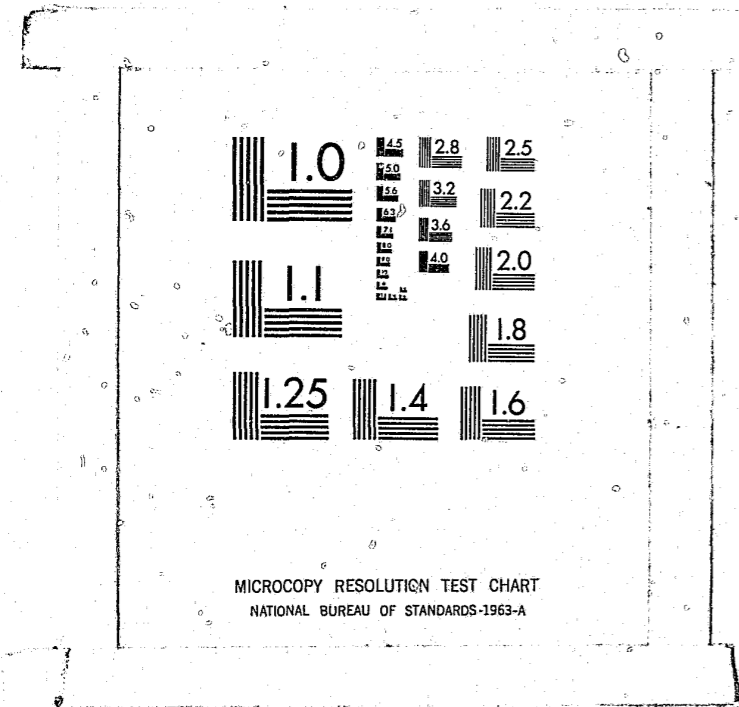


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INMATE ATTITUDES TOWARD
TEMPORARY RELEASE SELECTION

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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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Vera Institute of Justice

January, 1977

In the spring and summer of 1976 the Vera Institute of Justice, under contract to the New York State Department of Correctional Services, designed a point system and accompanying procedures to be used in selecting among candidates for the Department's temporary release program. This new selection process was designed to remedy some of the problems of the old selection procedures, a system that relied on the judgment of a three-man committee in each correctional facility. Under the old system, few explicit criteria existed to aid committee members in their choices, and inmates therefore had no clear idea of how entry into the program was gained. As a consequence of this loosely structured decision process, inmates felt temporary release selection to be arbitrary and unfair, leading to increased frustration and tension within the facilities.

The point system adopted by the Department consisted of ten items, six based on the applicant's prior criminal history and the remaining four focused on behavior in the facility. The new selection process was implemented on a trial basis beginning the last week in September at four Department facilities: Auburn (a maximum security facility for men), Bedford Hills (a medium security facility, the Department's only prison for women), Elmira (a medium security prison for younger men), and Wallkill (a medium security facility for men).

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For a description of the development of the point system see Barbara Dunkel, Cecilia M. Falbe, John Masten and R. Wayne Parsons, Design of a Point System for Temporary Release Selection, (The Vera Institute of Justice, December, 1976).

One of the main objectives of the new selection process was to be fair in the treatment of applicants. From the point of view of decreasing inmate discontent with temporary release selection, it matters little if the new selection process is fairer than the old one unless inmates perceive it as such. Therefore a forty-two page inmate manual was distributed to each eligible inmate in the pilot facilities. The manual described the various types of temporary release programs, the new selection process (including both the point system and the associated procedures), and the forms used in processing an application. Also, a videotape describing the new selection process was prepared and shown to inmates in order that they might better understand the new procedures. (Unfortunately, not all inmates had seen the videotape at the time of the interviews described in this report.) An additional feature of the new procedures was a personal interview with each applicant by a temporary release interviewer at the beginning of the application process. During the interview the applicant's point score and its implications were explained to the inmate, along with any special circumstances (such as outstanding warrants that precluded participation in the program), and any questions the inmate might have were answered.

Since considerable effort had been taken to explain the new process to inmates, Vera researchers decided it would be useful to talk to inmates whose applications had been processed under the new selection system to gauge their reaction to the point system and accompanying procedures. Consequently, 139 inmates were contacted at the pilot facilities. Structured,

self administered questionnaires were given to 126 of these inmates (see Appendix II). This questionnaire contained 43 items measuring the inmate's attitudes toward various aspects of the temporary release selection process. The format of the questionnaire required each respondent to read the question and then indicate his own opinion by placing a mark in the blank corresponding to "agree strongly", "agree moderately", "disagree moderately", or "disagree strongly". Respondents were instructed to leave the four spaces for an item blank if they did not understand the question, disagreed with the wording or assumptions of an item to the extent that they could not respond, or had no opinion. All respondents were promised complete confidentiality.

