Court Officers. This web-based self-report survey was conducted for the purpose of gathering demographic, educational and work-related opinions and information regarding adoption of innovation from a group of Juvenile Court Officers located in the Midwest region of the United States. Web surveys continue to gain in popularity as these allow researchers to obtain large amounts of data without paying for paper and postage or hiring, training and debriefing interviewers. Additionally, web surveys allow data to be collected and downloaded into statistical software without additional data entry.

Web surveys are not without limitations, however. Well-designed surveys can be overlooked or ignored by subjects due to the sheer volume of e-mail, entertainment, requests and other data-gathering activities on the web. With all that is expected of the JCOs and with the emergencies of the youth and families in their care, participants may tune out the survey.

The value of surveys that could be done on the Web is limited-as with other approaches-by the willingness of people to (participate in) them. Thus, the whole enterprise may be brought down by its own weight if we get to a point where persons are so bombarded with surveys (or other) requests that they either tune out completely or base their participation decisions on the content, topic, entertainment value, or other features of the survey. (Couper, 2000, p. 465)

Additionally, research shows that web surveys may fail to meet the response rates of traditional mail surveys (Couper, 2000). Differences in response rates for mail surveys and web surveys could be due to less time devoted to motivating subjects (through e-mail reminders, etc.) compared to several methods often utilized in postal mail (personalizing letters, follow-up reminders, and different incentives) (Kaplowitz, Hadlock & Levine, 2004). However, Kaplowitz, Hadlock, and Levine also discovered that web-based and paper-based surveys achieved the same response rate when both were given advance mail and reminder notifications.

The researcher elected to utilize a web-based survey format after considering the benefits and potential limitations of using web surveys within research. Using Survey Monkey was both easy to use and economical, meeting the needs of the researcher and the subjects. A professional subscription to Survey Monkey was obtained to create and disseminate the survey. The Innovation Adoption Survey was accessible to each eligible participant via a hyperlink embedded in an email, which provided an easy and immediate means of response for the participants. Survey access was by invitation-only and password protected. The information collected by Survey Monkey was only accessible by the researcher and responses were aggregated and anonymous. Subjects were

assigned a respondent number and names did not appear in any other documents related to this research with the exception of the e-addresses collected to allow the researcher to conduct follow-up interviews. The setting was only to be referred to as taking place in the Midwest. The names or location of the regions remain unknown to all but the subjects and the researcher. At the conclusion of the study, all data was collected and saved on a non-internet accessed computer located at the researcher's residence.

### **Instrumentation**

Three research instruments were utilized to create a new instrument, the Innovation Adoption Survey. These three instruments were the Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale, the Big Five Inventory and the Wilson Employee Engagement Scale. An overview and discussion of each instrument follows.

#### **Instrument 1: The Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale.**

*The Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale*, created by Carol Savery and used with permission (Appendix B), was adapted for use with this study. Ms. Savery studied 116 chapter members of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in a Midwestern state. The instrument included multiple-choice and open-ended questions with a forced-response 4-Point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree and 4-Strongly Agree). Scores for each question were summed; higher scores indicated more inclination to adopt innovation.

The Savery Scale's Cronbach's Alpha reliability was .657 for nine questions. Initially, there were twelve survey questions: the three additional survey questions this researcher chose not to include in the study's results due to low alpha results. With all 12 questions included, Cronbach's Alpha was .504. After each question was critically



evaluated, it was determined that three questions needed to be eliminated. The questions were: Question 8: I will adopt new approaches or ideas, but do not attempt to influence others (Cronbach Alpha raised to .576). Question 5 I tend to be suspicious (Cronbach Alpha raised to .615). Question 9: I go along with innovation out of necessity (Cronbach Alpha raised to .657). For the remaining nine questions, the minimum score possible for the Savery Scale was nine and the maximum score possible was 36.

### **Instrument 2: The Big Five Inventory.**

*The Big Five Inventory* (BFI) (John, Donahue & Kentle, 1991) is a forty-four-question instrument that measures five personality dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Openness. For this study the personality dimension of openness was selected for inclusion; the sub-scale that measured openness consists of 10 questions. The BFI incorporated a forced-response five-point Likert scale (disagree strongly (1), disagree a little (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree a little (4) and agree strongly (5)). The scores from each question were summed; higher scores indicated a greater degree of openness. For the ten questions related to openness, the minimum score possible was ten and the maximum 50 with two questions reversed-scored. Chronbach's Alpha for the BFI was .798.

### **Instrument 3: Wilson Employee Engagement Scale.**

Karen Wilson (2009) created the *Wilson Employee Engagement Scale* for use in her doctoral dissertation. The eight-question scale (used with permission – see Appendix G) was developed for use with an exploratory study of employee engagement of a public rehabilitation service agency. The eight-question scale used a six-point Likert scale for eight questions (strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), slightly agree

(4), agree (5), and strongly agree (6)). All scores were summed; higher scores indicated a greater degree of employee engagement. For the eight questions related to employee engagement, the minimum score possible was eight points and the maximum 48.

Chronbach's Alpha for the Wilson Scale was .713.

### **Survey Adaptations**

For the Innovation Adoption Survey, adaptations of the Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale were made to reflect terminology related to Juvenile Court Officers. Other adaptations included the deletion of two questions relating to specific public relations' organizations and media delivery and four questions relating to communication of innovation to outside sources (other public relations firms, clients, media agencies, etc.). Two questions related to Savery's research subject's preference for Internet or paper surveys were deleted as these included both delivery types in her research. Four questions were added specifically related to the goals of this study (rural vs. urban location, active caseload, listing of JCO training workshops and review of training workshops). Five open-ended questions were included to elicit additional comments or clarifications from the JCOs (see Appendix C for the modified instrument).

### **Measuring Results**

The Innovation Adoption Survey was designed to measure participants' levels of innovation working as Juvenile Court Officers in relation to three separate indicators: the Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale, The Big Five Temperament Inventory and Wilson's Employee Engagement Scale. For this study the Independent variables were the employee's number of years of service within a district, the location of the employee's office, his or her gender, and number of cases per employee, personal

temperament and employee engagement. Table 2 describes the total score for the adoption of innovation scale (Savery), temperament inventory (BFI) and engagement scale (Wilson).

Table 2

*Juvenile Court Officer Total Scores – (Savery, BFI and Wilson)*

	<i>n</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Savery Total Score	51	9.00	36.00	24.47	3.08
BFI Total Score	50	10.00	50.00	36.32	5.44
Wilson Total Score	54	8.00	48.00	32.74	5.05

Table 2: JCO Total Scores

The resulting scores from the instruments used in this study were considered to be within the acceptable range of reliability. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) “the number of test items, item interrelatedness and dimensionality affect the value of (Cronbach’s) alpha” (p. 54). Schmitt (1996) reminds researchers,

In considering the implications of these findings for expected validity, it can be seen that with reliability equal to .70, validity has an upper limit of .84 (i.e. the square root of .70) as opposed to 1.00. Even with reliability as low as .49, the upper limit of validity is .70. When a measure has other desirable properties, such as meaningful content coverage of some domain and reasonable unidimensionality, this low reliability may not be a major impediment to its use. (p. 352)

With regard to the Savery scale then, this researcher accepted Schmitt's rationale that there is meaningful content coverage with regard to adoption of innovation that would allow an acceptable Cronbach Alpha to be .657.

The last two questions asked in the e-survey were whether the participant would be willing to participate in a brief (approximately 45 minute) interview and if so, if he/she would provide an e-mail address so he/she would be contacted by the researcher to set up an interview. Eighteen Juvenile Court Officers (32.14 percent) of the 56 total respondents ( $n = 56$ ) agreed to be interviewed. Of the 18, one did not respond to further e-mail messages, one decided to decline the interview due to work demands and another went un-interviewed due to scheduling problems, leaving a total of 15 Juvenile Court Officers ( $n = 15$ ) who engaged in the personal interview process. "The important point is to describe the meaning of a small number of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 122). Creswell notes, "between 10 and 20 personal interviews are a good range for a phenomenological study" (Creswell, personal class notes 9/2004).

### **Personal Interview**

The researcher developed the Innovation Adoption Personal Interview that employed the research tradition of Phenomenology. Phenomenology is structured upon the work of leading phenomenologist Clark Moustakas in his 1994 book *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Moustakas describes phenomenology as "the first method of knowledge" as it "attempts to eliminate everything that represents a pre-judgment, setting aside presuppositions and reaching a transcendental state of freshness and openness" (p. 41). By promoting the concept of epoche (to refrain from judgment), a

phenomenological researcher brackets his or her biases and preconceptions and studies a phenomenon with child-like wonder (Creswell, 1998, p. 52). Furthermore, Moustakas suggests that:

Evidence from phenomenological research is derived from first-person reports of life experiences. In accordance with phenomenological principles, scientific investigation is valid when the knowledge sought is arrived at through descriptions that make possible an understanding of the meanings and essences of experience. (1994, p. 84)

Phenomenology was an appropriate qualitative tradition for this study because of the need to examine recurring patterns of meaning from the perspective of those being studied. This was accomplished through transcribed client interviews that centered on attempting to understand how “ordinary members of society constitute the world of everyday life, especially how individuals consciously develop meaning out of social interactions” (Creswell, 1998, p. 53).

As indicated earlier, eighteen JCOs offered to participate in the follow-up interview. Of the eighteen, fifteen were interviewed. Each of the fifteen interviewees were asked a series of six open-ended questions about innovation adoption (See Appendix L). Interviews lasted, on average, 33 minutes (range = 27 – 45 minutes). Each interview was audiotaped using a RCA digital voice recorder that generated an identifying letter and number for each JCO. Once the interview was completed, the researcher and one transcriptionist transcribed the digital files (See Appendix N for a copy of the signed confidentiality agreement), then the researcher created a process of reviewing each digital file and transcript to ensure accuracy. Once the interviews were

completed and the transcripts analyzed, a synthesis of the textual and structural meanings was completed, as well as any comparison of themes with themes identified in the Innovation Adoption Survey (see Appendix G for Innovation Adoption Personal Interview questions).

### **Data Analyses**

Each transcript was highlighted to note the six different questions and carefully reviewed again to create a synopsis of each JCO transcript, paying specific attention to quotes, stories, key phrases, grouping ideas expressed by each subject into units and discovering themes. With the sheer volume of information generated from the interviews and surveys, the choice of a data analysis method needed careful consideration. In his 2011 edition of *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, Creswell outlines five types of mixed-methods design: convergent, embedded, explanatory, exploratory, multiphase and transformative. For this study, the researcher chose the explanatory model. Creswell explains,

The data analysis procedures in the explanatory design involve first collecting quantitative data, analyzing the data, and using the results to inform the follow-up qualitative data. In this design, the data analysis of the initial quantitative phase connects into the data collection of the follow-up qualitative phase. (p. 221)

Creswell also outlines strategies by Bogdan and Biklen, (1992) Huberman and Miles, (1994) and Wolcott (1990) regarding how one should take notes, identify codes, use systematic procedures and more. Creswell distills his own formula for data analysis that he calls a “spiral” (see Data Analysis Spiral Figure 6) which includes such tasks as

visualizing, classifying, memoing, reflecting, comparisons, etc., creating the possibility of a robust thematic analysis.

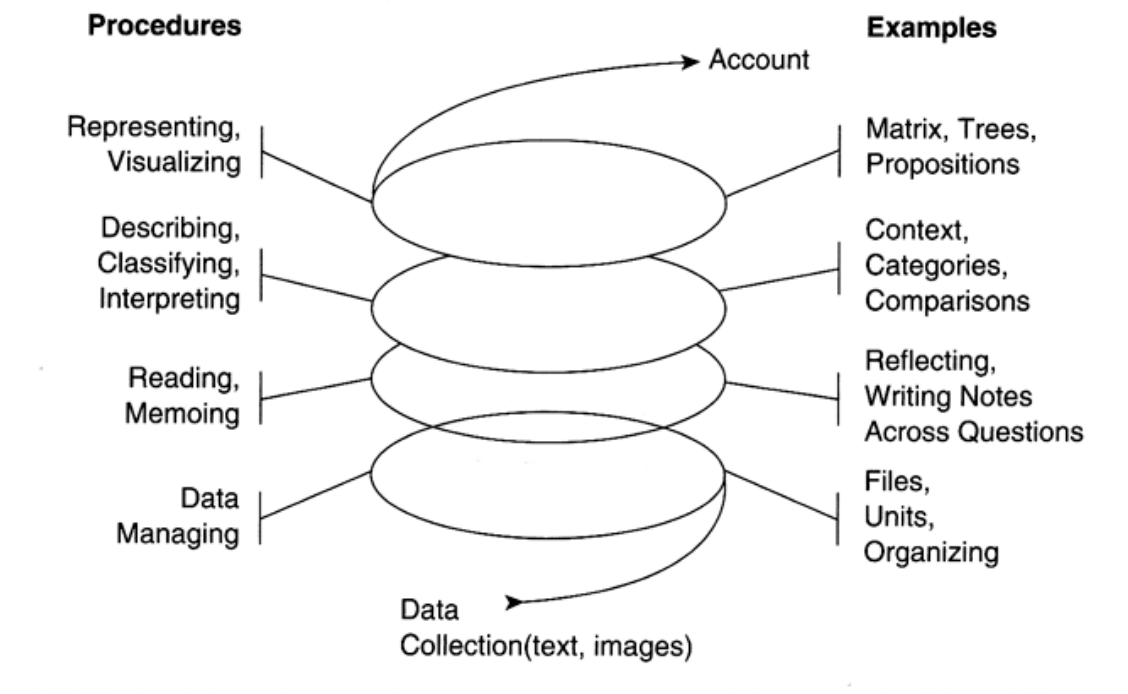


Figure 6: Data analysis spiral from Wakkary (2008, p. 6) adapted from Creswell (1998).

