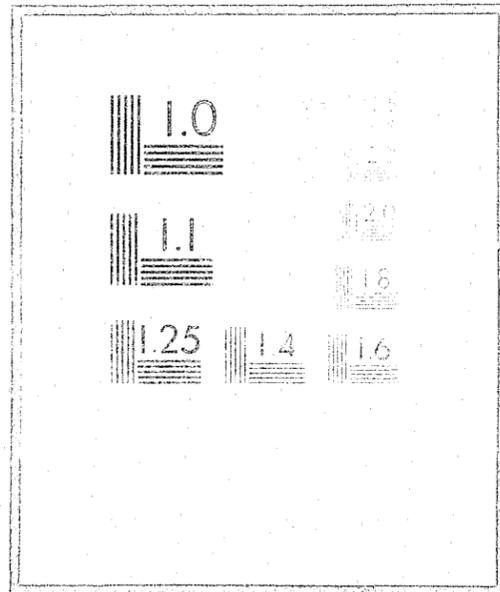


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i ACQUISITIONS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
LIST OF TABLES	iii
SUMMARY OF RESULTS	1
METHODOLOGY	4
Background	4
Focus of Study	5
Sample	6
Data Collection Methods	6
Data Analysis	7
FINDINGS	8
The Context of TAP Decision Making	8
Flow of Decision Making	9
Factors Influencing Decision Making	16
Rates of Approval and Institutions	16
Rates of Approval and Type of Institution	18
Police Recommendations	18
Judicial Recommendations	19
Police and Judicial Recommendations	20
Demographic Considerations	20
Intended Place of TAP Activation	21
Previous TAP Involvement	22
Proportion of Time Served	23
Potential Earnings Expected from TAP Jobs	25
Native Applicants	25
Criminality	26
Recidivist vs. First Incarcerate	26
Restricted Categories	27
Liquor Offences	30
Current Aggregate Sentence	31
Reasons given for Decision Outcome	31
Attitude and Background Characteristics of the Decision-Makers	35
Comparison of TAP Applicants with non-TAP Applicants	37
RECOMMENDATIONS	43
APPENDIX A	47
APPENDIX B	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY	52

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Level of Agreement for All Combinations among the Four Stages with respect to Case Disposition	10
2	Pattern of Disposition Through Successive Stages of the Decision-Making Process	11
3	Proportions of Unanimous Decisions Across Stages As A Function of Specific Factors	13
4	Proportions of Unanimous Decisions Across Stages As A Function of Specific Factors (Excluding Guelph C.C. Sample)	15
5	Approval Rate At Each Decision Stage By Institutions	17
6	Disposition Pattern For Successive Stages By Institutional Category	18
7	Disposition Pattern As A Function of Police Recommendation	19
8	Disposition Pattern As A Function of Judicial Recommendation	20
9	Disposition Pattern As A Function of Intended Place of Activation	21
10	Disposition Pattern and Previous TAP Applications	22
11	Disposition Pattern and Past Involvement in the TAP	23
12	Disposition Pattern and Proportion of Sentence Served At Point of Application	24
13	Disposition Pattern and Proportion of Time Served Excluding the Guelph C.C. Sample	24
14	Disposition Pattern and Proportion of Time Served for Guelph C.C. Sample only	25
15	Final Disposition Pattern As A Function of Previous Recidivism	26

LIST OF TABLES - CONT'D

<u>TABLE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
16	Proportions of Positive Dispositions As A Function of Offence Category	28
17	Proportion of Positive Dispositions As A Function of Offence Category Excluding Guelph C.C. Sample	29
18	Proportion of Positive Dispositions As A Function of the Liquor Offence Category	30
	Reasons Cited for Disposition Pattern (Tables 19-22)	32
19	Institutional Committee Members	32
20	Superintendent	32
21	Main Office TAP Committee Members	33
22	TAP Co-ordinator	33
23	Relationship of Attitude Scale Scores to Disposition Pattern at the First Three Decision Stages	36
24	Comparison of Marital Status of the Study Groups	37
25	Comparison of Previous Application Pattern of the Study Groups	38
26	Relative Proportions of Inmates with "Restricted" Category Offences Among Three Study Groups	39
27	Relative Proportions of First Incarcerates Among Three Study Groups	40
28	Reasons mentioned for not applying	41
29	Disposition Pattern for those cases where the Police have made a Favourable Recommendation	49
30	Disposition Pattern for those cases where the Police have made an Unfavourable Recommendation	50
31	Disposition Pattern for those cases where the Police <u>did not</u> have input	51
	Appendix A Model of Relationships under Investigation	47

## SUMMARY

This study was undertaken to examine the employment Temporary Absence Program (TAP) decision-making process. The files of 175 employment applicants from eleven institutions were examined for the period of September 25, 1974 to December 15, 1974. The purpose of this task was to determine what factors were associated with favourable or unfavourable dispositions at each of the four decision-making stages. In addition, the decision-makers themselves were asked to state their reasons for the types of decisions made. Their attitudes, as expressed via validated scales, were examined to see whether the decision outcomes were at all related to the attitude scale scores. A group of 77 non-TAP applicants were interviewed to determine what, if any, reasons they had for not applying for TA. Through Main Office inmate file information, it was also possible to compare the TAP applicant group with the non-applicant group on a number of background characteristics.

Comparison of all four decision-making stages indicates that the Main Office decision-makers are somewhat more conservative in terms of favourable dispositions than are those at the institutional level. The first two stages show a high level of decision outcome agreement.

It was striking to note that for 150 (85.7%) of the 175 applicant cases examined, there was complete agreement on the final disposition across all four stages of decision-making. While the overall decision outcome agreement across stages is high, it was demonstrated to be even higher when certain factors were isolated (eg., favourable police recommendation, length of current aggregate sentence, etc.).

Several of the findings are distorted by the undue influence of the sample of cases from the Guelph Correctional Centre. A substantial proportion of the variance observed can be attributed to the effects of this sample. In light of this fact, for comparison purposes, two sets of data were reported for some of the findings. One which included the total sample and one with the Guelph sample removed. The extent of this problem is highlighted by the fact that when all eleven institutions are compared, the least amount of decision outcome agreement occurred between the Guelph Correctional Centre decision-makers and Main Office decision-makers.

Some key findings are:

- 1) *Decision-makers at jails with the exception of the superintendents tend to recommend for approval, more cases than do those from correctional centres.*
- 2) *While both the police and judicial recommendations are associated with TAP decision outcome, the input by the police is far more influential than that of the Judges.*

- 3) *Neither age nor marital status distinguishes between approved or rejected applicants.*
- 4) *Cases which are to be activated from the originating institution or a CRC have a better chance of a favourable disposition at the main office level than do cases which are to be transferred to other institutions.*
- 5) *As expected, applications from first incarcerates have a better chance of approval than do recidivists.*
- 6) *The data from this study show that each successive decision-making stage is more cautious in approving TAP applicants whose offences fall within the "restricted" category type (eg., crimes of sex, assault, arson, drug trafficking, parole violation). This difference is especially highlighted with the Guelph Correctional Centre TA applicants.*
- 7) *It was found that applicants with liquor offences were more likely to be approved than were those with other specific offences. However, these same applicants exhibited a higher incidence of TA revocations.*
- 8) *Fewer applicants with longer current aggregate sentences were approved than were applicants with shorter current aggregate sentences.*

One of the major reasons cited by decision-makers for favourable recommendations was the positive institutional behaviour exhibited by the applicant. Another reason cited was the fact that the applicant seemed "sincere". Unfavourable recommendations were most often related to the severity of the applicant's criminal involvement.

None of the decision-makers' characteristics, i.e., age, marital status, educational level, etc., were related to the kinds of decisions made. Furthermore, contrary to what one might expect, no significant correlation was found when the attitude scale scores of staff involved in decision-making were taken into account.

When the TAP applicant group was compared to the non-applicant group on background characteristics, surprisingly few differences were detected. A greater proportion of the TAP sample (55.1%) were married than the non-applicant sample (35.1%). With respect to the "restricted" category offence type and proportions of first incarcerates, it was interesting to find that the non-applicant group was more comparable to the successful applicants than to those whose applications were denied.

The most frequently mentioned reason by the non-applicant group for not applying for TA was that the sentence was too short and it did not seem worthwhile. Others felt

that they were ineligible. Roughly one quarter of them pointed out that they either did not have a job or that they were encountering transportation and/or situational problems. Only 10.7% actually mentioned that they had no desire to apply under any condition.

Based on the findings of this research a number of recommendations have been made. The most notable of these is the suggestion that the authority to approve or deny all employment TA cases be vested in the Superintendents, thus reducing the number of decision-making stages from four to two.

## METHODOLOGY

### Background

The Ontario Temporary Absence Program acquired its official status with the proclamation of Section (19) of the Ministry of Correctional Services Act, 1968. Operationally, the program had its beginning in the summer of 1969. Very broad operational guidelines were instituted. For example, an applicant was most likely to be accepted if he/she was not an escape risk, had not committed a crime involving violence or arson, had not habitually used or trafficked in drugs and had not committed a series of sexual offences.

Because of the high priority which the Ministry has given to the Temporary Absence Program, several studies have focused on its operation.

A first year examination of the TAP (J. Hug, 1970) dealt with the factors in an applicant's background which were related to acceptance or rejection. The results indicated that regardless of any involvement in sex, drug or liquor offences, education applicants had an equal chance of being accepted or rejected. However, the chances of acceptance for employment applicants with those same offences were significantly lower.

A later study of 1-5 day TAP leaves (J. Currie, 1973) showed that applicants falling within the so-called "restricted categories" had as much chance of being accepted as other applicants.

A more recent study (L. Crispino, 1974) has outlined the benefits which are accrued as a consequence of employment TA participation for the individual, the family, the institution and society as a whole.

Clearly these studies would indicate a Program of demonstrated benefits with criteria which vary depending on the type of TA.

Because a number of years have elapsed since the inception of the TAP, it was felt that this Program had developed to the point where a different type of study seemed warranted. The "newness" and "pilot" concept no longer exists and the number of employment applications received per year has more than tripled since the first year of operation.

It was felt that the TAP for employment was different enough from other types of TA's (i.e., both in operation and in quantity of applications received) that it warranted separate examination. Accordingly, this study has focused on the TAP for employment only.

Earlier studies have examined the characteristics of the individual applicant as factors in decision-making. In this study, the effect of the decision-makers themselves on the decision-making process was examined as well. Furthermore, because benefits have been shown to exist through TA involvement, it was decided that this study should also encompass in its methodology some provision for determining why some inmates do not, in fact, apply for Temporary Absence.

It was hoped that through this systems approach to the decision-making process valuable feedback might be obtained which would be useful to both Main Office TA personnel and their institutional counterparts. For example, the results of this study might give indications as to how the decision-making process might be changed in order to avoid any unnecessary replication. More attention might be paid to those areas which tend to be of greater concern in the selection process. The information derived from this study might also be used by institutional staff to better screen and counsel potential TAP applicants. Finally, as a result of this study, it might prove desirable to make changes in the existent general guidelines for TA eligibility.

### Focus of Study

Both the Main Office TAP Branch and the institutional TAP personnel showed a keen interest in a study which would examine the TAP decision-making process. Both Main Office and Institutional personnel were consulted at the beginning of this project to identify major concerns for study.

Under the present system of TA selection, four decision-making bodies exist. Chronologically, the first two are institutionally-based while the last two are at Main Office. The authority to approve or deny TA applications is vested in the last stage. The other three stages have recommendation powers only.

The study encompassed a number of areas for investigation. A general approach model can be found in Appendix A. Of primary concern was the operation of the various TAP decision-making stages. For example, the extent of agreement in dispositions made with respect to TA applicant cases was examined, as were those situations under which the agreement level varied. Similar research approaches have been utilized in the field of parole decision-making in the United States (Robison et al, 1971; Hawkins, 1971).

Aside from the actual agreement from one decision-making level to another, the various factors which may have an effect on the decision-making process, i.e., selection criteria, were also examined. This was done for each of the decision levels in order to determine the extent to which they differ with respect to the kinds of selection criteria emphasized.

Sample

The sample of inmates included in the study was constructed from TA employment applicants from eleven specific institutions. The rationale for selection of institutions was based on geographic location, type of institution, extent of TA involvement, CRC involvement, size and type of local community. This resulted in a sample which was heterogeneous in nature with results which would be generalizable to the entire Program. Based on these criteria, the following institutions were included:

- Northern Region: Thunder Bay C.C.  
Sault Ste. Marie Jail  
Monteith C.C.
- Eastern Region: Rideau C.C.  
Cobourg Jail  
Quinte R.D.C.
- Central Region: Mimico C.C.  
Toronto Jail  
Walkerton Jail
- Western Region: Guelph C.C.  
Simcoe Jail

All employment TA applications originating from the above named institutions between September 25, and December 15, 1974, were examined. A total of 176 inmates applied during this time span. Because not all appropriate data were available for all cases, some sections of the analysis will deal with different case totals.

In order to determine what, if any, differences exist between TAP applicants and non-applicants, the sample of TAP applicants was compared to a sample of 77 non-remand inmates not applying for the TAP. These inmates were randomly chosen from the general inmate population housed in the aforementioned institutions to provide a proper basis for comparison.