In addition to the structured questionnaires, 38 inmates were interviewed in half hour interviews (26 of these interviews were with applicants who also completed the questionnaire). The in-person interview was largely open-ended, thereby allowing the inmate complete latitude to respond to such questions as "What do you like about the new selection process? (Probe for specifics.)" The in-person interview was designed to allow for greater subtlety of response than can be obtained with a forced-choice questionnaire.

An important methodological issue in giving a self-administered questionnaire to inmates is whether or not individuals, such as inmates, with poor educational backgrounds can meaningfully respond to a questionnaire that presupposes the ability to read

and think through questions.² The only way of answering this question in the present context is to see if the responses are consistent with our substantive expectation; that is, do the answers "make sense?" Fortunately, they do. For example, only 5% of those completing the self-administered questionnaire agreed with item 18, "Only inmates convicted of crimes of violence should be allowed in temporary release."³ An inspection of the responses to each item, shown in Appendix II, shows that on the whole it appears that most inmates were able to complete the questionnaire. Also, other patterns in the data are evidence that the responses to the items appear to be meaningful.

Knowledge of the System

In contrast to some other characteristics of the temporary release program and selection process, the use of the point system appears to be something that almost all inmates can understand and relate to. Thus 92% of the 38 applicants interviewed knew which category of the point system they fell in. Sixty-four percent had determined their score before meeting with the interviewer.⁴ Furthermore, only 8% of those completing the questionnaire gave an incorrect answer (i.e., agreed) to item 20, "Under the new selection process, the longer an applicant's

²For example, 38% of a sample of 379 temporary release applicants have attained no more than ninth grade; only 29% have graduated from high school. These figures are provided by the temporary release management information system.

³The content of this item is, of course, preposterous; it was included precisely for the purpose of checking to see if responses were substantively meaningful.

⁴There were strong differences by sex; only 25% of the women, as contrasted with 81% of the men, had scored themselves.

criminal record, the more points he gets!"

Inmate knowledge about other aspects of the temporary release program also appeared substantial, if not as high as for the point system.⁵ As shown in Table 1, 3 of the other 4 factual questions were answered correctly by majorities of inmates. The one question which only a minority of inmates (roughly one-third) answered correctly concerned the legal definition of temporary release eligibility.

In sum, inmates appear to understand quite well the concept of the point system. Presumably this is because of its analogy to numerically graded school tests. Furthermore, most applicants understand the point system well enough to determine their scores by themselves. Finally, other factual questions showed a substantial understanding of the temporary release program.

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE RESPONDENTS GIVING CORRECT
ANSWER TO FACTUAL QUESTIONS

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Wording</u>	<u>% Correct</u>
3A	The only reason you can get a furlough is to maintain family ties.	70%
9	Educational leave is only for finishing high school.	75
14	Anybody within 2 years of parole or conditional release, according to the law, is eligible to apply for temporary release.	35
38	Furloughs are given for any purpose.	67

⁵Since the inmate manual describing the new selection process discusses all of the factual questions asked on the questionnaire, an applicant who read and understood the manual should be able to answer all five questions correctly.

Attitudes Toward Temporary Release Selection

A frequent complaint about the old selection process was that it took too long. Eighty nine percent of the applicants completing the questionnaire agreed with item 6, "the old selection process took too long." Of the 30 applicants interviewed in person with previous temporary release experience, 40% mentioned in response to an open-ended question the length of the old process as something they disliked.⁶ These figures are especially meaningful in view of the importance inmates attach to a prompt disposition for their application: 91% agree with item 26, "knowing right away if you're allowed to go out on temporary release is almost as important as going out." Since the new process eliminates Albany review for the great majority of cases, the time needed to process an application should be substantially less than before.⁷ Although no question was asked about this aspect of the new procedures, it is probably accurate to assume that most inmates would view the new process better on this count.

The amount of time taken to process applications was the only feature mentioned by any sizeable proportion of those questioned about the old process. The issue of reasons for

⁶The question read "What did you dislike about the (old) process?" Forty percent is a sizeable proportion for an open-ended question.

