MODERATING PROBATION AND
PAROLE OFFICER ATTITUDES
TO ACHIEVE DESIRED OUTCOMES

BETSY FULTON
AMY STICHMAN
LAWRENCE TRAVIS
EDWARD LATESSA
University of Cincinnati

Much has been written about officer role orientations in probation and parole and about principles of effective correctional intervention, but little research adequately reflects the importance of linking these two discussions. The present study on officer attitudes provides a first step toward making this link. An officer attitude survey was conducted with both regular and intensive supervision officers at two different program sites. Each site recently implemented a prototypical model of intensive supervision that encourages a balanced approach to supervision and is based on principles of effective correctional intervention. Prior to implementation, the intensive supervision officers at each site participated in comprehensive training and development activities. The primary purpose of this research was to learn the extent to which attitudes of the intensive supervision officers differ from those of regular supervision officers—who did not participate in the training and development activities—in terms of their focus and style of supervision. The results suggest that a comprehensive approach to training and development can effectively instill in officers the supervision attitudes that are most conducive to promoting offender change.

INTRODUCTION

For decades, academicians have investigated probation and parole officers’ role preferences and attitudes toward their jobs. Often, this research focuses on role orientations in terms of the seemingly inherent conflict between treatment and control. According to Clear and Latessa (1993), role conflict in probation and parole arises out of a chasm between two of the primary functions of probation and parole officers: to enforce the law and to help the offender. Numerous models have been developed to describe differ-

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ent role orientations and conflict in probation and parole (see Glaser, 1964; Klockars, 1972; Ohlin, Piven, & Pappensfort, 1956; O'Leary & Duffee, 1971; Rowan, 1956). Most often, this is described in terms of the competing concerns for the community and the offender, the incompatibility of control tasks and assistance tasks, and the differing role conceptions of "law enforcer" and "social worker."

Role orientations have been studied extensively through the use of attitude questionnaires and field research, with mixed results regarding the extent to which any conflict exists. Studt (1978) found that some officers were more comfortable using one extreme version of a role, whereas other officers who were less disturbed by the inherent conceptual conflicts performed both roles. Studies have shown that some officers develop an adaptive role in which the officers vacillate from role to role according to the client's behavior and criminal career (Hardyman, 1988; McCleary, 1978). Research conducted by Erwin and Bennett (1987) and Clear and Latessa (1993) demonstrates that, despite clear role preferences, officers are able to perform both tasks of assistance and control as the chain of events in supervision requires.

Research on the sources of an officer's individual role preference is limited. Sluder and Reddington (1993) examined the influence of various demographic factors on role preferences and found that male probation officers and officers working in larger agencies were more likely than female officers or officers working in smaller agencies to support law enforcement and control strategies. In a study of the attitudes and behaviors of intensive supervision program (ISP) officers in Georgia and Ohio, Clear and Latessa (1993) found that the organizational philosophy plays an important role in determining officers' attitudes and task preferences. Specifically, they found that an organizational philosophy of treatment is more instrumental in producing support tasks than is the officer's personal preference, and further, that an organizational statement regarding the importance of rehabilitation objectives may be the only way to ensure the performance of assistance tasks.

Research on how attitudes and role preferences translate into correctional practice has also been neglected. Clear and O'Leary (1983) found that attitudes of authority and assistance were significantly related to both the type and the number of supervision objectives that officers set for clients. Research by Katz (1982) and Duffee (1975) shows that attitudes may be related to certain behaviors, particularly an officer's decision to revoke. Dembo's (1972) findings supported this link—officers with a low reintegrative score, representing a greater punishment orientation, were more likely to take formal action on violations and to recommend return to prison. Dembo concluded that officer orientations affect job behavior and case outcomes.
Several authors have addressed potential consequences of role conflict in probation and parole. Whitehead and Lindquist’s (1985) study of factors contributing to job stress and burnout revealed that 63% of the officers studied experienced role conflict, and that this role conflict contributed to greater job burnout and the impersonal treatment of offenders. Blumberg (1974) argued that role conflict results in an uncertain professional status and a “civil service malaise” among probation officers. Proposals suggested to resolve this perceived role conflict among probation and parole officers typically involve the abdication of the social work and assistance role (Barkdull 1976; McCleary, 1978). However, Whitehead (1989) suggested that such a narrow definition of the probation and parole professional, while reducing role conflict, would lead to another source of job stress—boredom and lack of variety.

