

PROJECT 173

THE TEMPORARY ABSENCE PROGRAM

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR OUTCOME

by

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I INTRODUCTION

The Temporary Absence Programme (TAP), as it is known today, was initiated under the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services in 1969. G.G. McFarlane (1979) provides a comprehensive review of both the historical foundations and current operations of TAP. Traditionally, passes for temporary absence (TA) have allowed inmates to be released into the community on the condition that they return to the institution in the evening. TAs have been granted to inmates for compassionate leaves or to pursue employment or educational opportunities. The rationale for the programme is twofold. Firstly, it allows inmates to maintain the dignity of retaining community contacts and responsibilities. Secondly, TAs provide inmates with the opportunity for gradual adjustment into society before release from incarceration.

Since its inception, the organization and programming of the TAP have been expanded and diversified to include many more facilities. Technically, all Ministry programmes that necessitate inmates leaving the institution require participants to register under the Temporary Absence Programme. Hence, the authority of TAP extends to Community Resource Centres (CRCs) which are residential facilities in the community contracted through private agencies. Ministry Directed Work Programmes (M.D.W.P.) which include programmes operating on institution premises but managed by private firms also fall under TAP jurisdiction. The employment of inmates at the abattoir in Guelph and with the catering operations in several institution kitchens are examples of this latter type of programme. M.D.W.P. also refers to work projects in the community which are managed by private or public companies employing inmates referred by the Ministry. The tree planting project with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the pulp cutting project at Cygnet Lake are examples of community based work projects.

The opportunity for inmates to continue with jobs or courses they had been involved with prior to incarceration is one of the major benefits of the temporary absence programme. Unlike TA passes that provide the opportunity to alter pre-existing unproductive patterns, passes granted to inmates already productive in the community ensure that these patterns can be maintained. This type of treatment of offenders supports TAP objectives of maintaining contact with community responsibilities.

Ministry optimism surrounding the Temporary Absence Programme has promoted its rapid expansion and application. The findings of early studies that focused on the operations of the Programme (Hug, 1970; Currie, 1973; Crispino, 1975), and on benefits accrued through participation in employment TAs (Crispino, 1974) gave further impetus of the programme's development.

In recent years, dramatic increases have been observed in the number of inmates involved in TAP. In part,

this may be due to increases in the availability of programmes functioning under the auspices of TAP. Most of these programmes are oriented to the same "low risk" sector of the inmate population. It is possible, therefore, that competing programmes may be relaxing admission criteria in order to meet minimum operating capacity levels.

This latter concern was supported by recent findings (see Ardron, 1978) that reported an unprecedented recidivism rate of 38% within a one year period after release among a sample of TAP participants. Although it was recognized that the sample selection criteria may not have been representative of the general TA population, these findings suggested the need to re-examine the outcome of a larger, more representative sample.

The purpose of the current study was to examine the outcome of a large sample of inmates receiving employment and education TAs. Outcome was defined in terms of programme completion and recidivism. This study was also designed to describe and compare the background characteristics of inmates selected for each of the three programmes. The data were examined for relationships between success or failure rates, and various background characteristics of participants.

II METHODOLOGY

A. SAMPLE SELECTION

The current sample consists of those persons receiving Temporary Absence passes for employment or education between January 1st and April 30th of 1977. The sample does not include persons receiving one to five day or recurring TAs. Neither does it include persons granted passes for volunteer work, for medical or compassionate leaves or to seek employment.

The initial sample was identified by scanning computerized Ministry records for inmates commencing employment or education TAs during the study period. Not all of the 639 cases initially selected were retained in the final sample. Upon closer examination of case files, it was found that some cases, although technically requiring a TA pass, were not involved with employment or education programmes as defined by the current study. For example, some CRC residents were seeking employment or partaking only in services offered through the centres.

Cases where inmates escaped custody during the study incarceration were also excluded from the sample. The intervening period created too large an interruption in their TA experience to allow for proper evaluation. Other cases were removed because available data was not sufficiently complete. Recidivism data were collected for a one year follow-up period after release. All participants released after February 28th, 1978, were excluded from the sample. This deadline would allow the one year follow-up period to expire for the remaining participants by the time recidivism data were being collected in 1979.

Thus, the original sample of 639 cases were reduced to 490 persons meeting all study criteria.

B. DATA COLLECTION

A data collection form (see Appendix) was completed for each case in the sample. Main Office files and computerized AIS profiles were examined for relevant data.

Application forms for TA were scrutinized for reports of previous infractions and information concerning the nature and reasons for the absence. Data concerning the background characteristics of participants were acquired from the admission cards completed at the time of incarceration. Recidivism data and data concerning criminal history were achieved by examination of files retained at the Ministry's main office and through R.C.M.P. reports (FPS).

For some participants, the TA occurring during the study period may not have been the first, or last, pass received during their time of incarceration. Thus, factors

such as length of time incarcerated prior to first receiving a TA, or the total proportion of the sentence spent on TA could not be addressed.

C. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was directed at determining the reliability of observed differences between groups of TAP participants, and at determining the strength of the associations between background characteristics and outcome measures. Statistical evaluation was accomplished by use of a chi square (χ^2) and t-test.

Both of these techniques provide a statistic associated with a "p" or probability level indicating the degree of confidence one may have in the results. Thus, a $p < .05$ indicates that five times out of 100 a statistic will achieve that value by chance and chance alone. Generally speaking, if a difference has a chance of occurring less than five times out of 100, the association between two variables is considered reliable. The notation "n.s." is used to indicate a statistically non-reliable result, or in this case, $p > .05$.

