

Research Paper

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Probation officers' accounts of practice with women convicted of intimate partner violence towards men

Gareth Hole

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1 Introduction

Comparatively little research has been conducted about the motivations and risk factors associated with intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetrated by women when contrasted to that of men. Very few studies have investigated the effectiveness of interventions to reduce women's risk of perpetrating partner-violence and virtually nothing is known about the experiences of probation officers working in this field. This report presents the findings of an exploratory study examining probation officers' accounts of practice with women convicted of IPV. I interviewed twelve probation officers about their work with such women, the factors they considered linked to the perpetration of offences and their attitudes and perceptions towards them. The aim is to understand how the attitudes of probation officers towards women who have perpetrated IPV influence working practices.

The idea for this study arose from observations I made working as a "male safety officer", a role which offered support to male victims of IPV perpetrated by women subject to probation supervision. Very few probation officers made referrals, although it was unclear whether these adequately reflected total numbers; additionally, referrals often described men as the 'real' or 'primary' perpetrator although women were convicted. I therefore intended to investigate probation officers' attitudes to women who disclose being victims from partners; whether their acceptance of this factor as a trigger to offences influenced the work subsequently undertaken.

This study represents both an opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding women who perpetrate IPV and the experiences of those working with them. I completed a thematic analysis of interviews which identified two recurring themes: women who perpetrate IPV frequently report that offences emerged from a context of experiencing abuse from partners; a high number were described as suffering from past trauma or psychological disturbance. I describe participants' responses to these two factors and the variety of personal and professional challenges this raised.

I begin with a brief description about probation practice and key definitions, followed by a literature review of the extant research regarding women who perpetrate IPV. I then outline the methodology underpinning this study and an analysis of key findings. I end by discussing these findings with regards their implications for probation practice and policy.

1.1 Probation practice and key definitions

Probation officers work with individuals who have been sentenced to non-custodial Community or Suspended Sentence Orders, or following their release from custody (Criminal Justice Act, 2003; Offender Rehabilitation Act, 2014). In this report, the term “service-user” is preferred to describe those subject to probation supervision, although the more impersonal term “case” was used by a high number of participants. Service-users are required to abide by a variety of conditions, which often comprise one-to-one “supervision” appointments with probation officers or a range of rehabilitative interventions, such as group “Accredited Programmes”. In order to identify the factors which have contributed to offending, the risk of re-offending or the potential harm posed by service-users, probation officers in the UK complete assessments using the “Offender Assessment System” (OASYS).

From June 2014 the administration of probation services changed: those identified as posing a ‘high risk’ of serious harm, registered sex offenders or individuals sentenced to more than 12 months custody for a specified list of violent offences, are managed by National Probation Service (NPS). Probation services for all other convicted individuals are delivered by a range of private/third sector organisations, entitled “Community Rehabilitation Companies” (CRC). Prior to June 2014, geographically configured “Probation Trusts” delivered services.

Men convicted of IPV often attend group domestic violence programmes, which are underpinned by a large body of research and delivered by specially trained officers. A multi-agency approach is encouraged: victims are offered the support of “Women’s Safety Officers” who contribute to assessments and plans to manage risks; victims who are considered to be at a high risk of harm are referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) where agencies meet to share information and devise plans to manage risks. A similar multi-agency approach is also advocated to protect children, via Multi-Agency Safety Hubs (MASH). Probation officers attend these meetings, known as “MARAC” or “MASH” single points of contact (SPOC).

Probation practice with women convicted of IPV is less well developed. No specific policies guided practitioners, no specific interventions have been available to deliver to them and probation officers have not attended training to work with such service-users. In seeking to address this, London Probation Trust developed an intervention, Female Aggression and Domestic Abuse (FADA), to be

delivered by probation officers who completed a 2-day training programme, in their supervision sessions with women convicted of IPV. Mirroring the approach with male perpetrators, the victims of such women could be referred to a "Male Safety Officer" (MSO). I undertook this role for approximately 2 years, until June 2014, in addition to my work as a probation officer.

During their interviews some participants refer to "clinical supervision", a forum in which probation officers consult with a psychologist/psychotherapist about practice issues and the emotional complexity/impact of their work.



2 Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction

The lack of research investigating the perpetration of IPV by women when compared to that of men has been frequently emphasised (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Dutton, Nicholls and Spidel, 2005; Dowd, 2008; Dobash and Dobash, 2004). No systematically tested or validated theories currently exist (Swan and Snow, 2006; Allen, 2010), although some are in development (e.g. Johnson, 2006; Dasgupta, 2002). Arguably, the empirical uncertainty frustrates probation officers' attempts to appropriately understand and work with such women. The urgency for more research is fuelled by evidence of a rise in the numbers of convicted women for such offences in the USA (Miller, 2001; Miller and Melloy, 2006; Malloy, McCloskey and Grigsby, 2003; Swan and Snow, 2002), with evidence of a similar trend in the UK (Hester, 2012; Cavill and Fursman, 2011).

This review summarises current research and commentary about three areas: the prevalence of the perpetration of IPV by women; women's motivations for perpetrating IPV; guidance for practitioners. I critique the extent to which practitioners are guided in their work and argue the rationale for a study investigating their work with such women.

2.2 The prevalence of IPV perpetrated by women

Domestic violence is most commonly understood as a phenomenon of men's violence towards women and women's victimisation (Saunders, 2002; Pence and Dasgupta, 2006). Traditional definitions conceptualise domestic abuse as comprising the subjugation of women by men through a pattern of controlling behaviours and coercive tactics, including but not restricted to physical violence, motivated by men's exertion of power and control over women (Pence and Dasgupta, 2000; Osthoff, 2002). Despite this, a high number of surveys of randomly selected men and women of the general population about their use of violence in relationships have revealed a somewhat controversial and consistent result: women in these studies self-report perpetrating equivalent and sometimes higher rates of IPV than the men (Hamberger and Guse, 2002; Dowd, 2008; Dowd and Rosenbaum, 2003; Swan and Snow, 2002). This has prompted a fierce debate which has somewhat dominated academic commentary about whether the perpetration of IPV by women has been given due attention or whether the findings of these surveys have been too readily criticised and suppressed, particularly by those from the feminist perspective (Swan and Snow, 2002; Dutton *et al.*,

2005). While it has been emphasised that the findings of general population studies are by no means equivocal (Malloy *et al.*, 2003), a well-respected meta-analysis confirmed women in these studies were more likely to report committing more acts of IPV than men; although the result was statistically significant, the size of the difference was small (Archer, 2000).

Persuasive arguments have criticised the methodologies of surveys of the general population. Significantly, while they 'count' acts of IPV they do not reveal or distinguish between the motivations and contexts for the self-reported acts, their nature and impact; therefore self-defensive acts, those motivated from a context of experiencing abuse from a partner and acts of variable seriousness are amalgamated and thus weaken the explanatory value of these studies (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Dobash and Dobash, 2004).

Additionally, it has been argued that it is misconceived to equate all individuals who have ever perpetrated any act of partner-violence; it is increasingly recognised that there are different types of domestic violence (Johnson, 2006; Pence and Dasgupta, 2006; Osthoff, 2002). Some have also emphasised that studies of forensic samples (hospital data, convicted offenders or domestic violence shelters, for example), contrary to those of the general population, reveal that men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators (Johnson, 2006; Carney, Buttell and Dutton, 2007). This has led Johnson (1995; 2006) to hypothesise that studies of the general population and those of forensic samples are in fact analysing different types of IPV. He distinguishes 'situational IPV' which comprises reactions to specific situations in which the violent party attempts to control the situation but not the entire relationship, from 'intimate terrorism' which comprises a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviours motivated to control, dominate and subjugate the other partner. The latter, he hypothesises, is more likely to be found in forensic samples, whereas the former is more common and thus more likely to be captured in surveys of the general population. Analysing interview data using these typologies, Johnson finds support for his theory that 'situational' violence is perpetrated equally by men and women and that men are overwhelmingly 'intimate terrorists' (Johnson, 2006; Johnson and Yu, 2014).

Some commentators also emphasise studies which indicate that women suffer greater psychological and physical effects of domestic violence than men (Malloy *et al.*, 2003); Archer's (2000) meta-analysis revealed, for instance, that where measures were based on physical consequences, men are more likely to have injured their partner. The author of one study who analysed UK police records

considered that women, contrary to the men in the study, were not engendering fear in or controlling their partners (Hester, 2012); however, the author did not contemplate the potential that men may have been less likely to describe being in fear of partners or that police would have been less inclined to perceive such effects for men. Studies of male victims indicate they can suffer serious effects of IPV and that men face significant social, cultural and practical barriers to reporting victimisation (Migliaccio, 2001; Carmo, Grams and Magalhaes, 2011; Drijber, Reijnders and Ceelen, 2013).

The high number of studies which focus on the prevalence of women's perpetration of IPV and the resultant debate is unhelpful for probation practitioners. Amalgamated data of survey responses which ignore the context and reasons for self-reported acts of IPV provides little guidance to practitioners working with individual women. Indeed, it has been argued that if practitioners fail to grasp the methodological implications of the general population studies and consider men's and women's IPV to be equal, that dangerous practices may result (Allen, 2010). A focus on understanding the aetiology of IPV by women and how practitioners can best address this, rather than counting instances of the phenomena would have more practical value.

2.3 The reasons women perpetrate IPV:

i) Women's Victimization

Studies investigating the reasons for the perpetration of IPV by women have used a range of methodologies: observing convicted women participating in domestic violence programmes, (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Schroffel, 2004), interviewing convicted women (Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, Tolin, 1997; Dasgupta, 1999, cited in Miller and Melloy, 2002), or administering questionnaires (Bair-Merritt, Crowne, Thompson, Siginga, Trent and Campbell, 2010) are common approaches. These studies have revealed that a high proportion of women who perpetrate IPV report being victims of abuse from their partners and perpetrate IPV within this context: protection, self-defence, retaliation for past abuse, or attempting to stop further violence, are commonly cited. The implication of these studies is that women would not perpetrate partner-violence were it not for their victimisation. In a systematic review, Bair-Merritt *et al.*, (2010) concluded that women appeared to be more often responding to abuse, than a desire for coercive control and that motivations linked to self-defence and retaliation were noted in all but three of the studies reviewed. Saunders (2002) noted similar conclusions in a separate review.

Being solely reliant on the self-report of participants without triangulating data with other sources (such as police reports or interviews with partners) raises questions about validity. Some studies highlight, however, women's willingness to disclose their perpetration of IPV, potentially indicating their credibility (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Schroffel, 2004). One study found that women disclosed more of their own violence than their male partners reported about them (Dobash and Dobash, 2004); another highlighted more women than men who telephoned the police and were subsequently arrested, suggesting women's honesty (Hester, 2012).