Data Collection Methods

Information on file at Main Office provided background data for both the applicant and non-applicant samples. In addition, inmates from the non-applicant group (N=77) were interviewed in order to ascertain the extent of TAP familiarity, as well as the rationale, if any, for their non-involvement in the Temporary Absence Program. These interviews were conducted in the institutions and usually lasted from fifteen to thirty minutes. Full co-operation was obtained from all inmates.

Short questionnaires were administered to 80 randomly chosen members of TAP screening committees, both at the institutional and Main Office levels. The questionnaire

focused on demographic information (e.g., age, marital status, position held, etc.) as well as attitudes regarding various aspects of the criminal justice system. The latter were measured using revised versions of validated scales developed by Hogarth, 1971. The purpose of this phase was to focus on the extent to which the background characteristics and attitudes of decision-makers were influential in the decision-making process. These individuals also completed very short questionnaires about some of the cases immediately after having made a recommendation in order to obtain information concerning their personal reasons for making favourable or unfavourable recommendations.

Small group research (see McGrath & Haltman, 1966; Hare (a) 1966 and (b) 1955) suggests that informal or subjective considerations may also be influential in decision-making. For this reason, a number of areas dealing with the dynamics of the institutional TAP committee meetings were considered, (e.g., physical appearance of applicant, amount and type of interaction between the applicant and the committee, length of time to reach a decision, etc.). The researcher made these observations via checklists by attending 10 institutional TAP committee meetings where a total of 33 applicants were considered.

Data Analysis

A large portion of the information collected was pre-coded for computer processing utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). From preliminary frequency counts of all variables under investigation, it was possible to determine how the data should be arranged (e.g., collapsing categories) in order to make the data more amenable to further analysis.

The most frequently used statistical test in this study to examine level of significance between category proportions was the "t" ratio.

Other statistical techniques such as multiple regression analysis and factor analysis, while not reported here, were used in assisting the writer to choose avenues of analysis or to validate findings achieved through other statistical methods.

FINDINGS

THE CONTEXT OF TAP DECISION MAKING

In order to understand the total mechanism of Temporary Absence, it is necessary to examine the various stages involved in the selection process.

Once a TAP application for employment has been made by an inmate and a plan formulated (through the help of institutional personnel), a number of decision-making bodies become involved. First, an institutional TAP committee of three gathers and compiles all pertinent information. This committee reviews the available information and makes a recommendation for or against allowing the applicant to participate on the TAP. The applicant is usually asked to appear before the committee. Once this committee has made a recommendation, all documents are then forwarded to the Superintendent of the institution. He/she also makes a recommendation. The next body to review the case is a Main Office TAP committee of three which also makes a recommendation. The final decision to approve or deny the application is made by the TAP Co-ordinator. These various stages need not necessarily agree. However, the final decision rests with the TAP Co-ordinator.

Some discussion of the composition and operation of the institutional and Main Office TAP Committees seems warranted since they differ substantially in some ways.

The institutional TAP Committee normally meets as a group, although depending on availability of staff and/or the circumstances of the case, the committee may meet in a rather informal manner. For example, two committee members may review the case and then the relevant information is brought to another staff person for a third opinion.

Preceding this formal or informal meeting, however, much preparatory work has been compiled, usually by the TAP supervisor at the institution, should one be available. It is the responsibility of this person to gather the necessary information before the application is allowed to be processed. The TAP supervisor may have to investigate the nature of the job prospect, liaise with Probation and Parole services in order to obtain community information, contact the arresting or investigating police officer and sentencing judge to obtain their attitudes towards the case, etc. These TAP supervisors (or designated people) usually have other responsibilities aside from Temporary Absence which at times have to be performed almost simultaneously.

The composition of the institutional TAP committee differs somewhat from that of Main Office. Of a random sample of 43 people who were active on the former committees at some time during the study period, over half of them (51.2%) were correctional officers, 16.3% were TAP supervisors, 9.3% were psychologists, psychiatrists or social workers, 9.3% were assistant or deputy superintendents and the remaining were comprised of teachers, classification officers, etc.

On the other hand, of the 21 different individuals who acted as members of the Main Office TAP committee during the study, more than three-fifths of them (61.9%) were Probation and Parole officers. The rest ranged from internal TAP Branch staff to executive assistants and classification officers.

The fact that Correctional Officers were predominant on the institutional TAP committees is not surprising in view of the fact that they comprise the largest single body of staff in the institutions. What is more significant, however, is that they are asked to participate on the TAP committees because of their familiarity with inmates. The predominance of Probation and Parole officers on the Main Office committee is probably due to the similarities that exist between the areas of Parole and Probation and Temporary Absence. Over half of the institutional committee members (51.2%) and 61.9% of the Main Office members had been connected with the Ministry for over ten years, indicating that the majority of the TAP decision-makers at both levels possessed extensive experience in the area of corrections.

In terms of the decisions made, the data from this study indicate that the institutional TAP committee tends to arrive at a consensus more often than the Main Office Committee, i.e., all three members recommending either in favour or not in favour. Of the 175 decisions which were made by the institutional TAP committee during the study period, 169 (96.6%) of these resulted in consensus. Its counterpart, the Main Office Committee made 153 (87.4%) consensus decisions. This difference might be explained by the fact that as a general rule, the institutional committee members discuss the ramifications or circumstances of the case with each other before arriving at a disposition. Although the Main Office committee members, meet as a unit, they do not discuss elements of the case but rather make individual recommendations.\*

### FLOW OF DECISION MAKING

It would seem reasonable to expect that the individuals involved at each stage of the TAP selection process operate from a somewhat different perspective, e.g., institutional vs. Main Office. Table 1 presents the amount of agreement between all possible combinations of decision stages, comparing two at a time.

\* There are exceptions to this, of course, but in the vast majority of the cases, they make individual recommendations.

TABLE 1

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT FOR ALL COMBINATIONS AMONG THE FOUR STAGES WITH RESPECT TO CASE DISPOSITION (N=175)

	Superintendent	Main Office Committee	Coordinator
Institutional Committee	169 (96.6%)	153 (87.4%)	153 (87.4%)
Superintendent	-	159 (90.9%)	159 (90.9%)
Main Office Committee	-	-	169 (96.6%)

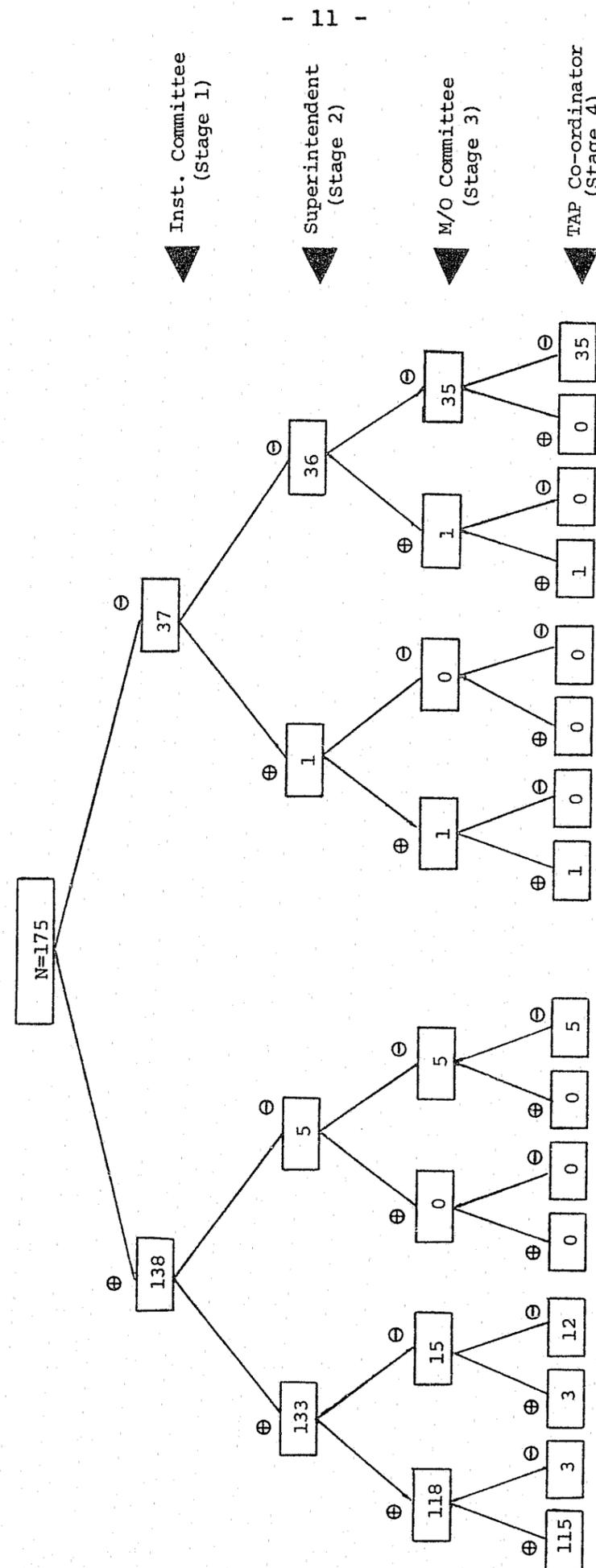
The evidence clearly points to the fact that there is a different modus operandi between the institutional and Main Office levels.\* The amount of agreement between stage I and stage II is as high as the amount of agreement between stages III and IV. The least amount of agreement occurs between stage I and stage IV (153 cases, 87.4%). Since stages I and IV are somewhat removed from one another, both in the degree of accountability and in time order of involvement in the selection process, the agreement level in terms of decision outcome will be lower.

The following chart (Table 2) demonstrates pictorially the disposition pattern for each successive stage in the TAP decision-making process. The bulk of disagreement between stages I and IV occurs mainly with cases that stage I has recommended for approval. Of 138 cases which were recommended at stage I, 118 (85.5%) of these were approved by stage IV. On the other hand, the TAP Co-ordinator concurred with 35 (94.6%) of 37 cases which were not recommended for approval by the institutional TAP committee. Consequently, it appears that if an applicant is not recommended for approval at the institutional TAP committee level, there will be little chance that he will be approved by the subsequent stages. This seems to be the general pattern followed by each successive stage, i.e., agreement is higher for cases not recommended for approval as compared to cases recommended for approval. Each subsequent stage becomes more cautious.

\* Throughout the body of this report, stage I will be synonymous with the institutional TAP committee, stage II with the superintendent, stage III with the Main Office committee and stage IV with the TAP Co-ordinator.

TABLE 2

PATTERN OF DISPOSITION THROUGH SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS



Differential levels of accountability and degree of familiarity with or knowledge of the applicant are just two factors which may account for the observed difference. Adverse publicity with respect to TA revocations or related matters is more likely to be lodged against Main Office Officials. It is at these stages where the Ministry must provide justification for their decisions if there is a question as to why a particular inmate was denied (or approved) for TA. It follows then, that a greater degree of caution is exercised by these later decision-makers. This increased "conservatism" in the higher levels of the hierarchy is not very surprising and is supported by similar research in the parole field (see Robison, et al.) where this pattern of conservatism at the higher decision levels is defined as choosing the "less risky" and "less lenient" of two alternatives.

Reference to Table 2 illustrates a rather striking finding. Of the 175 cases examined, 150 (85.7%) of these were unanimously approved or denied when all four stages were considered. This is made up of 115 cases which received unanimous approval and 35 cases which were unanimously rejected. When one considers the different compositions of the committees, the different methods of operation and different degrees of accountability at each level, the amount of agreement (85.7%) exhibited as per decision outcome is rather startling. Despite the fact that the four stages are not totally independent of one another, the level of agreement is still very high. In almost 9 out of 10 cases, the decision made at stage I is the same as that made by the other three stages.

It should be made clear at this point that in discussing the overall number of unanimous decisions made, the entire sample of applicants (N=175) was examined, irrespective of any consideration of inmate characteristics or other variables which might have an effect on the pattern of decision-making. In view of this fact, some attention must now be given to other considerations. Eight variables were examined. The product of this analysis (see Table 3) reveals, that the disposition pattern does not operate in a uniform manner when these factors are taken into account. On the contrary a substantial amount of variation in disposition pattern occurs.

