

INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY: A THEORY OF
AGING IN PRISON

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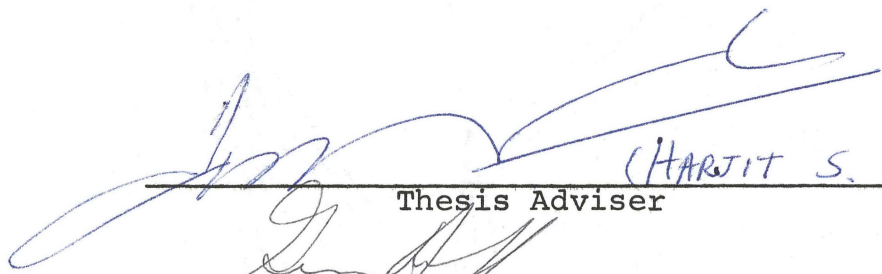
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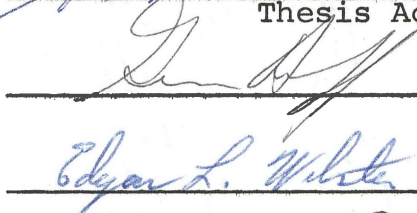


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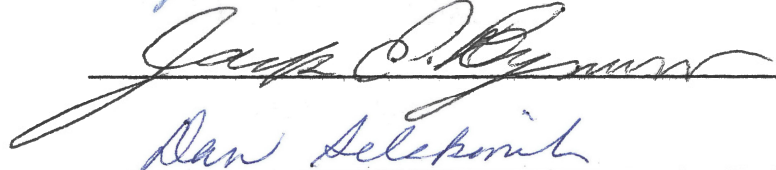
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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

A significant proportion of the inmate population of many correctional institutions is elderly or beyond middle age. Baier (1961), Pollak (1941), and Schroder (1936) have stressed that the older prisoner is a unique category possessing special criminal and aging characteristics. Some committed as adults for long terms have simply grown old in prison. Others have long histories of crime and a sequential career of institutional commitment. Yet others committed offenses relatively late in life and were sentenced to a correctional institution as an older person. In all instances, the aging offender often represents a special population of inmates in terms of criminal pattern, problems of individual adjustment to institutional life and problems of family relationships posing special difficulties to the institution in regard to custody, medical care, rehabilitation, and eventual community reintegration (McWhorter, 1976).

Recent statistics show that one out of every five persons in the nation is an older arrestee of age forty or over. The U.S. Census of Population (1970) also reported a steady

increase in the number of older inmates. Moreover, it has been projected that these numbers will continue to increase as the elderly population grows. For example, the following table provides a comparative analysis of Uniform Crime Reports based on a five-year interval (1968-1973). Among the seven crimes included in the crime index, substantial percentage increases were noted in six for the total population, with five of the categories for the older group exceeding the increase for the total population.

TABLE I
PERCENTAGE INCREASES IN ARRESTS GERONTOS
COMPARED TO TOTAL POPULATION

Uniform Crime Reports
1968-1973

	Total Population % of Increase	Geront. Group (55 & Over) % of Increase
Violent Crimes		
Homicide	28	11
Forcible Rape	51	125
Robbery	47	97
Aggravated Assault	46	45
Crimes Against Property		
Burglary	23	28
Larceny	39	43
Auto Theft	-6	42

Although these hard statistics fail to provide the total picture of gerontological crime, they do stress the need for a more in-depth investigation of the old prisoner.

In spite of his unique characteristics, problems, and status, the aging offender has been largely neglected by researchers in the field of both penology and gerontology. Previous research has concentrated on the identification of the types of crime that are generally associated with advancing age while the institutional adjustment of the aging offender has been completely ignored. This situation may be attributable to several factors. Pollak (1941:212) has suggested that:

Old criminals offer an ugly picture and it seems as if even scientists do not like to look at it for any considerable amount of time.

The difference in scientific appeal between the criminality of youth and the criminality of old age is the more interesting since the relationship between age and crime is recognized for all groups and not confined to youth alone. Thus, scientific logic would seem to require more research in the criminality of old age than has actually been done. The sad aspect of the old criminal has certainly had something to do with this neglect. Quetelet thought that he could dispose of this problem by pointing with disgust at the moral depravity of old offenders. Somewhat along his line, we find that Bresler tries to justify his study with the purpose of saving the respectability of old age by explaining its criminality as mental sickness. In general, however, the ugliness of a phenomenon does not deter scientific research, and as a matter of fact, statistics furnish a more plausible explanation. They show that crime decreases with advancing years and that no pressure of great numbers urges more thorough investigation. On the other hand, if the thesis of the interrelationship between age and crime is to hold, an investigation of all its implications has to yield results, and with the

tendency of our population to increase in the higher age brackets, a special study of criminality of the aged seems to meet a scientific as well as a practical need.