One important aspect of officer orientations in probation and parole that is conspicuously missing from the literature is a discussion regarding the influence of various orientations on recidivism. What attitudes and behaviors of officers are most likely to contribute to the achievement of public safety objectives? This study of officer attitudes provides a first step toward linking these two discussions and research agendas. Results will be reported from an officer attitude survey conducted with both regular and intensive supervision officers at two different program sites. The purpose of this research is to examine whether the attitudes of ISP officers, who have received extensive training on the principles of effective intervention, are different from the attitudes of regular officers, who have not received this training. The hypothesis is that the attitudes of ISP officers will reflect a stronger focus on the provision of services, the importance of quality interpersonal relationships with offenders, and strategies that promote offender change. Before reporting the results of this study, it is important to review past research and recent events that prompted the current research. First, two research agendas will be examined: research on traditional surveillance and control-oriented ISPs and research on principles of effective intervention. Next, a prototypical model of an ISP will be described. This model incorporates lessons learned from both bodies of research, including lessons related to officer attitudes and behaviors. Last, the methodology and results of the officer attitude survey will be reported.

INTENSIVE SUPERVISION RESEARCH

Most ISP policies either explicitly or implicitly encourage authoritative supervision strategies. Process evaluations of ISP revealed that they have
achieved intensive levels of supervision as defined by increased surveillance-oriented activities such as supervision contacts and drug tests (Baird & Wagner 1990; Erwin, 1987; Latessa, 1987; Pearson, 1987; Petersilia & Turner, 1993). The results do not reveal a similar intensity in the level of services and interventions provided to ISP offenders. RAND found that less than 50% of the ISP offenders participated in some counseling during the follow-up period and that slightly more than 50% of the ISP offenders were employed. Harris (1987) noted that this emphasis on control has caused probation and parole agents to “become the avowed enemies of their charges, operating . . . to incarcerate and, as . . . urine takers, money collectors, compliance monitors, electronic surveillance gadget readers, and law enforcers” (p. 21).

Research on intensive supervision programs suggests that this surveillance-oriented approach is not effective in reducing recidivism. Many ISP evaluations have revealed an increase in technical violations for ISP offenders as compared to offenders placed in other sentencing options, but no significant differences in the new offense rate (Erwin, 1987; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993; Wagner & Baird, 1993). The average recidivism rate across 12 sites studied by RAND, as measured by new arrests, was 37% (as compared to 33% for the control groups; Petersilia & Turner, 1993).

