

1955

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Recommended Citation

Lloyd E. Ohlin, Routinization of Correctional Change, The, 45 J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci. 400 (1954-1955)

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THE ROUTINIZATION OF CORRECTIONAL CHANGE

LLOYD E. OHLIN

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Dr. Ohlin's article was presented before the Illinois Academy of Criminology on May 14, 1954.—EDITOR.

Rapid social and cultural change is one of the chief distinguishing features of modern, highly industrialized societies of the Western World, as contrasted with simpler folk societies. In the United States far-reaching innovations in our technological processes and equipment are accepted as regular and frequent occurrences. Changes in governmental and industrial organization, policy, and procedure are regarded as routine and inevitable. Changes in our ways of thinking and behaving toward significant personal objects and relationships occur as an important part of the anticipated content of our daily experience. Thus, our society appears as a complex network of interrelated institutions and practices constantly undergoing change.

However, these changes do not occur in the various aspects of our society at the same rate or at the same time. Sociologists have developed the concept of cultural lag to characterize this differential rate of change. When certain institutions and behavior patterns change too slowly to keep pace with changes in other aspects of the society, severe stresses and strain are created in the societal structure. Frequently a crisis stage is reached, which is attended on the personal level by tension, anxiety, and an acute feeling that things are out of kilter. Radical innovation and reorganization are often required to restore a sense of harmony and order.

CHANGE THROUGH CRISES

The correctional system appears to be one of the most conservative and change-resistant institutions in our society. Usually, correctional changes are preceded by severe crises which dramatize and focus attention on outmoded practices in such a way that everyone feels something must be done. The changes which are instituted under these conditions are often ill-advised and hasty. They are seldom formulated or implemented as a coherent part of a broad, well-planned program of change. They infrequently appear as a consistent reflection of a progressive philosophy of corrections, and do relatively little to remove the basic conflicts that exist within the system.

A great deal of recent evidence may be cited in support of this observation. Reference may be made to the changes which followed the prison riots of 1952 and 1953. Many of these changes such as the hiring of additional guards, the renovation and

cleaning-up of the physical plant, improvements in the feeding situation, and the removal of obvious defects in the administration of the institution represent relatively superficial remedies. While efforts of this kind are helpful, they fail to reach the basic conflicts underlying the riots, and fail to mold the institution into a clear-cut and consistent reflection of a treatment philosophy of corrections. To the uninitiated they suggest that something has been done and serve to forestall additional criticism.

Similar administrative action may be observed during the occurrence of so-called "parole scandals". At such times of crisis, newspaper criticism creates a flurry of administrative activity to alleviate the situation. Such an incident occurred in Illinois in 1936 when a parolee, in the act of committing a crime, killed a policeman. The newspapers seized this opportunity to launch a bitter attack on the parole system. As a direct consequence a sharp reduction occurred in the number of paroles granted. Whereas in 1936 over 1400 paroles were granted at the Joliet-Stateville and Menard branches of the Illinois State Penitentiary System, in 1937 the paroles granted were cut to more than one-third that number. A change also took place in the readiness to revoke parole for rule violation. Prior to this incident, there were nearly as many parolees returned for new felonies as for violating the parole rules. After this incident, there were over twice as many parolees returned for technical violation of the parole regulations as were returned for committing new crimes. However, no other significant changes were made in the operation of the system. The stricter selection and revocation policies were gradually relaxed in succeeding years, until again in 1941 nearly 1400 parolees were released from Joliet and Menard. The relative proportion of minor and major violators again approached equality.

Similar illustrations could be drawn from other state correctional systems. With few exceptions, correctional authorities have failed to exploit these periodic crises to implement long-range programs of change which would create permanent improvements in the operation of the correctional system.

ROUTINE METHODS FOR CHANGE

As long as we rely on this method of periodic change through crisis, the correctional system cannot keep pace with changes occurring in related institutions in our society. If we desire our correctional institutions to reflect an integrated treatment philosophy, it is essential that we build into the correctional system routine methods for the continuous readjustment of policy and practice. We must establish clear-cut channels of communication for the recognition and control of tensions and disturbances. All members of the correctional unit must be effectively organized to spot problems, to make proposals for change, and collectively participate in working out adequate solutions. Furthermore, systematic research efforts must be employed to collect facts concerning the various problems that arise and to test scientifically the alternative solutions which are proposed.

