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EVALUATION OF "SERVICIOS ESPECIALES A  
MENORES INTERVENIDOS POR EL  
TRIBUNAL" (SEMIT), SUBVENCION  
77-AF-AX-02-0072-3 (1)  
PROJECT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
ADDICTION SERVICES

( A R E S U M E )

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PUERTO RICO CRIME COMMISSION

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I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGSINTRODUCTION

## ACQUISITIONS

The project "Servicios Especiales a Menores Intervenidos por el Tribunal" (SEMIT) was initiated in November 1976 by the Department of Addiction Services (DAS). The Project has been operating for a period of about two years.

The SEMIT has been operating in the following five institutions of the Department of Social Services (Program of Social Treatment Centers): Hogar Juvenil de Ponce, Hogar Juvenil de Hato Rey, Escuelas Industriales de Ponce and Mayaguez, and Hogar Estatal de Niños de Guaynabo. In addition, there are services provided to the clients by the Follow-Up Unit of the SEMIT.

These five institutions were selected from the 17 institutions<sup>1/</sup> of the Department of Social Services. In these DSS provides rehabilitation services to minors and the young people with the problems of conduct and/or personality. DSS feels that the young people with problems need social protection and necessary institutional treatment. The purpose of the services of the DSS is to reintegrate the young people with problems into a normal life of the society. The Department facilitates the evaluation and diagnosis of emotional conditions of the young people. The Department provides these services to approximately 2,600 young people<sup>2/</sup> referred to it by the police and the juvenile courts, as well as by the local offices of the Department of Social Services. While the young

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<sup>1/</sup> One was closed in April 1977.

<sup>2/</sup> See DSS, Boletín Estadístico, F.Y. 1977, p. 141.

people stay at the rehabilitation centers, they receive diagnostic, evaluation and social treatment services, including orientation, education, vocational training, recreation and medical attention. While the young people are at the institutions, they are provided with shelter, food, clothing, shoes and medicine.

In the 17 institutions, there were registered 999 clients at the end of the fiscal year 1977. This number was more or less the same as that for fiscal year 1976. Of the clients registered in the 17 institutions, 110 or 11 per cent were absent without permission.

In the five institutions of the Department of Social Services where the SEMIT Program is operating, there were 501 clients registered at the end of fiscal year 1976 and 473 by the end of fiscal year 1977. In the five DSS-SEMIT institutions on the average there were 342 clients registered throughout the fiscal year 1977. The number of clients registered in the same five institutions slightly increased to 348 throughout the fiscal year 1978. This means that approximately one-third of the clients of the DSS institutions were enrolled in the DSS-SEMIT institutions. In the five DSS-SEMIT institutions 73 persons were absent without permission by the end of the year. While DSS-SEMIT institutions had one-third of the total clients, two-thirds of the persons absent from the institutions, implying that the level of absence without permission was higher than the average. In other words the

absence without permission amounted to 5.6 per cent in the non DSS-SEMIT institutions and in the DSS-SEMIT institutions the same type of absence constituted 21.3 per cent.

The Department of Social Services had provided 192,000 services to the clients of the 17 institutions consisting of visits to the dispensaries and medical services. Since in the fiscal year 1977, 2,632 clients passed through the system of social treatment centers, each client received 72.9 such services. Such services provided to the five DSS-SEMIT institutions amounted to 108,000, implying that each person who passed through the five institutions received on the average 58.9 services.

DSS also provides psychiatric services to the clients of the 17 institutions. In the five DSS-SEMIT institutions, there were 720 psychiatric services provided or 77 per cent of the total services, for one-third of the clients. The Department of Social Services provided 4,200 dental services, 636 psychometric examinations, 226 employment services. In the five DSS-SEMIT institutions, there were provided 564 psychometric examinations or 88.7 per cent of the total such examinations. The Department provided 130 employment services in the five institutions in 1977.