Kodish & Gittelsohn (2011) explained:

A researcher examining acceptability in a new setting using a qualitative approach might analyze initial qualitative data using open coding; that is, he or she explores the textual data line-by-line for conceptualization of “emergent” themes related to beneficiary perceptions of the unfamiliar commodity. Themes from the data might emerge that are unexpected to the researcher, for example, unique cultural characteristics that directly relate to (adoption of innovation). (p. 53)

Moustakas (1994) suggests that a researcher uses the following:

Analysis steps – horizontalizing individual statements, creating meaning units, clustering themes, advancing textural and structural descriptions, and presenting

an integration of textural and structural descriptions into an exhaustive description of the essential invariant structure (or essence) of the experience. (p. 153)

Using Creswell's data analysis spiral and Moustakas' Analysis Steps allowed the researcher to delve deeply into the textual data to glean important phrases, concepts and concurrent themes that may or may not validate the quantitative data. Each tool also allowed the researcher to consider many possibilities at once. For example, as the researcher considered the responses, a question arose as to whether or not there were distinct differences between those who identified themselves as Innovators as opposed to Early Adopters or Early Majority Adopters. The researcher gathered all of the transcripts and synopses and evaluated each group's responses to each of the six questions to discover and compare what, if any differences, emerged. The next chapter outlines the study's results.



## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### Overview

The purpose of this study was to determine levels of innovation adoption by Juvenile Court Officers in eight judicial districts of a Midwestern state and to examine the extent to which location and demographic variables influence innovation adoption. Areas of inquiry concerned the relationship between Juvenile Court Officers' office locations, years of service, gender, active caseload, personality and temperament and employee engagement, and their levels of innovation adoption. Four hypotheses were developed. These hypotheses, the analyses used to test them, and the results are presented below.

*Hypothesis 1a: Respondents from rural office locations will report lower adoption of innovation scores than those from urban office locations.*

The independent samples T-test was chosen as the statistical measure for this question. The T-test was used to evaluate the difference in means between two groups and assumes that the variables are normally distributed within each group and that the variation of scores in the two groups is not reliably different. Results of the Levene's test (.770) indicated that equal variances could be assumed and an alpha level ( $\alpha$ ) was set to .05 to limit Type I error or falsely accepting the null. In this sample, the mean score for rural respondents ( $n = 17$ ) was 2.79 ( $SD = .35$ ), whereas the mean score for urban respondents ( $n = 34$ ) was 2.68 ( $SD = .34$ ), thus indicating that rural respondents reported slightly higher levels of innovation than those who worked in urban areas. However, the score showed no statistically significant difference between rural and urban employees' total innovation scores ( $t(49) = 1.161, p = .251$ ). The hypothesis that rural respondents would

report lower scores for innovation adoption was not supported (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Rural and Urban Respondents and Innovation Adoption*

Rural Respondents	( $n = 17$ )	Mean = 2.79	SD = .35
Urban Respondents	( $n = 34$ )	Mean = 2.68	SD = .34
$(t(49) = 1.161, p = .251)$			
(Note: 5 JCOs did not respond to all Innovation Adoption questions)			

Table 3: Rural and Urban Innovation

*Hypothesis 1b: Respondents with more years of service will report lower innovation adoption scores than those with fewer years of service.*

The independent samples T-test was chosen as the statistical measure for this question. Results of the Levene's test (.401) indicated that equal variances could be assumed and an alpha level ( $\alpha$ ) was set to .05. In this sample, the mean score for respondents with service of 10 years or less ( $n = 28$ ) was  $M = 2.22$ , ( $SD = .31$ ), whereas the mean score for respondents with service of 11 years or more ( $n = 20$ ) was  $M = 2.33$  ( $SD = .23$ ), thus indicating that those with more years of service reported slightly higher levels of innovation than those who had less years of service. However, the results were not statistically significant ( $t(50) = .481, p = .633$ ) therefore the hypothesis that respondents with more years of service would report lower scores of innovation was not supported (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Years of Service and Innovation Adoption*

10 years of service or less	( <i>n</i> = 28)	Mean = 2.22	SD = .31
11 or more years of service	( <i>n</i> = 20)	Mean = 2.33	SD = .23
$(t(46) = -.481, p = .633)$			
(Note: 8 JCOs did not respond to all Innovation Adoption or Years of Service questions)			

Table 4: Years of Service and Innovation

Although significance related to years of service was not supported, one unexpected outcome was a significant correlation noted between one's age and employee engagement. Due to the many comments JCOs made regarding their belief that younger and older employees would adopt innovation differently, three different age groups were created; group M1 = JCOs 26-39 years of age, (*n* = 17); group M2 = JCOs 40-46 years of age, (*n* = 16) and group M3 = JCOs aged 47 and above, (*n* = 18) (five respondents did not reveal their age). Analysis of Variance examined differences in mean scores between the three age groups, with results revealing that group one (younger) was significantly more likely to report engagement than were group two (mid-range); ( $M1 = 5.05$  vs.  $M2 = 4.47$ ; ( $F(2, 48) = 3.614, p = .035$ ). No differences between either groups one or two and group three was found ( $M3 = 4.77$ ). In other words, younger JCOs were more likely to report engagement with his or her work than those slightly older (from 1 to 6 years) but were not more likely to be more engaged than those who were seven or more years older. The hypothesis that respondents with more years of service would report lower innovation adoption scores than those with fewer years of service was not supported (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Ages of Juvenile Court Officers and Innovation Adoption*

M1 = JCOs ages 26 - 39	( <i>n</i> = 17)
M2 = JCOs ages 40 – 46	( <i>n</i> = 16)
M3 = JCOs ages 47 and older	( <i>n</i> = 18)
M1 = 5.05 vs. M2 = 4.47	( <i>F</i> (2, 48) = 3.614, <i>p</i> = .035) significant
M3 = 4.77;	no significance detected when compared to M1 or M2
(Note: 5 JCOs did not respond to all Innovation Adoption or Age questions)	

Table 5: JCO Age and Innovation

*Hypothesis 1c: Male and female respondents will report equal levels of innovation adoption scores.*

The independent samples T-test was chosen as the statistical measure for this question. Results of the Levene's test (.568) indicated that equal variances could be assumed and an alpha level ( $\alpha$ ) was set to .05. In this sample, the mean score for female respondents (*n* = 17) was 2.77 (SD = .176), whereas the mean score for male respondents (*n* = 34) was 2.69 (SD = .274), indicating that male and female respondents reported equal levels of innovation. The scores showed no statistically significant difference between males and female respondents' total innovation scores ( $t(49) = .768, p = .446$ ). The hypothesis that male and female respondents would report equal levels of innovation adoption scores was supported (Table 6).

Table 6

*Male and Female Respondents and Levels of Innovation Adoption*

Female respondents	( <i>n</i> = 17)	Mean = 2.77	SD = .287
Male respondents	( <i>n</i> = 34)	Mean = 2.69	SD = .368
$(t(49) = .768, p = .446)$			
(Note: 5 JCOs did not respond to all Innovation questions)			

Table 6: Levels of Innovation Adoption

*Hypothesis 1d: Those Juvenile Court Officers with greater caseloads will report lower innovation adoption scores than those with lighter caseloads.*

The researcher received the reported Juvenile Court Officers' active caseload summary from the Midwestern state's Department of Corrections. However, due to the study's design and promise of anonymity for the web survey, the researcher could not correlate the respondent's responses to the surveys with his or her caseload. Therefore, no determination of this hypothesis for the total sample was possible, however there were 18 who provided e-mail addresses for the follow-up personal interview. With these addresses the researcher was able to compare and contrast the caseloads of these 18 with their Savery innovation scores. In 2012, there were 20,094 total complaints lodged against juveniles in this Midwestern state. Approximately half of the cases were dismissed, leaving 10,000 cases to be disposed of formally (sent to court) or informally (sent to a diversion program). The sum of the caseload scores for the 18 officers was 524, ranging from a low of zero to a high of 56. For the purpose of this study, eight scores above 32 were considered high and 10 scores of 28 or under were considered low. Using SPSS, a t-test was conducted. Results of the Levene's test (.780) indicated that equal

variances could be assumed and an alpha level ( $\alpha$ ) was set to .05. In this sample, the mean score for JCOs with 28 or fewer active caseloads ( $n = 9$ ) respondents was 2.80 ( $SD = .30$ ), whereas the mean score JCOs with 32 or more active caseloads ( $n = 8$ ) was 2.65 ( $SD = .32$ ), thus indicating that JCOs with fewer than 28 and more than 32 active cases reported equal levels of innovation ( $t(15) = .995, p = .335$ ). As the score showed no statistically significant difference, the hypothesis was not supported (Table 7).

Table 7

*Active Cases and Innovation Adoption*

28 or fewer active cases	( $n = 9$ )	Mean = 2.80	SD = .30
32 or more active cases	( $n = 8$ )	Mean = 2.65	SD = .32
$(t(15) = .995, p = .335)$			
(Note: 1 JCO did not respond to all Innovation Adoption or Active Cases questions)			

Table 7: Active Cases and Innovation

*Hypothesis 2: Respondents reporting greater levels of openness on the Big Five Temperament Inventory will show greater readiness for innovation adoption.*

Correlational analyses revealed that a *trend* towards statistical significance in the association between temperament and readiness to adopt innovations ( $r = .079; p = .607$ ). Interestingly, there were two outliers – one who reported low levels of innovation and high levels of openness and another who reported high levels of innovation and high levels of openness. When both outliers were excluded, no effect was evident ( $r = .156; p = .319$ ). It is clear that there was no statistical significance when all respondents were included or the two outliers excluded between those with more or less openness and total innovation scores and the hypothesis was not supported (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Correlations for Big Five Inventory and the Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale*

With outliers	( $r = .079$ ; $p = .607$ )
Without outliers	( $r = .156$ ; $p = .319$ )

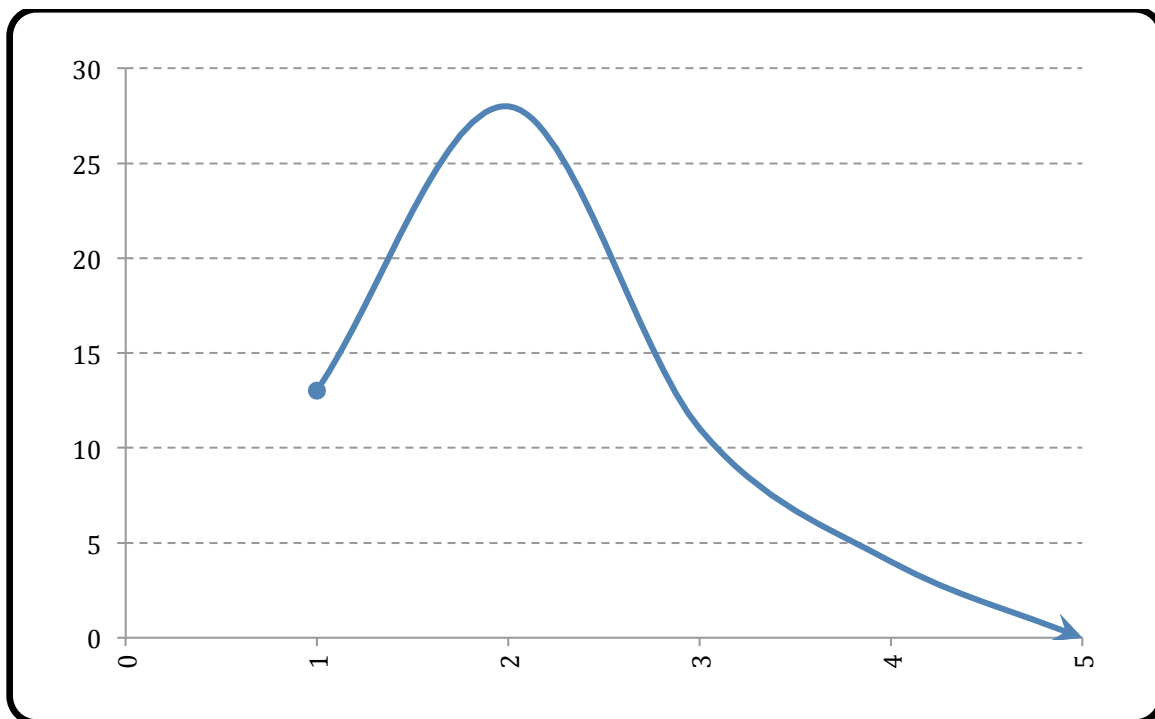
Table 8: Big Five and Savery Correlations

*Hypothesis 3: Respondents reporting greater levels of employee engagement on the Wilson Employee Engagement Scale will show higher levels of innovation adoption.*

Correlation analysis were conducted and revealed that there was a significant relationship between employee engagement and adoption of innovation ( $r = .44$ ;  $p = .001$ ), indicating that respondents with greater levels of employee engagement also reported greater levels of adoption of innovation scores, thus supporting Hypothesis 3.