Improvements in the network of official communication and the resolution of problems through organized staff discussions may result in a routine set of procedures through which programs of change, oriented toward the implementation of a treatment philosophy of corrections, can be constantly pursued. Under these conditions

research becomes an indispensable tool for the formulation of adequate administrative policies and procedures by virtue of its data-gathering and evaluative functions. I wish to illustrate the role that research can play in this connection by referring to studies which I have been able to carry out in the field of parole prediction and selection.

ILLINOIS PAROLE PREDICTION RESEARCH

During the course of these studies, I gathered data on all men who had been paroled over a twenty-year period, from 1925 to 1945, from the Stateville-Joliet and Menard branches of the Illinois State Penitentiary System. For each parole case, data were obtained on 27 background factors. These 27 factors have been routinely reported on parole cases by the prison sociologist-actuaries to the Illinois and Pardon Board since 1938. The sample included 9,084 consecutive paroles from 1925 to 1935. These cases formed the experience base for the prediction tables which were put into use in 1938. The sample also included 8,013 consecutive paroles from 1936 to 1944. The data for these cases were gathered directly for this research project from the actuary and the prison files. The total sample thus represents 17,097 parole cases.

Nearly all of the published studies in the literature of parole prediction have been based on cases paroled over a period of less than five years. Thus the data of the present research afforded two important advantages, as compared to the data of previous studies. The total sample was large enough to permit the use of sizable original and follow-up samples for the construction and validation of alternative types of experience tables. Also, the cases were distributed over a broad enough time period to permit an adequate treatment of various errors in prediction which arise with the passage of time. These two features of the data made it possible to focus attention on the problem of evaluating the accuracy of the prediction tables in relation to the changes which occur with the passage of time.¹

CHANGES IN PAROLE CONDITIONS

In the initial analysis of the data it became apparent that the gradual decline in violation rates from 1925 through 1944 was a fact of central importance to the study. Each step in the construction and the evaluation of the experience tables underlined the importance of this instability in the universe of conditions for which predictions were to be made. As shown in Table I, the total violation rate varied from a high of 57.1 percent in 1926 to a low of 26.2 percent in 1938 and 1941.

It is frequently overlooked that the conditions prevailing in the parole situation from one time period to the next do not necessarily remain constant. Changes occur in parole policies which affect the violation rates from one time period to another. For example, at the present time there appears to be a gradual shift in the nature of supervision from the policing function of the parole agent to the function of treatment. Though this change is slow, other changes come very abruptly. The incident cited above, involving the shooting of a police officer by a parolee in 1936, is a case

¹ For a complete technical account of the results of this research study see, LLOYD E. OHLIN, *The Stability and Validity of Parole Experience Tables* (Unpublished Ph.D., dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago.)

TABLE I
 VIOLATION RATES BY YEAR OF PAROLE FOR 17,097 CONSECUTIVE PAROLES FROM THE
 JOLIET-STATEVILLE AND MENARD BRANCHES OF THE ILLINOIS STATE
 PENITENTIARY SYSTEM

Year of Parole	Total Cases	Total Violators	Violation Rate
1925	657	279	42.5
1926	464	265	57.1
1927	627	321	51.2
1928	599	280	46.7
1929	763	399	52.3
1930	792	375	47.4
1931	912	463	50.8
1932	848	377	44.5
1933	1,026	450	43.9
1934	1,211	472	39.0
1935	1,185	387	32.7
1936	1,410	522	37.0
1937	369	124	33.6
1938	535	140	26.2
1939	758	209	27.6
1940	861	227	26.4
1941	1,345	353	26.2
1942	842	240	28.5
1943	1,037	273	26.3
1944	856	299	34.9
Total.....	17,097	6,455	37.8

in point. The immediate effect of the public criticism directed against the parole system was to produce a tightening-up of parole policies. Parolees were returned for infractions of the parole rules which shortly prior to this event had been overlooked. This public criticism resulted in the establishment of a new policy that no expense would be spared to return Illinois parolees who had violated their parole in other states. The previous practice had been to return only those who had committed very serious violations. The immediate effect of this new edict was to "clean up the books". A large number of parolees were returned who had been allowed to remain "at large" for years, because the minor violations committed did not appear to warrant the expenditure of state funds to effect their return.

