

THE CONCERNS AND ATTITUDES OF PROBATION OFFICERS

A STUDY OF PERCEPTIONS

by

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SUMMARY OF RESULTS

A study was conducted through personal interviews to determine the roles and attitudes of 247 Probation, Parole and Aftercare Officers* at all levels. This total number was comprised of 138 Probation/Parole and 109 Probation/Aftercare Officers.

It was found that most of the officers perceived their role to be social workers in contrast to the public's perception of the P.O.'s role as primarily that of a law enforcement officer. Moreover, the P.O.'s indicated that there should be more of a balance between security and rehabilitation.

Courts, Reports and Communications were three areas of major concern for many P.O.'s who cited that lack of appreciation for the P.O.'s time and the attitude of the Judges towards the P.O.'s were of critical concern.

The Professional Developmental Examination was criticized for the content of the study syllabus, the instructors, and the amount of time allotted for training. Over half the P.O.'s placed some objection to being required to write the examination before acquiring an upgrade in status. Seniors and supervisors even outranked the line staff in their opposition to the examination as it is presently managed.

Much skepticism was indicated when promotional policies were discussed. Many probation officers felt that the selection process was based on the criterion of 'who you know', with the younger P.O. and females being more vocal in this regard.

It was found that the P.P.O. (Probation/Parole Officer) and P.A.C.O. (Probation/Aftercare Officer) supervised average caseload sizes of 81 and 37 respectively. Many P.P.O.'s expressed concern that their large caseloads limited their effectiveness and restricted them to a "warehousing" process. A comparison of past and current

* Throughout this report, P.O.1, R.O.1, P.O.2, and R.O.2 classification levels will be referred to as "line staff" and P.O.3 and P.O.4 classification levels will be referred to as "supervisory staff".

caseloads revealed that on Probation there are presently more serious offenders, more cases involving psychological disorders, more "sophisticated" individuals, younger and more female offenders. Volunteers were viewed positively by most P.O.'s as a means of assisting in caseload management.

It was estimated that the P.P.O. and P.A.C.O. spend an average of .83 and 1.68 hours per month respectively in direct client counselling for each case, while the time they spend "waiting around" in Court averages 5 hours per month for the P.P.O. and 10.7 hours per month for the P.A.C.O. As a means of increasing their effectiveness, P.O.'s requested more time for counselling and less emphasis on administrative tasks.

Overall, the P.O.'s indicated high satisfaction and low tension levels although the line staff showed less satisfaction and higher tension levels than the senior and supervisory staff. When asked whether they were planning to remain in their present job over the next two years, a large majority of P.O.'s from both Services answered in the affirmative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A-COURT RELATED MATTERS

From this study's data it is evident that, overall, the quality of relationship between the Courts and the Probation/Parole-Probation/Aftercare Services is at best mediocre.

1. It is recommended that in order to ease and encourage the flow of communication with the ultimate aim of mutually resolving any differences, a committee be struck. This committee would be comprised of senior officials from the Probation/Parole-Probation/Aftercare Services and the Judiciary.
2. Discussions with the Judiciary should be initiated to resolve and clarify a number of immediate issues. Such issues include:
 - (i) difficulties faced by P.O.'s in relation to "unenforceable" probation orders.
 - (ii) difficulties faced by P.O.'s in relation to restitution matters.
 - (iii) the high volume of PSRs requested.
 - (iv) methods to decrease the amount of the P.O.'s time spent in non-productive activity while in Court. Dialogues could include discussion of the feasibility of:
 - (a) Probation Court,
 - (b) greater use of court liaison officers.
 - (v) problems faced by some P.O.'s regarding late notification of court dockets.

B-STAFF TRAINING

One prominent concern voiced by probation officers from both Services was their dissatisfaction with the current system of training leading to the Professional Developmental Examinations (PDE). Dissatisfaction was high not only on the part of line staff but also at the senior and supervisory levels.

1. Regarding the material used for the examinations, it is recommended that the syllabus be updated to reflect current social work theories. A stronger emphasis on practical concerns is needed, particularly in the social work area where material should adequately reflect current client

needs. This is especially important in view of the increasing proportions of clients who are emotionally disturbed, or who have committed more serious offences.

2. It is further recommended that the length of the syllabus be reduced to a more manageable level.
3. Efforts should be made to reduce the workload of those P.O.'s who are close to examination time.
4. It is essential that seniors and supervisors be exposed to some training which will assist them in their role as instructors to P.O.'s. The assumption cannot be made that, by virtue of their role, they are naturally endowed with the capacity to impart the necessary knowledge.
5. Less reliance should be placed on seniors and supervisors to deliver the training component. Other inputs from professional educators and Staff Training and Development utilizing differential delivery systems would beneficially supplement the high involvement by seniors and supervisors.
6. The Ministry should explore the feasibility of new P.O.'s taking relevant courses from university faculties such as law, social work and administrative studies. Successful completion of these courses would form the major part of the training requirement. This is recommended as an additional option.
7. There is a definite need for more practical training in court-related duties in order to optimize P.O.'s effectiveness in Court. One excellent method which is presently being explored in some areas of the province is the use of moot Courts which would offer fundamental training not only to new P.O.'s but also to student lawyers.
8. The Ministry should consider exemptions for that part of the P.D.E. in which P.O.'s can demonstrate that they have undergone previous graduate work which can be judged equivalent to the prescribed Ministry training. This petition would be accompanied by course outlines, lists of required texts, and letters from the relevant educational institutions.
9. Senior probation officers have indicated a need for more training in administrative areas such as budgeting and management. It is recommended that upon promotion to a P.O.3 position, individuals undergo some training in administrative matters.
10. Probation officers at all levels should be strongly encouraged by the Ministry to participate in outside seminars and workshops which offer opportunities for them to develop or upgrade skills which are specific to their job (i.e., group or alcoholic counselling, interviewing skills, etc.).

C-CASELOADS

Needless to say, a very real and persisting day-to-day problem for line officers in the Probation/Parole Service is the excessively high caseload volume. No relief in this respect is imminent. The following areas would seem worthy of further serious consideration:

1. Innovative caseload management techniques.
2. Wherever possible, Senior probation officers carry a minimum caseload which would not only alleviate workload pressures for line staff but would also keep them "in touch" with the current needs of the probation population.
3. Creation of a classification of "assistant to P.O.'s". These individuals would assume a supportive role assisting P.O.'s with workload requirements where the need is indicated. This could involve a system of rotation from officer to officer and/or office to office.
4. More efficient use of volunteers which would first require:
 - (i) more public relations efforts regarding the concept of volunteers to foster better acceptance throughout the Service.
 - (ii) assessment of the range of uses of volunteers and recruitment policies.
5. Use of more experienced and responsible volunteers in the capacity of volunteer coordinators.

D-FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Since promotional policies were perceived as questionable, there is a need for more feedback to unsuccessful candidates of P.O. job competitions. This is particularly important in situations where a P.O. has made several unsuccessful attempts.
2. Discussions should take place between senior officials of the two Services and field personnel regarding implementation of a better information distribution system. These discussions should focus on what information should be disseminated as well as the best information distribution system which would ensure receipt by the appropriate audiences.
3. At this time (roughly three years after its introduction), it would be appropriate to review the purpose and need of the monthly workload analysis forms. No doubt some basic information is needed for accounting and statistical

purposes. However, much of the information which is currently collected is of questionable value. The Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare Services should review the contents of the present report to arrive at a more concise version. This will not only minimize the amount of time needed to complete each report but could also increase the reliability of the information supplied. Furthermore, because of the information that is/will become accessible via the probation information system, it would seem reasonable to phase out the workload analysis entirely.

4. Because of the unfavourable winter conditions and high costs of gasoline in Northern Regions it would seem reasonable that the Ministry should make representation to the Ontario Government to review the current mileage rates for the Northern Regions.
5. Two obvious areas for further research or analysis which would seem indicated are:
 - (i) exploration and testing of new caseload management modalities.
 - (ii) relationship between different styles of supervision and their effects on the client.

INTRODUCTION

A-BACKGROUND

This study was initiated at the request of senior Ministry officials that research be conducted among staff of the Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare Services. This, of course, was in keeping with the Ministry's overall plan to conduct research among all levels of staff. It was suggested that the study focus on the role and attitudes of the probation officer. This focus is particularly relevant in view of the fact that the two services have undergone rather significant changes, e.g., amalgamation, increased caseloads, etc.

Following an extensive review of the pertinent research literature, it was decided that before the study could be successfully undertaken, input from field staff, management and other Ministry officials should be solicited. This strategy resulted in over fifteen meetings with individuals from within the Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare Services.

The nature of these meetings consisted of spending one day with preselected probation officers in order for the research person to gain some insight into the duties and roles of the P.O. As a result of these valuable meetings it was possible to construct the necessary research instruments in such a way as to make them more relevant to the P.O.'s job. In addition, this made field staff aware of the study and gave them an opportunity to provide input at the developmental stages of the research project. In fact, many of the areas under investigation were a direct result of suggestions made by staff at these early phases of the study.

Because the focus is primarily based on the perceptions of probation officers with respect to work-related aspects, it is quite possible that what is perceived may not necessarily accurately reflect the actual state of affairs. While no claim is made as to the accuracy of the perceptions, what probation officers perceive to be real must be real in its social consequences. (see Thomas, 1951)

In view of the recent changes which have taken place (e.g., amalgamation of Probation Services and Parole/Aftercare) and ongoing changes in the structure and nature of the services, a study of the role of the probation officer seemed warranted and timely.

The data from this study will serve not only as a basic description of probation officers (from both services) and their work, but will also serve as a barometer of P.O.'s perceptions on key job-related issues and policies.

B-RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The data for this study were collected via intensive personal interviews with probation officers at all levels. The interview schedule was semi-structured to allow respondents the freedom to elaborate on certain questions. After the interview was completed, P.O.'s were asked to complete a short questionnaire. These research instruments included questions about the role of the P.O., problems in carrying out that role, solutions to perceived problems, perceptions of Ministry policies (e.g., use of volunteers, contracting out of services, professional developmental exams, etc.) as well as measures of job tension and job satisfaction.

While it was estimated that the individual interviews would last no longer than one and one-half hours, it was very common for some interviews to last three to four hours. The interviewers allowed the length of the interview (within limits) to be dictated by the individual respondents.

C-SAMPLE

The interviews were conducted by both male and female interviewers between May and November, 1976, with the bulk in the months of June through September.

A total of 247 probation officers were interviewed.* Of this total, 138 were from the Probation/Parole Service and 109 were from the Probation/Aftercare Service. These samples were chosen such that there would be representation from all respective geographical regions, all P.O. classification levels, field offices of varying sizes, and both male and female officers. Once control of these criteria was ensured, the names of those to be interviewed were chosen at random from the most up-to-date nominal roll lists. This procedure yielded a sample whose characteristics are described in Table 1.

Other demographic characteristics generalizable to the two Services are found in Appendix A. Overall, the Probation/Aftercare officer tends to be younger and more likely to be single when compared to the Probation/Parole officer. This would also help explain the fact that 39.9% of the Adult probation officers have spent over ten years in corrections as compared to only 18.3% of the Juvenile group.

It was found that among those individuals who were involved in this type of work prior to 1972, nine out of ten officers

* It is noteworthy to mention that of 248 projected interviews, there was only one person who refused to be interviewed.

from the present Probation/Parole Service were previously in the Probation Service. This compares with only four out of ten for the present Probation/Aftercare Service.

Educational backgrounds for officers from both Services are very similar with over three-quarters of all officers having a university or college degree.

NOTE: In those cases where a statistical test is applied, p (probability) indicates the statistical reliability, or degree of confidence one can have in the results. A ($p < 0.05$) indicates that 5 times out of 100 such a statistic will achieve that value by chance and chance alone. Similarly a ($p < 0.01$) indicates that the event will occur once in a hundred times by chance and chance alone. If the difference has a chance of occurring less than five times in a hundred, the observed difference is judged as being a real difference.

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY SAMPLE

Total Sample

(n=247)

PROBATION/PAROLE
(n=138)

PROBATION/AFTERCARE
(n=109)

<u>n</u>			<u>n</u>		
<u>%</u>			<u>%</u>		
<u>Region</u>					
North	23	(16.6%)	North	25	(23.0%)
East	28	(20.3%)	East	41	(37.6%)
Central	48	(34.8%)	West	43	(39.4%)
West	39	(28.3%)			
<u>Classification</u>					
P.O.1	24	(17.4%)	P.O.1	31	(28.4%)
R.O.1	1	(0.7%)	R.O.1	0	(0.0%)
P.O.2	76	(55.1%)	P.O.2	46	(42.2%)
R.O.2	5	(3.6%)	R.O.2	7	(6.4%)
P.O.3	17	(12.3%)	P.O.3	14	(12.8%)
P.O.4	15	(10.9%)	P.O.4	11	(10.1%)
<u>Office Size</u>					
1 - 4	38	(27.5%)	1 - 4	37	(34.0%)
5 - 7	35	(25.4%)	5 - 7	34	(31.2%)
8 - 9	33	(23.9%)	8 - 9	29	(26.6%)
10+	32	(23.2%)	10+	9	(8.2%)
<u>Sex</u>					
Male	108	(78.3%)	Male	71	(65.1%)
Female	30	(21.7%)	Female	38	(34.9%)

FINDINGS

A-PERCEIVED ROLE

Three reference points commonly used in the Probation/Aftercare and Probation/Parole Services to describe the role of the probation officer are: Law, Social Work, and Administration. That these are the major key job aspects meets with little disagreement. What is more important is to gain an understanding of the relative weights which the incumbents of these roles would ascribe to each aspect.

