IMPLEMENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE DECISION AIDS IN THE OKLAHOMA PROBATION AND PAROLE SYSTEM, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD THEM

By

Anne L. Schneider
Zoann Snyder-Joy
Laurie Ervin

Prepared for presentation at the 1990 meetings of the American Society for Criminology, Baltimore, November 9. The research was supported by a grant fron the National Institute of Justice.

INTRODUCTION

Decision making in the public sector has undergone extraordinary changes in the past two decades. While most decisions in public agencies were once based on case by case analysis, judgement, intuition, experience, and political processes, decisions in the modern agency often rely on formal analysis, including statistical prediction of future events. Discretionary decision making has been widely criticized as being arbitrary, unfair, too dependent on political power arrangements or social stereotyping, and ineffective in achieving policy goals. Reliance on quantitative decision models also has been criticized, however, and viewed as part of an inevitable and detrimental scientification of administration and politics.

Formal decision models have been used in criminal justice to guide decisions regarding diversion, sentencing, bail, parole, intensity of probation supervision, and treatment modality (see Gottfredson and Tonrey, 1987; Pinkele and Louthan, 1985). In spite of the enormous increase in reliance on scientific decision aids in criminal justice, very little is known about how these instruments have been implemented and how they are actually used.

The research reported here is a study of how the Wisconsin risk/need instruments were implemented in the Oklahoma Probation and Parole Department, how they are actually used, in practice, and attitudes about them held by probation officers. The study is part of a larger project

carried out in conjunction with the Oklahoma Department of Probation and Parole, under a grant from the National Institute of Justice. Data are drawn from historical records, in-depth interviews, and a structured survey of probation officers throughout the state.

THEORY AND APPROACH

Two divergent perspectives have been advanced about the use of technical and scientific analysis in administrative decision making. Some view the primary problems in administration as human irrationality, "politics," and organizational dynamics that create incentives which are dysfunctional in terms of achieving the instrumental goals of policy. From this perspective, quantitative risk/need instruments that have been adequately validated should produce an improvement in agency performance, provided that they are implemented and used correctly. Correct use, in this sense, implies strict adherence to the classification system with a minimum of overrides and the avoidance of outright manipulation of the point system itself.

Skeptics, however, place more confidence in human judgement and discretion guided by professional norms. Decentralized organizations, combined with grass-roots "learning" models of organizational behavior are viewed as superior to hierarchy. The scientification of bureaucracy and government are simply mechanisms for avoiding accountability and eschewing responsibility for policy failures. From this perspective, better decisions would be

made if the instruments (if used at all) are viewed as flexible aids to decision making. Overrides would be relatively common and, if prohibited by the agency, case workers would develop other schemes to by-pass the "advice" from the instruments and rely on their own judgement.

Proponents of Decision Models

Proponents of formal models usually point to their consistency and uniformity as well as their ability to predict risks and needs more accurately than human decision makers (Brennan, 1987; Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1986). Risk/need estimates are expected to improve efficiency by enabling agencies to concentrate resources on those persons with the greatest probability of failure. Proponents emphasize the fallibility of human judgement, abuse of discretion, and the politicization of administration, any of which could produce errors in decisions. From the perspective of those who believe that increasing reliance on scientific analysis will improve policy and administration, the introduction of quantitative decision aids is a sign of progress. If so, then formal decision aids have the potential for increasing public safety by reducing recidivism rates, reducing costs, and increasing accountability.

Proponents of quantitative decision models draw heavily on the experimental research carried out on human decision making which almost always finds that formal decision models outperform human judgement (Meehl, 1954; Dawes and Corrigin, 1974; Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985; Kahneman, Slovic and

Tversky, 1982). Research repeatedly has shown the predictive superiority of formal models, even when the models were exact replicas of the variables the human decision makers specified should be used, and even when they incorporated the exact weights specified by the decision makers (Dawes, 1975). Dawes, for example, has shown that formal models predicted graduate student success better than university professors, even when the models incorporated exactly the variables that the professors said were important, and when the models used the exact weights the professors claimed that they were using (Dawes, 1975).

One explanation for the apparent superiority of decision models over human judgement is that individual decision making capacity is limited and does not follow the prescriptions of normative, utility maximizing, models (Wright, 1984; Kahneman, Tversky, and Slovic, 1982; Fischoff, et. al., 1982). Thus, even though decision makers believe they should examine a specific set of variables, and weight them in a particular manner, they seldom adhere to their own advice.