These types of changes in parole policy alter the conditions to which the parolee must adjust in the parole situation. If these changes are abrupt, an increase or decrease in violation rates may be quite marked. If they occur gradually, an upward or downward trend in the violation rates will result. As an illustration of this trend effect, parole authorities have frequently pointed out that improved parole supervision will increase the number of parolees returned for minor violations. Since the number of technical violators will increase under these conditions faster than the number of major violators will decrease, the combined effect will produce a noticeable upward trend in total violations.

Changes in the opportunities for employment are obviously an important part

of the parole situation, and they facilitate or impede the adjustment of the parolee. Parole officers still talk rather despairingly of their experiences in trying to secure job placements for parolees during the depression years of the early 1930's. Parolees were often kept in prison long after a parole had been granted, simply because they could not secure the promise of a job on their release from prison, as required by the State law in Illinois. This created bitterness which found expression in their behavior on parole. Persons with criminal records were quite generally rejected by employers, when jobs were scarce, in favor of men without a record. If a parolee lost his job it was frequently quite impossible to find him another. He would then be turned over to the care of one of the private charitable institutions, since the State made no provision for a contingency fund to aid in the support of parolees who were unemployed. Undoubtedly, the scarcity of jobs affects both criminals and non-criminals, but constant unemployment for a man with a criminal past can only serve to increase recidivism.

These same conditions apparently recurred briefly during the depression of 1937. Since that time, however, the Illinois parole employment picture has steadily improved. During the war years, when many parolees were admitted quite freely into the Army and War plants, employment opportunities for parolees reached a peak, and in the post-war years this favorable situation has continued.

These changes in employment conditions for parolees have the effect of altering the character of the parole situation which the parolee faces on his release. They create an instability in the parole situation from one time period to another, which is reflected by the violation rates.

The problem of relating the changing conditions of the parole situation to the changes in violation rates requires much more extensive research. However, preliminary investigation suggests that the gradual expansion of employment opportunities is of greatest importance. One of the factors on which I gathered data concerned the employment which an offender received on his release on parole. An offender was regarded as having an adequate job if he had definite contacts for a favorable job prior to his release and this job was consistent with his previous work history, intelligence and social type. If, on the other hand, the job contact was tentative, or of an unfavorable nature, it was described as inadequate. The category *none* was employed to refer to the absence of any contacts for a parole job. It was discovered in subsequent analysis that there was a close relationship between the proportion of cases who were classified as having an inadequate parole job or no parole job contacts and the total rates of violation from 1925 to 1944. A positive Pearsonian co-efficient of correlation of .83 was found between the annual percentages of these combined parole job categories and the annual violation rates. These results suggest that the violation rates vary directly with the opportunities for employment which are present in the parole situation from year to year. They suggest the need for a more intensive investigation of the variations in parole conditions and the rates of violation.

FACTOR STABILITY

The disclosure of a marked downward trend in the rates of total violation prompted an immediate concern with the effect of this trend on the violation rates of the sub-

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY SUB-CATEGORIES BETWEEN THE PERIODS 1925-1935 AND 1936-1944 FOR THE FACTOR *Parole Job*

Sub-Category (1)	Period 1925-1935			Period 1936-1944			Difference in Violation Rates (4-7) (8)	Percentage Decrease in Violation Rates (8/4) (9)
	Total Cases (2)	Percentage Distribution (3)	Violation Rate (4)	Total Cases (5)	Percentage Distribution (6)	Violation Rate (7)		
Adequate.....	6,536	72.0	37.8	6,486	80.9	25.4	12.4	32.8
Inadequate.....	1,748	19.2	66.4	619	7.7	71.9	-5.5	-8.3*
None.....	765	8.4	55.2	878	11.0	32.1	23.1	41.8
No record.....	35	0.4	48.6	30	0.4	33.3	15.3	31.5
Total.....	9,084	100.0	44.8	8,013	100.0	29.8	15.0	33.5

