

PAROLE DECISION-MAKING

SUPPLEMENTAL
REPORT EIGHT

PAROLING POLICY FEEDBACK

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Collaboration with The United States Board of Parole

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SUMMARY

Parole board members make two types of decisions about parole: individual case decisions and paroling policy decisions. The latter set the framework within which the former are made. Paroling policy decisions generally are not explicitly stated. The lack of clearly-articulated policy guidelines has resulted in considerable criticism of parole board decision-making practices.

This report describes a study conducted in collaboration with the parole board members of the Youth Correction Division of the United States Board of Parole. The aim is to provide a feedback device capable of making more explicit the presently implicit policies used in making case decisions. A feedback device of this type may enable parole board members to: compare actual policies with those desired, and take corrective action if indicated; reduce disparity in individual case decision-making by noting decisions which appear to vary substantially from usual practice; and reduce the criticism leveled against the parole board as having unfettered discretion.

The relationships between decision-makers' evaluations of four specific case factors (severity of the offense, institutional program participation, institutional discipline, and chances of favorable parole outcome) and paroling decisions are studied. From these relationships, a method of describing and articulating implicit paroling policy is demonstrated and the relative weights given to the above factors in practice are described.

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PAROLING POLICY FEEDBACK

Introduction

Parole board members make two kinds of decisions about parole. They make decisions about individual persons; also, they make paroling policy decisions which set the framework within which the individual case decisions are made. The paroling policies which guide individual case decisions may or may not be explicitly stated. Most often, parole selection policies are not explicitly articulated. When stated, they are likely to be put in very general terms (e.g., there must be a reasonable probability that the prisoner, if paroled, will remain in the community without violating the law), although there may be certain explicit policies for very specific types of cases (e.g., persons committed for armed robbery must serve at least two years in prison). Various norms are learned through interaction with other parole board members on individual case decisions and in other discussions, but these are rarely stated formally and are not uniformly adhered to by the members.

The lack of clearly-articulated policy guidelines may lead to the problem of disparate decisions. If parole board members are following different guidelines concerning implicit policy, then different decisions for the same

case will likely result. This is not to argue that parole board members should be continually "of one mind." Especially in the formulation of parole selection policy guidelines, a broad range of opinion would appear useful. In the implementation of these guidelines by actual case decision-making, however, a lack of consistency may be equated with a lack of fairness, since inconsistency would be expected when the idiosyncratic views of individual members play a larger role in the decision-making process.

This paper reports the development of a feedback device for parole board members of the Youth Correction Division of the United States Board of Parole concerning the relationships between their evaluations of specific case factors (the severity of the subject's instant offense, institutional program participation, institutional discipline, and parole prognosis) and paroling decisions. From these relationships based upon a sample of case decisions, implicit paroling policies may be inferred and made explicit.

Provision of feedback of this type can enable the parole board members to test the congruence between actual and desired policies concerning the weights given to the various factors. For example, the parole board may find that it gives more (or less) weight than in-

tended to institutional discipline. Once known, corrective action could be taken. Feedback based upon subsequent decisions would then provide a measure of whether the planned change had been effected.

Such a feedback measure can also serve a second purpose; it can make explicit presently implicit paroling policies and thereby reduce the criticism leveled against parole boards as having unfettered discretion. Davis¹ and Remington, et al.,² have argued that, while discretion in the administration of criminal justice is necessary, there must also exist effective checks on its arbitrary use. One method proposed for such checks is the articulation of the criteria upon which the decisions are based. Providing a measure of the weights given to the primary factors in the parole selection decision may provide a step toward this objective.

A policy indicator may provide, at the same time, a measure of equity, alerting parole board members to recommendations or decisions which appear to vary substantially from established policies. Such indicators would not be intended to remove the individual parole board member's

¹Davis, K.C., Discretionary Justice, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969.

²Remington, F., et al., Criminal Justice Administration, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1969.

discretion. As Ohlin³ has argued on another topic (in relation to the use of predictive devices), indicators should function merely as a stop sign to alert the parole board member to further specify his reasons for case decisions which appear to deviate from the usually expected decisions in similar cases.

Youth Corrections Act Decisions⁴

Cases of federal offenders sentenced under the Youth Corrections Act and appearing for original parole (not reparole) consideration were selected for this study. These persons have no minimum sentence and are eligible for parole at any time. Each person's case is reviewed initially by the parole board within three to six months after reception in prison. Although eligible for parole at the initial hearing, most cases are "continued" for an additional period determined by the board. Each offender's case is reviewed thereafter at least once every three years until he is paroled or released by mandatory parole. Mandatory parole occurs two years before an individual's maximum expiration date (with credit for jail

³Ohlin, L.E., Selection for Parole, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1951.

⁴For a description of the Youth Corrections Act and the structure and function of the United States Parole Board, see Rules of the United States Board of Parole, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1971.

time). Therefore, the paroling decision may be viewed as one of when rather than whether the offender is to be paroled. In most cases, the maximum sentence length is six years, providing a mandatory parole date at 48 months.

The actual parole selection decision is made in Washington, D.C., on the basis of the information in the case folder and hearing summary (or institutional progress report). After the first parole board member reviews the case and renders a decision, the case file (with decision attached) is transmitted to a second parole board member. If the second member agrees, the determination is final. If there is a disagreement which cannot be resolved, the case folder is submitted to a third member who casts the deciding vote. Cases judged especially serious or notorious may be reviewed by the full parole board (Youth and Adult Division members sitting together) at en banc hearings.

Informal interviews with parole board members and hearing examiners indicate some differences of opinion as to the appropriate nature of the continuance at the initial hearing. The prevailing sentiment appears to be that the initial continuance should be of a length sufficient to take into account the severity of offense (reflecting the concern of "accountability") and initial estimate of parole risk so that the person will be paroled at the second hear-

ing if there has been satisfactory institutional adjustment. In serious cases (e.g., armed bank robbery) this continuance is likely to be at least two years (the maximum continuance permitted at any one decision is 36 months). Other persons, however, find the concept of long continuances undesirable since the inmate is not given an opportunity to demonstrate more rapid improvement. Those with this view argue that a lengthy continuance may create feelings of negativism in the inmate and is in opposition to the "rehabilitative intent" of the Youth Corrections Act. Shorter continuances, however, also have disadvantages: the parole board may find itself in a position at the second hearing in which the inmate has demonstrated satisfactory institutional progress but still is unacceptable for release in view of the severity of the offense (or prior record) and the short amount of time served. It may be argued that giving another continuance at this point creates as much or more frustration for the inmate. The extent to which either policy is followed in practice is one subject of this study.