⁷No accurate statistics comparing these times are available.

denial does not appear highly salient as a source of discontent to inmates: of the 19 applicants rejected under the old system, only 1 (=5%) mentioned this as something they disliked.⁸

Turning to questions that measured general attitudes toward the new selection process, we find opinions to be divided in favor of and opposed to the new system. For example, 41% of the sample agree with item 10, "temporary release selection is unfair", 48% agree that "given the difficulty of making selection, the temporary release process is about as fair as possible" (item 39), and 47% agree that "the temporary release selection process should be completely overhauled" (item 32). Forty percent agree that "only the best people are selected for temporary release" (item 38). Similar responses were obtained from questions in the personal interview. When asked to name things they both liked and disliked about the new selection process, 18% of the 37 respondents named only things they disliked, 35% named things they both liked and disliked, and 46% listed only things they liked. Finally, the point system was endorsed by roughly half the respondents (52% agreed with item 5, "a point system is a fair way of selecting people for temporary release"). In sum, opinions appear to be split for and against the new selection process, with possibly a slightly larger percentage of inmates in favor of the new process than opposed.

We again find mixed responses to questions explicitly comparing the new selection process to the old one. Forty three

⁸These responses do not necessarily mean that inmates do not care about knowing reasons for denial; a plausible interpretation is that reasons for denial under the old system are adequate explanations from the inmate's point of view, although inmates may (and probably will) disagree with the decision.

percent agree that "the new selection procedures are basically the same as the old ones," (item 15), a not inaccurate perception in view of the similar results of the old and the new selection process.⁹ In a more evaluative comparison of the two selection systems, 73% of the respondents disagree with item 30, "the new selection procedures are not as good as the old," and a majority of those questioned agree that "the new selection process is better than the old one" (item 43).¹⁰ When asked in the personal interview "do you think the new selection process is fairer than the old one?", 68% of the 28 respondents answered 'yes'.

A number of questions asked about specific aspects of the selection process. One feature of the new procedures that proved unpopular with inmates is the heavy emphasis of the point system on prior criminal record, especially as measured by crimes of violence. Forty two percent of inmates interviewed in person did not think it fair to take away points for crimes of violence.¹¹ Fifty nine percent agree that "everyone should be allowed in temporary release, regardless of what he or she has been convicted of" (item 4). Large majorities of inmates in the sample feel that an applicant should not be denied temporary release on account of his record; 72% disagree with item 29, "some people

⁹Dunkel, et al, op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁰This question was not asked at Auburn Correctional Facility. Since inmates at Auburn are critical of the new process, having asked this question at this facility would probably have lowered the total percentage agreeing with the question from the 67% level in our data.

¹¹The question read "do you think it's fair to take away points for crimes of violence?"

have such bad records that they should never be allowed in temporary release", and 90% disagree that "inmates convicted of crimes of violence, such as robbery or assault, should not be allowed to participate in temporary release" (item 36). The attitudes of the vast majority of inmates appear to be succinctly captured in item 37, since 93% agree that "it's not fair to evaluate an applicant on the basis of what he did before he got to prison since he may have changed while doing time."

One of the ways available to inmates to demonstrate that they have changed is program participation. That most inmates appear willing to engage in these activities if they think it will bring them rewards such as temporary release and parole is evidenced by the 75% who agree that "not participating in programs or work assignments should make it harder to get into temporary release" (item 25). These responses occurred in the context of a point system heavily penalizing applicants with lengthy criminal records; whether or not a smaller percentage would be willing to base temporary release acceptance on program participation if the past intruded less remains to be seen.

Aside from participation in programs and work assignments, institutional behavior can most easily be judged by an inmate's disciplinary record. But inmates on the average are less inclined to be evaluated for temporary release on the basis of their disciplinary record: 55% agree that "an inmate's disciplinary record is not a good way of judging his suitability for temporary release" (item 31). The irony in these responses is that inmates want to be evaluated in the way that is least predictive of temporary release success. Criminal history and disciplinary be-

havior were predictive of success, while program participation was not.¹²

Another aspect of the new process unpopular with inmates is automatic rejection for those having a point score in the low range. Seventy seven percent disagree that "inmates with low point scores should not be allowed to participate in temporary release" (item 41), and 89% agree that "no applicant should be denied an opportunity to appear before the temporary release committee" (item 34).

