EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINAL REPORT

Contract No. J15C-2014

EVALUATION OF
AN INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONAL TECHNIQUES

August 1973

STAFF TRAINING CENTERS

THE BUREAU OF PRISONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINAL REPORT

Contract No. J15C-2014

EVALUATION OF

AN INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONAL TECHNIQUES

A Program of
The Bureau of Prisons
Staff Training Centers
El Reno, Oklahoma
Atlanta, Georgia

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PREFACE

The final report on project No. J15c-2014, "Evaluation of an

Introduction to Correctional Techniques" is presented in two parts.

The first is an Executive Summary. The second, a technical report,

contains the supporting data on which the Summary is based.

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to provide administrators

in the Bureau with a brief review of the activities and the pertinent

findings of the project. The condensed statements are supported in the

technical document. In general, the divisions in the Executive Summary

correspond to the sections in the full report. Thus, it would be possible,

if a statement of interest is found in the Executive Summary, to locate

the source of the statement and examine the analyses upon which it was

based.

The Technical Report contains the details necessary for a full

understanding of the several analyses. It would be of primary interest

to researchers and others who would capitalize upon the work already

done and continue to move it forward. The details presented describe

methods of data processing and modes of statistical analyses which would

normally be of little interest or use to persons in management who have

decision making roles.

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When the Bureau of Prisons started the staff training centers for new employees in 1971, a contract was written to develop an external evaluation. The evaluation was not intended to be a research project; rather it was a program to develop instruments which would provide the trainers with information about the results of their work. The initial proposal suggested the development of an information system which would provide continuing feedback for the trainers and specific information for executives responsible for making decisions about the future of the training programs. During the developmental period, which will end with this report, the information system could be envisioned as shown in Figure 1. The role of consultants and specialists focused on planning data collection and compiling the data into a form usable by the trainers and administrators of the Bureau.

Data were collected through three primary methods. The main body of data was gathered at the staff training centers while the new employees were in training. The second major source of data was from the several institutions of the Bureau. It consisted of follow-up reports on former trainees during their probationary year. Finally, certain individuals provided information through site visits to the institutions. The last source was useful in designing data collection instruments.

As the information was explored and organized informal discussions were held and formal reports were written (see List of Reports). Each of the reports was discussed with personnel assigned to the training centers and with personnel at the Bureau. The information was subsequently