Research Design

The research plan called for an evaluation sheet containing a set of four scales to be completed by each parole board member after reviewing each case and prior to making

his decision for a sample of parole consideration decisions. The evaluation sheet (see Appendix A) requested each parole board member to place his or her evaluation in the severity of the offender's instant offense, participation in institutional programs, institutional discipline, and parole prognosis (probability of favorable parole outcome) on four scales and record the decision recommendation. The relationships between the above variables, jail time, prison time served, and decision outcome (parole board member's recommended decision) could then be analyzed by multiple regression techniques and policy profiles (scattergrams with lines of best fit) plotted.

Parole board members of the Youth Correction Division of the United States Board of Parole agreed to complete evaluation forms for a 30 percent sample of case decisions beginning November 1, 1971. The sampling for this report was terminated May 30, 1972. Thus, a sample of 30 percent of all Youth Corrections Act cases considered by the parole board for original release (whether first or subsequent hearing)⁵ was obtained. Each individual whose prison register (identification) number ended in one of three odd digits became a sample case; it was assumed that this pro-

⁵In order to reduce the demands on the parole board members' time, the sampling for subsequent decisions was terminated March 30, 1972.

cedure would approximate random selection.

Evaluation forms and envelopes were placed in the appropriate case folders by parole board clerical staff prior to decision consideration. As a minimum of two parole board members review each case, at least two evaluation forms for each were obtained.⁶ Parole board members were instructed to complete the evaluation forms independently and seal them in the envelopes provided.⁷ Therefore, while the second parole board member was aware of the first member's decision, he was not aware of the ratings given on the four scales. These evaluation forms were retrieved by project staff and additional information was recorded (see Appendix B).

Parole board members actively collaborating in the Parole Decision-Making Project were extremely cooperative in completing the evaluation forms. Before submission to the parole board, this experiment was reviewed and approved at a meeting of the project's Scientific Advisory Committee. The research design was then presented to the full parole

⁶This procedure resulted in 729 evaluation forms from approximately 340 cases. Unfortunately, 65 cases were omitted from the sample due to the failure of the board clerical staff to place the required forms in the case folder prior to decision. However, as the clerical staff do not read the folders, and the folders are processed sequentially, this bias was assumed to be random.

⁷In addition, there were 41 instances in which a board member neglected to complete the evaluation form.

board at their October, 1971, business meeting. In addition, individual meetings were conducted with the parole board members who would be participating to explain the research procedures in detail. These conferences resulted in several suggestions and amendments to the research design.

For example, one parole board member expressed discomfort with the use of numbers in the scale to be used to estimate likelihood of favorable parole outcome. However, a line scale to be checked was unacceptable to other parole board members. This led to the development of a scale consisting of both numbers and a line, which satisfied all parties and increased their comfort with (and probably interest in) the experiment. A second example concerns the number of scales used. Originally, only three scales had been proposed: severity, institutional discipline, and risk of parole violation. The number of scales had been limited in order to avoid imposing unduly upon the time of the parole board members. However, at the suggestion of the parole board members, a fourth scale (participation in institutional programs), representing a factor perceived important, but distinct, from institutional discipline was developed.

Predictor Variables

Four subjective factor ratings were selected for con-

sideration as predictor variables. These factors were chosen to reflect four important and prevalent parole selection concerns cited by Dawson⁸ and O'Leary⁹. The first factor (the severity of the present offense) relates to the concern known as "accountability," "sanctioning," or the service of a "sufficient" minimum time. The second and third factors (institutional program participation and discipline) relate to the concerns of system maintenance and encouragement of the constructive use of prison time. The fourth factor (chance of favorable parole outcome) relates to the concern of risk of parole violation. The concern of reducing sentencing disparity was not considered, due to the nature of the data. Since Youth Corrections Act cases have no minimum sentences and the vast majority have maximum sentences of six years, the problem of disparate sentences does not appear.

The use of subjective measures has both an advantage and a disadvantage. An advantage is that parole board members are making these types of judgments in actual case decisions and appear to have little difficulty in articulating them. As a first step, they can provide a measure of the implicit policy the parole board member is attempting to

⁸Dawson, R., "The Decision to Grant or Deny Parole," Washington University Law Quarterly, 243, 1966, pp. 265-85.

⁹O'Leary, V., Parole Frame of Reference Inventory, New York: National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1969 (mimeo).

follow. If, at a later date, more objective indicators of these concerns are developed (e.g., base expectancy or severity scale measures), the objective measures may be substituted in the predictive equations to indicate to the parole board member the appropriate course of action to better implement desired policy.

A disadvantage of subjective measures is that they may reflect rationalizations for decisions rather than determinants of them. For example, if a parole board member is examining a case and develops a subjective desire to parole, he may tend to credit the subject with better institutional progress or a higher chance of success than is, in fact, indicated. Nevertheless, the ability of parole board members to consider possible biased responses is likely to be improved if decision items (i.e., focal concerns) are examined separately.

Criterion Measures

In order to examine the relationships of these factors to paroling decisions, a number of criteria were selected. At the initial decision, the first criterion measure to be considered is the continuance recommended (in months) with parole treated as zero (0) months. The second criterion measure used is the total time in custody recommended until decision number two (jail time plus time in prison until initial decision plus recommended continuance). At

subsequent decisions, the criterion considered is the dichotomous parole/continue decision.

Results and Discussion

Stepwise multiple regression equations were calculated for the 378 responses concerning initial decisions. A random split half technique was used to provide construction (N = 196) and validation (N = 182) samples. It must be noted that three of the scales used (severity, progress, and discipline) were rather crude ordinal measures which were treated as interval measures for these computations. Nevertheless, the predictive power of these indicators was substantial. (Table I displays the zero order correlations among the variables.) Using only the variables severity and prognosis (risk) as predictors, multiple R's of .70 for the first criterion measure (recommended continuance) and .68 for the second criterion measure (recommended total time to be served before next review) were obtained on a construction sample. For the validation sample, these R's were both .56. Neither discipline nor institutional progress, which were highly intercorrelated ($r = .90$), added significantly to the predictive equation.