Human judgement also suffers considerably under conditions of uncertainty. Rather than combining probabilities with outcomes in the manner specified by probability theory to maximize utility over a long series of events, decision makers rely on heuristics (mental shortcuts, rules of thumb) which produces poorer decisions, over a series of cases (Kahneman, Slovic and Tversky, 1982).

Decision makers are distracted by extraneous information, and often focus on only one aspect of the important variables (Carroll, 1986). Formal models are not influenced by these heuristics, nor by irrelevant information or other irrelevant contextaul factors.

A second reason for expecting formal decision models to outperform human judgement in correctional agencies lies in the political and social nature of decision making in the agency context. Decisions by persons in public agencies have implications beyond those for which the decision putatively is intended. When risky decisions are involved and outcomes are highly uncertain, it is reasonable to expect agency officials to deviate from the presumably "rational" decision in the direction of increased protection against political or administrative criticism. Thus, probation officers may be inclined to "overclassify" cases and assess the risk at higher levels than is needed, thereby providing greater intensity of supervision (Brennan, 1987) and higher costs.

The tendency to overestimate risk and overcommit resources to avoid risk reduces personal liability from erroneous decisions. If a probationer commits another offense, in spite of heavy supervision, the officials can claim that they "did everything they could." But if subsequent crimes are committed by persons on minimum supervision, the agency official may be subjected to intense criticism for not having kept the person under closer scrutiny. Criticisms from elected officials and the public

are not based on the proportion of errors officials make, nor upon the administrative costs of their decisions. Criticisms can be made and jobs lost on the basis of a single dramatic crime committed by a person on probation, particularly one assigned to minimum supervision. Hence, there are powerful incentives for persons in public agencies to overclassify cases, rather than underclassify. (Overclassification also may occur because correctional officials generally believe that heavier supervision will be more effective in preventing recidivism than will lighter supervision.)

The Skeptics

A number of concerns, however, have been expressed about the wide-spread adoption of quantitative decision models. From a technical perspective, concern has been expressed when decision models have been adopted by jurisdictions without sufficient validation of their predictive validity (Wright, Clear and Dickson, 1984). Many jurisdictions use models for purposes other than those for which they were developed (Gottfredson, 1987; Glaser, 1987; Brennan, 1987; Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1986). The presumed effectiveness of these instruments in increasing uniformity, effectiveness, or efficiency, may be undermined by implementation problems, including reluctance of professionals to permit quantitative prediction systems to replace their professional judgements. Almost nothing is known about whether the formal decision models are as "objective" as they appear, as the initial

assignment of points to each of the attributes on some of the instruments may involve a measure of subjectivity. It is possible that those who score the attributes used in the decision system are able to produce the classification they subjectively determined was most appropriate. And, formal decision models have been suspected of introducing race, ethnicity, or gender bias into decision outcomes, much in the same manner as discretionary decision systems, due to the intercorrelation of certain risk and need variables with the personal characteristics of the individual (Petersilia and Turner, 1987; Farrington and Tarling, 1986).

Critics of formal decision models defend judgement-based, discretionary decisions on the grounds that no system of rules or scientific aids can anticipate all of the possible contingencies and variances in human behavior that will actually be encountered (Pinkele, 1987; Fischer, 1980.) Nor can such models adequately handle multiple definitions of "good decisions," particularly when these vary widely in their predictability (such as "fairness" vs. "recidivism"). Reliance on a limited set of variables with questionable validity to predict only one of many different desirable outcomes may introduce errors in decisions for which no one can be held accountable.

Critics also note that the proliferation of quantitative decision aids within criminal justice is an indication of the increasing scientification of administration that has occurred in virtually all areas of administration within the

United States. Such trends are seen as inevitable in advanced, modern societies, but many scholars view them with alarm. Habermas, for example, argues that governments faced with declining performance and increasing expectations from citizens will seek to define most problems as technical ones, and that they will seek to convince the public that they are searching for technically-correct solutions rather than acknowledging the structural basis of the problems. Thus, governments increasingly are not held accountable for policy failures, and the public is increasingly excluded from meaningful discourse about public issues.