III FINDINGS

A. ACTIVITY WHILE ON TEMPORARY ABSENCE

The specific activities of participants while on employment and education TA are outlined in this section. The total sample is examined for the various purposes for which TAs were granted and the time spent on TA in the following table.

TABLE 1

<u>ACTIVITY WHILE ON TEMPORARY ABSENCE</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Months on TA:		
1 month or less	208	42.4
over 1 month to 3 months	175	35.7
over 3 months	107	21.8
Number of TA until release	381	77.8
Programme:		
Institutional TA	204	41.6
C.R.C.	191	39.0
M.D.W.P.	95	19.4
TAP Activity:		
continuing previous job	204	41.6
starting new job	231	47.1
continuing previous course	14	2.9
starting new course	39	8.0
employment & school TA	2	0.4
Occupations (for those starting new jobs, N=231)		
M.D.W.P.	95	41.1
unskilled labourer	50	21.6
skilled labourer	45	19.5
unskilled service	5	2.2
skilled service	2	0.9
clerical	2	0.9
professional-technical	2	0.9
unknown	30	13.0

The length of time clients were on temporary absence ranged from less than one month up to a maximum of thirteen months. The average length of time on TA was approximately 2.4 months. However, the largest proportion of participants were in the programme one month or less. Over three-quarters of the total sample were on TA until release from the study conviction. Excluding this group, the average

length of time between termination of the study TA and release was 3.7 months.

Most passes granted were for employment. Altogether 435 (88.8%) of the cases were on employment TA passes. Ninety-five of these working inmates located employment through referral to projects under contract with the Ministry. The remaining 340 employment passes were granted to inmates who had independently located work in the community. In most cases, these inmates were working in the capacity of skilled or unskilled labourers. This group was almost equally divided between CRC placements and the institutions.

A large proportion of the employment TAs were granted to allow inmates to continue working with former employers. Typically, this group were first offenders who were married and relatively well educated. They tended to be older than participants obtaining new employment: 29.3 vs. 24.9 years respectively. Differences in earnings were also apparent, with those persons continuing a previous job earning an average of \$239 compared to \$147 per week for those in new jobs.

Inmates continuing with former employers most often remained in the institution rather than being transferred to a CRC. In fact, two-thirds of the inmates receiving employment TAs from the institutions were people continuing with their former positions, whereas, just over half of the working CRC residents were employed in their previous jobs. This finding may be attributed to differences in the length of sentence being served. As indicated in Table 2, participants continuing with former employers tended to be incarcerated for a shorter period of time than those persons obtaining new employment positions. In those cases where a CRC resident was continuing with a former job, the average period of incarceration was longer than their institutional TA counterparts (see Table 2). Generally, short term incarcerates were rarely placed in CRCs. Perhaps this is because of the time required to process their transfers, or because a residential setting in the community may be considered an unnecessary allowance for short term incarcerates.

Overall, the CRC residents were incarcerated for a longer period of time than inmates granted institutional TAs. The length of time participants served on TA was directly associated with length of incarceration. Thus, TAs for CRCs were, on the average, longer than institutional TAs. Over half of the institutional TAs lasted one month or less, whereas half of the participants in CRCs resided in the centres for over two months.

TABLE 2

TYPE OF TA BY TIME INCARCERATED
AND TIME SPENT ON TA

TYPE OF TA	AVERAGE MONTHS INCARCERATED	AVERAGE MONTHS ON TA	N
Ministry Directed Work Projects	11.0	2.8	95
Institutional TA:			
starting new job	6.2	2.2	58
continuing same job	2.1	1.6	114
starting new course	8.4	3.2	28
continuing same course	1.3	1.3	4
Overall Institutional TA	4.1	2.0	204
CRCs:			
starting new job	8.2	3.4	80
continuing same job	3.1	2.1	90
starting new course	6.3	2.8	11
continuing same course	2.1	1.7	10
Overall CRC	5.4	2.6	191