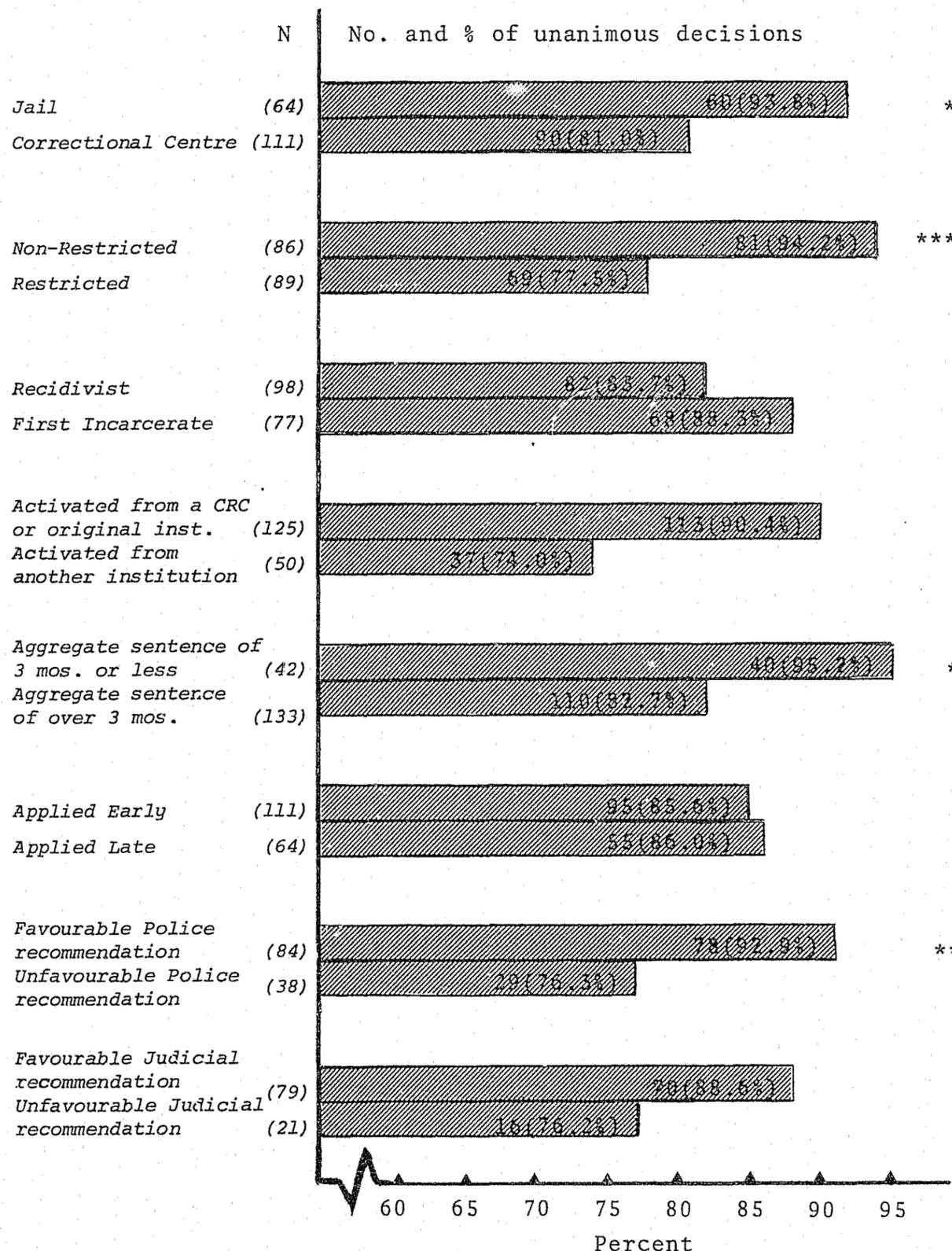
Specifically, fewer unanimous decisions (77.5%) occurred for those applicants whose current offences included "restricted" category offences when compared to the proportion of unanimous decisions (94.2%) for those applicants with no such offences.\* Clearly, a uniform practice does not seem to

\* At the initial stages of this study a number of decision-makers were asked to categorize various offence categories as to whether they were restricted or not restricted. In addition to this, the original guidelines which were set out at the beginning of Temporary Absence in 1969 were examined. From both of these sources, it was possible to construct groups of offences which were considered as being more serious (restricted) or less serious (non-restricted).

TABLE 3

PROPORTIONS OF UNANIMOUS DECISIONS ACROSS STAGES AS A FUNCTION OF SPECIFIC FACTORS

SPECIFIC FACTORS



\* p < .025 (1-tailed)  
 \*\* p < .01 (1-tailed)  
 \*\*\* p < .005 (1-tailed)

Non-starred factors indicate non-significance

exist across all four levels on this issue. (The author is not suggesting that a uniform policy should necessarily exist). The low level of agreement may be caused by the fact that, in general, the Main Office decision-makers, especially stage IV, are more cautious in allowing "restricted" category applicants to participate in the Temporary Absence Program for the reasons mentioned previously.

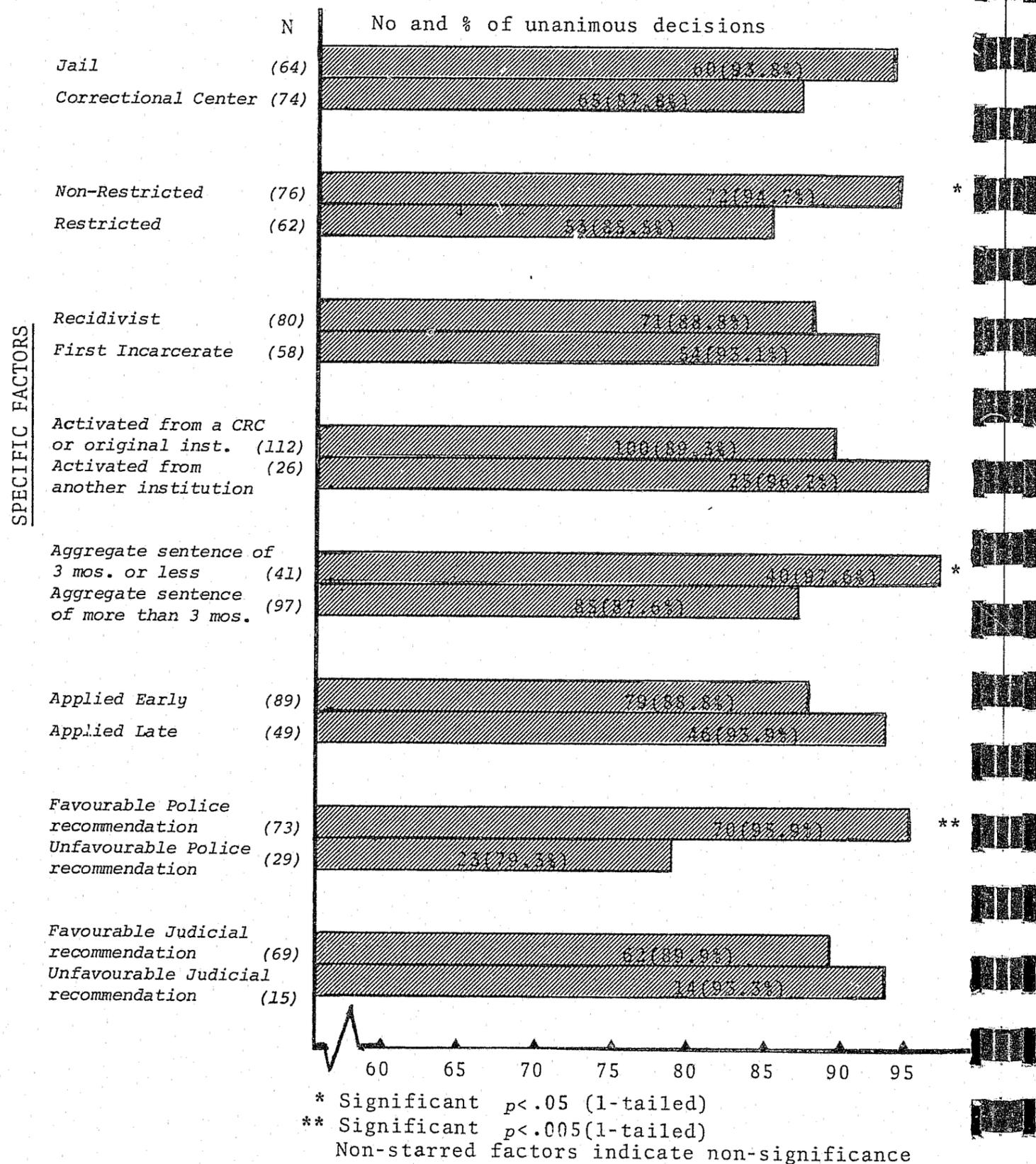
Cases originating from jails as opposed to correctional centres tend to generate unanimous decisions. Much less agreement occurs for those cases originating from correctional centres. Of 84 cases with favourable police recommendations, 78 (92.9%) had unanimous decisions associated with them compared to 29 out of 38 (76.3%) for those cases where the police were not in favour of TAP for the applicant. In (95.2%) of the cases where the current aggregate sentence was three months or less, the decision process displayed complete unanimity compared with only (82.7%) where the current aggregate sentence was in excess of three months.

The purpose of this analysis was to demonstrate the fact that while the overall agreement across stages is high, it increases when certain factors are isolated. The high level of agreement in disposition outcome among the four decision stages is further reinforced when the same set of factors (as in Table 3) are re-analyzed by excluding the Guelph Correctional Centre sample, thereby leaving 138 cases from the remaining ten institutions (see Table 4). In eliminating the Guelph Correctional Centre cases, a large proportion of the variance disappears. Several findings in this research appear to be unduly affected by the Guelph Correctional Centre sample. In view of this fact, it seemed reasonable for comparison purposes, to also report these findings with the Guelph Correctional Centre cases removed. This will prevent the reader from making undue inferences about all cases where, in fact, the findings may be attributable to those cases originating from Guelph Correctional Centre only. Much of the statistical difference caused by the Guelph Correctional Centre sample in several of the findings seems to be related to the following three variables: intended place of TA activation; proportion of time served by the applicant and applicant's offence type, i.e., restricted vs. non-restricted. Discussion of these variables will follow in the appropriate sections of the report.

To this point the discussion has centered around the unanimity of decision outcome when all four stages are considered. The data are self-evident. Without doubt, a remarkable degree of agreement seems to exist across stages I through IV. The implications of this will be discussed at a further point in this paper.

TABLE 4

PROPORTIONS OF UNANIMOUS DECISIONS ACROSS STAGES  
AS A FUNCTION OF SPECIFIC FACTORS  
(EXCLUDING GUELPH C.C. SAMPLE)



FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION OUTCOME

This section will deal with the kinds of criteria the various TA decision-makers use in arriving at a case disposition. All four decision-making stages will be included in this analysis. These findings will shed further light on the findings just discussed because the kinds of criteria used at each stage will have an effect on the amount of unanimity across stages.

Rates of Approval and Institutions

It would be very misleading to compare the various rates of approval for different institutions because not all institutions are of the same type. Some institutions are primarily responsible for dealing with short term offenders while others must work primarily with long term people. The severity of offences committed by inmates may also differ from institution to institution. In looking at the different rates of approval for each institution (see Table 5) one should keep this clearly in mind. While some general comments are possible, these should be approached with caution.

The rate of approval by the institutional TAP committee is very high for some of the smaller institutions, (e.g., Quinte R.D.C., Walkerton Jail, Sault Ste. Marie Jail, Simcoe Jail, Cobourg Jail, Thunder Bay Correctional Centre and Monteith Correctional Centre). This may be due to the fact that at these institutions more preliminary screening occurs with the result that a number of "unsuitable" applicants may be directed into other types of programs. What is common to these institutions is the fact that rather large scale local employment is available and in a number of situations a plant manager or the personnel officer from the local factory or plant will call the superintendent to enquire if there are any inmates which might be suitable for a certain job. A mini-selection process takes place at this level. There is a certain amount of pressure on the local superintendent to choose someone who is in fact "suitable" because if that particular inmate should cause problems or violate the conditions of TAP, then the employer would be less likely in the future, to employ another inmate.

Once again, Main Office approves fewer applicants than do the institutions. This can also be seen from Table 5. Generally speaking, the rates begin to drop at the Main Office TAP committee level. However, a disproportionate drop is evident for those cases originating from Guelph Correctional Centre. Of the 37 cases from Guelph Correctional Centre, 28 (75.7%) were recommended by the institutional TAP committee and 27 (73.0%) by the superintendent. When these same cases were reviewed by the Main Office TAP committee, only 20 (54.1%) were recommended. Nineteen (51.4%) were finally approved by the TAP Co-ordinator.

TABLE 5  
APPROVAL RATES AT EACH DECISION STAGE BY INSTITUTIONS

DECISION STAGE	INSTITUTIONS							
	*Thunder Bay CC and Monteith CC (N=20)	*S.S. Marie Jail, Simcoe Jail, Cobourg Jail (N=11)	Toronto Jail (N=23)	Walkerton Jail (N=18)	Rideau C.C. (N=26)	Quinte R.D.C. (N=12)	Guelph C.C. (N=37)	Mimico C.C. (N=28)
Institutional Committee	18 (90.0%)	9 (81.8%)	17 (73.9%)	17 (94.4%)	18 (69.2%)	12 (100.0%)	28 (75.7%)	19 (67.9%)
Superintendent	18 (90.0%)	8 (72.7%)	16 (69.6%)	17 (94.4%)	17 (65.4%)	12 (100.0%)	27 (73.0%)	19 (67.9%)
M/O Committee	18 (90.0%)	8 (72.7%)	14 (60.9%)	17 (94.4%)	14 (53.8%)	12 (100.0%)	20 (54.1%)	17 (60.7%)
Co-ordinator or D. M.	18 (90.0%)	8 (72.7%)	15 (65.2%)	17 (94.4%)	14 (53.8%)	12 (100.0%)	19 (51.4%)	17 (60.7%)

\* These institutions were grouped together because of the small numbers involved.

Rates of Approval and Type of Institution

The basic distinction which was made with respect to institution type was whether an institution was a jail or a correctional centre. The one regional detention centre was classified under jail type.

Virtually all decision-makers at jails with the exception of the superintendents recommend for approval more cases than do those from correctional centres (see Table 6).