* This negative result indicates an increase of 8.3 percent in violation rate from the period, 1925-1935 to 1936-1944.

categories of the factors. It was anticipated that changes in the violation rates of the factors would have an important effect on the value of the factors as predictors in the original and follow-up samples. Accordingly, the annual violation rates from 1925 to 1944 were obtained for each of the factors in the study. The results revealed a marked tendency for the sub-category violation rates to parallel the trend indicated by the total violation rate. This correspondence of trend in sub-category and total violation rates was found to hold true for all of the factors used in the study with the exception of the factor, parole job. In the latter, the violation rates of the sub-category *inadequate* showed a tendency to remain high and even to increase in the face of a declining total violation rate. This may be noted in Table II, where the annual rates have been combined into two major time periods.

The general tendency of sub-category rates to parallel the trend in total violation rates is regarded as a fact of considerable importance to the construction of efficient prediction tables. It means that the efficiency of the predictive items will be lost as the total violation rate declines, making it impossible to maintain an efficient experience table. Because of the importance of this problem, a more intensive analysis was made of the sub-category violation rates. This analysis revealed that all of the factors, except parole job, had a tendency to classify an increasing proportion of the cases in the unfavorable sub-categories of each factor from the year 1925 to 1944.

The effect of this should have been to increase the total violation rate over the twenty-year period, but instead the total violation rate decreased. Apparently, the release of more unfavorable cases was more than compensated by favorable changes in parole conditions. In contrast to the other factors, the factor, parole job, showed a tendency throughout this period for a greater proportion of the cases to be classified in the favorable category of the factor, and a smaller proportion of cases to be classified in the unfavorable sub-categories. As a consequence of this, the sub-category violation rates of this factor did not decrease throughout this period as much as other factors despite the downward trend in the total violation rate. The contrast may be observed by comparing Table II with the typical results obtained for the other factors, as illustrated by the factor, type of offender in Table III.

TABLE III
COMPARISON OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY SUB-CATEGORIES BETWEEN THE PERIODS 1925-1935
AND 1936-1944 FOR THE FACTOR, *Type of Offender*

Sub-Category (1)	Period 1925-1935			Period 1936-1944			Difference in Violation Rate (4-7) (8)	Percentage Decrease in Violation Rate (8/4) (9)
	Total Cases (2)	Percent- age Dis- tribution (3)	Viola- tion Rate (4)	Total Cases (5)	Percent- age Dis- tribution (6)	Viola- tion Rate (7)		
First.....	4,937	54.3	33.6	2,497	31.2	19.1	14.5	43.2
Technical first.....	1,386	15.3	50.2	1,564	19.5	31.2	19.0	37.8
Occasional.....	2,040	22.5	58.2	2,897	36.2	33.5	24.7	42.4
Juvenile recidivist....	38	0.4	68.4	124	1.5	36.3	32.1	46.9
Recidivist.....	503	5.5	72.6	738	9.2	42.6	30.0	41.3
Habitual.....	151	1.7	80.1	178	2.2	48.9	31.2	39.0
No record.....	29	0.3	44.8	15	0.2	46.7	-1.9	-4.2*
Total.....	9,084	100.0	44.8	8,013	100.0	29.8	15.0	33.5

* This negative result indicates an increase of 4.2 percent in violation rate from the period 1925-1935 to 1936-1944.

The stability of the violation rates for the factor, parole job, confirmed certain expectations concerning the nature of a stable factor. It was anticipated that a factor would be highly related to parole outcome if it clearly reflected the conditions and conceptions in the parole situation which influence parole success or failure. But it was also expected that these factors would not be stable unless they also reflected those influences and conceptions which produce changes in the rates of violation from one time period to another.

The majority of the factors employed in prediction research reflect influences leading to parole success or failure, but do not reflect influences responsible for the changing trends in violation rates. The factor, parole job, however, appears to reflect both types of influences. It reflects the probable work conceptions of parolees and their employment capabilities and ambitions, in terms of the adequacy or inadequacy of their initial job on parole. At the same time it reflects the character of general employment conditions in the current parole situation. Thus the factor, parole job, not only shows a high relation to parole outcome, as do other factors, but has the added advantage of greater stability in maintaining this high relationship as parole conditions change.