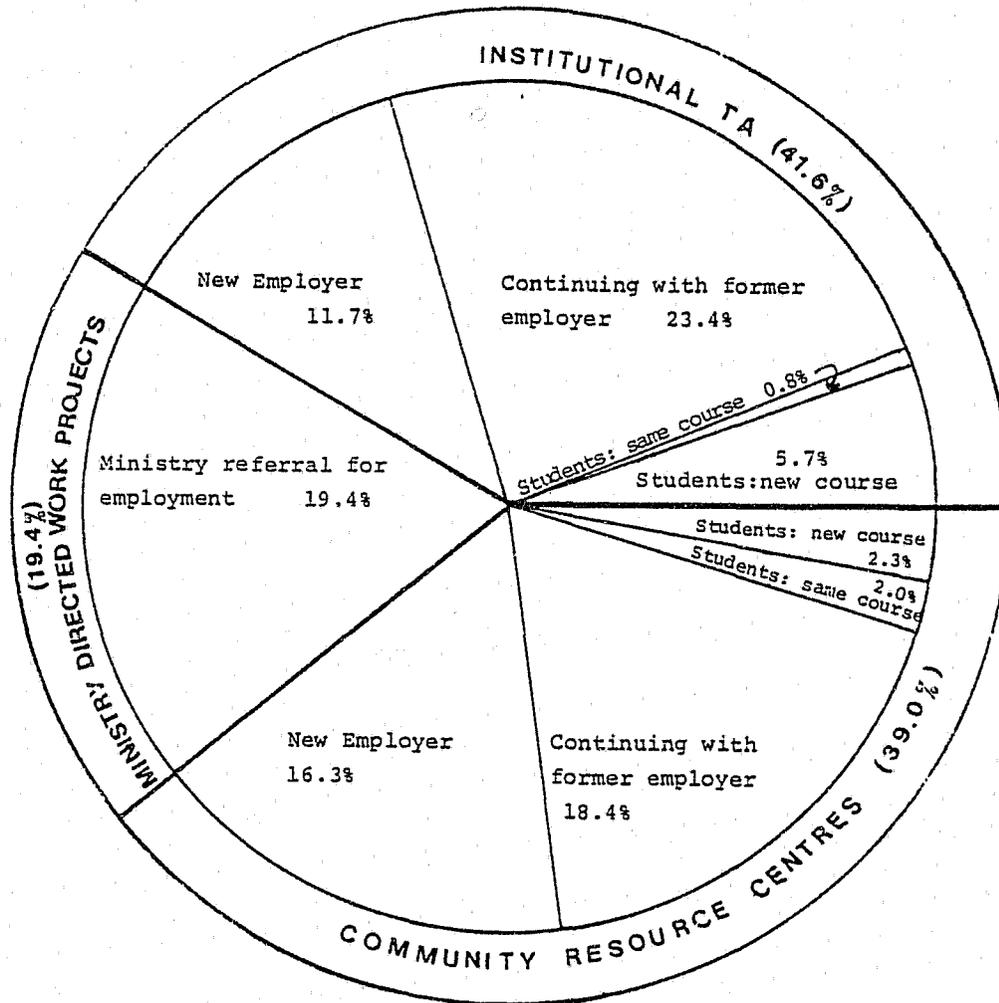
There were 53 cases (10.8%) on educational TAs who were attending either academic or vocational courses. Fourteen of the educational TAs granted were to permit students to continue courses they had been attending prior to incarceration. Students continuing with former courses, particularly the longer term incarcerates, were often transferred to a CRC. Although inmates beginning courses after admission served a longer period of incarceration than students continuing with former courses, a smaller proportion were accepted into the CRC environment. In part, this is due to the lack of CRCs available in the Monteith area where almost half of the new student sample were attending vocational preparatory courses.

There were two additional cases involving participants who were equally as active with work as with school. One participant was in a CRC while the other remained in the institution. For the sake of clarity, these participants were included under the "new employment" category in their respective programmes.

Figure 1 provides a schematic representation of the participants activities while on Temporary Absence.

FIGURE 1

TA ACTIVITY



B. DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Overview

The data illustrated in Table 3 describe the background characteristics of participants in all Temporary Absence Programmes. Most frequently, participants were single, white and male. Most had completed at least grade ten level of education and the majority had been working at the time of incarceration. Overall, the average age at their time of incarceration was 26.4 years.

TABLE 3

DEMOGRAPHY OF TAP PARTICIPANTS

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Sex:		
Male	469	95.7
Female	21	4.3
Race:		
White	441	90.4
Native	41	8.4
Other	6	1.2
(missing information)	(2)	
Age at incarceration:		
16 - 17	34	6.9
18 - 20	142	29.0
21 - 25	124	25.3
26 and over	190	38.8
Highest grade completed:		
9 or less	182	37.7
10 to 13	286	59.2
post secondary	15	3.1
(missing information)	(7)	
Marital Status:		
single	265	54.4
married	143	29.4
common-law	31	6.4
separated/divorced/widowed	48	9.9
(missing information)	(3)	
Work Status at incarceration:		
employed	302	62.8
unemployed	156	32.4
student	16	3.3
housewife	5	1.0
part time work and school	2	0.4
(missing information)	(9)	
Any indication of alcohol abuse:		
yes	160	32.7
no	330	67.3
Prior Convictions:		
yes, recidivists	300	61.2
no, first offenders	190	38.8
Prior Incarcerations:		
yes	211	43.1
no	279	56.9
Current Offences:		
Property	228	46.5*
Alcohol	153	31.2
Public order and peace	110	22.5
Traffic	86	17.6
Drugs	68	13.9
Person	45	9.2
Morals and Decency	8	1.6
Other	8	1.6

* Percentages do not add to 100% as some offenders committed offences in more than one category.

TABLE 3 CONTINUED

DEMOGRAPHY OF TAP PARTICIPANTS

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Months incarcerated:		
1 month or less	133	27.1
over 1 month to 3 months	107	21.8
over 3 months to 9 months	144	29.4
over 9 months	106	21.6
Previous violations of:		
TAP	6	1.4
Parole	33	7.4
Probation	90	20.6

The most common type of offences for which participants were serving time were related to property, alcohol and public order and peace. Very few inmates had convictions for crimes against persons or public morals and decency included in their current charges. Over half the sample were incarcerated for over three months while the overall average was 5.9 months incarcerated. A large proportion of participants were recidivists with previous incarcerations.

On the application form for a temporary absence pass, applicants were questioned as to any previous infractions against TAP, parole or probation. Of those persons for whom the information was available, very few accepted applicants were known to have been violators. Only 1.4% had previously violated TAP while 7.4% and 20.6% were known to be violators of parole and/or probation respectively.