TABLE 6

DISPOSITION PATTERN FOR SUCCESSIVE STAGES BY INSTITUTIONAL CATEGORY

	Application for Jail (N=64)	Application from C.C. (N=111)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	55 (85.9%)	83 (74.8%)	p<.05
Stage II	53 (82.8%)	81 (73.0%)	p>.05
Stage III	51 (79.7%)	69 (62.2%)	p<.01
Stage IV	52 (81.3%)	68 (61.3%)	p<.005

This finding is especially true at the Main Office levels where the difference is more pronounced. These findings, of course, support earlier research findings by Hug, 1970 and Currie, 1973. Jails tend to house less serious offenders than do correctional centres, at least with respect to those inmates eligible for TAP. Furthermore, because jail inmates, for the most part, are individuals from the same community, the possibilities for returning to gainful employment are much greater.

Police Recommendations

As indicated earlier, the attitude of the police toward individual TAP applicants is often solicited. Of the 175 applicant cases, 122 (69.7%) of them had police recommendation input. The arresting or investigating officer usually indicates in writing whether he/she is in favour of a certain individual participating on the Temporary Absence Program. Police input into the TAP decision-making process is seen as an integral component, by most TAP decision-makers. It is believed to be crucial in a situation where the inmate, if approved, is to go to work in the same community where he/she was apprehended.

It is not surprising that the type of police recommendation made is very much associated with the decision outcome at each of the four stages (see Table 7).

TABLE 7

DISPOSITION PATTERN AS A FUNCTION OF POLICE RECOMMENDATION

	Police are in favour (N=84)	Police are not in favour (N=38)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	78 (92.9%)	18 (47.4%)	p<.0005
Stage II	78 (92.9%)	15 (39.5%)	p<.0005
Stage III	75 (89.3%)	9 (23.7%)	p<.0005
Stage IV	75 (89.3%)	10 (26.3%)	p<.0005

A favourable police recommendation has an important impact on decisions through all four stages. Unfavourable police recommendations do not seem as influential, for the first two stages. However, at stages III and IV, their importance is more obvious. Overall, it would appear that with respect to police input, TAP decision-makers give the applicant the "benefit of the doubt". A favourable police recommendation will in most cases help the applicant, but an unfavourable recommendation will not be used against the applicant quite to the same degree. Those cases with no police input have a significantly greater chance of being approved than those cases with an unfavourable police recommendation but a lower chance of approval than those cases with a favourable police recommendation.

Judicial Recommendations

The sentencing judge is often asked for his opinion with regard to allowing an inmate to participate in the TAP. In most cases the judge will comply and give his opinion. In some instances, he/she may feel that this is not his/her role and so does not provide any feedback.

One hundred TAP applicant cases (57.1%) had judicial recommendation input. Substantially more cases (69.7%) had police input. The bulk of this difference seems to be due to lower response rate by the judges and not due to fewer requests for judicial input.

From examination of the 100 cases with judicial input (see Table 8), a relationship between judicial recommendation and decision outcome is evident.

TABLE 8

DISPOSITION PATTERN AS A FUNCTION OF JUDICIAL RECOMMENDATION

	Judicial is in favour (N=79)	Judicial is not in favour (N=21)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	71 (89.9%)	11 (52.4%)	p<.0005
Stage II	69 (87.3%)	10 (47.6%)	p<.0005
Stage III	63 (79.7%)	7 (33.3%)	p<.0005
Stage IV	63 (79.7%)	8 (38.1%)	p<.0005

The relationship is in the same direction as that of the police. However, it is substantially weaker. This is particularly noticeable with unfavourable judicial recommendations which carry less weight.

Police and Judicial Recommendations

When both the judicial and the police recommendations were in favour of TAP for an applicant (N=51), no less than 46 (90.2%) of these cases were approved at each decision stage. In cases where there is a split, i.e., the police are favourable and the judicial are not, the more influential recommendation by far appears to be that of the police. For example, of 6 cases where the judge was not in favour but the police were, the institutional levels recommended for approval all 6 and the Main Office levels recommended for approval 5 of the 6.

Reasons for the overall importance and weight which police input has for TAP decision-makers have already been suggested. Once a judge has made a recommendation, the consequences of allowing or not allowing an inmate to participate on the TAP do not, in a practical sense, have as much direct effect on him/her.

Demographic Considerations

The age of the TAP applicant does not seem to be a crucial factor to the decision-makers for approving or denying TAP applications. The differences in age between those applicants who were favourably recommended (or approved) and those who were not is practically negligible. The greatest difference occurs at the Main Office TAP Committee level where the mean age of recommended applicants is 29.1 years compared to 26.3 years for those who were not recommended (t=1.89, 2-tailed, p>.05). Even here, however, the difference is not large enough to be statistically significant.

Similarly, the proportions of applicants recommended for approval is virtually the same for both married and non-married people. This is true for all four decision-making bodies.

In effect both of these findings might be viewed as positive aspects of Temporary Absence in that a wider number of applicants are allowed to participate on TAP. In a number of jurisdictions (see W. Ayer, 1970) where work release programs are available, certain types of applicants are favoured, almost to the total exclusion of others (with respect to the variables just discussed). The Ontario Temporary Absence Program, however, does not seem to be as rigid. If two of the major considerations for TAP decision-makers are the "rehabilitation" of the individual inmate and the potential risk factor associated with allowing an inmate to participate on TA, then the applicants' ages or marital status are probably not viewed as factors which would negatively effect either of these considerations.

Intended Place of TAP Activation

Normally three places are possible from which a TAP application (if approved) can be activated. The inmate may participate on the TAP from the institution where the application originated or he/she may be transferred to another institution. The other possibility is that the applicant may be housed in a Community Resource Centre (CRC) during involvement in the TAP.

It was found that an applicant had a better chance of approval by Main Office, if that case was to be activated from the originating institution or a CRC rather than if the inmate was to be transferred to another institution and his TAP activated from that institution (see Table 9).

TABLE 9

DISPOSITION PATTERN AS A FUNCTION OF INTENDED PLACE OF ACTIVATION

	To be activated from original institution or a CRC	To be activated from another institution	Significance
	(N=125)	(N=50)	(2-tailed)
Stage I	103 (82.4%)	35 (70.0%)	p>.05
Stage II	99 (79.2%)	35 (70.0%)	p>.05
Stage III	93 (74.4%)	27 (54.0%)	p<.01
Stage IV	93 (74.4%)	27 (54.0%)	p<.01

It might be argued that the institutional staff from where the application originated "know" the inmate and would also have a certain amount of accountability. However, if the TAP applicant is transferred to another institution, the superintendent and other institutional staff are not as familiar with the inmate and the risk of a negative result is perhaps greater, under these circumstances. Similarly, cases bound for a CRC, have a better chance of approval since the very fact that they are being considered for TA from a CRC suggests that they are 'better' applications. (Because the CRC program is new, it is expected that at least initially, the eligibility criteria are also stricter).

Another argument might be, that while the authorities from a receiving institution might feel "obliged" to receive the TAP inmate into their institution, they nevertheless have no real input or involvement in the selection of the inmate for TA. These same authorities may feel that given the nature of their institution or their institutional policy, a particular inmate may be totally unsuitable for the TAP. A further complication is that the inmate himself will have to go through a readjustment period to a "new" institution which might be problematic in itself.

It has also been suggested, through informal conversations with institutional and Main Office personnel, that the practice of recommending TA applications which will be activated from another institution can be abused in that it may become a way of "dumping" unsuitable or troublesome inmates on the receiving institution.

Further examination of this variable provides at least a partial explanation for the high incidence of rejection of Guelph Correctional Centre applicants by Main Office. We have seen that transferred cases are less likely to be approved by Main Office TAP decision-makers. Examination of the data reveals that the Guelph Correctional Centre sample had a large proportion (i.e., 22 out of 37 cases; 59.4%) of these types of cases.

Previous TAP Involvement

The presence of a previous TA application does not appear to affect Main Office, in their decisions (see Table 10). There is some effect, however, at the institutional stages.

TABLE 10

DISPOSITION PATTERN AND PREVIOUS TAP APPLICATIONS

	Applied Before	Never Applied	Significance
	(N=94)	(N=81)	(1-tailed)
Stage I	79 (84.0%)	59 (72.8%)	p<.05
Stage II	77 (81.9%)	57 (70.4%)	p<.05
Stage III	67 (71.3%)	53 (65.4%)	p>.05
Stage IV	67 (71.3%)	53 (65.4%)	p>.05

If an applicant had previously participated in the TAP, his/her chances of having the current application approved are significantly better than if he/she had never applied (see Table 11).

TABLE 11

DISPOSITION PATTERN AND PAST INVOLVEMENT IN THE TAP

	Applied & Approved (N=60)	Never Applied (N=81)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	52 (86.7%)	59 (72.8%)	p<.025
Stage II	52 (86.7%)	57 (70.4%)	p<.01
Stage III	48 (80.0%)	53 (65.4%)	p<.05
Stage IV	48 (80.0%)	53 (65.4%)	p<.05

This is the same for all four stages. The decision-makers feel somewhat more confident in approving the applications of those inmates who at some time before applied and were approved for TA, be it, on a 1-5 pass or a more extended leave. Stages III and IV do not seem to be as confident or as assured by the knowledge that an applicant had previously been on the TAP. As has been mentioned previously, this may be due to the fact that these two levels are somewhat removed, in a practical sense.

Proportion of Time Served

Technically, inmates may make application for TA at any point during their sentence. Of the total sample (i.e., N=175) 111 (63.4%) individuals applied within the first two-fifths of their sentence. The remainder, applied during the last three-fifths. For the sake of labelling, the former were considered as "early" applicants and the latter were "late" applicants. The literature (see W. Ayer, 1970) from the United States in the area of work release programmes would suggest that those inmates who apply for work release during the latter part of their sentence are more likely to be allowed to participate than are inmates who apply at an earlier stage. Upon cursory examination, this study would indicate a similar trend at least for the institutional stages. However, the Main Office TAP Committee and the TAP Co-ordinator do not differentiate significantly between these two types of applicants (see Table 12).

TABLE 12

DISPOSITION PATTERN AND PROPORTION OF SENTENCE SERVED AT POINT OF APPLICATION

	Early Application (N=111)	Late Application (N=64)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	83 (74.8%)	55 (85.9%)	p<.05
Stage II	79 (71.2%)	55 (85.9%)	p<.025
Stage III	73 (65.8%)	47 (73.4%)	p>.05
Stage IV	73 (65.8%)	47 (73.4%)	p>.05

Upon closer examination of these findings, it was interesting to note that the significant findings at stages I and II disappear when the Guelph Correctional Centre cases are deleted from the analysis. What is happening, in fact is that the difference which was found can be attributed to the Guelph Correctional Centre sample (see Tables 13 and 14).

TABLE 13

DISPOSITION PATTERN AND PROPORTION OF TIME SERVED EXCLUDING THE GUELPH C.C. SAMPLE

	Early Application (N=89)	Late Application (N=49)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	70 (78.7%)	40 (81.6%)	p>.05
Stage II	67 (75.3%)	40 (81.6%)	p>.05
Stage III	63 (70.8%)	37 (75.5%)	p>.05
Stage IV	64 (72.0%)	37 (75.5%)	p>.05

TABLE 14

DISPOSITION PATTERN AND PROPORTION OF TIME SERVED FOR GUELPH C.C. SAMPLE ONLY

	Early Application	Late Application	Significance
	(N=22)	(N=15)	(1-tailed)
Stage I	13 (59.1%)	15 (100.0%)	p<.005
Stage II	12 (54.5%)	15 (100.0%)	p<.0005
Stage III	10 (45.5%)	10 (66.7%)	p>.05
Stage IV	9 (40.9%)	10 (66.7%)	p>.05

The institutional stages at the Guelph Correctional Centre seem to be emphasizing the proportion of time served by an inmate. The Guelph Correctional Centre decision-makers appear to feel rather confident in favourably recommending applicants who have served at least two-fifths of their time. Of the 15 applicants from Guelph Correctional Centre who had served this amount of time, all were recommended for approval. Of the 22 applicants who had not yet served more than this amount, only 13 (59.1%) were favourably recommended by the institutional TAP committee and only 12 (54.5%) by the superintendent.

Potential Earnings Expected from TAP Jobs

The estimated weekly gross average earnings from the TAP job prospect for the whole TAP applicant sample is \$151.00. Roughly one half of the applicants would be making less than \$140.00 and the other half would be making over this amount. When recommended and not recommended, applicants are compared for each stage, no difference occurs with respect to the amount of earnings expected.

Other factors relating to the nature of the job prospect and familiarity with the job are not associated with any particular type of decision outcome.

Native Applicants

Because there were only 9 Native inmates who applied for employment TAP during the study period, discussion surrounding proportions recommended will be descriptive in nature. Only 9 inmates were approved throughout the decision-making process. Because so many obstacles have to be overcome before applying for TAP, especially for the Native people, few tend to apply. There may be a number of reasons for this. A major reason is the fact that correctional institutions are more often than not, rather distant from a Native offender's

home community, and his/her job is not readily accessible. Because of language and other cultural barriers, a new job may not always be easily acquired while incarcerated. Those few Native inmates who do apply for TAP will have probably worked out these and other difficulties with the result that his/her chances of receiving approval are good. The plans for future community resource centre involvement in Northern Ontario should help the Native offender substantially in taking advantage of the benefits which are possible through TAP participation.