Several evaluations revealed a relationship between program participation and reduced recidivism rates. Offenders in a Massachusetts ISP who showed initial improvement in substance abuse and employment had lower rates of recidivism (Byrne & Kelly, 1989). Byrne and Kelly (1989) argued for “crime control through treatment” based on the indirect effect the ISP had on recidivism rates through a direct effect on the intermediate variable of offender change. A program evaluation of an electronic monitoring program combined with intensive drug and alcohol treatment in Clackamas County, Oregon, revealed similar results. Although there were no overall differences in recidivism rates between the experimental group and offenders placed on electronic monitoring without the treatment component, there were significantly lower recidivism rates for offenders who successfully completed the intensive drug and alcohol treatment program (Jolin & Stipak, 1992). The RAND research also indicates a relationship between program participation and recidivism reduction. Supplementary data analyses conducted on the California and Texas sites revealed “that higher levels of program participation were associated with a 10-20 percent reduction in recidivism” (Petersilia & Turner, 1993, p. 8). As noted by Petersilia and Turner (1993), these results must be interpreted with caution: Lower recidivism rates for offenders participating in treatment may be due to a self-selection process whereby those offenders who participated in treatment were most likely to succeed anyway.
Finally, an evaluation of an ISP operated by the New Jersey Board of Paroles is particularly instructive concerning a link between officer attitudes and roles and ISP outcomes (Paparozzi, n.d.). As further evidence of a relationship between treatment and recidivism reduction, Paparozzi found that ISP subjects received twice as many treatment referrals as a matched group of offenders on traditional parole supervision and had a 20% lower recidivism rate. Paparozzi also examined the relationship between officer attitudes and roles and parole outcomes. Based on a survey of officer attitudes, Paparozzi (n.d.) categorized the ISP officers as social work officers, balanced approach officers, and law enforcement officers. Recidivism data for each category revealed that the social work officers had significantly higher rates of new arrests and lower rates of technical violations, the law enforcement officers had significantly higher rates of technical violations and lower rates of new arrests, and the balanced approach officers had lower rates of both technical violations and new arrests. Paparozzi concluded that a balanced approach to supervision that recognizes the full range of probation and parole activities—intervention, surveillance, and enforcement—will help meet both the short-term objectives of risk control and the long-term objectives of behavioral change and reduced recidivism.

**PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION**

Until recently, little evidence has existed to suggest which roles and strategies are most effective in reducing recidivism. The principles of effective intervention, identified through recent meta-analyses of correctional intervention programs, are suggestive of officer attitudes and behaviors that contribute to a reduction in recidivism (Andrews et al., 1990; Gendreau & Andrews, 1990; Gendreau & Ross, 1987). Gendreau (1994) and Gendreau and Goggin (1997) summarized the principles of effective intervention as follows:

1. Intensive services, behavioral in nature, are provided to higher risk offenders.
2. The program is highly structured, and contingencies are enforced in a firm but fair way: Staff design, maintain, and enforce contingencies, internal controls are established to detect possible antisocial activities, and program activities disrupt the criminal network and prevent negative peers from taking over the program.
3. Positive reinforcers outnumber punishers by at least four to one.
4. Offender responsivity to different styles and modes of service is considered: Treatment approaches are matched to the learning style or personality of the offender, the personality characteristics and relationship styles of the officer are matched with those of the offender, and officers are matched with the program.

5. Officers relate to offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways and are trained and supervised adequately.

6. Officers monitor offender change on intermediate targets of treatment.

7. Relapse prevention is employed in the community to monitor and anticipate problem situations, and to train offenders to rehearse alternative behavior.

8. High levels of advocacy and brokerage occur.

These principles have several implications for officer roles, styles, and behaviors. First, a review of the principles suggests that the primary goal of effective correctional interventions is offender change rather than merely constraining or controlling offender behavior. Second, the principles demonstrate that both structure and support are necessary elements within effective offender intervention programs. Third, the principles suggest that the use of positive reinforcement is a more potent mechanism of behavioral change. Fourth, the principles encourage an advocacy role among program personnel. These principles contradict many community corrections practices and models of supervision in which the primary focus is offender control in the community. They recognize the need for an integration of control and support tasks in promoting offender change. The focus on positive reinforcement and advocacy stands in stark contrast to the punitive approach currently operating in many community corrections programs.

