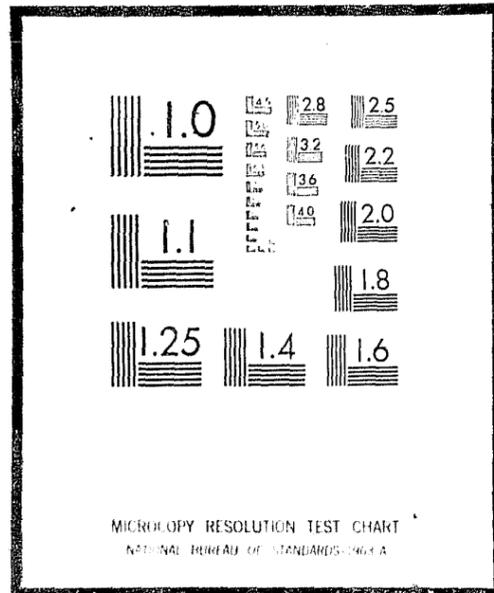


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The Prediction of Recidivism: A Review

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Introduction

"The ultimate goal of corrections under any theory is to make the community safer by reducing the incidence of crime. Rehabilitation of offenders to prevent their return to crime is in general the most promising way to achieve this end." (Task Force on Corrections, President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967.) The most frequently employed measure of rehabilitation in corrections has been the recidivism rate, or rate of return to crime. This paper seeks to provide a comprehensive review and criticism of the major recidivism studies of the last two decades. The emphasis in this review is on the prediction of recidivism.

The following is a brief description of the principal sources of the data to be discussed later. These sources are grouped as follows: (1) follow-up studies, in which subjects were followed-up to determine whether they became recidivists; (2) retrospective studies, in which antecedent variables among samples of prisoners were examined; (3) recidivism studies combining these two approaches; and (4) literature reviews.

Follow-up studies

1. Arbuckle, D. S., and Litwack, L., 1960. This study includes data from 500 boys, aged 12 - 17, in residence at the Lyman School for Boys during the period January 1, 1953 to December 31, 1956. The criterion for recidivism was recommitment to the same institution due to

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violation of parole or criminal activity during a 17 month period. The recidivism rate was 35%.

2. Arnold, W. R., 1965. This study provides data on 55 boys, aged 14 - 17, all Cook County parolees from the Illinois State Training School for Boys at St. Charles. Recidivism was defined as reincarceration during the first five months of parole. The recidivism rate was 20%.

3. Babst, D. V., and Hubble, M. E., 1964, 1965. These two studies present data from 753 boys and 354 girls "first-released" from the Wisconsin School for Boys and Wisconsin School for Girls, respectively. Recidivism was defined as incarceration in any public institution during the first year following release. The recidivism rates were 43.6% for the boys and 29.1% for the girls.

4. Cowden, J. E., 1966. These data are from 270 boys committed to the Wisconsin School for Boys from December, 1956, to November, 1957. Recidivism was defined as recommitment to any correctional institution during the 5-year period following release. No recidivism rate was reported.

5. England, R. W., 1955. This study presents data from 500 male and female federal offenders (M age - 37.0) placed on probation in eastern Pennsylvania from January 1, 1939, to December 31, 1944. The criterion for recidivism was a subsequent misdemeanor or felony conviction during a 6-year follow-up period. The recidivism rate was 17.7%.

6. Glaser, D., 1963. These data are from 1,015 men, aged 18 - 50+ at release, who comprised a 10% systematic sample of all adult males

released in 1956 from federal prisons after a sentence of over one year. Recidivism was defined as recommitment for a new offense or for parole or mandatory release rule violations, as well as convictions. The recidivism rate was 31%.

7. Glueck, S., and Glueck, Eleanor, 1930, 1937, 1943. These three classic studies are successive five-year follow-ups on 510 men whose parole from Massachusetts Reformatory expired during 1921 and 1922. Partial failure was defined as conviction for two minor offenses, or arrest for not more than three minor offenses, or arrest for not more than two major offenses not followed by conviction. Total failure was arrest for three or more serious offenses not followed by conviction, or conviction for one or more serious offenses, or desertion or dishonorable discharge, or being wanted, or commission of offenses without arrest or prosecution. Recidivism rates were 78.9% for the first 5 year follow-up period, 67.9% for the second, and 69.2% for the third. Only 32.3% persisted in criminal behavior over the entire 15 year period.

