

The Relations Between Research and Practice

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Focus

- Evaluating practice
- Evaluation crucial to:
 - Improving practice
 - Making case for RJ
- Underlying issues

What is Evaluation?

- the systematic assessment of the worth or merit of some object

Who is evaluation For?

- Government/policy makers
- Sponsors
- Public
- Practitioners
 - All have different interests/questions

Standards commonly used for Evaluation

- Impact on recidivism
- Participant satisfaction
 - With process
 - With outcomes

Asking other questions

- Other goals of restorative justice practice
 - Empowerment
 - Recognition
- Need to expand scope of evaluative research

Methodological Problems

- Comparative or absolute standards
- Restorative justice, by its nature, cannot be used randomly
- Operationalizing 'recidivism', 'participant satisfaction' etc
- Relating satisfactory outcomes to causes

Evaluative styles

- Statistical studies of outcomes
- Stories (reliability issues)
- Observation (+ participant observation)
- In-depth qualitative methods (e.g. interviews)
- Theoretical critique