*Hypothesis 4: Juvenile Court Officers' response results will reflect Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Adopter's categories.*

Rogers suggests five categories of adopters to innovation: Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards (which, for this study, was changed to Non-Adopters). Visually, the way that groups adopt innovation follows a normal curve (see Figure 2). No respondent self-identified as a Laggards/Non-Adopters, although four identified with the category Late Majority, 11 identified as Early Majority, 28 as Early Adopters and 13 as Innovators. When plotted these responses created a positively skewed curve (see example Figure 7).



1=Innovators, 2=Early Adopters, 3=Early Majority, 4=Late Majority, 5=Non-Adopters

Figure 7 – Juvenile Court Officer Innovation Adoption Scale

The graph displayed a significant positive skew. The hypothesis was not supported. A second question was asked as to the perceived nature of a respondent's own working environment relative to Rogers' categories of Diffusion of Innovation. When prompted to select the category that would best describe most (65% or higher) of the Juvenile Court Officers at the respondent's agency, the responses generated the following curve (see example Figure 8).



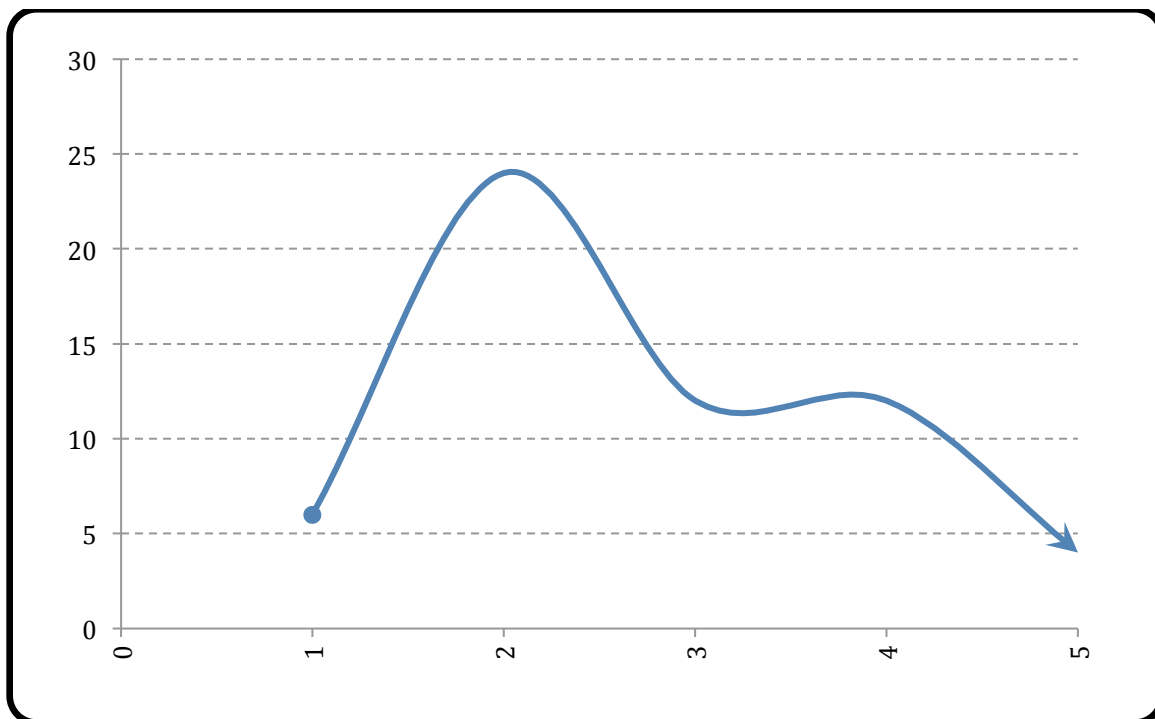


Figure 8 – Juvenile Court Officer Report of Other JCO Innovation Adoption

This graph also displayed a significant positive skew. The hypothesis that this curve would reflect Rogers' normal curve was not supported.

In summary, the following table lists the four hypotheses and whether or not each was supported by the survey results (see Table 9).

Table 9

*Hypotheses Results Table*


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	Supported	Unsupported
H1a: Rural vs. Urban		X
H1b: Years of Service		X
H1c: Male vs. Female	X	
H1d: High vs. Low Caseloads		X
H2: Personality and Temperament		X
H3: Employee Engagement	X	
H4: Roger's adopter categories "S" curve		X

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Table 9: Hypothesis Table

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### Personal Interviews

Personal phone and face-to-face interviews were conducted with fifteen participants using the Innovation Adopter Personal Interview in order to better understand Juvenile Court Officers' experience of innovation adoption. Of the fifteen interviews, five of the Juvenile Court Officers categorized themselves as Innovators; Eight as Early Adopters and two as Early Majority Adopters: There were no Juvenile Court Officers who identified themselves as Late Majority or Non-Adopters.

The researcher mined the interviews using spiral data analysis to understand innovation as experienced by Juvenile Court Officers. Their comments shed additional light on the three basic themes of the survey: The effect that personal characteristics of individual

JCOs have on their willingness to adopt innovations, the effect that external circumstances on adopting innovations and the impact of the quality of proposed innovations and the way they are presented on a JCO's willingness to adopt them. The remainder of Chapter 4 will be based on JCO interviews and address each theme, subthemes and ultimately, the essence of the research. All names are pseudonyms; for the ease of the reader, the researcher chose to use a selection of names included on the National Hurricane Center's 2013 Tropical Cyclone list for the Atlantic Region to identify each of the JCOs.

### **Personal Characteristics**

The recurring theme of personal characteristics was noted as one of the key factors influencing willingness to innovate. Particular characteristics that stood out included age/job tenure and personality. These are discussed in detail below.

**Age and tenure.** Comments and opinions related to age, job tenure and a JCO's willingness to adopt innovation appear throughout the interview transcripts. Generally speaking, their comments reflect a belief that younger individuals and those with fewer years on the job are more likely to be innovative. For example, Barry noted,

“I think that (the) younger you are the fresher you can be sometimes. There is no ‘well, we did it this way for thirty years and it has worked okay.’ There are tons of variables there, but I think sometimes newness and age does lead to (more openness, yet lessens with) the longer you have been in a profession.”

Others commented that those who don't wish to change feel like they have “been there, done that” or that “changes come and go, just wait it out”, or that if you do “change”, you may be admitting that you did things wrong before. Van described:

“I would say Juvenile Court Officers are typical positions that people tend to hold on to for a long time. They are highly sought after positions so folks often retire from a position. I think depending on where you are at in your career (older or younger), embracing new ideas and concepts is pretty challenging, because one, it’s sometimes difficult to do and (two), depending on how you perceive change you’re often saying ‘maybe what I have done for a long time wasn’t right or wasn’t effective.’”

and Humberto concurred with the following:

“I see people that don’t want to change and don’t want to adapt. (I don’t mean to) stereotype, (but it) is usually the ones that have been here for a long time and have done things a certain way for a long time. They are very comfortable with the way things are done and like the things the way they are.”

In a similar vein, Lorenzo stated “I would be curious, state wide, what you hear as far as how many people have retired and (have) said ‘I’m going to retire before we go digital.’”

**Personality.** Several personality factors were cited as creating both a willingness to be innovative (i.e. due to valuing life-long learning, liking to try new things) as well as resistance to change (i.e., fear and suspicion). While Juvenile Court Officers discussed many elements affecting why they would be receptive or would not be receptive to innovation, six specifically noted that it was simply their desire to be life-long learners that made them so willing to try new things. To illustrate, Chantal shared,

“I think when somebody mentions a new way of doing something, it’s always a try (for me). You get stagnant if you do the same things the same way for years and years. We were punitive more and now we’re taking a whole different

approach. (For example) like Motivational Interviewing – getting the kid to, you know, pretty much not buy into your program, but to make their own program and want to change for their reasons not for your reasons.”

Ingrid concurred,

“I’m the person out there on the internet trying to figure out what the next best practices are, new research, or (an) article or innovation that is out there that actually makes a difference for our kids. I believe we can actually make a difference in our kids. But we have to change what we’re doing and we have to continually change and adapt to the innovation of what’s out there.”

Similarly, five JCOs felt that their openness to innovation was due to their predisposition for innovation and consideration of its impact on their job performance. As Ingrid explained,

“Some people are very secure and are more open to change than others. But in terms of adapting to change or being open to change, my observation is that in large part, the willingness to change, to like change or not like change (is key).

Van contended:

“I like to have access to information as it comes in when I need it. So having...(new) applications on my phone that sync with Lotus Notes and things like that allow(s) me to essentially have work with me wherever I need to be.

On the other hand, personality factors appeared at work among those unwilling to change; in fact, fear was noted by several as a key factor that created resistance to change. Not all JCOs are keen to adopt innovation. For some, suspicions were aroused whenever new programs, projects or approaches are suggested. Lorenzo explained: “I

think that (computers) scared a lot of people away – we had a surge of people retiring. I think some of the technology has chased people away.” Further in the conversation he noted,

“You know, I thought about this (technology). We can say that we’re going to make things easier. We can say this is a better system – technology changing, policy changing. Bottom line is that we work with people and it doesn’t always help our jobs because in the end of the day, we still have to sit face to face with somebody, we have to deal with that person. I don’t care if it’s the 1920s or the 2010s, we are still dealing with people and families and technology. I think people get frustrated (and wonder) if we’re going to end up making ourselves too robotic.”

Similarly, for some, suspicions were aroused whenever new programs, projects or approaches are suggested. For instance, Lorenzo noted,

“Anytime people mention change, there (are) a lot of conspiracy theories that go around. They wonder ‘Okay, what’s behind this? (Why) are we doing this? They don’t think that it’s out for their best interests. They think ‘they are going to outsource me’ or ‘they’re going to make my life more difficult for me’.”

Ferdinand seemed to agree, noting, “I have been doing this job for 7 ½ years and we have gone through a lot (of change in) the years I have been here. So, you know, (more new change) is tough.” Regardless of one’s personality and tendency to gravitate toward or shy away from innovation, the bottom line – described by Van – was that innovation, and technological innovation in particular, exerted benefits as well as costs. He stated:

“I like to have access to information as it comes in when I need it. We (JCOs will)

get away from being tethered to the desk and back into the public again eventually, with iPads and mobile technology. But on the flipside I think sometimes that can be detrimental. I think you can get into a little bit of a slippery slope (when) you're really ambitious in your responding and you're collaborating all the time. People come to expect that (that you will respond) and you may not always be able to deliver."

### **External Circumstances**

External circumstances were also noted as theme that influenced one's willingness to innovate. Two characteristics in particular stood out; limited time and resources, and peer pressure.

**Time and resources.** Generally speaking, innovations that allowed JCOs to be more effective and efficient with their time – in an effort to spend more time with their clients – they indicated a greater willingness to be innovative. A comment from Dorian is illustrative:

"(If an innovation) makes you look smarter, it is more efficient, effective and to be honest with you, if I could find a way to cut my time to do something, I will do it. For years it seems like you spend more time pushing papers than you're actually working with the kids. So if there is any way you can cut back on your paper and be more efficient, in fact, if you get more time to spend with kids and trying to change (the kids behavior) (this) is what you're supposed to be doing."