Table I
 ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS AMONG VARIABLES
 IN THE CONSTRUCTION SAMPLE
 (NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

VARIABLE	Offense Severity	Institutional Program Participation	Institutional Discipline	Prognosis (Parole Risk)	Recommended Continuance	Recommended Total Time To Be Served Before Next Review
Offense Severity	1.00* (196)	.1318* (190)	.0984 (192)	-.0567 (196)	.6738* (196)	.6325* (196)
Institutional Program Participation		1.00* (190)	.8972* (190)	.0873 (190)	.0405 (190)	.0146 (190)
Institutional Discipline			1.00* (192)	.1570* (192)	.0394 (192)	.0147 (192)
Prognosis (Parole Risk)				1.00* (196)	-.2771* (196)	-.2885* (196)
Recommended Continuance					1.00* (196)	.9270* (196)
Recommended Total Time To Be Served Before Next Review						1.00* (196)

*Correlation coefficient is significant at $\alpha = .05$ (one-tailed).

Table II shows the predictive equations.

Table II
PREDICTIVE EQUATIONS

RECCNT 1: Predicted recommended continuance from offense severity and parole prognosis (IN MONTHS)
$\text{RECCNT 1} = .594 + 3.99 \times \text{Severity} - .075 \times \text{Prognosis}$
RECTOTM 1: Predicted recommended total time served before next review (IN MONTHS)
$\text{RECTOTM 1} = 7.729 + 4.41 \times \text{Severity} - .119 \times \text{Prognosis}$

In light of the high correlations found, it may be tentatively concluded that a fairly consistent (although implicit) youth parole selection policy was in effect. It is to be noted that two events occurred during the data collection phase which would have been expected to reduce the correlations found. One, the Chairman of the Youth Division retired and was replaced by a member of the Adult Board. Two, the Youth Board decided to give credit for jail time uniformly in calculating time to be served. Previously, there had not been a consistent policy on this issue.

A Policy Profile

From equation #2, a table of the expected total number of months to be served before review may be calculated.

Table III
EXPECTED TOTAL NUMBER OF MONTHS
TO BE SERVED BEFORE REVIEW

		Severity					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Prognosis (Parole Risk)	10	10.9	15.4	19.8	24.2	28.6	33.0
	20	9.75	14.2	18.6	23.0	27.4	31.8
	30	8.6	13.0	17.4	21.8	26.2	30.6
	40	7.4	11.8	16.2	20.6	25.0	29.4
	50	6.2	10.6	15.0	19.4	23.8	28.2
	60	5.0	9.4	13.8	18.2	22.6	27.0
	70	3.8	8.2	12.6	17.0	21.4	25.9
	80	2.6	7.0	11.4	15.8	20.3	24.7
	90	1.4	5.8	10.2	14.7	19.1	23.5
	100	.2	4.6	9.0	13.5	17.9	22.3

The expected time to be served for each combination of severity and prognosis (parole risk) is shown at the intersection of the appropriate row and column. With a severity level of three (slightly below average severity) and a favorable parole outcome estimate of 50 percent, the expected

total time to be served before review is 15.0 months. For a severity level of six (among the most serious cases) and a favorable parole outcome estimate of 70 percent, the expected time to be served is 25.9 months.

This type of matrix may be used to make explicit presently implicit paroling policies. It may be seen that the greatest weight is given to the factor of severity, while considerably less weight is given to the issue of parole risk. For example, it would appear that a difference of one level of severity shifts the decision 4.4 months, while a 15 point difference in parole risk estimate shifts the decision 1.8 months. Once the severity and parole risk estimates are taken into account, institutional discipline or progress does not significantly add to the prediction. It will be seen that at subsequent (review) decisions, institutional behavior becomes a strong predictor of decision outcome.

From the knowledge provided by this type of matrix, a parole board can test the congruence of actual and desired policy. They may be asked whether the values in the matrix conform to those they expect or desire and whether there are particular values that they desire to change. Furthermore, the provision of this feedback on a regular basis would alert the board to "apparent" policy changes.

In individual case decision-making, this measure could

be used in the following manner. After reviewing a case, the parole board member would complete the rating scales and make his recommendation. He would then check his recommendation against the matrix provided. If he found that his recommendation varied from the expected decision by more than a given amount (e.g., two months), he would be alerted to specify the considerations resulting in this difference or to reconsider his recommendation. For example, consider a case in which the parole board member recommends a continuance of four months and the expected continuance is nine months. The parole board member might point out that the subject's mother is extremely ill, that he has a considerable amount of jail time, or that his institutional performance has been much above average. On the other hand, he might, upon reflection, find no exceptional factors and reconsider his recommendation. In either case, potential disparity would be reduced. Analysis of the reasons cited for deviations from the expected time held would provide insight into the incidence and importance of other factors in the parole selection decision and might be used to refine the policy model.

An Interval Severity Scale

As noted, the severity rating initially used was a rather crude ordinal scale. An attempt to transform this

ordinal scale into an interval scale was made by substituting the median total time to be served before review for each severity level in place of the ordinal rating (Table IV) for the construction sample. Multiple regression equations were then recalculated using the prognosis and transformed severity ratings. Higher construction sample correlations ($R = .77$ and $R = .77$) were obtained for criterion 1 and 2 respectively.

Table IV
MEDIAN TOTAL TIME FOR EACH SEVERITY LEVEL

Severity	n	Median Total Time
1	1	6
2	8	16
3	45	14
4	53	15.05
5	46	18.7
6	43	28.8

Validation sample correlations were also higher ($R = .65$ and $.67$). Table V displays these differences. Thus, it appears that a more refined severity scale increases the correlations noted. However, larger samples would be required to confirm this finding.

Table V
CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION CORRELATIONS
FOR INITIAL AND TRANSFORMED SEVERITY SCALES

	Construction R	Validation R
RECCNT 1: Recommended continuance predicted from parole prognosis and initial severity scale --COMPARED TO--	.699	.557
RECCNT 2: Recommended continuance predicted from parole prognosis and transformed severity scale	.765	.653
RECTOTM 1: Recommended total time to be served before next review predicted from parole prognosis and initial severity scale --COMPARED TO--	.681	.557
RECTOTM 2: Recommended total time to be served before next review predicted from parole prognosis and transformed severity scale	.765	.677

Nonlinear Relationships

The multiple regression methods used above assume that the relationships among the variables are linear. In fact, nonlinear relationships may exist or there may be other interactions among the variables. Figure 1 (see next page) displays certain hypothetical relationships which would be masked by a multiple regression equation.

