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ACQUISITIONS

PHASE II DESIGN

PHASE I EVALUATION OF

INTENSIVE SPECIAL PROBATION PROJECTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Georgia Tech Project

This report, Phase II Design[1/] is one of several being produced by Georgia Tech's Phase I National Evaluation of Intensive Special Probation (LEAA Grant Number 76 NI-99-0045). This project, like the more than twenty other Phase I projects in various criminal justice program areas, is a part of the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice's National Evaluation Program. The long term aim of the National Evaluation Program is to determine which types of criminal justice programs are the most productive investments of criminal justice dollars. Each Phase I study is to set the stage for evaluation of a particular program area by determining how particular programs are actually structured and implemented, defining a framework around which an evaluation can be centered and assessing the state of knowledge about the elements of the framework.

To accomplish its Phase I study of intensive special probation, the Georgia Tech research team has undertaken a variety of research activities. Initially, a careful review was made of the available literature and opinions were sought from numerous probation experts in order to produce an Issues Paper setting out the important concepts and controversies in the design and evaluation of probation programs [1]. A list of 126 active projects which appeared to meet the definition of Intensive Special Probation (ISP) was assembled from a variety of sources. From that list, 46 projects were determined to be actually active and within the scope of ISP. A brief telephone survey

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[1/] The complete title for this document is Phase II Design: Phase I Evaluation of Intensive Special Probation Projects. However, when references to internally generated ISP products are made here, only the main titles will be used.

was administered to each of these 46 projects, and the results were summarized in [2]. Drawing on the results of the telephone survey and various informal contacts, 20 project sites were selected for actual visits by Georgia Tech ISP staff. A great deal of information about the intervention strategy, measurements and evaluations used at these sites was collected during the site visits and summarized in the report, Interventions Papers [3]. Intervention strategies found at individual sites were assimilated in Frameworks [4]. All of the foregoing findings were presented in Knowledge Assessment [5]. This last document indicates what is known and what is knowable, what is measured, and what is measurable in Intensive Special Probation. An additional document, Single Project Evaluation Design, has been completed [6].

Contents of the Document

Chapter II of this document is a justification for additional evaluation. It is based on past evaluation efforts that have been reported and those taking place within the sites visited. Some 25 areas of insufficient knowledge are presented and the benefits of obtaining this knowledge are given.

Chapter III presents three Phase II design options. A scoring model is constructed and the options are compared. One of the three options is recommended.

Chapter IV deals with the issue of funding an existing project or funding a new project. The advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed and one of the two is recommended.

The specific evaluation design is presented in Chapter V. Data collection instruments will have to be prepared to implement the design. An example is provided of one such instrument. The subject of using comparison groups in the Phase II design is discussed, including methods and costs.

Chapter VI is a conclusion. The necessity for conducting a Phase II evaluation is reiterated and the Phase II design is described.

CHAPTER II

JUSTIFICATION FOR ADDITIONAL EVALUATION

Past Evaluation Efforts--Intensive Probation

The effectiveness of caseload reduction in probation has received much research attention as a contributor to achieving greater effectiveness. A number of interesting reviews of caseload research are available in the criminological literature [7,8,9,10,11,12,13]. However, all these reviews have given real attention to only one adult probation project, the San Francisco Project which operated in the federal probation system in the late 1960's.

That project was undertaken in two phases. The first randomly selected probationers for two "ideal" caseloads of 40, two "intensive" caseloads of 20, and one "minimum" caseload of several hundred, leaving all other cases in "normal" loads of 70 to 130. The second phase used a selection procedure to assign probationers to caseloads. Because it involved random allocation to different caseload sizes, the first phase is the one most useful in assessing overall effectiveness. Analysis (see for example [14]) showed that, excluding technical violations, the minimum supervision caseload was not significantly less successful than other caseloads. Smaller caseloads appeared to produce more technical violations.

Though it is much referenced and discussed, the San Francisco project would appear to be an unsatisfactory basis for general conclusions about caseload size in adult probation. An obvious concern in generalizing is the fact that the study was operated within the federal correctional system where the mix of probationer's crimes is unlikely to match that in state and local probation. Also, while the "minimum" caseload was handled on a time available basis by several officers, the testing of only two "intensive" and two "ideal" caseloads certainly raises concern about interactions between results and officer

supervision styles. Adams et al., in their critique of the project, observe that there was "deliberate effort to avoid identification of particular officer styles in the research . . . ." [14] Additionally, there were a host of minor methodological difficulties with the San Francisco project (discussed for example in [14]) which collectively cast some doubt on the validity of the results obtained.