The project was warranted by a high incidence of drug addiction in Puerto Rico, particularly among the juveniles. Thus, the project was intended to help the juveniles to get

out of drug addiction, give up experimentation of drugs, prevent them from committing criminal acts, help them improve their performances in academic and vocational education, help them improve their own image, encourage them to communicate with others and assist them in improving their inter-personal and family relationships.

In brief, the project was designed to improve the conduct and/ or personality of the beneficiaries so that they can be a part of the normal community life.

Institutionally, the Department of Drug Addiction initiated the project in order to avoid duplication and overlapping in the agency functions.

This project was warranted by a sharp increase in drug addiction in Puerto Rico. According to the available estimates, there were 1,600 drug addicts in 1961, 25,000 in 1972 and 70,000 in 1974. Of the drug addicts, 90 percent are males and 10 percent females.<sup>1/</sup>

The project was initiated in November 1976. The project has already completed, therefore, almost two years of operations. Total funding for the project amounted to \$127,000 in the first year, \$100,000 in the second year and \$70,000 in the third year by the Puerto Rico Crime Commission. The Right to Work Administration has also provided funds for the project amounting to \$150,000 under its CETA Program.

The SEMIT Project provides services in the areas of drug addiction and/or alcoholism, to youths from 8 - 18 years of age, who have been impacted by the Juvenile System. The services are provided to the youths in the five institutions,

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<sup>1/</sup> Pedro Vales, Compendium of Statistics Related to the Problems of Drug Addiction.

as well as at the homes of the youth while they are living in the community.

The Puerto Rico Crime Commission contracted the services of PRMEC to evaluate the SEMIT Project. The objectives of the evaluation were as follows:

1. To establish the profile of the characteristics of the clients serviced by the project.
2. To determine the number and classification of the posts filled-up.
3. To determine the number and type of training received by the personnel.
4. To determine the adequacy of human resources available to the project from the standpoint of the number, composition, functions and qualifications.
5. To determine the number, type and the utility of the forms created to tabulate information, the major utilization of the information in order to take future decisions and to determine if this information is reflected in the required progress reports.
6. To determine if they developed the program activities from the standpoint of the objectives, stipulated in the proposal.

#### IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

1. To determine the changes in the conduct of the clientele, and/or, how the clientele utilized the process of assistance offered, especially

from the standpoint that a client arrived to seek assistance from the project.

2. To determine the impact of the follow-up unit within the treatment model, results of the follow-up, and action taken as a consequence of the same.
3. To determine if the project is realizing the analysis of toxicology, how many each time, what they reveal and what utility they had on the decision of the project and treatment offered to the clientele.
4. To ascertain the perception of the clients on the services rendered by the follow-up unit and how such services have assisted the clients to resolve their problems. In addition, to determine the perception of the clients during the period they were institutionalized and type of treatment they received.
5. To analyze the perception and opinions of the personnel of the Department of Social Services on the treatment module, for each one of the institutions and homes of detention where the project was implemented. In addition, explore the adequacy of coordination between the personnel of the Department of Social Services and the Department of Drug Addiction. As a part of the analysis of perception of those persons include the perception of the Director of each institution



or dentention home.

6. To determine the number of cases that pass through each module for treatment for the problems of drugs, or other problems of conduct, or the type of problem of the clientele by the treatment module and the reference mechanism, or the selection of the client module.

The evaluation has been completed and the report is being now submitted.

In conducting the evaluation, PRMEC used a number of questionnaires, conducted interviews, undertook evaluation of the data available in the files of SEMIT-DAS. In order to find the opinions of the clientele of the SEMIT Project, it was necessary to design a special questionnaire and get it filled up. It was so done and 216 questionnaires were completed by the SEMIT clients, of which 77 were completed by the clients in the five institutions and 139 were completed by the clients in the follow-up unit. These questionnaires were tabulated and results are analyzed in the main body of the study. Also, PRMEC prepared a questionnaire to be completed by the staff members of the SEMIT, those staff members who were being financed by the funds made available by the Puerto Rico Crime Commission. Each one of these staff members were interviewed by PRMEC.