PROBATION OFFICERS' AND PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF ROLE

Probation officers were asked to describe their role as to whether it was perceived by them to be mostly like that of a law enforcement officer, a social worker, or an office administrator. In addition, they were asked as to how they felt the general public viewed the role of the probation officer. Table 2 represents the results of these questions as well as a measure of agreement between P.O.'s perceptions and the general public's perceptions. It was decided to restrict the analysis to the line staff levels because the sheer nature of the seniors' and supervisors' positions would predetermine the direction of job emphasis.

TABLE 2

P.O.'S PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE AND PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF ROLE

		Public's Perceptions			
		Law Enforcer	Social Worker	Office Admini- strator	Total
P.O.'s Perceptions	Law Enforcer	25	3	0	28 (15.9%)
	Social Worker	98	36	0	134 (76.1%)
	Office Admini- strator	8	6	0	14 (8.0%)
	Total	131 (74.4%)	45 (25.6%)	0 (0.0%)	176 (100%)

The majority of P.O.'s (76.1%) place the emphasis on the social worker role. When the responses of probation officers from each Service are separated, there is more emphasis placed on the social worker role by Probation/Aftercare staff (84.1%) than by the Probation/Parole staff (69.1%).

According to the probation officers the pattern of emphasis is reversed when one examines the P.O.'s view of the public's perceptions. In fact, 74.4% of the P.O.'s indicated that the public perceived them mainly as law enforcement officers, although many P.O.'s mentioned that the public had no idea of what the probation officer's role entails.

Of the 176 P.O.'s who answered the questions, only 61 (34.5%) indicated that the way in which the public perceived the role was in fact congruent with their own perceptions. In this respect, P.O.'s often mentioned that the Ministry as a whole has done very little in educating the public as to the role of Probation, Parole and Aftercare in the correctional system. It was acknowledged, however, that this is a problem which pervades throughout Correctional Services and that to some extent this reflects itself in their respective Services.

SECURITY AND REHABILITATION

Two generally accepted goals of the Ministry are security and rehabilitation. Once again, P.O.'s were asked to relate these goals to their own work situations and indicate where they felt the emphasis lay. The second part of the question related to their preferences, i.e., where the emphasis should be. The responses of the two Services were significantly different to warrant separate analyses. [see Tables 3 (a) and (b)]

Essentially, the Probation/Parole staff would like to see a slightly more balanced approach along the security-rehabilitative continuum. The amount of emphasis (70.5%) on the rehabilitative goals was perceived to be satisfactory.

The Probation/Aftercare respondents demonstrate a similar trend with the exception that 82.1% indicate the existing emphasis is on rehabilitation. Roughly eighty per cent of the P.A.C.O.'s felt that their own goal emphasis complied with what they perceived to be currently emphasized. The corresponding figure of P.P.O.'s who identify with their Service's goals is only 67.6%.

In the process of carrying out his/her job duties, the probation officer must, by necessity, interface with a variety of systems. In the context of the P.O.'s job such systems may include the Courts, the Ministry itself, outside agencies, police, etc.

TABLE 3(a)

PRESENT EMPHASIS IN RELATION
TO WHERE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE

(a) PROBATION/PAROLE

Emphasis "should be"					
	Security	Equal	Rehabili- tation	Total	
Emphasis "is"	Security	4	5	14	23 (21.9%)
	Equal	2	5	1	8 (7.6%)
	Rehabili- tation	2	10	62	74 (70.5%)
	Total	8 (7.6%)	20 (19.1%)	77 (73.3%)	105 (100%)

Level of congruence = 67.6% ($71 \div 105$) between
where emphasis "is" and where emphasis "should be".

TABLE 3(b)

(b) PROBATION/AFTERCARE

Emphasis "is"	Emphasis "should be"				
	Security	Equal	Rehabili- tation	Total	
	Security	2	0	8	10 (11.9%)
	Equal	0	3	2	5 (6.0%)
	Rehabili- tation	1	6	62	69 (82.1%)
	Total	3 (3.6%)	9 (10.7%)	72 (85.7%)	84 (100%)

Level of congruence = 79.7% ($67 \div 84$) between
where emphasis "is" and where emphasis "should be".

Of the total sample of 247 respondents, 181 (73.3%) indicated that in many situations conflicts arise when dealing with these different systems. A significantly higher proportion of the Juvenile Service P.O.'s (79.8%) experience conflicts when compared to their Adult counterparts (68.2%). In spite of this, however, the sources of conflicting demands for the two Services are almost identical. (see Table 4)

TABLE 4

MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOURCES
OF CONFLICTING DEMANDS

(Rank ordered)

Source	%
1. Ministry - Courts	25.1%
2. Officers - Courts	21.4%
3. Officers - Ministry	20.9%
4. Ministry - Clients	18.2%
5. Officers - Police	16.0%
6. Clients - Courts	12.8%

Particularly noticeable is the fact that the Courts play a predominant causative role in conflicts. The data from this study consistently point to the fact that the Courts present rather serious problems for probation officers. P.O.'s felt that the demands imposed upon them by the Courts often were at odds with the demands of the Ministry and/or their own objectives. More will be said about the specific kinds of problems emanating from the Courts in the following section.

B-ISSUES SURROUNDING COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Three frequently mentioned areas of concern which were alluded to in the preliminary conversations with P.O.'s were the Courts, Presentence Reports/Social Histories and Communications. It was, therefore, decided that the interview questions should allow for discussion of the above-mentioned areas.

The data in Table 5 indicate that the three areas are of crucial concern to a large number of probation officers at all levels. Problems vis-a-vis the Courts and Reports were mentioned significantly more often by P.O.'s from the Adult Service than P.O.'s from the Juvenile Service. The number of P.O.'s from both Services citing problems in Communications was also very high.

TABLE 5

PROBLEMS WITH COURTS, REPORTS AND
COMMUNICATIONS BY SERVICE

	PROBATION/PAROLE N=136		PROBATION/AFTERCARE N=109		"t"
	%	#	%	#	
Courts	69.1	94	54.1	59	p<.05
P.S.R.'s/S.H.'s	52.2	71	14.7	16	p<.05
Communications	60.3	82	67.0	73	p>.05

Based on the responses supplied by P.O.'s, it was possible to accurately identify several distinct examples of the kinds of problems perceived by P.O.'s with respect to each of the three areas. Generally speaking, unless otherwise indicated, these examples apply to both Services.

COURTS

Of utmost concern was the fact that the judges had very little appreciation for the probation officers' time. Furthermore, P.O.'s emphasized the fact that it was usually quite difficult to have access to the judge to discuss matters relating to particular cases. One-fifth (21.4%) of the P.O.'s mentioning courts as a problem felt that the judges held a negative attitude toward the P.O.'s and that their role was not fully appreciated. Rather, they felt that they were treated as minions of the Court.

Some frustration was expressed by 15.8% of the P.O.'s (predominantly from the Probation/Parole Service) regarding the nature of some probation orders which are sometimes unenforceable from the P.O.'s standpoint. Monitoring a curfew and guaranteeing attendance at A.A. Meetings are two examples mentioned in this regard.

Probation officers also find it unrealistic for the judge to delegate to the P.O. the authority to determine the amount of restitution and the mechanics by which restitution is to take

place. It becomes not only a problem of time but also a problem of its viability.

REPORTS

As indicated in Table 5 the P.A.C.O.'s experience very little difficulty with the Social Histories. It was mentioned by only 14.7% of Probation/Aftercare Officers. This finding is in direct contrast to and significantly different from the degree of problems experienced by P.P.O.'s with the presentence reports (52.2%).

The major complaint in the area of P.S.R.'s is that the Courts are requesting P.S.R.'s indiscriminately, and that in many situations the request is made simply to confirm the judge's position or opinion of the case in the eventuality of sentence appeals.

Given the fact that a proper P.S.R. takes much preparatory work and given the high frequency of requests, there is the problem of time needed to complete a P.S.R. if one considers this in the context of the already large caseloads.

A less frequently mentioned problem concerned the fact that P.O.'s were not legally permitted to make recommendations to the Courts.

When one compares the number of P.S.R.'s completed by P.P.O.'s with the number of Social Histories completed by P.A.C.O.'s, it is not surprising to note that far more P.P.O.'s articulated problems with reports. For example, in the year of 1976 there was a total of 12,680 P.S.R.'s completed by the Adult Service, whereas 1,795 Social Histories were completed by the Juvenile Service during the same period. On the whole, then, the Adult Service completes seven times the number of reports completed by the Juvenile Service.

In light of this, it is quite understandable why this area would be of a much greater concern to the officers from the Adult Division as the sheer numbers involved would seem to override peripheral concerns.

COMMUNICATIONS

A sizeable proportion of P.O.'s from both services expressed concern in the general area of communications. Complaints in this area were made by 60.3% of P.P.O.'s and 67.0% of P.A.C.O.'s. It is clear that it is a concern which permeates both services at a relatively high rate. The examples often mentioned were quite specific and emotionally laden. P.O.'s perceived the communications problems, not as overwhelming but nonetheless, as serious day-to-day irritants.

The foremost complaint was the fact that the "information distribution system" currently used is both inadequate and ineffective. The main problem was one of selectivity. Often, P.O.'s would receive an overflow of information, some of which was not pertinent to the P.O.'s job. On the other hand, there was also the belief that some information which was relevant to the P.O.'s job would not go beyond the supervisor's level and they would learn of new policies or procedures after the fact with little or no immediate sharing of information. In fact, 73.9% (102) of all officers from the Adult Service and 69.7% (76) of all officers from the Juvenile Service complained of noninvolvement in Ministry decisions which had direct bearing on their day-to-day operation. There was a general desire for greater involvement either directly or indirectly.

P.O.'s from both the Juvenile Service and the Adult Service indicated that there is very little communication between themselves and the training schools and adult institutions respectively.

The P.P.O.'s felt that the quality of communication with the police departments was often very poor. In fact, at times it became quite difficult to obtain information regarding a client from police authorities. It is not difficult, of course, to understand some of the reasons for this. To a large extent the role of the P.O. and that of the police may be in conflict. While the two roles need not be in conflict there is still the implicit perception that the two ends of the Criminal Justice System are at cross-purposes. The main function of the police is to apprehend, whereas the probation officer is concerned with interacting with the offender and hopefully affecting some attitudinal and behavioural change.

COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY

Table 6 depicts the proportion of P.O.'s from each Service who mentioned problems in the above areas according to the size of the community in which they worked. It was decided to distinguish those communities of less than 100,000 in population from those with 100,000 and over.

It is evident from this analysis that there are significantly more P.O.'s from larger communities (i.e., 100,000 and over in population) than from smaller communities who made mention of problems with the Courts. This statistically significant difference occurs for both Juvenile and Adult Services.

Several reasons may be cited for this rather solid difference among P.O.'s from small vis-a-vis large communities. In small communities it becomes much easier to have direct access to the Courts and to develop suitable working arrangements. The P.O. in a small community is probably much more

familiar with the judge than is the case in a large metropolitan centre where such freedom of access is not always afforded. Communication links between the Probation/Parole or Probation/Aftercare Office and the relevant Court are obviously much easier to establish in a small community because fewer personalities are involved. In fact it was often mentioned by P.O.'s from these communities that their relationships with their local courts were relaxed and it was not uncommon for the judge and probation officers to meet informally outside of the Courtroom.

With respect to problems in Reports and Communications, no significant differences between P.O.'s from small and large communities were evident. This would suggest that problems in these two areas exist to the same degree irrespective of the community size where the probation officer is working.

TABLE 6

PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS WITH COURTS,
REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY
WHERE P.O.'S CASELOADS ARE LOCATED

	PROBATION/PAROLE			PROBATION/AFTERCARE						
	< 100,000 (N=46)		100,000 + (N=58)	"t"	< 100,000 (N=38)		100,000 + (N=45)	"t"		
	%	#	%	#		%	#	%	#	
Courts	52.2	(24)	79.3	(46)	p<.05	26.3	(10)	64.4	(29)	p<.05
Reports	43.5	(20)	56.9	(33)	p>.05	18.4	(7)	8.9	(4)	p>.05
Communi- cations	50.0	(23)	69.0	(40)	p>.05	71.1	(27)	66.7	(30)	p>.05

COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

Tables 7(a) and (b) describe the proportions of P.O.'s mentioning problems according to geographical regions as they appeared in the Probation/Parole, Probation/Aftercare nominal rolls.

