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Decision Making in the Classification of Juvenile Delinquents
in the Juvenile Classification and Detention Homes

— Fourth (Final) Report —

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I. Purpose

In making classification decision for juvenile delinquents, not only an attempt to analyse present problems borne by juveniles but also an attentive consideration for both treatment effects on the juveniles after the decision and prediction of residivism are to be required of those responsible for classification practices. In other words, it is essential to describe what sort of treatment should be appropriate for a given juvenile or through what treatment a juvenile will be prevented from committing other crimes in his future. Sufficient classification decision, therefore, cannot be made unless relationships between the data obtained at the time of classification, effect of treatment, and prediction of residivism are explicitly disclosed.

Series of studies have been successively conducted to meet the above mentioned requirement. The first report dealt with the analysis of factors involved in the process of decision-making based on the data obtained at the time of classification. The second report tried to explain relations between factors of classification decision and residivism. Further, relations between factors of residivism and factors of treatment for juveniles disposed by the family court with reference to the recommendation (classification decision) from the classification home were analysed in the third report. The present report has an attempt to integrate finally the above three substantive studies.

II. Method

1. Methodology: Through previous analysis of residivism prediction based on the records of treatment process in the juvenile training school it was felt that the nature of the data obtained should further be examined closely since the data themselves have multivocal meanings. The multiple regression analysis model can be applied for predicting residivism on the basis of the assumption that independence, unbiasedness, equal variance, and normal distribution exist in the

- data obtained. Firstly, therefore, fundamental values for statistical analysis, i.e., skewness, kurtosis, and coefficient of variation were found so as to discuss and revise the selection of subject groups and items. In addition, after calculating the distance between given data and the center of each group by means of Mahalanobis generalized distance technique, singular data were verified in accordance with probability theory.
2. Techniques and processes for analysis: For analysing factors, three kinds of predictive method were employed in the previous studies, namely, a quantified system by regression obtained from varimax criterion (multiple correlation method), a point method based on discriminant analysis (multiple correlation ratio method), and a branch method based on predictive attribute analysis. The present study utilized multiple regression method which is the most precise of the three. Also, results obtained by using multiple regression method were signified by using F-test as an analysis of variance.
 3. Subjects: A total of 254 juveniles who were placed under probationary supervision and 181 juveniles who were sent to the juvenile training schools were studied. All those juveniles were released from the juvenile classification homes throughout the country in February and March, 1969. Traffic offenders and juveniles whose fingerprints were not found in the Fingerprint Identification Center of the National Police Agency (NPA) were excluded. Incidentally, the definition of residivism applied for the series of studies is defined any apprehension by the police determined through fingerprints kept at NPA. (The first survey was done in March, 1973; the second in March, 1974; and the third in February 1976.)
 4. Data: This study used (1) the same data collected in the first survey i.e., major items appeared in the cards for statistical use of classification and items relating to juveniles' personality. (cf. the Second Interim Report) (2) data on the treatment of juveniles received from the staff of the probation office and the juvenile training school at the time of the second survey. (cf. the Third Interim Report) This study also used (3) the data gathered from the survey made during the period of 1972 relating to residivism of the subjects. In this study any commitment to the correctional institutions was added to the definition of residivism.

III. Research findings and discussion

1. Juveniles under probationary supervision

Factors concerning residivism of the juveniles placed under probationary supervision were analysed through data collected both at the time of classification and during the period of treatment. Prediction of residivism can be made more precisely by using these kinds of factors than by applying factors analysed through only

data gathered for classification. Regardless of whether apprehension by the police after discharge from the classification home or re-committal to the correctional institutions taken as a criterion variable, attitudes towards daily life during the later stage of probation, criminal records, attitudes toward others, attitudes toward social norms, an extent of damage inflicted upon others, environmental changes after the family court disposition, emotional stability and flexibility, mental condition as a whole, etc. are found to have strong relations with residivism. Especially, it was found that juveniles who show a loose life during the later period of probation have a great possibility of residivism. All those findings suggest that problems of personality including attitudes toward others, records of misbehavior, and environmental problems including family relationships should be carefully taken into consideration for treating juveniles.

2. Juveniles sent to the juvenile training school

Factors of residivism relating to juveniles sent to the juvenile training school were studied by making three groups, namely, (1) all juveniles sent to the juvenile training school with the family court decision, (2) juveniles in group who were evaluated suitable for having treatment at the school by means of classification index score developed for this study (cf. First Interim Report), and (3) juveniles who committed the school for the first time. Methods employed here were same as used for analyzing juvenile probationers described above. Through this study, it was realized that the factors related closely to residivism were number of admission to the classification home, previous history of disposition by authorities, school career, state of vocational and economic life, treatment other than such special treatment as individual or group therapy given for improving juveniles' personality, abuse of drugs, etc. Although juveniles in group (3) were affected strongly by the treatment at the juvenile training school compared with other two groups, this group were also highly effected by factors influenced on juveniles before their commitment to the school rather than other factors as to contributing factors to residivism. Findings commonly observed in the three groups were as follows;

- (1) career of delinquent acts or extent of delinquency reflected on the history of disposition by authorities has a strong relation with residivism,
- (2) length of period between the first disposition given by the authority and the present case also shows a close relation with effects of treatment at the juvenile training school,
- (3) main emphasis may placed upon reformation of personality in the treatment process through group or individual therapy for those juveniles with grave personality problems, however, it should be noted that the more serious the disturbance of personality may be, the more difficult would be to treat them, and

(4) good environmental situations after release from the training school such as desirable relationships between released juveniles and their guardians or family members is one of the factors to prevent juveniles from committing another offense. In other words, it was found that good environmental situations have a close relation with juveniles' good conducts after release on parole.



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