Andrews (1979) expanded on these principles by identifying several characteristics of effective change agents. He suggested that effective change agents are able to develop a quality interpersonal relationship with the probationer or parolee. Such relationships are characterized by warmth, genuineness, and flexibility. Effective change agents are able to model behavior in concrete and vivid ways. Furthermore, they are a source of not simply punishment but of reinforcement. Finally, an effective change agent engages in disapproval with strong, emphatic statements of disagreement about an offender’s negative attitudes and behaviors. Again, such characteristics are in sharp contrast to current community corrections practices that are more oriented toward “people processing than people changing” (Shichor, 1978, p. 37).
Programs that have followed the principles of effective intervention have demonstrated, on average, a 50% reduction in recidivism (Andrews et al., 1990; Gendreau & Andrews, 1990). Agencies across the country are beginning to recognize these principles and incorporate them into agency operations. Further evaluation is needed that provides additional support for these principles within a community corrections setting and leads to an investment in effective practices that hold despite ideological shifts.

A PROTOTYPICAL MODEL OF AN ISP

In response to the research on ISPs and the principles of effective intervention, and with the support of funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the American Probation and Parole Association developed a prototypical model of intensive supervision. The conceptual framework for this model emphasizes the goal of offender change and includes a focus on the provision of intensive services and a balanced approach to supervision (Fulton, Stone, & Gendreau, 1994). Critical elements include a high-risk/need target population identified through the use of a reliable risk/need instrument, small caseloads, frequent “substantive” contact, systematic case review, a system of positive reinforcement, a system of control and accountability, an available range of correctional interventions that meet certain principles of effectiveness, community involvement, ISP officers serving as facilitators and advocates, an objectives-based management system, and a sound means of program evaluation.

Full implementation of the prototypical ISP requires officers to vary their activities from those currently conducted in surveillance-oriented ISPs. Although surveillance activities continue to be an important element of the prototypical ISP, they are more purposeful—instead of merely “watching and catching” offenders, surveillance is designed to monitor offenders’ social milieu and their progress in rehabilitative programming. Rather than conducting home visits and other fieldwork to meet prescribed standards of supervision, officers engage in frequent substantive contact with offenders aimed at assistance and problem resolution. Furthermore, in contrast to the sole focus on negative consequences for noncompliant behavior, officers also use positive reinforcement to promote behavioral change. In the prototypical model of intensive supervision, officers serve as advocates for offenders in the community by engaging in resource development and facilitating offender reintroduction. They use their resources and skills to encourage prosocial behavior and to reduce offender risk. As implied in the balanced approach to
supervision, their arsenal of techniques includes a range of sanctions to control offenders in the community and to hold them accountable for their behaviors; if necessary, they remove offenders from the community in the interest of public protection.

The key to a balanced approach is the sequence in which each component is applied. Current ISP practices center on surveillance and enforcement activities and occasionally interject treatment and services. A more proactive approach is the identification of, and intervention with, offender needs as a means of promoting behavioral change. If intervention is successful, as ascertained through purposeful surveillance and monitoring, the application of expensive enforcement strategies becomes unnecessary.

The integrity of the prototypical model of intensive supervision depends on a complete ideological and behavioral shift from surveillance-oriented ISPs. The next section of this article provides the methodology and results of an officer attitude survey conducted to determine the extent to which the necessary attitudinal shift is possible.

THE PRESENT STUDY

This study was designed to determine the extent to which ISP officers in two sites have adopted the balanced approach to supervision and the focus on the provision of intensive services set forth in the prototypical model of an ISP. An officer attitude survey was used to compare the attitudes of intensive supervision officers who participated in comprehensive training and development activities during the year prior to program implementation to the attitudes of regular supervision officers who did not participate in such activities.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This officer attitude survey is part of an ISP evaluation sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). Two agencies were selected to participate in this study, which incorporates an experimental design and a variable follow-up period of 5 to 15 months. Each site was selected because of its successful implementation of the prototypical ISP.

ISP officers at each site participated in intensive training on the principles of effective intervention, objectives-based case management, and risk/need assessment. ISP officers from both agencies participated in work groups in which the purpose was to develop program components, policies, and procedures that reflected the major tenets of the prototypical ISP.
DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

As stated, both agencies implemented the prototypical model of intensive supervision, resulting in programs that were very similar in terms of their focus and primary program components. There are, however, several program variations and agency differences that deserve mentioning.