CRIMINALITY

The factors examined thus far, are not related to criminal history. The importance of the applicant's criminal history, however, cannot be minimized. General guidelines formulated upon initiation of the TAP allude to its importance as a factor in TAP selection. A number of indicators of criminal history, therefore, have been developed and examined with respect to decision outcomes.

Recidivist vs. First Incarcerate

Significantly more first incarcerates are recommended for approval than are recidivists. If one considers the stage IV decisions, which are fairly representative of the decisions made with respect to first incarcerates, this becomes apparent (see Table 15).

TABLE 15

FINAL DISPOSITION PATTERN AS A FUNCTION OF PREVIOUS RECIDIVISM

DECISION	TYPE		TOTAL
	First Incarcerate	Recidivist	
Approved	58 (75.3%)	62 (63.3%)	120
Denied	19 (24.7%)	36 (36.7%)	55
TOTAL	77 (100.0%)	98 (100.0%)	175

t = 1.723, (1-tailed) p<.05

This finding is not surprising in view of the fact that recidivists are generally more entrenched in criminal behaviour. As such, they will be considered poorer TAP risks. The finding should not be interpreted as indicating that TAP participation is intended only for first incarcerates because a substantial proportion (63.3%) of the recidivist applicants were also approved for TAP participation. This practice in fact compares rather favourably with policies in operation in other jurisdictions with similar programs (see L. Root, 1972).

Restricted Categories

The importance of the "restricted" categories as a selection criterion varies somewhat from stage to stage (see Table 16). As the application is passed through each successive stage of the decision-making process, the importance of "restricted" category offences as a criterion becomes apparent. At the first two stages "restricted" category offences do not play a significant role in the determination of who should or should not be recommended for TA. The proportions of applicants recommended for approval from among those applicants with and without "restricted" category offences are approximately equal. It is only at stage III of the process that a difference is seen. At this point, applicants with no offences from within the "restricted" category have a higher chance of receiving a favourable recommendation. At stage IV this trend is verified. At this latter level, 76.7% of the applicants with current offences from within the less serious (i.e., non-restricted) categories were approved. The comparable proportion for those inmates with serious offences is only 60.6%, significantly less.

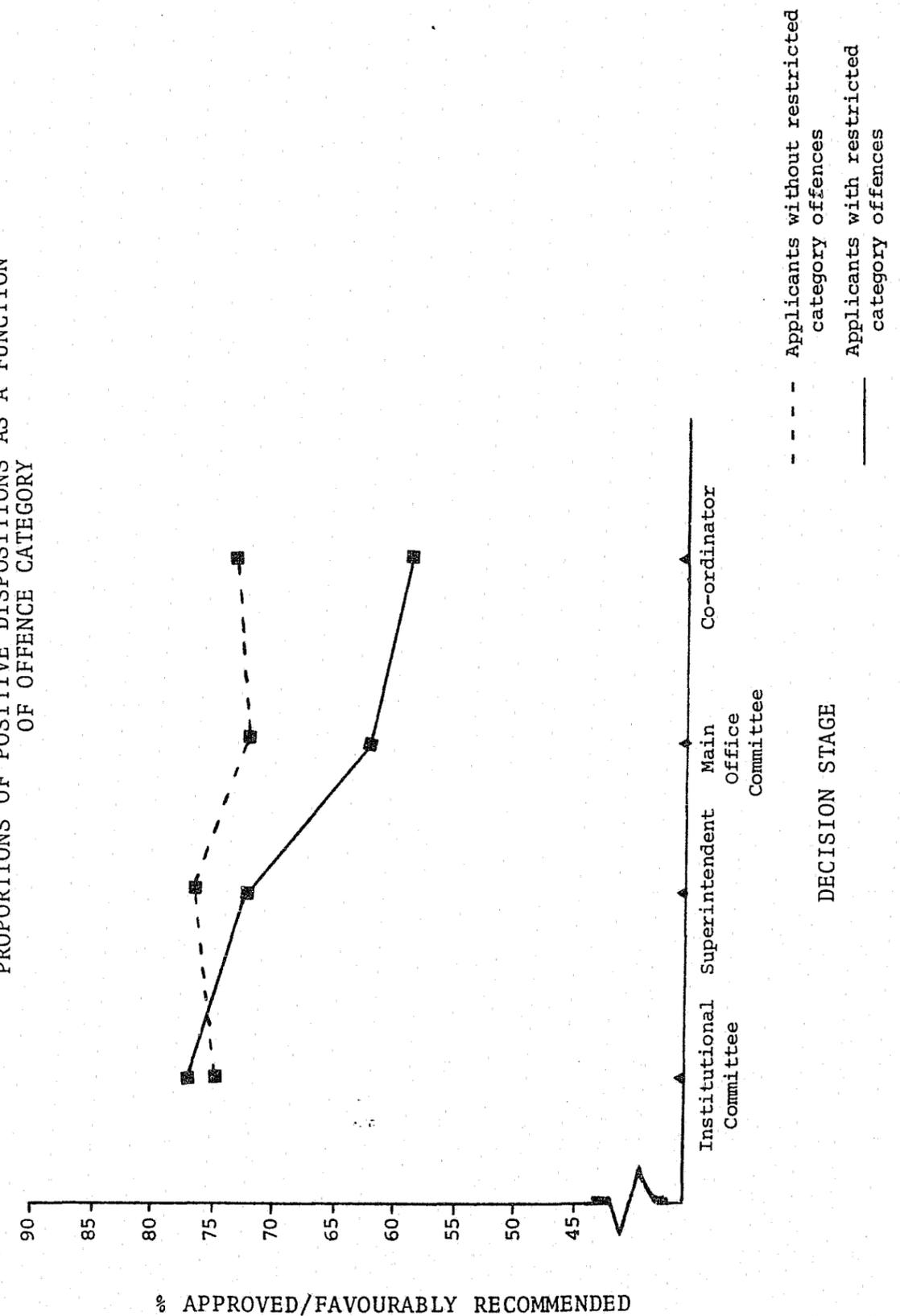
If the proportion of "restricted" category offenders approved are compared to the proportion approved in 1972 for the same months used in this study, it will be found that 55.0% of these earlier applicants from within the "restricted" category offence type were approved. (Statistics with respect to "non-restricted" category offences were unavailable.) Although the data in this study indicate that more inmates from within the "restricted categories" are presently approved (i.e., 60.7%) the increase is minimal considering that two years have gone by.\* The Program, it would appear, has not relaxed its policy regarding offence criteria substantially in this regard between late 1972 and late 1974.

The data in Table 17 demonstrate that each successive decision-making stage is more cautious in approving TAP applications from within the "restricted" category offence type. Once again, in this Table the Guelph Correctional Centre sample has been excluded in order to determine the extent to which the original results were due to the Guelph Correctional Centre sample only. Although the original statistically

\* Credit for collection of these data should go to Nancy Mulvihill who so painstakingly reviewed 106 Main Office files of TAP applicants for the year 1972.

TABLE 16

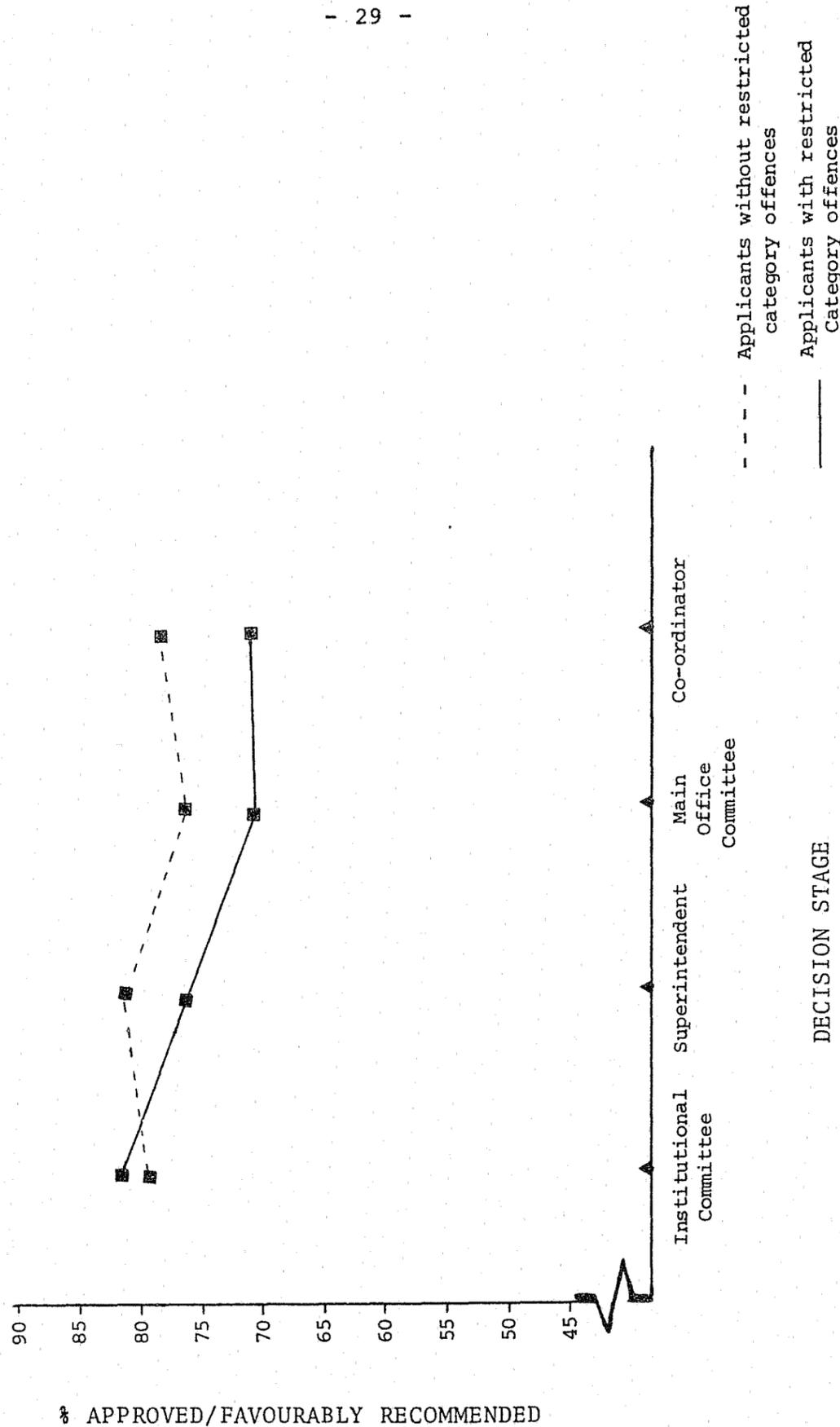
PROPORTIONS OF POSITIVE DISPOSITIONS AS A FUNCTION OF OFFENCE CATEGORY



% APPROVED/FAVOURABLY RECOMMENDED

TABLE 17

PROPORTION OF POSITIVE DISPOSITIONS AS A FUNCTION OF OFFENCE CATEGORY EXCLUDING GUELPH C.C. SAMPLE



significant difference which existed at stage IV disappears, it can be seen that the general differences between stages still remain. Because stages III and IV tend to approve fewer applicants whose offences are of the restricted category type, and because a large proportion (27 out of 37: 73.0%) of the Guelph Correctional Centre sample has such offences when compared to only 62 out of 138 (44.9%) applicants from other institutions, then it is expected that, proportionally, the Main Office TAP decision-makers will approve fewer Guelph Correctional TA applicants. Guelph Correctional Centre decision-makers appear to be somewhat liberal in recommending for approval, applicants from within the restricted offence categories. Therein lies a major conflict in policy between these decision levels.

Liquor Offences

Applicants whose offences include liquor related ones, are more likely to be approved than applicants with other kinds of offences. On the basis of this data, it appears that applicants with liquor related offences (not including traffic offences where alcohol was involved) are judged to have a better chance of success on the TAP.

TABLE 18

PROPORTION OF POSITIVE DISPOSITIONS AS A FUNCTION OF THE LIQUOR OFFENCE CATEGORY

	Liquor offences (N=60)	Offences other than liquor (N=115)	Significance (1-tailed)
Stage I	53 (88.3%)	85 (74.0%)	p<.025
Stage II	51 (85.0%)	83 (72.2%)	p<.05
Stage III	48 (80.0%)	72 (62.6%)	p<.01
Stage IV	48 (80.0%)	72 (62.6%)	p<.01

As Table 18 indicates, 80.0% of those applicants who had at some time been convicted with one or more liquor offence(s) were approved compared to only 62.6% of those without any liquor related offences. However, if one is interested in determining what kinds of individuals tend to "revocate" while on the TAP, the data from this research imply that applicants who have committed one or more liquor offences are more likely to "revocate" than are applicants with other types of offences. Of 48 approved applicants with liquor

related offences, 7 (14.6%) were later revoked for infractions of TAP regulations. Of 72 approved applicants who did not have liquor offences, only 4 (5.6%) were later revoked. Although the number of revoked cases is too small to make definite inferences, a trend seems to exist. This is highlighted by the fact that the most frequently stated reason for revocations in the past year seems to have been related to liquor. The evidence presented does not suggest that these applicants are necessarily bad risks in the strict sense of the word. Rather, the data do suggest that these individuals are more likely to commit a minor infraction of the TAP regulations and are thus counted as a "failure" for statistical purposes.