Approach to the Study

Interviews with key officials were undertaken to explore the historical context in which the Wisconsin instruments were introduced and to understand how the implementation occurred. These interviews were followed with a structured questionnaire administered to all probation officers in the state. The historical analysis was intended to examine the types of changes that occurred in the use of the instrument and to provide a context for interpreting the survey data. The survey questionnaire was designed to emphasize the following points:

1. Whether probation officers believe the instruments are appropriate and useful in making decisions about the intensity of probation;

2. What they say the instruments are useful for, such as doing a better job, increasing control of supervisors within the hierarchical structure, legitimizing decisions to the public and protecting the officers from blame.

3. Why they use the instruments, such as for professional reasons, trust in expertise/research; requirements within a hierarchical structure; or positive or negative incentives.

4. To what extent are the instruments manipulated by the officers, and how much influence is exerted by the media or by external political agendas?

5. The relationship of attitudes toward the instruments and (a) job satisfaction and (b) perceptions of job effectiveness.

The second section of the paper describes the historical context within which the instruments are used; the findings from the survey are presented in the third section.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WISCONSIN RISK/NEED INSTRUMENTS

Oklahoma has used six different decision-making systems during the past 15 years for determining the level of supervision that should be given to persons serving sentences of probation or parole under the supervision of the State Department of Corrections (DOC) (Berry, 1988).

The Committee System

Before 1976 there was no formal assessment of risks or needs and no formal assignment of cases to levels of supervision intensity. The system was based on judgement and discretion, with both in the hands of the probation and parole officers and their supervisors. The gradual

replacement of individual judgement with more structured decisions began in 1976 when decisions making shifted to a three- person committee of probation and parole officers along with their supervisors. These individuals assessed the risks and needs of each person referred to probation and parole and assigned them to one of three different levels of supervision intensity: Level I (maximum supervision), Level II (moderate) or Level III (minimum supervision). These classification decisions were based on subjective assessments without benefit of formal decision aids (Collins, 1988). Two other levels of supervision (Levels IV and V) were specified, but both dealt with persons who could not be kept under direct supervision, such as mental commitments or absconders.

As was to be true until 1984, the contrast in required supervision intensity was surprisingly small. Levels I and II both required one contact per month, with the contact being out-of-the office for Level I and in-office for Level II. Level III required one contact every 90 days (Berry, 1988). Other contacts were "encouraged." Officials from DOC have indicated there may not have been much actual difference in the amount of supervision probation officers provided to clients, or there may have been substantial differentiation that was not related to the point system (Hatley, 1989). If so, this system was primarily voluntary rather than mandated.

Adoption of the Wisconsin Instruments

The committee system was abandoned in 1981, reportedly on the grounds that it was arbitrary and inconsistent (Berry, 1988b), and the Wisconsin Client Classification instruments were adopted to replace the committee decision systems. The major impetus for shifting to a structured decision system was to again accreditation from the American Correctional Association. Collins (1988) reported that this was the original Wisconsin instrument, although the scoring system used in it differs from the one incorporated in Wright, et. al. analysis of the Wisconsin approach (Wright, et. al., 1984). There was no validation of the instrument in Oklahoma or on cases drawn from Oklahoma files.

According to Berry (1988) there were three major goals proposed for the shift to an objective client classification system: (1) To maintain the current level of client misbehavior (arrests, new convictions, technical violations; (2) To improve resource utilization, and (3) to minimize client involvement in formal supervision and minimize client contact with officers.

The official statement of purpose was as follows:

> A sound classification system is the most effective means utilized to accomplish effective utilization [sic] of resources in probation and parole supervision efforts. The classification system must ensure service delivery in accordance with the needs of the client and safety of the community. The goal of our classification system is having clients progress to the point that services are no longer needed and our efforts may be redirected to those in need. (Berry, 1988).

The Assessment of Client Risk used 10 variables, seven of which were objective: number of address changes, employment, age at first conviction, prior periods of supervision, prior revocations, prior felony convictions, and prior convictions for any offense. Three subjective factors were scored by the officials: alcohol use, drug use, and attitude. Alcohol and drug use were assessed in terms of no problem, moderate problem, or serious problems. Interestingly, serious alcohol problems were scored more heavily "4" than serious drug problems "2". Attitudes were scored from "0" to "5", using response categories of whether the person was "motivated to change" or "rationalizes behavior; negative, not motivated to change." The maximum score was 57, or possibly even higher, as the instrument permitted an unlimited number of prior convictions to be "counted" toward the total. In fact, prior convictions could entirely dominate the scoring on this instrument.