These results suggest the need for new considerations in the selection of prediction factors, and the desirability of extensive research on the influences which produce changes in violation rates from one time period to another. The most useful factors for prediction work, when violation warrants are the measure of outcome, must reflect not only the self-conceptions of the parolee and his assessment of parole conditions, but also the conceptions and changing views of parole and police authorities, employers, neighbors and relatives. Factors will be stable when they permit changes in the distribution of the cases among the sub-categories, in accordance with the variable influences of the latter as well as the former. None of these elements of the parole situation may be regarded as constant. On the contrary they tend to change

with the times, reflecting changes in policy, employment conditions and public sentiment.

LOSS OF PREDICTABILITY AND STABILITY

The decline in the total violation rate from 1925 to 1944 and the decline in the violation rate for the sub-categories of the various factors had a very significant effect on the predictability and selectivity of the experience tables which were constructed during the course of this research. A number of alternative types of experience tables were constructed, using the period 1925 to 1935 as the experience base, and predictions were then made on a follow-up sample of cases paroled during the years 1940 through 1944. All the experience tables showed high predictability and selectivity in the original sample on which the experience table was constructed. But in each instance, except where readjustment techniques were applied, there was a marked drop in predictability and selectivity in the follow-up sample. Analysis clearly showed that this loss of predictability could only be accounted for by a marked decrease in the association of the various predictive factors with outcome on parole. Improved parole supervision and improved parole selection appeared to be neither likely nor adequate explanations. The only possible explanation seemed to be that the parolees behaved quite differently as the conditions of parole changed.

Changes in parole and penal policy, employment conditions, and the social situation of parolees under the stress of military mobilization and wartime conditions are regarded as significantly altering the level of adjustment and crime resistance thresholds of paroled offenders. The likelihood that fairly continuous changes of this kind in parole conditions will exist in the future creates the necessity for revising prediction and selection techniques and practices to take account of these changes.

Statisticians generally appear to agree that successful prediction requires a stable universe of conditions. In his book on the *Social Effects of Aviation*, Professor Ogburn points out that "the logic of prediction is that the universe of the future will be much like the universe of the past".² To the extent that the changing character of the parole situation finds reflection in the violation rates, significant errors will appear in predictions which are based on tables no longer typical of current parole conditions. The greater the lapse of time between the original and the follow-up sample, the greater the probability that significant changes have occurred in the parole situation. Accordingly, prediction errors can generally be expected to increase with the lapse of time. It is essential, therefore, that techniques be developed by which errors can be reduced and the predictions kept abreast of the changes in parole conditions.

READJUSTMENT PROCEDURE

In the present research the approach to this problem of stability involved the use of trends and estimates of violation to keep the experience sample as close as possible to the follow-up sample from the time standpoint. Since the effects of changing parole conditions are not marked over short-run periods of time, stability from the

² WILLIAM FIELDING OGBURN, *THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF AVIATION*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., (1946), p. 41.

TABLE IV
 PREDICTABILITY, SELECTIVITY, AND RELIABILITY OF UNADJUSTED ORIGINAL AND FOLLOW-UP
 EXPERIENCE TABLES BASED ON EIGHT UNFAVORABLE FACTORS

Base Period	Total Cases	Predictive Efficiency* (Percent)	Mean Cost Rating† (Proportion)	Error in Estimating Total Violation Rate‡—(Percent)
Original Sample				
1925-1935	9,084	31.0	.479	—
Follow-up Sample				
1940-1944	4,941	-41.3	.270	24.2

* The measure of "predictive efficiency" indicates the relative gain or loss of accuracy of prediction through use of the experience table probabilities as compared to an overall prediction of success for all cases. A negative result in the follow-up sample indicates a percentage loss in predictive efficiency as compared to a simple prediction of total success. For a more complete description of this measure see, LLOYD E. OHLIN AND OTIS DUDLEY DUNCAN, *The Efficiency of Prediction in Criminology*, AMER. JOUR. OF SOCIOLOGY, LIV (March 1949), 441-451.