2. A Comparison of Programmes

It was initially stated that there were three main types of Temporary Absence Programmes: Institutional TAs, Community Resource Centres (CRCs), and Ministry Directed Work Programmes (M.D.W.P.). Before analyzing outcome measures, it is important to be aware of any differences between the inmates being accepted into each of the programmes. The background characteristics of participants selected for these programmes are listed in Table 4.

TABLE 4

DEMOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANTS BY TA PROGRAMMES

	Institutional TA		CRC		MDWP	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Sex:						
male	188	(92.2)	186	(97.4)	95	(100.0)
female	16	(7.8)	5	(2.5)	0	(0)
Race:						
white	196	(97.0)	179	(93.7)	66	(69.5)
native	5	(2.5)	9	(4.7)	27	(28.4)
other	1	(0.5)	3	(1.6)	2	(2.1)
(missing information)	(2)					
Age at Incarceration:						
16 - 17	14	(6.9)	8	(4.2)	12	(12.6)
18 - 20	63	(30.9)	49	(25.7)	30	(31.6)
21 - 25	47	(23.0)	56	(29.3)	21	(22.1)
26 and over	80	(39.2)	78	(40.8)	32	(33.7)
Highest grade completed:						
9 or less	68	(33.7)	67	(35.8)	47	(50.0)
10 - 13	129	(63.9)	112	(59.9)	45	(47.9)
post secondary	5	(2.5)	8	(4.3)	2	(2.1)
(missing information)	(2)		(4)		(1)	
Marital Status:						
single	104	(51.7)	98	(51.3)	63	(66.3)
married	71	(35.3)	58	(30.4)	14	(14.7)
common-law	8	(4.0)	12	(6.3)	11	(11.6)
separated/divorced/widowed	18	(9.0)	23	(12.0)	7	(7.4)
(missing information)	(3)					
Work Status:						
employed	140	(70.4)	127	(67.6)	35	(37.2)
unemployed	51	(25.6)	48	(25.5)	57	(60.6)
student	5	(2.5)	9	(4.8)	2	(2.1)
work and school	1	(0.5)	1	(0.5)	0	
housewife	2	(1.0)	3	(1.6)	0	
(missing information)	(5)		(3)		(1)	
Any Indication of Alcohol Abuse:						
yes	61	(29.9)	59	(30.9)	40	(42.1)
no	143	(70.1)	132	(69.1)	55	(57.9)
Prior Convictions:						
yes, recidivists	104	(51.0)	112	(58.6)	84	(88.4)
no, first offenders	100	(49.0)	79	(41.4)	11	(11.6)
Prior Incarcerations:						
yes	70	(34.3)	72	(37.7)	69	(72.6)
no	134	(65.7)	119	(62.3)	26	(27.4)
Current Offences:						
property	74	(36.3)	85	(44.5)	68	(71.6)
alcohol	78	(38.2)	57	(29.8)	18	(18.9)
public order and peace	36	(17.6)	33	(17.3)	41	(43.2)
traffic	31	(15.2)	36	(18.8)	19	(20.0)
drugs	30	(14.7)	30	(15.7)	8	(8.4)
person	12	(5.9)	14	(7.3)	19	(20.0)
morals and decency	1	(0.5)	4	(2.1)	3	(3.2)
other	3	(1.5)	3	(1.6)	2	(2.1)

TABLE 4 CONTINUED

DEMOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANTS BY TA PROGRAMMES

	Institutional TA		CRC		MDWP	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Months Incarcerated:						
1 month or less	85	(41.7)	41	(21.5)	7	(7.4)
over 1 month to 3 months	47	(23.0)	54	(28.3)	6	(6.3)
over 3 months to 9 months	45	(22.1)	69	(36.1)	30	(31.6)
over 9 months	27	(13.2)	27	(14.1)	52	(54.7)
Months on TAP:						
1 month or less	111	(54.4)	69	(36.1)	28	(29.5)
over 1 month to 3 months	67	(32.8)	67	(35.1)	41	(43.2)
over 3 months	26	(12.8)	55	(28.8)	26	(27.4)
TAP Activity:						
employment TA						
continuing same job	114		90			
with new employer	58		80			
total	172	(84.3)	170	(89.0)	95	(100.0)
education TA						
continuing same course	4		10			
in new course	28		11			
total	32	(15.7)	21	(11.0)		

Persons accepted into the institutional TA programme were not significantly different from residents in the CRCs. An analysis of the demographic factors listed in table 4 revealed no reliable differences between these two groups of participants. However, there were some offence related differences between the two groups. There were substantially more property offenders in the CRCs than in the institutional TA programme: 44.5% vs. 36.3% respectively ($t=1.67$, $p<.05$). On the other hand, the institutional TA programme was comprised of a significantly larger proportion of alcohol offenders; 38.2%, whereas only 29.8% of the CRC residents were serving time for offences related to alcohol ($t=1.76$, $p<.05$). The more serious nature of offences committed by inmates receiving TAs for CRCs was reflected in the longer period of incarceration served by CRC residents relative to institutional TA participants. Owing to the relationship between time incarcerated and time on TA, it followed that CRC residents tended to serve a longer period of time on TA (see Table 2).