Northeastern Agency

The northeastern agency is a large urban probation department under the direction of the states’ administrative office of the court. This agency shifted to the prototypical model of the ISP from an existing intensive supervision drug unit with a zero-tolerance philosophy. Officers involved in the earlier surveillance-oriented intensive supervision drug unit are now involved in the prototypical model of the ISP. Seven ISP officers are each responsible for a caseload of 25 high-risk offenders. They operate out of a central office, with much of their time spent in teams of two visiting offenders in their homes or places of employment. They have adopted a brokerage model of supervision whereby the officer is responsible for assessing the offender’s needs and referring the offender to outside services for treatment. The officers have established collaborative relationships with local drug and alcohol treatment agencies and a local employment placement program.

The ISP officers work in isolation from the 38 regular supervision officers within the department. Interviews with unit supervisors revealed a distinct division between the two units. The additional treatment resources, surveillance equipment, and salary paid to ISP officers is a source of resentment for regular supervision officers, each of whom is responsible for a caseload of 200 clients. Interviews with supervisors and administrators revealed that the ISP officers have struggled with the ideological shift from the surveillance-oriented ISP to the prototypical ISP, but that the additional salary, flexible schedule, and periodic training serve as motivation.

Midwestern Agency

The midwestern agency is a rural agency responsible for the supervision of probationers and parolees within five counties, and is administered jointly by the state department of corrections and the local judiciary. Unlike the northeastern agency, this agency developed a prototypical model of an ISP where no ISP existed previously. Experienced probation and parole officers were selected to serve as ISP officers. Four ISP officers are each responsible for a caseload of 20 high-risk offenders. As in the case of the northeastern
agency, the ISP officers in this agency refer offenders to outside services for treatment. However, many services, including a cognitive skills development program, a batterers’ group, and Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (TASC), are offered in-house. The ISP officers are trained facilitators for the cognitive groups.

One ISP officer is assigned to each of the four offices in the judicial district, and, as such, officers work closely with the regular supervision officers and the TASCliaison at each site. In contrast to the resentment found in the northeastern agency, the atmosphere within the midwestern agency is one of support and concern for ISP officers, who are believed to be overburdened with these high-risk caseloads and intensive program requirements.

THE ATTITUDE SURVEY

The officer attitude survey consists of 33 semantic differentials designed to measure officers’ attitudes. Semantic differentials are well suited to attitude measurement (Heise, 1971; Mueller, 1986). They are designed to measure subjects’ reactions to pairs of words and concepts that are opposite in meaning (Heise, 1971). In this case, pairs of terms (e.g., control-assistance, director-adviser, enforcing-counseling, coercion-negotiation) were placed at opposite ends of a 6-point scale. The items were designed to measure officer attitudes about the goals of supervision, officer roles, and supervision strategies. More specifically, the survey was designed to ascertain the extent to which officers have adopted a balanced approach to supervision as measured by their rating of terms associated with control or assistance tasks and social worker versus law enforcer roles, and to measure the extent to which they buy in to strategies aimed at promoting long-term behavioral change versus strategies aimed at short-term offender control.

The use of semantic differentials differs from previous officer attitude surveys that generally consist of items measuring attitudes toward control and assistance separately (Clear & Latessa, 1993; Harris, Clear, & Baird, 1989; Sluder, Shearer, & Potts, 1991). In reality, these decisions regarding officer goals and strategies are rarely made in isolation of one another. Therefore, semantic differentials were used to more accurately reflect the difficult choices faced by officers in the daily supervision of offenders.