The flip side was true as well, as clearly articulated by Pablo:

"The changes that come from above often are money driven, some client driven. So If I am told I have to do a new service, it probably means more work or more

paperwork and less client contact time. There (are) plenty of studies that show we make a difference with (client) contact time, so it becomes frustrating because it takes away our time with the kids.”

In addition to time, monetary resources were important considerations to one’s willingness to be innovative. Sebastian commented:

“We don’t have monies for different treatment – like community based stuff. We don’t get things (programs). I don’t quite understand how other districts’ funding goes. How are we able to provide treatment in one part of our district and not in the others? I mean, no one has enough money, but...it makes it harder to change.”

**Peer pressure.** Peer pressure was also cited as a deterrent to innovation. Many spoke of the pressure they felt to conform to an unspoken “norm”. Some said they needed to be cautious or were thought of by others as “strange” or “crazy”, would possibly be asked to “stop innovating” or would experience jealousy from others because of one’s innovation style. Barry explained “I have to be cautious that I am not preaching and not perceived as somebody that preaches....I (just) feel like I have to be cautious. (Some) feel his or her decisions (are) better than any risk tool. Sometimes they think ‘man, he is way out there.’” Jerry concurred, noting:

“(Even) if my supervisor could appreciate me being willing to try this stuff, my coworkers would that that ‘hey, he should (just) stop. (They would say if) ‘just a few of us try that then maybe we won’t have to (change)’. What they’ll say is ‘I don’t want to do that and I don’t see the purpose in it.’ So it usually comes across as ‘Stop! Just leave it alone!’”



### **Evidence-based Practices**

When it came to why a JCO would be more willing to adopt change, the primary reason was the need for evidence-based practices. Ten JCOs indicated a need to move toward more evidence-based practices and programs. To illustrate, Nestor would be less cautious adopting an innovation if he could;

“See some support from studies – some evidence-based (research). That’s what we’re driven by is evidence-based practices. I guess I would be hesitant if there was somebody (who came up) and said ‘Hey, you should try this’ (but) there is nothing supporting or backing that up.”

Chantal agreed.

“We do have so many fly-by-night people wanting to provide service. I do remember one (example) that comes to mind. (Someone) who was fresh out of prison and came and sold us a whole bunch of stuff that we as officers thought ‘are you kidding me? What makes you trust this guy?’ But we did – we used the program (but) he sold us a lot of crap. I mean – those people who come out of the woodwork offering things that they don’t have any credibility (for), I am not going to buy that.”

Van offered,

“Contrary to what people may think, we all do things differently as Juvenile Court Officers in hopes (of) getting to a similar end. I think our chief embraces ...some ideas about making changes and using some of the (evidence-based) research to decide what works best. (We) have enough data and research now to really start

doing some evidence-based stuff and really take a look at recidivism.”

Overall, many Juvenile Court Officers shared that they felt their state was very innovative with regard to juvenile corrections. Barry offered,

“I definitely feel that when I look at some states that still lock (juveniles) up on truancy issues and simple trespasses...I feel that we (as a state) have moved past status offenses and now are trying to look at the actual crime and then getting the best treatment to resolve the skill sets they need to increase (success) and (limit) recidivism.”

### **Essence**

A fundamental element of phenomenological research is the idea of essence. The essence is a distillation of the descriptions of the experiences of the research subjects to create a composite depiction of a phenomenon. Each of the three themes outlined above (personal characteristics, external circumstances and the quality and presentation of proposed innovations) lead us, as Moustakas (1994) states, to the “intuitive integration” (p. 100) or as Creswell states “the essential, invariant structure (or essence) of the experience, recognizing that a single unifying meaning of the experience exists” (1998, p. 55).

The essence of this study is the fundamental belief that whatever the innovation, it must benefit the youthful offender. Whether on a large or small scale, any innovation is weighed and measured against the impact on the youth served. Above all else, JCOs are sensitive to the fine balance needed between the need to discover new and better ways to do their job and the immediate needs of the youth and families in their care. JCOs are

passionate about their focus on positively impacting the trajectory of a juvenile's future so that he or she can break the cycle of criminality. Humberto observed:

“We need to figure out what really motivates these kids. What really gets to the heart of who they are and what is going to make them change for the long term. There are various things that work for various kids. I have learned early on that you have to tweak things and be innovative in the way you deal with kids. I think sometimes the kids are left wondering – Does anybody really care? Is this really going to help me? I think when (the juveniles) see people that sincerely care and sincerely want to help, whether it is a judge or a probation officer, it just shows that we are normal people too. We sincerely want to help (the juveniles) become productive citizens down the road.”

Even if an innovation takes time to learn, JCOs would be willing to make that time commitment if he or she could envision the innovation as efficient and effective in relating to clients. Erin confided:

“If I really feel like this is going to be a benefit to my clientele, then I want to do it. You know, whether or not anybody else is doing it, if this is going to make my kids' lives better, I want to do it. Even if it is not going to make my life easier, but its' going to help my clients in the long run, I want to do that.”

Sebastian agreed:

“So if we have a new tool that is going to benefit or make a difference, I think that is important for us to utilize, because what else do we have? If it makes a difference then we want to be using it because, you know, our jobs are very impactful and the long overarching consequences can be pretty significant (for the

juvenile). So, if we can make differences, this early on, it gives dividends back in the future.”

Although all shared their passion for helping youthful offenders, each person noted the need to be cautious when adopting any innovation. Van noted:

“When we’re dealing with kids, we don’t have the luxury of making (mistakes). (We can’t go) ‘Oh well, that didn’t work out too good’ because it’s somebody’s life we’re dealing with.”

Ingrid agreed:

“I think we need to change carefully and traditionally and get buy-in. I also think we shouldn’t be afraid to change (or) to focus on the fact that we’re here because of the kids. I believe (the) positive results we (gain) for our kids is a paramount reason to be here. I believe that we can continue to implement the best that there is and our kids will continue to benefit from that.”

### **Additional Analysis**

The JCOs interviewed included five Innovators, eight Early Adopters and two Early Majority Adopters as determined by their individual responses to the Innovation Adoption Survey. For each question, the researcher evaluated each group’s responses to each of the six questions to discover and compare what, if any differences emerged. When comparing one group’s responses to another, most of the responses were similar with regard to these three questions: What are some of the reasons Juvenile Court Officers would choose to or choose not to adopt innovation in their workplace? How has your innovation style been beneficial in the workplace and are there some workplace issues that you are more cautious in adopting innovation within the workplace? The one

question where the JCO identified his or her innovation style and spoke of how quickly he or she would adopt innovation was different for each group; Innovators were quick to embrace change and often led the change, Early Adopters were more inclined to see innovation as a process to be considered before enacting, and Early Majority Adopters saw it as their ‘duty’ to sit back and see the impact of the innovation before completely buying-in.

The largest between-group differences were evident within questions two and three – Why do you feel you are so receptive/unreceptive to innovation and how do your peers and supervisors perceive your innovation style? Innovators spoke of their openness and receptivity to change and shared several stories of how they championed change in their districts. Innovators also spoke of how they felt appreciated by supervisors but often felt that their peers perceived them as “nutty” or “out there”. The five Innovators shared their impatience with others who were unwilling to change but acknowledged that change can be hardest for those who enjoy routine and disdain the chaos that comes with trying new programs and processes. Many Early Adopters shared that innovation takes time and that time is something they often run short of, especially in smaller, rural offices. Early Adopters spoke of their need to more fully understand an innovation (i.e. reading documents, seeing it work in another location) and acknowledge that sometimes suspicions about a change (why is he/she doing that? What’s behind this?) surface. With only two Early Majority Adopters, not many inferences were possible. However, each one spoke of their “cautious nature” when it came to innovation. Each spoke of having limited resources of time and finances, and each wanted to be very certain that an innovation was not a waste of either one.

When the researcher considered all of the JCOs' interview responses and survey comments, regardless of the questions asked, several themes emerged. These themes speak to the essence of the experience of innovation adoption, and include the desire for adoption of evidence-based practices, the unanimous agreement that whatever the innovation, it must allow the JCO more meaningful contact with the juvenile and that technological advances often provide a myriad of challenges and opportunities for innovation adoption.

"Does it (an innovation) work" was a phrase woven throughout the interviews as well as web-survey comments. Juvenile Court Officers expressed their desire for evidence-based practices – those programs, projects or approaches that had been researched, tried and tested with good results. Many JCOs mentioned learning the practice of Motivational Interviewing (MI) and/or Aggressive Replacement Therapy (ART), and how the programs' successes in juvenile-focused rehabilitation helped to convince them of its efficacy. Although admittedly hard for some to accept these changes, even those who declared that they were "innovation-resistant" were more likely to adopt approaches that were clearly research-based. It should be noted, however, that several JCOs cautioned that helping to create a body of research for an innovative program within this Midwestern state caused many of their peers to be hesitant to adopt. Pilot studies in various districts helped to support growing research that an approach worked, yet also surfaced technical or other problems that raised wariness and hesitancy with adopting that program or process.

"Will the innovation allow me (the JCO) to more effectively work with families and juveniles" (anonymous web-survey comment). Each of the fifteen Juvenile Court

Officers interviewed mentioned their passion for working with juvenile offenders and their families. Any innovation that would allow a JCO greater opportunity for less administrative work and more face-to-face time was welcomed. Most agreed that each innovation required time to learn about and acquire the skills for a program, project or approach, yet there seemed to be a tipping point where an innovation was not worth their time or effort. The researcher noted that differences among JCOs varied with their self-categorizations on Rogers' scale (Innovator, Early Adopter, etc.). Those who identified themselves as innovators were more inclined to give an innovation greater latitude with regard to time and complexities, where those who identified themselves as Early Adopter or Early or Late Majority innovation adopters were quicker to dismiss an innovation if, as Van stated "all the bugs hadn't been worked out first." Several JCOs discussed the time constraints they felt and many offered that they would view any innovation through a time-lens, weighing the time needed for adoption against time taken or gained by the innovation once learned; each equation balanced with time that could be spent with a juvenile and his or her family.

When asked about what obstacles or challenges to innovation adoption a JCO faces, another theme that emerged was technology. Although only fifty-three percent (27 of  $n = 51$ ) of respondents indicated that technology was an obstacle, those who selected "training requirements" included technology training under this heading. Each of the JCOs interviewed alluded to one or more challenge with technology; whether it was learning a new software program to new online office practices or it was sharing their frustrations or cautions about the use of social media, JCOs shared how technology was both helpful and challenging. The issue of technological advances was also seen as a

dividing point between the “old” and “young” JCOs as well as with those who were more or less willing to adopt innovation simply based on one’s ability to use technology, especially computers. The digital divide seemed most apparent and for some, seemed to reflect one’s willingness to adopt innovation: if you embraced Ipads, smartphones and other new technology, you were more likely to be classified as “innovative”, if not, you were more likely to be classified as “resistant”. Although more research would be needed for any definitive inferences, comfort with and usage of technology, both among the JCOs as well as with juveniles, often arose in comments and conversations.

Juvenile Court Officers often referred to themselves as “independent operators”. Much in the tradition of John Augustus, the man recognized as one of the earliest adult and juvenile probation officers, JCOs work with individual juveniles and their families under the direction of the juvenile court judges. Each manages those in their care throughout the probation process, even following-up when the juvenile is placed in a treatment center. It is possible, especially in rural offices, to not meet with colleagues for weeks at a time. Although outwardly independent, each JCO interviewed spoke of the influence of their Chiefs, Supervisors and other JCOs on their level of innovation adoption. In larger offices, office politics and general skepticism takes a toll on one’s willingness to try new things. Comments on JCO’s web-surveys ranged from outlining obstacles to innovation adoption including receiving “ridicule by other officers who are highly resistive to change/innovation” to “difficulty in persuading others of the value of the innovation. (This organization) doesn’t readily support change.” Some stated that they “follow directives from my supervisor” or “do what is asked of me” while others indicated they were “not in the position to lead” or followed the lead of “positive



and respected peers”. Support of innovation adoption by the Chiefs was also cited by eighty percent of the JCOs as a major influence of their adoption strategies. Managing innovation, then, requires careful consideration of the interpersonal influences that can support or suppress adoption.

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

This chapter will summarize the key findings of the study, present the researcher's conclusions derived from the results and suggest options to be considered for future practice and research. The first section summarizes and discusses key findings about the influence of demographics, personality/temperament and employee engagement on employees' levels of adoption of innovation at work. The second section bridges the web-based survey with the personal interviews to emphasize the need for a mixed-methods approach. The third section outlines study limitations while the fourth section forwards the implications of this study and proposes ideas for future research about innovation adoption by Juvenile Court Officers.