This might indicate to the TAP decision-makers that a closer look be given to applicants with liquor offences. It is conceivable that these types of offenders have a more difficult time adapting to TAP participation and that perhaps more counselling work is needed with these individuals.

Current Aggregate Sentence

Another factor which had a bearing on decision outcome was the length of the applicants' current aggregate sentence.

As expected, applicants recommended for approval have shorter current sentences than applicants not recommended for approval. Decision-makers at all levels tend to recommend for approval more applicants with shorter aggregate sentences. For example, approved TAP applicants have an average current aggregate sentence length of 276.3 days compared to 356.1 for denied applicants ( $t = 2.19, df = 173, p < .025$ : 1 tailed). This finding would seem to follow very logically from the earlier finding that at stage IV "restricted" category applicants are less likely to be approved than other applicants. By the very nature of the severity of "restricted" category offences, these people are more likely to have longer aggregate sentences imposed on them.

An explanatory comment should be made in regards to the length of aggregate sentences. Upon cursory reading, it will probably appear that the average aggregate sentences just cited are quite long. This is true because no allowance was made with respect to any eventual discharge through parole. Therefore, aggregate sentence indicates the length of time to be served (less earned and statutory remissions) without consideration for possible parole discharge.

REASONS GIVEN FOR DECISION OUTCOME

In addition to analyzing available file information for each TAP applicant, the decision-makers at each decision level, completed short questionnaires for a random sample of TAP applicant cases considered. The main purpose of this was to allow the decision-makers to state their reasons for the decision outcome. This was done because it

is conceivable that not all possible information, related to a case, was available via Main Office files. It also made it possible to determine what, in fact, the decision-makers themselves perceive as important in recommending or not recommending an applicant for TAP involvement.

Due to the heavy workloads and time restriction of most decision-makers, it was difficult for the writer to justify having the decision-makers complete large numbers of questionnaires. For this reason the analysis in this area will be kept at a descriptive level. For the sake of uniformity, the discussion will center around those reasons which were mentioned in at least 20.0% of the cases presented (see Tables 19 to 22).

REASONS CITED FOR DISPOSITION PATTERN  
(Tables 19-22)

TABLE 19

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=197)			UNFAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=49)		
Reason	No.	% of Total	Reason	No.	% of Total
Positive Institutional Behaviour	93	47.2	Severity of offence	18	36.7
Sincerity to Rehabilitate	56	28.4	Insincerity to Rehabilitate	11	22.4

TABLE 20

SUPERINTENDENT

FAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=58)			UNFAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=15)		
Reason	No.	% of Total	Reason	No.	% of Total
Positive Institutional Behaviour	35	60.3	Police not in favour	4	26.7
			Severity of offences	4	26.7
			Community not in favour	3	20.0

REASONS CITED FOR DISPOSITION PATTERN (Continued)

TABLE 21

MAIN OFFICE TAP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=204)			UNFAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=64)		
Reason	No.	% of Total	Reason	No.	% of Total
Institution in favour	77	37.7	Severity of offences	23	35.9
Community in favour	66	32.4	Institution not in favour	21	32.8
Enough time served	51	25.0	Community not in favour	18	28.1
Good employment situation	45	22.1	Insincerity to Rehabilitate	15	23.4

TABLE 22

TAP CO-ORDINATOR

FAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=19)			UNFAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION (N=14)		
Reason	No.	% of Total	Reason	No.	% of Total
Institution in favour	10	52.6	Severity of offences	14	100.0
Positive Institutional Behaviour	8	42.1	Institution not in favour	5	35.7
Offences not serious	8	42.1	Police not in favour	5	35.7
Police in favour	7	36.8	Security Risk	4	28.6
Judge in favour	7	36.8			

One of the major reasons cited by the institutional decision-makers and TAP Co-ordinator for a favourable recommendation was the positive institutional behaviour exhibited by the applicant (see Hug, 1970; Currie, 1973). This would seem reasonable, since the institutional decision-makers, more often than not, have had close personal contact with inmates in that institution with the result that some preliminary opinion as to the appropriateness of TAP application has been formed. For a substantial proportion of these cases which Main Office has favourably recommended, it would appear that a primary rationale for that decision was the favourable recommendation received from the institution.

For all cases that were rejected, understandably a major reason which was given by all four levels of decision-makers was related to severity of criminal involvement. These applicants were judged to be entrenched in rather chronic criminal behaviour. This supports some of the data already discussed with respect to criminal history.

The institutional committee seems to form an opinion of the individual applicants around a concept of "sincerity", i.e., "sincerity of the applicant to rehabilitate" or "to change" (see R. Fox, 1971). For 56 (28.4%) of the cases which were recommended for approval, the individual institutional committee members felt that these inmates seemed "sincere" in changing their pattern of behaviour. For 11 cases (22.4%) with unfavourable decisions, the same members pointed out that precisely because these applicants did not seem to be sincere, they were not recommended for approval. The Main Office TAP committee members also mentioned this as one of the reasons for unfavourable recommendations.

Precisely what indicators are used to judge an applicant "sincere" or "not sincere" is not quite certain but it does seem conceivable that first hand knowledge or observation of the inmate would probably be an important consideration. It is not surprising, therefore, that the institutional TAP committee members who, by and large have had more direct contact with the applicant, feel this is an important consideration. This direct contact, in addition to inmate file information seems to supply the basis for labelling an applicant sincere or not sincere. Main Office, of course, is influenced by these opinions.\*

\* It is understandable why the degree of agreement between the reasons cited by the decision-makers themselves and the relationships examined earlier via Main Office files is not a perfect one. In many instances more subjective opinions such as the sincerity of the applicant, were developed obviously not through Main Office file perusal only. In other instances, of course, the decision-makers may not have been consciously aware of some of the criteria which in fact they were using as frames of reference for arriving at a decision.

Both the Superintendents and the Main Office TAP Co-ordinator were strongly influenced by the recommendations made by the police authorities. Reasons for the importance of the police recommendations were discussed earlier.

### ATTITUDE AND BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DECISION-MAKERS

It was thought possible that while the information and circumstances regarding a particular applicant would be very important for the decision-makers in arriving at a decision, the attitudes of the decision-makers themselves might also have a bearing. Attitudes were investigated in order to present a more complete model of decision-making.

Although a number of attitude scales were examined, it was decided to use the validated attitude scales developed by Hogarth (see J. Hogarth, 1971). These were considered to have a high degree of relevance in the context of Temporary Absence. From the original set of scales, only two major scales were used for the purpose of this study.\* One dealt with treatment related items in the criminal justice system. The other centered around punishment related items. Since it was not possible to obtain scores for every decision-maker, a random sample of 80 people were asked to complete the attitude questionnaires.

Scores on each scale were calculated and then dichotomized as low or high. The cutoff point for labelling "high" or "low" was the median (i.e., the point at which half

\* In order to make the Likert scale items more relevant for the decision-makers, several items were either deleted or re-worded. Because of this, new reliability coefficients were calculated to ensure that the reliability of the scales did not fall below acceptable levels. A conservative approach was taken. Any scale with a reliability coefficient below 0.7500 was not used as part of the analysis. Only the punishment and treatment scales met the above criterion. The punishment scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.8960 and the treatment scale 0.7761. The Split-Half Method with application of the Spearman-Brown Formula was the method utilized in determining reliabilities.

The following are examples of items in each of the scales:

Treatment item - "Most criminals are in need of treatment".

Punishment item - "There should be more discipline in penal institutions".

Respondents were asked to indicate the degree of agreement from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

of the respondents are below and half are above). By matching the attitude category (high or low) to the decision outcomes of the respective decision-makers, it was possible to obtain a measure of association between attitudes and decision outcome.

Contrary to what one may expect, no significant correlation was found (see Table 23)

TABLE 23

RELATIONSHIP OF ATTITUDE SCALE SCORES TO DISPOSITION PATTERN AT THE FIRST THREE DECISION STAGES

	Institutional TAP Committee	Superintendent	M/O TAP Committee
Punishment Scale	$\phi=0.0866$ $p>.05$	$\phi=0.0537$ $p>.05$	$\phi=0.0387$ $p>.05$
Treatment Scale	$\phi=0.0830$ $p>.05$	$\phi=0.0555$ $p>.05$	$\phi=0.0200$ $p>.05$

between attitude scale scores and disposition pattern for any of the decision-making levels considered, as measured by the phi coefficient\*. (Since only one individual is involved at Stage IV, it was not possible to test for a relationship here, because only one attitude scale score was possible, i.e., either high or low).

The personal attitudes of the decision-makers as represented by the scales, do not seem to be related at all to whether an applicant is approved or denied for TA. For the most part, each applicant case is handled on its own merit in the context of general policy or guidelines, and is not affected by personal attitudes or whims of the individual decision-makers.\*\* A note of caution should be introduced here

\* A phi coefficient is related to  $\chi^2$ . This correlation measure is applicable to 2x2 tables only and the variables involved are assumed to be discrete.

\*\* Further evidence of this is suggested by data collected in the context of several institutional TAP Committee meetings where the applicant was also present. The author checked off a number of precoded categories such as the physical appearance of the inmate, the amount of talking done by him and similar "subjective" considerations. It was found that none of these considerations had any effect whatsoever on the decision outcome. It was only possible to attend 10 of these meetings. A total of 33 applications were considered.

in that the attitudes examined do not represent all possible types. It is conceivable that if other kinds of attitudes were investigated, some association might have been evident.

General demographic information on the decision-makers was collected to determine whether there was any relationship between these variables and disposition pattern. The information collected included: age, marital status, length of service in the Ministry of Correctional Services, position held and educational level attained. None of these variables, however, revealed any significant relationships.

COMPARISON OF TAP APPLICANTS WITH NON-TAP APPLICANTS

A sample of 77 inmates who had not currently applied for TAP (e.g., employment or educational) were interviewed to determine whether they were familiar with the TAP, how they found out about it and their reasons for non-involvement in the Temporary Absence Program. Remand prisoners were not included. Main Office file information provided basic demographic data for comparisons between these inmates and inmates who in fact applied for TA.

In the overall picture, very few differences in background characteristics exist between the TAP applicants and the non-applicants. The former group has an average age of 28.2 years compared to 26.5 years for the latter group (t=1.31, df=251, p>.05).

Compared to the non-applicant group, a greater proportion of the TAP applicant sample was married.

TABLE 24

COMPARISON OF MARITAL STATUS OF THE STUDY GROUPS

GROUP	MARITAL STATUS		TOTAL
	Married	Not Married	
TAP Applicants	97 (55.1%)	79 (44.9%)	176 (100.0%)
Non-TAP Applicants	27 (35.1%)	50 (64.9%)	77 (100.0%)
TOTAL	124	129	253

t = 2.957, p<.01

This might be explained by the fact that married inmates have more reasons to apply for employment TA than do single individuals. It is the married people who, in most instances, have families to support and financial and/or other obligations. Some families' sole income is from the inmates' employment. The adverse effects of total incarceration are, therefore, worse for these inmates. Single people, on the other hand, usually have significantly fewer obligations. In this context, it is not surprising that more married inmates apply for TA than do single ones.

More TAP inmates had previously applied for TAP (most were 1 - 5 day passes), than had inmates in the non-applicant group. Of the 176 TAP applicants, 94 (53.4%) had submitted previous TAP applications as compared to 23 out of 76 (30.3%) for the other group (see Table 25).

TABLE 25

COMPARISON OF PREVIOUS APPLICATION PATTERN OF THE STUDY GROUPS

GROUP	APPLICATION PATTERN		TOTAL
	Applied Before	Never Applied	
TAP Applicants	94 (53.4%)	82 (46.6%)	176 (100.0%)
Non-TAP Applicants	23 (30.3%)	53 (69.7%)	76 (100.0%)
TOTAL	117	135	252

t = 3.413, p<.001

Similarly, with respect to educational level, both groups of inmates had an average grade of 9.6. In summary, it can be seen that neither of these two factors distinguish between inmates who apply for TA and inmates who do not. On the contrary, the similarity is very striking.

However, several differences became apparent when criminal offence history was examined. The TAP applicant sample had an average current aggregate sentence of 300.4 days compared to 222.4 days for those individuals who did not apply (t=2.55, df=251, p<.01). Inmates included in the non-applicant group tended to have shorter sentences. This, however should not imply that TAP is therefore not suitable for this type of inmate.