Some studies have used samples of victimised women (Dobash and Dobash, 2004; Dowd, 2008), mixed samples of convicted women and domestic violence victims (Hamberger and Guse, 2002) or the views of staff working with convicted women and those working with victims (Miller, 2002). This would appear to bias results in favour of motivations linked to victimisation. However these studies, as well as those sampling convicted women with those recruited from other sources (Downs, Rindells and Atkinson, 2007; Swan and Snow, 2002) do not highlight differences in the predominance of this motivation between women sourced from different locations, indicating its pervasiveness. According to Johnson (2006), some individuals will only perpetrate IPV within the context of suffering violence from their partner. Analyses of interview data using his criteria indicate that these 'violent resisters' are overwhelmingly women (Johnson, 2006; Johnson and Yu, 2014).

It is reasonable to conclude that women convicted for IPV are likely to include high numbers of victimised women. However, the majority of studies emanate from the USA, where it has been argued that 'mandatory arrest laws' and an 'incident driven' criminal justice system which fails to consider the wider context when processing incidents has resulted in the conviction of increasing numbers of victims (Miller, 2001; Dasgupta, 2002; Miller and Melloy 2006; McMahon and Pence, 2003; Pence and Dasgupta, 2000). While police in the UK are encouraged to make an arrest in domestic disputes, they are additionally required to determine the 'primary perpetrator' by looking at the wider relationship history and prior arrests (ACPO, 2008). It is unclear whether this results in fewer victims being arrested and convicted or how likely it is that probation practitioners here will be working with women reporting this motivation.

ii) Intimate Terrorism, Situational Couple Violence and additional motivations

Evidence that women use IPV with a primary aim to subjugate, dominate or control their partners is extremely limited (Swan and Snow, 2006); while one review noted a high number of studies which found coercive control to be relevant to many women's motivations, none of these considered this to be a 'primary' motivation (Bair-Merritt *et al.*, 2010). Studies using Johnson's typologies find very few women to be 'intimate terrorists' (Johnson, 2006; Johnson and Yu, 2014) and relatively few women were recorded by the police as a 'sole perpetrator' in another (Hester, 2012). An analysis of telephone calls by men to a domestic abuse helpline, however, found that over 90% were experiencing abusive and controlling tactics from partners, although the study could not ascertain how representative these experiences were (Hines *et al.*, 2007). In a study by Swan and Snow (2002) comprising 108 women, 12% of the sample were described as 'aggressors', although only 6 of the women in the sample had reported no prior victimisation from partners. Although numbers appear to be very small, some women are found to be the primary aggressor or motivated to control and dominate partners. However studies have not focussed exclusively on delineating the characteristics specific to this group, making the task of identifying and responding to them nebulous.

According to Johnson (1995; 2006), women predominantly perpetrate 'situational' IPV whereby violence is used in specific situations, but where there is an absence of a wider strategy and pattern of longer-term control and abuse. A study using this approach found that police can become involved in such incidents (Johnson and Yu, 2014). Therefore practitioners are urged to distinguish different forms of domestic violence so that relevant motivations are identified and targeted (Pence and Dasgupta, 2000).

Literature reviews identify that women who perpetrate IPV are not a homogenous group; it has been noted that even women who experience victimisation from partners will often perpetrate IPV for a variety of additional reasons and many will not have experienced victimisation at all. Motivations linked to expressing anger and desiring attention from partners (Bair-Merritt *et al.*, 2010; Hines *et al.*, 2007; Miller and Melloy, 2006; Hamberger *et al.*, 1997) violence motivated by jealousy (Hines *et al.*, 2007) and expressing frustration (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Hamberger *et al.*, 1997) have often been found to underlie women's use of partner-violence. The extent that practitioners should focus on women's victimisation or other factors as a trigger to domestically

violent incidents should therefore be determined upon the basis of individual assessment (Dutton *et al.*, 2005).

iii) Past trauma and psychological factors

Studies have identified a very high prevalence of trauma in women who perpetrate partner-violence, often due to witnessing or experiencing violence in childhood, sexual abuse or the effects of domestic abuse from previous relationships; high rates of psychological disturbance have also been found, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, prior suicide attempts, attachment or personality disorders (Dutton *et al.*, 2005; Hamberger and Guse, 2002; Swan and Snow, 2006; Leisring and Dowd, 2003; Mappin *et al.* 2013). In a study of male victims, over 90% reported their partners had suffered a history of childhood trauma (Hines *et al.*, 2007).

The relevance of these matters to women's perpetration of IPV has not been fully clarified; Dowd (2008) recalls theories and studies which demonstrate a link between prior trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder and women's emotional self-regulation and use of aggression; this suggests a potential relevance to women who are violent in relationships. A case study of three women using multi-sequential functional analysis, hypothesised IPV functioned to increase low self-worth resulting from neglectful upbringings (Mappin, Dawson, Gresswell and Beckley, 2013). Many studies have found a high correlation between personality disorder and partner violence in both genders (Dutton *et al.*, 2005).

While the precise links are not clarified, the social and psychological correlates of partner violence are likely to be highly relevant considerations for practitioners working with women convicted of IPV. It has been argued, however, that interventions should not focus exclusively on treating the effects of past trauma, as addressing the behavioural factors linked to women's perpetration of IPV is relevant for many women (Dowd, 2008; Dutton *et al.*, 2005).

2.4 Guidance for Practitioners

Group interventions have been developed and implemented for women convicted of IPV in the USA; however the contents of these are variable and their effectiveness has not been studied (Dowd, 2008). There are no agreed principles to guide practitioners working in this field (Dowd, 2008; Leisring *et al.*, 2003) although some general advice has emerged.

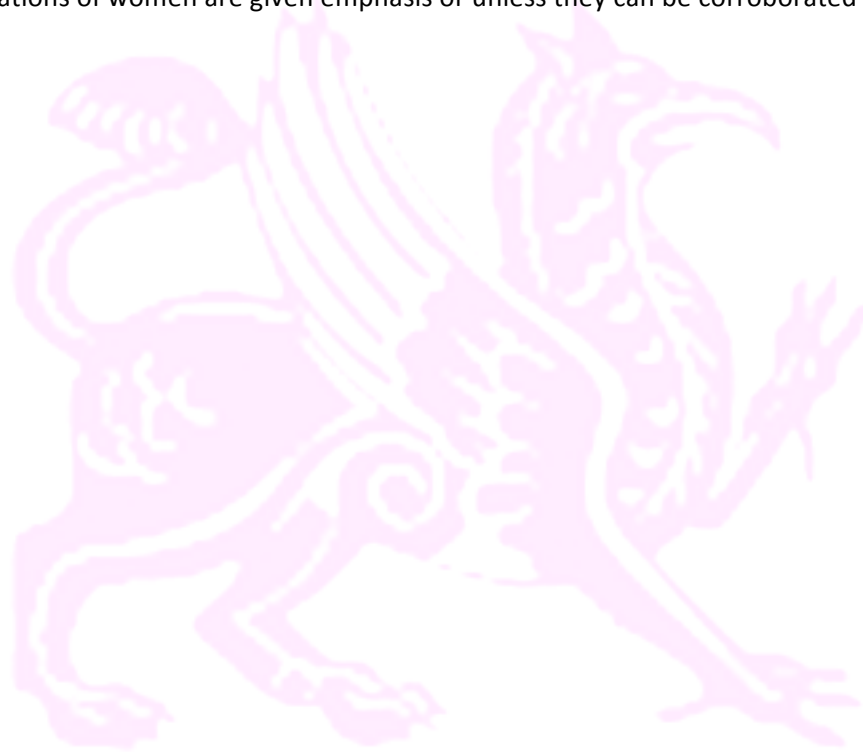
Given the repeated predominance of the issue in previous research, interventions which are sensitive to and counsel women about their experiences of victimisation and promoting safety is strongly advocated for women IPV perpetrators (Leisring *et al.*, 2003; Dutton *et al.*, 2005). However it is also often argued that an exclusive focus on this issue for many women will not be sufficient. Therefore it has been advocated that practitioners should additionally target a range of other factors relevant to each individual on a case-by-case basis: teaching women to be responsible for their use of IPV (Leisring *et al.*, 2003; Dutton *et al.*, 2005), anger, assertiveness and communications training (Leisring *et al.*, 2003), conflict management, communication skills, stress management or targeting and changing cognitions which influence violent behaviour (Dowd, 2008) are advocated approaches.

Additionally, practitioners are strongly advised to complete a comprehensive investigation about service-users' relationships, the pattern, type and frequency of violence used by both partners and to resist making early assumptions (McMahon and Pence, 2003; Dowd, 2008; Hamberger and Guse, 2002; Pence and Dasgupta, 2000; Osthoff, 2002). By investigating the dynamics of each relationship, based on the perspectives of both partners and analysis of collateral information, such as police call-out history, witness statements or the views of other agencies, it is suggested practitioners will be able to better assess service-users' motivations and to respond accordingly. For instance, it has been argued that practitioners frequently mistake 'situational' violence as 'terroristic' abuse (Pence and Dasgupta, 2000); therefore when women state they have been victims from partners and have used violence in response, the potential that both partners have used 'situational' violence, rather than presuming women have been solely motivated to protect themselves from a pattern of terroristic abuse, requires analysis. Additionally, although practitioners are unlikely to be frequently working with women who use a pattern of controlling and 'terroristic' IPV, they must be alert to this possibility.

Therefore, being aware of and sensitive to the influence of cultural stereotypes about women and violence is important (Hester, 2012). Studies have found that women's violence is often rated as less serious than men's, even where the 'act' is the same (Dietz and Jansinski, 2003; Drijber *et al.*, 2013); a study interviewing counsellors work with male victims of domestic violence noted their difficulties accepting the men as 'victims' and the women as 'perpetrators' (Hogan, Hegarty, Ward and Dodd, 2012). Until risk assessment tools and research provides more clarity, a reflective, individualised and comprehensive approach to assessing women's motivations appears to be advocated.

2.5 Conclusion

This review has demonstrated that although understandings of women who perpetrate IPV are considered limited, common themes have emerged. Guidance for practitioners is however vague; the emphasis which should be placed on different motivations for different women is not specific and open to subjective interpretation; the precise processes through which practitioners should address women's victimisation, the behavioural factors or psychodynamic features underpinning their use of IPV are not delineated. If it is accepted that women who perpetrate IPV are a heterogeneous group, distinguishing between them appears to be challenging unless the self-reported motivations of women are given emphasis or unless they can be corroborated through other sources.