Semantic differentials are easy to construct and administer and are highly reliable (Mueller, 1986). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the complete officer attitude survey was .92. The drawback to the semantic differential lies in its transparency—that is, it is fairly simple for respondents to identify what is being measured (Mueller, 1986). The direction of the scales in the officer attitude survey were randomly altered to avoid response sets.
TABLE 1: The Subjective Role Scale

1. As a probation/parole officer, your primary obligation is to
   Rehabilitate the offender 1 2 3 4 5 6 Enforce supervisory conditions

2. Your primary concern as a probation/parole officer is to
   Monitor offender compliance 1 2 3 4 5 6 Rehabilitate the offender

3. Which best describes your role as a probation officer
   Police officer 1 2 3 4 5 6 Social worker

4. Your most appropriate role with offenders is as
   Advocate 1 2 3 4 5 6 Supervisor

5. The most essential part of a probation/parole officer’s job is
   Counseling 1 2 3 4 5 6 Enforcing

6. Your primary function as an officer is
   Enforcement 1 2 3 4 5 6 Intervention

7. Your function as a probation/parole officer most closely approximates
   Law enforcement 1 2 3 4 5 6 Social work

Through factor analysis, two scales—or factors—were identified as reliable measurements of the underlying concepts. The first factor, the Subjective Role Scale, is a seven-item scale with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .88 (Table 1). The second factor, the Strategy Scale, is a four-item scale with an alpha coefficient of .78 (Table 2). Although similarities exist between these two factors, the items in the Subjective Role Scale ask officers to rate what they do (i.e., the functions, roles, and goals of probation/parole officers), and the items in the Strategy Scale ask officers to evaluate how they do it (i.e., perform these functions).

An officer’s score could range from 7 to 42 on the Subjective Role Scale and from 4 to 24 on the Strategy Scale. Lower scores reflect a stronger focus on the provision of service, the importance of rehabilitation, and strategies that promote offender change according to the principles of effective intervention. Conversely, higher scores reflect emphasis on the roles and strategies associated with enforcement and control. Scores approximating the true mean on both scales (24.5 on the Subjective Role Scale and 14 on the Strategy Scale) would be indicative of a balanced approach to supervision—that is, both assistance and control roles and strategies are viewed as important to offender supervision.

STUDY PROCEDURES

The names and addresses of all regular and intensive supervision officers at each site were obtained from agency administrators. Seventy regular supervision officers (38 from the northeastern site and 32 from the midwest-
TABLE 2: The Strategy Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The most important aspect of your job is</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Surveillance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. The most important part of your job is</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The most effective way to change behavior is through</td>
<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Punitive sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Case supervision should be designed to</td>
<td>Regulate behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Change behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ern site) and 11 ISP officers (7 from the northeastern site and 4 from the midwestern site) were asked to participate in the survey. Each officer was sent an officer attitude survey and a personalized letter outlining the purpose of the survey and instructions for its completion. Participants were asked to return the survey directly to the researchers in an enclosed, self-addressed return envelope. The surveys were coded to enable the researchers to identify respondents for future research in which officers will be matched with case outcomes. In addition to the attitudinal items, officers were asked to provide information on their sex, age, level of education, and number of years as a probation or parole officer.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY SUBJECTS

A total of 72 officers (89%) completed the survey, representing 11 ISP officers and 61 regular supervision officers. Comparison of officer characteristics across and within sites shows very few differences in terms of sex, education, age, and number of years as a probation or parole officer. A comparison of regular supervision officers and ISP officers in both sites revealed that regular officers averaged 42 years of age, with 11.8 years of experience in probation, whereas ISP officers averaged 37 years of age, with 8.1 years of experience in probation. The majority in both groups was male (62.5%) and possessed at least a bachelor’s degree.

ANALYSIS

The statistical analysis was designed to determine the degree to which differences in officer attitudes existed between the two sites, between ISP officers and regular supervision officers in both sites, and between ISP and regular supervision officers within each site. t-tests were computed on both attitude scales (i.e., the Subjective Role Scale and the Strategy Scale) and officer background variables. Multiple regression was used to determine
TABLE 3: t-Tests for Differences in Attitude by Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>Significance of t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Role Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular (0)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26.15</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular (0)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>12.69</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

which factors among program site, position (ISP or regular officer), sex, age, and number of years as an officer predicted officer attitudes. Educational level was excluded from the analysis because of minimal variation in the sample.