TABLE 7

PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS WITH
COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS
BY GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

(a) PROBATION/PAROLE

	North (23)		East (28)		Central (48)		West (39)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Courts	60.9	(14)	42.9	(12)	83.3	(40)	71.8	(28)
Reports	60.9	(14)	53.6	(15)	47.9	(23)	48.7	(19)
Communications	47.8	(11)	60.7	(17)	62.5	(30)	61.5	(24)

(b) PROBATION/AFTERCARE

	North (25)		East (41)		West (43)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
Courts	40.0	(10)	61.0	(25)	55.8	(24)
Reports	24.0	(6)	4.9	(2)	18.6	(8)
Communications	24.0	(6)	63.4	(26)	72.1	(31)

In relation to problems with the Courts in the Adult Service, 83.3% of P.O.'s from the Central Region (which includes Toronto) cited problems with the Courts. At the other extreme is the Eastern Region, with only 42.9% of officers communicating such problems. A plausible explanation for the large proportion from the Central Region has already been alluded to. This region includes the Metropolitan Toronto area. Therefore, it may not be due to any inherent characteristic of the region but more so because it represents a high concentration of P.O.'s from large communities.

In the Juvenile Service, 61.0% of P.O.'s from the Eastern Region referred to Court problems. A similar explanation for this would seem reasonable especially in view of the fact that the Eastern Region not only includes parts of Toronto but the Ottawa area, as well.

With respect to problems in the Reports and Communications, more P.P.O.'s from the Northern Region tend to perceive Report problems but less Communication-type problems.

COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY CLASSIFICATION LEVEL

The high level of concern regarding various aspects of the Courts, Reports and Communications appears to be evident among all levels of P.O. staff. One might expect that it is the line staff who experience the day-to-day difficulties in the above areas. This would seem intuitively correct, especially because it is the P.O.1 and P.O.2 who are primarily involved with the Courts and who write P.S.R.'s or Social Histories. However, the seniors and supervisors from both Services are as concerned as line staff about these issues. Table 8 demonstrates this finding. The only exception to this is in relation to the Courts, where significantly more P.A.C.O.'s at the senior and supervisory levels (80%) mentioned the Courts as a problem area compared to only 46.4% of P.O.1's & 2's from the Juvenile Service. Otherwise, the data strongly suggest that line staff and supervisory staff alike perceive similar problems. Furthermore, the data would seem to suggest that seniors and supervisors are "in tune with" their subordinates' perceptions.

TABLE 8

PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS WITH COURTS, REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY CLASSIFICATION LEVEL

	PROBATION/PAROLE				PROBATION/AFTERCARE			
	P.O.1&2 (N=105)	P.O.3&4 (N=32)	"t"		P.O.1&2 (N=84)	P.O.3&4 (N=25)	"t"	
	% #	% #			% #	% #		
Courts	66.7 (70)	71.9 (23)	p>.05		46.4 (39)	80.0 (20)	p<.05	
Reports	51.0 (53)	56.3 (18)	p>.05		13.1 (11)	20.0 (5)	p>.05	
Communi- cations	60.0 (63)	56.3 (18)	p>.05		69.0 (58)	60.0 (15)	p>.05	

C-PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL EXAMINATIONS

The Professional Developmental Exam (P.D.E.), as part of the training program, is normally written in the initial six or seven months of operation to determine the P.O.'s abilities in the three basic areas of social work, legal principles and administrative procedures. Since an upgrading in status is not achieved until completion of two years service, it is evident that the exam and the preparation for it are used primarily as tools for basic training.

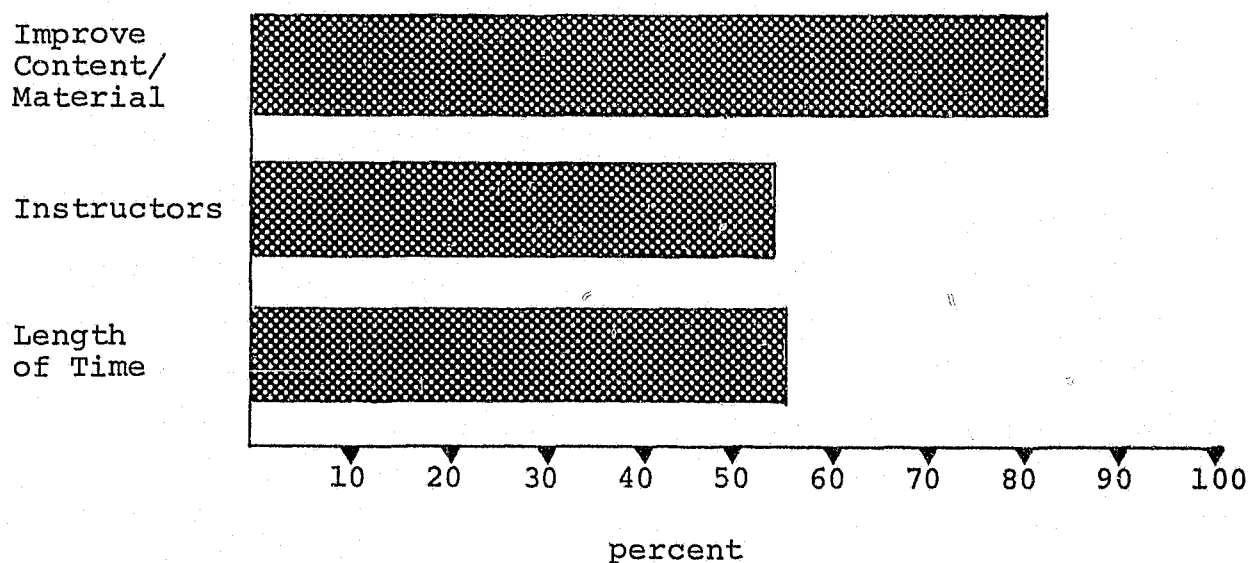
The supervisors and seniors, holding primary responsibility as instructors, receive their support and direction from the Staff Training and Development Branch. Among its recommendations, a 1973 Task Force on Staff Training and Development* stated that ".....the model proposed assumes adequate numbers of qualified seniors and supervisors to provide optimum supervision/training of new staff".

AREAS OF DISCONTENT

The Professional Developmental Exam engendered a high degree of consternation among all P.O. levels within both Services. The 'content/material' used for the exam was cited as an area for improvement by 81.7% (170) of P.O.'s at all levels who responded to the question. Similarly, 53.1% (104) suggested the 'instructors' as an area of concern and 54.6% (106) sought some adjustment in the 'length of time allotted for training'. This considerably high demand for improvement is reflected in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

AREAS REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT **



* Report of the Committee on Staff Training and Development Probation and Aftercare Services, 1973.

** No differences between services were found when analyzed separately.

1. Content/Material

- (i) Social Work: The study syllabus encompassing the three areas of social work, legal principles and administrative procedures received the greatest degree of criticism from all levels of probation officers. More specifically, the readings on social work techniques were very highly criticized as being redundant, outdated, exceedingly lengthy and unrelated to the practical applications of the job. Numerous P.O.'s mentioned the emphasis on the theoretical approach, especially on Freudian readings - one P.O. even claiming that "it is difficult to tell a parent that his child is oral or anal". The P.O.'s expressed very serious concerns that certain outdated social work theories were over-emphasized at the expense of more innovative theories and more practical and relevant instruction. In fact, when asked if there were any areas in which they felt they needed further training 63.8% (102) of the P.O.'s and 2's who responded requested additional training in more practical social work techniques encompassing such issues as drug counselling, interviewing skills, dealing with alcoholism and alcoholics, family and group counselling, community programs, volunteers, ethnicity and native offenders. The difference between the two Services in this area proved to be negligible.
- (ii) Legal Principles: Increased emphasis on legal principles was suggested as well as more specific training in this area to assist them in dealing with Court procedures, testifying as witnesses, determining the amount of restitution, when to lay charges and how to best present a case. However, only 20.6% (33) of the P.O.'s and 2's who requested further training mentioned it in relation to the legal area, although 27.9% (24) of the Adult group requested it in comparison to only 12.2% (9) of the Juvenile P.O.'s and 2's.
- (iii) Administrative Procedures: The administrative section of the syllabus did not provoke as much of a reaction although a few P.O.'s did mention that the methods were outdated and that the administrative material could be geared more towards training the officer in practical administrative tasks. It is interesting to note that 50% (36) of those who requested further training in administrative procedures were from the senior and supervisory levels - their concerns focusing more specifically on budgeting and management training. There was no variation between the Adult and Juvenile seniors and supervisors in this respect.

It was frequently mentioned that the materials were not made readily available to those in the more isolated areas and that more materials dealing with native offenders should be placed on the syllabus. In addition, it was generally felt that the present calibre of the exam was comparable to a graduate university level of study and yet no formal accreditation was accorded them upon successful completion of the exam.

The data revealed that those with a university degree maintained the highest level of dissatisfaction and criticism with the content/material used for the exam, but, more importantly, 100% (20) of the Adult P.O.'s and 2's who held a graduate degree were opposed in some way to the content/material used for the exam.

2. Instructors

When the P.O.'s and 2's were asked whether they felt the instructors who prepared them for the exam needed improvement, the most frequent response was "What instructors?" Indeed, in the more isolated areas the responsibility for teaching rested with each individual P.O., whereas in the more urban centres the P.O.'s often had the advantage of a resource person from a local university to provide instruction in each specialized field.

There was a general feeling among the staff that the seniors and supervisors were not qualified instructors. An interesting development was that 52.0% (30) of the seniors and supervisors felt that the 'instructors' required some improvement - a glaring reflection of their own confidence in themselves as instructors. In fact, they felt that instructing was a burden on their time especially since they felt the present calibre of staff did not require this type of exam. One senior even stated that he felt the exam was "demoralizing and a disincentive". In contrast, however, when asked if they required further training in any area, only a very small percentage of the seniors and supervisors requested additional training in teaching methods.

Overall, the demand was for a more formalized type of training possibly with more tangible input from the Staff Training and Development Branch since many P.O.'s noticed a real discrepancy between the questions asked on the exam and the material they were required to study. This is probably due to the lack of coordination

between the instructors and the examiners. The heavy content and the short period of time in which to study has developed an increasing demand for professional educators who would be involved with setting up the syllabus as well as the exam.

3. Time

The length of time allotted for training was considered by the P.O.'s to be the initial 6-7 month period before writing the exam. The experience of assuming a caseload (in many cases a full caseload), adjusting to a new work environment and studying to successfully complete the exams placed much pressure on the novice P.O. A breakdown of the various P.O. levels requesting improvement in this area showed 49.6% (68) of the P.O.1's and 2's and 66.0% (38) of all seniors and supervisors in favour of improving the time allotment with little distinction observed between the two Services.

A comparison of 'time allotment' according to geographical regions for P.O.1's and 2's revealed that 92.9% (13) of the P.P.O.'s from the North were opposed to the exam based at the sixth month. The combination of high caseload and the comparatively large degree of time lost in travelling was felt to severely limit their study time. The other regions in both Services were relatively similar in their attitudes towards the time allotted for training.

By holding the exam at the six or seven month interval, the entire second year of basic training was felt to be superfluous and did not allow a P.O. the opportunity to acquire practical on-the-job experience before writing the exams. In addition, a few P.O.'s mentioned that the burden of handling a full caseload severely limits the amount of time they have to study and that perhaps more time during office hours could be allocated for reading and studying for the exam.

AGREEMENT WITH THE EXAMS

When asked whether they agreed with having to write the exam before becoming a P.O.2, 52.4% (129) of the entire sample voiced some objection to the exam, 39.4% (97) being emphatically opposed and 13.0% (32) qualifying their

answers by stating that those with graduate degrees should not be required to write the exams. Others indicated that appointment to the P.O.2 level of competence should follow directly upon successful completion of the exam. An analysis by Service indicated that 62% (68) of the entire P.A.C.O. sample placed some objection to the exam as compared with 44% (62) of the entire Probation/Parole group. It was often mentioned that perhaps too much emphasis was placed on the exams rather than on the capability and performance of the officer, and that the training should de-emphasize the importance of regurgitating textbook contents and increase the emphasis on learning and day-to-day work performance.

As a means of replacing the exams, 57.0% (61) of line officers who wanted the exam system discontinued suggested an appraisal system conducted by seniors and/or supervisors on daily work performance. Similarly, 36.4% (39) suggested formal training sessions or seminars to replace the exam, while numerous P.O.'s mentioned a combination of appraisals and formal training sessions. Less frequently mentioned by the P.O.1's and 2's was length of service (20.6%). An exemption from writing the exam for those with a graduate degree was suggested by 15.9% of the officers. Little difference in emphasis was noted between the two Services in their suggestions to replace the exam, with one exception. In their emphasis on formal training sessions, seminars, or on-the-job practical training the Juvenile line staff was significantly stronger (47.3%) in comparison to their Adult counterparts (25.0%).

A further possible factor influencing their acceptance of the present exam and training was their affiliation prior to amalgamation. In both the Juvenile and Adult Services, those P.O.1's and 2's who had previously worked in the Probation Service had become accustomed to the exam through tradition and commitment. At amalgamation, however, the Parole/Aftercare group were then required to write the exam regardless of the length of their previous experience. The resentment to this still exists.

Overall, the exam was an area of very serious concern for the majority of probation officers in both Services, regardless of their rank. Moreover, the attitudes of the senior and supervisory levels towards the exam system was probably the most striking finding in the analysis of this section. As a group, their suggestions for improvement in the exam system even outranked the demands of the P.O. line staff. (see Appendix B)

D-CRITERIA FOR PROMOTIONS

Much skepticism seems to surround the question of how promotions in the two Services are conducted. Probation officers were asked how they viewed current promotional practices. Often this question evoked laughter or other facial expressions.