Since the later 1960's time frame of most reviews of caseload research, a number of large adult probationer projects have been undertaken in different parts of the United States. One such project is the Intensive Supervision Project operated by the Florida Parole and Probation Commission in 1971-1972. [15] The project provided service to a sample of 9,030 probationers and parolees randomly selected from the caseloads in various districts of the State. Experimental caseloads consisted of 35 "high risk" probationers and parolees. Control group caseloads contained 70 cases, 35 "high risk" and 35 "medium" or "low risk". Comparison of revocation rates between experimentals and controls who were classified "high risk" (there were at least 1,497 such individuals) showed no significant differences for probationers. The parole of those in the experimental group was statistically significantly more likely to be revoked than the parole of those in the control group. No analyses are reported on rearrests, reconvictions or other measures of recidivism.

Another significant caseload reduction project reported in [12] is the Oklahoma Department of Corrections' Special Community Supervision Project. Project caseloads of 50 were randomly selected from the probation and parole population and compared to control caseloads of 160-170. Approximately 90% of the clients were probationers. No significant differences in success rate were observed between project and control groups, but detail methodological difficulties bring into question the accuracy of this conclusion (see [12] for specifics).

The Volunteer Probation Counselor Program in Lincoln, Nebraska [16] essentially reduces caseload to one by assigning a volunteer counselor to each project client. A randomly selected control group receives standard probation supervision. All clients in both groups have been convicted of misdemeanors. Apparently valid results reported by Ku in [16] show substantially lower recidivism rates among the group supervised by volunteers, especially when traffic offenses are eliminated from recidivism calculations. However, the sample sizes associated with the two groups are not sufficient to guarantee statistical significance of the recidivism reduction. Moreover, any reductions may be due more to the special nature of volunteer counseling than the quantity of case contact.

Past Evaluation Efforts--Special Probation

Because of the wide range of program possibilities, evaluation of the effectiveness of special forms of probation is more sparse than that of intensive probation. However, the findings from the review of the literature are presented in this section.

A widely advocated special probation scheme is the use of volunteers and paraprofessionals to assist regular probation officers in case supervision. One use of volunteers is in specialized employment counseling like that of the Monroe County (New York) Probation Employment and Guidance Program. A report by Cronin et al. [17], which is apparently based on comparison to a validly selected control group, showed no significant differences in recidivism as a result of the project but did imply some success in obtaining employment for clients. The more standard use of volunteers and paraprofessionals is in providing direct probation counseling and supervision to clients. The only study obtained for this assessment which included a convincing evaluation of such a use of volunteers was the Lincoln, Nebraska Volunteer Probation

Counselor Program [16] discussed above. Substantial recidivism reductions were measured among misdemeanant offenders but the reductions were not shown to be statistically significant. Other comparative results showing some reductions in recidivism are reported for the volunteer program in Royal Oak, Michigan [18].

Another approach to special probation delivery is to specialize the type of treatment provided probationers, either by classifying the probationers and giving different treatment to different classes, or by selecting a special client group for project concentration. Because of the difficulty in arranging a suitable comparison group, no client classification projects reviewed as part of this assessment provided quantitative evidence--either pro or con--for the effectiveness of classification in reducing recidivism.

The Utah SOCIO probation program specialized in Mexican-American clients [19]. Special bilingual counselors were provided by the Spanish-speaking Organization for Community, Integrity and Opportunity to Chicano clients of the Utah Division of Adult Probation and Parole. A sample of project clients was carefully matched with comparable clients experiencing the normal probation system. Sample sizes involved were too small to provide statistically significant results, but a reduction of recidivism for the project group was measured.

A third class of special probation projects for which some overall effectiveness results are available includes various programs to decentralize probation delivery by locating probation supervisors in neighborhood or regional offices. One major project of this type is Caseload Management/ Addition to Supervision project in Philadelphia's Adult Probation Department [20,21]. Seven district offices are being operated in different sections of Philadelphia, with clients from other offices being supervised at downtown offices. Personnel in district offices perform all probation functions

(including, for example, intake), while central office probation supervisors are specialized into various supervision units. Preliminary, but apparently reliable, evaluation results in [20,21] show no significant differences in recidivism between the two groups.

The Philadelphia Outreach Sub-Offices and Chester District Office project is a decentralization effort of the Pennsylvania State Board of Probation and Parole. Five outreach sub-offices are operated in Philadelphia, and a separate office provides service to neighboring Chester and Delaware counties. Clients not assigned to these decentralized centers are supervised by the Philadelphia District Office in downtown Philadelphia. Caseloads in sub-offices have average near 50, and those of the district offices have ranged widely from 60 up. Comparisons between recidivism rates for the central and decentralized offices show decentralized offices statistically significantly lower. However, rough analysis for probationers alone (the project includes both probation and parole) shows recidivism higher in the decentralized facilities.

A project for which less complete recidivism information is presently available is the Pennsylvania Regional Offices and Sub-Offices project, which has decentralized probation offices in various parts of the State of Pennsylvania [22]. The project reports some evidence of lower recidivism among probationers supervised by decentralized offices as compared to those supervised by large, regional offices, but there are numerous problems of comparing the two client groups.