In addition, it has been suggested that most researchers deem the crimes of youthful offenders as more serious and dangerous for the fabric of society than the crimes committed by old persons (Carlie, 1970). For instance, currently there is an increased emphasis placed upon preventive crime models geared toward the juvenile offender in an attempt to successfully silence crime in its infant stages. Thus, hardly any have paid more than scant attention to the crime of the aged and the unique problems associated with aging in a prison environment.

Purpose

In response to this void, the purpose of this study is to investigate the unique problems associated with aging in a prison environment. More specifically, in an attempt to better determine the impact of institutionalization among older prisoners, an examination will be made regarding career crime patterns for the purpose of distinguishing any differences between those being first offenders when compared with those classified as recidivistic. This particular comparison will focus on pertinent socio-demographic characteristics as well as an analysis regarding the process of prisonization and its impact on life satisfaction, role displacement, and reference group relationships.

Another principal intent of this investigation is to construct a conceptual model of aging in prison while crystallizing some of the relationships between the fields of gerontology and penology. In this quest an attempt will be to develop a tentative framework which includes the development of the concept of "institutional dependency" as a possible alternative for older prisoners in the final stages of the life cycle.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF RELEVANT THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Penology

One of the most serious attempts to understand the process of socialization in prison has been provided by Donald Clemmer in his work of The Prison Community (1958). Clemmer described the culture and social organization of the prison and coined the concept of "prisonization" as a summarizing concept revealing the consequences of exposure to inmate society. He formally defined prisonization as "the taking on, in greater or lesser degree, of the folkways, mores, customs and general culture of the penitentiary." Clemmer saw prisonization as a specific illustration of more general processes of assimilation occurring wherever persons are introduced to an unfamiliar culture. He believed that every man is subject to certain influences which he referred to as the "universal factors" of prisonization. These included the acceptance of an inferior role, accumulation of facts concerning the organization of the prison, the adoption of local language, the recognition that nothing is owed to the environment for the supplying of needs, etc. And while he

felt that no inmate could remain completely "unprisonized," he devoted a good deal of attention to variables that he thought probably influenced both the speed and the degree of prisonization. For Clemmer (1958:311) prisonization would be higher for:

- (1) A sentence of many years, thus a long subjection to the universal factors of prisonization.
- (2) A somewhat unstable personality made unstable by an inadequacy of "socialized" relations before commitment.
- (3) A dearth of positive relations with persons outside the walls.
- (4) A blind, or almost blind, acceptance of the dogmas and mores of the primary group and the general penal population.
- (5) A readiness and a capacity for integration into a prison primary group.
- (6) A chance placement with other persons of a similar orientation.

In view of the above, the feature that Clemmer thought was most important in determining the degree of prisonization was simply the degree of close interpersonal contact that inmates had with other inmates within the institution.

Although Clemmer's work has made a vital contribution to the understanding of the socialization processes within the prison environment, he has received criticism pointing up several weaknesses. Sykes and Messinger (1960) found the theory of prisonization incomplete because it failed to account for the presence of the inmate culture. For them, the theory is found inadequate because it accounts only for the process of cultural transmission and does not explain why the

culture is there to be transmitted. In this regard, it is criticized for being incomplete rather than false. In addition to this omission, Clemmer also failed to consider other important aspects. For example, although he indicates that age and criminality are important determinants of prisonization, he fails to explicitly integrate these into his schemata. Finally, there seems to be the need for greater clarification of the concept of prisonization before Clemmer's propositions can be adequately tested. Clemmer himself concedes that the "innumerable variables and the methodological difficulties which arise in learning what particular stage of prisonization a man has reached prohibit the use of quantitative methods.

Finally, it should be mentioned that many of Clemmer's ideas about the socialization process in prison were drawn from studies of assimilation of ethnic groups into American life; and since these groups were basically here to stay, the problem of what happens to them as they prepared to return to a former way of life does not arise.

Although Clemmer concentrated on the process of induction into the prison community, he had little to report about changes that might occur as inmates neared the time for release. The theory seems supported when inmates are classified only according to the length of time they have served (Wheeler, 1961). When they are classified into phases of their institutional career, however, the prisonization theory is inadequate as a description of changes over time.

A second and more recent temporal context introduced by Wheeler considers not only length of time served, but also length of time remaining to be served. This adaptive pattern approach is rooted in reference group theory and emphasizes Merton's concept of "anticipatory socialization," or the preparatory responses that frequently precede an actual change in group membership, such as the movement from prison to the broader community.

In Wheeler's (1961) study of a state reformatory, inmates, were divided into three groups:

- (1) Those who had been in only a short time.
- (2) Those who had only a short time remaining to serve.
- (3) Those who were near neither entry nor release.