External System

Internal System

STC

Insti-tution

Indivi-dual

A

A

A

Planning & Data Collection

Com-piler

A

Consultants & Specialists

Pre-Packaged Data

High Level Decision Maker

On Line Decision Maker
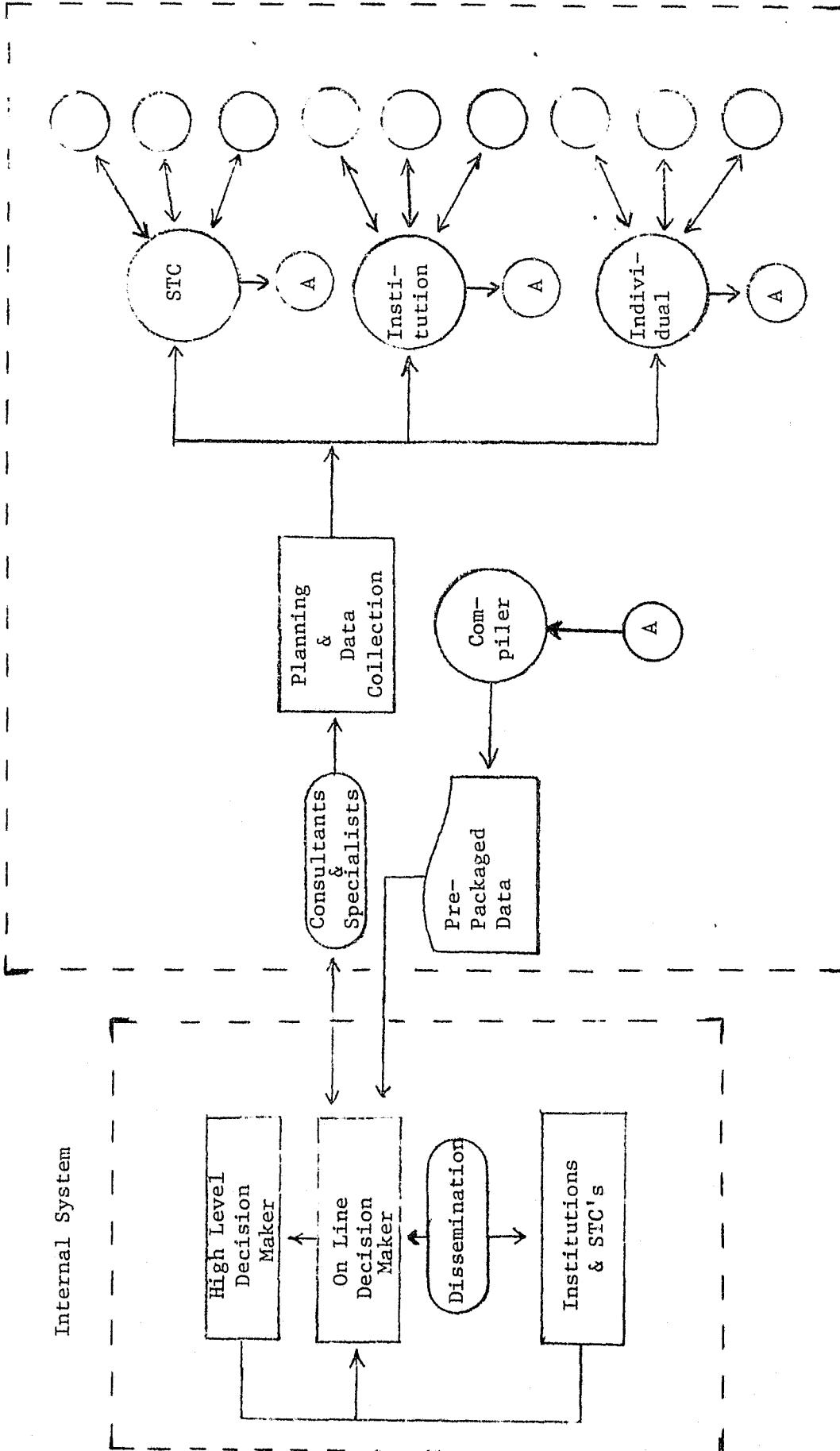
Dissemination

Institutions & STC's

FIGURE 1

Developmental Phase of Information System

disseminated through the staff training centers to the institutions.

With the termination of the evaluation contract, the information system acquires a new form. This form is shown in Figure 2. The major change is that further development of instruments and the collection, compiling and packaging of data must now become a function of the Bureau. Advisors and consultants will still be available; however, they will no longer be an integal part of the information system as they were while the instruments were being developed.

Five specific tasks were projected for the evaluation. Briefly they were:

1. A study of the background or demographic data of the trainees.

2. Development of a system for peer and staff rating. The ratings were to be done at the end of the training period.

3. Development of an attitude scale which would have the capacity to show changes in attitudes, beliefs or a general philosophy of corrections, as a result of the training. In order to show the change, there would have to be at least two forms. One would be administered prior to the training and one at the end of the two week training period. Ideally, a third form would be developed which would be used in the follow-up of employees after they had been on the job for several months.

4. The construction of an achievement test to measure the specific information which the trainees learned during the two weeks. Two forms were designed to be used, one before and one after training, so that changes as a result of training could be perceived.

5. A procedure was desired for assessing the effectiveness of the employees after they had been on the job. The follow-up study would provide one assessment of the effectiveness of the training program and could also provide criteria for validating the several instruments.
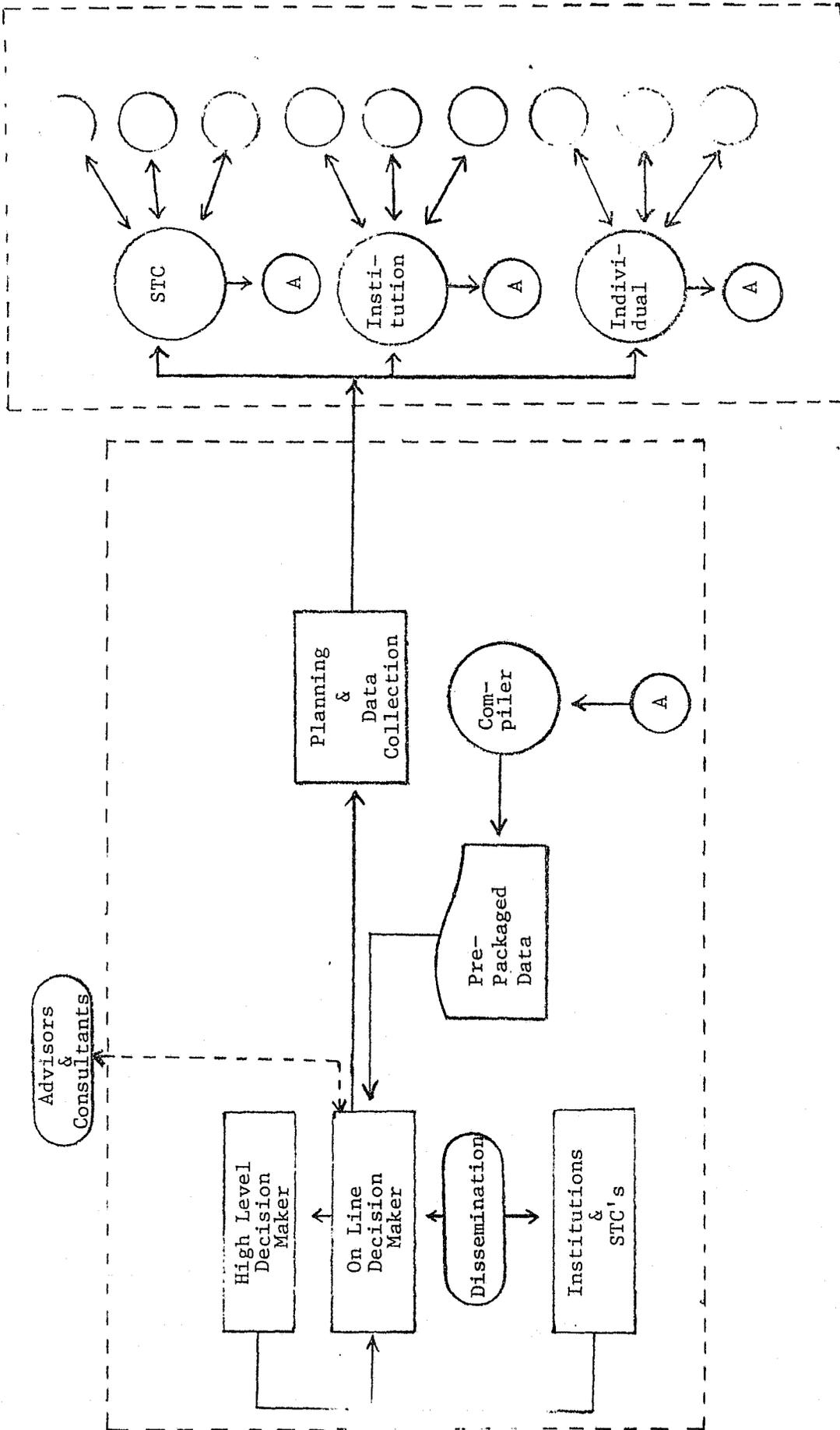
FIGURE 2