Another questionnaire was prepared in order to know the opinion of the staff of the SEMIT about themselves. This questionnaire was also completed and the results tabulated

and analyzed. Similarly, the Director of the SEMIT Project was asked to evaluate each one of the staff members. The results were tabulated, interpreted and the findings are included in the study.

A special questionnaire was designed to know the opinion of the personnel of the Department of Social Services on the functioning and operations of the SEMIT Project. A special attempt was made that all the social workers should complete the questionnaire. The Director of the institutions were also asked to complete the questionnaire. In addition, all the Directors of the institutions and some of the social workers were interviewed. The PRMEC personnel also discussed the SEMIT Project with the Central Office of the DSS. The findings were tabulated and the results are presented in the study.

A good deal of data was obtained from the files of the SEMIT. Also, the data was obtained from the DSS. On the basis of the information gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews and discussions, it was possible to prepare evaluation of the Project.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SEMIT PROJECT

One of the major objectives of the SEMIT Project is to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol by the minors. This is being accomplished by means of crisis intervention, induction to treatment, evaluation and diagnosis, orientation and counselling and placement in work public study systems. The objective is being realized by means of a large number of activities, which are discussed in Chapter II of the study. We believe that the objectives and activities of the SEMIT Project have direct relationship ~~and the SEMIT is performing~~ itself reasonably.

### PROFILE OF THE SEMIT CLIENTS

A typical client of the SEMIT Project is a male in the age group of 15 - 17 years. His education is less than seventh grade. He is a drop-out, lives in an Urban Area and within a public housing project. Generally, he lives with his Mother. He is in the system because he committed a crime which can be described as incorrigible, burglary or robbery. He is a user of drugs, particularly marihuana and thinner. He comes from a family with addiction and alcohol problems. His family has limited resources and draws benefits from the Food Stamp Program. The details may be seen in Chapter III.

### ADEQUACY AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

The professionals working in the SEMIT Project have at least B.A. Degrees and two of them have Masters Degrees. Almost all the staff have degrees in humanities, social sciences and psychology. All the staff members have received special training financed by the Crime Commission. They have taken courses in goal therapy, behavior modification, psychotherapy, emotional therapy, family therapy, controlled substances, concepts of drugs, etc. Some of the staff members indicated that they need further training in research methods, group therapy, traditional therapy, family relations and vocational orientation.

It was found that a SEMIT person month served 22.8 beneficiaries and conducted 47.6 interviews, 14.8 visits and 12.2 case discussions, rendering 74.6 services. A beneficiary of the SEMIT received approximately 7 hours of SEMIT services consisting of evaluation, action plan, orientation and counselling. On the average a beneficiary received 3.3 services, as compared to an establish goal of four services. However, in the two month period of May - June 1978, the SEMIT provided an average of 4.3 services to a beneficiary, implying that the goal is being realized in the recent months.

In view of the number of personnel working in the project, it is believed that there are adequate number of persons working in the project. However, the adequacy has been realized due to the availability of CETA funds, which will not be available from January 1, 1979. Since the Crime

Commission has also reduced the available funds to the SEMIT Project, it is believed that the resources available for the SEMIT Project from January 1979 will be inadequate. For details see Chapter IV.

#### NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF FILLED POSTS

With the Puerto Rico Crime Commission funds, during the past 23 months, 14 technical staff members have been hired, of which four have left and ten are still working. With these funds, the clients have been provided 242 person months of services and an average staff member has worked for 17.3 months.

With the CETA funds, 20 staff members have been hired, of which four have left and 16 were working at the end of September 1978. They have provided 146 person months of services, an average of 7.3 person months per staff member. The details can be seen in Chapter V.