TABLE 9

PERCEPTIONS OF PROMOTIONS CRITERIA

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare		"t"
	%	#	%	#	
"Who you know"	36.6	44	38.7	36	p>.05
Work Performance	37.5	45	39.8	37	p>.05
Length of Service	7.5	9	7.5	7	p>.05
Education	2.5	3	5.3	5	p>.05
Other	15.8	19	8.6	8	p>.05

It is revealing to note from the responses that over one in three P.O.'s from both Services (36.6% of P.P.O.'s and 38.7% of P.A.C.O.'s) felt that promotions are handled primarily on a "who you know" basis as opposed to more objective criteria such as work performance, educational background, length of service, etc. (see Table 9). The individuals indicated that pre-selection had already taken place for some of the competitions with the result that candidates for the position had little or no chance for success. Moreover, it was felt that competitions for promotions tended to favour the P.O. who "towed the line", i.e., did not question Ministry or local policy. P.O.'s were also of the opinion that there was a paucity of feedback provided to unsuccessful applicants as to reasons for the outcome and/or guidance which could be beneficial for future competitions. Isolated instances where notices for competitions were either not received or received too late were also mentioned.

The above are only several of the comments which arose from those P.O.'s who were of the opinion that promotional competitions were determined on the basis of "who you know". There is no significant difference between the number of P.P.O.'s and P.A.C.O.'s who gave this as a response although differences were detected among different age groups within the Probation/Parole Service. It was the younger P.O. who

was more likely to mention this reason. Over two-fifths (42.4%) of the P.O.'s less than 30 felt that promotions were handled in this manner, compared to 36.4% of P.O.'s between the ages of 30 and 45 and only 25.6% of P.O.'s over the age of 45. It was also interesting to note that there were significantly more female P.P.O.'s (48.3%) who felt that the major criterion for promotion was subjective in nature, i.e., "who you know", whereas the corresponding proportion for male P.P.O.'s is only 28.9%.

Work performance as a primary criterion for promotions was mentioned by 37.5% of P.P.O.'s and 39.8% of P.A.C.O.'s. The remaining respondents mentioned educational level, length of service and other miscellaneous reasons as major criteria for obtaining a promotion.

It should be pointed out that the already high proportion of P.O.'s who cited the criterion of "who you know" as the primary reason for getting promotions, is in all probability an underestimation. Subjectively, it appeared to the interviewers that respondents were somewhat reticent to give this type of response even though they may have believed it. Notwithstanding, it would appear that the number of P.O.'s who are skeptical of the way promotions are handled is quite large and is an area worthy of close attention.

As a cautionary note, it is important to bear in mind that the data do not necessarily indicate that promotions are, in fact, awarded on a "who you know" basis, but rather that a sizeable proportion of P.O.'s perceive this to be the case. This, however, does not negate any cause for concern, nor should it minimize the presence of the problem.

Skepticism about the manner in which promotional opportunities are managed can have deleterious effects on probation officers' attitudes toward their job and can lead to ridicule of promotional opportunities. It would seem, then, that promotional practices must not only be "fair" but must also be perceived to be "fair".

E-CASELOADS

Historically, caseload volume for the Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare Services have shown differential patterns. The overall caseload size of the Adult Service has over the past five years increased at a yearly rate of roughly 15.1% while that of the P.A.C.O. has demonstrated mild yearly decreases at an annual rate of 4.5%.*

* These estimates have been supplied by the Program Evaluation Section, Planning and Research Branch.

For the purpose of analysis, the discussion will be concentrated on the caseloads of line officers only (P.O.1 and 2). This should not be interpreted to mean that seniors do not have caseloads. For aggregate purposes it would be misleading to calculate average caseload sizes by including the nominal cases held by some seniors.

It is important to observe, however, that of the 17 senior P.P.O.'s included in the study, 10 (58.8%) held caseloads ranging from a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 85, the average being 28.5 cases.*

Of the 14 senior P.A.C.O.'s who were interviewed, 12 (85.7%) carried caseloads ranging from 1 to 13 with an average of 6.3 cases.

ACTUAL CASELOAD VIS-A-VIS SUGGESTED REDUCTION

On a province-wide basis, the average caseload size for the Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare line staff is 81 and 37, respectively. These figures represent P.O.'s estimates of their caseload size during the two month period just prior to the research interview.

For the Adult Service, the figure of 81 is comprised of 96% probation and 4% parole cases.** For all intents and purposes the Probation/Parole Service is really a Probation Service. In the Juvenile Service, the probation-aftercare split is 63% and 37%, in favour of probation.

Some regional variations exist in terms of the average caseload size in the Probation/Parole Service. The range is from an average caseload of 70 for the Northern Region to 89 for the Eastern Region (see Table 10). The three regions in the Probation/Aftercare Service show very little variation.

Needless to say, there were more negative comments made about the size of caseloads on the part of P.O.'s from the Adult

* The one senior P.P.O. who carried a caseload of 85 was in the transition stage and would not normally carry such a caseload. For this reason, the individual's caseload tends to exaggerate the overall average.

** Even if the National Parole Act is amended to give the Province jurisdiction of all parolees from provincial institutions the number of parole cases would not comprise a large proportion. For example, the number of people who were released by the National Parole Board from Provincial institutions in Ontario for the year 1976 was 303. (See 1976 Report to the Minister, Ministry of Correctional Services)

TABLE 10

ACTUAL CASELOAD SIZE AND PERCENTAGE REDUCTION SUGGESTED

	A.	B.	(A-B) ÷ A
	Actual Average Caseload Size	Practical Caseload Size as per P.O.'s	Percentage Reduction Suggested
ENTIRE POPULATION (Both Services)	61	48	21.3%
PROBATION/PAROLE SERVICE	81	58	28.4%
Northern Region	70	44	37.1%
Central Region	86	60	30.2%
Eastern Region	89	61	31.5%
Western Region	73	57	21.9%
PROBATION/AFTERCARE SERVICE	37	33	10.8%
North Eastern Region	39	36	7.7%
South Western Region	37	33	10.8%
Central Region	37	31	16.2%

Service. There was the general feeling that even though most officers practice some form of caseload management (by necessity), their work with clients can be described fundamentally as a "warehousing" process. In terms of affecting behavioural and/or attitudinal change in clients given the current caseload volumes, P.O.'s openly admitted feelings of doubt and pessimism.

P.O.'s from both Services were asked to consider their current caseload size and to indicate what, practically speaking, would be a reasonable caseload size if different from their current one. Reference to Table 11 illustrates marked differences in responses between P.P.O.'s and P.A.C.O.'s.

On an aggregate basis, P.P.O.'s suggested that their current average caseload size of 81 should be decreased to 58 which represents a 28.4% reduction. The highest reduction suggested was from Northern Region P.O.'s where a diminution of 37.1% was suggested (from a size of 70 to 44). The Western Region P.O.'s suggested only a 21.9% reduction (from 73 to 57).

Province-wide, a drop of four cases (10.8%) was suggested by Probation/Aftercare officers. Regionally, the percentage reduction suggested by the North Eastern, South Western and Central regions was 7.7%, 10.8% and 16.2% respectively.

Again, this analysis confirms the fact that excessively heavy caseloads are primarily a problem faced by officers in the Probation/Parole Service. It will become an even greater problem in the future in view of projected caseload increases unless ways are found and implemented to reduce caseloads.

Similarly, more efficient and effective caseload management techniques will have to be explored.

CASELOADS AND TRAVELLING

By relating the average number of miles travelled per month to the average caseload size, it was possible to construct a ratio of miles per case travelled (see Table 11). Comparing this ratio for the two Services, it was found that because P.A.C.O.'s do significantly more travelling per month than do P.P.O.'s (524 miles compared to 271 miles), the ratio for the Probation/Aftercare Services is 14.2 miles per case compared to only 3.3 miles per case for the Probation/Parole Service. The reader is cautioned here not to interpret this finding to mean that, for example, an additional juvenile case will necessarily entail an additional 14.2 miles travelling. On the contrary, as more and more cases are added, the rate of increase in travelling may drop.

CASELOADS ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF SUPERVISION

It is generally recognized that not all clients require the same degree of supervision on the part of the P.O. Within

TABLE 11

MILES TRAVELLED, CASELOAD SIZE AND MILES PER CASE RATIO

	A.	B.	(A ÷ B)
	Average Number of miles travelled per month	Average Caseload Size	Ratio of Miles per case travelled
FOR ENTIRE POPULATION (Both Services)	385	61	6.3
PROBATION/PAROLE SERVICE	271	81	3.3
Northern Region	323	70	4.6
Central Region	198	86	2.3
Eastern Region	289	89	3.2
Western Region	318	73	4.4
PROBATION/AFTERCARE SERVICE	524	37	14.2
North Western Region	592	39	15.2
South Western Region	404	37	10.9
Central Region	589	37	15.9

the context of caseload management, probation officers were asked to categorize the clients on their caseload according to the P.O.'s perception of supervisory needs. It was felt that this analysis might assist in the development of any new models of supervision. A graphical representation of these results is presented in Figure 2 below. Three categories were used, ranging from "minimal" supervision to "intensive" supervision.

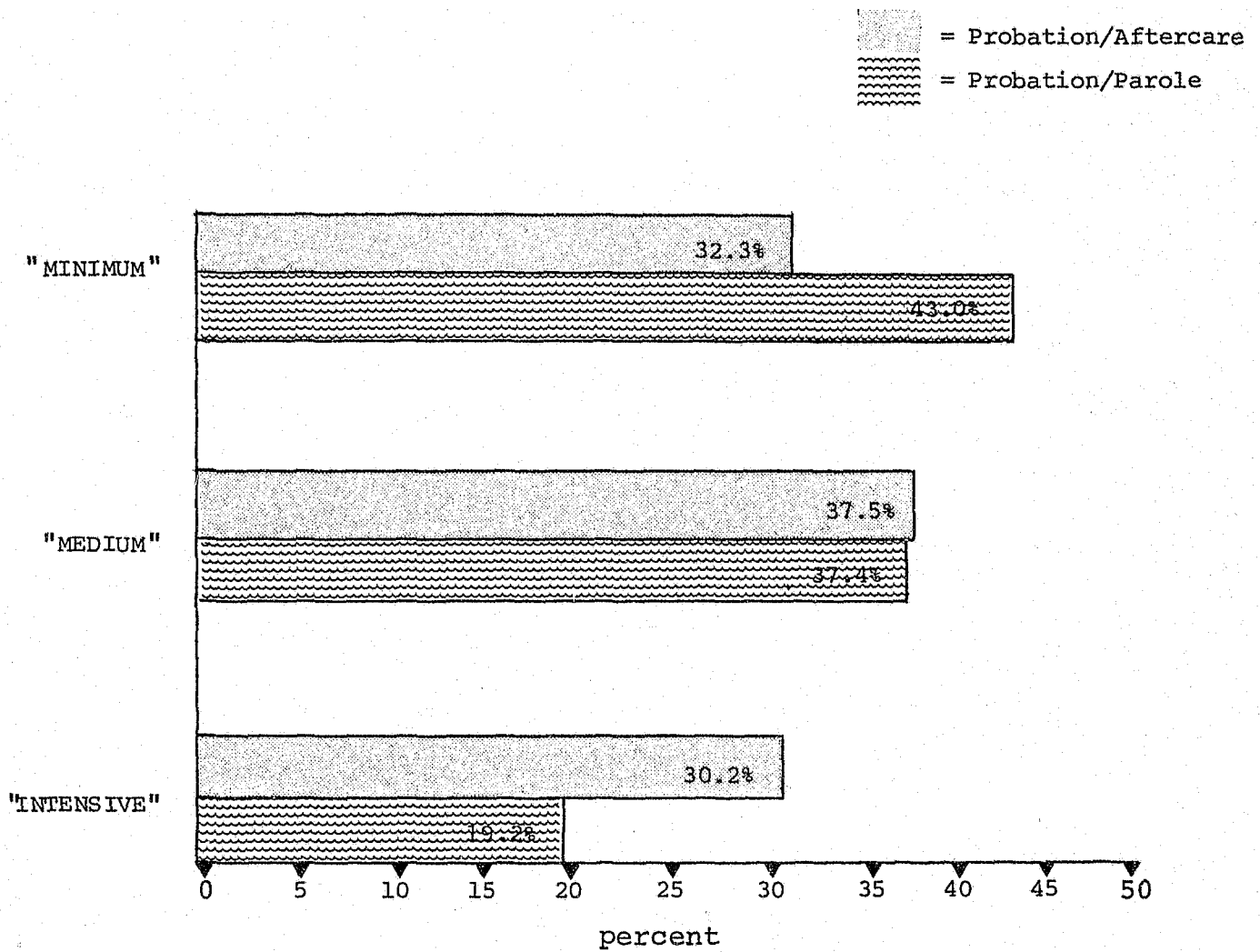
Minimal supervision means that the client could quite easily be supervised by infrequent contact, possibly by way of telephone. In some cases, it was felt that no supervision seemed indicated. These individuals tended to be first offenders, judged to be low risks and displaying no real need for counselling. In addition to this, it was felt that some clients refused counselling of any sort. Based on their current caseloads, 43% of the P.P.O.'s caseload compared to 32.3% of the P.A.C.O.'s caseload was judged as needing minimal supervision only. Conversely, only 19.2% of the caseload for a P.P.O. was considered to need intensive type supervision (i.e., needing frequent contact, special services, etc.). The corresponding figure for a P.A.C.O. was 30.2%. For those clients needing supervision at the level somewhere between the two extremes, the figures for the two Services are identical, approximately 37%.