Operational Phase of Information System

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A sixth task emerged from the others. This was the development of a standard scoring system for the Bureau of Prisons. All instruments were normed in such a fashion that the results could be plotted on a Personal Profile. The system provided a number of advantages. It gave a visual record of the trainee's background and achievements. It showed how his scores related to a standard developed on male Correctional Officers. Because it was a standard scale it permitted comparisons among several varieties of data. The Profile could be used to illustrate the similarities or differences on any of the measurements between training classes, job groups, institutional groups, or other classifications of employees that might be useful. Conversion tables were developed and delivered to the Bureau which would permit the raw scores from any instrument to be transfered into the standard scores and plotted on a Personal Profile.

Personal Data Sheet

The initial attempt to collect background information from the trainees used the Personal Qualifications Statement (Form 171). During the first year considerable time and effort was invested in screening the Personal Qualifications Statements of the trainees. Two problems became apparent. It was difficult to get the forms of all employees and in many instances the information on the forms was not uniform. As a result, the decision was to develop a short form that would provide that information on the background of the trainee which appeared to have some usefulness for the project. These items were identified through the preliminary statistical analyses. The new form, the Personal Data Sheet, was to be completed by the trainee after he arrived at a staff training center. It resolved many of the problems of obtaining comparable data and provided an opportunity

to explore some information which did not normally appear on the Personal

Qualifications Statement.

A study of the background information produced some notable

results. It is evident that more new employees have relatives working for

the Bureau than would be expected. However, the decision of the new employees

to apply for a position with the Bureau was not a result of influence by

relatives, but rather an interest in a career. There was considerable

variation among the institutions. It may be important to study the trends

in order to gain an understanding of the full implications of the practice.

Age and military service also appeared to be significant factors in the

background of the trainees.

The Staff-Peer-Self Rating

At the end of each class the trainees were asked to rate each other

in terms of their belief about future success on the job. Each trainee was

also asked to rate himself on the same scale. In addition to these peer

and self ratings, staff members were asked to rate each of the trainees. As

a result, four ratings were available for each trainee: the rating he had

given to himself, the average rating he had given to his peers, the rating

which his peers gave to him, and the rating he received from the staff.

Conversion tables were developed to permit placing these ratings on the

Personal Profile.

Explorations of these data showed that the average rating which

a trainee received from his fellow classmates was closely related to his

subsequent success on the job. Unfortunately, the average rating given by

the staff did not discriminate. In earlier reports it was pointed out that

an unusual amount of variability existed in the staff ratings. It may have been a result of the staff member's own background. Whether he had been a Correctional Officer, a caseworker or an educator, he may have a very different perception of the trainee. Also, while the number of trainees rating each other was large enough that extreme scores did not affect the average rating, the number of staff members providing ratings was small. As a result, the influence of very high or very low ratings was greater.

The rating given to a trainee by staff members showed a good correlation with the trainee's formal education. Generally speaking, the more formal education he had, the better ratings he received from the staff members. There was also a suggestion that he received better ratings from the other trainees.

Studies of the rating systems indicated that the raters, whether trainers or trainees, were rating a person as a person and not in terms of any distinctive traits that he might have. Thus, it became more feasible to request ratings in terms of a global view of expected success on the job, rather than in terms of specific behavior traits relating to treatment, security and custody. In spite of the inability of the raters to discriminate among these characteristics, the average peer rating has remained the item most closely related to success on the job as reflected in satisfactory completion of the probationary year.

