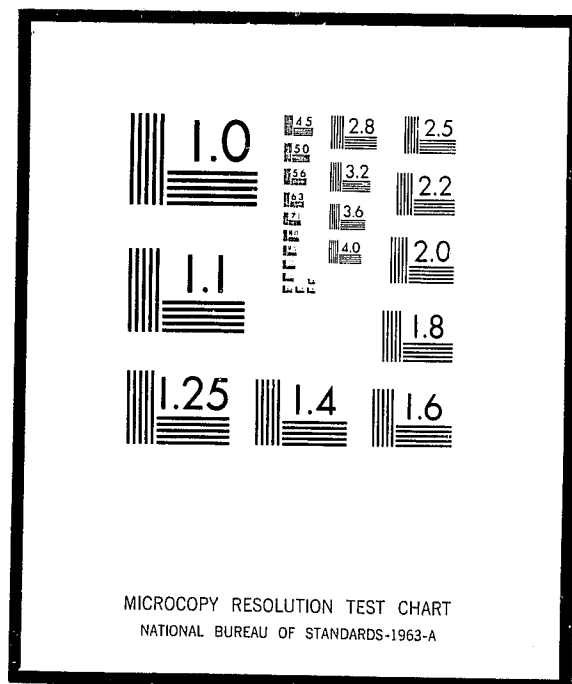


NCJRS

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20531

Date filmed.

6/27/75

An Evaluation of "Organization For Treatment"
by David Street, Robert Vinter, and Charles Perrow

The Study

Organization for Treatment is an evaluation of six juvenile correctional institutions whose primary goal is changing youth's personality and values so that these youth can participate effectively in the large society. The authors refer to these institutions as "people changing organizations." The major objectives of this study are to examine the consequences of different correctional goals regarding organization structure, staff perspectives and behavior toward the inmates, and inmates behavior.

An analysis of several broad sets of beliefs (incarceration and deprivation, authority and obedience, learning, socialization, and therapy) defined three major organizational models ranged along the custody-treatment continuum. The obedience/conformity model is committed to incarceration and deprivation, authority and obedience beliefs. The re-education/development model caters to learning and socialization beliefs while the treatment model believes in therapy. Two organizations were selected to represent each model. In order to aid the reader in following a comparative analysis involving six organizations, the authors first let the letter of each fictional name represent the first letter of the characteristic goal: Dick (for Discipline), Mixer (for Mixed Goals), Regis (for Religious Rules), Bennett (for Benign), Milton (for Milieu Therapy), and Inland (for Individual Therapy). Dick and Mixer were representatives of a custodial model. Regis and Bennett were examples of a re-education/development model and Milton and Inland represented a treatment model.

The research was comparative and to some extent longitudinal. The organizations representing the custodial and treatment models were studied at two

014374
EVALUATION

points in time. Feedback of phase one data findings was made available to key administrators of each institution between phase one and phase two data gathering periods. The study is comprehensive in that data was gathered from top administrators, the rank and file, and the clients. In addition, several data gathering techniques were used (1) interviews of key persons in the organizations, (2) questionnaires to all personnel and clients, and (3) observation of early activities of each institution involved in the study.

The presentation of the study is as follows:

- a. A short discription of the author's theoretical framework
- b. Variations in each organization
- c. Evidence which supported some general hypothesis presented in the conceptual section
- d. Concluding remarks as to the implication of the findings.

Critique of the Study

The Conceptual Model

Street, Vinter and Perrow's conceptual framework consists of an analysis of organizational goals and their implications. After classifying juvenile correctional institutions according to sets of beliefs ranged along a custody-treatment continuum, the authors developed four general guiding propositions. The authors very skillfully cited enough sources so that their theoretical bases for their conceptual position could be traced to more complete discussions. What was not done though was to adequately reduce their guiding porpositions to working hypotheses.

More specifically, upon presenting the four generl propositions and discussing

organization variations, the authors first reported the findings which concern proposition two, (stratigies of the executive.) In addition to beginning with the second proposition there was no attempt made to reduce the guiding proposition to a more workable form. After a discussion of the data which pertained to the second proposition, the authors then analyzed the data which concerned the first proposition stated, (staff-inmate relations). Again there was no attempt to state working hypotheses. For some unknown reason, beginning with proposition three (inmate perspectives) there was a conscious effort made to tie the analysis of the data to the conceptional framework by stating working hypotheses. This greatly enhanced the clarity of the author's conceptual thinking. Presentation of the data which concerned proposition four (the inmate group) was clear but discussed in still a different way from previous discussions of the various propositions. The authors precluded the analysis which pertained to the inmate group with a theoretical discussion which generated working hypothese. They then rather informally interwove each hypothesis with those results that were relevant. Finally, a weak analysis was made of the data which focused in on organization change. This analysis was made without any guidance from either stated general or specific hypotheses.