Evaluation Efforts of Sites Visited

Only one of the 20 probation projects visited by the Georgia Tech ISP team had yet reported evaluation results based on a methodologically sound evaluation plan. That project was the Intensive Services Unit of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Adult Probation Project. Clients of the Intensive

Services Unit are sex offenders and persons placed on "psychiatric probation." Caseloads in the project are typically near 50. A comparison of rearrest rates between a sample of project clients and a sample of similar clients in caseloads exceeding 100 showed statistically significantly lower rates for project clients. However, the concept of the project calls for a much different quality as well as quantity of supervision than experienced in normal caseloads. In particular, the Intensive Services Unit seeks to take a more psychological/psychiatric approach to probation, including a heavy emphasis on assessment. Thus, it is possible that the observed success is a consequence of the special nature of treatment rather than caseload size.

Several other caseload reduction projects encountered as part of Georgia Tech's ISP study claimed recidivism decreased but had either not prepared for final analyses or had not employed a valid comparison group in drawing conclusions. Among the caseload reduction projects visited by Georgia Tech which reported preliminary findings of recidivism reductions were the High Impact Intensive Supervision Narcotics Unit and the Intensive Differentiated Supervision of Impact Parolees and Probationers projects in Baltimore, the Volunteers in Probation project in Evansville, Indiana and the Intensive Supervision Program in Denver. Only the Denver project is known to plan a more complete evaluation in the near future.

There are several findings which are apparently based on valid evaluation designs in projects with specialized clienteles. One such project is the Philadelphia Intensive Services Unit discussed above. This Unit specializes in clients who are either sex offenders or offenders designated by judges as requiring "psychiatric probation." Evaluation results for the Intensive Services Unit show a statistically significant reduction in project client recidivism, as compared to a comparable sample of other probationers.

Another project, operating in four counties in Oregon, concentrates on burglary offenders. Recidivism of project clients is compared to that of burglary offenders in four other counties which are reasonably well-matched to the project counties. Results to date show no significant differences between project and matched counties in recidivism.

One of the sites visited specializes in treating drug offenders. The Baltimore High Impact Narcotics Unit has operated a valid evaluation design but produced only preliminary results.

The Intensive Supervision Program in Denver decentralized probation office in various parts of the City. The Denver project has produced only preliminary results, but some differences in favor of the decentralized facilities are reported.

Areas of Insufficient Knowledge

The gaps in knowledge have been presented in Frameworks [4] and Knowledge Assessment [5]. Readers are encouraged to review these two documents for a complete discussion of these gaps. The areas presented in this section are derived from these two sources.

Increased Case Contact. Case contact in probation supervision is the amount of interaction between probation staff and the case including not only direct interaction with the client, but also interaction with other persons interested in his case (family, employers, etc.). The following are unanswered questions or issues in this area:

1. What is the appropriate measure of case contact?
2. Does decreased caseload result in increased contact?
3. Does increased probation contact with cases result in more effective probation treatment?
4. Can probation officers adjust to increased case contact?
5. Is it possible to increase contact to a point at which intensity is reached? (Can even a generous allocation of staff time lead to a degree of contact which can fairly be defined as "intense"?)

More Efficient Contact. An alternative intensity dimension to the pure quantity of contact with probation cases is the efficient use of contact time. Many schemes for ISP can be viewed as seeking to improve the efficiency of contact through more effective management of probation staff. The most widely employed approach is the use of some form of case classification. The following are unanswered questions or issues in this area:

1. Can clients be readily classified into groups which satisfactorily predict the recidivism risk associated with a given client group?
2. Can post research on client classification be brought to the level of practical usefulness to serve a large proportion of probation projects?
3. Is increased contact effective for only certain types of offenders?

Use of Volunteers or Paraprofessionals. The following are unanswered questions or issues in this area:

1. Does the quantity of case contact with clients in a volunteer or paraprofessional project increase or decrease?
2. Does the use of volunteers or paraprofessionals significantly reduce the contact which probation officers have with clients?

Quality of Contact. The quality of the contact may be of greater importance than the quantity of contact. The following are unanswered questions or issues in this area:

1. Does specialization of the project on clients of a particular type result in increased officer understanding of the subject client-type and thus in more intensive officer-case interaction?
2. Does organization of the probation staff into teams jointly supervising the same caseload result in a better match of officer skills and client needs in particular situations and thus in more intensive officer-case interaction?
3. Do indigenous knowledge and less-authoritarian images of volunteer and paraprofessional probation supervisors result in a more frank and thus more intensive staff-case interaction?
4. Does decentralization of probation facilities into client's neighborhoods result in increased officer familiarity with the social environment in which clients live and thus in more intensive officer-case interaction?

5. Do more thorough diagnostic and assessment activities at the point of probation intake lead to increased officer understanding of clients and thus to more intensive officer-case interaction?