The second instrument, Assessment of Client Needs, was considerably more subjective and incorporated variables ranging from employment and financial management to sexual behavior. Interestingly, the officer's "impression of client needs" was included as a variable and scored in the same manner as other variables. Other variables on this instrument were adequacy of academic and vocational skills, marital or family relationships, characteristics of companions, emotional stability, alcohol and drug use, mental

ability, and physical health. In Wright's analysis of the Wisconsin instrument (Wright, et. al., 1984), the subjective assessment of the client's needs was the single best predictor of failure. The Client Needs instrument used scores ranging from zero to 2 and all variables had the same range of scores, thereby providing equal weights for each variable. The maximum score was 24.

The level of supervision was based on the points from the two instruments. Cutpoints were established for the risk and needs instruments, separately, yielding two possibly different estimates of the level of supervision needed. The classification indicating less supervision was the one selected, if the two differed.

The Wisconsin system includes two reassessment instruments (one for risks, one for needs) that are to be completed every six months. The risk reassessment includes four new items that are quite subjective: problems in interpersonal relationship; social identification (mainly with positive individuals, mainly with delinquent individuals); response to conditions imposed by probation and parole authorities (complies, does not comply); and use of community resources.

Pilot Test of the Wisconsin System

A pilot test of Oklahoma's new system was conducted in 1981 by DOC (Collins, 1988), in which two-thirds of the probation officers in each of the seven districts in the state were randomly selected to begin using the new risk

classification instrument. Others continued with the committee approach. Officers participating in the experiment reclassified all clients on their case load.

The results of Collins' analysis of 1,600 cases (See Table 1) showed a substantial change in the proportion classified at each level. The Wisconsin classification system assessed only 3.9 percent of the cases as needing Level I supervision (the maximum level), compared with 11.3 percent of the cases assessed by the committee. The contrast at Level III is even more stark, as 75 percent of the cases were classified as Level III by the Wisconsin system, compared with 28 percent by the committee. This phenomena almost certainly reflects the caution inherent in public agencies when dealing with risky outcomes.

TABLE 1. CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS: COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS AND FORMAL DECISION MODEL IN OKLAHOMA

	Level I (Maximum)	Level II (Moderate)	Level III (Minimum)
	%	%	%
Classification Decisions			
Committee	11	60	28
Wisconsin Model	04	21	75

Note: Data are from Collins (1988), p. 11.

Changes in the Wisconsin System

The Wisconsin system has been changed in many ways during its brief history in Oklahoma. In 1984 there was an expansion in the number of Levels from three to five, a change in the points assigned to the specific categories within the reassessment risk/need instruments, and an increase in the contrast among levels in the intensity of supervision. Reassessment of client risks/needs was undertaken in all of these systems on a regular six-month basis. Maximum supervision cases (Level I) now commanded two face to face contacts per month; Level II cases required one contact per month, and Level III cases were to have one contact every three months. Level IV, a new classification, was for persons assessed as low risk and low need who had been under supervision for at least six months. Contacts were to occur only as needed and the client was expected only to submit a written monthly report. Level 7 was for clients on early termination, and the level of supervision was not specified.

In 1985, three district in the state--two in Oklahoma County and one in Enid--were asked to test the Iowa Risk instrument. The Iowa instrument was initially developed for parole release decisions. It contains no need assessment (although Oklahoma incorporated a needs instrument in their implementation), and it relies almost exclusively on

information about the number and type of prior offenses. In comparison with the Wisconsin instruments, the Iowa protocol is more sophisticated, complex, and time-consuming to complete. It also requires considerably more data and training. The instrument is less intuitively understandable, as well, as it is almost impossible to determine from a casual inspection how the various attributes are being weighted and combined to produce the final level of risk. The Iowa instrument was used for about 18 months and then dropped due to general dissatisfaction. Department of Correction officials enumerated some of the problems: it required data that often were not available, it was being used in a manner different than that for which it was developed and staff did not "trust" the results, and it was time-consuming and confusing to complete. These three districts shifted back to the revised Wisconsin instruments in late 1986.