3 Methodology:

3.1 Rationale for this study

Very little is known about probation officers' work with women who have perpetrated IPV (Miller and Melloy, 2006). One study (Miller, 2002) found that practitioners emphasised women's perpetration of partner-violence as usually originating within the context of victimisation from partners; however the study included only 5 probation officers, their views amalgamated with practitioners from other agencies. A detailed exploration about the factors probation officers consider to be relevant to the perpetration of IPV by women has not been undertaken. Although previous research indicates the likelihood that many women will report perpetrating IPV within the context of their own victimisation by partners, the willingness of practitioners to accept or discount this and how, or whether, the differing views of officers might affect the nature of the work which is undertaken is currently unknown. Additionally, whether probation officers follow guidelines about assessing and addressing the perpetration of IPV by women has not been addressed by previous studies. A study about probation officers' work in this area is therefore indicated.

3.2 Research questions and aim

In light of the foregoing literature review, three research questions framed the design of this study:

- **What factors do probation officers commonly assess to be linked to the perpetration of IPV by women towards men?**
- **What are the attitudes of probation officers towards such women and specifically, disclosures that offences are linked to victimisation from partners?**
- **What work do probation officers complete with such women?**

The overall aim is:

To understand how the attitudes of probation officers towards women convicted for IPV influence working practices.

3.3 Reflective statement

As a probation officer interviewing colleagues, the potential impact of my status as an "insider researcher" onto the design, implementation and analysis of this study is acknowledged (Greene, 2014; Chavez, 2008). My personal experiences working as an MSO and my reactions to referrals describing women as victims and the male victims as the 'real' perpetrators provided the initial

impetus for this study. At this time, I considered probation officers were 'biased' to conceptualise 'women as victims' and I resisted this interpretation and therefore may have been 'too close' to the study to have provided objective analysis (Greene, 2014). The final research questions, submission for research access and design of the interview schedule were completed once I had read the majority of research for the literature review, which facilitated a balanced approach. The interview schedule used open questions, and when conducting interviews I aimed to reflect and probe, rather than lead and influence.

Insider researchers are seen to have many advantages, particularly with regards to understanding the research context and establishing rapport with participants (Greene, 2014; Chavez, 2008). However achieving an objective standpoint was a challenging and ongoing process. I completed summaries and charts outlining participant responses, read interviews a number of times to ensure I had accurately understood, regularly discussed with my academic supervisor and completed a reflexive journal to challenge my own beliefs and preconceptions. Some of these approaches are considered beneficial to ensuring the validity of insider qualitative research (Greene, 2014).

3.4 Research Design

i) Semi-Structured interviews and data from OASYS

I chose to obtain the substantive data for this study by completing semi-structured interviews with participants on an individual basis; all participants were probation officers who had worked with at least one woman convicted for IPV (see section 3.4 (ii)). I considered semi-structured interviews to be an appropriate forum as this assured some consistency about the areas discussed, but also allowed flexibility for participants to explore areas they considered relevant without imposing a rigid structure based on my own preconceived ideas (Robson, 2011). This approach was considered preferable to written questionnaires which might have facilitated the inclusion of more participants, but would arguably have resulted in more vague and subjective interpretations due to the inability to probe and seek clarification. I also discounted the use of a focus group; I considered this would not have allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' work with specific service-users; it would also have been less possible to ascertain individuals' attitudes or the extent to which they had been influenced by those of other participants.

I interviewed participants for approximately 1 hour, with the exception of participant 4 (1.5 hours) and 5 (35 minutes). I asked participants to describe the offences and backgrounds of service-users,

the factors they considered linked to offences and to summarise the work they had undertaken. To investigate attitudes, I asked for typical responses when both men and women who have perpetrated IPV disclose being victims from partners, their reactions to the term “female domestic abuse perpetrator” and sought generalisations about why they considered women perpetrate IPV. The full interview schedule is included in Appendix 1.

To place the study within a wider context, data was requested and provided by the CRC and NPS in the area studied about the numbers of women subject to probation supervision for IPV offences and the proportion identified as ‘victims’ as well as ‘perpetrators’ of domestic violence.

ii) Participants

Sampling was purposive as I recruited participants based upon critically considered criteria, rather than solely their availability or accessibility (Silverman, 2000). I initially proposed to interview participants who had worked with a high number of relevant service-users and had completed FADA training and to compare their approaches with those with less experience and no training; this approach was constrained, however, when lists of potential officers who had completed relevant OASYS assessments revealed very few had completed more than one each. While a more representative study would have comprised officers with extremely limited experience, I aimed to include participants with as much experience as possible as this was considered more appropriate for an exploratory study with an aim of identifying common themes.

All officers who had completed relevant assessments within the past year were invited to participate and asked to report the number of women they had ever worked with following a conviction for IPV. The response rate was very low; when participants cancelled or re-arranged interviews, this prevented the inclusion of more in the time available for practical research. The final sample comprises 12 participants; three were considered experienced due to having worked with a higher number of relevant service-users and their completion of FADA training, three were considered to be inexperienced as they had not completed this training and had worked with only one service-user each; the remainder mainly comprised participants who had worked with two service-users and some had completed the FADA training. Participants mainly worked with service-users in the CRC division of the probation service, though 3 worked for NPS. I noted that many worked either as specialist women’s officers and/or were representatives at MARAC or MASH; therefore the sample could be considered to comprise a high number of participants motivated to work with women and

domestic violence than might ordinarily be the case for most officers. Additionally, no men responded to invitations; this prevented analysis about the role of gender and its influence. See Appendix 4 for a full profile of the sample.

iii) Access and Ethical considerations

This study comprises a practitioner research fellowship administered by Griffin's Society in conjunction with University of Cambridge. I have no prior experience of research however I attended research seminars arranged by the University. Professor Malcolm Cowburn, Emeritus Professor of Applied Social Science, Sheffield Hallam University, provided academic supervision.

Ethical considerations primarily related to the potential conflict of interest between my role as MSO and completing this research, the disclosure of 'live' risk issues which might require immediate action, or interviews revealing participants' contravention of organisational policies and procedures. As this study did not comprise interviews with service-users and because the MSO role advocated discussions with probation officers about service-users, I did not consider that service-users would be adversely affected by their probation officer participating in this study. All participants were supplied an information sheet (Appendix 2) and signed a consent form (Appendix 3) outlining that if interviews indicated immediate risk issues that required urgent work, that discussions would take place following the interview; additionally all participants were informed that line managers would be informed about any issues of malpractice. Assuring the confidentiality of both service-users and participants and the appropriate storage of sensitive information were also critical considerations.

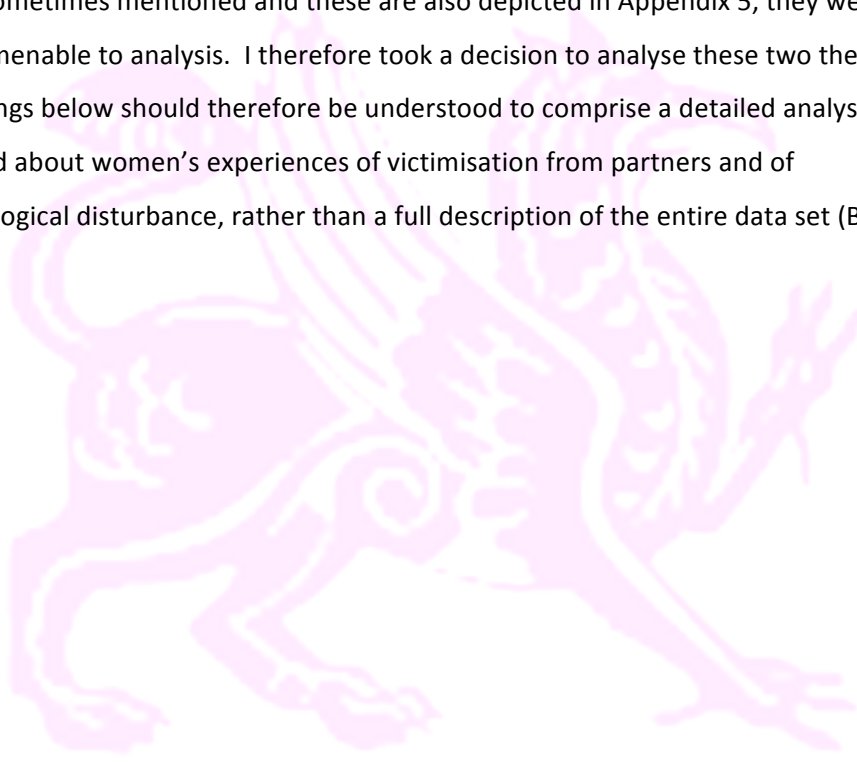
Ethical approval was granted by University of Cambridge, Institute of Criminology. The study was also approved by National Offender Management Service Research Committee, subject to my agreement to key considerations, notably about recruitment of participants. As stipulated, access was also sought and agreed from London NPS and London CRC.

3.5 Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed which I read a number of times. To identify themes, I carried out a thematic analysis, using the Miles and Huberman (1994) approach, described by Punch (1998) and Robson (2011); principles of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) also guided my approach. As this area is under-researched, I was unable to retrieve previous studies to guide

analysis and therefore the approach was inductive as themes were identified from participants' responses rather than using previously defined themes (Robson, 2011; Braun and Clarke, 2006).

In order to facilitate analysis, key features relating to the service-users and their offences were depicted in tabular form (Appendix 5). All interviews were coded descriptively and codes compared both within each interview and between participants, which I grouped into related themes. Analysis of Appendix 5 and descriptive codes indicated that a high number of service-users were identified as victims of abuse from partners and/or having experienced emotional trauma or psychological disturbance; a high number of descriptive codes also related to these issues. Although other matters were sometimes mentioned and these are also depicted in Appendix 5, they were relatively brief and not amenable to analysis. I therefore took a decision to analyse these two themes in detail; the findings below should therefore be understood to comprise a detailed analysis of what participants said about women's experiences of victimisation from partners and of trauma/psychological disturbance, rather than a full description of the entire data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).



4 Findings:

OASYS Data

Between June 2014-2015, 43 new OASYS assessments were completed in London CRC for women where the items “perpetrator of domestic violence” and “current offence comprises physical violence to partner” were marked as present; 65.1% of these identified the service-users as a “victim of domestic violence”. The majority (92%) of these assessments were completed by different officers; only three officers completed 2 or more assessments. There were only 8 new assessments completed by officers in NPS London during the same time period which fitted this criteria; no officers completed more than one of these assessments.

Between June 2012-2013 47 new assessments were completed in London Probation Trust and 55 between June 2013-2014 which fitted the above criteria. Out of these 102 assessments, 67% identified service-users as victims of domestic violence. Similarly, 84% of these were completed by different officers; 8 officers completed two assessments each. The provided data also included an additional 202 assessments between June 2012-2014 which identified women as “perpetrator of domestic violence” but where the current offence was not identified as comprising “physical violence to partner”. Although it was not possible to identify if the victim of these offences was a partner, 69% of these women were identified as victims of domestic violence.