While Wheeler found a larger percentage of inmates who were strongly opposed to staff norms during the last stages of their confinement than during the first, he found a U-shaped distribution of high conformity responses over the three time periods. The U-shaped pattern of conforming responses was found both for inmates who had developed many friends in the institution and for those who had not. This behavior pattern was supported both for first offenders and for recidivists.

In response to Wheeler's U-shaped, adaptive pattern, Garabedian (1961) found that when aspects of inmate social structure are taken into account, a variety of patterns of response to prison life emerges. Inmates are socialized in varying degrees and rates which indicate a differential

impact of the prison culture on its participants. For Garabedian, the point of heaviest impact varies with the different role types: the early phase being important for dings, the middle period for rights and square Johns, and the late phase for outlaws. Garabedian's findings indicate a variety of patterns that include distinct trends other than the U-shaped or adaptive pattern which purports a "prisonized" and deinstitutionalized process.

Among the many penal studies that have appeared after World War II, Gresham Sykes' case study, *The Society of Captives* (1958), is most influential. Unlike Clemmer, Sykes did not concern himself with how the prisoners take on the deviant subculture (institutionalization) of the institution. His basic concern was why the presumed culture came into existence in the first place. He argued that many of the deprivations associated with imprisonment are extremely painful for the inmate and that, subsequently, an inmate culture arises as a defensive response to the pains of imprisonment. The resulting subculture, he claimed, stresses inmate cohesion against staff and the law-abiding world. Although Sykes concerns himself with the formation of groups among the inmates, like most penologists, no reference to the factors of age is mentioned.

Since Sykes's publication, a variety of works have appeared on the prison as a social system. However, many of these studies following Sykes' were largely concerned with basically the same question--that of the conditions giving

rise to an inmate subculture. Other studies constituting this third phase of sociological research on penal institutions centered around the refinement of earlier theories of inmate subcultures and the different forms these subcultures take. It is unfortunate, however, that these publications did not consider the factor of age in inmate groupings or its influence on institutional adjustment.

Gerontology

Although social gerontology is a relatively new academic discipline, a number of significant theoretical models has emerged. Each of these theories primarily focuses on the concept of successful aging among the aging population in general. Among the most often mentioned theories is the disengagement theory of aging as originally proposed by Cumming and Henry in 1961. This particular theoretical approach views aging as universally characterized by "an inevitable process in which many of the relationships between a person and other members of society are severed, and those remaining are altered" (Cumming and Henry, 1961:101). In this respect, successful aging is perceived as a mutually satisfying withdrawal process between the individual and the society in which the individual is disengaged from his life roles.

The activity model, the polar opposite of the disengagement position, makes the assumption that high morale or successful aging is dependent upon a maintenance of the social

activity patterns of middle age. Implicit in the activity approach is the proposition that retirement or old age brings with it a decreasing number of roles for the older person, which may lead to a reorientation of an attitude and behavior to meet the demands of the new social situation (Cavan et al., 1949). Therefore, the extent to which the individual successfully adapts to his new position may determine the state of his psychological well-being.

A further review of the literature on activity theory also reveals that a number of studies have emphasized the nature of the activity role as a potential influence on the concept of "life satisfaction." For instance, Kutner et al. (1956:103) make the point that "many people require activities in retirement that will be substantial functional substitutes for the responsibilities of gainful employment, family rearing, and homemaking." Although the authors acknowledge the belief that activity and activity programs promote health among the aged, they also state (Kutner et al., 1966:04):

Our contention is that not any activity but only activities that provide status, achievement and recognition can lift morale, and that those are not basically satisfying needs do not contribute to the individual's adjustment.

In addition, Lemon et al., (1972) link activity with role support as an eventual factor regarding life satisfaction. The authors contend that the more intimate and more frequent one's repertoire of activities, the more likely one will experience sufficient role support resulting in a more

positive self-concept. They further argue that an individual's degree of content and pleasure from his life situation is dependent upon a positive self-concept.

In summary, activity theory advocates the fullest possible involvement with others. As an individual relinquishes his societal roles, successful aging demands the reestablishment of new activities, new role identities, and new acquaintances, etc.

The two theories briefly reviewed thus far have been the dominant theoretical themes in the literature of social gerontology. However, inconsistent findings generated by the two theories have led to the development of a number of other models of aging. The first of these models to emerge was proposed by Havighurst (1954) and essentially deals with life satisfaction. Sometimes referred to as personality theory, this perspective focuses more toward the idea of aging as an individual phenomenon. In this sense, adjustment to old age is seen as being a personal matter which is dependent upon the individual's unique personality makeup, his satisfaction with the present situation, and particularly, his past life experiences. For Havighurst, successful aging is conceptualized as successful enactment of specific social roles. As Havighurst points out, the ability to negotiate a change in role status depends on individual "flexibility" coming from earlier life pattern adaptations.