A check for multicollinearity in the independent variables revealed that none of the variables approached collinearity. Because of the small number of cases, mean values in the scales were substituted for missing values (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

RESULTS

No significant differences in background variables were found between program site or position. Furthermore, no significant differences in attitudes were revealed across program sites. The t-test for differences in attitudes between ISP (n = 11) and regular supervision officers (n = 61) revealed significant differences in both the Subjective Role Scale and the Strategy Scale (Table 3). The mean scores of ISP officers were significantly lower than those of regular supervision officers on both scales. Theoretically, the ISP officers with the balanced approach should have scored closer to the true mean of the scale than the regular officers. It appears, however, that on both scales, the regular officers scored closer to the mean than the ISP officers. The scores for ISP officers represented a much stronger focus on treatment and services.

Multiple regressions revealed that the independent variables of gender, age, program site, years as an officer, and position explained 14.4% of the variation in the Subjective Role Scale and 19.1% of the variation in the Strategy Scale (Table 4). Each regression model was significant at the .05 level (Subjective Role Scale: F = 3.12; Strategy Scale: F = 3.98). In both models, the only significant relationships were between position and the attitude scale, revealing that position was a predictor of attitudes. ISP officers scored lower on both scales than regular officers, indicating that they have a stronger treatment orientation.
TABLE 4: Regression Model for Predicting Attitudes (Subjective Role Scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (0 = male, 1 = female)</td>
<td>-.540</td>
<td>1.432</td>
<td>-.045</td>
<td>.7087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position (0 = regular, 1 = ISP)</td>
<td>-.7.41</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>-.474</td>
<td>.0003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site (0 = northeastern agency, 1 = midwestern agency)</td>
<td>-.1.060</td>
<td>1.434</td>
<td>-.090</td>
<td>.4630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time as probation officer</td>
<td>-.0017</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>.8639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(range = 4 months-312 months, mean = 134 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (range = 29 years-58 years, mean = 41 years)</td>
<td>-.1.36</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>-.170</td>
<td>.2501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F = 3.12$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of $F = .0146$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$R^2 = .212$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2 = .144$</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 5: Regression Model for Predicting Attitudes (Strategy Scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (0 = male, 1 = female)</td>
<td>-.1.64</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>-.028</td>
<td>.8133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position (0 = regular, 1 = ISP)</td>
<td>-.3.69</td>
<td>.930</td>
<td>-.475</td>
<td>.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site (0 = northeastern agency, 1 = midwestern agency)</td>
<td>-.1.00</td>
<td>.692</td>
<td>-.171</td>
<td>.1532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time as probation officer</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>-.082</td>
<td>.5394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(range = 4 months-312 months, mean = 134 months)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age (range = 29 years-58 years, mean = 41 years)</td>
<td>.0.49</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>.3878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F = 3.975$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significance of $F = .0036$</td>
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<tr>
<td>$R^2 = .255$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2 = .191$</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The overall findings support the research hypothesis regarding predicted differences between the attitudes of ISP officers who have participated in comprehensive training and development activities on the principles of effective intervention and the prototypical model of intensive supervision and the attitudes of regular supervision officers who have not participated in these activities. Attitudinal scores of ISP officers suggest a much stronger focus on the rehabilitative function of probation and parole and on strategies for promoting behavioral change than regular supervision officers. This finding is particularly interesting considering that ISPs are generally more surveillance and control oriented than are regular supervision programs.
The findings regarding no significant relationships between an officer’s attitude and an officer’s gender, years as a probation officer, and program site were somewhat surprising given past research finding a relationship between these variables (Dembo, 1972; Sluder & Reddington, 1993). The fact that no significant relationships between officer background variables and officer attitudes were found may be indicative of the primary limitation of this study—the small sample size. The inclusion of only 64 officers limits variation and conclusive findings. However, because significant relationships are difficult to obtain with small samples, these findings may be conservative estimates of the true differences between the attitudes of officers who have participated in comprehensive training and development activities on the principles of effective intervention and the prototypical model of intensive supervision and the attitudes of those who have not participated in these activities.