The Correctional Practices Questionnaire

Early explorations for scales oriented to corrections indicated that existing scales lacked specificity and presented high variability in reading difficulty. As a result the task of developing a questionnaire

conferences with personnel at the staff training centers and at the central office in Washington. The primary focus of the training was the Correctional Officer and the majority of them were male. Therefore, that job classification was used as a standard and all scaling refers to the average male Correctional Officer. The use of a model based upon one group of trainees provided a stable frame of reference for evaluating the scores of any trainees. It does not restrict or distort the scores of any individual or group but rather provides a baseline for interpreting all scores.

Exploration of the data provided evidence of gains from pretest to post-test. Most new employees failed to show well formulated beliefs about the work of corrections at the time they were employed. However, after they had completed the two weeks of training, they had acquired a philosophy of corrections which was congruent with that adopted by the Bureau.

The questionnaires can be scored by computer. The program generates standard scores for each trainee on each of the three scales. It is also possible to score them by hand. Scoring keys, together with conversion tables were provided to both staff training centers. The conversion tables permitted the translation of raw scores into the Bureau of Prisons Standard Score System.

The final forms of the CPQ were constructed so that it would be possible to develop norms for a short scoring system. This would permit fast scoring by hand without a great loss of information. While the entire questionnaire will always be administered, the short scoring system can be used when time in scoring is a significant factor. Two forms of the CPQ, Forms 5 and 6, and norms for both short and long scoring are available. Form 7 was also constructed but could not be fully standardized before the

specific to the philosophy of the Bureau of Prisons was undertaken. It passed through several developmental stages and acquired several distinctive characteristics. First, it was constructed with a controlled reading level. Second, it was specific to the task of corrections and to the philosophy of the Bureau of Prisons. This was accomplished through the cooperation and the expert knowledge of the trainers at the staff training centers and through site visits to representative institutions. Third, in its final form, it was a brief instrument. In spite of its limited length, it provided three scaled scores: Ambition, Treatment and Security. The scales of the Correctional Practices Questionnaire measure three aspects of a philosophy of corrections. They may be defined as:

1. Ambition: Measures the orientation of the correctional worker towards increased professionalism and alignment with Bureau of Prisons standards.

2. Treatment--Measures the recognition of the role of the correctional worker in the helping relationship with residents. It is expected that the cognitive recognition of this role will be related to the behavioral acts of helping which comprise the goal of the training.

3. Security--Measures the recognition of the responsibility of the correctional worker in maintaining custody and establishing an atmosphere in which the goals of the institution may be carried out in the most efficacious manner.

Several problems were encountered in standardizing the instrument in the last year. Primary among these were changes in the training schedules which resulted in a very small group; 54 male Correctional Officers were available for the final standardization. The decision to standardize all instruments on male Correctional Officers emerged from a series of

completion of the contract. However preliminary exploration of Form 7 suggests that it will be an extremely useful addition to the battery of instruments now available to the Bureau.

Not only were most of the new Correctional Officers male, but the females who had been employed proved to be a remarkably different group according to their scores on the CPQ. In view of the differences observed, the group should be the focus of a special study.

The Content Test

The final priority in instrument construction was given to the Content Test. This was to be a standardized achievement test focusing upon the content of the two week training program. One form was to be used prior to training and the second, after completing the two weeks of training. At the present time Forms 4 and 5 of this test have been standardized on the male Correctional Officer model.

The Content Test must have a close relationship to the content of the program. As content of the program changes to reflect new policies of the Bureau certain items will become obsolete and the forms will need to be revised. It is important for new trainers at the staff training centers to be thoroughly and carefully oriented to item construction. It is also important that they be aware of the importance of careful interpretation of test scores. While this is true of all the instruments it is perhaps most important for the Content Test. Some individuals, because of unfortunate personal experience in formal education have distorted ideas about the role of an achievement test in a training program.

Exploration of the data from the Content Test has shown desirable gains among the trainee over the two week period. It has also shown differences among the training classes. Some trends suggest that differences

also may exist among institutional classifications and among job classifications. While the formal education of trainees showed a high correlation with staff ratings, it did not show a strong correlation with scores on the Content Test. In fact, there appears to be some negative interaction between the amount of formal education and achievement during training. It may be that the more highly educated trainees were usually not assigned as Correctional Officers but to other job classifications, therefore, they did not perceive the content as being of importance to them and did not exert a level of effort commensurate to their formal education.

The explorations indicate that the scores on the Content Test are quite independent of the scores on other instruments; thus, they are providing an independent or unique view of the training. This point needs to be pursued in terms of subsequent success on the job.

The original goal was not to construct an achievement test; the first goal involved a more complex idea of developing a pool of standard items. The decision to focus upon a standard test was based on two factors. One was the difficulty in constant writing, editing, and testing new items; the other was that a standardized test afforded a means of providing consistency across the frequent changes of personnel and content in the training programs. The present forms of the achievement tests have been shown to be useful. However, it may be helpful to consider the advantages which could accrue if the goal of a pool of standard items was carried to its conclusion. It would provide greater flexibility for the trainers and avoid the problem of changes in the training program adversely affecting the scores on the tests.