8. Glueck, S., and Glueck, Eleanor, 1939. The sample consisted of 923 delinquent boys (average age, 13 years 5 months) referred by the Boston Juvenile Court for clinical examination at the Judge Baker Foundation Clinic in Boston between 1917 and 1922. Recidivism was defined as major and minor offenses, arrests for all crimes not followed by conviction, crimes not discovered, warrants, desertions or dishonorable discharges within a 5 year period subsequent to the termination of the treatment prescribed by the Court. The recidivism rate was 88.2%.

9. Guze, S. B., 1964. These data are from 217 male felons assigned

by the Missouri courts between November 1, 1960, and April 30, 1961, to the St. Louis Branch Office of the Missouri State Board of Probation and Parole. There were 2 different measures of recidivism: (1) percentage of subjects arrested at least once, and (2) percentage of subjects imprisoned at least once during a 33 - 36 month follow-up period. Recidivism rates were 68% for arrests and 41% for imprisonment.

10. Hammond, W. H., and Chayen, Edna, 1963. This study provides data on 1,384 British male recidivists, aged 30 and over, who were subject to "preventive detention" in 1956. The follow-up criterion for recidivism was reconviction during the 1 to 7 year period following release. The recidivism rate was 80%.

11. Laulicht, J., 1962, 1963. These studies are based on 579 males, aged 11 - 17 (average age, 14.2), released between January 1, 1950, and December 31, 1958, from the Berkshire Farm for Boys in Canaan, New York. Recidivism was defined as apprehension for a criminal act or violation of parole resulting in commitment to another institution during a 1 to 7 year follow-up period. The recidivism rate was 34%.

12. Mandel, N. G., Collins, B. S., Moran, M. R., Barron, A. J., Gelbmann, F. J., Gadbois, C. B., and Kaminstein, P., 1963, 1965. These reports present data on 446 males, aged 15 - 70 (average age, 23.58), released from the Minnesota State Reformatory at St. Cloud, between July 1, 1955, and June 30, 1956. The criteria for recidivism employed will be discussed later in this paper. The recidivism rate was 62.33%.

13. Mannheim, H., and Wilkins, L. T., 1955. These data are based on 720 boys admitted to two Borstal centers in Great Britain between August

1, 1946, and July 31, 1947. The criterion for recidivism was reconviction within a three and one-half year period following release. The recidivism rate was 45%.

14. McCord, W., and McCord, Joan, 1953. Two follow-up studies are compared, one providing data on 65 boys, aged 8 - 12, in private Wiltwyck School and the other on 228 boys, aged 8 - 16, in a public New England school. Both employed the recidivism criterion of further court appearance, the former study utilizing a five year period after release, the latter, a three year period. Recidivism rates were 29.2% and 33.3%, respectively.

15. Metzner, R., and Weil, G., 1963. These data are taken from 311 males, aged from below 14 to 40, discharged or paroled in 1959 from the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Concord. Recidivism was defined as return to any prison within a two and one-half year period. The recidivism rate was 60.5%.

16. Reitzes, D. C., 1955. This study presents data on 176 former felons, who comprised a random sample of all parolees inducted from northern Illinois during World War II. The criterion for recidivism was reconviction during a five year period. The recidivism rate was 46.6%.

17. Rumney, J., and Murphy, J. P., 1952. These data are taken from 1,000 juveniles and adults, aged 10 - 73, placed on probation in Essex County, N. J., between January and June, 1937. Recidivism was defined in two ways: Subsequent arrest, or subsequent incarceration during an eleven year period following placement on probation. Recidivism rates

were 54% for arrests and 29% for imprisonment.

18. Scanlon, J. R., and Harville, U. L., 1966. This study is based on 293 male delinquents, aged 9 - 17, released from Georgia training schools during July 1, 1961 to June 30, 1962. The criterion for recidivism was a judgment based on extensive interview data concerning delinquent activities in the two year period subsequent to discharge. The recidivism rate was 47.5%.

19. Schnur, A. C., 1949. These data cover 1,762 men released from Wisconsin State Prison between January 1, 1936, and December 31, 1941. Recidivism was defined as arrest and conviction for an offense committed within two years after release which resulted in a sentence of six months or more in probation or to an institution. No recidivism rate was presented.

20. Weeks, H. A., 1958. This study presents data on 233 boys released from Highfields School and on 122 boys released from Annandale Reformatory between 1951 and 1954. Recidivism was defined as return, for any reason, to court and/or violation of probation or parole and resulting commitment to an institution during a period of at least one year following release. The recidivism rate at Highfields was 37%, and the Annandale rate was 53%.