Thematic Analysis

4.1 Accepting women's victimisation as a trigger to offences

Participants commonly reported that service-users told them they were victims of physical or emotional abuse from their partners. Indeed, as highlighted in Appendix 5, out of the twenty-six service-users discussed during interviews, nineteen were said to have experienced victimisation from partners and all but one participant had worked with at least one service-user where this was a feature. Where women said they were victims, all participants strongly considered this to be a relevant factor in understanding their service-users' perpetration of IPV; this was very often the first issue referred to in interviews, it was the most emphasised factor linked to offences and descriptions of women's victimisation often dominated participants' accounts. Participants commonly recounted service-users' self-reported explanations about why their victimisation contributed to offences, with

clear references that they accepted this as pertinent factor. For instance, four were described as protecting themselves from immediate harm:

“she feared...what he would do to her...picking up a knife was not with an intention to harm, it was an intention to warn, to keep him away” (Participant 11, Service-User 3)

“she said she really feared for her life...she got...the nearest thing she could find and...she hit him over the head...I think she thought “If I don’t do something about this, the consequences for me are going to be very, very serious” (Participant 4, Service-User 4)

Four offences were portrayed as arising from a context of a long history of abuse; the offence was described as comprising an attempt to stop further abuse or possibly to retaliate towards partners:

“she attacked him while he was sleeping...she killed her partner and she stabbed him...he’d been violent to her throughout this relationship. This was a last ditch attempt to try and get this to stop” (Participant 11, Service-User 2)

“she described it as passive aggressive abuse....emotional and passive....she’d lived a life where she’d been abused and just rebelled, you know, taken a stop and decided, enough is enough” (Participant 2, Service-User 2)

A larger group of service-users were said to have perpetrated impulsive or reactive verbal or physical violence within the context of their partner’s actions towards them; the behaviour of male partners was usually emphasised as the primary trigger to women’s reactions:

“I think she was strangling him when the police turned up and that’s why she was charged and he wasn’t....She just says she gets pushed to a point she just goes off on one....” (Participant 5, Service-User 1)

“I still feel that some sort of assault took place...I don’t think he just stood there and just let her assault him, I can’t see that, I’ve met him” (Participant 2)

For this group of women some participants referenced additional explanations. While they still indicated that men's actions provoked women's aggressive responses, other factors such as anger, frustration or an inability to manage emotions, were also noted as associated risk factors. For example, participant 6 described that one of her service-users threw a stone at her partner's window during an argument about child contact, where he was described as maliciously contravening a prior arrangement. When asked what factors were relevant to her risk, "anger, and the ability to manage her emotions" were described as associated triggers.

Many participants referred to seeking further information from the police or other agencies to corroborate service-users' histories of abuse, although this was only available for a small number. There was no difference, however, in the approach between participants who had been able to verify this and those who had not; all participants conveyed strong beliefs about accepting the relevance of women's victimisation even where women's self-reports were the only available source of information. Additionally, the approaches of participants to this issue did not appear to differ depending upon their level of experience or training. While more experienced participants had indeed worked with more women who were not victims, where this was disclosed, their approach also appeared to be one of acceptance. Indeed, when asked how she could verify women's self-reports about victimisation from partners, one experienced participant succinctly admitted "I can't really! I have to take their word for it!" (Participant 3).

All participants were asked if their practice was informed by theory or research. Some said they were aware of research that indicates women IPV perpetrators tend to be victims of abuse; this was particularly the case for those who had completed FADA training (see section 1.1 above). A few mentioned that the approach they took with service-users had been influenced by this research.

4.2 Women are honest and accept responsibility

The majority of participants made statements that suggested they considered their service-users to be open, honest and frank about themselves, their lives and their use of IPV. As reflected in the previous section, women's accounts about being victimised by partners were believed and these were not represented as attempts to exonerate responsibility or to deny wrongdoing, as reflected in the following accounts:

“quite often they really do say it as it is....you know, I’ve had a woman say to me, “I just thought he was going to hurt me, so I just picked up a brandy bottle and hit him around the head, hard with it!” (Participant 4)

“She called the police and told them what happened... she was honest and straightforward from the beginning and admitted what she had done...she understood that what she did...was totally and utterly wrong” (Participant 8)

“Well with [service-user 1] she was very honest...I think she called me within minutes of attacking him again” (Participant 10)

“she’ll come, and she’s very open...She’s never said, “oh if he hadn’t done that then I wouldn’t be doing Probation” I’ve never heard her say that” (Participant 12)

Paradoxically, although service-users’ accounts usually differed from what male partners had alleged and indeed the women had been convicted, women were seen to be providing truthful reports. Only participant 7 doubted the credibility of one of her service-users; the participant said she provided conflicting reports about whether her partner had abused her or not, but significantly, also emphasised that she took no responsibility for acting wrongfully and externalised blame onto her partner. It therefore appeared to me that participants may have been influenced to accept women’s self-reports about the context of their offending as they were strongly influenced by service-users’ willingness to accept responsibility for acting wrongfully, despite the context of victimisation to which they often referred.

4.3 Predisposition to viewing women as victims and men as perpetrators

Given that participants were open to accepting women’s self-reports, even where there was no other evidence to substantiate their accounts and the implication that men provoked women’s offending even where the ‘official’ account did not support this, I investigated whether participants were influenced by cultural or personal stereotypes of viewing women as ‘victims’ and men as ‘perpetrators’ of domestic abuse. All participants were asked to discuss why women perpetrate IPV ‘generally’ and their reaction to the phrase ‘female domestic abuse perpetrator’. The majority of responses were framed in terms of women being victims, although many also referenced additional

factors. Although two participants resisted making generalisations, they did so inadvertently, stating they had “never” worked with a women IPV perpetrator who had been the “sole perpetrator” (Participant 4) or that “cross-violence” was “always” present (Participant 3), but later giving examples where this was not the case.

Regardless of any history of abuse, all service-users had been convicted of wrongful behaviour. The majority stated they understood their role was to accept this verdict and to deliver the sentence imposed, although two participants described their service-users' actions as ‘justified’. However despite this, there was a tacit resistance in many accounts to viewing men as passive recipients of women's violence:

“I don't think I viewed it as “domestic violence” when she broke into his house....I don't think it automatically came to mind....well it is domestic abuse because if she was a man I'm pretty sure she'd be in prison” (Participant 7)

“I believe that yea, he was winding her up” (Participant 9)

“I still feel that some sort of assault took place...I don't think he just stood there and just let her assault him, I can't see that, I've met him” (Participant 2)

“There's always a bigger story! She wasn't just strangling him was she? I mean that just doesn't happen very often!” (Participant 5)

Although men were victims of women's offences, there was a notable absence in accounts about taking actions to promote his safety. All participants were asked about the work they did to manage the potential risks of harm. While many focussed on protecting women from their partners (see section 4.4 below) very few referred men to the Male Safety Officer and none spoke about referring him to MARAC or to other support services. Some participants explained that they had never heard of the MSO role; others said they were unsure if this role still existed since the ‘split’ in probation services in June 2014 (see Chapter 1.1 above). A few said they did not consider the threshold for a MARAC referral to have been met and therefore did not assess him to be at a high risk of serious harm; a few mentioned they were unsure where to refer men for support or whether this should comprise their role. However it was also possible that they were not as ready to see men as victims

as they were with women; many said they usually take a more sceptical approach when men state their use of partner violence occurs within the context of experiencing violence from female partners:

“I would see that very differently, yeah....I would see that as him justifying his behaviour...” (Participant 10)

“A man will often excuse his own behaviour by reference to female violence...there is a lot of victim blaming from men to women and that has to be explored” (Participant 1)

“I would be more inclined to believe a female when she says, you know, “I had no choice”, whereas I wouldn't believe a man straight away” (Participant 5)

The stark differences in responses to men and women could indicate differences in their attitudes towards them; many emphasised, however, that it was their knowledge of research and also their own professional experience which informed views that women are predominantly the victims of men. Despite this, eleven participants made references that suggested they were aware of the potential influence of stereotypes:

“I admit I'd be more worried if it was a woman...I don't know why, I just am” (Participant 5)

“You do, you do stereotype, you think “Oh you know, he must have been about to attack her, or she's at the end of her tether and flipped out”...it's difficult to imagine a complete role-reversal, where she's there controlling and dominating” (Participant 8)

The three most experienced participants in this study appeared to take a more considered and reflective approach to the issue. All three strongly resisted making generalisations when asked to do so; they also appeared to take a more self-critical view about whether they had taken the correct approach or if they had been influenced by their personal views:

“our perception has been “they must be the victims” and “that it’s not possible not to be a victim”; but working with them, I’ve seen that yes they can be perpetrators, you know, it’s been quite interesting gaining an understanding of that” (Participant 3)

“I’ve found myself getting drawn into them as a victim and the abuse being a reaction from that....but I’m not sure whether that’s being responsive to the situation and seeing things as different because they *are* different or whether it’s being more collusive” (Participant 10).

While the less experienced participants made generalisations although they had often only worked with just one woman, those with more experience suggested their views of women’s perpetration of IPV had changed as a result of their work.

4.4 Working with victimisation: The need for specialist advice

Every participant said they took steps to promoting service-user’s safety where victimisation was a feature, indicating they considered this to be important component of their work with women who perpetrate IPV. Most frequently, referrals were made to domestic violence agencies and some referred service-users to the MARAC panel. Some sent women to a “Freedom” programme, a group intervention for women experiencing domestic abuse, possibly indicating their consideration that addressing victimisation was a priority for such service-users; indeed, participant 4 appeared to reflect that it was more important to address her service-user’s victimisation rather than treating them as a ‘perpetrator’:

“I think that’s a great programme....Because when they go on that they’re not treated as the perpetr...you know, they are there because they are a women with other women, who have found themselves in very risky situations”

It was notable that despite the emphasis participants placed on this issue, that many expressed a lack of confidence in addressing women’s victimisation directly, suggesting they were inadequately trained or lacked enough knowledge to appropriately advise women who were victims, other than making referrals. Very few spoke about delivering formal ‘safety plans’ although this was mentioned by two of the more experienced officers (who worked as specialist women’s officers). Where used,

the FADA manual was often described as being helpful in exploring and addressing victimisation. Many spoke of needing to consult themselves with other agencies to get appropriate advice and some described themselves as 'fortunate' or 'lucky' if they were able liaise with someone considered more experienced in dealing with women's victimisation, such as Participant 10, who worked from a women's centre:

"I'm surrounded by women who specialise in working with women who have been victims...I think it's just knowing that there's somebody just out there that I can go and grab...to speak to about that....that's just quite comforting"

In terms of their direct work with women, over half recounted detailed discussions with service-users about the dynamics of their relationships, listening to their experiences of abuse and offering advice, such as motivating her to leave the relationship. Some described conversations about encouraging service-users to accept they were in fact victims, rather than perpetrators. The extent to which participants dealt with other matters other than victimisation or dealing with traumatic emotional experiences (see sections 4.5-4.7 below) when these factors were present was unclear. A few officers referred to helping women to consider alternatives to their violent reactions to men and helping them to improve consequential thinking. However descriptions of the approaches participants took were brief and not amenable to analysis and there was little consistency between what participants said, possibly indicating they were tailoring interventions to the specific individual.