The relationship between time incarcerated and time in the CRC delineates a specific role of the centres. To wit, an earlier study of CRCs (Ardron, 1978) reported that the

centres were being used for long term treatment and for short term pre-release planning. The current data indicate that 21.7% of the 60 residents completing a stay at the CRCs of one month or less, were incarcerated for at least three months. For these residents, the CRC provided an intermediary adjustment from institutionalization to the community. By comparison, only 10.7% of the 190 participants completing a short term institutional TA were incarcerated for over 3 months.

Two-thirds of the 174 CRC residents completing their planned stay in the centres were on TA for over one month. These longer term residents were primarily repeat offenders; 63.2% had been convicted prior to the study incarceration and 41.2% had previously been incarcerated. These long term residents with histories of repeated criminal activity may have required the treatment facilities available through the centres.

Overall, it would appear that CRCs were accepting more serious offenders than those persons retained in the institution for their TA experience. The longer period of incarceration associated with more serious offenders would make this group more amenable to long term treatment available through the centres. Short term incarcerates may not have required this type of experience.

The Ministry Directed Work Programmes (M.D.W.P.) were accepting a specific group of inmates that would not normally be placed in CRCs or on institutional TA. The majority of the participants referred to agencies under contract with the Ministry were long term incarcerates (over 9 months) available for extended work placements on TA. Among those participants who completed their intended TAP experience, the average time on TA was 2.7 months. Most of these inmates were convicted of property and public order and peace offences. Although few had alcohol related offences included in their current charges, previous alcohol abuse was prevalent among participants in M.D.W.P.

A large proportion of M.D.W.P. participants had been convicted (88.4%) and incarcerated (72.6%) prior to the study incarceration. Moreover, there was a higher proportion of men who were single, young, unemployed, native and/or with a lower level of education in Ministry Directed Work Programmes. Collectively, these background factors do not favour a promising outcome for M.D.W.P. participants relative to those inmates involved with other Temporary Absence Programmes.

The picture that emerges from these data reveal a group of young men whose alcohol problems, impoverished educational background and early experience with the criminal justice system contributed to their being poor candidates for locating employment. Employment through Ministry referral provided an opportunity that may not otherwise have been available.

C. OUTCOME

1. Programme Completion

Earlier studies of Community Resource Centres and the Temporary Absence Programme have considered measures of programme completion a critical factor for evaluation of a Ministry Programme (Hug, 1971; Sone, 1976). Programme completion is defined in the current study as continuing a TA until their release from incarceration or completion of their intended stay at a temporary employment or educational opportunity. Altogether, 427 persons (87.1%) of the total sample successfully completed their TA.

There were 60 persons (12.2%) who had their TA passes prematurely withdrawn or revoked. The reasons given for participants' removal from the programmes are listed in Table 5.

TABLE 5

REASONS FOR FAILURE

<u>REASON</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Alcohol or drug related misconduct	12	20.0
Poor attitude or lack of effort	11	18.3
Other misconduct	5	8.3
Transferred to another institution	10	16.7
Quit job/course	7	11.7
Fired from job	2	3.3
Choose to discontinue TAP	2	3.3
Further charges	1	1.7
Unknown	10	16.7
TOTAL	60	100.0

Finally, there were three persons whose passes were terminated for health reasons. Extenuating circumstances of this nature are beyond the inmate's control, so these inmates are not included among the failure group.

Of those persons who failed to adjust to TA conditions, one-third were removed from the programme within the first month. More than half had been on TA for less than three months. On the average, this left an additional 3.7 months of incarceration after their TA experience.

In determining which factors were associated with participants' failure, an analysis was made of all background characteristics. The analysis revealed some reliable indicators of the incidence of TA failure.

Marital status at the time of incarceration was associated with participants' failure rates. Persons living common-law at the time of incarceration demonstrated similar failure rates to those persons who were single at the time of incarceration. Collectively, these two groups had a 14.9% (N=296) failure rate. A significantly lower failure rate of 8.4% (N=191) was observed among persons who were separated, divorced, widowed or married at the time of incarceration ($\chi^2=3.94$, $p<.05$).

The inmates' employment status at the time of incarceration was another indicator of TA failure. Only 7.3% of those persons who were employed at the time they were institutionalized (N=302) failed to complete the programme. Unemployed incarcerates (N=156) demonstrated a 23.1% failure rate under the temporary absence programme ($\chi^2=21.79$, $p<.001$). Students and housewives were not included in this analysis due to their small numbers. It should be noted that one woman out of five who described themselves as housewives when admitted failed to complete her temporary absence, and none of the 16 persons who were students at the time of admission failed to adjust to TA conditions. Neither of the two persons who were involved with both work and school failed to complete their TA.

The type of TA granted would, for the most part, be contingent on the participants' employment status at the time of incarceration. That is, persons who located work positions with new employers were often the same people who were unemployed at the time of incarceration. One could anticipate this group having a higher failure rate relative to those persons who were employed at the time of incarceration, and were subsequently granted a TA to continue with their former employer. The data support this assumption. Only 5 (2.5%) of the inmates continuing work with former employers failed to complete their TA. However, 43 (18.6%) failed to complete their TA among those who were employed in new positions. All of the students continuing with former courses completed their TA. One-third of those involved with new educational opportunities failed to complete their intended programme.

Age at the time of incarceration was not a reliable predictor of participants' failure. There was a general tendency for rates to decrease with increasing age, especially after 25 years of age. However, the overall differences between age groups were not significant.