21. Zuckerman, H. B., Barron, A. J., and Whittier, H. B., 1953. These data are from 668 males, aged 20 - 29, released from Minnesota State Reformatory between July 1, 1944, and June 30, 1945. Recidivism was defined as being held and fingerprinted, otherwise reported for law infraction, or returned as a parole violater during a five to seven

year period following release. The recidivism rate was 52.8%.

Retrospective Studies

1. Mannering, J. W., 1958. This study is based on 1,989 adult prisoners sentenced to three Wisconsin correctional institutions in 1956 and 1957. All subjects were classified as recidivists, i.e., all had felony convictions prior to this imprisonment. No recidivism rate was reported.

2. Weeks, H. A., and Ritchey, O. W., 1956. These data are from 861 boys and 329 girls, residents of the Ohio Boys Industrial School and Girls' Industrial School in 1954. Recidivism rates were based on those residents who were returnees to the respective institutions. Recidivism rates were 20% for the boys and 15% for the girls.

Combined Retrospective and Follow-Up Studies

1. Caldwell, M. G., 1951. Two studies are reported, both utilizing the same sample of 1,862 Alabama males (Median age = 28.9) whose probation terminated between July 1, 1937, and December 3, 1942. In the first study, the criterion for recidivism was previous commitment, fine, or probation unrelated to the sentence being served at the time of the study. The second study used a subsample of 403 subjects and used probation violation rate as its' measure of recidivism. The recidivism rates were 45.2% and 19.1%, respectively.

2. Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1965. This annual report presents a study utilizing past arrest records for 134,938 offenders aged from below 20 to above 50, as one measure of recidivism. A second study reported is a two year follow-up of 6,907 offenders released

between January and June, 1963, with subsequent arrests as the criterion for recidivism. The retrospective recidivism rate was 75% and the follow-up rate was 48%.

Reviews

1. Glaser, D., and O'Leary, V., 1966. This is a review of eight major parolee recidivism studies, including the Glaser study above. The other 7 studies are not included separately herein.

2. Schreiber, P., 1960. This review includes several recidivism studies of juvenile delinquents, two of which are included in the present listing of studies.

What is recidivism?

As can be noted in the preceding summaries of the studies reviewed, the variation in recidivism rates is markedly large. Undoubtedly, some of this variation reflects relative effectiveness in correctional practices. However, it should be emphasized that a part of this variation is probably due to other variables such as age range of sample, type of institution, type of prisoner, and differences between systems, including length of sentence, extent of use of probation or parole, and type of parole or probation supervision. For example, it is reasonable to expect that juveniles released from a private, therapy-oriented, "open" institution would exhibit a different recidivism rate from adult federal offenders released from a maximum-security prison.

The present authors believe that a major variable contributing to the confusing variation in recidivism rates among the studies presented is the different definitions of recidivism employed. This difference in

the definitions of recidivism can partially account for such differences as the 88% vs. 44% juvenile failure rates found by the Gluecks (1939) and Babst and Hubble (1964), respectively, and the 62% vs. 31% adult recidivism rates reported by Mandel et. al. (1963, 1965) and Glaser (1964), respectively. In each instance, the higher rates were obtained by the study with more inclusive criteria of recidivism.

It is evident, then, that a standard set of criteria for recidivism is a necessity if relevant evaluation and comparisons of correctional institutions and procedures are to be made. Such a set of criteria has been proposed recently by Mandel et. al. (1963, 1965) and subsequently recommended by the Gluecks (1965). This definition of recidivism consists of eight descriptive categories listed below in descending order with respect to relative seriousness:

1. Convicted for commission of felony.
2. Returned to custody as violater because of commission of alleged felony (not convicted).
3. Returned to custody as violater of parole rules because of commission of misdemeanor (whether convicted or not).
4. Returned to custody for violation of technical parole rules only.
5. Convicted and sentenced for one or more misdemeanors (other than traffic), but not a parole violater.
6. Convicted of one or more traffic violations resulting in fines of \$100 or more, or jail or workhouse sentences of 30 days or more, or both.

7. Charged, finger-printed, or "wanted" for a felony even though no record of conviction is available.
8. Charged or finger-printed for one or more misdemeanors (other than traffic) even though no record of conviction is available.

Two questions arise concerning Mandel's criteria. The first is whether the categories are actually arranged in order of relative seriousness. While this particular set of criteria may not be completely satisfying to all researchers, it does seem to be the best available now. Moreover, its common acceptance and use in research would rob the question of perfect ordinal nature of much of its incisiveness, with the empirical value of using standard criteria out-weighing the possible theoretical short-comings.