The final change in the Oklahoma system was adopted in December, 1987, and involved changes in the classification categories, changes in the intensity of supervision, and changes in both the items on the risk/needs instruments as well as changes in the points. Three face-to-face contacts were now required for the Level I cases, two for the Level II, one for Level III, one per every three months for Level IV, and only a mail-in report for persons classified at Level V.

Generally, the Oklahoma adaptation of the Wisconsin

model can be characterized as a relatively flexible, somewhat judgemental, system in terms of the scoring and assignment to classification levels. In the early years, it prescribed very little differences in level of supervision, but permitted probation officers to use heavier supervision for whichever cases they believed needed it. Over time, considerably greater differentiation has been incorporated into the system, so that offenders in the maximum supervision category (Level I) receive far more intensive supervision than those in the minimum category (Level V), and there is considerably less discretion available to officers to determine on the basis of their own judgement, which offenders should receive heavier supervision.

ATTITUDES ABOUT THE RISK/NEED INSTRUMENTS

The questionnaire was sent to all probation officers in the state (N = 296), with 179 (60 percent) responding. The average age of respondents was 35 years, average length of employment was 5.5 years. Most of the respondents were men (63 percent), most were white (83 percent), and all had at least a bachelor's degree.

Attitudes toward the instruments were generally neutral or negative rather than positive (Table 3). Slightly more than one-third (37 percent) believed that the risk needs instruments are appropriate for making decisions about the level of superivsion, and almost one-half (47 percent) believe they are a helpful tool. Strong majorities of 76

percent and 61 percent believe the officers should have more discretion in selecting the level of supervision and that the officer's knowledge is better than the instruments.

The open-ended interviews suggested a number of ways in which the instruments purportedly are useful, but when these were posed as questions to the probation officers, only one-fourth to one-third generally concurred. Twenty-six percent said the instruments were useful in identifying high risk offenders; 37 percent said they were useful in providing initial insight into the offender or in helping the officers allocate their time among different cases. More than half agreed that the instruments help insure that high risk cases get more intensive supervision. Generally, less than half the respondent believed that the instruments were useful in any of the specific tasks of the probation officer.

The instruments were not judged much better in terms of their usefulness to supervisors or to "the system." More than half said that they were useful in providing uniformtiy of supervision state-wide, but most disagreed that the instruments helped supervisors evaluate probation officers, helped supervisors allocate case loads, and they emphatically rejected the notion that the instruments reduce the costs of probation and parole--which was one of the major purposes of them.

Almost a majority believed the instruments were useful in justifying the supervision level to the public or legislature, but they strongly rejected the notion that

reliance on quantitative decision aids protect the employee from blame if an offender commits another offense while on supervision.

The survey posed questions regarding four different reasons for why the officers complete the instruments and use them in their decision making:

(a) trust in expertise (i.e., they believe the instruments are scientific and are willing to yield their subjective judgement to it;

(b) professionalism (i.e., professional norms work in favor of relying on the instruments)

(c) positive incentives, and

(d) expectations of supervisors within the hierarchical system of control, including negative evaluations.

Respondents strongly rejected the notion that the instruments reflect expertise, as only 15 percent disagreed with the notion that the officer's knowledge is more accurate than the instrument; and only 13 percent agreed with the statement that experienced officers find the instruments makes better decisions than they would. Professionalism also was not viewed as the reason for using them, as only 20 percent agreed with the statement that they would use the instruments even if they were not required because it is the professional thing to do. About one-third said that positive rewards were provided for properly completing the instruments; whereas 83 percent said that negative evaluations were given for failure to complete the

instruments positively and 78 percent said that supervisors look more favorably on those who properly complete the instruments.

Several questions probed for information about whether the officers manipulate the point system and the ways in which this occurs. One type of manipulation is to ignore various needs of the offender and not record his or her problems accurately in order to obtain a lower supervision level and lessen work load. Only 12 percent said that his happens often or always, but 42 percent said it happens sometimes (Table 5). To a more general question about whether the officers score the instruments incorrectly in order to manage their case load within the time frame they have available, 22 percent said this happens often or always, and 36 percent said it happens sometimes. About the same results were obtained from a question about whether officers score the instruments incorrectly to justify the level of supervision they believe is appropriate. Another type of manipulation is to simply ignore the classification level when it suggests a less intensive level of supervision and simply see the offender more often, rather than seeking an "override" from their supervisor. Fourteen percent said that this happens often or always, and 42 percent said it happens sometimes.