Treatment Judgments. Many ISP projects have been created with certain assumptions about treatment structure. Scientifically valid research about these assumptions is lacking. Unanswered questions or issues about treatment structure include the following:

1. Does location of probation offices in the neighborhoods where clients live assist in keeping probation officers informed about the community services available in the area?

2. Does employment of indigenous paraprofessionals or volunteers from neighborhoods where clients live assist in keeping probation staffs informed about the community services available in the area?

3. Can a treatment-oriented client classification system be devised which distinguishes among clients on the basis of the type of treatment needed?

4. Does concentration of a probation project on a specialized class of clients assist probation supervisors in keeping informed about the community services suitable for that class?

5. Does increased diagnosis and assessment effort at client intake lead to better probation staff judgments about appropriate treatment plans?

6. Does legal enforcability of treatment plans through behavioral contracting bring about more careful selection of treatment?

Client Receptivity to Probation Treatment. Reducing client hostility toward probation treatment has been assumed to enhance positive behavior change in clients. However, efforts to scientifically validate these assumptions have been minimal. Unanswered questions or issues about treatment structure include the following:

1. Do the less-authoritarian roles played by volunteer and paraprofessional probation counselors lead to a relationship with probationers less characterized by hostility and suspicion?

2. Does intensive interaction of probation staff with clients lead to a sense that "somebody cares" in clients and thus to reduced hostility toward probation?

3. Does decentralized location of probation offices lead to improved neighborhood attitudes toward probation, and, thus, to improved client attitudes toward probation?

4. Does decentralized location of probation offices provide a more convenient and less imposing setting for probation and, thus, lea to improved client attitudes toward probation?

Benefits of Increased Knowledge

The 25 areas of insufficient knowledge presented in the last section are somewhat of a shocking revelation that very little is known about intensive special probation. Only a few valid research findings have addressed the effects of increases in the intensity of probation supervision, and even fewer have evaluated the various forms of special probation.

Although the amount of funding for Intensive Special Probation Projects, from all sources, is unknown, some educated guesses can be made. Of the 126 potential ISP projects identified in the telephone survey, 46 operational, truly ISP projects were eventually located and interviewed. Twenty of these sites were visited. The accumulated, most recent annual expenditures of these twenty sites was $4,913,238 for an average of $245,662 per site. These expenditures ranged from a low of approximately $12,000 to a high of approximately $600,000. If the 46 operational, truly ISP projects comprise the universe, then the total amount of expenditures might be estimated as $11,300,452 ($245,662 x 46). Since the universe was not exhaustively enumerated, perhaps $20,000,000 is being spent annually on ISP.

With such gaps in knowledge, it should be quite feasible to improve the effectiveness of treatment. A 25% increase in effectiveness would save $5,000,000 or enhance the treatment by a like percentage.

The theme, from all sources, is repeated. In the Issues Paper it was recognized that even basic problems of definition had not been solved (what is a standard for workload measure?) [1]. Conceptual problems dealing with process measures were discovered. (The number of contacts fails to deal with

quality of contact.) Problems were recognized in selecting outcome measure. (Recidivism can be measured, and is measured, many different ways). These dilemmas continue throughout the Issues Paper.

The Interventions Paper, based on the site visits, continued to spew forth with gaps in knowledge [3]. The difference between ideal measures and actual measures, on a site by site basis, indicated that the findings reported in the literature, from communication with experts in the field, and gleaned from monitoring reports or evaluations (the sources for the Issues Paper) were actual, true and real.

The Frameworks methodically reconstructed all the data gaps that were uncovered [4]. A massive, 22 page table was prepared to indicate the critical issues. These critical issues were built from data gaps associated with each element in the framework. Finally, the Knowledge Assessment generated 25 assumptions or areas of insufficient knowledge [5].

The point of these last few paragraphs is a reinforcement of the need for generating additional knowledge. The monetary savings are but one aspect. Certainly any estimated monetary savings is only an educated guess. The current need for an alternative to incarceration caused by overcrowding of prisons, is but another aspect. The case for additional knowledge should be based on the severe lack of standards, measures, and knowledge of treatment effectiveness.

CHAPTER III

PHASE II OPTIONS

Discussion of Each Option

There are basically three options that will be discussed. The first option is to improve the current data collection system, to improve the quality of evaluation designs, and to create a better means of dispersing data. The second option is to conduct a small scale program that will be monitored very closely. The third option is to create a large scale system and conduct a correspondingly large evaluation.

1. Option 1. Improved Collection and Dissemination. The problems with the current data collection system(s) are multifold. There are no standards, so projects invent measures that are comfortable for them. These measures usually cannot be compared across sites. For example, in the numerator one project may base caseload on active cases only, another may include all cases, while a third may subtract any cases handled by volunteers. In the denominator one project may include only probation officers, while a second includes volunteers. Thus, a simple measure like caseload cannot be compared.