Some of the data solicited by the TA application form were statistically related to participants' failure rates. Based on those persons for whom information was available, failure rates were found to be significantly higher among those with reported parole violations (27.3%), probation violations (38.3%) and escapes (39.1%). Persons who were known to abuse alcohol adjusted well to TA conditions. Only 7.1% of those persons who had reported histories of alcohol problems failed to complete their TAP. Indications of drug abuse and/or drug charges were not associated with programme failure.

The degree of criminal involvement, as indicated by prior record and the length of current sentence, was predictive of participants' failure. Table 6 summarizes the relationship between failure rates and various indicators of criminal involvement.

TABLE 6

CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT BY FAILURE RATES

CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT FACTOR	PROGRAMME FAILURE RATE		STATISTICAL RELIABILITY
	N	(%)	
Prior incarcerations:			
yes	45/211	21.3	t = 5.33
no	15/279	5.4	p < .001
Prior convictions:			
yes	53/300	17.7	t = 4.60
no	7/190	3.7	p < .001
Number of prior convictions:			
1 or 2	22/150	14.7	not
3 or more	31/150	20.7	significant
Length of present sentence:			
1 mo. or less	3/133	2.3	x ² = 74.97
over 1 mo. to 3 mos.	4/107	3.7	p < .001
over 3 mos. to 9 mos.	15/144	10.4	
over 9 mos.	38/106	35.8	

In summary, failure rates were notably higher among participants having any of the following characteristics: convictions prior to the current sentence; current incarceration period of at least three months; single or common-law marital status; probation or parole violations or escape convictions; unemployed at the time of incarceration or working in new employment positions while on TA. Although alcohol was often involved with misconducts leading to removal from the programme, persons reported to have alcohol problems demonstrated relatively low failure rates during their TA experience.

2. Recidivism

Recidivism is a critical variable for evaluating Ministry programmes. The necessity to re-examine recidivism data for the TAP became apparent after an earlier study reported a 38% reconviction rate during a one year period among a sample of TAP participants (Ardrin, 1978). This section will examine recidivism data for the current sample of employment and education TA participants. This will be followed by a study of

recidivism rates for various sectors of the TAP sample.

The data presented in Table 7 has been adapted to Gendreau's Recidivism Outcome Index (1976). It represents the most severe disposition received by participants during a one year period following their release.

TABLE 7

OUTCOME

<u>DISPOSITION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Two years or more	10	2.0
3 months to 2 years less a day	38	7.8
3 months or less/intermittent	45	9.2
Technical Parole violation which carried no conviction	5	1.0
Probation/Suspended Sentence/ Community Service Order	7	1.4
Fine or restitution or fine/time	23	4.7
No illegal activities recorded	362	73.9

Excluding those persons who were re-incarcerated due to parole violations, 123 or 25.1% of the total sample were convicted of a further offence during the follow-up period. Sixteen of the 23 recidivists receiving fines actually served time in jail in default of payment of their fine. Thus, a total of 109 persons, or 88.6% of the 123 who were reconvicted were re-incarcerated during the one year follow-up period. In addition to those sentenced to incarceration, five inmates were incarcerated due to parole violations (exclusive of any additional charges that would have otherwise led to incarceration). Three other persons who had not been incarcerated during the follow-up period due to sentencing or parole violations were being held in custody on remand at the end of the follow-up period. Thus, of the total sample, 117 (23.8%) people were incarcerated within a one year period after release.

Recidivists averaged 1.4 conviction dates during the one year period after release. Their first conviction occurred about 6.2 months after release on the average. Of the 109 recidivists who were incarcerated, their retainment occurred, on the average, about 5.6 months after release. The type of offences committed by recidivists is illustrated in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of recidivists who had convictions falling within each category. The percentage column totals over 100 since many of the recidivists had convictions for charges within more than one category.

TABLE 8

TYPE OF OFFENCES

<u>OFFENCE CATEGORY</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Property	67	54.5
Alcohol	35	28.5
Public Order and Peace	32	26.0
Traffic	29	23.6
Drugs	14	11.4
Person	13	10.6
Morals and Decency	1	0.8
Other	9	7.3

D. BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO RECIDIVISM

Reconviction rates were determined for a number of breakdowns of the sample based on various background characteristics. Several of these variables were found to be reliably related to recidivism. Table 9 summarizes the reconviction rates for selected demographic divisions of the sample.

TABLE 9

RECIDIVISM RATE AND BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

<u>BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS</u>	<u>RECONVICTION RATE</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
Age at admissions			
16 and 17	11/ 34	32.4	$x^2 = 11.96$ $p < .01$
18 to 20	49/142	34.5	
21 to 25	26/124	21.0	
26 and over	37/190	37.0	
Employment Status			
employed	56/302	18.5	$x^2 = 25.74$ $p < .001$
unemployed	64/156	41.0	
other/missing information	(41)		
Marital Status			
married	18/143	12.6	$x^2 = 19.36$ $p < .001$
single	86/265	32.5	
common-law	9/ 31	29.0	
other/missing information	(51)		
Highest Grade Completed			
9 or less	64/182	35.2	$x^2 = 16.51$ $p < .001$
10 to 13	57/286	19.9	
post secondary	1/ 15	6.7	
missing information	(7)		

It is interesting to note that common-law arrangements were not as stabilizing a factor as marriage. When examining various outcome factors, people living common-law showed similar patterns to single participants. The association between recidivism and other demographic factors varied according to the age of incarcerates. The data in Table 9 indicate that recidivism rates were highest among the single, unemployed and the poorly educated inmates. These associations were less pronounced among persons under 21 years of age. For persons over age 21, these variables were a decisive factor of recidivism. For example, married participants under 21 years of age showed similar recidivism rates as single participants of the same age group. Recidivism rates did not significantly decrease among married participants until after 21 years of age. Both single and common-law incarcerates demonstrated consistently high recidivism rates across all ages.