† The "mean cost rating" is a direct measure of the overall selectivity of the experience table varying from 0.0 to 1.0 or -1.0. It is independent of variations in the average violation rate. For a more complete account of this measure see, OTIS DUDLEY DUNCAN, LLOYD E. OHLIN, ALBERT J. REISS, JR., AND HOWARD R. STANTON, *Formal Devices for Making Selection Decisions*, AMER. JOUR. OF SOCIOLOGY, LVIII (May 1953), 573-584.

‡ The "error in estimating total violation rate" is a measure of the reliability of the score-specific violation rates. It is obtained by applying the score-specific rates of the original experience table to the score distribution of cases in the follow-up experience table and calculating the difference between the actual and the expected total violation rate for the follow-up sample.

original to the follow-up sample should increase if the time lapse between the two samples is reduced. Routine readjustment of the experience table on an annual basis would be required to maintain the continuity between the experience sample and the cases currently being paroled.

The results secured in the present research fully support the desirability of employing such routine readjustments. In parole prediction work, there exists a time spread between the parole dates of the experience sample and those of later samples of new cases to which the experience table is to be applied. This results from the requirement that the experience tables reflect outcome over the total parole period for all of the cases. In Illinois this time span extends up to five years before final parole outcomes are known. The techniques of routine readjustment developed in the present research operate to reduce this time spread. I have described this procedure elsewhere at some length.³

Parole period-violation ratios are obtained for each score group in the experience table by dividing the violations occurring in the total parole period by those which occur during the first year on parole. These ratios are obtained for those years in the experience sample where the parole outcomes are fully known. Estimated total-

³ LLOYD E. OHLIN, *SELECTION FOR PAROLE*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1951, Appendix D.

parole-period violations are then obtained for all the parole years included in the experience sample, by multiplying the number of violations occurring in the first year-on-parole by the pre-established parole period ratios.

Comparison of the actual with the estimated total-parole-period violation rates reveals an average weighted difference of only 1.3 percent for all the score groups of the experience table. The estimated total violation rates thus provide a reliable and accurate basis for prediction. Predictions can then be made for a single year of new parole cases. The experience table is routinely readjusted thereafter by progressively dropping the earliest year and adding an additional year to the experience sample, computing a new set of parole period ratios, constructing a new experience table with estimated score-specific violation rates, and predicting for the succeeding year of new parole cases.

This readjustment method permits the experience table, and the sample on which it is based, to be kept within a year of the cases currently being paroled. In the present research study the application of this procedure led to the construction of five different original experience tables and five follow-up experience tables. When the results from the readjusted tables were compared with the results from experience tables constructed in accordance with previous practice, there was a marked difference in the stability of the measures of predictability, selectivity and reliability in favor of the readjusted tables. This difference may be noted by comparing the results for the unadjusted table shown in Table IV with the results for the readjusted tables in Table V. The effect of this greater stability is that increased reliance may be placed on the predictability and selectivity of the original experience table, as it is applied to new samples of parole cases. In addition to this greater stability, it proved possible to obtain greater accuracy of prediction in the follow-up samples,

TABLE V
PREDICTABILITY, SELECTIVITY, AND RELIABILITY OF READJUSTED ORIGINAL AND FOLLOW-UP
EXPERIENCE TABLES BASED ON EIGHT UNFAVORABLE FACTORS

Base Period	Total Cases	Predictive Efficiency (Percent)	Mean Cost Rating (Proportion)	Error in Estimating Total Violation Rate—(Percent)
Original Sample				
1933-1938	5,736	20.9	.438	—
1934-1939	5,468	10.8	.357	—
1935-1940	5,118	7.9	.346	—
1936-1941	5,278	2.4	.277	—
1937-1942	4,710	0.2	.213	—
Follow-Up Sample				
1940	861	-40.1	.236	15.1
1941	1,345	-17.3	.321	16.5
1942	842	-22.5	.242	12.5
1943	1,037	0.7	.301	6.0
1944	856	0.7	.206	6.0

since the readjustment procedures permitted successive changes in the prediction cutting score in accordance with trends in the score-specific violation rates.