While each of the relationships described by Figure 1 has a perfect correlation, the correlation for low severity offenses is nonlinear. Furthermore, the relationships for medium and high severity offenses are linear, but they have different slopes. If a linear multiple regression equation were calculated for the total sample, the multiple correlation would be much reduced.

To examine for these possibilities, scattergrams of parole prognosis versus expected total time held before review were calculated for each severity rating. No nonlinear relationships were apparent. However, the slopes of the best fit lines (for each severity level) appeared steeper for the two highest severity levels. That is, comparatively less weight appears to be given to prognosis in the higher severity cases.

Again, the small sample size limited further exploration. However, it appears that calculating the expected

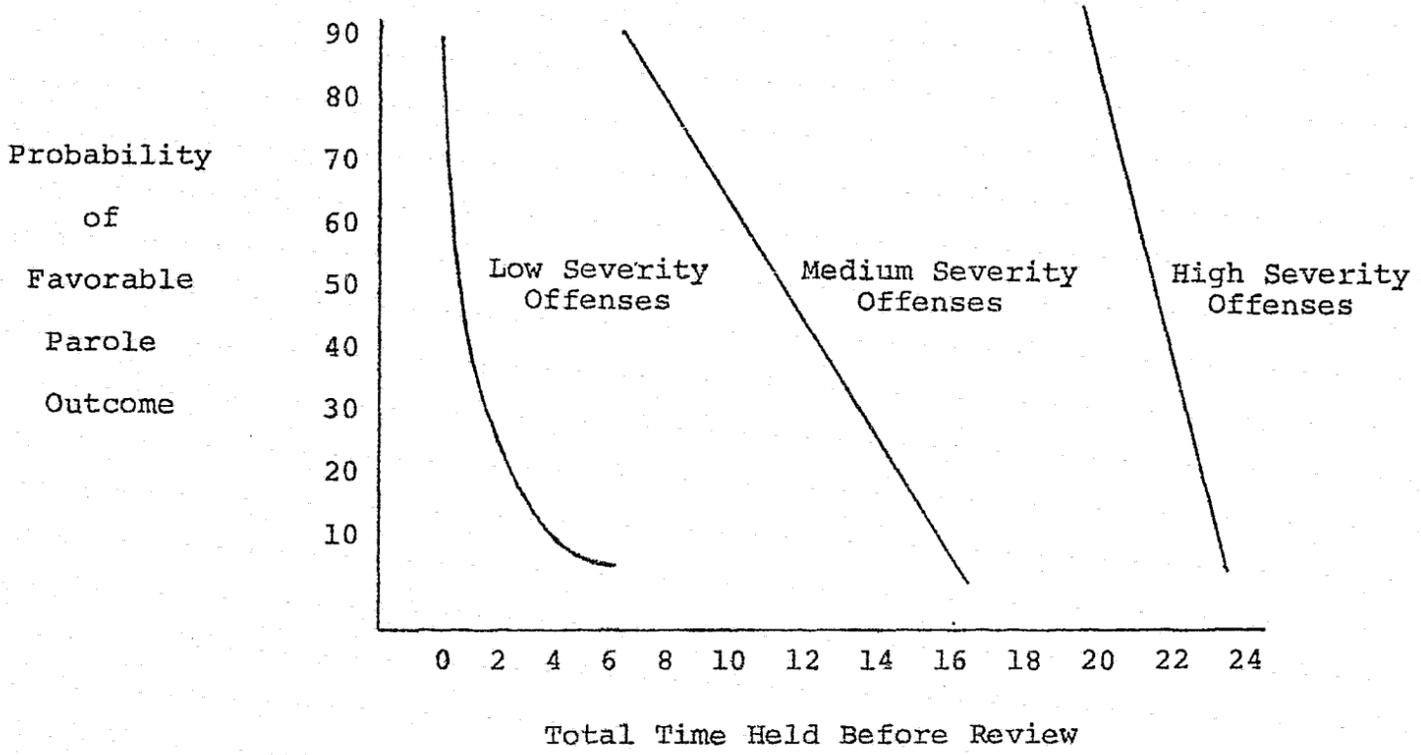


Figure 1
 HYPOTHETICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
 PAROLE RISK AND TOTAL TIME HELD BEFORE REVIEW