It is evident that the caseload for a Probation/Aftercare officer is roughly comprised of an equal distribution of the three types of clients, while a Probation/Parole officer caseload tends to have a higher number of clients who require minimal supervision. It seems reasonable, that the question of whether some of the latter cases deserve any supervision should be a topic for discussion and representation by the Probation/Parole Service to the Courts. The reader should, however, bear in mind that a case can be in one category at one time and in another at a different point in time. No variation in the above pattern was detected when geographical region and community size were included in the analysis.

One rather recent development in both Services has been to contract out for supervision of selected clients. The objective of this practice has been to decrease caseload volumes and/or to provide certain clients with specialized services normally not available in the two Services. Recipients of contracts have included such organizations as the John Howard Society, Children's Aid Society, Family Service Agencies, etc. When asked whether they were in favour of such developments, 50.0% (66) of all P.P.O.'s and 41.1% (44) of all P.A.C.O.'s expressed favourable opinions. The remainder, however, felt that the recipients of the contracts offered little in the way of new services which were not already provided. Clearly, then, a sizeable group of officers from the two Services was not convinced as to the cost-benefit of contracting out services, at least in relation to recent implementation.

FIGURE 2

CASELOADS AND LEVEL OF SUPERVISION



CHANGES IN CLIENT POPULATION

When asked whether they felt the type of client had changed over the past two years, 52.6% of P.P.O.'s and 54.2% of P.A.C.O.'s answered in the affirmative. The general feeling from both Services was that the client today tends to have committed more serious offences, is younger and more "sophisticated". It was felt that the proportion of female clients is increasing and that there are fewer cases with drug-related offences. What is very disturbing in the responses is the perception that there are increasingly more clients with psychological disorders. (mentioned by 28.7% of P.P.O.'s and 27.6% of P.A.C.O.'s.) What is alarming about this perception, if correct, is the dilemma of whether the sole responsibility for these cases should be placed with the Ministry of Correctional Services. The question must also arise as to whether the Probation, Parole, and Aftercare Services are equipped to supply the services needed to optimally respond to the needs of these people.

F-DISTRIBUTION OF TIME

Generally speaking, the majority of probation officers work between 39 and 41 hours per week.* In lieu of overtime, probation officers are allowed five days compensating leave (in addition to normal vacation leave entitlement). Over one-half of all officers (53.6% of P.P.O.'s and 50.5% of P.A.C.O.'s) felt that this system of granting days off is unjust and does not reflect the amount of overtime worked. The overwhelming suggestion in this regard by 54.7% of officers from both services was that the compensating leave should be commensurate with actual overtime worked. Simply stated, these officers felt that there should be a "time for time" policy implemented.

Among those who did not voice concerns regarding the current policy, some indicated that suitable arrangements could usually be worked out between themselves and their superior(s).

USE OF TIME BY SETTING

The three major settings where the probation officer conducts his/her work are the office, the field and the courtroom. Within this context, a careful analysis of how much time the P.O. devotes to various job functions within the three settings was undertaken. This information will be valuable both as a feedback mechanism as well as a planning tool. The results can be evaluated in relation to the overall objectives of the two Services.

* Assuming a 46 week working year and an estimate of 3 hours overtime per week, the average total yearly overtime worked is equivalent to approximately 3.8 weeks.

The analysis was restricted to line officers only and no supervisory levels were included.

TABLE 12
PERCENTAGE OF LINE OFFICERS' TOTAL TIME
SPENT IN OFFICE, FIELD AND COURT

	Probation/Parole	Probation/Aftercare	
Office	64%	42%	p<.05
Field	25%	39%	p>.05
Court	6%	13%	p>.05
Other	5%	6%	p>.05
	100%	100%	

Table 12 indicates that on the whole, P.P.O.'s spend more time in the office and less time in the field and Court when compared to probation officers from the Juvenile Service. Rather striking here is the finding that nearly two-thirds (64%) of the P.P.O.'s time is spent in the office while only one-quarter of their time is spent in the field. The proportion of time spent in the office is high compared to the Probation/Aftercare Service as well as other jurisdictions (see Carter, Wilkins, 1970).

Figures 3 and 4 depict the proportion of total time spent at the specific functions performed by the two Services. It is quite surprising to note the total amount of time spent by P.O.'s in direct client-counselling. This calculation was based on a summation of counselling time in the three settings and then dividing this by the average caseload size for each Service.* The result of this analysis revealed some significant

* A 40-hour working week is assumed in these calculations.
(40 hr. x 4.3 weeks = 173.2 hrs. per month)

a) Calculation for Probation/Aftercare Service:

- i) Total counselling time in field, court, office 36.7%
- ii) 36.7% of 173.2 hrs. 62.35 hrs/mo.
- iii) 62.35 hrs. ÷ average caseload size (37) 1.68 hrs/client

b) Calculation for Probation/Parole Service:

- i) Total counselling time in field, court, office 38.82%
- ii) 38.8% of 173.2 hrs. 67.20 hrs/mo.
- iii) 67.20 hrs. ÷ average caseload size (81) .83 hrs/client

FIGURE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL TIME
AMONG VARIOUS ACTIVITIES
(Probation/Parole Service)

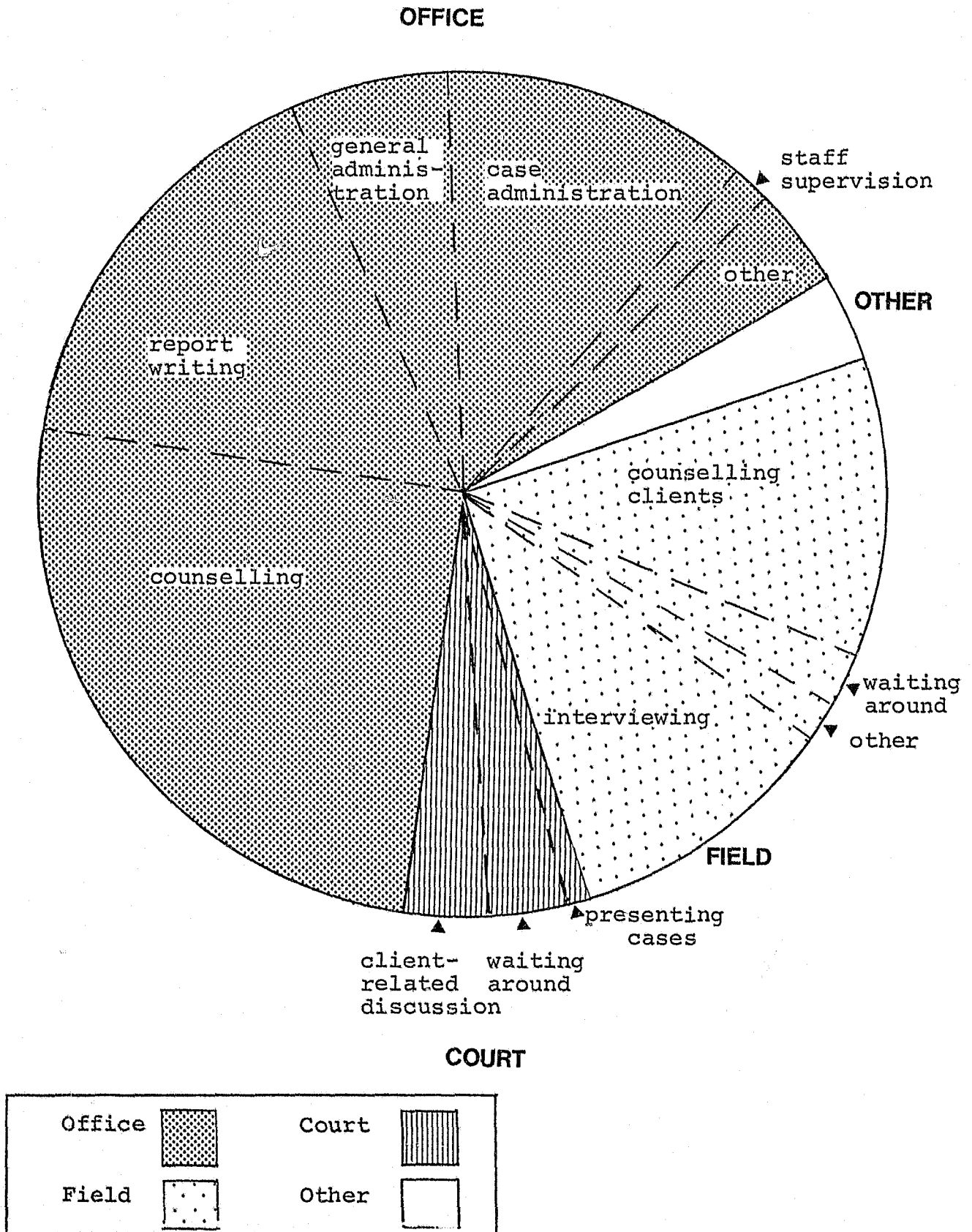
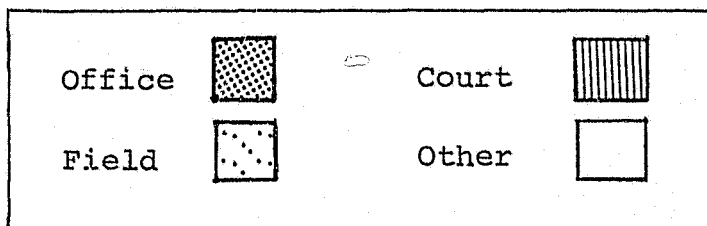
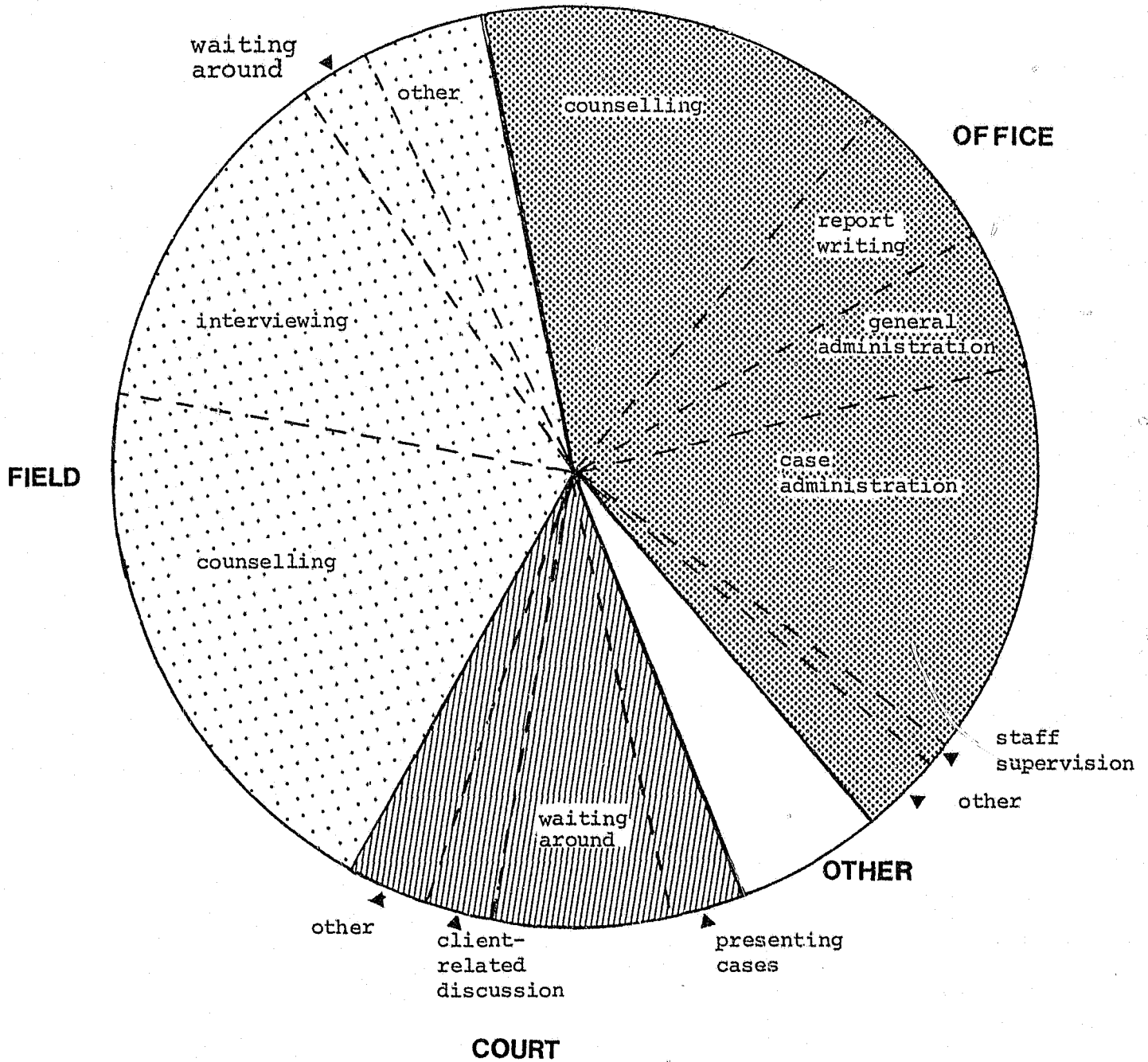


FIGURE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL TIME
AMONG VARIOUS ACTIVITIES
(Probation/Aftercare Services)



findings. It was found that on the average probation/aftercare line officers spend 1.68 hours per month in direct client-counselling. The corresponding average for the Probation/Parole Service is only four-fifths of an hour (.83 hours per month). It should be emphasized, however, that these are only averages and it is quite possible that individual cases receive considerably more counselling. In spite of this, there are serious doubts as to the impact which can be expected on the basis of so little counselling time. Although the Probation/Aftercare Service tends to be higher, it would still seem to fall short of most objectives.