There were three separate scales adapted for use within this research study: The Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale, The Big Five Temperament Inventory and Wilson's Employee Engagement Scale. The new scale created, the Innovation Adoption Survey, was offered to the 169 Juvenile Court Officers (JCO) of a Midwestern state to determine each JCO's self-reported level of innovation adoption within his or her job. The research questions for the study were based on the assumption that individual temperament and work environment as well as demographic characteristics impacted levels of JCO innovation adoption at his or her workplace. There was also one additional finding that was adventitious; each will be discussed separately. Key findings for and discussion of each hypothesis are described below.

*Respondents from rural office locations will report lower innovation adoption than those from urban office locations.* Although rural respondents reported slightly higher levels of innovation than those in urban settings, the lack of statistical significance

between the scores failed to support this hypothesis. The researcher believed that urban JCOs would have more access to resources within the community, more money for programs and projects and more people within the office to generate innovative ideas and approaches. However, a perception surfaced within the phenomenological research to the effect that JCOs in rural areas may in fact be “freer” to innovate than their counterparts in larger offices. Freer may mean that a rural-based JCO could consider making a change in his/her approach to a family (i.e. meeting during evening or weekend hours, rearrange his or her schedule to fit the needs of a juvenile and/or family) without worrying about what others may think or believe (i.e. where is “x”? Isn’t he/she supposed to be here by now?) Several of the interviewees were either in an office by themselves or with one other person. These JCOs felt that their relative autonomy was due largely to the absence of someone micro-managing their jobs on a day-to-day basis. This afforded the interviewee the opportunity to enact programs and processes that he or she deemed important or valuable. He or she also did not have to concern him or herself with what others would think, nor did he or she need to seek permission (some did say that they would run something by their supervisor or chief before moving forward). They also felt that their locations shielded them from potentially watchful and possibly judgmental co-workers who might be threatened by or criticize the way they approached their work (e.g. experimenting with new ideas, using a computer instead of Dictaphone for case notes, using or not using Dragon Speak, etc.). Rural JCOs also admitted that they needed to be innovative simply due to lack of resources or time; these constraints were keenly felt in a one or two-person office.

*Respondents with more years of service will report lower innovation adoption than those with fewer years of service.* In essence, Juvenile Court Officers with ten or less years of work experience and those JCOs with eleven or more years of work experience reported equal levels of adoption of innovation. Among those who were interviewed there was a perception that Juvenile Court Officers who had been in their jobs for a number of years were quite resistant to adoption of innovation. Without sufficient numbers to allow for more age categories, the researcher does not believe real differences could be reliably measured. Of the 15 JCOs interviewed, each one mentioned that their perception was that those with more years of service were far less likely to adopt innovation (especially technology) due to the habits and personal success with known processes and programs. There were JCOs who felt “new” in their jobs even after having served 17 years, therefore the question of how one perceived his or her years of service may have been a confounding element to this research: as compared to other JCOs in his or her office, he or she was a “newbie”; the average tenure of this office was about 30 years. The researcher deduced that if it were possible to have the opportunity to assess what one perceives about one’s years of service or possibly questioning more JCOs with 25 or more years of service, a correlation between years of service and innovation could possibly have surfaced. With more input, greater differences between the groups seem likely given the tendency for JCOs to stay in their positions until retirement as employee turnover is very low. In an article posted on the Juvenile Justice Information Exchange, Schill (2011) explained,

Employee turnover rates vary widely from one industry to another and can be affected by many factors including employee compensation and job morale,

according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Statistics compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed the food service industry, for example, had a turnover rate of more than 54 percent in 2010. State and local government however had the lowest turnover rate at 16 percent for the same year. (p. 1)

However, Schill also noted that

A low turnover rate isn't necessarily better, according to a Congressional Budget Office report from 1986 entitled "Employee Turnover in the Federal Government" that says turnover has both positive and negative effects. The negative consequences are mostly financial; it costs time and money to recruit and train new employees, the report says. But the positive consequences are less obvious. Turnover might include removing an underperforming employee but could also include 'providing an opportunity to introduce new ideas and innovative procedures into the workplace. (p. 1)

One adventitious discovery referred to was age-related. Younger Juvenile Court Officers, those between the ages 26 to 39 reported greater levels of employee engagement than those aged 40 to 46: however, there were no significant differences between those older (ages 47 and above) and either the younger or mid-aged JCOs. Also, this study noted that when employee engagement was high, reported levels of adoption of innovation were high.

In 2004, Pennsylvania State University researchers Ryan, Caskie, Schaie and Willis reported discoveries from a seven-year longitudinal study of approximately 1000 respondents comparing age groups (young (21–34 years), young middle-aged (35–45

years), old middle-aged (46–54 years), and old aged (55+)) and innovation. The research team noted, “The middle-age groups perceived more decline in innovation than either the young or old age groups” (p 4). Although the current study’s age ranges did not perfectly match those of Ryan et al., (26-39 as opposed to 21-34 etc.), it seems that there may be greater differences relative to age and innovation. However, there were no great differences in perceptions between those younger and the eldest employees in both studies. Ryan et al. (2004) further postulated,

An interesting finding was that in regards to individuals who were categorized as having decreased perceived innovation after a 7 year time interval, there were no significant differences between the young and old age groups but differences were significant in all other age group comparisons. Why then was there no difference on decreased levels of innovation between the youngest and oldest age groups in this sample? Perhaps the explanation for this lack of a difference is due to the fact that there were fewer decliners in the youngest and oldest age groups relative to those who remained stable and increased in their perceptions of innovation than in the other age groups. Thus, since the youngest and oldest age groups had so few individuals who declined in perceived innovation, the two groups were not significantly different from each other. (2004, p. 12)

As this current research didn’t specifically delve into age differences, the researcher wonders if there may also be other reasons for these differences; for example, are younger and older JCOs more understanding or welcoming of innovation - the young because of their freshness and openness to new research and technologies and the older because they are more likely in charge of the office or region and are the ones choosing

which innovations to adopt? More research would be needed to answer these questions.

*Male and female respondents will report equal levels of innovation adoption.*

Scores for male and female JCO's were virtually equal (2.625 and 2.651) thus this hypothesis was supported. The researcher discovered that among the ten males and five females interviewed (which reflects the proportion of males to females who responded to the web survey), equal numbers reported themselves as Early Adopters and Early Majority Adopters; however, proportionally more men than women identified themselves as innovators (four males to one female). In the web survey, twice as many men as women were innovators (10 to 4), about as many reported being Early Adopters (18 males to 11 females) and Early Majority Adopters (7 males to 4 females). As to Late Majority Adopters, with only four responses the trend of males to females was reversed (3 females to 1 male). Even with greater numbers of respondents the researcher concludes that equality among male and female Juvenile Court Officers could prevail however, those drawn to participate in such a web survey may be those highest on the innovation scale. It seems that using an innovative technology to generate, receive and gather results may not have suited all respondents; the question remains as to whether or not others would have participated if the survey had been offered on paper.

Another consideration may be that although male and female JCOs identified themselves as innovators, it may be for differing reasons. Millward and Freeman (2002) tested the hypothesis that gender role expectations may constrain or facilitate innovation. "Results suggest that innovative solutions were attributed more often to a male than a female manager, whereas adaptive solutions were attributed more often to a female than a male managers" (p. 1). Boyd (2013) reflects that

The essence of the (Millward and Freeman) research is that, while men and women are equally innovative, their gender role within the context of an organization can affect how they are perceived and how they behave when innovating and sharing ideas. Men are perceived as more risk-taking and women are perceived as more adaptive and risk-adverse. The essence of the research is that, while men and women are equally innovative, their gender role within the context of an organization can affect how they are perceived and how they behave when innovating and sharing ideas. (p. 1)

Boyd continues, “These differences can be beneficial. The more adaptive behavior in women and more risk-taking behavior in men provides a certain balance or harmony during innovation. Together, they give a complementary effect that seems to yield better results” (2013, p. 1). The researcher posits that perhaps women tend to internalize such views and under-report their innovative tendencies.

*Respondents with greater numbers of juveniles in their active caseloads will report lower innovation adoption than those responsible for a lesser number of juveniles.*

This hypothesis could not be tested due to a flaw in the research design. Although a report of the 169 active caseloads of Juvenile Court Officers in a Midwestern state was obtained from the state’s corrections statistics office, no correlation between the survey responses and the caseload numbers was possible due to the promise of anonymity of respondents with the online survey. The researcher felt it was of utmost importance to assure anonymity to those Juvenile Court Officers who wished to participate. The online web tool Survey Monkey did offer Internet Protocol (IP) address linkage so that the researcher could identify each individual answering the web survey. This option was



intentionally disabled as it was clearly stated in the study's informed consent documents that each respondent would be afforded anonymity and all responses would be reported in aggregate. However, there was one way in which the researcher could identify specific respondents; when a JCO provided his or her e-mail address for a follow-up interview. With only 18 JCO responses for further interviews, no meaningful inferences were possible as to whether or not innovation varied with greater or lesser active caseloads and this hypothesis remains untested.

*Juvenile Court Officer temperament and personality will affect innovation adoption.* When including all of the responses, there was no evidence of significance and the hypothesis was not supported. However, in personal interviews, JCOs shared that they believed their personalities played a big role in their willingness or unwillingness to try new ideas, programs and procedures. Many felt that their life's experiences, including past jobs, had molded their ideas about accepting, seeking out or resisting changes in the juvenile justice system.

With the smaller number of survey respondents (56), two outliers may have had a large impact. In a document written for the University of Oregon, statistical programmer and consultant Robin High noted, "It's an unfortunate fact of research that data are not always well-behaved. 'Outliers' - unusual data values - occur in almost all research projects involving data collection" (2000, p. 1). She continues

What should you do with outliers? Working with outliers with continuous data can pose rather difficult decisions. Neither ignoring nor deleting them at will are good solutions. If you do nothing, you may end up with a model that describes essentially none of the data - neither the bulk of the data nor the outliers. Even

though your numbers may be perfectly legitimate, if they lie outside the range of most of the data, they can cause potential computational anomalies and resulting inference problems. (2000, p. 1)

With 56 respondents, computational and inference problems persisted, leaving the researcher little choice but to declare the hypothesis unsupported. One would need to investigate this more fully to gain a better understanding of the temperament and personality trait of openness and innovation adoption.

*Juvenile Court Officer levels of employee engagement would affect innovation adoption.* This hypothesis was strongly supported. Respondents reporting greater levels of employee engagement reported higher levels of innovation adoption. Those reporting lower levels of innovation adoption also reported lower levels of engagement.

In 2002, the Gallup organization compiled results of a survey of 1000 employees aged 18 years and older regarding employee engagement and innovation. An article in the October 2006 issue of *The Gallup Business Journal* presented three types of employees: Engaged, non-engaged, and actively disengaged. Engaged employees were those that “work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organization forward” (p. 1). The article further describes engaged employees as:

Far more likely to suggest or develop creative ways to improve management or business processes. They're also far more likely to find creative ways to solve customer problems or to involve their customers in creating service innovations. Company leaders who want to drive growth through innovation should first create an environment that welcomes new ideas -- and should make engaging employees

a key component of that strategy. (p. 1)

For those who are not engaged (employees who are “checked out”, who are putting in time – but not energy or passion into their work) or are actively disengaged (employees who are not just unhappy but are busy acting out their unhappiness at work), innovation is not seen as important or valuable to their work-life.

The Gallup supports this study’s results. Time and again JCOs speculated that those who were “biding time, waiting for retirement” were less likely to be inclined to change and couldn’t see the point of trying new ideas at this stage of their careers. Others felt that those who were newly hired and fresh out of college were eager to try new approaches, as these new JCOs would have been introduced to the newest research and best-practice offerings in their recent educational careers.