Two questions probed the extent of media and political influence, but respondents indicated that media and public opinion seldom influenced the level of supervision (53

percent) comapred with 32 percent who said it happens sometimes and 14 percent who said it often or always influences the level. The political agenda of the sheriff or DA was rejected as a favor by 75 percent of the respondents, although 20 percent said it influences them sometimes and 5 percnet said it often or always is a factor in determining the levels assigned to probationers.

In spite of the somewhat negative views of the instruments, more than half disagreed with the statement that the system would be better off without them. Only 23 percent agreed with that statement and 25 percent were neutral.

The second part of the analysis completed at this time pertains to the relationship between the perceived usefulness of the instrument and (a) job satisfaction and (b) their sense of effectiveness in achieving rehabilitation and reducing crime rates.1 On the whole, attitudes toward the instruments were not associated with the sense of job satisfcation (which was very high, with more than 80 percent generally responding positively to the series of questions about job satisfaction). On the other hand, attitudes about the instruments were commonly related to the sense of job effectiveness (Table 6). An overall scale of usefulness comprised of 13 questions correlated at .42 with the scale of job effectiveness ($p < .001$).

The final part of the analysis completed at this time examines the perceptions of helpfulness as a dependent variable (Table 7). Those who have positive attitudes were

more likely to believe their training was adequate, were familiar with research on the instrument and were aware of local research that had been done. (This was only 9 percent of the total, however). Perceptions of helpfulness were strongly related to positive attitudes about the attributes of the instruments, as one might expect (Table 7). Those who believed the instrument was logical, sensitive to community values, complete, sensitive to offendr needs, used appropriate weights, accounted for uncertainty, was consistent with moral principles, and allowed for officer judgement in assigning points believed the instrument was more helpful. Finally, there were relatively strong correlations between beliefs that the instrument is a helpful tool, generally, and awareness of how the instrument is useful in specific instances, particularly in making sure that high risk cases get intensive supervision, in justifying the level of supervision to the public, and in providing uniformity of supervision.

FOOTNOTES

1. Usefulness is additive scale comprised of the 10 questions shown in Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha is .93.

Job satisfaction and job effectiveness are additive scales created from variables associated with how much the parole officers reported liking their jobs. Questions used for the job satisfaction scale were:

-I like the duties I perform in my job here
-I am satisfied with my present job assignment
-If I had a chance, I wouldn't get a job in something other

than what I am doing now
-I enjoy most of the work I do here
-I like my job better than the average person does
-Most days I am enthusiastic about my job
-My work here gives me a strong sense of accomplishment
-I have opportunity to use my real skills and abilities
-My work is interesting and challenging

The Cronbach's Alpha score is .91.

The job effectiveness scale was developed from three questions pertaining to effectiveness in helping rehabilitate, reducing the likelihood of recidivism, and protecting the public from crime. Cronbach's Alpha is .78.

TABLE 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

Total Population	296
Response Rate	60 %
Number Responding	179
Average Age	35 Years
Average Length of Employment	5.5 Years
Sex	
Male	63 %
Female	36 %
Race	
White	83 %
Black	9 %
Other	8 %
Education	
Bachelors	82 %
Masters	16 %
Doctorate	2 %

TABLE 3. USEFULNESS OF THE RISK/NEEDS INSTRUMENTS

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
	%	%	%
OVERALL ASSESSMENT			
a) the risk/needs instrument is appropriate for making decisions about the level of supervision	37	31	33
b) The instruments are a helpful tool for the probation officer	47	26	28
c) Officers should have more discretion in selecting the level of supervision	76	18	6
d) the officer's knowledge...is more accurate than the instrument	61	24	15
INSTRUMENTS ARE USEFUL TO PROBATION OFFICERS			
a) ... in identifying High Risk Offenders	26	29	45
b) ... in providing initial insight into offender	37	31	31
c) ... in helping officers manage case load (i.e., allocate their time)	37	29	33
d) ... in making sure high risk cases get intensive supervision			
e) ... in assisting the offender to get assistance needed for success	24	31	45
INSTRUMENTS ARE USEFUL TO SUPERVISORS AND THE SYSTEM			
a) ...in providing uniformity of supervision statewide	57	23	20