The second question is the choice of the arbitrary cut-off point separating recidivism from nonrecidivism. Mandel et. al. (1963, 1965) utilized categories 1 - 6 in their studies, which appears reasonable, although some researchers might prefer less inclusive criteria. Even if there were no agreement among researchers as to this cut-off point, some basis for comparison would still be retained because of the purported ordinal nature of the categories.

Another variable which should be included in the definition of recidivism is the length of the follow-up period. While the classic studies by the Gluecks (1930, 1939) utilized a 5-year plan, Laulicht (1962) reports that a 3 year period provided 81% of the total number of recidivists found in a 7 year follow-up period. Glaser (1964) found that a

3 year follow-up included "about 90% of probable future returns to prison data." The conclusion, then, is that a study of recidivism should employ a follow-up period of at least 3 years.

Correlates of Recidivism

In this section correlates of recidivism found in the above studies are reviewed. Although most attention is centered on pre-prison variables, prison and post-prison variables are also discussed briefly. Included as pre-prison variables are those indices available to the researcher at the time of imprisonment.

Highly Important Pre-prison Variables

Age. Almost all of the studies reviewed report a significant negative correlation between age and recidivism. Four interrelated generalizations can be made from the findings: (1) the older a criminal is when released from prison, the less likely is his return to crime; (2) the younger an offender is at his first arrest, conviction, or confinement, the more likely is he to continue in crime; (3) the younger an offender is when he leaves home, the more likely his recidivistic activity; (4) the younger an offender is when he leaves school, the more likely is he to continue in crime.

These findings are particularly alarming in the face of the fast increasing rate of juvenile crime and the current population trends, such that juveniles make up a growing percentage of the population. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) reports that, between 1960 and 1965, arrests of persons under 18 years of age rose 52% for several categories of offenses, whereas

arrests of persons 18 and over for the same offenses increased by just 20%. The result is a vicious circle -- an increasing number of juveniles, who manifest the highest crime rate, are also the worst recidivists, and thus produce a continuing rise in criminal activity.

Why is it that older age appears to bring with it a decline in criminal activity? The Gluecks (1930, 1937, 1943), in their successive five year follow-up on the same sample of criminals, suggest that the process of "aging" itself accounts for the decline in recidivism. This concept of aging cannot be naively considered as simple biological maturation, but implies economic, emotional, and social maturation.

In spite of the varied approaches of the recidivism studies, what can be said about actual recidivism rates? Attacking the "legend that two-thirds return to prison," Glaser (1964) presents three arguments against the notion that about 65% of offenders are again imprisoned after release: (1) since offenders with prior imprisonment usually receive longer sentences and are less readily paroled, they tend to accumulate in prison, so that they make up a misleadingly high percentage of the prison population; (2) generalizations about return rates within an entire prison system are usually made from the few institutions where recidivists tend to be concentrated; (3) considering the yearly release rate and prison population, a 65% return rate is statistically impossible. Glaser also presents data from a number of studies which tend to support his contention that one-third, rather than two-thirds of, prisoners do return.

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration

of Justice (1967) concludes that one-third of all offenders will be reimprisoned within a five-year period. England (1957), in a review of probation and post-probation, reports that the majority of the findings indicate only a 10 to 30% failure rate. Although many of the studies reviewed here are not comparable and although the rates reported are quite variable, the mean rate tends to be within the 35 to 55% range. This would seem to be more in line with Glaser's and the Presidential Commissions' opinions than the pessimistic 65% rate.

Prior Criminal Record. Another finding common to almost all of the studies reviewed is a positive relationship between prior criminal record and recidivism. In general, the longer the span of prior criminality and the greater the extent of past offenses, arrests, and commitments, the poorer the prognosis for success after release. This trend, however, tends to be offset by the influence of age, such that one or more commitments as a juvenile appear to be more unfavorable to future success than the same number of commitments later (Glaser and O'Leary, 1966).

Type of Offense. A relationship found to be significant in several of the studies is that between type of offense and recidivism (Glaser, 1964; Glaser and O'Leary, 1966; Glueck and Glueck, 1939; Mandel et. al., 1963, 1965; Metzner, 1963; Schnur, 1949). Typically the highest failure rates are found with those offenders whose crime is auto or other theft, burglary, forgery, or fraud. Intermediate recidivism rates are usually found for robbery, or for narcotics

and liquor violations, and lowest rates for assault, homicide, rape, or other sex offenses.