Other limitations of this study include a possible treatment effect and the absence of a pretest. The findings may be more of a reflection of what ISP officers view as “desirable” or “correct” responses based on their exposure to the principles of effective intervention and the prototypical ISP than their true attitudes toward offender supervision. A pretest of officer attitudes would have allowed for the direct measurement of changes in attitudes following participation in training and development activities associated with the implementation of the prototypical ISP. Without a pretest, the extent to which the attitudes of ISP officers actually changed cannot be determined. Nor can it be assumed that any changes in attitudes were the result of the training. The only conclusions that can be drawn is that the attitudes of ISP officers differ from the attitudes of regular officers in both sites and that the attitudes of ISP officers are similar across sites. In the case of the midwestern agency, it could be that officers were selected for ISP because their role preferences and treatment orientation supported the prototypical model, and that this is what accounts for the differences in attitudes between them and regular officers. In the northeastern agency, the stronger treatment orientation found among ISP officers is not so easily explained away. As stated previously, this agency was moving from a zero-tolerance intensive drug unit to the prototypical model with the same officers participating in both models. One would assume that the strong treatment orientation found among ISP officers represents an ideological shift from the earlier model. Without a pretest, however, this cannot be determined with certainty. This latter scenario, however, lends some credence to the idea that the strong treatment orientations found among ISP officers can be attributed, in part, to their participation in comprehensive training and development activities.
The next logical step toward studying the impact of training and development activities is to examine behavioral differences between these two groups of officers. Behavioral differences in the predicted direction would lend support to the results of the present study and reiterate the importance of officer training and development. Furthermore, correspondence between officer attitudes and actual officer behaviors will lend more credibility and integrity to the prototypical ISP. That is, we can be more confident that ISP officers are focusing on the provision of intensive services and strategies aimed at promoting long-term behavioral change in offenders.

As part of the NIJ-sponsored ISP evaluation described earlier, the scores of both regular and IPS officers on these two attitude surveys will be linked with actual case outcomes. This research will test whether these behaviors and strategies contribute to lower rates of recidivism than have been found in surveillance-oriented ISPs. The stronger than anticipated treatment orientation among ISP officers may result in a different set of problems for ISP. Like Paparozzi’s (n.d.) study on a New Jersey ISP, this study may find that a strong treatment or social work orientation contributes to lower rates of technical violations but higher rates of arrests for new offenses. Better results for offenders who have been randomly assigned to regular officers, whose scores on the attitude survey represent more of a balanced approach, will attest to the important role of officer attitudes and styles of supervision in case outcomes. Whatever the findings, the examination of the relationship between officer attitudes and case outcomes will provide invaluable, policy-oriented information to community corrections agencies.

Aside from possible implications for ISP development, the results of this study have potential implications for the hiring and training of probation and parole officers. A parsimonious officer attitude scale such as the scale used in this study would be useful in measuring attitudes toward supervision during the hiring process, particularly if certain attitudes prove to be associated with improved case outcomes. Additionally, if officer attitudes can be changed through carefully planned training and development activities, there is hope for agencies that have invested in hiring and training practices supportive of the deterrence-based and control-oriented programs so popular throughout the past decade. Agencies can build on the skills and experience of current officers by engaging them in training and development activities designed to foster attitudes and behaviors conducive to the achievement of long-term behavioral change in offenders and, ultimately, public safety objectives.
REFERENCES