#### EVALUATION OF FORMS AND INFORMATION TABULATED

There are ten forms being used by the SEMIT Project, which are:

1. DSCA 381 - Entrevista Inicial
2. DSCA 375 - Datos Generales Sobre el Menor y Su Familia
3. DSCA 374 - Reunión de Supervisión
4. DSCA 125 - Hoja de Seguimiento
5. Historial Igreso
6. Visita al Hogar
7. DSCA 364 - Tarjeta Índice

8. Criterios a Utilizarse para la Evaluación del Progreso Estimado del Menor en la Grafica
9. Informe de Progreso
10. Progreso del Cliente

The purpose and description of each form is described in Chapter VI. We have recommended to the Director of the Project that there is a need for adjustment in certain forms. However, the information being gathered by means of the forms is essential for the administration and evaluation purposes. We believe that the information should provide bi-variate and multi-variate analysis. Also we have evaluated the nature and type of information being received by the Crime Commission from the SEMIT Project. We believe that if bi-variate and multi-variate analysis are prepared, it should be possible to corrolate the outputs with inputs, which in turn may help make changes in the action program.

#### NUMBER OF CASES PASSING THROUGH THE MODULES

The data is presented in Chapter VII. It may be noted by the end of Semptember 1978 the number of clients who had passed through the various modules of the SEMIT Project were as follows:

Hogar Estatal Niños Guaynabo	54
Hogar Juvenil Hato Rey	255
Escuela Industrial Niñas Ponce	56
Hogar Juvenil Ponce	148
Escuela Industrial Jovenes Mayaguez	261
Follow-Up Unit	<u>510</u>
Total	1,284

### FUNCTIONING OF THE FOLLOW-UP UNIT

In the months of May and June of 1978 there were 260 clients registered in the follow-up unit, of which 19 were new entrance and eight clients completed their treatment. There was no voluntary withdrawal during this period. However, 39 clients had been evading the services of the unit during the same period.

To render a service, a specialist in human conduct must go to the house of the client, transport himself, talk with the client, discuss with the client and then return to the office where he must prepare a report and submit it to the supervisor. We have estimated that to render one service by the follow-up unit, there is required an input of two hours. We believe that this level of productivity of a specialist is high. For details see Chapter VIII.

### TOXICOLOGY

Toxicology services were discontinued, as the clients of the SEMIT were generally using such drugs as marihuana, thinner and glue. These drugs do not show-up in urine analysis. Under the toxicology program, 200 tests were conducted, of which two were positive. These tests cost the Crime Commission \$500.00, implying that an average positive test costs up to \$250.00. For details see Chapter IX.

### COORDINATION BETWEEN THE PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ADDICTION SERVICES

The two institutions are required to work on the same subject. The points of interaction are substantial and

possibilities of friction are significant. Despite the problems, the Project has functioned well. However, it is recommended that both the Department of Social Services and the Department of Addiction Service, undertake special measures and methods which could lead to improving communications between the social workers and specialists. It is strongly recommended that the DSS personnel should receive training in dealing with drug users and alcoholics. Similarly, the DAS personnel should be exposed to understanding the responsibility of social workers in the DSS-SEMIT institutions. Details may be seen in Chapter X.

#### PERCEPTION AND OPINION OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Thirty-five personnel of the DSS were interviewed, of which three-fourths said that in their opinion the SEMIT Project was helping the clients and the remaining one-fourth indicated that it was not. Of the 26 respondents who answered yes, they also supplied the following information:

1. 58 per cent of the affirmative respondents said that the SEMIT Project helped the clients, (a) to obey the regulations of the institutions, (b) to improve communication between them and the clients, and (c) to lose interest in the use and experimentation of drugs.
2. 73 per cent of the affirmative respondents felt that the SEMIT Project improved the clients attitude to plan and implement realistic goals.
3. 69 per cent of the affirmative respondents felt that the SEMIT Project improved the attitude of the clients toward vocational education, family relations and community image.
4. About 62 per cent of the respondents felt that the SEMIT Project improved the attitude of the



minors toward academic education and possibilities of discontinuing criminal acts.