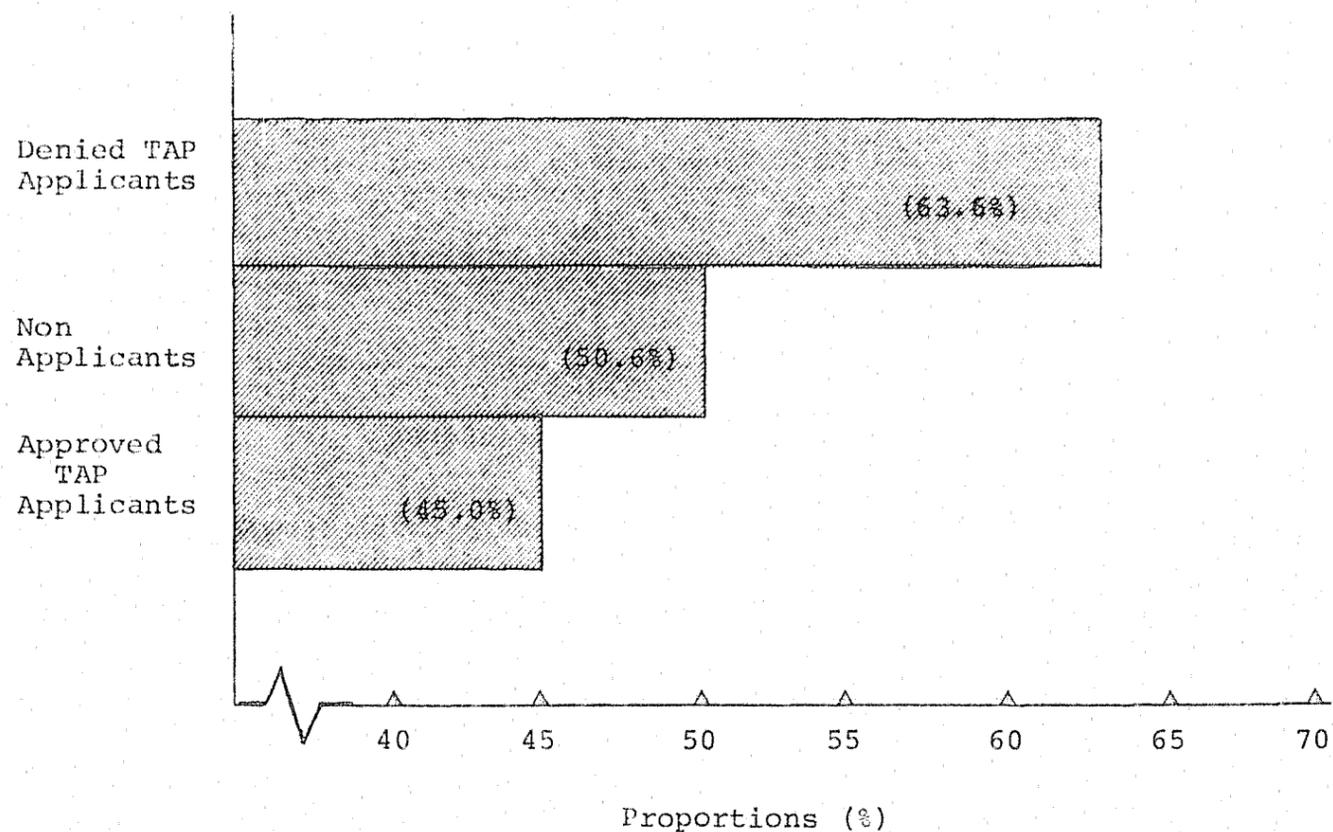
While the non-applicant sample had 2.9 previous incarcerations compared to 1.9 for the applicant group ( $t=1.21$ ,  $df=86$ ,  $p<.05$ ) they, nevertheless, had served only an average of 168 days from other incarcerations vis-a-vis 201 days for the applicant group. This merely reflects the fact that the applicant group had an average of 0.42 previous liquor convictions. The non-applicant group, however, had 2.58 convictions related to liquor ( $t=2.02$ ,  $df=77$ ,  $p<.05$ ). These findings tend to suggest that a large portion of the non-applicant group had a history of chronic liquor offences.

In all other respects, the two groups do not differ significantly. In fact, it was surprising that the two groups are in many ways so similar. This similarity is especially highlighted when the relationships are further refined upon comparison of the non-applicant group with (a) approved TAP applicants and (b) denied applicants.

With respect to the proportions of inmates whose current offences are in the "restricted" categories, the non-applicant group is more similar to the approved applicants than they are to the denied ones (Table 26).

TABLE 26

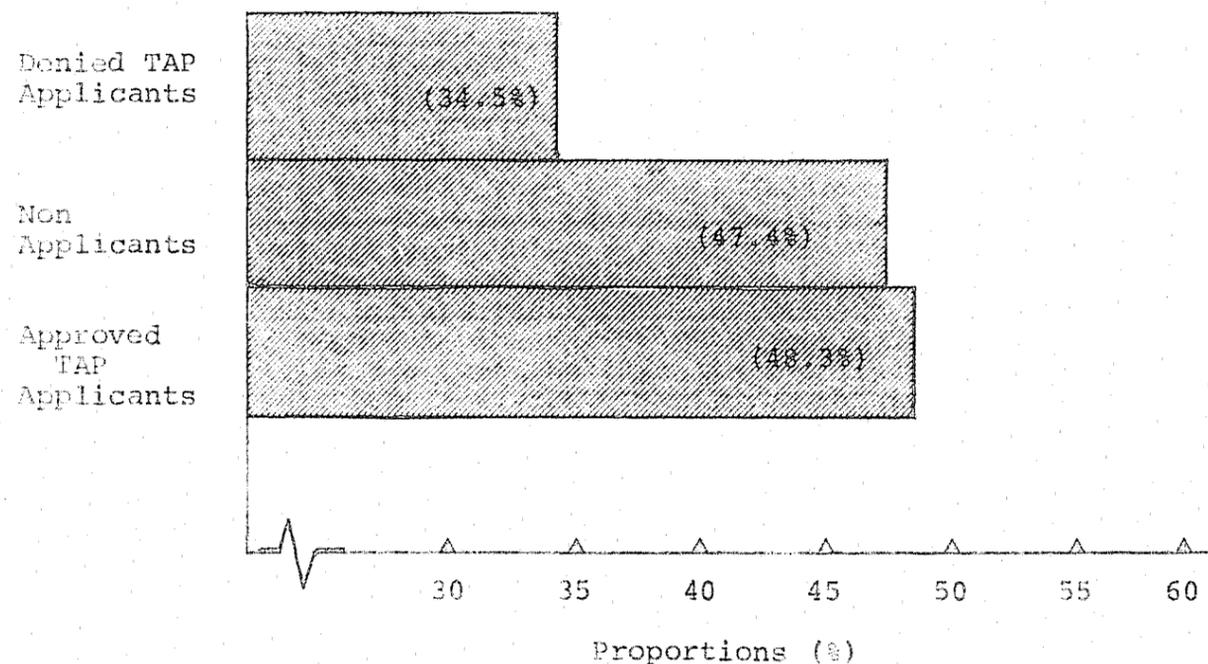
RELATIVE PROPORTIONS OF INMATES WITH "RESTRICTED" CATEGORY OFFENCES AMONG THREE STUDY GROUPS



The same finding occurs with respect to the proportions of inmates who are first incarcerates (Table 27).

TABLE 27

RELATIVE PROPORTIONS OF FIRST INCARCERATES AMONG THREE STUDY GROUPS



The point here is that while the non-TAP applicant sample is surprisingly similar in most respects to the TAP sample as a whole, when separate key factors are considered, the similarity to the approved sample increases. It would not seem at all unreasonable that a substantial number of the inmates from the non-applicant group could have easily been part of the applicant group. Even more important, however, is the fact that a number of these inmates would have probably been approved for TA, all things being equal.

What reasons then, did the inmates from the non-applicant group have for not applying for TAP, given that they were not radically different from those inmates who did apply?

When asked whether they knew what TAP was, all 77 non-applicant inmates indicated that they did. Over three-fifths (61.0%) of this sample learned of TAP through other inmates. The remainder read about TAP in the inmate booklet or were informed by legal counsel and/or relatives. Obviously, ignorance of the Temporary Absence Program cannot be used as a reason for not applying. The following chart indicates reasons based on 75 non-applicant inmates' answers:

TABLE 28

REASONS MENTIONED FOR NOT APPLYING (N=75)

REASON	No.	% of Total
A. Short duration of sentence ("not worthwhile")	18	24.0
B. Ineligible ("I would just get refused")	10	13.3
C. No job available	10	13.3
D. Transportation or situational problems	10	13.3
E. No desire to apply	8	10.7
F. Too much sentence time left	4	5.3
G. Disabled	4	5.3
H. Was discouraged from applying	3	4.0
I. Intentions to apply	3	4.0
J. Satisfied with institutional involvement	3	4.0
K. The application process takes too long ("there's too much red tape")	3	4.0
L. Other Reasons	3	4.0

As indicated in the table, the most frequently mentioned reason (24.0%) for not applying related to the fact that the sentence was too short. Given the amount of time needed for an application to be processed, these individuals did not feel it was worthwhile. One might question whether the answers supplied in the interviews are inaccurate. Comparison of the length of current sentence as per Main Office file information for those (24.0%) inmates who mentioned that their sentence was short with those who did not would suggest that this is not the case. It was found that the length of sentence for the former group was 108 days compared to 260 days for the latter ( $t=3.58$ ,  $df=54$ ,  $p<.001$ ). This supports the validity of the answers given in the interviews.

The fact that some inmates had shorter sentences does not necessarily mean that it would have been impossible to apply for TAP. The fact is, that these inmates themselves felt it was not worthwhile for the short period of time which they could spend on TAP, particularly in those cases where parole discharge was possible. Inherent in the reason cited by these inmates is the notion that perhaps the TAP selection process takes too long and that, in fact, it may discourage some inmates from applying. Similar comments were made by 3 inmates (4.0%) who did say outright that this was their reason for not attempting an application (Reason K).

It was surprising to find that 10 (13.3%) inmates felt that there was no point in applying because they would be denied. They arrived at this conclusion not through institutional staff influence, but rather, through their own general knowledge of TAP criteria. The kinds of reasons which they gave as to why they would be refused were usually based on very broad generalizations or stereotypes. Ten (13.3%) individuals indicated that they did not have a job or job prospect. They did indicate, however, that should a job be available they would definitely be willing to apply. A similar number of inmates stated that because their job was located in an area where it was very difficult to obtain transportation to and from work, this precluded their applying. Only 8 (10.7%) inmates actually made it known that they had no desire to apply. They felt that TAP participation would add other pressures which they needn't face by doing "straight time". This bears out earlier findings (Crispino, 1974) where it was indicated that TA is not necessarily an easier way of serving a sentence, but that in many respects it is much more difficult and demanding than "doing straight time".

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the discussion of the flow of decision-making in the present system, it became apparent that there was a high degree of consistency in the pattern of dispositions amongst the four stages.

One would expect a substantial amount of agreement to exist, but not to the point where roughly nine out of ten cases are disposed of with the same decision outcome at all four stages. Clearly, this would seem to negate the need for so many stages in the decision-making process when the final outcome of an application can be fairly accurately predicted by knowing what the decision outcome was at the institutional levels. This system has served a very useful purpose by assisting in the growth and development of the Program. At present, however, the system has become somewhat cumbersome in its operation. The obvious and necessary question must be asked. "Can the decision-making process be modified in order to improve on the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Temporary Absence Program?" It is the feeling of the author that based on the data derived from this study, the answer to this question must be in the affirmative. The following recommendation is then proposed: *That the authority to approve or deny all employment Temporary Absence applications be delegated to the Superintendents.*

Under this scheme, the institutional TAP committee would make its recommendation in the normal fashion. The Superintendent would then, on the basis of the committee's recommendation and on other pertinent information or policy, approve or deny the TAP application for employment. The Main Office stages would not be directly involved. This is not to say that exchange of information should be nullified. On the contrary, all investigative services should be made available to the institutional authorities. Furthermore, duplicate documentation should be forwarded to the Main Office.

Under this new system, the institutional TAP Committee would, by necessity, have to assume a more significant role with greater autonomy. More specifically, the role of the local TAP supervisor should be strengthened. A common complaint expressed by TAP supervisors is, that along with their TAP duties, a host of other responsibilities also awaits them at the discretion of the Superintendent. A reduction of these "other" kinds of duties would be desirable for these individuals, in order to allow them more time to spend in the preparation of TAP cases. If the institutions are willing to accept the delegation of authority, then they should also be willing to accept the added responsibility.

The Main Office TAP Branch would be the most likely body to handle appeals or case reviews. It would appear fruitless to have this authority vested upon the institutional authorities because, in fact, they would be asked to review their own decisions, a situation which may not be in the best interests of all parties concerned. The mechanics of these provisions will, of course, need careful consideration.

How can the Temporary Absence Program as a whole "benefit" from the proposed change in the delegation of authority? Aside from the obvious reduction of Main Office time demand, the amount of time needed to process an application will be considerably reduced (perhaps by as much as half or more), a concern which some of the non-applicant inmates indicated as a reason for not applying.

The possibility of a potential TA applicant losing his/her job while awaiting approval for TA participation would be greatly minimized. This is especially true for cases originating from the Northern Region where, because of geographical isolation and unfavourable winter conditions, the time-lapse between time of application and final approval is quite lengthy. As was previously discussed, at times an employer will call a Superintendent and indicate to him/her that a position or a number of positions are available and he would be willing to hire TAP inmates. Unfortunately, the employer cannot always wait for the length of time needed to process an application.

The amount of paper work required was a major concern voiced at a recent TAP workshop (March, 1975). This is another area where some relief would be experienced.

Because of regional differences among the four regions with respect to various facets of Temporary Absence, delegation of authority will provide the basis by which each region may be able to be more responsive to its own particular needs.