Moderately Important Pre-prison Variables

Race. Several studies report a significant correlation between race and recidivism (Babst and Hubble, 1964, 1965; Guze, 1964; Mannering, 1958; Metzner, 1963; Rumney, 1952; Schnur, 1949). While it is true that Negroes in the United States have a higher rate of arrest, conviction, and imprisonment than Caucasians, it has been suggested (Glaser, 1964; Glaser and O'Leary, 1966), that there is little evidence for a higher Negro recidivism rate if certain variables are controlled. These variables include low socio-economic status, high unemployment, low educational level, and residence in slum areas, all of which contribute to higher crime rates.

Educational Record. Although two researchers (Guze, 1964; Mannering, 1958) reported non-significant findings in this area, most studies reveal a significant relationship between school record and recidivism (Arbuckle and Litwack, 1960; Caldwell, 1951; Exner, 1949; Frey, 1951; Glueck and Glueck, 1939; Weeks and Ritchey, 1956). In general, the findings indicate that lower educational status, school retardation, and school misconduct are related to higher recidivism rates.

Sex. Even though most of the studies employ only male subjects, several of those with both male and female subjects indicate that males are more likely to be designated recidivists than females (Babst and Hubble, 1964, 1965; Glaser and O'Leary, 1966; Mannering, 1958; Rumney, 1952).

Mental Characteristics and Personality. In a number of studies significant correlations were reported between "mental" characteristics and recidivism. The Gluecks (1930) and Hammond and Chayen (1963) both found positive relationships between mental disease and recidivism, while Guze (1964) found a similar relationship between psychiatric diagnosis and recidivism. The Gluecks (1939) also reported that a juvenile whose family has a history of mental disease is more apt to become a recidivist. Personality prognosis was also found to be related to recidivism (Cowden, 1966; Exner, 1949; Frey, 1951) with more positive prognosis correlated with less recidivism. Although Mandel et.al. (1964) found no significant relationship between MMPI scores and recidivism, Panton (1962) reported significant correlations with three MMPI scales.

Work Record. Several studies have shown significant correlations of work record with recidivism (Exner, 1949; Glueck, 1930, 1939; Hammond and Chayen, 1963; Mannheim and Wilkins, 1955; and Reitzes, 1955). Typically, the finding is that the more stable, responsible, and upwardly mobile the offender has been prior to imprisonment, the more likely is his success subsequent to release.

Home Environment. Many of the investigators reported significant correlations between home background and recidivism (Arbuckle and Litwack, 1960; Babst and Hubble, 1964, 1965; Exner, 1949; Frey, 1951; Glueck and Glueck, 1939; Hammond and Chayen, 1963; Laulich, 1963; Mandel et. al., 1963, 1965; Mannheim and Wilkins, 1955; Reitzes, 1955; Weeks and Ritchey, 1956). In general, the findings indicate that

(1) the more intact the family and living situation; (2) the more positive the home environment, including good parent-child relationships, a moderate degree of discipline, and high family moral standards; and (3) the less criminality in the family, the less is the tendency toward recidivism. Although two studies (Cowden, 1966; Guze, 1964) emphasized non-significant correlations in this area, most of the evidence points to the importance of this variable.

Variables of Questionable Importance

Intelligence. In general, the findings relating intelligence to recidivism show only a slight or inconsistent pattern, with only two studies reviewed reporting significant correlations (Frey, 1951; Laulicht, 1963). Explanations for this lack of relationship include (1) the low reliability of intelligence tests given in a correctional setting with possible negative motivation on the part of the offenders; and (2) the fact that intelligence tests are usually administered immediately on arrival to an institution, when the new inmate is apt to be disoriented and frightened. In addition, many crimes reflect emotional behavior rather than rational thinking, so that intelligence may not be a relevant variable (Glaser and O'Leary, 1966).

Body Characteristics. Although there is widespread popular belief that criminals, and particularly "hardened" ones, can be readily identified by certain body characteristics, the studies reviewed show little evidence to support this view. The lone exception is Arbuckle's (1960) finding that height is inversely related to recidivism.

Religion. Only two studies (Caldwell, 1951; Scanlon and Harville,

1966) reported that pre-correctional church attendance is related to lower recidivism rates. Focusing on other aspects, the Gluecks (1939) reported a negative correlation between the Hebrew religion and recidivism, and Laulicht (1963) found a significant relationship between the mother's religious affiliation and juvenile recidivism. At best, evidence for the relation between formal church affiliation and recidivism appears to be slight.