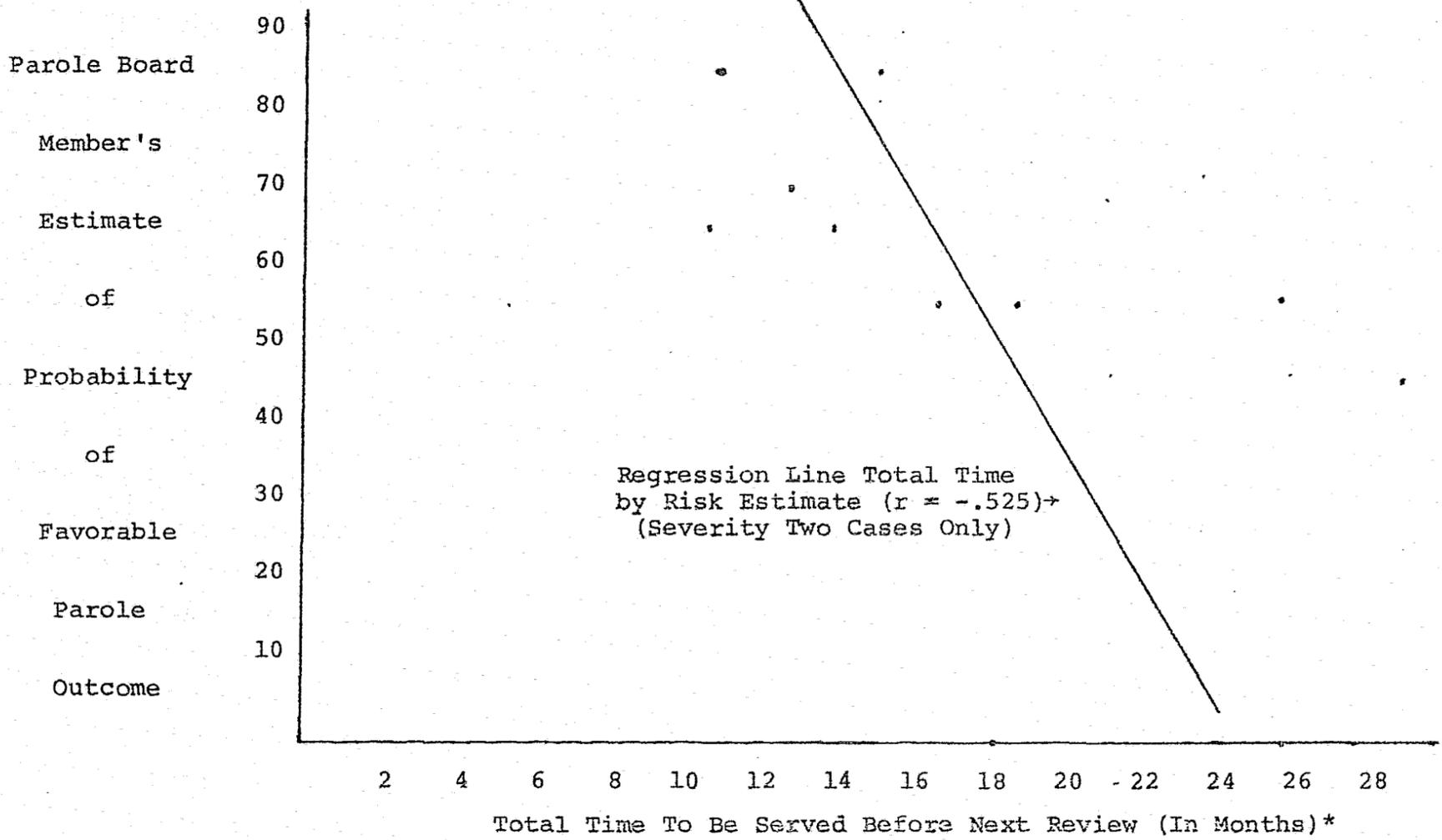


Figure 2
TOTAL TIME TO BE SERVED BY RISK ESTIMATE
(SEVERITY LEVEL TWO)

* Parole = 0 months continued

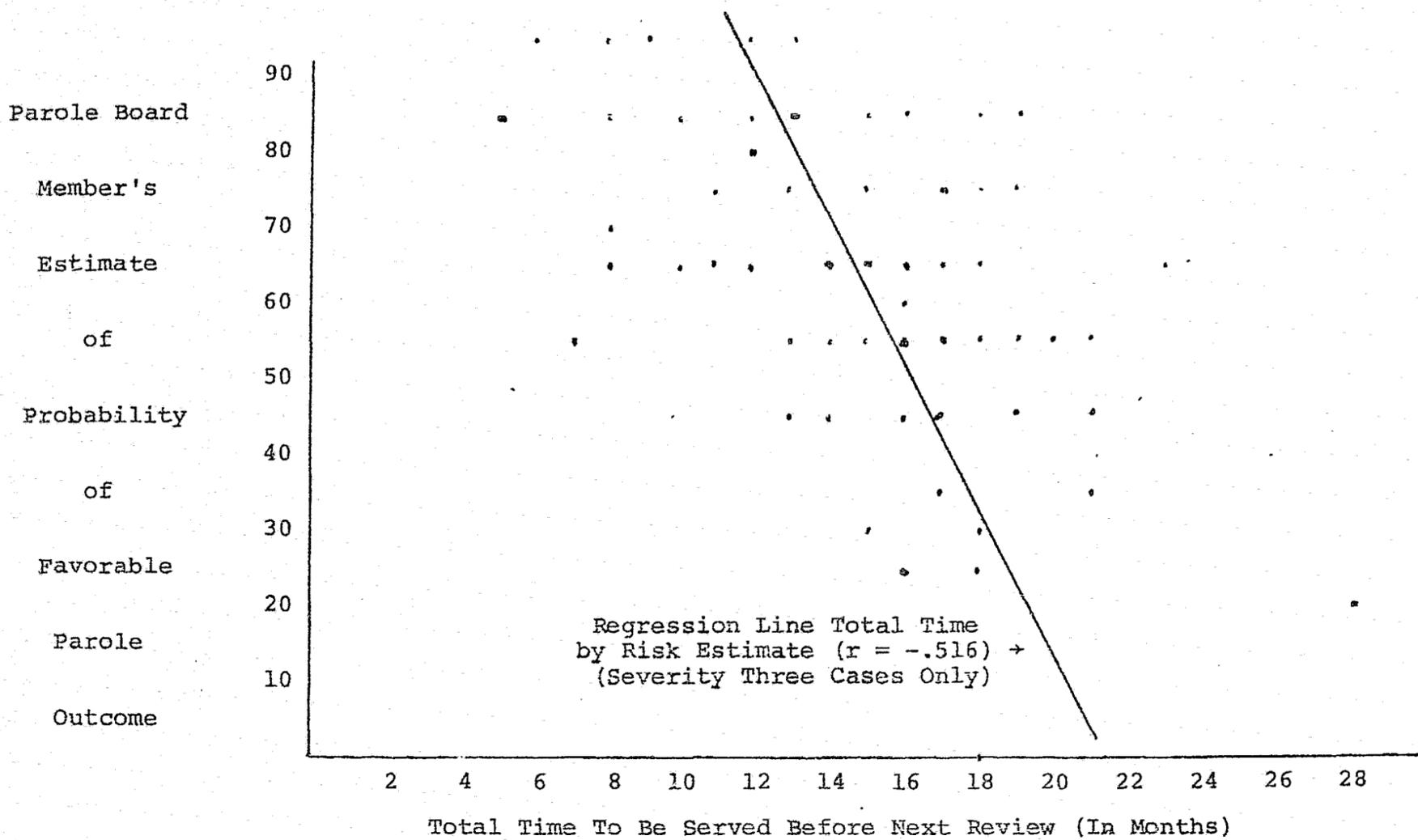


Figure 3
TOTAL TIME TO BE SERVED BY RISK ESTIMATE
(SEVERITY LEVEL THREE)