The chief research effort was devoted to an attempt to increase the stability of the score-group violation rates in the experience table. However, additional analysis also revealed that the stability of the prediction tables could be increased by applying these techniques in regularly assessing the value of the individual prediction factors. As the experience base moves forward in time, those items which reveal marked loss in discrimination can be dropped from the prediction battery.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS: IMPLICATIONS

The foregoing discussion has summarized certain results which I obtained in recent research in the field of parole prediction. The results have shown that changes occur in the total rates of violation with changes in the conditions of parole and alterations in parole policy. It has been possible to identify certain kinds of factors which provide more accurate and stable predictions over the long run. It has also proved possible to demonstrate the manner in which the experience table loses predictability and selectivity, as it becomes progressively further removed from the cases to which rates are applied. This research study has succeeded in proving the critical importance to practical prediction work of dealing with the hitherto neglected errors arising with the passing of time. It has presented techniques for increasing the stability and validity of experience tables in routine application to subsequent samples of parole cases. It is clear from this research work that extensive refinements of experience tables to be employed in the prediction and selection of new parole cases will be of little value unless the problem of stability is adequately handled.

These results of parole prediction research have been summarized to illustrate the manner in which a continuous program of systematic research can function as a useful tool for the guidance of administrative policy and procedure. Through such prediction work, it is possible to keep the members of the parole board informed as to the probable rates of total violation for cases paroled on each monthly docket. The parole board is thus placed in the position of being able to adjust its standards of selection in accordance with the changes which occur in parole conditions.

Such research is also useful to the parole board in evaluating the factors which are important to consider in making parole decisions. There is a prevalent tendency in parole work to regard certain factors as of equal importance from one time period to the next. For example, the factor, criminal record, has always been given a great deal of weight by parole boards. In the present research it was revealed, however, that the rates for different types of offenders varied a great deal over the twenty-year period, depending upon the parole conditions. The annual violation rate for first offenders varied from 48 percent to 11 percent, and the annual rates of violation for recidivists, that is, persons who had a previous prison commitment, varied from 83 percent violation to a low of 33 percent violation. These results clearly show that information concerning the past history of criminal offenders may vary greatly in significance from one time period to the next. The parole board must continuously re-evaluate the significance of various factors in accordance with changes in parole conditions in the community. The research results from routine prediction work

thus serve to keep the parole board members continuously informed of the weight that may properly be attached to certain factors at different time periods.

The readjustment procedures which I have described constitute a technique by virtue of which the parole board members are furnished with reliable, up-to-date information on various categories of offenders. Selections can be made in accordance with the anticipated rates of violation and the intensity of parole supervision adjusted in accordance with the difficulties likely to be encountered by various types of parolees in the free community.

There are, of course, many other considerations which enter into a parole decision, in addition to the question of probable parole success or failure. Nevertheless, reliable experience tables furnish the parole board with an objective summarization of past experience with different types of cases. The exploitation of systematic research effort of this kind by parole board members will prevent rather than encourage parole by rigid formulas. It will provide an informed and accurate flow of information on the basis of which a flexible policy can be formulated. It thus represents a first step in the setting up of routine procedures for the encouragement of change in administrative policy and decisions to accord with changes in other aspects of our society.

The research skills employed in prediction work are equally applicable to other phases of the correctional program, particularly in the organization, development, and evaluation of treatment programs within institutions. Such research effort must be combined with the development of effective procedures for increasing the quantity and quality of inter-staff communication and cooperative problem resolution. The correctional institutions of the country will continue to be beset by periodic crises, followed by ill-advised innovations, until a genuine effort is made to build into the correctional system routine procedures for instituting necessary changes.

The organization of such routine procedures as an integral part of correctional administration will not only serve as a safety valve for explosive tensions in the prison community or in parole and probation work, but will actively promote an integrated philosophy of correctional treatment, by removing the sources of conflict before they create disruptive pressures. Changes can then be instituted in terms of long-range plans, continuously directed and motivated by systematic research work and effective inter-staff collaboration.