5. About 54 per cent of the affirmative respondents felt that the Project helped the minors attitude toward finding employment and improve relationships with peers.
6. 50 per cent of the affirmative respondents said that the SEMIT improved the attitude of the minors toward recreational activities.
7. However, about 31 per cent of the affirmative respondents felt that the Project helped the minors to improve their communication with the Director of the Institution.

The details may be seen in Chapter XI.

#### PERCEPTION OF THE CLIENTS IN REGARD TO THE SEMIT SERVICES

A survey was conducted to find the perception of the SEMIT clients in regard to the services provided by the Project. Institution by institution tabulation has been prepared and included in Chapter XII of the study. About the quality of services received by the SEMIT clients, the answers were as follows:

1. In the Industrial School of Mayaguez 35 clients were interviewed, of which 29 rated the SEMIT services as good and six as excellent.
2. In the Ponce Industrial School 14 clients were interviewed, of which one said that the quality of services was regular, eleven said it was good and two said it was excellent.
3. At the Guaynabo Home for Boys eight clients were interviewed, of which one said that the services were regular and seven said that the service was good.

4. At the Hato Rey Home for Boys 15 clients were interviewed, of which ten answered that the SEMIT service was good and the others did not answer the question.
5. At Ponce Home for Girls eight clients were interviewed, of which four said that the SEMIT services were good and four said the services were excellent.
6. In the follow-up unit of the SEMIT Project 139 clients were interviewed. A predominant number of them expressed satisfaction with the services of the SEMIT. The clients very strongly felt that the SEMIT services helped them to improve their performance in schools and in work places. The services have also helped them to improve their relations with their parents, neighbors, teachers, employers and peers. A good number of them said that the services have helped them to give up the use of drugs.

CHANGES IN THE CONDUCT OF THE CLIENTELE OF SEMIT

From the data available in the files of the SEMIT, it was possible to arrive at the following conclusions in regard to the progress mad by the clients of the SEMIT. It should be noted when it is said that the progress was 25 per cent, it means that the client was complying with the minimum requirements; when it is said 50 per cent progress, it means that the client could evaluate his situation responsibly; when the progress is 75 per cent, it means that a client has begun to implement the action plan; and when the progress is 100 per cent, it means that the client has reached his objective and he will be able to deal with his problems.

The findings in respect of the progress of the clients are as follows:

1. That 189 clients of the SEMIT who had been in the SEMIT Project for a period of one to three months showed a progress of 25 per cent.
2. That 277 clients who had been in the SEMIT Project for a period of two to six months had shown a progress of 50 per cent.
3. That 127 client who had been in the SEMIT Project from five to nine months had shown a progress of 75 per cent.
4. That 44 clients who had been in the SEMIT Project for a period of 12 months plus had accomplished a progress of 100 per cent.

5. That 40 clients who had been in the SEMIT Project for a period of two to three months had not shown any progress.

For details see Chapter XIII.

#### ALUMNI OF THE SEMIT PROGRAM

There are 24 alumni of the SEMIT Project, of which ten are full-time students, twelve are working and two are working and studying. It is believed that all of the alumni are leading a normal life. This conclusion should be interpreted in line with the fact that predominant number of SEMIT clients were drop-outs and it was their drop-out status which contributed to their becoming drug experimentors, users and addicts. Thus, the status of 24 alumni of the SEMIT Project is that the project is showing effectiveness. However, it should be emphasized that the alumni constitute less than four per cent of the universe and it is very difficult to generalize with a sample of this size for this level of universe. For details see Chapter XIV.

Further it is recommended that the SEMIT Project should maintain contacts with its alumni for a period of two to three years. The contact can be maintained by means of a simple questionnaire printed on a card to be filled out by the alumni. The card could include questions pertaining to residence, employment (partial or full-time), student status, salaries or wages earned, occupation, if changed student or employment status why, any problems with the law enforcement agencies.

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The card should be completed once every three months and properly tabulated and results analyzed in order to determine the effectiveness of the project.

**END**