Several questions focused on the temporary release committee's decision-making. Inmates do not appear to believe that the committees grant temporary release participation either on the basis of bribes or personal relationships. (Note the answers to items 2, 23, and 35 in Appendix II.) But inmate evaluation of the TRCs' performance is again mixed: 49% agree that "the temporary release committee generally does a good job in making its decisions" (item 19). The sample is roughly evenly split over the issue of less discretion in the committees' decisions. Fifty four percent agree that "the temporary release committee should not have so much discretion in deciding on temporary release applicants" (item 33), and 61% agree that "there should be more rules about how the temporary release committee chooses participants for temporary release" (item 22). Finally, there does not appear to be any consensus on the issue of TRC composition. Sixty four percent agree that "there should be inmate representatives on the

¹²See Dunkel et al, op. cit.

temporary release committee" (item 27). Fifty percent agree that "corrections officers should be on the temporary release committee since they know inmates best" (item 8) and 59% disagree that "corrections officers shouldn't be on the temporary release committee since all they care about is discipline" (item 24). Despite whatever criticisms they might have about the TRC's decision-making, though, inmates seem to welcome the opportunity to appear in person before the committee. Of the 16 inmates interviewed in person who had appeared before the committee, 81% thought the experience worthwhile.¹³

DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD TEMPORARY RELEASE SELECTION

Thus far the analysis has examined the answers to each question independently of anything we know about the respondents. In this section we examine the distribution of responses according to the facility the inmate is in and his point score category.

Each item in the questionnaire was crosstabulated against the respondent's facility and the range-disposition category he fell in.¹⁴ Since this produced 86 tables (two for each item in the questionnaire), it is impractical to reproduce all of them here. Tables 2 through 5 are four of these, chosen because they clearly portray the interesting relationships in the data.

Tables 3 and 5 indicate that a respondent's attitudes toward the selective process change according to the range-disposition

¹³Exactly the same percentage of the 36 respondents questioned about their meeting with the temporary release interviewer thought the interview to be worthwhile.

¹⁴Range-disposition is defined as follows: low range-automatically denied; middle range-denied by TRC; middle range-pending; middle range-approved by TRC; and high range-automatically approved.

category he falls in. Inmates who are approved, either automatically or by the temporary release committee, are much more favorably disposed toward the selection process than those who are rejected. Many of these differences are quite large for survey data. For example, Table 3 shows that only 18% of those in the low range agree that "the temporary release committee generally does a good job in making its decisions" (item 19), while fully 78% of those in the high range agree (either strongly or moderately) with the item. It is interesting to note that since applicants in these two ranges do not go before the temporary release committee, there is no logical reason why attitudes toward the committee should differ between these two groups. Two possible explanations are first, that applicants misunderstand the process to the extent that the committee is credited with the responsibility for decisions falling in these ranges, and, second, that the range and disposition so affect the applicant's attitudes that opinions with respect to all aspects of the selection process are colored by range and disposition.

Tables 2 and 4 show how attitudes toward the process vary by facility. Although differences between facilities are not as large as those between categories of range-disposition, there are consistent differences. Elmira and Bedford Hills inmates are more positive in their attitudes toward selection than inmates at Auburn and Wallkill. For example, majorities of inmates at both Elmira and Bedford Hills (61% and 68% respectively) agree with item 19, while the situation is reversed at Auburn and Wallkill, with 27% and 38% agreeing respectively.

TABLE 2

ITEM 19 BY FACILITY

Item 19: The temporary release committee generally does a good job in making its decisions	FACILITY			
	Elmira	Bedford	Auburn	Wallkill
Agree Strongly	19%	37%	3%	10%
Agree Moderately	42	31	24	28
Disagree Moderately	15	9	33	24
<u>Disagree Strongly</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>38</u>
Total %	99% *	100%	99%*	100%
Number in Column	(26)	(35)	(33)	(29)

* Does not sum to 100% due to rounding errors.

TABLE 3

ITEM 19 BY RANGE-DISPOSITION

Item 19: The temporary release committee generally does a good job in making its decisions	Low, automatically denied	Middle, disapproved by TRC	Middle Pend.	Middle Approv. by TRC	High, Automatically Approved
Agree Strongly	0%	10%	4%	48%	17%
Agree Moderately	18	30	24	26	61
Disagree Moderately	30	0	32	16	13
<u>Disagree Strongly</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number in Column	(27)	(10)	(25)	(31)	(23)

TABLE 4

ITEM 5 BY FACILITY

Item 5: A point system is a fair way of selecting people for temporary release:

	FACILITY			
	Elmira	Bedford	Auburn	Wallkill
Agree Strongly	48%	39%	12%	10%
Agree Moderately	20	22	31	26
Disagree Moderately	4	11	19	16
Disagree Strongly	28	28	38	48
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number in Column	(25)	(36)	(32)	(31)

TABLE 5

ITEM 5 BY RANGE-DISPOSITION

Item 5: A point system is a fair way of selecting people for temporary release:

	Low, auto- matically denied	Middle, disap- proved by TRC	Middle Pend.	Middle, Approv. by TRC	High, automa- tically Approved
Agree Strongly	7%	30%	32%	47%	26%
Agree Moderately	11	20	24	27	39
Disagree Moderately	14	10	12	13	13
Disagree Strongly	68	40	32	13	22
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number in column	(28)	(10)	(25)	(30)	(23)

Since the proportion of inmates falling in the ranges of the point system varies by facility (See Table 6 in Appendix I), the differences by facility shown in Tables 2 and 4 may simply reflect the fact that some facilities have an overall lower-scoring population than others and hence have applicants who are less positive in their attitudes about the selection process than respondents at other facilities. Thus the facility differences in attitudes observed in Tables 2 and 4 may result wholly from the different scores of the people in the facilities. Another possibility is that there is something about the facilities - differences in types of inmates or temporary release administrative practices, and so forth - that accounts for attitude differences between facilities over and above those differences we would expect solely on the basis of point scores. In brief, the strategy used to answer this question was to form two attitude scales, one measuring general affect towards the selection process (the extent to which the respondent approves or disapproves of the selection process) and the other measuring the extent to which the respondent feels that some people should be excluded from temporary release, and then use these scales as dependent variables in a multiple regression. The details of the analysis are presented in Appendix I and only the substantive results are discussed here.

The results of the analysis in Appendix I indicate that, for general affect towards the selection process, facility does have an effect on attitudes in addition to that explained by range-disposition. Thus differences in attitudes between facilities

are not explained wholly by the range-disposition category an applicant falls in. Unfortunately, these results do not tell us what it is about a facility that accounts for these differences, though some speculation is useful. One possibility is the different administrative practices in the temporary release programs at facilities (such as varying interviewer styles, lengths of time needed to process applications, the way applicants are treated by TRC's, and so on) account for these differences. Another possibility is that inmates at various facilities have different characteristics accounting for these attitudinal differences. For example, a policy of transferring the more 'difficult' inmates - those with greater expressed hostility towards the correctional system - to Wallkill and Auburn could also account for the patterns observed in the data. Although both explanations are possible, observations of program implementation at the four pilot facilities certainly suggest the plausibility of the first one.

The results of the analysis described in Appendix I have other implications. For example, the tendency of applicants denied by the TRC to have more favorable attitudes than those falling in the low range suggests that hostility towards the program can be reduced by somehow giving inmates in the low range an opportunity to appear before the TRC. Among the alternatives already discussed by Vera staff are eliminating the low range altogether, lowering the boundary between the low and middle ranges, and instituting a periodic review by the TRC of those applicants in the low range with no possibility of gaining enough points through improved institutional behavior to move into the middle range.

The results also show that an applicant's evaluation of the process is more favorable the more he knows about the selection process. Again, the explanations of this finding are speculative. One is that greater understanding of the process leads to more favorable attitudes. Another is that the results are spurious, that the type of inmate most likely to understand the selection process well is also the type likely to have favorable attitudes toward the process. Although we cannot establish the truth of either hypothesis, the plausibility and pragmatic implications of the first hypothesis, if true, suggest that greater effort be taken in the future to explain the system to inmates.

Finally, we note that in terms of explaining affect toward the selection process we have done remarkably well. Almost half of the variance of AFFECT, the scale measuring general approval or disapproval of the selection process, has been explained by the regression, an amount that is certainly high for attitude data. Furthermore, one-third of the variance is explained by range-disposition categories alone. In other words, attitudes toward the system are strongly determined by whether or not and how the application is approved or denied. While we have pointed out a few ways that the results suggest the program might be modified so as to increase its acceptance by inmates, it is clear that no matter how much the selection process is designed, modified, or explained to inmates, denying an inmate's application will, on the average, create some hostility towards the program. In short, the only way to win complete acceptance of the selection process by inmates is to let everyone out, an implication of no great practical importance.

APPENDIX I

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES

As discussed in the text, it is of interest to know if different degrees of support for the new selection process in the four facilities are accounted for by the differences in scores at the four facilities or whether facilities have an effect independent of score. One problem adding to the difficulty of answering this question is the correlation between facility and point score range-disposition. As shown in Table 6, inmates at Bedford score highest, while those at Auburn score lowest. Inmates at the two remaining facilities, Wallkill and Elmira, score on the average about the same, and are intermediate in their scores compared to the other two facilities.