To this point, the major criticisms are that the authors failed to systematically tie their analysis of data to their conceptual framework, as well as failing to order the sequence of events. These considerations are extremely important in light of possible confusion as a result of a comparative study involving six organizations.

Another point in regards to the authors' conceptual model is how the various concepts were operationally defined. Contrary to the reader's preconceptions, the task of operationalizing the concepts was clear and could be followed. The major concepts are: type of organization and feedback sessions, (two independent variables), the executive's formulation of specific goals, the executive as a

key link between the organization and its environment, the executive and internal strategies, staff perception, staff-inmate relation, inmate perspectives, and inmate group. (These concepts are operationally defined as dependent variables.)

Research Design

The research was comparative and to some extent longitudinal with non-random sampling of six institutions selected to maximize differences in goals among both public and private and large and small organizations. The unit of analysis was organizations.

One impressive point is that it appears that the authors had the study thoroughly planned prior to collection of the data. As the reader moves through the monograph, it is evident that only with good coordination of efforts would a research staff get such good cooperation from six different organizations. The authors did an excellent job in establishing sponsorship.

One major problem with the comparative component of the design is that it incorporated a number of dimensions. The reader finds it difficult to keep the many comparisons clear in his mind as he digests the analysis. Possibly, rearranging the comparisons according to organization, or restricting oneself to dealing with fewer dimensions could minimize the confusion when reading the analysis.

In addition to the comparative aspect of the design, the authors gathered data at two points in time from each of the organization's participating in the study (staff data was not collected from the two re-education institutions during the second data gathering period.) Feedback sessions were introduced into each of the institutions between data gathering waves. The major criticism of

this component of the design is that the authors made inferences from results generated by this design which cannot be supported. Questions regarding how the organizations were changing were dealt with adequately, however, most of their inferences as to why certain institutions were changing was purely subjective. To explain further, each institution was given feedback but the organization in which most changes occurred received their feedback only a few weeks before the final testing period, where other institutions experienced the feedback sessions six months prior to the final data gathering wave. In the case of the organization with the most change, a halo effect could have biased the results. In addition, the survey itself generated different responses in each of the organizations as a result of their respective differences in size, sources of funds, and goals by which they operated.

Questionnaire Construction

As a whole both the staff and inmate questionnaires were well structured. The authors generated primary ^{ily} close-ended responses with little emphasis placed on open ended questions. There are of course several points to be made which could improve the questionnaires. Number one, the authors rather frequently used a five point response continuum ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Due to people's reluctance to respond to negative response categories, it is believed that the alternatives given to the respondent should all be in the positive direction.

Secondly, each response category was assigned a number. These numbers actually placed in the questionnaire could have possibly biased the results. A respondent may be inclined to mark either small or large numbers more frequently.

Thirdly, it is believed that structured situational questions which only give three or four possible alternatives are inappropriate. One response category should have been other in which the respondent could write in an answer which was not offered (the response category other (write in) was added to the questionnaire administered the second time around.)

Fourthly, several questions could be reworked. (1) For possible responses to one question, the authors had strongly agree to strongly disagree for one dimension and not strict enough to too strict as another dimension. Example of responses: Strongly agree; They're not strict enough.

Strongly disagree; if anything they're too strict

It is possible for a respondent to strongly agree with the statement but not for the reason given.

Fifthly, the question which referred to the respondent's race was restricted to Caucasian, Negro and Oriental. Since the researchers were fortunate enough to get this question included, they should have put enough categories so everyone could be classified or at least include an other category. People tend to get upset about this issue.

It might also be pointed out that the authors included a number of questions where the respondent was requested to rank certain things. It is of the reader's opinion that this type of response was handled in the most valid way. They asked the subjects to list only the two most and two least important response choices. It is believed that the respondent can make these kinds of distinctions fairly clearly.

Finally, since the scope of this study goes beyond monograph, it is difficult to say which items are unnecessary or what other items should have

been included. More than a dozen other articles have been written on these data.