Type of Military Separation. Three of the studies reviewed (Mandel et. al., 1963, 1965; Mannering, 1958) found dishonorable discharge from an armed service to be correlated with greater recidivism. However, this relationship does not seem to be pervasive.

Occupational Status. Although Caldwell (1951) and Reitzes (1955) found that higher occupational status was related to lower recidivism, Mandel et. al. (1963, 1965) reported opposite findings. The significance of this variable, thus, is doubtful.

Marital Status. While three studies (Mannering, 1958; Reitzes, 1955; Schnur, 1949) found marital stability to be negatively related to recidivism, Mandel et. al. (1963, 1965) reported opposite findings. This variable, too, appears to be of questionable predictive value.

Prison Variables

Although most of the studies reviewed are more concerned with pre-prison variables, three prison variables have been reported to be significantly related to recidivism. These are: (1) institutional offenses (Arbuckle, 1960; Glueck and Glueck, 1930; Hammond and Chayen, 1963; Mandel et. al., 1963; Schnur, 1949; Weeks and Ritchey, 1956);

(2) institutional adjustment (Babst and Hubble, 1964, 1965; Cowden, 1966); and (3) length of stay (Babst and Hubble, 1964; Laulicht, 1963; Mannering, 1958; Mannheim and Wilkins, 1955; Schnur, 1949). In general, the findings indicate that with less serious and fewer institutional offenses, with better institutional adjustment, and with shorter prison stay, the chances of success after release are significantly better.

Post-Prison Variables

Even though the findings relative to post-prison variables are sparse, the three variables of family relationships (Glueck and Glueck, 1930; Reitzes, 1955); social relations (Arnold, 1965; Reitzes, 1955); and area of residence (Babst and Hubble, 1964, 1965; Mannering, 1958; Weeks and Ritchey, 1956) seem to be significantly correlated with recidivism. The typical findings are that better and more stable family and social relations, and rural place of residence after release are related to lower recidivism rates.

Summary

1. The principal recidivism studies of the last twenty years were briefly outlined, with the sample description, definition of recidivism, and recidivism rate given for each study.

2. An examination of recidivism definitions revealed a large variation among the studies in the criteria and length of follow-up periods employed, making valid comparisons among studies difficult. Mandel's proposed standardized categories of recidivism were presented. Evidence indicated that a follow-up period of three years is the minimum length sufficient for a valid study.

3. In a discussion of actual recidivism rates, Glaser's arguments against a recidivism rate of 65% were presented. His evidence and that of others suggest a failure rate of about 33%. An examination of the studies reviewed herein revealed a mean recidivism rate within the 35 - 55% range.

4. The pre-prison variables of age, prior criminal record, and type of offense were found to be highly related to recidivism, while race, educational record, sex, mental characteristics, work record, and home environment appeared to be moderately important variables. Intelligence, body characteristics, religion, type of military separation, occupational status, and marital status appeared to be of little or questionable importance. Among the prison variables, institutional offenses, adjustment, and length of stay appeared to be moderately related to recidivism. The post-prison variables so related were family relations, social relations, and area of residence (urban vs. rural).

Conclusions

1. There is a pressing need for a standardized national program of recidivism studies. Our correctional systems are the object of much criticism, some of which may be warranted. The field of corrections has little evidence to support its claims of criminal rehabilitation, little evidence except its own word. Words are not enough; the need is for hard data, and a great deal of it. This will require the use of standard recidivism categories² such as Mandel's and the employment of adequate follow-up procedures. Once a national program of such studies is begun and refined, researchers can then focus on the efficacy of particular

correctional programs. If the purpose of corrections is to be rehabilitation, we must identify and evaluate that which does the best job of rehabilitating.

3. The second great need is for the specification of the variables prognostic of recidivism. One step might be the factor analysis of these variables to reduce their number and clarify their meaning. It could be that some common variance, e.g. social-economic status, underlies some of these common variables. A next step would involve the understanding of the contribution of certain variables to success and failure. Why is it true, for example, that several offender characteristics -- low socio-economic status, marital instability, low educational status, and poor home environment -- are highly prognostic of criminality (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967), but only slightly or moderately predictive of recidivism? An understanding of the working of these variables can lead to both more effective prevention and solutions.

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Footnotes

- 1 This review was supported in part by the State of Georgia Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Education. The views expressed herein are solely those of the authors.
- 2 Gottfredson (1967) has urged a uniform descriptive reporting system for use in all correctional work, so that comparable statistical data from different systems (across geographical boundaries, state, local, and national) may be collected.

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