Prior criminality was found to be one of the strongest predictors of continuing criminal activity after release. The data in Table 10 demonstrate the comparatively high recidivism rate among people who had been convicted of offences prior to the study incarceration. Moreover, the interim period before first conviction after release was much shorter among persons with histories of repeated offences: 5.9 months vs. 8.7 months among recidivating first offenders ($t = 2.92, p < .01$).

TABLE 10

RECIDIVISM BY PRIOR CONVICTIONS

Prior Convictions	Reconvicted				100%=
	Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	
yes	109	(36.3)	191	(63.7)	300
no	14	(7.4)	176	(92.6)	190

$\chi^2 = 50.38, p < .001$

There was found to be a high degree of intercorrelation among background characteristics that were related with reconviction, and certain relationships were found to vary when looking at subgroups of the sample. This is particularly true with age and prior convictions. The relationship between age and reconvictions is much more pronounced when looking only at first offenders (see table 11). This relationship between age and reconviction rates was not apparent among people with previous convictions. Reconviction rates remained consistently high across all age groups among those participants with previous convictions.

TABLE 11

RECIDIVISM BY AGE

(First Offenders Only)

Age at Incarceration	Recidivated				100%=
	Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	
16 to 20	7	(14.9)	40	(85.1)	47
21 to 25	4	(9.5)	38	(90.5)	42
26 and over	3	(3.0)	98	(97.0)	101

$x^2=8.06, p<.05$

These findings support Madden's observations (1976, 1977) of a relationship between recidivism and age at time of first conviction or first incarceration. The data suggest that once an offender is launched into a criminal career, predicting recidivism is impossible on the basis of age alone. Studies which have examined repeated offenders have not found any reliable association between recidivism rates and age at the time of investigation (Lambert and Madden, 1976; Roberts, Erikson, Riddle and Bacon, 1974).

First offenders also differed from those people with prior convictions on a number of demographic factors. Typically, first offenders were older than repeat offenders: 29.7 years vs. 24.4 years ($t = 6.15, p<.001$). They also tended to be better educated and were more likely to be employed and married at the time of the study incarceration. First offenders were usually incarcerated for a shorter period of time during the study sentence than those people with a criminal record: 3.6 months vs. 7.4 months ($t = 7.44, p<.001$). However, the length of time these two groups were on TA during the study period was not significantly different.

The trend of decreasing recidivism rates with increasing age appears to be associated with factors coinciding with age. The data in table 12 focuses on the more stabilizing background characteristics. It is apparent from these data that with the exception of education, the incidence of the more stable factors increases with age of TAP participants.

TABLE 12

AGE BY INCIDENCE OF STABLE FACTORS

STABILIZING FACTOR	AGE		t= p<.001
	Under 21 (N=176) %	21 and over (N=314) %	
Employed	77 (43.8)	225 (71.7)	6.09 p<.001
Married	14 (8.0)	129 (41.1)	7.74 p<.001
Education past gr.9	103 (58.5)	198 (63.1)	0.99 p=n.s.
First offenders	47 (26.7)	143 (45.5)	4.11 p<.001

In summary, those factors found to be related to recidivism were highly intercorrelated. That is, those possessing any one of the stable factors related to reduced recidivism were also likely to possess the others. For example, the inmates in the older age group were generally first offenders, married and employed. Thus recidivism could be predicted on the basis of any one of the demographic factors, including age and prior record, alone. In combination, these factors produce a more reliable prediction of outcome.

E. PROGRAMME FACTORS RELATED TO RECIDIVISM

Recidivism varied considerably according to the type of TA programme in which the participant was placed. Table 13 shows the rate of reconviction for each of the three programmes.

TABLE 13

RECONVICTION RATES BY TA PROGRAMME

RECONVICTED	INSTITUTIONAL TAs		CRCs		M.D.W.P.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
yes	37	(18.1)	40	(20.9)	46	(48.4)
no	167	(81.9)	151	(79.1)	49	(51.6)
100% =	204		191		95	

$x^2=34.50, p<.001$

The similar outcome of inmates receiving institutional TAs and TAs for CRCs is a reflection of the similar background characteristics observed in these two groups of participants. Inmates involved with Ministry Directed Work Programmes indicate a relatively high reconviction rate during the one year period after release. Again, this is probably more a reflection of differences in background characteristics than differences in programme effectiveness. All factors related to higher reconviction rates were much more prevalent amongst the M.D.W.P. group than the CRC or institutional TA samples.

The same pattern was apparent in programme failure rates (table 14). Inmates referred to work programmes under contract with the Ministry, indicated a higher failure rate in adjusting to the conditions of their new employment setting.