It was also notable that a handful of participants expressed difficulty in delivering work to service-users who strongly resisted the label of 'perpetrator'. Some expressed confusion about whether or not they were supposed to acknowledge the victimisation of these service-users:

"invariably I do work with her as a victim...that's the truth...and I think when that happens I'm not fulfilling the role I'm supposed to do....what would have helped is having some sort of proper pathway for working with these women....I feel like I've sort of got this moral conflict going on" (Participant 11)

"I found it difficult...labelling her as offender and him as victim....for her that was offensive...I didn't want to be too sympathetic so then she'd be like "my PO agrees I did

the right thing” because clearly you didn’t...but I can understand the thought processes in getting to that point” (Participant 7)

These participants appeared to experience a conflict of roles; while probation officers are expected to address the offending behaviour of participants, they appeared to express concern about whether they would be professionally criticised or compromised for prioritising women’s victimisation as a factor in her offending. Others had struggled to deliver ‘offence-focussed’ work to women who ultimately considered their victimisation to be the sole reason for their offending.

4.5 Past trauma and psychological disturbance

Every participant worked with at least one service-user who referred to past trauma and/or were thought to suffer psychological disturbance; although the service-user participant 6 worked with had suffered no traumatic experiences in upbringing, the participant emphasised the emotional trauma she exhibited as a result of emotional abuse from her current partner. Out of the 24 service-users where backgrounds were known, 16 were described as suffering the effects of traumatic experiences, commonly witnessing or suffering physical or sexual abuse growing up, abandonment from parents, neglectful upbringings or experiencing domestic abuse in prior adult relationships. Some service-users were diagnosed with personality disorder; a few were also described as suffering unspecified ‘mental health issues’ though the nature of these or whether they had resulted from formal diagnosis was unclear. Many were described as suffering depression or anxiety and ‘low self-esteem’ was frequently mentioned. As listed in Appendix 5, many service-users were said to have experienced more than one of these issues. A high number were identified as abusing alcohol; some were described as alcohol-dependent and a few were viewed as a higher risk of perpetrating IPV when under the influence; more commonly however, alcohol was described as a method women used to cope with past experiences.

All participants conveyed strong beliefs about the necessity of understanding and exploring women’s backgrounds and emotional wellbeing:

“I would imagine that the majority of those cases, if you get their trust and if you can dig back in their childhood, there’s usually something quite abusive in their history”
(Participant 8)

“the underlying reason is about not being able to cope within relationships...which seems to be a result of having been brought up in ineffective relationships themselves”
(Participant 11)

Participants supplied a variety of reasons about the connection between trauma and psychological functioning and women's perpetration of IPV offences. Many were described as having limited abilities to form appropriate intimate relationships as a result of living chaotic lifestyles due to not coping with their past experiences. Those who were in abusive relationships were often considered to have entered or remained in these as a result of their prior traumatic experiences, due to having poor self-esteem or distorted views and low expectations of men and relationships. Participant 2 made direct links between her service-users' past experiences of violence in family units by explaining that suffering violence from partners had triggered behavioural or coping responses which she thought were learned growing up in neglectful or violent circumstances. Participant 9 made similar links when describing a service-user who had not disclosed any violence from her current partner, but had experienced significant abuse in a previous relationship; when her current partner was described to be 'winding her up' her past experiences had, according to the participant, affected her style of managing conflict:

“her son's father had actually put her in hospital...she'd probably become quite submissive and then she said “I'm not willing to put up with that any more, I'm not going to tolerate anybody hitting me or, you know, abusing me in any way”

Only one service-user was described as using controlling and coercive violence to subjugate and dominate her partner; participant 10 explained this service-user's extensive history of intra-familial sexual abuse had warped her view of healthy relationships and ability to function appropriately towards her partner.

Where service-users were known or thought to suffer mental health issues, participants noted this to be one of the factors that had contributed to offences; these women were often described as having difficulty relating to their partners or taking extreme actions when partners were abusive towards them. Although participants suggested a link, the reasons they had come to this conclusion was often unclear:

“they both got arrested and she did get sent to prison for that ..but hers, she had a mental health issue, most definitely. You know, she had personality disorder and more. She had schizoid paranoid something or other. So there was definitely mental health in that, um, mixed up really.” (Participant 3)

Where emotional trauma and psychological disturbance had been disclosed, all participants therefore appeared to see this as very relevant to service-user's perpetration of IPV. The links made between the past and present and speculations about how past experiences had impacted present behaviour, suggested a psychodynamic approach, although participants did not state this specifically. However women's emotions were also seen to be relevant for service-users who had not had abusive histories:

“when we began to unpick it, it was to do with deep seated anger that she had....and then lack of control of her emotions” (Participant 3, Service-User 1)

“her issues are her emotions, first and foremost...and I'd say the way she thinks and resolves her problems...but emotion I think took over the most. Even when she was being pinned down, I still think her emotions were the ones that triggered everything else” (Participant 6, Service-User 1).

In my analysis of their accounts, participants often saw service-users through an emotional lens; they often suggested that exploring backgrounds, childhoods and attachments growing up was vital to understanding women's current offending and adult relationships and tended to prioritise emotional explanations for women's offending, rather than any other potential behavioural explanations.

4.6 Addressing emotions: Listening, exploring and supporting

The majority of participants described undertaking a process of exploration with service-users to make inferences between their pasts and their offences. The majority of service-users were seen to require high levels of support; descriptions of appointments suggested they were often dominated by listening to service-users, who usually disclosed highly charged emotional situations relating to their past or present relationships:

“When she comes to Probation she wants to talk and talk and talk, and I just let her talk to be quite honest” (Participant 12)

Some participants referred to assisting women to gain better self-esteem; ‘empowerment’ was also referenced by many. Self-esteem and empowerment were usually discussed in terms of helping women to gain independence from abusive men, or to avoid entering future abusive relationships.

Many participants spoke about helping women to improve their ‘emotional management’ or ‘emotional regulation’, suggesting a behavioural or cognitive behavioural approach; however no participant described what this work entailed in practice. Where used, the FADA programme was often described as assisting service-users to better understand and manage their emotions.

4.7 Women IPV perpetrators require specialist intervention

Nearly every participant considered that service-users who had suffered past trauma or psychological disturbance required more specialism than could be offered by themselves. Where service-users were engaging in psychological treatment, counselling or mental health resources, these were often described to be more relevant than their own appointments. Many participants worked hard to refer service-users to more specialist resources and expressed frustration if this was not readily available:

“I’m still pushing for a full assessment, a mental health assessment” (Participant 2)

“We did have at (women’s centre) a mental health worker and a counsellor ...but they’ve both gone now....But it was a shame because pretty much all of the women who go there, that’s exactly what they need” (Participant 10)

“I feel like there should be more support. Like when I tried to get support specifically for her, there was nothing...it was absolutely infuriating....and in the end I referred her to a Linkworker, who’s now working with her” (Participant 5)

Participants suggested two reasons for prioritising referrals to other agencies. Half described not having enough time to adequately cope with the high support needs such service-users often

demanded. Over half appeared to suggest a lack of confidence about whether they were appropriately placed to explore some issues:

“I think with her it’s more difficult because she’s got the mental health aspect and I think, “oh, am I equipped to deal with that?” because that seems to be the main reason why she forms these unhealthy attachments” (Participant 7)

“We spoke about the abuse, but I think there’s a point where I would think I’m not going to go into the details of this...it’s just about being able to be confident...I would have to think “am I out of my depth dealing with it? Do I need to refer her onto someone else?” ...because I don’t want to bring up a load of stuff that I can’t actually deal with” (Participant 9)

“I was professionally a bit reluctant to open up a can of worms that I can’t then deal with and just to leave her with that, but possibly what might be more truthful is, is just me not knowing how to cope and deal with that” (Participant 10).

While participants often described service-users opening up about emotionally complex and traumatic experiences, it was noteworthy that many expressed a conflict or reluctance about whether they were adequately trained or resourced to provide appropriate help. While two of the more experienced participants did not express this lack of confidence, it was unclear if their experience, or their access to available resources, accounted for this.

4.8 Emotional impact of the work

Participants frequently described experiencing a personal emotional impact as a result of this work. As outlined above, some referred to struggling with a conflict or ‘fear’ about whether they were adequately placed to deal with some complex issues. A few also referred to ‘fearing’ for their service-user’s safety:

“I just felt really quite fearful all the time, you know, am I doing the right thing, is she safe, is he safe, checking things out and then how you feel” (Participant 4)

Some described witnessing the direct effects of abuse, with women attending the office with bruises or other signs injury. There were occasional references to the emotional impact of hearing about women's experiences of abuse. Many of the service-users were also described as being 'difficult' or 'chaotic' or 'emotionally draining', with participants describing high levels of emotional resource and resilience to engage them:

"but I do think that it's quite a danger, because I've found myself thinking one extreme to another. Sometimes being in a room with somebody for ages and coming out feeling drained and emotional" (Participant 10)

"whenever you're working with a woman I think that....they're going to draw, pull, often bring a lot more into that session than maybe when you're working with a man" (Participant 9)

To counteract these experiences, many participants referred to speaking to colleagues and managers; some also referred to the benefits of attending 'clinical supervision' (see Chapter 1.1 above) which they saw as helping them to make sense of service-user's experiences and to gain personal emotional support. Interestingly, the three most experienced participants had all discussed women IPV perpetrators in clinical supervision and stressed the importance of doing so.

5 Discussion

This study intended to identify factors probation officers commonly link to the perpetration of IPV by women, their attitudes towards them and how differing attitudes influence supervisory approaches. Analysis revealed previously unknown insights about how probation officers respond to two features: where women disclosed victimisation from partners and/or past trauma or psychological disturbance, participants considered these to be highly relevant to women's perpetration of IPV and took steps to help women to address these issues in their work. However, when dealing with these issues practitioners confronted a number of personal and professional challenges. The salience of these findings and a discussion about the approaches taken by participants are now discussed. The discussion will end by identifying implications for probation service policies, particularly regarding provision of support to male victims and the levels of knowledge and experience of probation officers working in this field. These findings should, however, be read within the context of a number of limitations.