Although it was not a focus of study, there were a number of suggestions that reading competence was a problem for some trainees. The point was obvious in the preliminary exploration of the attitude scale and allowances were made in the construction of the Content Tests. The centers may wan to observe the use made of the instructional materials by the trainers of the centers and in the institutions. In occupations where written station orders have a major role, the specialized vocabulary and commonly used language structures are important. Familiarity with them is a prerequisite to job success and mastery may be essential.

The Follow-Up

The inital purpose of the follow-up was two-fold. First, it would provide feedback to the trainers on the effectiveness of their program. Second, it provided a basis for validating the instruments. The second point would be achieved by pairing measurements made at the training centers with estimates of success on the job. Success on the job is a difficult factor to measure. The data most readily available would be the ratings provided by the supervisors of the new employees. Another would be whether or not the trainee successfully completed his probationary year. The relationships between success in the training program and success on the job may be distorted by a number of factors. Early in the project there was some fear that the philosophy of corrections taught by the training centers may not be wholly compatible with the attitudes and beliefs of the supervisors at the institutions. Again, incompatibility of the trainees with a specific job assignment and the many incidents which are inevitable during the first weeks on a new job, can make the decision for the employee not to continue on the job. The

willingness of supervisors to give him the support that he needs during

the critical, early period of his employment can be a positive influence.

The interaction between supervisors and new employees is an

important one. Continuation on the job is a decision making activity

involving two parties. The new employee may choose to leave for a variety

of personal reasons other than initial or acquired dissatisfaction with

a particular job assignment. His reaction to the job will be moderated

by the general economic conditions in the geographic area. If jobs are

readily available or if he is willing to move to an area where they are

available, he will not hesitate ~~so long~~ to discontinue employment as when

jobs are difficult to find or he is not able to move to where jobs are

available.

The second party in the decision is the manager or administrator

of the employing institution. A new employee may be released during his

probationary period for a variety of reasons, any and all of which may

be described as unsatisfactory job performance. Thus, while termination

during the probationary period provided one view of the success of a

training program, it is by no means the ultimate criterion of success.

Similarly, while supervisor ratings may be useful they are not the ultimate

criterion of the training. There are many factors influencing both parties in

the decision to remain on the job or to leave it, in addition to the effect-

iveness ·of the training program.

A series of follow-up packages were designed to secure standard

information on the trainees who had returned to their institutions. The rate

of return of follow-up materials was never good. At best, it ran around

69% for the El Reno Center and 65% for the Atlanta Center. Explorations

were made of three job groups; male Correctional Officers, Foremen, and

Teachers-Caseworkers. After they had been on the job for five months
they were asked to express their reactions to the training. The
Teachers-Caseworkers gave negative reactions to the use of the teaching
machines and rated five of the content topics significantly lower than
did Correctional Officers or Foremen.

Some explorations were made of the characteristics of the
supervisors who provided ratings of the new employees. About half of them had
had some form of special training by the Bureau.

There was an interesting but unusual separation among the
three occupational classifications of supervisors. In general the
supervisors of the Foremen gave higher ratings than the supervisors of
Teachers-Caseworkers; supervisors of Correctional Officers gave the lowest
ratings. The only exception on this ordering was that the supervisors
of teachers appeared more sensitive to the ability of their new employees
to gain insight into inmate behavior than did supervisors of foremen.

During the course of the project, it was suggested several times
that there may be conflict between the attitudes of new employees and the
more experienced supervisors. As a means of exploring this, the supervisors
were asked to respond to the Correctional Practices Questionnaire. Differences
were found on the CPQ's Ambition Scale. Both the supervisors of Teachers-
Caseworkers and the supervisors of Correctional Officers scored lower than
the new employees. No corresponding difference was found between the newly
employed foremen and their supervisors.

The most striking differences between supervisors and new
employees were found on the scale for Security. Supervisors of Teachers-
Caseworkers scored remarkably lower than the other groups on the Security
Scale. The newly employed Teachers-Caseworkers presented lower scores than
did the Correctional Officers but not to the same degree as did their

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supervisors.

No significant differences were found between the supervisors
and new employees in any of the three occupational groups on the treatment
scale.

It was also suggested that the amount of experience or the
attitudes held by the supervisors might influence the way they rated
trainees. Supervisors' years of experience and CPQ scores were viewed
against the ratings they gave. In general, no significant relationships
were found. Although this is a satisfying state of affairs, it should
be pointed out that the sample was not as large as desired and the question
is of sufficient significance that it should be studied at greater depth and
with greater intensity.

One of the problems faced by the training centers was the degree
to which trainees attitudes might change after they had been on the job.
An examination was made of attitude change between measurements taken at
the end of training and those made in the follow-up studies. For the
Correctional Officer the relationships were fairly strong, indicating a
stable retention of the desired philosophy toward corrections across all
three scales. Teachers and Caseworkers showed similar relationships for
the Ambition and Security Scales but not for the Treatment Scale. Since
their initial attitudes towards treatment were much higher than the other
group it may have been difficult to measure responses to change. For the
foremen no significant relationships existed. However, the group was
quite small and presented great variations in terms of their work assignments.