Recidivism is another example of multiple methods of measurement. Whether to base it on revocations, charges, arrests, convictions, or incarcerations is one dimension of the problem. Another dimension is whether to consider the probationary period only, or the post probationary period, or both. If the post probationary period is considered, should it be for one year? two years? Five years? Common measures are needed.

There is no accepted standard by which projects can compare their performance. Admittedly, the standards could be difficult to develop. The standard for recidivism is a good example.

It is insufficient to say that the recidivism rate should not exceed 0.20 for project success. First, recidivism has to be measured similarly by all projects. Assume that this problem is solved by the wave of a wand. Next, recidivism has to be specified using demographic, geographic, and offense descriptors. The race, sex, and age of probationers would have to be stated, for there may be differing rates for males and females, for blacks and whites, and for young and old. Perhaps a vast amount of data could be gathered from all sources to prepare the desired standards. This would have to be accomplished for numerous measures.

In order to use the data from all these sources it would have to be verified and validated. This would require thorough scrutiny of published documents and interaction with those who collected the data to insure that the values did not come out of "thin air."

Exemplary projects would have to be named and described. These would be projects which have been evaluated using experimental designs or quasi-experimental designs such as the time series designs discussed by Campbell and Stanley [23]. A "yes-no" evaluation is not sufficient. Why a probation project worked or failed is the most important aspect that should be presented.

The data from all the exemplary projects, the measures and the standards need to be distributed to the 46 or more projects that are operating and, more importantly, to any new ISP project that is being created. No project would be funded unless it accepted the new data base generation methods and agreed to add to the data base by submitting reports in a timely and accurate fashion.

The cost of this alternative is very modest. An estimate is for a cost of approximately $250,000 for a 15 month project.

2. Option 2. Small Scale Program. This option would require the funding of a small program with a large evaluation component. A small program might employ about 5 probation officers and 3 probation aides with an annual budget of around $250,000. Program life would be a minimum of three years. Two different caseloads

would be maintained and the probation officers would be switched to different caseloads to remove bias. Each probation officer would spend the same amount of time over the life of the project on each caseload size.

An evaluation would be funded at a cost of about $125,000 per year. The evaluation would be funded a year in advance of the program to design the data collection system. Data collection instruments would be developed. Input, output, and outcome measures would be specified. Hypotheses and then tests would be formulated.

An advisory board would be formed to certify the evaluation design. This advisory board would consist of other evaluators, probation experts, probation practitioners, and funding/policy making agency representatives. Consensus would be derived before measures and procedures were implemented.

During the course of the project the evaluators would monitor the data, conduct formative evaluations, and provide information to the advisory board. At the end of the project, a thorough summative evaluation would be conducted.

The findings would be widely distributed. They would appear in the literature, in (LEAA) report form, and in book form (if the evaluators were willing authors). The approximate cost of this option is $1,250,000 over a four year period.

3. Option 3. Large Scale Program. In this option a national program would be implemented. There would be eight programs funded, each up to $750,000 per year for a three year period. A national evaluator would be selected to design the program, design an evaluation including standardized data collection instruments, and conduct the evaluation. The national evaluation would be funded for one year in advance of the implementation of the site activities. The program would cost about $5,000,000 per year. The national evaluation would cost about $500,000 per year and include a pre-program design year and a post-program analysis year. Local evaluators would also

be selected. Their function would be to insure adequate data collection, to collect client-centered data, and to conduct formative and summative evaluations at the local level. Local evaluators would be funded at 10% of the rate of the program.

The local programs would vary in geography and demography. They would also vary in process. For example, there would be different caseloads, different contact times, and different methods used in counseling probationers. This would necessitate the use of very powerful statistical techniques to decipher which independent or process variables lead to success or failure.

The program aspect of this option would cost about $15,000,000 over a three year period. The evaluation aspect would cost about $2,500,000. Thus, the total cost would be about $17,500,000 over a four year period.

Comparison of Options

The three options will now be explored and compared. Criteria will be generated. These criteria will be given point scores and each option will be weighted against each criterion. The resulting alternative will then be described in Section IV.

1. Criteria
   a. Timeliness--This is defined as the time between a decision to commence with the alternative, accomplishment of the result, and the implementation of the findings.
   b. Feasibility--This is defined as the capability of conducting the evaluation, obtaining meaningful data and results, and actually having users in the field implement the results.
   c. Cost--This is defined as the total cost of the evaluation, the program, and the dissemination of the findings.
   d. Utility--This is defined as the value of the completed product.
2. Weighting
   a. Timeliness--Not much has happened to this date, not a lot of

calls have come from professionals in the field that something must be done, funding agencies haven't indicated that a crisis exists. Weight assigned 10.

b. Feasibility--If the design cannot be implemented, it will have a negative impact on removing some of the extreme gaps in knowledge. If the professionals in the field will not heed the results, the effort is wasted. Weight assigned 40.

c. Cost--There are a limited amount of resources to go around. There are big differences in the three options. Weight assigned 20.

d. Utility--It is important that the results have value to the users. Otherwise, the effort is for naught. Weight assigned 30.