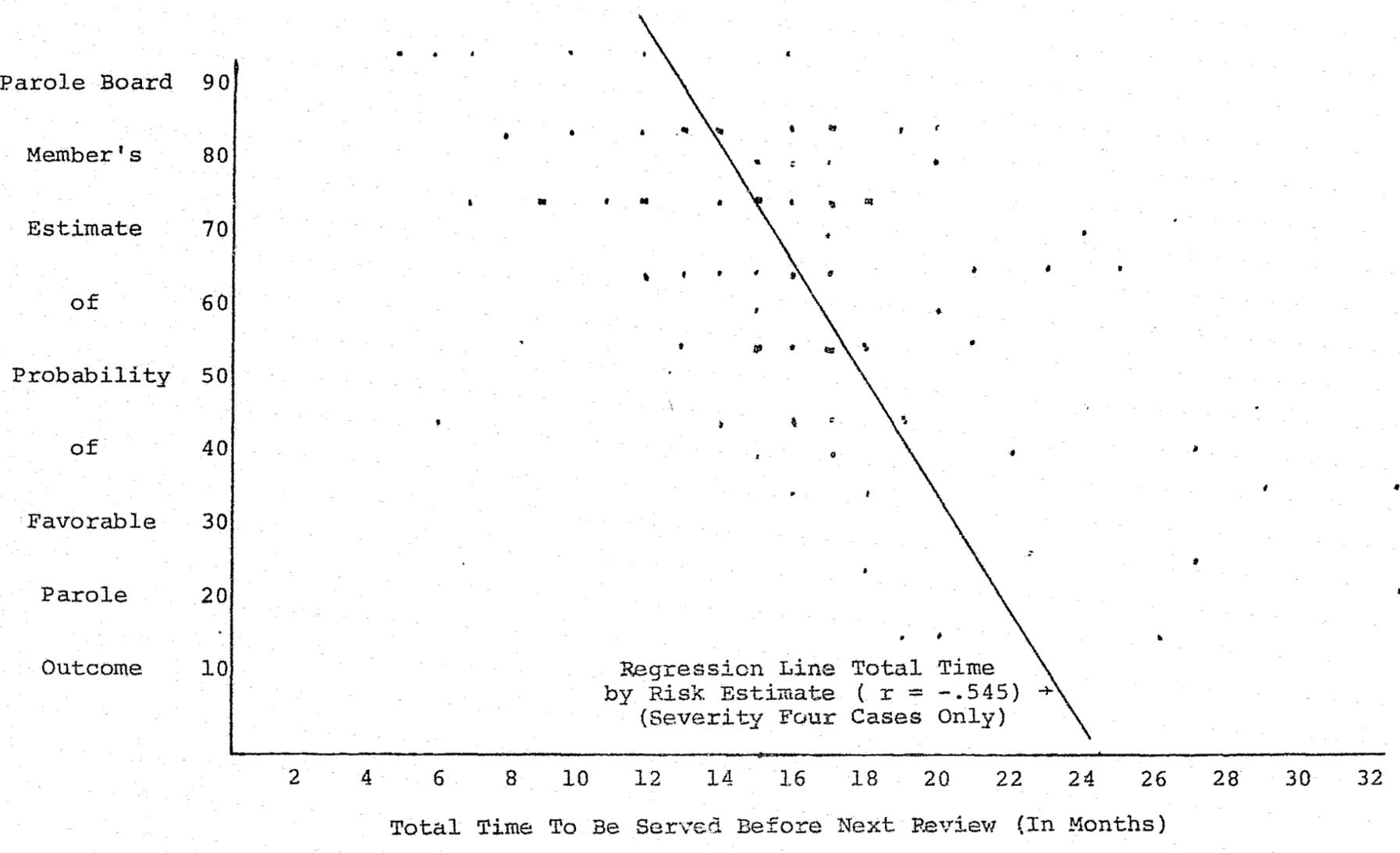


Figure 4
 TOTAL TIME TO BE SERVED BY RISK ESTIMATE
 (SEVERITY LEVEL FOUR)