A final examination was made of the scores of all other trainees
not included in the occupational group. Good relationships were found for
the attitude and security scales with acceptable relationships for the treatment
scale.

Apparently the trainee attitudes as measured by the CPQ
did not converge upon those of the supervisors' between the end of
the formal training and of the five month follow-up.
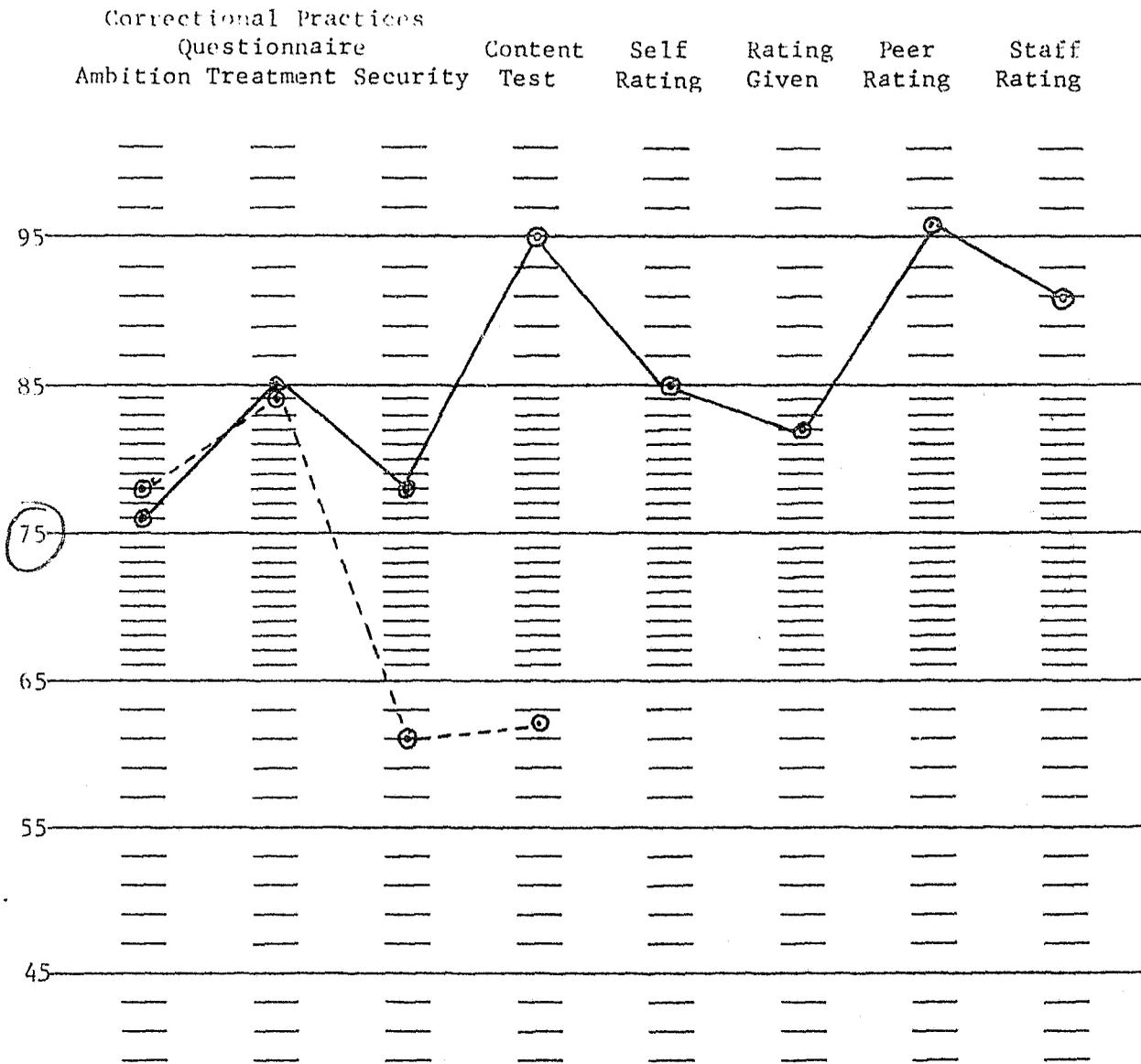
The Personal Profiles

Several illustrations of the use of the personal profiles are
on the following pages. The complete data is shown for one Correctional
Officer and for two different classes. It is important to remember that
the average male Correctional Officer was the basic model for standardizing
the several instruments. The standard is represented by a score of 75 on
all instruments. Other profiles are presented to illustrate other uses
such as comparing classes of trainees in training centers. In examining
these profiles, the significance of the Bureau of Prisons Standard
Score System becomes obvious. It provides the capacity for illustrating
differences quickly and in an easily comprehended fashion. It also
provides a form of quality control; missing data and important deviations are
easily seen.