USE OF TIME WITHIN SETTINGS

The various functions performed by P.O.'s in each of the three settings is shown in Appendix C. Furthermore, the total time spent in each setting is divided according to relevant activities.

In the field setting, roughly one half of the time (44.4% for P.P.O.'s and 50.7% for P.A.C.O.'s) is spent counselling clients. Overall, probation officers from both Services spend similar amounts of time at each activity.

P.O.'s from both Services spend nearly one-half of the Court time (47.2% for P.P.O.'s and 49.0% for P.A.C.O.'s) in non-productive activity, i.e., just "waiting around" until their client's case is heard. Translated into hours this represents 5.0 hours per month "waiting around" for the Probation/Parole Service and 10.7 hours per month for the Probation/Aftercare Service.* Although this amount of time may seem insignificant on a monthly basis, per officer, it becomes quite large when it is multiplied by all case-carrying line officers.** It is not conceptually difficult to appreciate the fact that this time could be used in other more productive activities especially in view of the low proportion of time available for direct client-counselling.

Regarding the amount of time spent at different functions in the office, the two Services are quite similar, except that the Adult Service P.O.'s tend to spend more time (22.3%) writing reports as compared to 13.0% for the Juvenile Service. On the other hand, the latter Service spends 33.5% of the office time in case administration, whereas the former Service spends only 17.6% of time in this function. Both allocate a similar proportion of their office time to direct client-counselling.

* Results from a similar study in the U.S. reports a figure of only 1.25 hours per month (see Carter, R.M. & Wilkins, 1970).

** On a monthly basis this is the equivalent of approximately eight P.P.O.'s and thirteen P.A.C.O.'s (based on 276 P.P.O.'s and 207 P.A.C.O.'s).

A separate analysis by geographical regions revealed that all respective Service regions were quite similar. The only exception to this was the finding that the Northern Region of both Services tended to spend less time "waiting around" in Court. Compared to the previously quoted figures, the Adult Northern Region P.O.'s spent 2.2 hours per month in Court in non-productive activity. For the Juvenile Northern Region, the corresponding amount is 6.9 hours.

G-PREFERRED USE OF TIME

When asked to which areas of their job they would prefer to devote more time, it was found that P.O.'s in both Services had similar feelings as to where their time could be utilized more effectively (see Figure 5). The greatest emphasis was placed on "counselling clients and/or their families" by the first two P.O. levels with an overall average of 71.4% (134) of the entire P.O. 1 & 2 sample desiring more time in this area. Of secondary importance, was the preparation time for the Professional Developmental Exam with an average of 45.5% (36) wanting additional study time.

For both Adult and Juvenile line staff it appeared that administration, whether general or case administration, was an area of high discontent. Almost three-fifths (58.2%) of the entire group requested less emphasis on general administrative tasks such as statistics, budgeting and meetings as well as less time on case administration (46.2%), e.g., correspondence, recording, reports, and arrangement for transfer that relate to their active caseloads. In fact, the most burdensome and time-consuming task for the line staff proved to be the workload analysis.

The greatest discrepancy between the two Services appeared in the area of P.S.R.'s and Social Histories. It was evident that the Probation/Aftercare group were highly satisfied 78.6% (55) with the amount of time they presently spend on Social Histories, only 44.2% (46) of the Probation/Parole group voiced satisfaction and 38.5% (40) requested that less time be spent on the preparation of P.S.R.'s. (Possible reasons for this have already been discussed.)

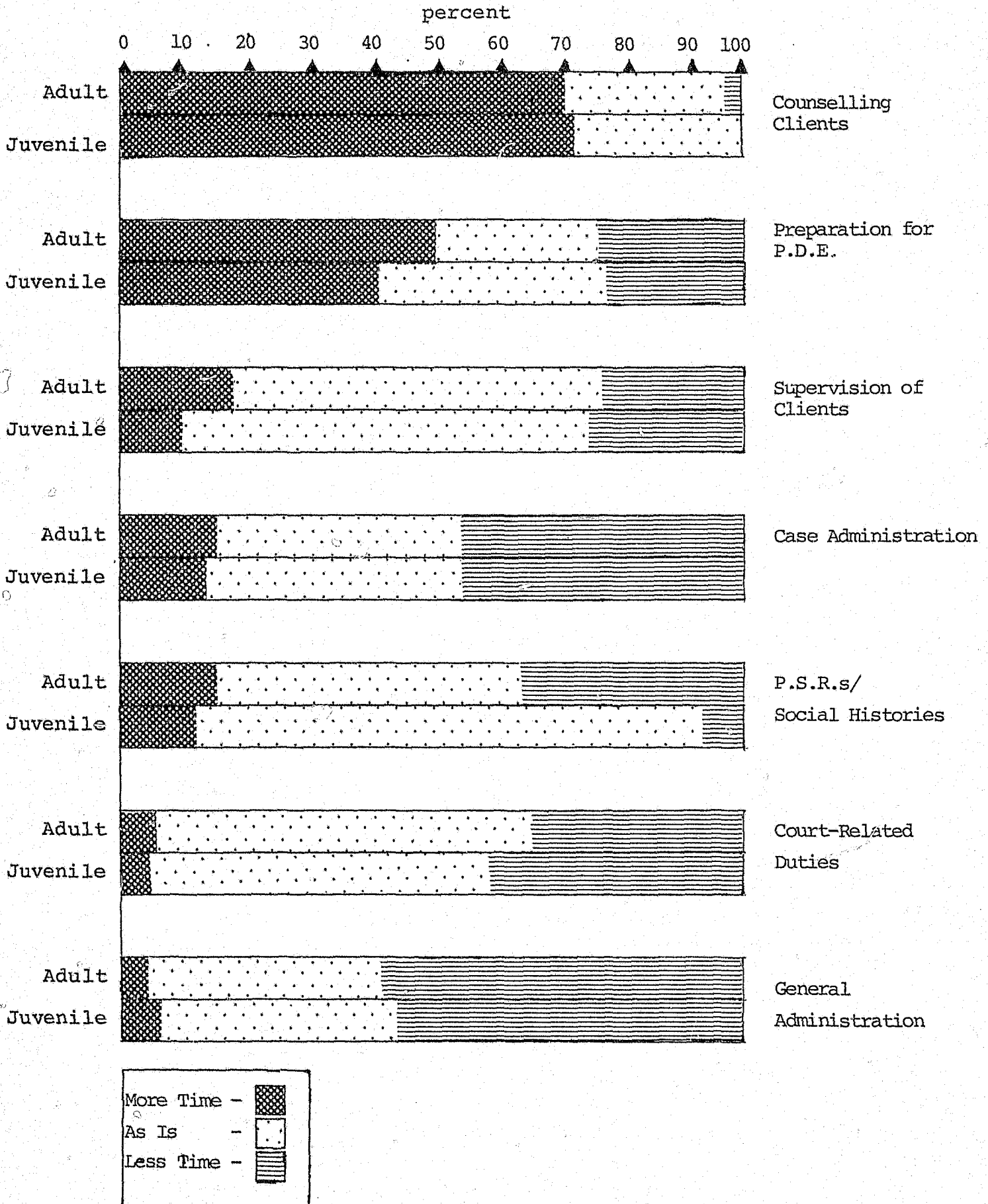
In their feelings about the supervision/surveillance of clients in a non-counselling capacity very little difference between the two Services was indicated.

Similarly, in their consideration of court-related duties it was found that, on the whole, both Services were satisfied (56.0% average) with their time in this area. An average of 38.6% requested less time allotted to these duties.

On a separate note, the supervisors from both Services stated they would prefer the seniors to spend more time on staff

FIGURE 5

PREFERRED USE OF TIME



training and staff supervision and less time on case-related items such as case administration and counselling.

H-ATTITUDES TOWARDS VOLUNTEERS

A majority (75%) of the Probation/Parole and Probation/Aftercare officers in this study have been involved with the utilization of volunteers in some capacity (i.e., training, supervision, or both). In many cases their involvement was limited because the volunteer program had just been initiated or the office had a Volunteer Co-ordinator who took most, or sometimes all, of the responsibility for volunteers. A significantly higher proportion of P.A.C.O.'s (84%) when compared to P.P.O.'s (67%) have had experience with volunteers.

Of the 185 officers who claimed prior involvement with volunteers, most officers (91%) had utilized volunteers on a one-to-one basis (a counselling or befriending capacity), 57.8% in the area of community relations and 32% were familiar with using volunteers in the preparation of P.S.R.'s or Social Histories. Seventy-five percent of the officers who utilized volunteers in the first two areas claimed the volunteers were "very helpful", compared to only 64% in the area of P.S.R.'s and Social Histories. Some officers felt that it was more efficient to conduct their own investigations due to the amount of time required to train a volunteer in this capacity. It was also explained that this investigation allows the officer an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with the client and his/her family and perhaps helps to alleviate any distrust or apprehension they may feel towards the P.O. "Confidentiality" was also a concern of several officers. Nevertheless, two-thirds of these officers were still receptive to utilizing volunteers in this capacity, especially if a more standardized format for the report could be implemented. At the present time it seems that individual judges have varied expectations regarding both the type and amount of information to be included in a report. The greatest need for volunteers in this area appears to be in the Adult Division where caseloads are high and P.S.R. requests are numerous. In the Juvenile Division, officers have fewer reports to prepare and, in the Toronto area, almost all Social Histories are written by one particular person.

AREAS OF NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS' SERVICES

It appears that the greatest need for volunteers' services according to the majority of replies (35.6%) is in a "befriending" capacity or working on a "one-to-one" basis with clients. As officers have a limited amount of time that they can devote to any individual client, especially when their caseloads are large, they perceive a genuine need for persons who are more readily available to offer their clients both friendship and practical assistance.

"Group activities" which includes sports, camping, drop-in centres and group therapy were mentioned by one-fifth of all respondents. However, this was a concern expressed primarily by P.A.C.O.'s (one-third mentioned it). This was probably because factors such as use of leisure time and opportunities to develop social skills are important considerations in responding to the needs of their young clientele.

The next most frequently mentioned suggestion (20%) was "exploring community resources". This encompasses such activities as public relations, liaison with outside agencies or ethnic groups and job-finding. Tutoring and life skills were mentioned by 13% of the respondents and it should be noted here that some offices are currently utilizing high school students as tutors for their clients. Eighteen percent of the officers in the Adult Division stated that it would be helpful to have volunteers assisting with the preparation of P.S.R.'s. Only 4% of their counterparts in the Juvenile Service suggested greater use of volunteers for Social Histories.

Volunteers to take part in "Diversion"/"Prevention" programs and "assistance with clients' practical needs" were two other areas of high priority in the Juvenile Service, being mentioned by 18% and 10% of the officers, respectively. "Assistance with practical needs" included helping clients with shopping, providing babysitting for parents attending court, providing transportation to medical appointments and hair-dressers, etc. These are roles which, although important in themselves, have had to be delegated to a secondary position, due to the probation officers' limited available time.

When respondents were asked if they felt there were any areas where volunteers' services should not be used, over one-half (53%) felt that volunteers could be used in every area, providing they were suitably qualified. Some reservations were expressed about assigning volunteers to intensive cases (e.g., emotionally disturbed clients or where family counselling was required) and also involvement in legal matters (e.g., court appearances, violations of probation), since both of these areas require some training and a fair degree of responsibility. The latter area could also conflict with volunteers' "befriending" role.

It should be noted that some officers mentioned that they did not fully support the idea of relinquishing all responsibility and contact with their clients to the volunteers and preferred to retain a certain degree of involvement with the case.

OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS OF EXISTING VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Less than one-half (42.4%) said that they were satisfied with the existing volunteer program in their office. However, another 28.6% said they would like the program improved or

expanded and 8.6% (21) said they would like to see a program initiated. Overall, 80% have indicated fairly positive attitudes towards volunteer programs. Approximately 12.7% (31) were non-committal, stating the program was just getting started or that they were not involved. Only 7.8% (19) actually said they did not want a volunteer program (either new or existing) in their office.

When asked for opinions concerning requirements for volunteers, a great majority of the responses related to personality factors, personal stability and interpersonal skills such as warmth, empathy, sincerity, interest in people, etc. Time commitment was an important factor to 27% of the officers, and they felt it was unfortunate when a volunteer who had established a good relationship with a client moved away or "returned home", as often happens with college student volunteers. Nonetheless, other officers maintained that colleges are an excellent source of volunteers. Surprisingly, educational background was mentioned by only 5% of the respondents and they usually went on to explain that post-secondary education was definitely not a necessity.