This type of problem can best be analyzed using multiple regression, a technique that examines the effect of several independent or predictor variables on a single dependent variable and, if two or more independent variables are correlated with one another, determines the corrected effect of any variable on the dependent variable by controlling for the effect of other variables in the equation. In the present circumstance there are 43 possible dependent variables (each item on the questionnaire), which, if each were analyzed separately, would be more regressions than convenient to analyze. Thus we have combined some of the items into two scales and analyzed the scales, not the individual items.

The scales were constructed by scoring the four possible answers - "agree strongly", etc. - 1, 2, 3 and 4 such that the response most approving of the point system and allied

TABLE 6

RANGE-DISPOSITION BY FACILITY*

	<u>FACILITY</u>			
	<u>Auburn</u>	<u>Wallkill</u>	<u>Elmira</u>	<u>Bedford Hills</u>
Low-automatically denied	24%	18%	17%	10%
Middle-denied by TRC	34	39	36	13
Middle-approved by TRC	31	31	36	42
High-automatically approved	11	13	11	34
<u>(Total % Approved)**</u>	<u>(42%)</u>	<u>(44%)</u>	<u>(47%)</u>	<u>(77%)</u>
Total %	100%	101%	100%	99%
(Number)	(231)	(204)	(351)	(155)

*These figures are based on 941 applications processed during the first nine weeks of the pilot period. They are taken from a DOCS memorandum from Leo Bisceglia to Clark Wilson, dated December 13, 1976. Due to rounding errors all columns may not total to 100%.

** This is the percent of all applications approved at the facility, either by the TRC or as result of falling in the high range. It is (subject to rounding error) the sum of the third and fourth rows of the table.

procedures (either "agree strongly" or "disagree strongly", depending upon the wording of the item) is scored "4". The next step was to compute a matrix of correlations (Pearson r's) of all 43 items. This matrix was visually examined to locate groups of items that mutually correlate with one another.¹⁵ Examination of the intercorrelations led to the development of two scales consisting of ten and four items each. The first scale, labelled AFFECT, consisted of ten items measuring the respondents' affect towards the present selection process.¹⁶ The second scale, called EXCLUDE, contained four items measuring the extent to which the respondent agreed with the present policy of excluding some applicants from the program.¹⁷ Each respondent was assigned a scale score equal to his average value on the items in the scale. Since items are scored 1, 2, 3, or 4, scale scores range from 1 to 4, with a higher value on the first scale corresponding to a positive attitude toward the selection process, and a higher score on the second scale indicating greater acceptance of the exclusionary policy.

Each of these scales was regressed on the following set of eight variables: four dummy variables corresponding to each category of range-disposition save low-automatically denied; three dummy variables corresponding to each facility save

¹⁵According to scaling theory, items must be measuring the same underlying dimension if they are to be combined into a scale. One indication that a set of items measures a common dimension is that they correlate with one another. In choosing items to combine into a scale, one must consider the substantive meaning of the items as well as their intercorrelations.

¹⁶The items are numbers 2, 5, 10, 15, 19, 23, 30, 32, 35, and 39.

¹⁷The items are numbers 4, 13, 29 and 41.

Bedford Hills; and a variable measuring the number of correct responses to the five factual items on the questionnaire.¹⁸

The last variable, NFACT, was formed by counting the number of correct responses to items 3A, 9, 14, 20, and 38, the five factual items on the questionnaire. A correct answer was considered to be "disagree strongly" or "disagree moderately", since all items were worded such that agreement would correspond to an incorrect answer. The distribution of scores on NFACT is as follows:

<u>Number of Correct Answers</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
None	1.6%	1.6%
One	9.5	11.1
Two	21.4	32.5
Three	20.6	53.2
Four	26.2	79.4
Five	20.6	100.0

These figures indicate, for example, that 20.6% of the sample answered exactly three questions correctly, and that 53.2% answered three or fewer questions correctly.

¹⁸A dummy variable is one coded 1 if an attribute is present in a particular case and 0 if the attribute is not present. For technical reasons a set of n nominal variables must be represented in a regression equation by n-1 dummy variables. Thus the five categories of range-dispositions are represented by only four dummy variables. An inmate falling in the middle-pending category would be scored 1 on the dummy variable corresponding to this category and 0 on all others. The omitted category, low range-denied, serves as the reference point in the analysis to which the other four dummy variables are compared. An applicant falling in the low range is uniquely identified by the fact that he is scored 0 on all four of the dummy variables corresponding to the other four range-disposition categories. Similarly, the four facilities are represented by three dummy variables. Bedford Hills has been omitted and serves as the reference point for the facility dummy variables.