Reliability and Validity

Some attention was given to validity checks which ascertained whether or not various items were measuring what they/^{were} designed to measure. The authors maximized content validity of the staff data by constructing a number of scales by using the Guttman scaling technique. The coefficients of reproductibility were all above Guttman's minimum of .90. Index construction in the inmate data was limited to only sumating specific items. The authors first determined which items to sum by factor analysis. Of the indexes constructed, 95% of the variance was accounted for and the average factor loading was .40. The authors demonstrated a conscious effort to extend their validity checks at least beyond face validity. Even though little research in the field or organization goes farther beyond content validity, it may prove beneficial for researchers in this area of study to consider establishing other kinds of validity checks. In this particular study, however, the researchers had no measure of behavior thus concurrent or predictive validity checks could not be made (Note: the two are not the same-reference Guion1968.) On the other hand, since the study is comparative, the researchers could have easily cross-validated their measures.

Other than performing coding reliability checks (1% for closed ended data and 4.9% for open-ended data) reliability was not mentioned. Possibly the reason for not reporting either internal or external reliability checks is because they were not made or because the checks were too low to report.

Data Collection

By utilizing four methods of observations, the authors were able to maximize their efforts in applying the most appropriate techniques for each research situation. The idea of constructing the staff and inmate questionnaires after holding informal interviews with member of the executive core and other staff members and inmates definitely enhanced the validity of the study. In addition, pre-testing the inmates' questionnaires helped the researchers weed out ambiguous questions as well as giving the investigators some idea as to how long it would take inmates to fill out the questionnaires.

The authors handled the administration of both staff and inmates questionnaires quite adequately. The staff was first contacted by the administration and then administered the questionnaires to small groups. The role that the administrators of each institution played in the research helped establish the legitimacy of the study. The inmate questionnaires were also administered to small groups with special emphasis focused on trying to minimize staff personnel intervention and contamination as a result of the youth discussing some of the questions aloud.

Analysis

The authors relied on conventional contingency tables for presentation of their data. The tables were usually consistent and were arranged in a logical order. Generally, the response categories were mutually exclusive and inclusive in the range of responses. There were some exception in the situational items discussed earlier in the paper. For some unknown reason the authors failed to account for the missing data. Blanks appeared in many of the tables without any explanation as to what happened.

The analysis was predominantly bivariate, however, the researchers did control for background attributes of the inmates while analysing six different indices on inmates perspectives by organizations. It was logically determined that background information of the inmates did not upset the findings of predicted organizational differences on perspectives studied (perspectives on the institution and staff, adaptation, and self). There were no statistics used to aid the authors in determining whether the differences between the actual values and the expected values were in fact different beyond chance. In fact, statistics were used only when the authors were interested in finding items which were significantly different according to custodial-treatment oriented staff groups. After 14 items passed the Kolmogorov Smirnov Two-Sample Test these items were processed through Guttman's scaling techniques.

In presenting the results of the study, the authors tended to generalize to correctional institutions in general indicating that the six institutions included in the study were representative. This is a fallacy of most researchers who have non-random samples. In the case at hand, the bridge from the sample to the universe was built entirely on logic. There was little inferential statistics used to assist in making the jump. One can argue that with a non-probability sample statistics are not appropriate. However, the researcher should restrict himself to the population being studied. According to Tunny and Cornfield (1956) if one wants to generalize with a comfortable degree of confidence from a sample to a larger universe, first, part of the bridge should be constructed by inferential statistics and the remaining part built on logic. These authors contend that a weak statistical-logic bridge is better than a bridge built purely on logic.

Conclusion

After studying this piece of research thoroughly, one would say that the author's data does not clearly support all of their guiding propositions or their working hypotheses as reported. The main reason for this lack of support is due to few tests of significant differences between organizations. In addition, reporting specific differences found to be statistically significant leaves one with the feeling that maybe these were the only significant differences found. The authors do not seem to bend over backwards to prove themselves wrong before directly or indirectly inferring that there was a specific difference among organizations. In cases where evidence was weak, they tended to rationalize and become extremely ambiguous in reporting some of the results.

In summary, the reader commends the authors on certain aspects of their study e.g. the number of methods of observations used, the index construction the data gathering, and the questionnaire construction. However, it is believed that the quality of data gathered warranted a more thorough analysis. The kind of analysis used is appropriate for a purely descriptive study but it is felt that these data could have said much more about the area of knowledge explored. As it turned out, the authors attempted to make inferences beyond the scope of their analysis.

END