Overall, the officers appeared to possess fairly positive attitudes towards the use of volunteers. Nevertheless, one officer made an interesting point, explaining that with more emphasis on volunteers, probation officers could lose their "minimal" or, as he explained, their "enjoyable" cases and, consequently, they would have a higher proportion of "intensive" cases which are more frustrating and are often the "failures". Other officers stated they would actually prefer caseloads consisting of only difficult or "intensive" cases. Nonetheless, the majority of officers did not express these particular concerns.

I-JOB SATISFACTION AND TENSION

Standardized scales were administered to the probation officers to measure level of job satisfaction and job tension. Job satisfaction was measured by the short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.* This scale consisted of three sub-scales: Intrinsic Satisfaction, Extrinsic Satisfaction and General Satisfaction. The tension scale** is a fourteen-item scale covering a variety of job-relevant problems. Each respondent was asked to indicate the degree to which he/she was bothered by each item.

Overall, the majority of people gave responses in the positive end of the continuum. However, some P.O.'s felt that the

* "Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire", Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation Bulletin 45 (1967).

** Kahn, Robert L., Wolfe, D.M., Quinn, R.P. and Snoek, J.D., Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1964.

items in the two scales did not adequately reflect relevant areas of concern for them. Nevertheless, it is still possible to examine the scale scores in terms of any observed differences between Services and within classification levels.

The results indicate (see Appendix D) that no significant differences between the two Services exist regarding the scale scores. What is significant, however, is the fact that line officers (P.O.1's & 2's) from both Services are consistently less satisfied and show higher tension when compared to the senior and supervisory level probation officers (see Table 13).

TABLE 13
SCALE SCORES BY CLASSIFICATION LEVEL

	P.O.1,2	P.O.3,4	"t"
Job Satisfaction	37.63	40.90	p<.001
Intrinsic Satisf.	40.10	42.37	p<.001
Extrinsic Satisf.	31.96	37.56	p<.001
Job Tension	23.96	21.53	p<.001

(NOTE: High score on satisfaction scale indicates high satisfaction while a low score on the tension scale indicates low tension.)

Several reasons may be suggested for this finding. Seniors and supervisors can feel relatively secure in their positions for they have reached a position of "authority". On the other hand, line officers realize the limited opportunities for upward mobility in the Services. They know, for example, the high level of competition which ensues in seeking an open P.O.3 position. Simply stated, the openings for P.O.3 positions are few while the number of potential candidates is large. This would seem a reasonable explanation, particularly because in both scales those specific items dealing with the chances for job advancement or promotion tended to be scored more negatively by line staff than by supervisory staff. This feeling was verified by P.O.'s casual comments in this vein during the interviews.

Perhaps a surrogate measure of job satisfaction may be obtained by examining the responses to the following question: "As things stand now, are you planning to remain in (Probation/Parole) (Probation/Aftercare) in the next two years or are you thinking of some other job?" It was found that 79.8% of the

Probation/Aftercare officers and 86.2% of the Probation/Parole officers stated that they were planning to remain in their respective Service. Those who answered in the negative tended to have "legitimate" kinds of reasons why they were not planning to remain. Such reasons included retirement, return to school, residential mobility, family reasons, etc. There was a total of only twelve individuals from both Services who specifically indicated disenchantment with the job as a reason for not planning to remain. This would not seem to be reflective of an overly disenchanted group. However, it should not imply that P.O.'s do not have concerns regarding their jobs. In fact there are many areas of concern which have already been discussed.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

AGE:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
21-29	34	24.6	50	45.9
30-45	44	31.9	34	31.2
46+	60	43.5	25	22.9
<hr/>				
Total	138	100.0	109	100.0
Mean	42		35	
Median	44		30	

MARITAL STATUS:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Single	21	15.2	28	25.7
Married	108	78.3	75	68.8
Other	9	6.5	6	5.5
<hr/>				
Total	138	100.0	109	100.0

SIZE OF TOWN, CITY, ETC. WHERE CASELOAD PRESIDES:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
<10,000	4	3.0	8	7.6
10,000- 49,000	23	17.2	21	20.2
50,000- 99,999	27	20.1	15	14.4
100,000-499,999	43	32.1	30	28.9
500,000 +	37	27.6	30	28.9
<hr/>				
Total	134	100.0	104	100.0

AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT IN CORRECTIONS:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 year	6	4.3	4	3.7
1-3 years	37	26.8	42	38.5
4-10 years	40	29.0	43	39.4
>10	55	39.9	20	18.4
Total	138	100.0	109	100.0

AFFILIATION PRIOR TO 1972:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Probation	83	90.2	21	38.2
Parole/Aftercare	9	9.8	31	56.4
Other	0	0.0	3	5.4
Total	92	100.0	55	100.0

TYPE OF WORK PRIOR TO ENTERING PROBATION/PAROLE AND/OR PROBATION/AFTERCARE:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Teaching, Health, Social Services	35	25.3	20	18.3
Armed Services, Law Enforcement	13	9.4	5	4.6
Clergy	25	18.1	11	10.1
Correctional Work	15	10.9	26	23.9
Student	27	19.6	33	30.3
Other	23	16.7	14	12.8
Total	138	100.0	109	100.0

EDUCATION:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
High School or less	8	5.8	8	7.3
Some Post Secondary Education	21	15.2	17	15.6
University/College Degree	109	79.0	84	77.1
Total	138	100.0	109	100.0

TYPE OF DEGREE:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Bachelor Degree	78	70.9	57	67.0
MSW/MCA	7	6.4	17	20.0
M.A.	9	8.2	5	5.9
Ph.D.	15	13.6	5	5.9
Other	1	0.9	1	1.2
Total	110	100.0	85	100.0

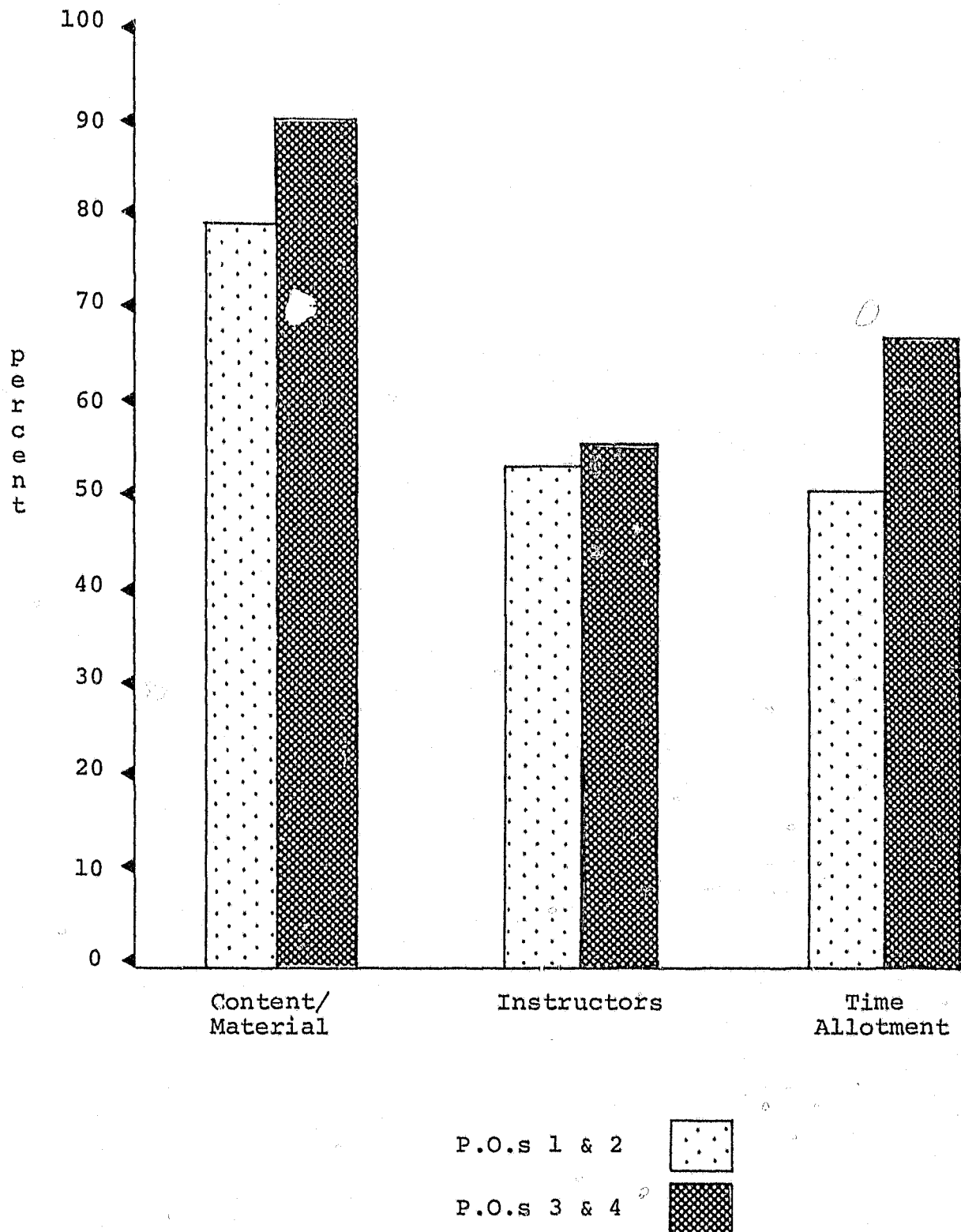
UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR:

	Probation/Parole		Probation/Aftercare	
	#	%	#	%
Social Sciences	62	65.3	56	71.8
Physical Sciences	4	4.2	2	2.5
Humanities	23	24.2	19	24.4
Other	6	6.3	1	1.3
Total	95	100.0	78	100.0