3. Measurement

a. Timeliness--Short term (1 year or less) implementation and dissemination of results--10 points.

Medium term (more than one but less than three years) implementation and dissemination of results--5 points.

Long term (more than five years) implementation and dissemination of results--0 points.

b. Feasibility

Evaluation design can be easily implemented.
Valid and reliable data will be available.
Users will implement the results. } 40 points

There will be difficulties in implementing the design.
There are questions concerning the data.
Many users may opt not to implement the results. } 20 points

Evaluation design cannot be implemented or,
Valid and reliable data will not be available, or
Users will not implement the results. } 0 points

c. Cost

Less than $1,000,000/year	20 points
$1,000,001 - $5,000,000/year	10 points
More than $5,000,000/year	0 points

d. Utility

Very useful, worthwhile, great advances	30 points
Somewhat useful, but not a real breakthrough	15 points
Useless, waste of taxpayer's money	0 points

4. Application

a. Option 1. System Improvements.

Timeliness--This option could be implemented in a relatively short time period and the data disseminated. It would probably require three months to review the literature, including the findings from the Phase I NEP, about six months to develop some worthwhile proposals, and three to six months to disseminate the findings.

Score 8 points

Feasibility--The design can be easily implemented, but there are lots of questions about the quality of the data in the field. Whether practitioners would apply the results, and accept the standard measures is doubtful. Whether practitioners will accept any recommendations is doubtful.

Score 25 points

Cost--The annual cost of the option is certainly less than $1,000,000 per year.

Score 20 points

Utility--As a starting point, this alternative will be very useful and worthwhile. It may or may not represent great advances, but it will be a step in the right direction.

Score 25 points

Total score for this option 78 points

b. Option 2. Small Scale.

Timeliness--It will take about one year to design the program and obtain concurrence. Then, three more years will be required to collect data and disseminate the results. Formative results would be disseminated. The total elapsed time may be more than four years.

Score 3 points

Feasibility--This design can be implemented since this is a condition of the funding. The nature of the design will insure validity and reliability. Users may approach the project somewhat as the San Francisco Project was approached. However, since the budget is somewhat lower, they may not hold it in such esteem.

Score 36 points

Cost--This project is not expensive, because it employs such a low number of staff. It costs only $375,000 per year.

Score 20 points

Utility--The project would be very useful and worthwhile. It would represent an advance, but not a great advance, because it is limited in demography, geography, and offenders.

Score 25 points

Total score for this option 84 points

c. Option 3. Large Scale.

Timeliness--This option will require a one year planning period, three years of program, and a one year post-period for analysis.

Score 0 points

Feasibility--This would be a very difficult design to implement because of the national coordination required. The data would be valid, and because of its sheer bulk, the practitioners would be more likely to implement the results.

Score 35 points

Cost--This option is very expensive and would continue to be expensive, mainly over the three year program period.

Score 0 points

Utility--The project would have all positive traits, useful, worthwhile, and advantageous.

Score 30 points

Total score this option 65 points

5. Conclusion

Option 1 received 78 points, Option 2 received 84 points, and Option 3 received 65 points. Option 2 seems to be the preferred option. However, Option 1 is not that far behind in total points, and perhaps, could be redesigned to increase its point score. Both Options 1 and 2 should be reevaluated by policy makers with possible changes in point score.

Another possibility is to let Option 1 be Phase II and Option 2 become Phase III of the NEP. In this instance, the timeliness of Option 2 will erode.

CHAPTER IV

UNIVERSE OF PROJECTS FOR EVALUATION

Families of Projects

Many categories of projects could be structured for the Phase II Evaluation. The possible families of projects presented in Frameworks include: [4]

1. Volunteer projects.
2. Caseload reduction projects.
3. Specialized referral projects.
4. Projects which develop special relationships with clients.
5. Close monitoring and tracking.
6. Probation aides.
7. Decentralization of treatment.
8. Attitudinal change.
9. Behavioral change.
10. Employment.

One or more projects in each of these families was visited by the Georgia Tech team. It is possible that a project contains the characteristics of more than one family. For example, a project could employ probation aides and also utilize attitudinal change.

The concern in this section is the selection of a family (ies) which might best serve for the Phase II Evaluation. One extreme would be to design a project encompassing all families. This is impossible since the recommended Phase II Evaluation is rather small in scope and because some of the families operate in opposing modes, viz. attitudinal versus behavioral change. The Telephone Survey may be used as a guide for typifying a project [2]. The typical project has recidivism reduction as its goal. Employment is seen as an important stabilizer

and a job is sought for each probationer. The program helps the probationer adjust to the community. Treatments frequently offered include peer counseling. Individual or group psychiatric or psychological counseling is also used but not as extensively. The project will have no volunteer program, or only a small volunteer program with under ten volunteers.