Although not all innovation is technological, there was also an advantage of digital-natives (those who are comfortable with technology) as compared to digital-immigrants (those who did not grow up with technology) when new computer and other technology-driven changes were made in the practice and organization of juvenile court services. In the article “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants” Prensky wrote,

Digital Immigrants learn...to adapt to their environment, they always retain, to some degree, their ‘accent,’ that is, their foot in the past. The ‘digital immigrant accent’ can be seen in such things as turning to the Internet for information second rather than first, or in reading the manual for a program rather than assuming that the program itself will teach us to use it. Today’s older folk were ‘socialized’ differently from their kids, and are now in the process of learning a

new language. And a language learned later in life, scientists tell us, goes into a different part of the brain. (2001, p. 2)

He also noted

Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel processes and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to 'serious' work. (2001, p. 1)

Technology adoption differences alone may mean the difference between not only understanding juvenile crime occurring on the Internet (cyberbullying, etc.), but may also affect the way a JCO responds to innovation. According to a 2012 article for the publication *Gerontology*, Wandke, Sengpiel and Sonkse argued

Even older people themselves are convinced of the myth (You can't teach an old dog new tricks). The human brain's plasticity decreases. At the same time, the motivation to learn new things decreases, especially if no immediate need or benefit is discernible. An anecdote may illustrate this tendency. In one of our (unpublished) interview studies on the identification of barriers for integrating the World Wide Web into teaching at schools, some teachers (aged 55+) argued that this would be more trouble than it is worth because they will retire in a few years. (p. 569)

The issue of allowing or prohibiting Juvenile Court Officers' access to Facebook or other social media to monitor juvenile offenders' online behavior also remains. For a 2009 American Bar Association journal article entitled *Web2.Uh-oh* Acello noted:

With social networkers busily constructing walls of information about themselves, it was only a matter of time before the courts took notice. MySpace, Twitter and Facebook present ample opportunities for defendants, jurors, adjudicated offenders and even attorneys to blab, brag and leave hints about their activities, legal and otherwise.” (p. 40)

This sharing of what otherwise would be considered personal or even possibly detrimental information online has received the sociological term *online disinhibition effect* that can best be described as “when online, people feel less inhibited by social conventions. Compared with face-to-face interactions, online we feel freer to do and say what we want and, as a result, often do and say things we shouldn't” (Dean, 2010, p. 1). In previous research, psychologist John Suler also found this to be true.

We all fear disapproval and punishment, but this imaginary world (of the internet) appears to have no police and no authority figures. Although there are people with authority online, it's difficult to tell who they are. There is no Internet government, no one person in charge of it all. So people feel freer online: away from authority, social convention and conformity. (Suler, 2004, p. 323)

Lim, Vadreyu, Chan and Basnyat (2012) discuss how juvenile offenders manage their online personas. They wondered how juvenile offenders managed their Facebook profiles that were equally visible to peers, gang members and authorities. The use of code or slang can also mask or be used to confuse readers. One JCO wondered aloud if “he could even understand some of what a (juvenile) says on Facebook – they use code.”

*Juvenile Court Officers' response results will reflect Rogers' diffusion of innovation adopter categories.* Rogers suggests five categories of adopters of innovation:

Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards (which, for this study, was changed to Non-Adopters). Visually, the way that groups adopt innovation follows a normal distribution, or “S” curve (see Figure 1) yet Juvenile Court Officers’ responses did not follow Rogers’s normal curve, rather the curve was positively skewed as no JCO self-reported a Non-Adopter response (see Figure 6). Also interesting was the JCOs’ responses to the question “Please select the one category that would describe most of the Juvenile Court Officers at your agency”. These responses also generated a positively skewed curve (see Figure 7), a bit different from the first JCO curve yet with essential similarities. The question remains as to whether or not interviewer or testing effects had any influence on the respondents and ultimately, their responses.

It is the researcher’s belief that Juvenile Court Officers’ self-reported levels of innovation would have more closely resembled that of Rogers had more of the 169 JCOs responded to the web survey. One JCO’s observation is telling; that he or she would “be surprised if I ‘got’ anyone in the last two categories (Late Majority Adopters and Laggards/Non-Adopters) to participate.” It is wholly plausible that those who are skeptical or not open to innovation would not willingly participate in a web survey about that subject. It is also possible that those who did were more likely to self-report favorable levels of innovation adoption. Whatever the reason, the sheer number of studies (over 5000) that report a similar Rogers’ normal curve must be considered: Are JCOs really that different when it comes to innovation, or were there simply not enough survey responses? This researcher believes it was the latter.

### **Need for Mixed Methods Approach**

In this mixed-method research study, multiple-choice questions revealed preferences in responses by Juvenile Court Officers to personal characteristics and beliefs that were more fully revealed through the personal interviewing process. Respondents' short phrases and comments included in the web-based survey instrument allowed the researcher to delve deeply into the reasons underlying the responses. For example, one question asked if the JCO "still hoped to be employed at my agency two years from now." Seventy-six percent strongly agreed with this statement, eleven percent agreed, six percent slightly agreed and another six percent of the JCOs did not expect to be employed as a JCO within two years. During the personal interviews it became clear that JCO positions are highly sought and have little turn over, as evidenced by comments about being a "newbie" in the office, with 15 to 20 years of experience in that very office. Discussion of this finding with the Midwestern state's research office (personal communication 9/10/13) revealed that this Midwestern state experienced about five percent turnover of JCOs, including the retirement of supervisors and Chiefs, in the past five years. This number is not officially tracked: several staff reductions have occurred in recent years yet FTE's (full-time equivalent) positions are still statistically counted with hopes that these positions will be reinstated in the future. As a comparison, in a Schill (2011) reported that in 2010 the state of Georgia's Department of Juvenile Justice had a 13% turnover rate while the state of Virginia reported an 11% turnover rate (p. 1). Although these states also have much larger juvenile justice departments than this Midwestern state, JCOs and their support staff expect to and do remain employed in this system.

One web-survey question asked respondents if “My opinion about adopting changes (innovation) at work is respected by peers.” Eighty percent of the respondents (n = 45 ) agreed or agreed strongly with this statement. Personal interviews revealed that many of those who described themselves as innovators felt that they were not respected but rather viewed as “nutty.” When asked to explain further, most concurred that their leadership with regard to innovation was respected by their chiefs and other innovators, but not by those who were reluctant to adopt innovation.

Another survey question requested that JCOs indicate their type of office location: urban, rural, or a mixture of more urban or rural. These statistics were used to test whether or not office location made any difference with regard to innovation adoption. The hypothesis that urban JCOs would report being more innovative than rural JCOs was not supported, yet personal interviews revealed each location’s challenges to those who wished to be innovative. For rural or those of a more rural than urban location, JCOs reported that they believed they could be and are more innovative due in large part to their need to be self sufficient. Often these JCOs were in a single-person office that meant they needed to discover new programs and processes to maximize their time. Many also complained that they could not get away for training opportunities as situations would arise that often thwarted their ability to attend training. Many urban JCOs agreed with their rural counterpart’s assessment of a rural office’s greater possibility for innovation and flexibility, and noted that one of their biggest challenges was their peers’ questioning an urban JCO’s approach or willingness to accept or champion innovation. Simply knowing a JCO’s office location was not sufficient; delving more deeply into the unique nuances about where they worked provided key



insights into the challenges and opportunities for innovation adoption.

### **Conundrums**

Although only two of the hypotheses were supported, it is the researcher's belief that the mixed-method results push the field of innovation adoption research forward in the area of Juvenile Court Officers. Greater understanding is needed of the conundrums that arose when evaluating the quantitative and qualitative data generated by this study.

One puzzling discovery was the dichotomy between Juvenile Court Officers' desire to innovate and their failure to do so, perhaps complicated by their concern that time required to learn an innovation would or might diminish time spent with clients. Many bemoaned the fact that with such limited time, attending training sessions, learning new software, or generally trying something new, in general, placed constraints on their already limited time with their clients, which is of utmost importance. The JCOs also wished to be able to incorporate new, effective innovations in order to be more impactful on the job, yet they reported they could not find or did not make the time to do so. Is there a threshold or tipping point that needs to be reached before a JCO will create the time needed in his or her schedule to learn a new approach, process or product? What factors do JCOs consider when making the decision to adopt, delay or discard an innovation?

Data gathered about a JCO's age and tenure was also puzzling. In many other careers, having seven or seventeen years of service would mean one was no longer a "newbie". In these districts, however, many considered themselves new to their job. One JCO spoke of the need to be on the job "another 5 to 7 years" before he would feel like he really knew what he was doing. With ever-changing laws and other regulations, one can

only imagine the sheer amount of learning one needs to be a successful JCO. Creating one's own approach to youth and their families, especially when there is a crisis situation (like going to court, probation or residential placement) needs not only innovation, but also time, patience, persistence and perseverance.

For JCOs, interacting with colleagues seems to always provide an element of surprise even after twenty or more years of service. JCOs commented upon the older employees and their unwillingness to adopt innovation. As Dorian shared "The reality is that some of them are old timers and they are not subject to change. So a lot of them will continue to do everything the old fashioned way." Yet some JCOs acknowledged that age or tenure may not really be a factor at all, as it is sometimes the youngest JCOs who are resistant to trying new ideas. Humberto summed it up this way: "I have seen people that have been here a long time who are very willing to adapt. Then I see a lot that don't – you see the younger people that do the same, go either way (adopt or not adopt)."

There was also the discovery that those who were 40-46 reported less innovation than those who were either older or younger than themselves. What, then is the key? How does one truly understand age and tenure related to innovation? Is the concept that older JCOs are unwilling to change a myth and if so, what, if any, is the impact of this myth on service delivery? Would a larger sample show a different result? This study seems to raise many more questions than answers.

Another conundrum centered upon the wish to use evidence-based practices. What exactly did this mean? For some of the JCOs, their comments seemed to suggest that they were willing to adopt innovative practices if the research matched what they believed or was already some part of their approach. Others used the term much like a

filter so they could more easily dismiss an innovation if the research wasn't copious, did not yet meet their standard or was just not "believable". A few JCOs spoke of their current involvement in a pilot project instigated by a Rhode Island company and how exciting it was to be part of a cutting-edge research process yet there were also those who expressed grave concerns about conducting any trials with their clients. To be fair, the area of Juvenile Correctional Services is one of many organizations that have to wrestle with how best to decide what programs and processes to adopt or discard. Yet the term "evidence-based practices" may need a clearer definition in this context.

### **Limitations**

Limitations are inherent in all exploratory research. According to Labaree, (2013) research limitations are defined as:

those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the application or interpretation of the results of (a) study. They are the constraints on generalizability and utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which (the researcher) chose to design the study and/or the method used to establish internal and external validity. (p. 1)

Labaree identifies several methodological limitations such as smaller sample size, lack of available and/or reliable data, and lack of prior research on the topic, measurement confines and self-reported data challenges. This research's small sample size did impact the quality of inferences relative to the constructs of openness, years of service and similarity to Rogers' normal curve. Self-reported data also posed questions; namely that the respondents could have inflated or exaggerated their levels of adoption of innovation.

Issues of external validity (or transferability, with the personal interviews) should

be considered. As all participants came from one Midwest state, it is uncertain as to what extent these results may be generalized to a larger population of Juvenile Court Officers: a larger and more geographically diverse sample of participants may be needed for future studies.

Issues of internal validity need also be addressed. For example, using an innovation (Survey Monkey) to study innovation may have overly complicated the survey response rates, especially from those who are uncomfortable with technology – would there have been more responses if a paper version of the survey were given? There also exists the possibility that experimenter bias that may have inadvertently affected the outcomes.

Issues regarding the survey instruments need to be considered. The researcher believes that the in-depth personal interviews somewhat mitigated the small survey sample size. A question remains as to whether or not the Savery Adoption of Innovation Scale was reliable enough to measure the true effects of innovation. Usually, a range of Cronbach Alpha of .7 - .9 is considered an acceptable range of values. The researcher believes that this instrument's alpha was viable, albeit a bit lower than hoped. Selecting an instrument that was less than perfect for this study was intentional in the sense that other options were foreclosed by feasibility constraints, complicated by limited availability to resources. The researcher did not discover other instruments that were not proprietary or exorbitantly costly that could be adapted for these research subjects, yet were deemed reasonably likely to be able to measure or detect all of the possible research relationships. One study limitation, then, was financial: the study was limited, in part, by the personal resources available for this dissertation.

Working only with self-reporting data can also be considered a limitation.

Without corroborating evidence of innovation style (survey of co-workers, personal history of past innovation adoption, etc.), Juvenile Court Officers may be over- or under-reporting with regard to innovation adopter category. Their beliefs about how others choose to or choose not to adopt innovation may also be biased, which could skew study results.

There was also a limitation of competing priorities regarding the conflict between ensuring participants' anonymity and cross-referencing active caseloads. The researcher needed to make a decision between the two and chose respondent's anonymity. One hypothesis remained untested, a limitation of the study, yet the researcher remained true to the integrity of the study and the wishes of the research subjects.

### **Implications of Study and Considerations for Future Research**

JCOs are responsible for the thousands upon thousands of youth who come within the jurisdiction of the nation's Juvenile Courts. Their willingness or unwillingness to adopt constructive new methods and practices when working with vulnerable youth is critical to their success, as measured by the futures of those juveniles. What do these research findings imply?