TABLE 3. CONTINUED [USEFULNESS]

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
	%	%	%
b) ...in helping supervisors evaluate probation officers	21	22	56
c) ... in allocating caseloads among probation officers	29	22	48
d) In reducing costs of probation and parole	10	27	63
USEFULNESS AS POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION			
a) ... protecting the employee from blame	19	18	63
b) ... justifying the supervision level to the public or legislature	49	27	24

TABLE 4. REASONS FOR USING THE RISK/NEED INSTRUMENTS

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
	%	%	%
TRUST IN EXPERTISE			
a) ...research has shown these instruments to be effective	24	44	32
b) The instrument is more accurate than a subjective evaluation of an offender	27	31	42
c) the officer's knowledge...is more accurate than the instrument	61	24	15
d) experienced officers find it makes better decisions than they would	13	29	58
PROFESSIONALISM			
a) using the instruments is the professional thing to do	20	26	53
INCENTIVES / HIERARCHY			
a) Positive rewards are provided for properly completing the instruments	31	26	42
b) Negative evaluations are given for failure to complete the instruments properly	83	12	4
c) Supervisors look more favorably on those who properly complete the instruments	78	15	6

TABLE 5. EXTENT OF MANIPULATION AND OUTSIDE INFLUENCE

	Never Seldom	Sometimes	Often Always
	%	%	%
a) Problems are ignored and not recorded properly to lessen work load	46	42	12
b) Officers score the instruments incorrectly to manage their case load	41	36	22
c) Officers score them incorrectly to justify the level of supervision they believe is appropriate	40	39	21
d) When officers believe an override is needed, they just see the client more often rather than getting an override	44	42	14
e) Do media and public opinion influence level of supervision?	53	32	14
f) Does the political agenda of the DA or Sheriff influence the level assignments?	75	20	5

ABLE 6. ATTITUDES ABOUT USEFULNESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF JOBS

	Job Satisfaction		Job Effectiveness	
	r	s	r	s
USEFULNESS OF THE RISK/NEEDS INSTRUMENT (SCALE OF 13 VARIABLES)	.1212	.106	.4226	.000
HOW USEFUL ARE THE RISK/NEEDS INSTRUMENTS . . .				
a) . . . in identifying High Risk Offenders	.0616	.413	.3955	.000
b) . . . in providing initial insight into offender	.0539	.473	.2775	.000
c) . . . in helping officers manage case load (i.e.,allocate their time)	.1501	.045	.3756	.000
d) . . . in making sure high risk cases get intensive supervision	.0308	.683	.1631	.029
e) . . . in assisting the offender to get the assistance needed for success	.0716	.341	.3936	.000
f) . . . in providing uniformity of supervision statewide	.0827	.271	.2190	.003
g) In reducing costs of probation and parole	.1640	.028	.3462	.000
h) . . . protecting the employee from blame	.1789	.017	.3993	.000
i) . . . protecting the officer from blame	.0607	.419	.2377	.001
j) . . . in providing data from which more can be learned about the behavior of clients	.1717	.023	.3831	.000
k) . . . in providing adequate protection for the community	.0950	.206	.3519	.000
l) . . . in minimizing the amount of interference in client's life	-.0250	.740	.1722	.022
m). . . in protecting offender	.0545	.470	.3149	.000

TABLE 7. PREDICTORS OF PERCEPTIONS ABOUT USEFULNESS

	Perception of Instrument as Helpful Tool	
	r	s
TRAINING		
Believe Training Received is Adequate	.1505	.044
Familiar With Research on Assessment	.1232	.101
Aware of Local Research	.1851	.013
ATTRIBUTES OF THE RISK/NEED INSTRUMENT		
Logical	.5613	.000
Sensitive to Community	.4328	.000
Complete	.4111	.000
Sensitive to Offender Needs	.3805	.000
Appropriate Weights	.3717	.000
Accounts for Uncertainty	.3134	.000
Consistent with Moral Principles	.2768	.000
Allows Judgement	.2573	.001
AWARENESS OF THE WAYS INSTRUMENT IS USEFUL		
Justifying Level of Supervision to the Public	.2129	.004
Making Sure High Risk Cases Get Intensive Supervision	.5244	.000
Providing Uniformity of Supervision	.3494	.000

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