In summary, a representative project from the family would use attitudinal change as its process and have an employment program. The attitudinal approach to client change was explained in the Frameworks [4]. Counseling leads to more realistic goals, this to a changed value system, this to a new life style, which leads to reduced recidivism.

Constructing an Ideal Project for Phase II

1. Expansion of Existing Projects

This method has various advantages and disadvantages as follows:

Advantages:

i. No delay time in hiring staff, training staff, purchasing equipment, or obtaining space.

ii. No requirement for continuing inertia of an integrated court system, viz. referrals from the sentencing body.

iii. Input of clients will continue without a period of instability.

Disadvantages:

i. Probation officers will continue to serve clients in the same way as they have always served clients.

ii. Probation officers will resent having to collect all the data required.

iii. There will be conflicts between the old data collection system and the new data collection system.

Discussion

The second disadvantage is so severe as to make the notion of expanding an existing project unpalatable. Probation officers feel their

function is to serve probationers. They resent intrusions such as "unnecessary" paperwork, even though data generation is the reason th project was formed. Programmatic analysis has been observed in se ere cases.

2. Funding for Special Data Collection Effort

This method has advantages and disadvantages as follows:

Advantages:

i. Staff can be hired with the understanding that data collection will require a large portion of their effort.

ii. Staff can be hired that are willing to provide service in an intensive manner.

iii. There will be no preconceived notions, opinions, or realities about the probation agency. It will have no history.

Disadvantages:

i. Probably have a three month start-up period before client service can begin.

ii. There may be jurisdictional arguments if another probation agency already exists in the area.

iii. Positive relationships will have to be earned and cemented with the criminal justice system.

Discussion

Even though there are disadvantages, the advantages of funding a new project exceed the advantages of expanding an existing project. It was speculated in the Knowledge Assessment that decreasing caseload may not increase contact time [5]. Probation officers would just have more free time. If this does occur, funding an existing program (with experienced probation officers) may not achieve the desired process of increased contact time.

CHAPTER V

SPECIFIC EVALUATION DESIGN

Design

The Single Project Evaluation Design is suggested as a guide for the collection of data. [6] The basis of the Single Project Evaluation Design is the reference frameworks found in Knowledge Assessment. [5] Data collected in the first mentioned document provides for the collection of data to test hypotheses, verify inputs, and observe processes. The suggested design is modular such that portions of it may be omitted as desired. Some of the hypotheses to be tested, the data elements required, and the statistical tests to be conducted are shown in Exhibit I.

Instrument Development

In order to operationalize the suggested evaluation design, the user will need to develop some data collection instruments. For example, one evaluation measure is client contact time. An example of an instrument to collect data about client contacts is shown in Exhibit II. A set of specifications would accompany each instrument. The example set of specifications for the Client Contact Form is shown in Exhibit III. Note that the evaluators will be required to construct instruments for all data elements

Relationship to Frameworks

The suggested design is based on the process elements of the general framework [4]. These process elements contain blocks relating to personnel, intensiveness, additional activities, facilitating efforts, better services, client change, immediate impacts, and long term impacts. Thus, the design is, or can be, a small scale test of the assumptions in the framework. If a project is successful, it should accomplish every assumption in the framework. An unsuccessful project will fail to accomplish one or more assumptions. Although it would be difficult to draw any generalizations from one project, some of the notions of the frameworks can be explored and validated. Since no generalizations will be rendered, it is called a "small scale" testing of the assumptions.

EXHIBIT I

SOME HYPOTHESES THAT WILL BE TESTED IN PHASE II

Hypotheses	Data Elements Required	Statistical Tests Required	Comparison Group Required
1. Decreased case-caseload results in increased contact.	Number of paid personnel Volunteers Contact time Number of contacts	t--test of means	Yes
2. Increased probation contact with cases results in more effective probation treatment.	Same as 1 above plus Revocations Convictions Time at risk	t--test of means	Yes
3. Probation officers can adjust to increased case contact	Contact time Number of active cases	t--test of means	Yes
4. Clients can be readily classified into groups which satisfactorily predict the recidivism risk associated with a given client group.	Number of active cases Revocations Convictions Race Sex Age Offense history	Multiple linear regression Analysis of variance	No
5. Increased contact is effective for only certain types of offenders.	Revocations Convictions Race Sex Age Offense history	Multiple linear regression Analysis of variance	No
6. When using volunteers the quantity of case contact with clients increases.	Number of volunteers Contact time Number of contacts	t--test of means	Yes

Exhibit I, continued

Hypotheses	Data Elements Required	Statistical Tests Required	Comparison Group Required
7. Intensive interaction with clients leads to a sense that "somebody cares" in clients and thus to reduced hostility toward probation.	Stability Client change	t--test of means	Yes

EXHIBIT II

CLIENT CONTACT FORM

1.1 Client ID	1.2 Client's Name
2.1a Initial P.O.	2.1b Date Assigned
2.2a Second P. O.	2.2b Date Assigned
2.3a Third P. O.	2.3b Date Assigned