As a result of developing the scoring system, realistic inter-
pretations are possible for differences in scale points. All new trainers,
upon being assigned to a staff training center should be given a thorough
orientation to the use of the Bureau of Prisons' Standard Scoring System.
It is very important that they make judgments on the basis of real
differences. More important, they should not leap at conclusions over
differences that are not of great importance.

Terminations

Over the two years of operation of the staff training centers,
a total of 134 or 13.44% of the trainees terminated before the end of

FIGURE 3
INDIVIDUAL MALE CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

Correctional Practices Questionnaire: Ambition, Treatment, Security | Content Test | Self Rating | Rating Given | Peer Rating | Staff Rating

Pre Test Scores ⊙------------⊙

	Ambition	Treatment	Security	Content Test
Raw	23	47	43	14
BOP	78	84	61	62

Post Test Scores ⊙————————⊙

	Ambition	Treatment	Security	Content Test	Self Rating	Rating Given	Peer Rating	Staff Rating
Raw	21	44	57	33	5.0	4.1	4.6	8.2
BOP	76	85	78	95	85	82	96	91

ID # 10103

OESP - BOP
July, 1973

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FIGURE 4
AVERAGE CLASS SCORES
CLASS 2, 1973 EL RENO
N = 22

Correctional Practices Questionnaire

	Ambition	Treatment	Security	Content Test	Self Rating	Rating Given	Peer Rating	Staff Rating
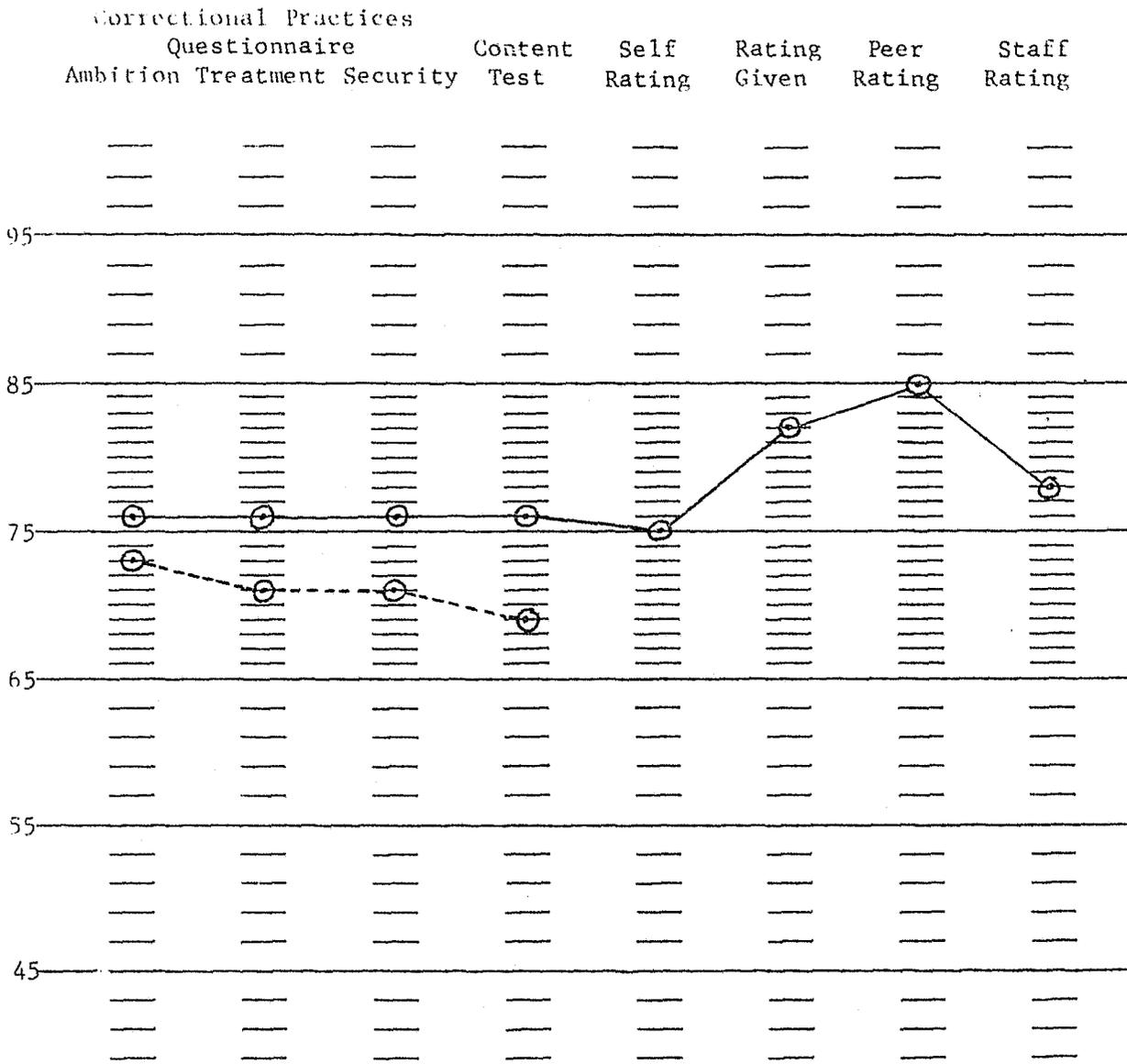
Pre Test Scores ⊙- - - - - - - - - ⊙