1. Researching Juvenile Court Officers improves our understanding of some of the variables (demographic, work-related, personality/temperament) that may impact an individual officer's adoption of innovation. This study may be the beginning of more innovation adoption research with Juvenile Court Officers, Chiefs and Supervisors. The development of new research tools (Innovation Adoption Survey and Innovation Adopter

Personal Interview) can be modified and strengthened, achieving more insights and results. Although the researcher found no other studies regarding innovation and this type of research subject, more research is needed with larger JCO populations to fully understand the relationships between and among the variables of this study as well as others (i.e. Do innovative responses depend on the nature of the crime committed by the juvenile? Do they depend on the number of employees who are at an office location? The age of an officer? Should researchers consider a JCO's previous employment? Would or should it matter if a JCO has been hired from a law enforcement agency, human services department or correctional institution? Would past experience make a difference in innovative approaches, recommendations, treatment or follow-up with juveniles in their care?) Clearly, more research is needed to answer these questions, especially as they relate to the hiring of new JCOs.

2. With regard to stimulating additional research, this study revealed the need for two different survey formats when surveying JCOs – one that utilizes technology and one that does not. Having a paper survey option allows those JCOs who may be technology-averse to also respond to the research questions. Using an innovative technology (Survey Monkey) to study innovation, this researcher believes, hindered the response by those who may be most resistant to innovation adoption.

3. It could also be beneficial for future studies to focus primarily on the nature of innovations themselves rather than on individual officers who will implement them. For example, it would be most beneficial to create a checklist of considerations to be included in choosing an innovation. The development of such a list could help Chief JCOs carefully weigh which innovative practices, programs and policies would be most

beneficial to the adopter as well as impactful for the juvenile and his/her family. Using some of the initial discoveries of this exploratory study, researchers could develop and define attributes of the adopter as well as characteristics of a proposed innovation that would facilitate presentation of a given change and enhance successful innovation adoption.

4. This study unearthed several Juvenile Court Officer's concerns about placement sites, social media and summer referrals. For example, during the interviews, JCOs shared many impressions about their work. Some speculated about the need for more innovative programs and processes in residential placements across the state. They feared that many placement sites did not employ new research or techniques when working with juveniles and feared that these programs may not benefit their youthful offenders even though placement was clearly needed. The JCOs, then, are one important part of the rehabilitative process but are also dependent on others. The expressed fear was that the placement sites and those who work within them may be unwilling or unable to create or sustain much-needed innovations, especially with scarce funding. Even as budgets were tightening, JCOs were willing to try new ways to reach out to juvenile offenders (i.e. using dedicated/secure computers to frequently Skype with juveniles in placement or using Skype to strengthen family ties by allowing parents and siblings to engage with their offenders when travel to or from the institution infeasible). Juvenile Court Officers hoped that what they had begun with a given youth was continued in other agencies that served that same youth.

5. There remains the issue of whether or not JCOs should be allowed to access Facebook or whatever other social media tools they deem necessary to help rehabilitate the

juveniles in their care. Some see monitoring these types of sites as helping to “catch” juveniles before they placed themselves in a problematic situation. Others believed that this could be in conflict with the court (if the JCO created an assumed identity) or simply a waste of time due to the tendency of young people to use jargon or slang that was not fully understandable or was misleading to adults. More research is needed to better understand these and other benefits and challenges that would become increasingly critical for JCOs as social media continues to evolve.

6. Interviewees also offered other questions to be considered. One wondered aloud why it was that juvenile court referrals were lower in the summer months than throughout the school year. He pondered aloud as to whether this was due in part to the number of individuals (mainly teachers and administrators) who referred juveniles or was this due to the fact that juveniles had less pressure (i.e. school rules, regulations and expectations etc.) and more opportunities to “escape” these pressures than when the schools are in session? The researcher wondered if this trend was limited to this one Midwestern state or was this a nationwide trend? Another wondered if the care JCOs’ give reflected how the JCOs were “parented” as children and teenagers? Still another wondered if older JCOs, hired from law enforcement agencies, were more inclined to be harsh with offenders while younger JCOs, who were mostly from human service agencies, were likely to be more lenient, given the same crime? These are some other research possibilities that arose from the personal interviews. The researcher believes that this study has offered an initial framework and it is reasonable to consider that future research with Juvenile Court Officers could afford many and varied research opportunities.



**Conclusion**

Results from this study contributed to the limited empirical research on the topic of adoption of innovation by Juvenile Court Officers. Specifically, it contributed both statistical and phenomenological research about possible variables that may affect JCOs in a Midwestern juvenile justice agency. Innovation can be considered a significant component of effective organizations and needs to be critically evaluated in the field of juvenile justice, if for no other reason than because of the great impact JCOs have on managing the rehabilitation options, programming and placement of juveniles in their care. An innovative staff is crucial, especially in times of budgetary constraints. Consequently, the necessity for robust innovation research among Juvenile Court Officers and within juvenile justice agencies is essential and critical for communities who wish to invest in the future life-success of their youthful offenders.

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APPENDIX A – PARTICIPANT’S E-MAIL  
Email Letter to Juvenile Court Officers Introducing the Research Project

Dear Juvenile Court Officer,

My name is Brenda J. Moran and I am conducting a research study for my PhD on the adoption or non-adoption of innovation (change) in the workplace. If you are 19 years of age or older and are currently serving as Juvenile Court Officer in Iowa, please consider participating in this research.

Participation in the first phase of this study will require approximately 25 minutes of your time. You will be asked to complete a web-based survey at the following web address: (web address added here once survey is completed) Participation will take place via your computer.

There is also a secondary optional phase where you can choose to participate in a face-to-face survey. If you should choose to participate, this phase of the study would require approximately 45 minutes of your time.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

The results of this study will be used to enhance learning opportunities (in-service offerings, e-modules, etc.) for Juvenile Court Officers.

Your responses to this survey will be kept both anonymous and confidential. There are three ways confidentiality of records will be maintained. 1. Survey results will be aggregated from the Survey Monkey website - even the researcher will not be able to link survey responses to individual JCO's with the exception of being able to contact those who provide e-mail addresses for the face-to-face interviews. 2. Electronic recordings will be kept only as long as it takes the researcher to validate her written notes and be recorded over or erased once this is completed. 3. For interviews, JCO's will be given a letter and number only, and the key for this system will be kept separately from any written records.

You may ask any questions concerning this research at anytime by contacting the principal investigator, Brenda Moran via e-mail at moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com or via phone at (402) 880-4936 . You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at rdalla1@unl.edu or at (402) 472-6546. If you would like to speak to someone else, please call the Research Compliance Services Office at 402-472-6965 or irb@unl.edu.

Participation in this study is voluntary though much appreciated. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Iowa Juvenile Court Services, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. By completing and submitting your survey responses, you have given your consent to participate in this research. You should print a copy of this page for your records.

Thank you, Brenda J. Moran

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FOR WEB-BASED SURVEY

### Juvenile Corrections Officers and Perceptions of Innovation and Adaptation; What Personal and Professional Factors Make a Difference?

This is a research project that focuses on the adoption or non-adoption of innovation (change) among Juvenile Court Officers in the workplace. In order to participate you must be an Iowa Juvenile Court Officer 19 years of age or older.

Participation in the first phase of this study will require approximately 25 minutes of your time. You will be asked to complete a web-based survey. Participation will take place via your computer.

There is also a secondary optional phase where you can choose to participate in a face-to-face survey. If you should choose to participate, this phase of the study would require approximately 45 minutes of your time.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

The results of this study will be used to enhance learning opportunities (in-service offerings, e-modules, etc.) for Juvenile Court Officers.

Your responses to this survey will be kept both anonymous and confidential. There are three ways confidentiality of records will be maintained. 1. Survey results will be aggregated from the Survey Monkey website - even the researcher will not be able to link survey responses to individual JCO's with the exception of being able to contact those who provide e-mail addresses for the face-to-face interviews. 2. Electronic recordings will be kept only as long as it takes the researcher to validate her written notes and be recorded over or erased once this is completed. 3. For interviews, JCO's will be given a letter and number only, and the key for this system will be kept separately from any written records.

You may ask any questions concerning this research at anytime by contacting the principal investigator, Brenda Moran via e-mail at [moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com](mailto:moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com) or via phone at (402) 880-4936 . You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at [rdalla1@unl.edu](mailto:rdalla1@unl.edu) or at (402) 472-6546. If you would like to speak to someone else, please call the Research Compliance Services Office at 402-472-6965 or [irb@unl.edu](mailto:irb@unl.edu).

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Iowa Juvenile Court Services, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. By clicking on the I Accept button below, your consent to participate is implied. You should print a copy of this page for your records.

I agree

I do not agree

## APPENDIX C: FOLLOW-UP REMINDERS FOR WEB-BASED SURVEY

*Reminder message about completing a step*

Last (specific day) we sent you a survey link via email. The survey will be available you to complete until [date survey is no longer available]. If you have already completed the survey, we thank you for your time. If you have not completed the survey, we would greatly appreciate any input you could provide.

If you have any questions, you may contact me, Brenda Moran, via e-mail at moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com or via phone at (402) 880-4936 . You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at rdalla1@unl.edu or at (402) 472-6546.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Brenda J. Moran and Dr. Rochelle Dalla

*Follow-up/Reminder Messages Templates for face-to-face, FaceTime/Skype or Phone interviews.**Research involving participation to occur at a specific time/location.*

You signed up to participate in a research study that focuses on the adoption or non-adoption of innovation (change) among Juvenile Court Officers. You are scheduled to complete the study on [date] at [time]. The study will be conducted in any of the following three ways: The interview may be conducted in one of three ways, depending on your preference: face to face at your office, online via Facetime, Skype, or other online applications (Blackboard) where you and I can respond to each other in real time, or via telephone. The personal interview will require approximately 45 minutes of the your time. If you have any questions, please contact me, Brenda Moran, via e-mail at moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com or via phone at (402) 880-4936 . You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at rdalla1@unl.edu or at (402) 472-6546.

Thank you,

Brenda J. Moran and Dr. Rochelle Dalla

## APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

### Juvenile Corrections Officers and Perceptions of Innovation and Adaptation; What Personal and Professional Factors Make a Difference?

This is a research project that focuses on the adoption or non-adoption of innovation (change) among Juvenile Court Officers in the workplace. In order to participate you must be an Iowa Juvenile Court Officer 19 years of age or older.

Participation in the second phase of this study (personal interviews) will require approximately 45 minutes of your time. You will be asked to complete a web-based survey. Participation will take place in one of three ways: at your office, via computer using such communication software as FaceTime or Skype or by telephone.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

The results of this study will be used to enhance learning opportunities (in-service offerings, e-modules, etc.) for Juvenile Court Officers.

Your responses to this survey will be kept both anonymous and confidential. There are three ways confidentiality of records will be maintained. 1. Survey results will be aggregated from the Survey Monkey website - even the researcher will not be able to link survey responses to individual JCO's with the exception of being able to contact those who provide e-mail addresses for the face-to-face interviews. 2. Electronic recordings will be kept only as long as it takes the researcher to validate her written notes and be recorded over or erased once this is completed. 3. For interviews, JCO's will be given a letter and number only and the key for this system will be kept separately from any written records.

You may ask any questions concerning this research at anytime by contacting the principal investigator, Brenda Moran via e-mail at [moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com](mailto:moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com) or via phone at (402) 880-4936. You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at [rdalla1@unl.edu](mailto:rdalla1@unl.edu) or at (402) 472-6546. If you would like to speak to someone else, please call the Research Compliance Services Office at 402-472-6965 or [irb@unl.edu](mailto:irb@unl.edu).

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Iowa Juvenile Court Services, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. By clicking on the I Accept button below, your consent to participate is implied. You should print a copy of this page for your records.

I agree

I do not agree

APPENDIX E: VERBAL SCRIPT  
(for face-to-face, FaceTime/Skype or phone interviews)

OPENING:

Hi. My name is Brenda Moran from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I am conducting a research study for my PhD on the adoption or non-adoption of innovation (change) in the workplace. If you should choose to participate, the interview phase of the study would require approximately 45 minutes of your time. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research and participation is voluntary.

Are you still interested in participating?

CLOSING:

Do you have any questions you would like answered now?

You may contact the principal investigator, Brenda Moran via e-mail at moran.brenda.jean@gmail.com or via phone at (402) 880-4936 . You may also contact Dr. Rochelle Dalla at rdalla1@unl.edu or at (402) 472-6546. If you would like to speak to someone else, please call the Research Compliance Services Office at 402-472-6965 or irb@unl.edu.