TABLE 14
PARTICIPANT FAILURE BY TA PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMME FAILURE	INSTITUTIONAL TA		CRCs		M.D.W.P.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
failed	19	(9.3)	17	(8.9)	25	(26.3)
completed	185	(90.7)	174	(91.1)	70	(73.7)
100% =	204		191		95	

$x^2=20.81, p<.001$

Outcome also varied with the type of activity while on TA. None of the students continuing with previous courses were reconvicted during the one year follow-up period. One-third of the 39 students involved with new education opportunities recidivated. Likewise, participants continuing with former employers demonstrated a lower recidivism rate than inmates in new job placements: 11.8% vs. 37.2% respectively ($x^2=38.85, p<.001$).

Reconviction rates did not reliably differ between those participants who failed to adjust to TA conditions and those who managed to successfully complete their TA. The data in table 15 indicate a tendency for recidivism rates to be lower among those people who completed their TA, however, this difference fell within chance levels. It is important to note from these data that 326 (66.5%) of the current sample both completed their temporary absence successfully and did not recidivate within the one year period following release.

TABLE 15

RECIDIVISM BY FAILURE TO COMPLETE PROGRAMME

Failed to Complete Programme	Reconvicted				100% =
	Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	
failed	20	(32.8)	41	(67.2)	61
completed	103	(24.0)	326	(76.0)	429

$\chi^2=1.75, p=n.s.$

An analysis within each programme did not reveal any reliable predictions of recidivism rates on the basis of participant failure within any of the specific programmes. The proportion of participants who both completed their programme and did not recidivate within the one year period after release were as follows: institution TA - 74.5% (152/204); CRC - 73.3% (140/191); M.D.W.P. - 35.8% (34/95).

IV SUMMARY

In focusing on employment and education TAs, this study examined three distinct programmes operating under the auspices of TAP. These included inmates granted employment or education passes by: (1) day release from the institutions (institutional TA); (2) transfer to Community Resource Centres (CRC) whereupon day release was granted; (3) referral to Ministry Directed Work Projects (M.D.W.P.) managed by firms under contract with the Ministry.

Participant outcome was studied for the entire TAP sample and for each of the three programmes. Programme failure rates and reconviction rates during the one year period after release were found to vary within certain sectors of the TAP sample. That is, specific demographic factors such as employment status, marital status and criminal history were found to be highly associated with participants' outcome.

In view of the many background factors associated with outcome, it was necessary to determine differences in the type of inmate accepted into each programme before comparing their results. Demographically, inmates on institutional TA were very similar to residents in CRCs. The distinguishing factor between these two groups was the length of time participants were incarcerated. Inmates on day release from the institution were more often short term incarcerates and few had previously been incarcerated. CRCs were accepting a somewhat more criminally involved client. Owing to their longer period of incarceration, more long term TAs were granted to inmates to reside in CRCs. Also, short term TAs, to allow for pre-release adjustment into the community after a long period of incarceration, were more often transferred to CRCs rather than remain in the institution. Subsequently, there was a larger proportion of CRC residents beginning new employment. People continuing with former employers were often short term incarcerates and were more likely to remain in the institution. In spite of their relatively short incarceration period, students on educational TAs to continue with former courses were more often transferred to a CRC.

Ministry referral to work projects managed by private firms are often presented as an incentive for good conduct in the institutions. Before acceptance into one of the programmes, the inmate's conduct was assessed for several months in the institution environment. Thus, the majority of inmates involved with Ministry Directed Work Projects were long term incarcerates. This criteria tended to select far more criminally involved clients with histories of prior incarcerations. The incidence of unstable characteristics associated with a poor outcome was high among M.D.W.P. participants. It was suggested that for many of these clients, employment through Ministry referral to contract firms provided an opportunity that may not have otherwise been available.

In this way, Ministry Directed Work Programmes approach a rehabilitation model designed for a specific group of inmates who might benefit by the experience. On the other hand, CRCs and the institutional TA programme focus on the re-integration of inmates into the community setting. These differences in orientation form the basis of the differences observed between participants in each programme.

Inmates participating in the institutional TAP and CRCs showed similar outcomes. Participant failure rates were 9.3% and 8.9% for each programme respectively. Reconviction rates for a one year period were 18.1% among persons released after participating in the institutional TA and 20.9% among CRC residents. Participant failure rates were relatively higher (26.3%) among inmates employed through Ministry Directed Work Programmes. This group of working inmates also demonstrated a relatively higher reconviction rate of 48.4% within a one year period following release. Rather than indicating differences in programme effectiveness, the relative outcome of participants involved with the three Temporary Absence Programmes, was a reflection of the observed differences in the types of inmates accepted into each programme.

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APPENDIX

T.A.P. RECIDIVISM STUDY DATA COLLECTION FORM 173-A-1

NAME: _____

CASE #

ADMIN FILE # INST #

ADMITTED RELEASED RELEASE STATUS

TAP START FINISH FINAL STATUS

WHY REVOKED OR WITHDRAWN TRANSFERRED TO C.R.C.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

AVAILABLE EVER VIOLATE: TAP PAROLE PROB

HISTORY OF: ALCOHOL ABUSE DRUG ABUSE

EVER CONVICTED OF: DRUG CHRG ASSAULT ARSON SEX ESCAPE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

DATE OF BIRTH SEX RACIAL TYPE

AGE LEFT SCHOOL HIGHEST GRADE ALCOHOL USE

MARITAL STATUS DURATION DEPENDANTS

OCCUPATION _____ WORK STATUS

(2) CASE # T.A.P. TYPE

WORK TYPE OF WORK _____

WEEKLY SALARY WEEKLY ROOM & BOARD

SCHOOL COURSE _____

LEVEL _____

END