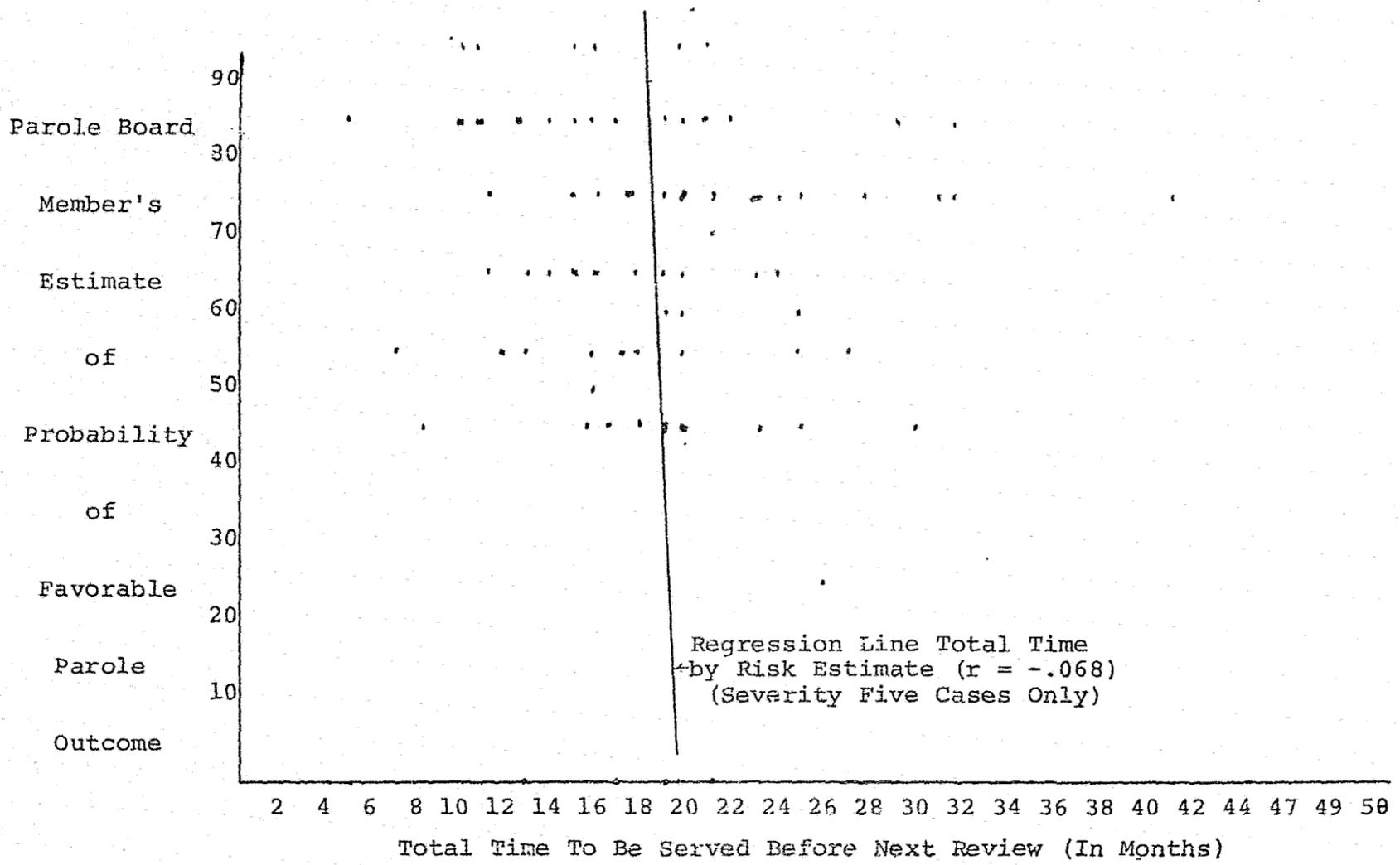


Figure 5
TOTAL TIME TO BE SERVEL BY RISK ESTIMATE
(SEVERITY LEVEL FIVE)

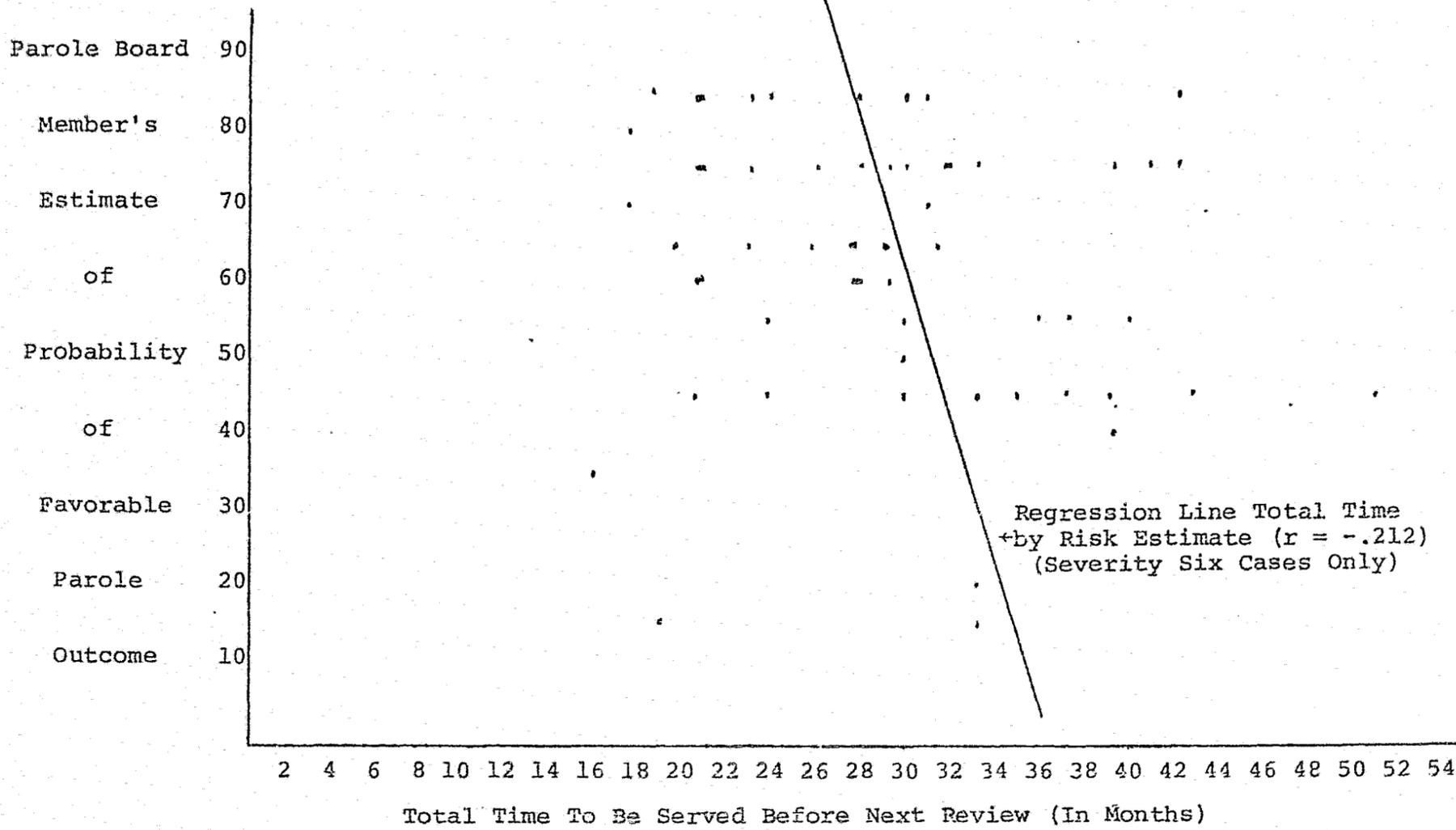


Figure 6
TOTAL TIME TO BE SERVED BY RISK ESTIMATE
(SEVERITY LEVEL SIX)

numbers of months to be served before review for each severity level separately could be hypothesized to increase further the correlations noted.

Subsequent Decisions

Two alternative policy models had been articulated by the parole decision-makers (hearing examiners and parole board members). One model proposed that the initial decision should be of a length sufficient to take into account the severity of the offense and initial estimate of likely parole outcome, and that subsequent decisions should primarily consider institutional behavior. Under this model, the initial continuance would indicate to the inmate that he would be granted parole at the next review if he maintained a satisfactory institutional record. The second model proposed that shorter continuances be given to all subjects. Release would not necessarily follow good institutional adjustment at the next hearing, but could be granted for extremely good institutional progress.

In Tables VI and VII is shown the relationship between institutional discipline rating and the parole/continue dichotomy¹⁰ for decisions two (# of response forms = 222) and three (# of response forms = 78).

¹⁰ Parole includes all decisions to parole or to continue four months or less (such continuances generally relate to parole program formulation).

