

A COMPARISON OF THOSE WHO ADJUSTED AND THOSE
WHO DID NOT ADJUST AT THE FORESTRY CAMPS

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The goal of this study is to supplement a previous one on recidivism among inmates released from Massachusetts Forestry Camps. In the previous paper recidivism was used as a yardstick to measure the impact of the camp program. It did not however take into account the problem of those who could not adjust to the camps and were returned to one of the institutions.

During the period March 1, 1960 to March 1, 1963 sixty-nine men were transferred from either Monroe or Plymouth to one of the main institutions because of some inability to adjust to the camp program. The latter date was chosen to allow for a four year follow up. The first question to answer is how this group compares to those who did adjust in terms of recidivism. The first study showed an expected recidivism rate of 57.7% and an actual rate of 52.3%. In this study there is an expected rate of 61.1% and an actual rate of 60.6%. Thus even though the expected rates are not far apart, there is a substantial difference in the actual rates. This would indicate that while the camp program has a beneficial effect on those who adjust, it may have an adverse reaction on those who do not. The added sense of failure and frustration could lead to a defeatist attitude when released, which would hasten their return to confinement.

To prevent this great care must be taken in selecting those inmates with the greatest chance of success. To help in this process, a comparison was made between the adjusters and non-adjusters in terms of their background and criminal history. On background, four factors were examined: age at present incarceration, race, education, and marital status.

As seen in table one the average age of the successful inmates was 27.6 while that of the other group was 28.9. The significance here is the similarity.

The same situation can be seen in the category of race, where only three-tenths of a percent separate the two figures. Likewise, marital status provides no clear cut basis for separation.

Table three on education points to a difference approaching statistical significance. 49.7% of those who adjusted had less than a 9th grade education, while 60.9% of those who did not adjust fall into this category. Thus it appears to be reasonable to assume that for the most part non-adjusters have less education than their successful counterparts.

The same essential similarities are evident in the criminal history. In age at first arrest the average age in both is approximately 17.8. In number of prior arrests, the differences were negligible in each column. The same situation exists in number of drunkenness arrests.

The first significant difference can be seen in the prior incarcerations of the two groups, particularly in their state prison records. Among the success group only 38.2% had previous incarcerations in a state or federal prison, while 52.2% of those who could not adjust had previous prison incarcerations. This difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 4.43$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$). Also 29.0% of those in the success group had no prior incarcerations of any kind, while only 20.0% of the unsuccessful group had such a record. Thus, the inmate with the shorter record would seem to have greater chance of success in adjusting to the forestry camps.

Another category by which the transfer board could judge an applicant is the type of offense for which he was committed. Here, as in the previous listings, there is little difference between the two groups which could be used for selection.

However similar the men are before camp there are definite differences between the groups which are related to their camp experience.

First, 52.2% of the non-success group are at the camps for less than five months, while only 14.1% of the success group are there for so short a time. Thus most of the non-adjusters ran into trouble in a very short time.

Men who can't adjust to the camp are more likely to serve longer sentences than the success group. 56.5% of those who are successful serve for 16 months or less while only 18.8% of the non-success group served a similar sentence. Also 93.9% of the success group were paroled while only 73.9% of the other received the same benefit. Thus because they can not adjust to a new environment their parole status suffers, they serve longer sentences and it would seem that chances for success on the outside are adversely affected.

A Statistical Comparison of
Successful and Unsuccessful Transfers
to Forestry Camps

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Successful Adjustment</u>		<u>Unsuccessful Adjustment</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>A. Background Factors</u>				
<u>1. Age at Present Incarceration</u>				
Under 20	39	(14.9)	4	(5.8)
20 - 24	74	(28.2)	23	(33.3)
25 - 29	51	(19.5)	19	(27.5)
30 - 34	46	(17.6)	7	(10.1)
35 - 39	28	(10.7)	6	(8.7)
40 or Older	24	(9.2)	10	(14.6)
Average Age	27.6		28.9	
<u>2. Race</u>				
White	210	(91.6)	63	(91.3)
Negro	22	(8.4)	6	(8.7)
<u>3. Education</u>				
Special classes	18	(6.9)	3	(1.4)
6th grade or less	28	(10.7)	13	(18.8)
7th grade	35	(13.4)	4	(5.8)
8th grade	49	(18.7)	22	(31.9)
9th grade	57	(21.8)	10	(14.6)
10th - 11th grade	52	(19.8)	12	(17.3)
High school graduate	23	(8.8)	5	(7.2)
<u>4. Marital Status</u>				
Single	104	(39.7)	27	(39.1)
Married	116	(44.3)	26	(37.7)
Div., Sep., Wid.	42	(16.0)	16	(23.2)
TOTAL	262 (100.0)		69 (100.0)	

Variable	Successful Adjustment		Unsuccessful Adjustment	
	N	%	N	%

Criminal History

1. Age at First Arrest

12 and Under	38	(14.5)	7	(10.3)
13 - 16	97	(37.0)	29	(42.6)
17 - 20	83	(32.8)	22	(33.8)
21 and Over	41	(15.6)	9	(13.3)

2. Number of Prior Arrests

None	15	(5.7)	1	(1.5)
1 - 4	67	(25.6)	17	(24.6)
5 - 9	80	(30.5)	22	(31.9)
10 - 14	16	(7.6)	11	(20.3)
15 - 19	36	(13.7)	8	(11.6)
20 or More	18	(6.9)	7	(10.1)

3. Number of Drunkenness Arrests

None	147	(56.1)	38	(55.1)
1	42	(16.0)	8	(11.6)
2 or More	73	(27.9)	23	(33.3)

4. Prior Incarcerations

State or Federal	100	(38.2)	36	(52.2)
House of Correction only	76	(29.0)	17	(24.6)
Juvenile only	10	(3.8)	2	(2.9)
None	76	(29.0)	14	(20.3)

61.8

TOTAL	262	(100.0)	69	(100.0)
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VariableSuccessful AdjustmentUnsuccessful AdjustmentN%N%Present Incarceration1. Type of Offense

Vs. person:

Robbery	212	(12.7)	22	(31.8)
Manslaughter (Murder 2nd)	24	(05.3)	2	(8.7)
Assault	10	(03.8)	6	(8.7)
Extortion	1	(00.4)	0	(0.0)
Abortion	0	(00.0)	1	(1.5)
Subtotal	137	(52.2)	35	(50.7)

Vs. property:

Burglary	87	(33.2)	29	(42.0)
Larceny	15	(05.7)	4	(5.8)
Common & Notorious Thief	13	(04.9)	1	(1.5)
Forging & Uttering	5	(02.0)	0	(0.0)
Operating m/v w/o authority	5	(02.0)	0	(0.0)

TOTAL

262 (100.0)

69 (100.0)

2. Time at Camp

Less than 5 months	37	(14.1)	36	(52.2)
5 - 7 months	83	(31.7)	17	(24.6)
8 - 10 months	57	(21.8)	7	(10.1)
11 - 13 months	33	(12.6)	6	(8.7)
14 - 16 months	21	(8.0)	0	(0.0)
17 months or longer	31	(11.8)	3	(4.4)

3. Total Time Incarcerated

Less than 12 months	81	(30.9)	7	(10.1)
12-- 16 months	67	(25.6)	6	(8.7)
17 - 21 months	26	(9.9)	6	(8.7)
22 - 26 months	32	(12.2)	13	(18.8)
27 months or longer	56	(21.4)	37	(53.7)

4. Type of Release

Parole	216	(93.9)	51	(73.9)
Discharge	16	(6.1)	18	(26.1)

TOTAL

262 (100.0)

69 (100.0)