As an exploratory study comprising a relatively small number of participants, many of whom had limited experience and came from one probation area only, the potential to generalise results are limited. Additionally, all participants were women, restricting discussion about how the gender of officer might influence responses. Many participants also specialised in working with women, or voiced a specific interest in domestic violence, suggesting the experiences represented in this sample may not be those of many probation officers. The study also focussed on two specific issues, women's victimisation and the role of past trauma or psychological disturbance, due to their prevalence in participants' narratives. While this was revealing, it is not claimed that these were the only factors discussed by participants and it was difficult to infer from the interviews the extent to which these factors influenced their direct interaction with service-users in practice; further research, such as a content analysis of 'case' records or observations of a series of appointments, might produce better insights about this. The study could also have benefitted from including more participants who had not identified service-users as 'victims' in their OASYS assessments; two such participants were included, however, whose approach was consistent with the rest of the sample.

Perhaps the most striking finding of this study was the frequency that women who perpetrate IPV are identified as victims of domestic violence by their probation officers. Data from OASYS indicated this to be a feature for almost 70% of relevant service-users and the issue was deemed to be a factor

for the majority of service-users discussed in interviews; interestingly, the two participants who had not identified their service-users as victims in the initial OASYS also spoke about the relevance of victimisation for their service-users in interviews, possibly suggesting their view had changed as their work progressed. The finding that women who perpetrate IPV often perpetrate partner-violence within the context of their own victimisation is consistent with a growing body of research in this field, outlined in the literature review. However, this study raises a number of challenges: what emphasis should be placed on this issue when addressing women's perpetration of IPV and might the attitudes of individual officers affect the extent to which this feature is addressed in their work?

Echoing Miller's (2001) findings, all participants in this study embraced women's victimisation as a relevant risk factor; they recognised the need to counsel women about the issue and often referred them to specialist organisations for advice. That interventions with women who perpetrate IPV should be sensitive to and promote women's safety is acknowledged and emphasised by many commentators (Dowd, 2008; Leisring *et al.*, 2003; Dutton *et al.*, 2005). Therefore the approach of the participants in this study in my opinion is encouraging. However, many lacked confidence in dealing with this issue directly, expressing a need for more training or consultation with domestic violence workers in order to provide appropriate advice. Because all participants appeared to take a similar approach to accepting women's self-reports about victimisation, this study was unable to explore if some officers hold a contrary attitude and how this might impact on their work; for example that women who disclose this are attempting to exonerate responsibility or to shift blame, similarly to the approach many said they took with men. Participants, however, appeared to hold the view that women are honest about their own use of IPV, which also mirrors the conclusions of some previous studies (Hester, 2012; Dobash and Dobash 2004).

It has been argued that focussing exclusively on women's victimisation to address their use of IPV will often not be sufficient as a range of other behavioural factors will need to be addressed (Leisring *et al.*, 2003; Dutton *et al.*, 2005; Hamberger and Guse, 2002). This is an important point as some studies indicate women in abusive relationships who "fight back" are at an increased risk of further victimisation (Miller and Melloy, 2006; Dasgupta, 2002). The findings from this study provide inconsistent support about whether and how participants addressed other factors. On the one hand, there was little consistency between participants about other identified factors, suggesting an individualised approach. Alternatively, many participants did not reference additional factors, and when they did, these were brief and vague. From their interviews, participants' appointments with

service-users appeared very often to comprise listening or reacting to a variety of support needs rather than being structured to target specific behavioural factors. It was not entirely clear why this was; suggested explanations could be that participants did not consider other matters to be relevant or because the additional dimension of women's emotional needs dictated their supervisory approach.

Many participants in this study appeared to be aware of and emphasised research which finds that women perpetrate IPV within the context of victimisation; however no participant referred to any other approaches, such as Johnson's typologies (1995; 2006). In line with Osthoff's (2002) suggestion, many appeared to take a dichotomous approach to viewing their service-user as 'victim' and their partners as 'perpetrators' rather than expressing a consideration that IPV of both sexes often varies along dimensions of coercive control, emotional and physical abuse (Swan and Snow, 2002); many appeared to resist portrayals of the man as a 'victim', which was also found in a study of domestic violence counsellors (Hogan *et al.*, 2012).

Indeed, the low referral rate to the Male Safety Officer (MSO) did not reflect the true numbers of women subject to probation supervision as identified by OASYS data. A speculative explanation might be that participants resisted viewing the men as victims in need of support; however many in fact said that it was due to them not being aware of this role and many suggested this role had now ceased to exist. Dowd (2008) suggests that appropriately addressing women's IPV requires intervention with both partners; however as presently configured, this requires probation officers to make prompt referrals. Additionally, although commentators have advocated the necessity for a thorough and comprehensive assessments of women and their relationships based on collateral information and information from both partners, this study highlighted the practical limitations to implementing such advice: information was not always available to corroborate service-users' accounts and the 'voice' of male victims was notably absent.

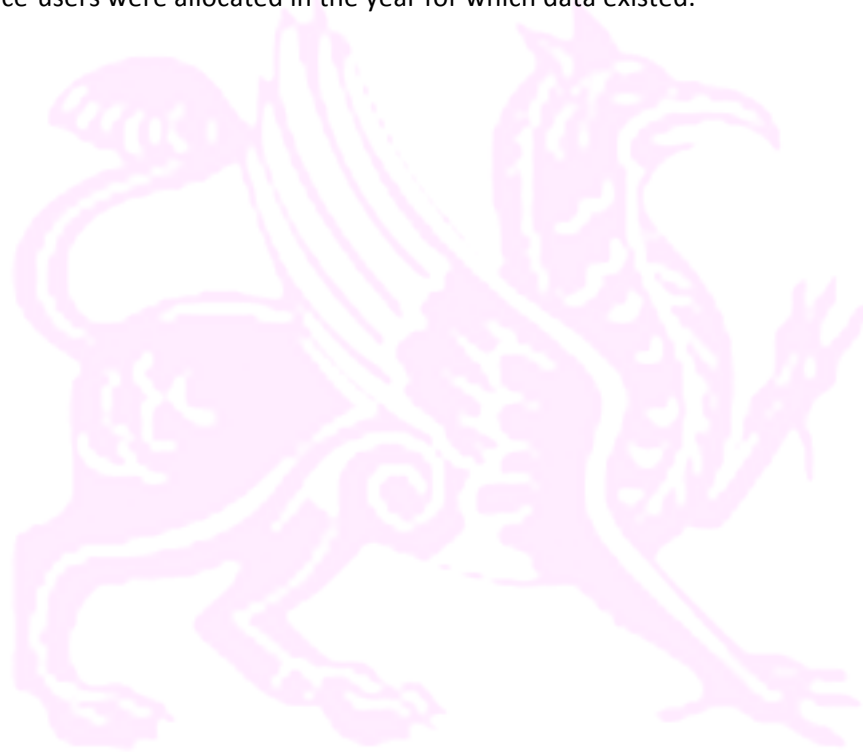
The participants in this study often made direct links between service-users' turbulent histories, emotional trauma and psychological disturbance and the reasons women perpetrated IPV or had entered or remained in abusive relationships with men. Many considered that service-users required specialist intervention, such as counselling or referrals to mental health resources and appeared unclear about the extent to which they should address such matters directly. The current evidence base about the relevance of these factors and how they should be addressed is lacking

(Dowd, 2008). However, this study, in line with previous, identified the prevalence of these issues in women who perpetrate IPV. This study has therefore raised a very salient issue; while the participants in this study listened to and supported their service-users, some struggled with knowing whether this was helpful or detrimental to service-users. Should a probation officers' role comprise of monitoring, listening, supporting and referring as inferred from this study, or should they be trained in therapeutic approaches to be able to address such matters more tangibly? Should probation services provide access to counselling for such women if this is considered necessary to mitigate their risks of re-offending?

The emotional demands of working with service-users and a perceived lack of confidence in adequately dealing with emotionally charged issues, was a notable feature in this study. Indeed, this mirrors the finding of a large-scale survey about probation officers' work with women which also identified a high number who emphasised the emotional complexity of the work, women's high emotional support needs and the time-consuming nature of the work (Seng and Lurigio, 2008). Indeed that study similarly found probation officers usually resolved this by making referrals to other organisations, though also found many women did not often follow them up, suggesting referrals are not always an effective way to address women's offending. A study of counsellors working with perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse also highlighted an initial lack of confidence and suggested that gaining experience was important; issues of burnout and experiencing symptoms of 'secondary trauma' were also relevant considerations in this study (Iliffe and Steed, 2000). The findings of the current study suggested participants often required high levels of support themselves; therefore access to clinical supervision, line management oversight or consultation with peers working with other IPV perpetrators is suggested.

The foregoing discussion has raised a number of important implications for probation service policy, such as the under-utilisation of the MSO role, the emphasis placed on referrals or whether probation officers require additional training to more confidently deal with victims and therapeutic issues. However it is perhaps the area of experience that requires closer attention. Data indicated that the vast majority of women convicted for IPV in the area studied are currently allocated to probation officers with no prior experience of this work; this appeared to be due to allocating service-users based on geographical location rather than specialism or offence-type. Seng and Lurigio's (2008) study of women probationers recommended their allocation to officers in specific teams working only with women, recognising that specialist knowledge is required to appropriately recognise and

address women's needs. The analysis of participant responses equally indicated that experience mattered; the three experienced officers appeared to take a more reflective approach, were more attune to the range of reasons women perpetrate IPV, made less generalisations and stereotypical assumptions and emphasised the importance of clinical supervision. Two also appeared to be more confident at addressing women's victimisation; their co-location in women's centres suggested this enabled them to more easily consult with other professionals and to facilitate women's better access to appropriate resources. Allocating service-users who have perpetrated IPV to officers who are specifically trained and have more experience and who possibly work from women's centres therefore appears to be indicated; this may present challenges for the NPS, however, where only a handful of service-users were allocated in the year for which data existed.