## APPENDIX F: PERMISISON FROM CAROL SAVERY, M.A.

On Fri, Dec 14, 2012 at 1:48 PM, <[smoran123@aol.com](mailto:smoran123@aol.com)> wrote:

Dear Ms. Savery,

My name is Brenda Moran and I am hoping to use the survey questions you posed to PR professionals in your work

"INNOVATORS OR LAGGARDS: SURVEYING DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS BY PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS"

I would like to adapt it for use with surveying Juvenile Correctional Officers. May I have your permission to do so?

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely, Brenda

Brenda Moran  
PhD Candidate  
University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
[402-880-4936](tel:402-880-4936) (c)

**From: Carol Savery <[csavery@kent.edu](mailto:csavery@kent.edu)>**  
**To: [smoran123@aol.com](mailto:smoran123@aol.com)**  
**Re: Seeking permission to use your Survey Questions for my research**

Absolutely. Let me know how your research goes.

C.A. Savery

Carol A. Savery, M.A.  
Doctoral Candidate  
Kent State University  
School of Communication Studies  
TLH 135A  
[csavery@kent.edu](mailto:csavery@kent.edu)



APPENDIX G: PERMISSION FROM KAREN L WILSON  
For use of Employee Engagement Instrument

from: **Brenda Moran** <moranbrendajean@gmail.com>  
to: karen.wilson@vr.dese.mo.gov  
date: Mon, Mar 18, 2013 at 4:56 PM  
subject: Seeking your permission

Dear Ms. Wilson,

My name is Brenda Moran and I am hoping to use the survey questions from your dissertation entitled: " A Survey of Employee Engagement"  
I would like to adapt it for use with surveying Juvenile Correctional Officers. May I have your permission to do so?

Looking forward to hearing from you, Sincerely, Brenda

**Brenda Moran PhD Candidate**

University of Nebraska – Lincoln 402-880-4936 (c)

from: **Brenda Moran** <moranbrendajean@gmail.com>  
to: turpski@yahoo.com  
date: Tue, Mar 19, 2013 at 11:23 AM  
subject: Fwd: Seeking your permission

Good morning,

I thought I would forward this to your Yahoo account as well, just in case I did not get your work e-mail written correctly.

Looking forward to your reply, Brenda

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Brenda Moran** <moranbrendajean@gmail.com>  
Date: Mon, Mar 18, 2013 at 4:56 PM  
Subject: Seeking your permission  
To: karen.wilson@vr.dese.mo.gov

Dear Ms. Wilson,

My name is Brenda Moran and I am hoping to use the survey questions from your dissertation entitled: " A Survey of Employee Engagement"  
I would like to adapt it for use with surveying Juvenile Correctional Officers. May I have your permission to do so?

Looking forward to hearing from you, Sincerely, Brenda

from: **Karri C** <turpski@yahoo.com>  
reply-to: Karri C <turpski@yahoo.com>

to: Brenda Moran <moranbrendajeane@gmail.com>  
date: Tue, Mar 19, 2013 at 3:10 PM  
subject: Re: Fwd: Seeking your permission  
Mailed: yahoo.com

I'm glad you copied this address because as of now, I have not recieved your mesage in my other in-box (although you do have my address correct, it is possible that it was filtered out of the state system...)

As we discussed in our phone conversation, you have my permission to use my survey questions. Please cite me as the author where appropriate. Good luck with your project!

Sincerely,

Karen (Karri) Wilson  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
Regional Manager  
2115 W Broadway  
Sedalia, MO 65301  
[660-530-5560](tel:660-530-5560)

## APPENDIX H: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Juvenile Correctional Officer's Survey adapted from questionnaire by Carol Savery

Strongly Disagree      Disagree      Agree      Strongly Agree

1

2

3

4

1. I am venturesome and eager to be the first to try new ideas at work.

2. I readily adopt change and influence others to do so at work.

3. I am willing to follow the lead of others in adopting innovation at work.

4. I need to be convinced by my peers of the advantages of a given innovation at work.

5. I tend to be suspicious of innovation at work.

6. I am always looking for innovative ideas at work.

7. My opinion about (adopting changes) (innovation) is respected by peers at work.

8. I will adopt new approaches or ideas but do not attempt to influence others to do so at work.

9. I go along with innovation out of necessity at work.

10. I am highly traditional and resistant to change at work.

11. Indicate obstacles or challenges that may affect your readiness to adopt innovation at work. (Please select all that apply.)

Need for technical support.

Training requirements.

Keeping up with new versions.

Privacy issues for juveniles in your care.

Cost

Security issues.

Added stress for me

Other: Please specify:

12. Indicate the influences to your adoption of innovation at work (Please select all that apply.)

Expectations of juveniles.

Expectations of families.

Expectations of victims.

Expectations by Chief Juvenile

Correctional Officers.

Personal expectations.

Enhancement of my career.

Organizational efficiency.

Other: Please specify.

13. Indicate the individuals who influence your adoption of innovations at work. (Please select all that apply.)

My supervisor.

My Chief

My peers.

Juvenile offenders in my care.

Families of juvenile offenders in my care. Community Leaders.

Other: Please specify

14. The results of innovation use are visible to others outside of my organization (e.g.,

clients or contacts).

15. Embracing innovation has enhanced my image or status at work.

16. Since 2007, the following training options/workshops have been offered to Juvenile Corrections Officers. Please indicate by checking more than one if appropriate in which training/workshops you have participated:

The Oz Principle Accountability Training

40 Developmental Assets Training

Motivational Interviewing

Aggressive Replacement Therapy (ART)

Functional Family Therapy

Stress Reduction

Drug Recognition

JCO School (part 1, 2, 3 or 4)

Motivational/Engagement/Incentive Workshop

DHS Training

Undoing/Recognizing Racism

Mental Health Training

Rays Program

Trauma Training

Poverty Simulation

Synthetic Drug Training

Partners in Leadership

National Youth in Transition Training

Sex Offender Registry Training

Other (please specify)

17. As you review the training/workshop options, in which category would you describe the majority (65% or more) of your colleagues and/or region where you work as being:

- a. Innovators – willing to launch new initiatives.
- b. Early Adopters – willing to try new ideas after conferring with others in the department.
- c. Early Majority – willing to adopt new ideas after they are proven in another venue.
- d. Late Majority – skeptical or reticent about new ideas, but subject to persuasion.
- e. Non-Adopters – more inclined to continue with proven methods than to adopt new ideas.

18. Gender

Male

Female

19. Age

In what year were you born?

## 20. Years of Service

What year did you first begin your work as a Juvenile Corrections Officer?

## 21. Education

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, mark the previous grade or highest degree received.

Associate degree (for example: AA, AS)

Bachelor's degree (for example: BA, AB, BS)

Master's degree (for example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA)

Professional degree (for example: MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)

Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD)

Please provide (or state) the name of the college or university where you received your most recent degree.

## 22. Location Size

Including you, how many employees work at this location?

1. 1-5
2. 6-10
3. 10-15
4. 16-20
5. 21 or more

6. Don't know

23. Rural/Urban

When you consider your department's caseload, would you describe your juvenile offenders as consisting of (check one of the following)

- a) Rural offenders
- b) Urban offenders
- c) A mix of **more rural** than urban offenders
- d) A mix of **more urban** than rural offenders
- e) An equal mix of both rural and urban offenders



## APPENDIX I: THE BIG FIVE TEMPERAMENT INVENTORY

**The Big Five Temperament Inventory – Openness**

Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree	Agree	Agree
Strongly	a little	nor disagree	a little	strongly
1	2	3	4	5

\_\_\_1. Is original, comes up with new ideas

\_\_\_2. Is curious about many different things

\_\_\_3. Is ingenious, a deep thinker

\_\_\_4. Has an active imagination

\_\_\_5. Is inventive

\_\_\_6. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences

\_\_\_7R\*. Prefers work that is routine

\_\_\_8. Likes to reflect, play with ideas

\_\_\_9R\*. Has few artistic interests

\_\_\_10. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

\*R – Reverse-scored items

## APPENDIX J: THE KAREN L. WILSON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCALE

**Employee Engagement Survey**

Please check (one of the 6) box(es) that best describes how you feel regarding each statement.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Slightly Disagree

Slightly Agree    Agree    Strongly Agree

1. I have received recognition for doing my job well.
2. My supervisor seems concerned about my welfare.
3. The mission of the agency makes me feel like the work I do matters.
4. I have friends at work.
5. While on the job, my ideas and opinions are taken seriously.
6. The materials, tools and equipment that I need to do my job are supplied by the agency and made readily available to me.
7. The people I work with do a good job.
8. I will still be employed here two years from now.

## APPENDIX K: OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. When you consider changes you are asked to make at work, what kind of innovation adopter would you consider yourself to usually be (the majority of the time):

- a. An Innovator - venturesome, ability to cope with high levels of uncertainty, willingness to be daring or risky.
- b. An Early Adopter - critically evaluate the new idea and judiciously chooses those innovations that you can place your “stamp of approval” upon.
- c. An Early Majority Adopter – you follow with deliberate willingness in adopting innovations but seldom lead charge.
- d. A Late Majority Adopter – you need most of the uncertainty about a new idea to be removed before you feel that it is safe to adopt this innovation.
- e. A Non-Adopter – you are usually extremely cautious in adopting any innovation and usually are more inclined to stay with proven methods than choose to adopt new ideas.

2. Briefly explain your choice of innovation adoption category. Why do you believe you are a certain type of adopter of innovation? Give an example if you can.

3. Would you be willing to participate in a brief (approximately 45 minutes) interview to further explore issues of workplace innovation? If so, please place your work e-mail

address in the box below. By entering your e-mail address below you hereby give your consent to be interviewed by the researcher. All interviews will be kept confidential.

APPENDIX L: RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEWS  
(for Face-to-Face, FaceTime/Skype or Phone Interviews)

**Overarching question:**

What are some of the reasons Juvenile Court Officers would choose to or choose not to adopt innovation in their workplace?

**Sub-questions:**

1. How quickly do you usually adopt innovation at your workplace? Please indicate your innovation style on this scale (Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority Adopters, Late Majority Adopters, Laggards/Non-Adopters).
2. Why do you feel you are so receptive/unreceptive to innovation in the workplace—what factors account for this (supervisors, culture, past experience, personality, etc.)?
3. How do your peers and supervisors, in your opinion, perceive your innovation style?
4. How has your innovation style been beneficial in the workplace? How has it been challenging or problematic for you in the workplace?
5. Are there some workplace issues that you are more cautious in adopting innovation within the workplace? Can you describe one or more for me?

APPENDIX M: FOUR ADDITIONAL SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL  
INTERVIEWS

Q 12 Indicate obstacles or challenges that may affect your readiness to adopt innovation  
at work (Select all that apply) N=51

Need for technical support - 27

Training requirements - 30

Difficulty keeping up with new versions- 19

Privacy issues for juveniles in your care- 3

Cost – 16 Security issues - 6

Added stress for me - 14

Q 13 Please indicate which factors have the greatest influence on your adoption of  
innovation at work (Select all that apply) N= 55

Expectations of juveniles - 31

Expectations of families – 30

Expectations of victims – 14

Expectations by Chiefs – 28

Personal expectations – 35

Enhancement of my career – 19

Organizational efficiency – 35

Q 14 Please indicate the individuals who influence your adoption of innovations at work.

(Select all that apply) N=58

My supervisor – 38

My Chief – 39

My peers – 26

Juvenile offenders in my care – 30

Families of juvenile offenders in my care – 26

Community leaders – 11

Q17 Since 2007, the following training options/workshops have been offered to Juvenile Court Officers. Please check all of those in which you have participated.

The Oz Principle – 6

40 Developmental Assets – 9

Motivational Interviewing – 54

Aggressive Replacement Therapy (ART) – 36

Functional Family Therapy – 23

Stress Reduction – 8

Drug Recognition – 17

JCO School (Part 1 – 4) – 24

DHS Training – 10

Undoing/Recognizing Racism – 12

Mental Health Training – 18

Rays Program – 24

Trauma Training – 27

Poverty Simulation – 5

Partners in Leadership – 1

National Youth in Transition Training – 7

Sex Offender Registry Training – 17

Motivational/Engagement/Incentive Workshop – 16

APPENDIX N: SIGNED CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR  
TRANSCRIPTION OF DIGITAL FILES

**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**  
**Transcription Services**

PhD Research project for Brenda Moran

I, Rosemary Mahoney transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes and documentation received from Brenda Moran related to her doctoral study. Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped interviews, or in any associated documents;
2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by Brenda Moran;
3. To store all study-related audiotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession;
4. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber's name (printed) Rosemary Mahoney

Transcriber's signature [Signature]

Date 7-22-2013

Researcher's name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_