APPENDIX B

FIGURE 6

AREAS REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT
ACCORDING TO PROBATION OFFICER LEVEL

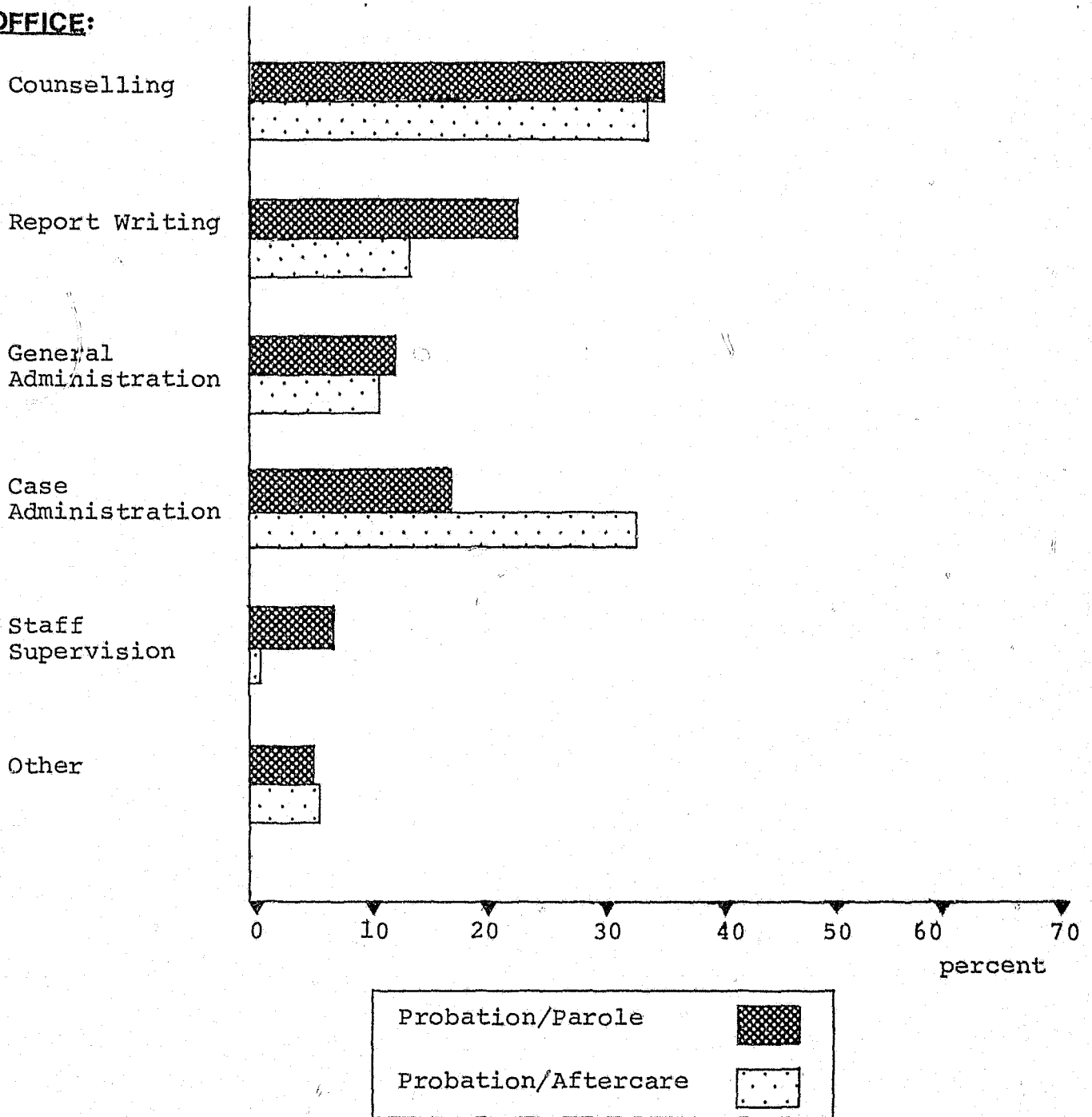


APPENDIX C

FIGURE 7

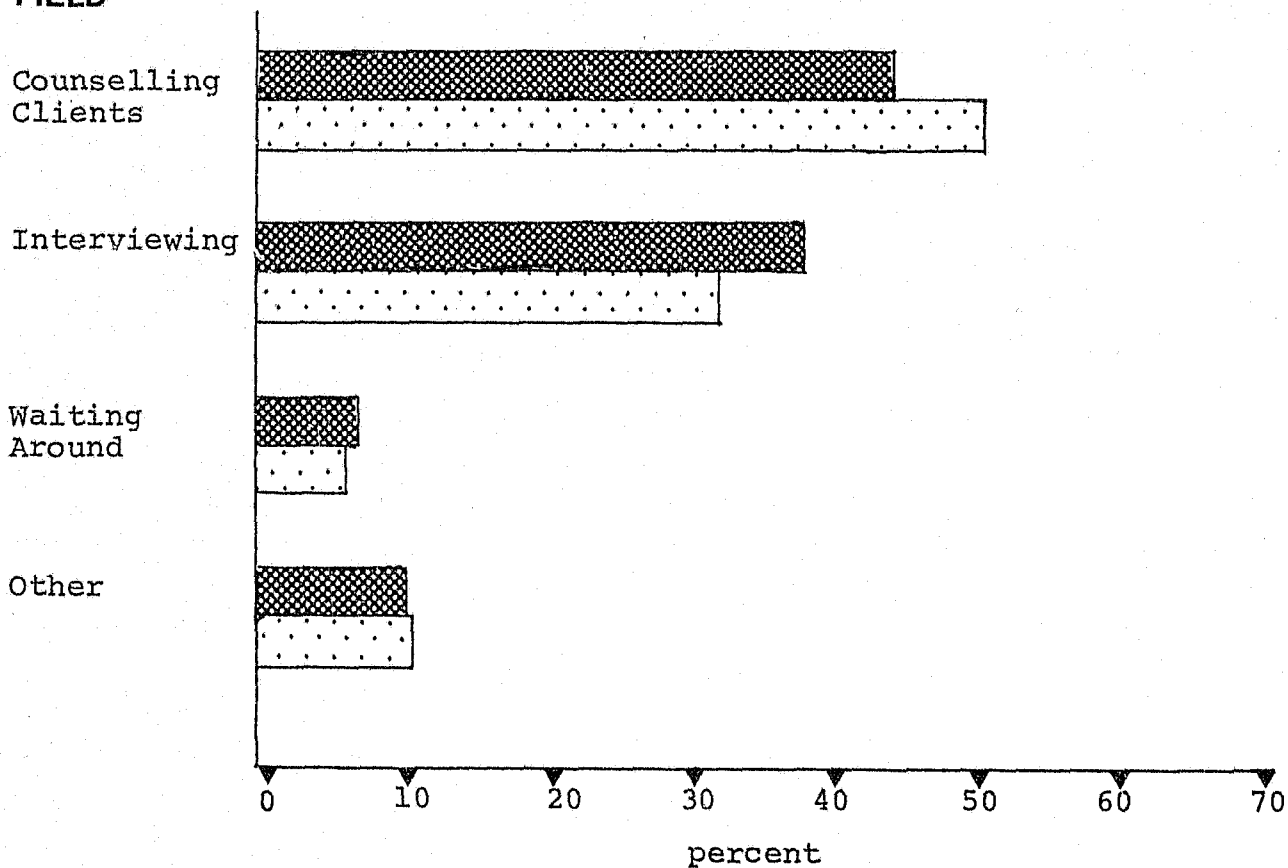
TIME DISTRIBUTION IN OFFICE, FIELD AND
COURT ACCORDING TO SERVICE

OFFICE:

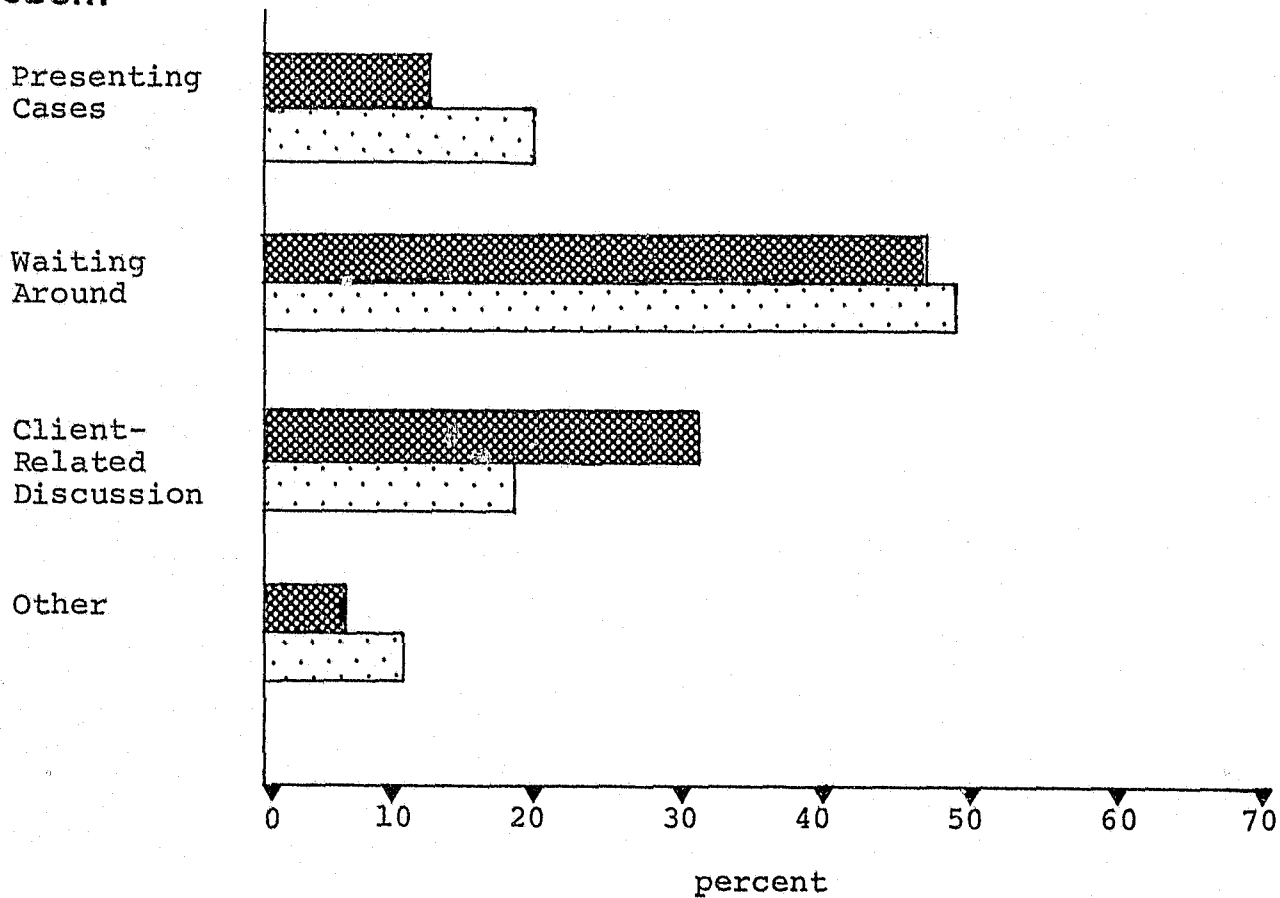


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FIELD

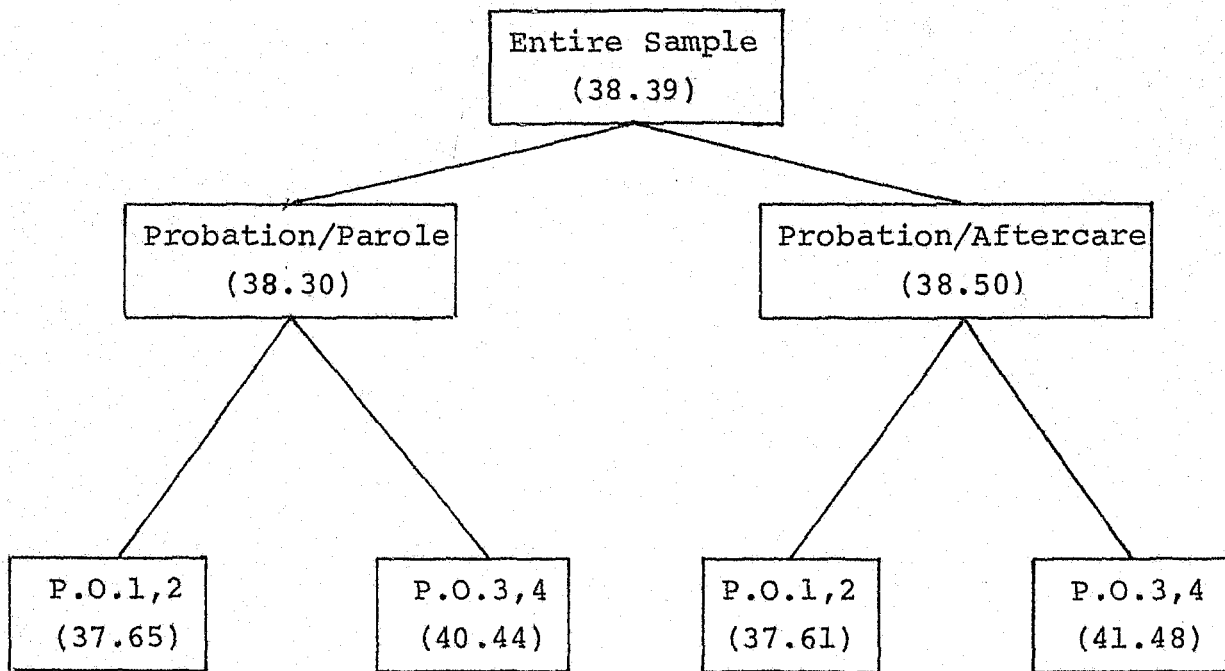


COURT

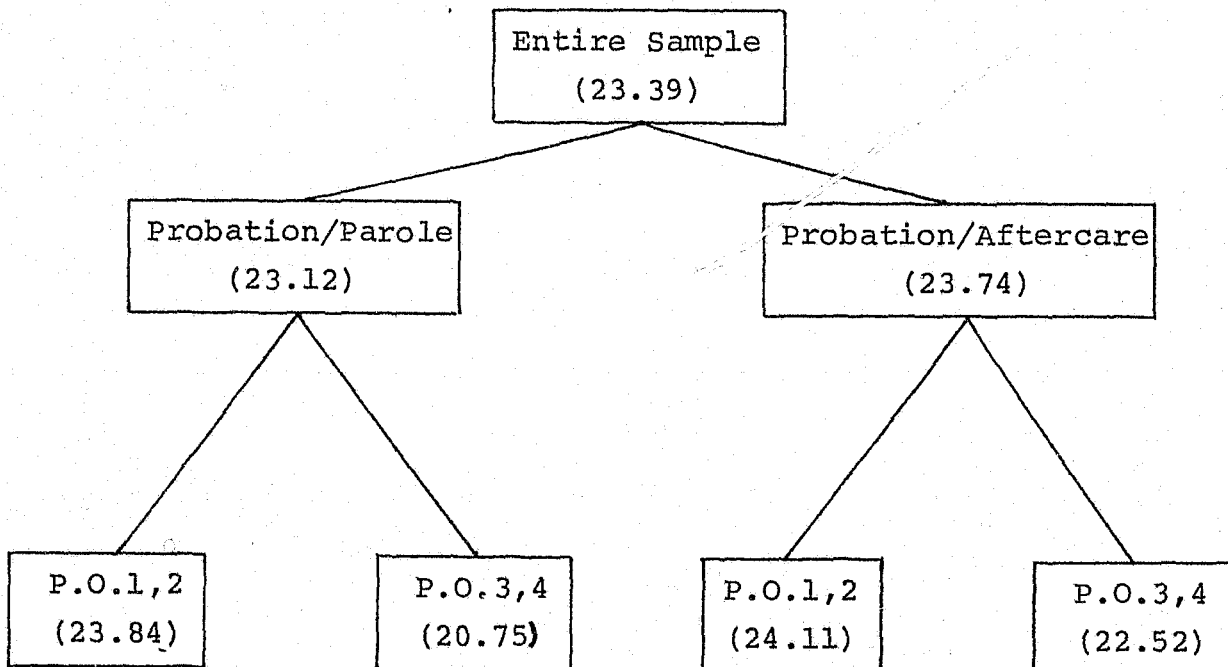


APPENDIX D

JOB SATISFACTION



JOB TENSION



END