Raw	21	37	51	17
BOP	73	71	71	69

Post Test Scores ⊙————————⊙

Raw	21	39	56	26	4.25	4.1	4.1	5.6
BOP	76	76	76	76	75	82	85	78

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July, 1973

FIGURE 5
AVERAGE CLASS SCORES
CLASS 2, 1973 ATLANTA
N = 33

Correctional Practices Questionnaire: Ambition, Treatment, Security; Content Test; Self Rating; Rating Given; Peer Rating; Staff Rating

Pre Test Scores ⊙- - - - - - -⊙

	Ambition	Treatment	Security	Content Test
Raw	21	37	51	17
BOP	73	71	71	69

Post Test Scores ⊙————⊙

	Ambition	Treatment	Security	Content Test	Self Rating	Rating Given	Peer Rating	Staff Rating
Raw	22	38	57	23	4.0	3.9	3.9	5.6
BOP	79	74	78	68	72	78	81	78

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July, 1973

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their probationary year. Of these, 75 left for better jobs or to further their education. Forty were released by the institutions because of inadequate job performance. The other 19 who separated from the service did not provide clear reasons for their decisions.

Studies of terminations indicated that new employees with considerable military background are more likely to remain with the Bureau than those with little or no military service. This factor is not related to the age of the new employee.

Although the Bureau has established an admirable record of employing members of minority groups, they have been employed primarily in the lowest level of job classifications and have the highest rate of release at the choice of the employing institution.

Of the many data collected, the peer ratings appear to be most useful for discriminating between those who remain on the job and those who do not. It also discriminates between those who leave for good reasons and those who are discharged. Those who leave for good reasons are, on the average, younger than a matched group who continued through their probationary year.

Summary

The initial phase of developing an information system, involving the problems of constructing usable instruments, has concluded with a reasonable degree of success. Several problems remain to be faced in developing the final standardization of the instruments. These could not be managed at this time because of changes in the training schedule.

A major problem still to be faced is to secure estimates of success on the job. These estimates must consider differences in organizational climates among the several institutions. A proposed project is now under

study by the Bureau and should make a major contribution to the Future development of the instruments and thereby to the improvement of the training programs.

The fear of the philosophical conflict between supervisors and the new employees was not apparent in the follow-up study. However, the problem is of sufficient importance that continued study of it is strongly recommended.

All norms are now based upon male Correctional Officers while in training. To maximize the utility of the information system, future norms should be based upon the scores attained by those new employees who, subsequent to the two weeks of training, were successful on the job. The task could be accomplished through the follow-up mechanism of the information system. It should increase the usefulness of the system significantly.

Given a reasonable investment in the continuing development of the instruments, the Bureau of Prisons has an excellent foundation for operating an internal information system which will aid in the continuing assessment of its training program. It will also form a basis for making significant studies relevant to some of its continuing operational problems.

Disposal of Data

At the termination of the evaluation program, all data were transfered to computer tape. One copy of the tape was delivered to Dr. Colin Frank. A second was retained by the Office of Special Projects until Dr. Frank indicates that he has the original and it is functioning.

EVALUATION OF
STAFF TRAINING CENTERS

Reports Submitted to the Bureau of Prisons
for Contract #J15c-2014

1. Evaluation of the Staff Training Center Program
    Report #1
    April 14, 1971

2. First Annual Report--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional Techniques
    July, 1971

3. First Annual Report--Volume II--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional
    Techniques
    July, 1971

4. Federal Prison Services Training Advisory Committee Meeting
    August 9, 1971

5. First Annyal Report--Volume III--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional
    Techniques
    September, 1971

6. Interim Report II--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional Techniques
    December, 1971

7. Interim Report II--Evaluation of Staff Training Center--Summary Statement
    December, 1971

8. A Supplement to Interim Report II--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional
    Techniques
    January, 1972

9. Third Quarter Report--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional Techniques
    March 22, 1972

10. Addenda to Third Quarter Report
    March 22, 1972

11. Fourth Quarter Report--Evaluation of an Introduction to Correctional Techniques
    July 24-25, 1972

12. Documentation of the Personal Data Sheet
    October 1, 1972

13. Documentation of the Self-Peer-Staff Rating
    November 1, 1972

14. Documentation of the Correctional Practices Questionnaire
    February, 1973

EVALUATION OF
STAFF TRAINING CENTERS

Reports Submitted to the Bureau of Prisons
for Contract #J15c-2044

1. Interim Report II--Evaluation of Summer Internship Program
   December, 1971

2. Final Report--Evaluation of Summer Internship Program
   June, 1972