Table 7 shows the results of regressing AFFECT and EXCLUDE on the eight independent variables. AFFECT is explained much more strongly by the variables in the regression than EXCLUDE (47.2% and 9.9% of the corrected variance respectively). Substantively, this means that knowledge of an applicant's range-disposition category, facility, and so forth, gives us a much more accurate prediction of his overall affect for the selection process than it does his feelings about excluding people from the program. Thus being rejected by the program, for instance, is much more likely to leave one with a negative feeling for the selection process than to cause a change in attitudes toward admitting people into the program.

Another implication of the findings is that facility does have an effect on attitudes independent of range-disposition, especially pronounced on AFFECT. Thus adding facility dummy variables adds 13.5% to the variance explained of AFFECT over that explained solely by range-disposition. The regression coefficients for facilities in the AFFECT equation indicate that Elmira inmates do not differ noticeably in their attitudes toward the selection process from Bedford Hills inmates, and that Wallkill and Auburn inmates are about one-half a point less favorable than Elmira or Bedford Hills inmates.¹⁹ Looking at the AFFECT equation, Elmira inmates on the average are .03 scale points less favorable in their attitudes than Bedford Hills in-

¹⁹Since no dummy variable is present for Bedford Hills, it is the reference point against which other facilities are compared.

TABLE 7
REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF AFFECT AND EXCLUDE

Dependent Variable = AFFECT

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	R ² Increment
Middle - Denied	.33	.23	
Middle - Pending	.42	.15	
Middle - Approved	.68	.15	.325
High - Approved	.56	.16	
Wallkill	-.49	.14	
Elmira	-.03	.14	.135
Auburn	-.49	.15	
NFACT	.13	.04	.057

TOTAL CORRECTED R² = .472

Dependent Variable = EXCLUDE

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	R ² Increment
Middle-Denied	.54	.33	
Middle-Pending	.44	.22	.150
Middle-Approved	.54	.22	
High-Approved	.86	.24	
Wallkill	.11	.21	
Elmira	.24	.20	.015
Auburn	.11	.22	
NFACT	.06	.06	.012

TOTAL CORRECTED R² = .099

In each equation, residual degrees of freedom = 108

mates when controlling for the other variables in the equation, while applicants from Auburn and Wallkill are both .49 points less favorable. Since the four possible responses to each item are scored 1-2-3-4, a .03 point difference is insignificant. A difference of one-half points, however, is substantively meaningful.

Looking at EXCLUDE, facility differences are not large enough to be statistically significant (adding the three facility dummy variables to the equation increases R^2 by only 1.5 percentage points, as compared to 13.5 percentage points for AFFECT). Thus facility appears to have an independent effect on AFFECT, but not on EXCLUDE.

The category of range-disposition without a dummy variable and hence serving as the reference point is the low-automatically denied range. The positive coefficients for the other four categories indicate that respondents falling in these latter four categories are on the average always more favorably oriented to the new procedures than those in the low categories, a finding that is immediately substantively plausible. The finding that applicants who have been denied by the TRC are more positive in their attitudes than those falling in the low range suggests that the chance at least to argue one's case before the committee tends to result in more support for the system.

Differences between the last four categories of range-disposition are not large enough to be statistically significant with this size sample, though the results are suggestive in substantively plausible ways. Respondents whose applications have been approved - either by the TRC or by virtue of falling

in the high range - appear more approving of the system than those who have been denied.

Finally, we also note that as one's factual knowledge about the new selection process increases, so does support for the system. Moving from zero to 5 correct answers appears to increase one's support, as measured by AFFECT, by about two-thirds of a scale point, a not insignificant amount. The possible interpretations of this finding are discussed in the text.

TEMPORARY RELEASE PROGRAM

Temporary Release Program Applied For: Furlough _____ Work Release _____

Educational Leave _____

Your Point Score: _____ Range: Low _____ Middle _____ High _____

Application was Approved _____ Disapproved _____

Answer each of the following questions according to whether you agree strongly, agree moderately, disagree moderately, or disagree strongly. Put a check in the blank corresponding to your opinion. If you don't have an opinion about any statement or don't understand the statement, leave it blank and go on to the next one. For example, suppose you disagree strongly with the statement, "Temporary Release is not a good program." Then you should mark the blank on the right as shown. For the most part, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. None of your answers will be revealed to any one in the Department, either in Albany or in this facility. Your answers are completely confidential.