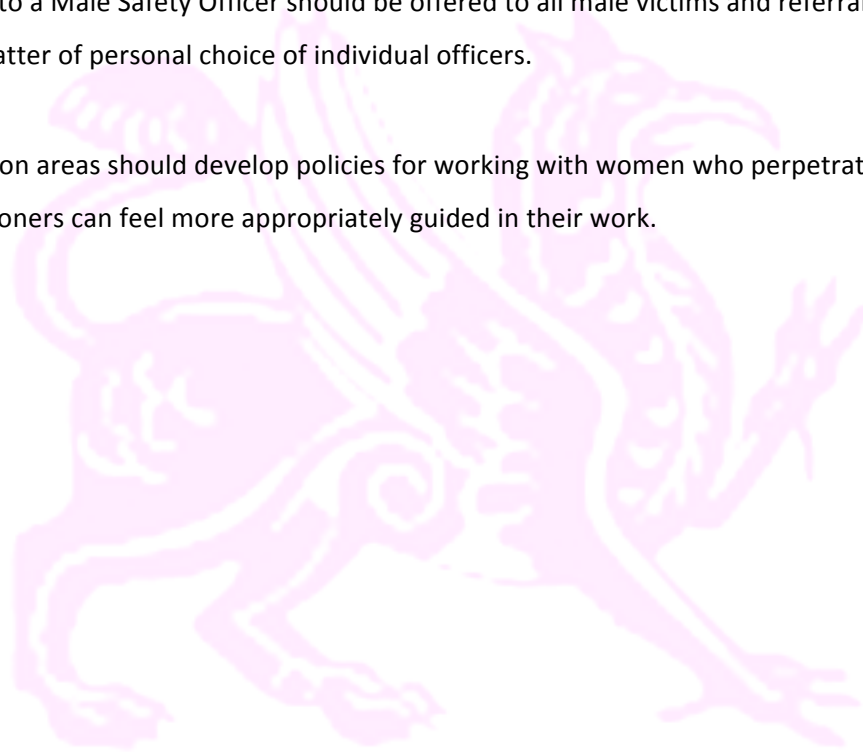
6 Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has identified and described two factors that probation officers commonly link to the perpetration of IPV by women. As participants considered victimisation from partners to be relevant to the commission of offences, they took steps to promote service-users' safety and explored women's experiences of victimisation in their appointments, although many considered they required more training about this. Some participants may have prioritised victimisation over other potentially relevant factors for some service-users and their perspective may have been enriched had the views of male victims been accessed. Although research is unclear on the link between past trauma/psychological disturbance and the perpetration of IPV by women, participants frequently dealt with such matters in this line of work and considered that service-users required specialist intervention; many were unsure if they were adequately equipped to deal with such matters and appeared themselves to require support and specialist advice. The study also provided some insights about the potential benefits of allocating service-users to officers with more experience, given the specialist nature of this work.

In light of these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- More research is required to identify methods which are effective at reducing women's risk of perpetrating IPV. In particular, more specific practice guidelines are required about how and to what extent, women's victimisation, emotional trauma or other behavioural factors should be addressed by practitioners.
- Women who have perpetrated IPV should be allocated to work with probation officers who have received additional training in this area and where possible, to officers who have gained experience in such work. Probation areas should consider allocating these service-users to officers based on offence type, rather than geographical location.
- Probation officers working with women who perpetrate IPV require training in working with domestic violence victims; alternatively, a forum for them to consult with specialist victims workers is required. The co-location of such officers in women's centres where both officers and service-users can more readily access services appears to be indicated.

- Women who perpetrate IPV often present with emotionally complex and high support needs. Facilitating women's access to counselling or training probation officers in therapeutic approaches may help them to feel more confident.
- Probation officers who work with women convicted of IPV often require emotional support; clinical supervision, regular line management supervision and forums to consult with colleagues should be offered to these officers.
- Access to a Male Safety Officer should be offered to all male victims and referrals should not be a matter of personal choice of individual officers.
- Probation areas should develop policies for working with women who perpetrate IPV so that practitioners can feel more appropriately guided in their work.



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Appendix 1 – Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule: Probation Officers' practice with women convicted of intimate partner violence towards men

Introductory Words

Today we will be discussing your work with women who have been convicted of an offence of intimate partner violence towards a man.

I will be asking you to tell me about the woman/women you have worked with and your assessment about why her offence/s was/were committed. We will also be looking at your work with such women and your thoughts and feelings about them.

I will introduce each section of the interview with a general question, however feel free to respond to any question as fully as you wish. I may prompt you with additional questions or comments from time to time to keep the conversation flowing. Remember there are no right or wrong answers and I'm genuinely interested to hear about your views and what you consider to be relevant.

Introductory questions asked to all participants

Are you a probation officer or probation service officer?

For how long have you worked in this capacity?

How many women have you worked with following their conviction for an offence towards a male intimate partner?

When and for approximately how long?

Have you attended the 2-day FADA Training? If so, approximately when?

Are you or have you been a women's SPOC, MARAC SPOC, MASH SPOC or other specialist role relevant to working with women?

Theme one – The reasons women perpetrate offences of intimate partner violence towards men

Tell me about the women/woman you have worked with following their conviction for an offence of Intimate Partner Violence towards a man:

- a) Their history/background
- b) Their offence/s
- c) The factors you considered to be relevant to the commission of the offence/s and their risk.

Moving away from this specific case example, what in your assessment are the reasons women perpetrate violence or abuse towards men in relationships?

What theory, approaches or research informed your views?

Theme two – Disclosures from women about being a victim of abuse from the victim to whom her offence was perpetrated

In your work with relevant women, have any of them told you that they were experiencing violence from their victim or that their offence was perpetrated as a reaction to violence perpetrated against her by the victim?

If yes – how many? how did you respond to this disclosure, both in your face-to-face meetings and outside of your meetings?

If no – how do you predict that you would respond to this disclosure, both in your face-to-face meetings and outside of your meeting?

What is your usual approach when men make such comments about their offences and their victims

Theme three – Attitudes towards women who have perpetrated IPV

What thoughts and feelings come to mind when you hear the term “female domestic abuse perpetrator?”

What thoughts and reactions do you recall when you initially started working with this offender/these offenders – how did your thoughts and feelings about her change as a result of your work?

Theme four – Your work with women following their conviction of intimate partner violence towards a man

Tell me about the work you completed with this woman/these women to reduce her risk of reconviction and to manage the risk of harm?

What challenges or difficulties did you encounter in this work?

How well equipped did you consider yourself to be at dealing with women's experiences of victimisation?

What might have made your work more effective at reducing risks of re-conviction and managing risks of harm?



Appendix 2 – Participant Information Sheet

Invitation to participate in a research study: “Probation Officers’ practice with women convicted of intimate partner violence towards men”

You are invited to participate in an interview about Probation Officer’s practice with women who have been convicted of an offence towards a male intimate partner. The interview will survey Probation Officers about their views and assessments regarding these offenders.

About the study

The study comprises a practitioner research fellowship offered annually by Griffin’s Society to practitioners. The study has received ethical approval from the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge. The study, including your participation during work time, has been authorised by NOMS and your employer (NPS or CRC London area)

About me

I am a Probation Officer working for NPS London, Tower Hamlets. You may also be aware that I am a “Male Safety Officer” (MSO), providing advice and assistance to men who have been victims of domestic violence. During the interview you might choose to discuss a case that you may or may not have referred for MSO support. Please be reassured that the MSO role entitles me to access case records and OASYS assessments relating to relevant offenders and also encourages my regular discussion with Probation Officers; therefore your participation in this study unlikely to involve disclosure of any information to which I would not have been entitled in my role as MSO.

What your participation will involve and how information will be used

Your participation will involve one face-to-face interview with me for a maximum of one hour. Interviews will take place at your place of work at a time convenient to you. No preparation is necessary, however it will assist if you can read back through an OASYS assessment/s of any relevant offender you have worked with to refresh your memory of relevant issues. Although it is not intended that any follow up contact will arise following the initial interview, if this is necessary you will be emailed or telephoned to agree to any further participation. Should the interview reveal any current or urgent risk management related matters relevant to the role of Male Safety Officer, we will agree a time to discuss this following the interview.

The interviews will be recorded and later transcribed; your name and any information which could identify you or any offender will be changed and/or deleted during the transcription process. Electronic recordings will be deleted immediately following transcription. Transcribed interviews will be stored on password-protected computers.

The transcriptions will be analysed to identify themes and commonalities experienced and reported by participants. It is intended that recommendations can be made about working practices, training

and policies regarding Probation practice with such women, based on the common experiences as reported by Probation Officers participating in the study.

A written report will be produced for Griffin's Society which will be published on their website and the findings will also be reported in a public conference arranged by the Griffin's Society. It is also intended that the findings will be written into a journal article for publication and presentation at public conferences/meetings.

Confidentiality considerations

The final report will be published, but it will not identify you by name, office location or other identifier. You will be asked to change the names of any offenders you refer to during the interview. During the written transcription of recorded interviews, your name and that of any offender or any other identifiable information will be changed again, to be absolutely certain that no person can be identified in the final report. No names will be used in the final report and no individual, including yourself, will be identifiable from the published report.

You should be aware however that I have a duty to inform your supervising line manager should a breach of any of your employer's policies and procedures come to my attention during the course of this research.

Considerations for participation:

If you would like to participate in this interview please ensure that:

- You are a Probation Officer or Probation Services Officer
- You have supervised at least one female offender following a conviction towards a male intimate partner; you have completed one OASYS assessment relevant to such an offence

Participating in this study will contribute to improved knowledge and working practices regarding this small and relatively unknown group of individuals. However your decision to participate is entirely voluntary. Your decision to participate or not will not confer any advantage or disadvantage; neither does your decision to withdraw from this study at any time or to refuse to answer any question posed during the interview.

Please contact me if you would like further information or to indicate your willingness to participate:

Gareth Hole
 Probation Officer – National Probation Service
 Tower Hamlets Offender Management Team NPS 2
 Tel: 0208 980 1818 (then press option 1)
 Email: gareth.hole@probation.gsi.gov.uk

For more information about the Griffin's Research Fellowship visit www.thegriffinsociety.org

Appendix 3 – Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: **Probation Officers' practice with women convicted of intimate partner violence towards men**

Name of Researcher: **Gareth Hole**

Please tick box

1. I confirm that I have read the Information Sheet for Participants for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3. I understand that I will participate in an interview, that this will be recorded and that the interview will be transcribed. I understand however that in any published report about my participation no real names or other identifying information about me or others will be used.

4. I am aware that if information comes to light during the research which reveals any breach of any of my employer's policies or procedures, that this will be brought to the attention of my line manager.

5. During my participation in this study I agree to change the names of any real people and will not use any other information while being interviewed which could identify any person (dates of birth, addresses, real names of children or partners for example).

6. I understand that the interview is about my experiences and views of working with offenders and that if I require any support following the interview the researcher will signpost me to relevant persons or agencies.