Although, staff morale and attitudes towards TAP was not one of the primary areas of investigation, it becomes apparent to the author that some hostility or resistance toward the program still exists among institutional staff. In the great majority of these cases, Main Office involvement in the TAP selection process was cited as the primary reason. Many, in fact, did not take the institutional involvement in the selection process very seriously because the final authority rested elsewhere, somewhat "removed" from the "real-life" situation.

Should it prove impossible for practical reasons to delegate all employment cases to the institutional level, or should a "phasing-in" stage be deemed necessary, the following recommendation is seen as a viable temporary alternative: That complete delegation of authority to the superintendents be given for those employment cases where the police authorities have expressed a favourable recommendation.

Reference to tables 29 - 31 indicates that in those cases where the police have made a favourable recommendation, the agreement level in decision outcome among the four stages is very high. Aside from this, of course, input by the police authorities is a vital community contribution to the decision-making process. In a practical sense, this arrangement is easier to manage than other criteria which were found to be relevant. (see Table 3) This recommendation, however, should only be entertained if total delegation of all employment cases is not feasible at this time. Based on current trends, this latter alternative would reduce the proportion of employment cases to be considered at Main Office by 45.0% to 55.0%.

Because of the importance of police input in Temporary Absence (discussed earlier in the study) it may prove very beneficial to periodically allow local police authorities to participate in the decision-making at the institutional TAP committee level. This may not always be possible due to sheer practical considerations. Several institutions have attempted to include police authorities in the actual TAP selection process with what seems to have been positive results.

Wherever possible, employers from the local community should be encouraged to participate in the decision-making process in order to help both TAP decision-makers and the general public to better accept the notion that the community is a very important aspect of Temporary Absence.

As previously mentioned, some attention should be paid to those TAP participants whose convictions involve liquor related offences. The data indicates that these participants are more likely to violate the conditions of Temporary Absence. Perhaps more counselling involvement such as with AA would help this type of inmate better cope with the strains and difficulties encountered while in the TAP.

In the discussion of the non-applicant group, it became apparent that a number of them did not apply for TA because they felt that they would not be recommended for approval. As mentioned, the reasons for this were rather obscure. It appears that at least some of these inmates displayed a lack of self confidence (some, of course, were also realistic). Institutional personnel who are in contact with these inmates may be in a position to provide guidance and direction regarding TA participation or alternate available Programs which may best suit the needs of the inmate. The correctional officer or line staff may be in the best situation to help foster within the inmate a better understanding of the Temporary Absence Program.

The value of more TAP workshops has been highlighted by recent workshops where a number of issues arose for discussion. Problems encountered by one institution may have already been resolved by another and the exchange of such information

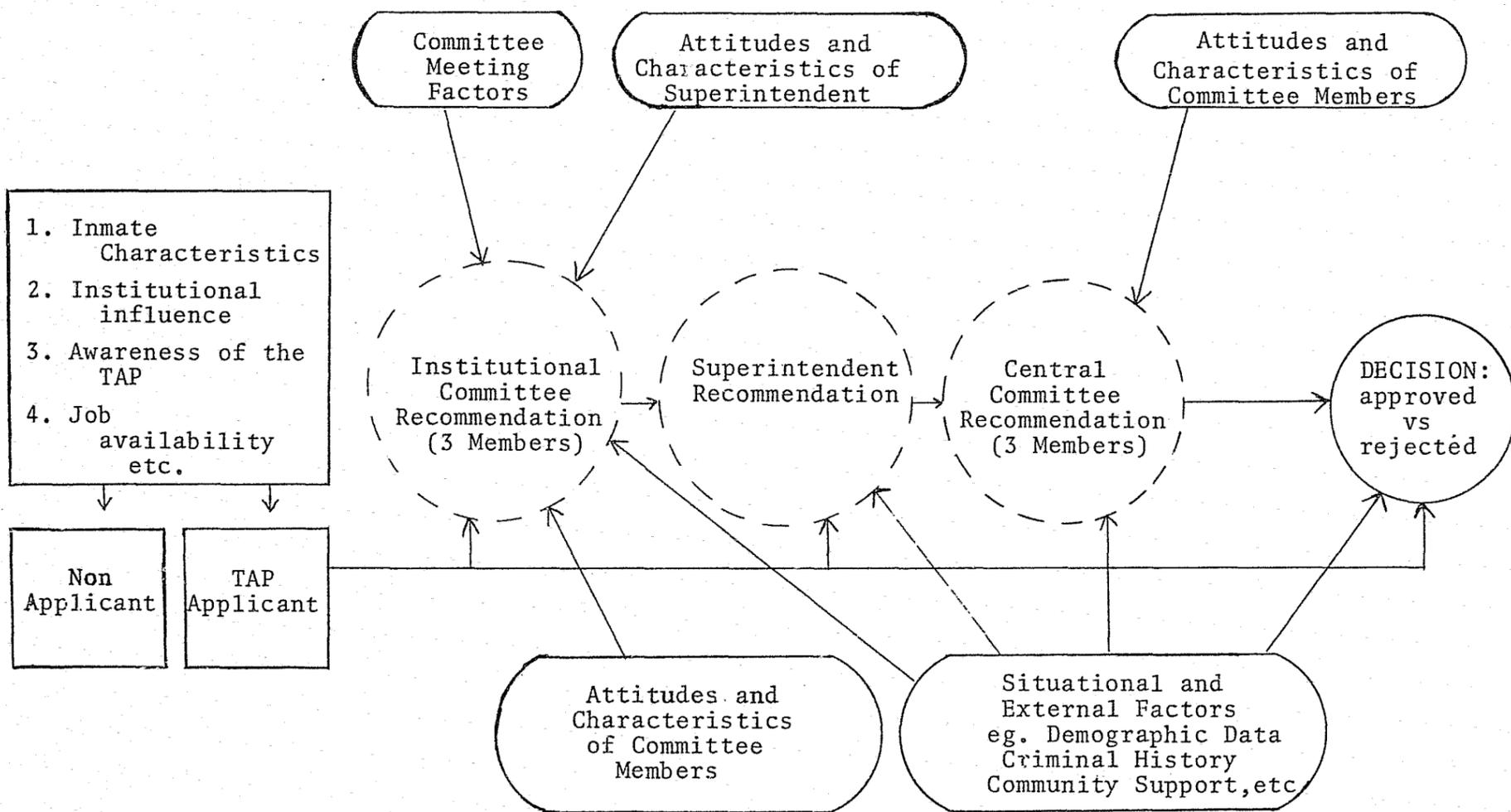
is very valuable. These workshops can also help to assess the overall status of the Temporary Absence Program.

More involvement of Staff Training and Development would also be desirable at various intervals in the overall professional development of TAP supervisors.

Perhaps TAP decision-making might be viewed as a process whereby two types of errors are possible. One type is to allow potentially unsuitable inmates to participate in the TAP. The other is to prevent a potentially suitable inmate from participating. Ideally, one would like to eliminate both types of errors. Needless to say, this is not possible. However, it is possible to minimize one type of error. Decision-makers must ultimately ask themselves the crucial question, "Which type of error is less desirable?"

APPENDIX A

MODEL OF RELATIONSHIPS UNDER INVESTIGATION



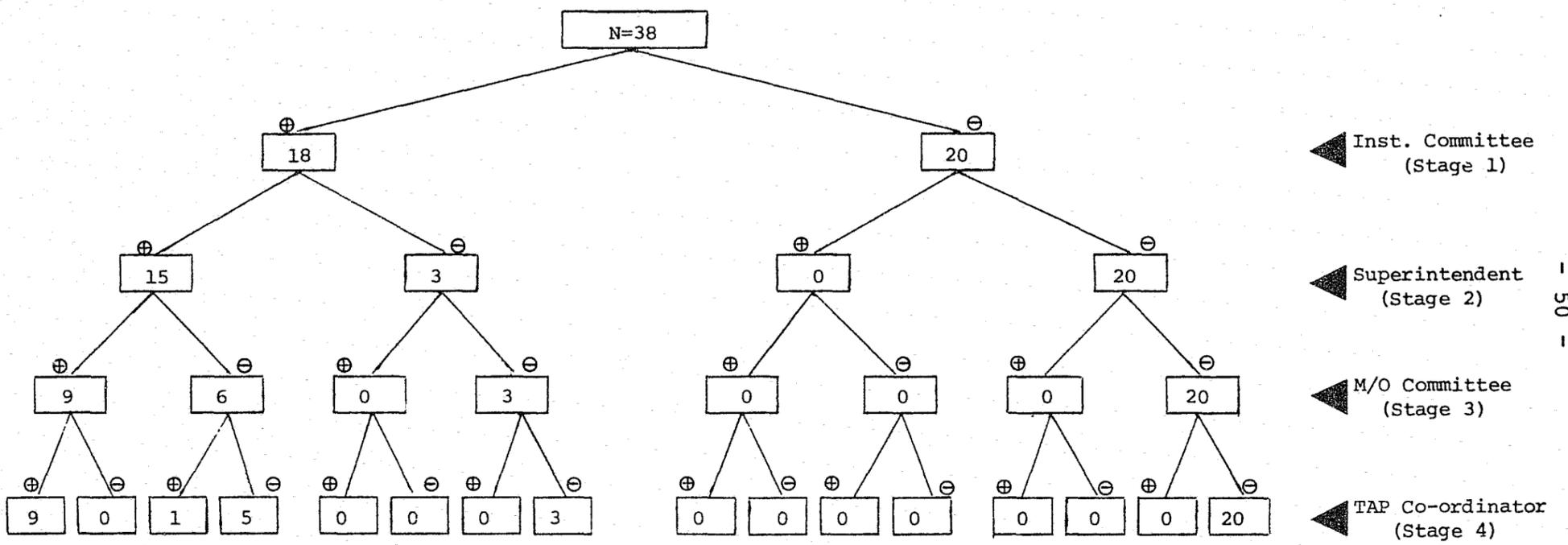
APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL TABLES 29 - 31



TABLE 30

DISPOSITION PATTERN FOR THOSE CASES WHERE THE POLICE  
HAVE MADE AN UNFAVOURABLE RECOMMENDATION



Amount of agreement:  $9 + 20 = 29$  (76.3%)

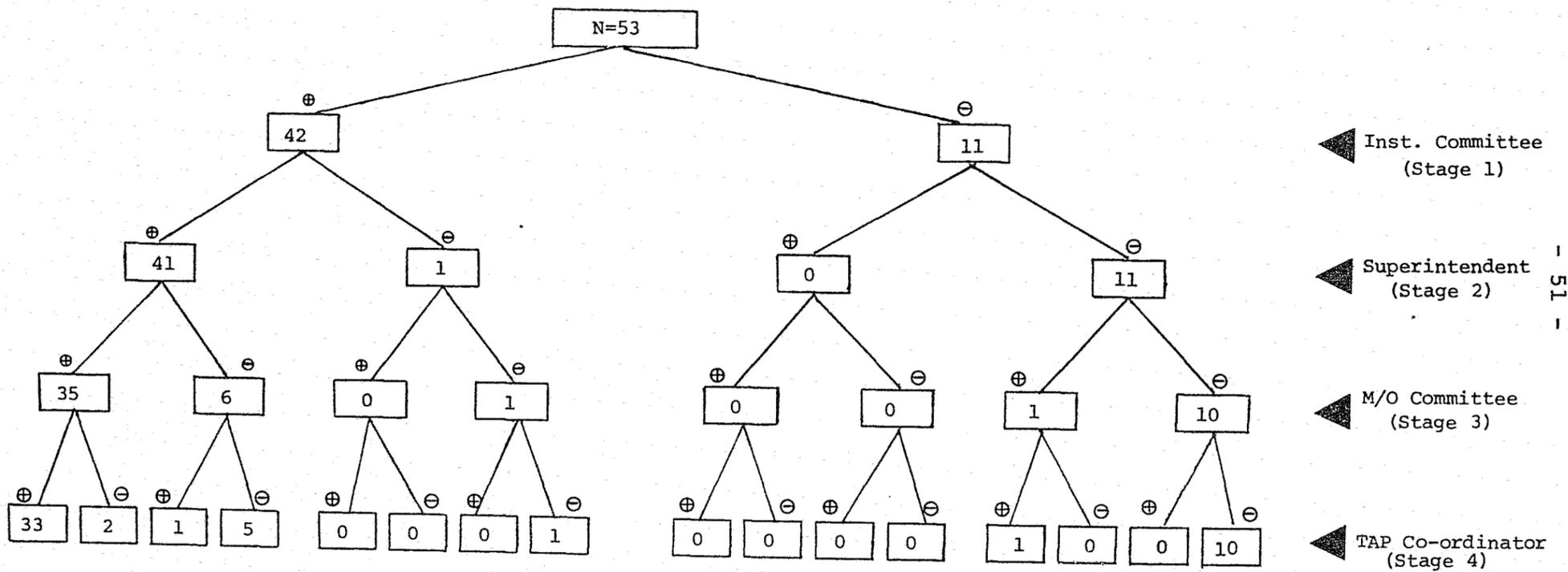
⊕ = Favourable decision outcome

⊖ = Unfavourable decision outcome



TABLE 31

DISPOSITION PATTERN FOR THOSE CASES WHERE THE POLICE  
DID NOT HAVE INPUT



Amount of agreement:  $33 + 10 = 43$  (81.1%)

⊕ = Favourable decision outcome

⊖ = Unfavourable decision outcome

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