STATUS CHANGE	REASON	DATE
3.1a	3.1b	3.1c
3.2a	3.2b	3.2c
3.3a	3.3b	3.3c

DATE	TYPE OF CONTACT	PLACE	LENGTH
4.1a	4.1b	4.1c	4.1d
4.2a	4.2b	4.2c	4.2d
4.3a	4.3b	4.3c	4.3d
4.4a	4.4b	4.4c	4.4d
4.5a	4.5b	4.5c	4.5d
4.6a	4.6b	4.6c	4.6d
4.7a	4.7b	4.7c	4.7d
4.8a	4.8b	4.8c	4.8d
4.9a	4.9b	4.9c	4.9d

EXHIBIT III

SPECIFICATIONS FOR CLIENT CONTACT FORM

1.1 Each client will have a unique identifier.

3. Status changes include:

Active to inactive

Inactive to active

Termination

4. Contacts may be positive or collateral. Positive contact is direct with the probationer and collateral contact is with a third party, such as family, employer, friend or relative of the probationer.

Places of contact should be indicated as probation office, employment, home, telephone, school, community, referral agency (specify) or other (specify).

Time of positive contacts should be recorded. Time to the nearest 1/10th of an hour should be entered.

Controls on Measurements

The suggested design does not require control groups. However, comparison groups are suggested where appropriate. The comparison group would be based on those clients who receive the standard treatment. Comparison group clients would come from a population possessing similar characteristics of race, sex, age, offense, and geography. Those measures where comparison group information is important include:

1. Contact time
2. Number of contacts
3. Time of contact
4. Employment
5. Stability
6. Revocation rate
7. Recidivism rate

Variables 1 through 5 can be treated as independent variables. Variables 6 and 7 are the dependent variables. A multivariate analysis can be performed to ascertain the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables for both the treatment and comparison group. Further analysis can be conducted to determine the cause of difference between the values of the dependent variables for the two groups. Thus, if the recidivism rate is lower for the experimental project, it may be determined that the number of contacts was the most significant contributor to the difference.

Method of Obtaining Comparison Group

Since comparisons will be made, a common data base must be obtained. The most reliable, and the suggested method, is to require a standard treatment project, funded by LEAA, to adopt the information system being developed by the experimental project. This could be made a condition of a continuing grant or a condition placed on a new grantee. The latter option is much more desirable

since it will not interfere with an existing data system and may be positively embraced as an advanced system of collecting data. Its adoption would also relieve a new project of one of the many difficulties encountered in start-up.

Cost of Obtaining Comparisons

As discussed above, the requirement for comparisons may be a condition for funding. However, this may be considered in part as a cost for obtaining the comparisons. The total cost of funding the project used for comparative purposes should not be assessed against the cost of the suggested Phase II effort. Rather, some proportion of a similar sized project serving similar clients may be used. This cost could be the difference in the amount of data collection effort required. Perhaps 20% would be an upper limit of the cost. At $150,000 per year, the cost of obtaining comparisons would then be $30,000. These values of 20% and $150,000 are estimated in the following manner. The 20% is an upper limit to the addition in staff required to maintain additional data. The actual additions in staff may be more like 15%, but a concession may have to be made to obtain cooperation. This 15-20% would allow for the addition of a data collector/statistician on the project staff. The $150,000 is an approximate cost for a project treating the same caseload as the experimental project. The comparison project would have fewer probation officers and fewer (or no) probation aides. It is estimated that the standard treatment costs only 60% of the experimental treatment. Thus, 60% of $250,000 = $150,000. The resultant, $30,000, is well within the limits of the cost of an additional staff person for data collection, plus overhead.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Necessity for Phase II

From the findings in the Issues Paper [1], the information gained from site visits and presented in the Interventions Papers [3], further refinement in the Frameworks [4], and thorough investigation presented in the Knowledge Assessment [5] there are numerous gaps in knowledge. It appears that by almost any scientifically valid standard which might be applied to available information, very little is known about the effectiveness of intensive special probation. Only a few valid research findings have addressed the effects of increases in the intensity of probation supervision, and even fewer have evaluated the various forms of special probation.

Phase II Project

Three options were offered. The first option was to improve the data collection and dissemination system. The second option was to conduct a small scale project with a sizeable evaluation component. The third option was to conduct a large scale, national program with a sizeable evaluation component. The second option was recommended, although the first option was very close in total score. It was indicated that these two options may be performed sequentially.

Phase II Design

The evaluation design follows that recommended in the Single Project Evaluation Design [6]. The recommended design is based on the frameworks that have been developed as part of this Phase I NEP [4]. This design requires the preparation of data collection instruments. A one year (pre-project) period is recommended for the selection of standard measures, obtaining national consensus on these measures, preparation of data collection instruments, and statement of analytic methods.

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