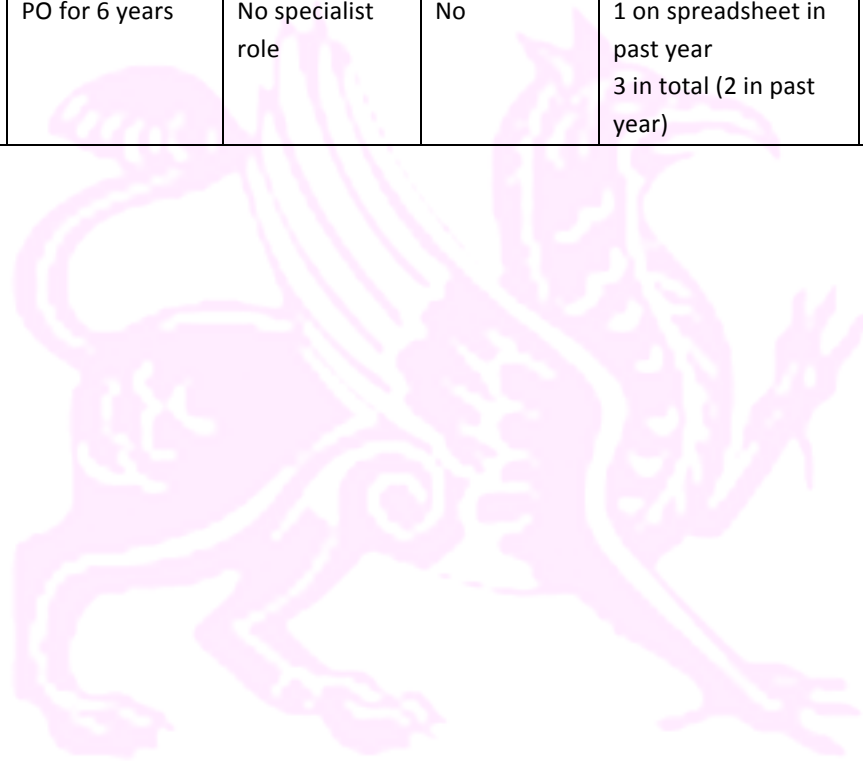
7. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent	Date	Signature

Appendix 4 - Participant profiles

Allocated participant number and Probation Service Division	Role and for how long	Specialist Role?	Trained in FADA	Spreadsheet provided by NPS/CRC June 2014-2015 identified participant had worked with how many service-users? How many relevant women worked with in total?	Was the service-user identified as a victim of DV in the start OASYS
Participant 1 – CRC employee	PO for 8 years and PSO/trainee for 3 years before that	MARAC SPOC Women's SPOC	No	1 in past year on spreadsheet 1 total	Victim and perpetrator
Participant 2 – woman CRC employee	PO for 3 years and PSO/court officer for 15 years prior to that	Women's SPOC	No	1 in past year on spreadsheet 2 total	Victim and perpetrator
Participant 3 – CRC employee	PO for 9 years	Women's SPOC MARAC SPOC	Yes – 3 years ago	3 in past year on spreadsheet 6 in total	Mix of victim and perpetrator only cases
Participant 4 – CRC employee	PO for 15 years; social worker for 20 years prior to that	Women's SPOC MARAC SPOC MASH SPOC	Yes – 3 years ago	4 on spreadsheet in past year Over 10 in total	Mix of victim and perpetrator only cases
Participant 5 – CRC employee	PO 4.5 year	MASH SPOC	No	1 on spreadsheet in past year 2 total	Victim and perpetrator on spreadsheet (but second case was perpetrator only)
Participant 6 – CRC employee	PO 10 years	MASH SPOC	No	1 spreadsheet in past year 1 total	Perpetrator only (but refers to her victimisation in interview)
Participant 7 – CRC employee	PO for 5 years	No specialist role	Yes	1 on spreadsheet in past year 2 total	Victim and perpetrator
Participant 8 – CRC employee	PO for 6 years	Women's SPOC MASH SPOC	Yes	1 on spreadsheet in past year 2 in total	Victim and perpetrator
Participant 9 – CRC employee	PO for 12 years	MASH SPOC	No	1 on spreadsheet in past year 1 total	Victim and perpetrator

Participant 10 NPS employee though had worked with service-user prior to June 2014	PO for 12 years	Women's SPOC MARAC SPOC MASH SPOC	Yes	1 on spreadsheet for previous year 2 total and various court reports	Victim and perpetrator (though in interview referred her to being perpetrator only)
Participant 11 NPS employee	PO for 1 year but PSO for 11 years previously	No specialist role but had personal interest in women's offending	No	1 on spreadsheet in past year 2 total	Perpetrator only (though in interview both cases referred to as victims of DV)
Participant 12 NPS employee	PO for 6 years	No specialist role	No	1 on spreadsheet in past year 3 in total (2 in past year)	Victim and perpetrator



Appendix 5 – Chart depicting key themes

	Violence from partner reported by service-user Evidence available? (Yes/No)	Offence considered by participant to be reaction to partner's violence or actions	Past trauma/abuse/psychological issues	Alcohol issues	Any other factors mentioned	Service-User known to have been violent in other contexts	Brief description of offence
Participant 1 Service-User 1	X Yes	X	X Sexual abuse Victim of IPV in previous relationships	X	Negative thoughts and emotions triggered by alcohol	X	Reacting to partner shouting humiliation at her; context of years of abuse, she is reacting to this
Participant 2 Service-User 1	X Yes	X	X Sexual abuse	X	No other issues mentioned	X	Argument over child contact in which she says she was reacting to his violence (not proved)
Participant 2 Service-User 2	X No	X	X Violence in family unit		No other issues mentioned		Offence occurred due to victim retaliating after suffering years of "passive abuse"
Participant 3 Service-User 1	X No	X		X	Anger issues Lack of control of emotions		Argument with partner over him disrespecting her/taking advantage/not meeting her expectations
Participant 3 Service-User 2	X Yes	X	X Victim of IPV in previous relationships Upbringing relevant to adult behaviour	X	Anger issues	X	Very angry young woman – she stands up to him/his violence – alcohol relevant to offence
Participant 3 Service-User 3				X	Frustration with partner		Offence/risk linked to woman's frustrations/disappointments with partner/resentment of him/man not meeting her needs
Participant 3 Service-User 4	X Yes	X	X Personality disorder	X	No other issues mentioned		Stabbed partner in the eye – definite victim of violence from partner – seems to be retaliating for past violence though unclear

	Violence from partner reported by service-user Evidence available? (Yes/No)	Offence considered by participant to be reaction to partner's violence or actions	Past trauma/abuse/psychological issues	Alcohol issues	Any other factors mentioned	Service-user known to have been violent in other contexts	Brief description of offence
Participant 4 Service-User 1	X Yes	X	X Traumatic childhood Bereavement Previous IPV Mental health and depression	X	Sexual jealousy appears relevant to offence	X	Hit partner over head with bottle - sexual jealousy/retaliation for past abuse appears to be relevant – woman considered by police to be the primary perpetrator
Participant 4 Service-User 2	X No		X Mental health issues (unspecified) and poor family background	X	No other issues mentioned		Threatened to kill partner after relationship breakdown – issues with separation/abandonment
Participant 4 Service-User 3			X Personality disorder Self harm Poor upbringing	X	No other issues	X	Offender threatened to kill partner as she felt she was going to lose him/felt her needs weren't being met
Participant 4 Service-User 4	X No	X			No other issues mentioned		Offender hit victim in a very violent incident in which she was therefore defending herself
Participant 5 Service-User 1	X Yes	X	X Difficult upbringing Chaotic and vulnerable person in presentation	X	Thinking/behaviour Anger Lack of support Dependency on victim		Offender strangling victim in context of a fight – PO felt he must have been violent to her for her to react like this
Participant 5 Service-User 2			Unknown / not explored	X	Frustration due to loss of custody of child		Offender harassing victim/smashed window – reacts like this when drunk as victim cheated on her/angry that he has child custody
Participant 6 Service-User 1	X Yes	X			Emotions main issue and poor self-esteem; poor problem solving		Offender considered to be reacting to/defending herself from victim's violence

	Violence from partner reported by service-user Evidence available? (Yes/No)	Offence considered by participant to be reaction to partner's violence or actions	Past trauma/abuse/psychological issues	Alcohol issues	Any other factors mentioned	Service user known to have been violent in other contexts	Brief description of offence
Participant 7 Service-User 1	X No	X	X Personality disorder Abandoned by father		No other issues mentioned		Broke into victim's home/caused damage when he threw her out part clothed onto street
Participant 7 Service-User 2	X No	Participant unsure	Unclear/not known		No other issues mentioned		Threw glass at victim when he pulled her arm to get her to leave a club
Participant 8 Service-User 1	X Yes	X	X Sexual abuse		No other issues mentioned		Stabbed partner in serious incident in which she was reacting to/defending herself from serious violence
Participant 8 Service-User 2		Participant unsure	X Poor self esteem Abandoned by mother	X	Jealousy		Harassing/causing criminal damage – feels ignored by partner/insecurities
Participant 9 Service-User 1		X	X Sexual abuse Experienced IPV in previous relationships	X	No other issues mentioned	X	Reacting to her partner hiding her phone- his actions were considered to be 'winding her up' and malicious
Participant 10 Service-User 1			X Sexual and physical abuse in childhood Prior IPV	X	Service user controlling and domineering	X	Service user is considered to be violent and controlling of her partner
Participant 10 Service-User 2	X No	X			Jealousy		Broke his phone – retaliation for past history of abuse/infidelity – jealousy?
Participant 11 Service-User 1	X No	X	X Witnessed and experienced IPV in childhood Previous violent relationships	X	Thinking skills and attitudes but unclear what is meant by this.		Assaulted partner – PO considers she must have been reacting to his violence to make his violence stop

	Violence from partner reported by service-user Evidence available? (Yes/No)	Offence considered by participant to be reaction to partner's violence or actions	Past trauma/abuse/psychological issues	Alcohol issues	Any other factors mentioned	Service-user is known to have been violent in other contexts	Brief description of offence
Participant 11 Service-User 2	X No	X	X Witnessed DV as child	X	No other issues mentioned		Murdered husband due to history (uncorroborated) of severe abuse – retaliation for past violence/make violence stop
Participant 11 Service-User 3	X No	X			No other issues mentioned		Picks up knife to threaten husband as she feared imminent attack due to past attack/self-defence
Participant 12 Service-User 1	X No	X	X Abuse from mother Abandoned by mother Suffered breakdown		Desiring attention Anger issues Inability to manage emotions		Argument over child contact – anger due to victim ignoring her – suspected DV in relationship
Participant 12 Service-User 2		X			Frustration with partner Poor problem solving – not thinking through consequences		Stabbed partner/building emotion over him cheating on her/got upset and she'd "had enough"
Total 26	19 out of 26 Evidence available: 8 out of 19	19 out of 24	17 out of 24	16 out of 26		7 out of 26	

END