Table VI

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE
RATING AND PAROLE (RECOMMENDED DECISION \leq 4 MOS.)
VS. CONTINUE FOR DECISION TWO

	Institutional Discipline Ratings					Total
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	
# Paroled	8	30	43	61	21	163
%	40.0	68.2	79.6	85.9	77.8	75.5
# Not Paroled	12	14	11	10	6	53
%	60.0	31.8	20.4	14.1	22.2	24.5
TOTAL	20	44	54	71	27	216*

$\chi^2 = 19.62, p < .001$

$\Phi = .301$

*6 subjects had a rating of 6 (not enough information)

It is apparent that the institutional discipline rating is a good predictor of the parole/continue decision ($\Phi = .301$). At decision two a person with a fair or better discipline rating is very likely to be paroled (82.2% paroled). The relationship between below average discipline and parole/continue is not as strong (40.1% continued). It is possible that there is a mixture of the two policies in operation at this point.

Table VII

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE RATING AND PAROLE (RECOMMENDED DECISION ≤ 4 MOS.) VS. CONTINUE FOR DECISION THREE

	Institutional Discipline Ratings					Total
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	
# Paroled	2	10	21	15	8	56
%	18.2	62.5	77.8	100	100	72.7
# Not Paroled	9	6	6	0	0	21
%	81.8	37.5	22.2	0	0	27.3
TOTAL	11	16	27	15	8	77*

$\chi^2 = 26.32, p < .001$

$\Phi = .585$

*1 subject had a rating of 6 (not enough information)

For decision three the institutional discipline rating proves to be a better predictor of the parole/continue decision ($\Phi = .585$). The relationship between average or better discipline rating and parole is higher (88.0% paroled) as is the relationship between below average ratings and a decision to continue (55.6% continued). It would appear that at the third hearing a good institutional discipline rating will result in parole.

Conclusions

From a set of four rating scales completed by parole

board members for a sample of cases at the time of decision-making, a method of describing and articulating presently implicit paroling policy is shown. This method might be used by parole board members to examine the congruence of actual with desired policy on a macroscopic level. At present, it appears that at the initial hearing, primary weight is given to the board member's estimation of the severity of the instant offense. Secondary weight is given to estimate of risk of parole violation. At subsequent hearings, institutional adjustment becomes a primary decision determinant.

Through the use of multiple correlation techniques and graphical analyses, a set of expected decisions for given factor combinations may be determined. In relation to individual case decision-making, these expected values may provide an equity measure to alert hearing examiners and parole board members to potentially disparate decisions.

While the measures utilized in this research were subjective measures, more objective measures would be desired for implementation as a policy control and equity device. For example, an experience table might be substituted for the prognosis (risk) measure, and an objective scale, as the one developed by Sellin and Wolfgang¹², might be utilized

¹²Sellin, T. and Wolfgang, M., The Measurement of Delinquency, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964.

for the severity measure.

Practical Applications

Several practical results appear to have been associated in some part with this research. As part of a pilot regionalization project, the parole board requested from the research team, and subsequently implemented, a policy/control/equity device similar to that described above (with separate guidelines for youth and adult offenders).¹³ Furthermore, in this pilot regionalization project, the policy of considering severity and prognosis (risk) at the initial hearing and, with a few specific exceptions, considering institutional performance as the major determinant at subsequent hearings was adopted.

¹³Hoffman, P.B. and Gottfredson, D.M., Paroling Policy Guidelines: A Matter of Equity, Report Number Nine, Davis, California: Parole Decision-Making Project, National Council on Crime and Delinquency Research Center, June, 1973.

APPENDIX A

FORM C

Case Name _____ Register Number _____
FBI Number _____

YOUTH CORRECTIONS ACT--EVALUATION SHEET

Please complete this form, seal in the envelope provided, and replace in the case folder. Remember, your best estimate is requested; it is not expected that you will provide exact answers to these questions.

1. Offense Severity

Please circle the letter which most closely corresponds to your evaluation of the severity of the offense behavior for which this subject was committed.

- a. Among the least serious offenses
- b. Less serious than the average
- c. Slightly less serious than the average
- d. Slightly more serious
- e. More serious than the average
- f. Among the most serious offenses

2. Participation in Programs*

Please circle the letter which most closely summarizes your evaluation of the subject's participation in institutional programs (since last review).

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. Very Good | d. Poor | f. Not enough information available |
| b. Good | e. Very Poor | |
| c. Fair | | |

*NOTE: Prior to 2/3/72, the scales used for "Participation in Programs" and "Institutional Discipline" are shown below. At the suggestion of several parole board members, these were revised to produce a five-point scale with an additional choice for cases with insufficient information. For our

3. Institutional Discipline*

Please circle the letter which most closely summarizes your evaluation of the subject's institutional discipline record (since last review).

- a. Very Good
- b. Good
- c. Fair
- d. Poor
- e. Very Poor
- f. Not enough information available

4. Estimate of Likely Parole Outcome

The 100 at the right of the scale represents certainty of favorable parole outcome. The 0 at the left of the scale represents certainty of unfavorable parole outcome. The center of the scale represents the point at which either favorable or unfavorable outcome is equally likely. Please circle a number on the scale below or mark an X on the line to indicate your estimate for this subject.

0 5 15 25 35 45 55 65 75 85 95 100

certainty of unfavorable parole outcome

certainty of favorable parole outcome

*NOTE: (continued) analyses, the following transformations were made: Very Good = Very Good; Above Average = Good; Slightly Above or Slightly Below Average = Fair; Below Average = Poor; Very Poor = Very Poor. [Insufficient information choice cases were eliminated from computation; however, such cases were limited to initial hearings.]

Institutional Progress

Please circle the number which most closely summarizes your evaluation of the subject's participation in institutional programs.

- 1. Very Poor
- 2. Below Average
- 3. Slightly Below Average
- 4. Slightly Above Average
- 5. Above Average
- 6. Very Good

5. Your Decision Recommendation: Parole _____
Number of months continued _____

6. Initials of Parole Board Member completing this instrument _____

*NOTE: (continued)

Institutional Discipline

Please circle the number which most closely summarizes your evaluation of the subject's institutional discipline record.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very Poor | 5. Above Average |
| 2. Below Average | 6. Very Good |
| 3. Slightly Below Average | |
| 4. Slightly Above Average | |

APPENDIX B

To be completed by research staff:

YOUTH CORRECTIONS ACT

1. Case Register # _____ Case Name _____
2. F.B.I. # _____
3. Actual Decision _____
4. Date of Decision _____
5. Board Members _____
6. If paroled, length of time served before parole grant

7. (a) Jail Time _____ months
(b) Prison Time _____ months
8. If more than a six-year sentence, indicate maximum
length _____
9. Hearing First
 Second
 Third
 Fourth
 Fifth
 Six or More

END