	AGREE STRONGLY	AGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE STRONGLY
1. Temporary Release is not a good program. (Example)	_____	_____	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. The best way to get a furlough is to be good friends with a staff member.	10%	11%	22%	58%
3a. The only reason you can get a furlough is to maintain family ties.	12	18	20	50
3b. People with serious psychiatric problems should not be allowed in Temporary Release.	26	22	31	20
4. Everyone should be allowed in Temporary Release, regardless of what he or she has been convicted.	33	26	25	16
5. A point system is a fair way of selecting people for Temporary Release.	27	25	13	36

Figures are percent of respondents giving each answer to every question. Due to rounding error, numbers may not sum to 100% across every row.

	AGREE STRONGLY	AGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE STRONGLY
6. The old selection process took too long.	69%	20%	7%	5%
7. Inmates should be able to meet with a counselor both before and after going on a furlough.	62	28	2	7
8. Corrections officers should be on the Temporary Release Committee since they know inmates best.	34	16	10	40
9. Educational leave is only for finishing high school.	14	11	17	58
10. Temporary Release selection is unfair.	25	16	28	31
11. All Temporary Release decisions should be made in Albany.	14	8	20	57
12. People should be selected into Temporary Release on the basis of a lottery.	6	6	8	80
13. Everybody should be allowed in Work Release, even if only for a few months.	46	17	19	18
14. Anybody within 2 years of parole or conditional release, according to the law, is eligible to apply for Temporary Release.	51	14	4	31
15. The new selection procedures are basically the same as the old ones.	22	22	26	31
16. The Temporary Release program should be abolished since most people don't get much out of it.	12	9	12	68
17. Only inmates with good work records should be allowed in Work Release.	21	16	24	39
18. Only inmates convicted of crimes of violence should be allowed in Temporary Release.	2	3	24	71

	AGREE STRONGLY	AGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE STRONGLY
19. The Temporary Release Committee generally does a good job in making its decisions.	18%	31%	20%	31%
20. Under the new selection process, the longer an applicant's criminal record, the more points he gets.	4	4	14	78
21. The number of spaces for Work Release should be greatly increased.	77	16	3	3
22. There should be more rules about how the Temporary Release Committee chooses participants for Temporary Release.	40	21	23	16
23. Members of the Temporary Release Committee generally give furloughs only to inmates they like.	15	13	22	50
24. Corrections officers shouldn't be on the Temporary Release Committee since all they care about is discipline.	29	12	25	34
25. Not participating in programs or work assignments should make it harder to get into Temporary Release.	44	32	11	14
26. Knowing right away if you're allowed to go out on Temporary Release is almost as important as going out.	70	21	5	4
27. There should be inmate representatives on the Temporary Release Committee.	48	17	13	23
28. Only the best people are selected for Temporary Release.	19	21	30	30
29. Some people have such bad records that they should never be allowed in Temporary Release.	12	15	32	40
30. The new selection procedures are not as good as the old method.	12	15	34	40

Inmate Questionnaire

	AGREE STRONGLY	AGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE MODERATELY	DISAGREE STRONGLY
31. An inmate's disciplinary record is not a good way of judging his suitability for Temporary Release.	30%	26%	26%	18%
32. The Temporary Release selection process should be completely overhauled.	24	22	29	24
33. The Temporary Release Committee should not have so much discretion in deciding on Temporary Release Applicants.	24	29	25	21
34. No applicant should be denied an opportunity to appear before the Temporary Release Committee.	78	10	3	8
35. An easy way to get a furlough is to bribe a member of the Temporary Release Committee (or staff).	7	3	9	80
36. Inmates convicted of crimes of violence, such as robbery or assault, should not be allowed to participate in Temporary Release.	7	2	21	69
37. It's not fair to evaluate an applicant on the basis of what he did before he got to prison since he may have changed while doing time.	70	23	3	4
38. Furloughs are given for any purpose.	19	14	31	36
39. Given the difficulty of making selection, the Temporary Release process is about as fair as possible.	24	24	29	23
40. The Temporary Release Committee should be allowed to look at anything it wants in an applicant's folder in making its decision.	28	31	21	20

Inmate Questionnaire

	<u>AGREE</u> <u>STRONGLY</u>	<u>AGREE</u> <u>MODERATELY</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u> <u>MODERATELY</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u> <u>STRONGLY</u>
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41. Inmates with low point scores should not be allowed to participate in Temporary Release.

<u>6%</u>	<u>16%</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>52%</u>
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42. It is unfair to check an applicant's record for a history of mental illness.

<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>45</u>
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43. The new selection process is better than the old one.

<u>37</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>25</u>
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(N-83)*

*Since this question was not asked at Auburn and of some respondents at Bedford Hills, the number of respondents is smaller for this item. All other items were administered to 126 inmates.

END