In reflecting on this life satisfaction model, Bultena (1971:7) suggests that although role flexibility is important:

The continuation of a relatively high level of satisfaction into old age is for many a function of two things: (1) cultural orientation that individuals must make the best of their situation, (2) a salient alteration in self-identity with aging in which new reference groups now become operational for the individual.

This may well suggest another aspect of successful aging: that is the degree to which an individual is able to achieve a degree of flexibility, not in terms of roles, but in terms of social relationships. Oliver (1971:4) suggests that researchers' attentions ought to be focused on the social relations of the older person and bases this on the assumption that:

The maintenance and development of social relationships are more primary and more lasting in influence for aging persons than the social roles they may have held in earlier ages.

Stemming from this approach has been the development of still another theoretical model of aging. Recognizing some of the limitations in the dominant theoretical themes in the literature, the concept of reference group has been proposed as a pivotal and theoretical base that integrates, synthesizes, and reorganizes these perspectives (Romeis et al., 1971).

In suggesting the concept of reference groups as an important variable for successful aging, Romeis, Albert, and Acuff believe that neither of these two major theories are capable of dealing with the following questions:

- (1) Why are some older people who are actively and extensively involved with others apparently

well-adjusted? (unexplained by disengagement theory)

- (2) Why are some older people who are actively and extensively involved with others apparently poorly adjusted? (unexplained by activity theory)
- (3) Why are some people who have withdrawn and disengaged from society apparently well-adjusted? (unexplained by activity theory)
- (4) Why are some people who have withdrawn from society apparently poorly adjusted? (unexplained by disengagement theory)

Moreover, regarding the reference group approach, the authors further contend that these questions can be answered by analyzing the older person's reference group behavior. In order to carry out this analysis, they mention the following assumptions (Romeis et al., 1971):

- (1) Reference group is a valid approach in that people are influenced by their relationships with others and that people obtain from others an evaluation of self, as well as standards for their behavior.
- (2) Past, present, and future reference groups do operate.
- (3) A person may participate in positive and negative reference groups.

- (4) A reference group may be any group, real or imaginary.
- (5) A person may have a multiplicity of reference groups.
- (6) Self-image is derived from interaction with others, and the others will be contained within reference groups.
- (7) Reference groups provide the individual with a basis for attitudes, values, and norm function.

Summary

The literature in these two distinct fields of study offer a variety of perspectives within which to view the process of institutional adjustment for the older prisoner. In keeping with the objectives of this exploratory study, an attempt will be made to unite theoretical concepts from both fields where there appear to be common-ground attributes. The concept of reference group seems to be one such area that has emerged within the prisonization theory framework as well as providing a synthesis of activity and disengagement theories in the field of social gerontology. An analysis of significant others for the older prisoner, both inside the prison and outside, seems to be a valid point of departure into this unknown research area.

Perhaps another orientation that might disclose valuable insights into the institutional adjustment of this particular

group is the possible identification with a new prison sub-culture which may serve to replace a substantial loss of outside roles and identity, especially for the older inmate. In this sense, the activity approach would be applied within the confines of the prison community as a possible alternative in adapting to the prison environment. Here the concept of life satisfaction could be utilized as a viable measure of successful aging or social-psychological adjustment to life in general and to the prison community in particular.

CHAPTER III

AGE AND CRIME: A POINT OF DEPARTURE

Introduction

The process of aging has been perceived as being a constant succession of transitory periods. Unfortunately, various gaps exist in our knowledge of what happens during our life stages and, in particular, between adolescence and old age. These are precisely the years during which man fulfills most of his ambitions, assures the continuity of life, or fails badly in his individual and social aspirations and expectations. It is also a period when age itself brings new problems and strange experiences. In particular, many of the aged in our society are frustrated socially, economically, and psychologically and find difficulty in coping with various environmental changes over which they have no control. Due to the enormous problems of aging in a complex society, delinquency in the gerontological population is difficult to determine and even more difficult to evaluate.

In all societies, chronological age is considered to be important because it provides certain clues to the current phase of the individual's life cycle and, in turn, projects certain behavior expectations. More specifically, different

age periods reveal a difference in degree of criminal and quantitative differences in the structure of criminality. It has been suggested that criminality is conditioned by age, with youth and young adulthood being the periods when criminality reaches its peak. As biological maturity is achieved, there is a pronounced decline, and with old age criminality virtually disappears for certain offenses.

Although there is an obvious decline in deviant behavior among the majority of the elderly population, an investigation of criminality in old age is a particularly important factor in developing a descriptive profile of the older prisoner. Moreover, an analysis of the career crime patterns of the older offender will serve as a point of departure for isolating the distinguishing characteristics that might have an impact on eventual institutional adjustment.

Review of Literature

The literature provides a mixture of studies discussing various aspects of the phenomenon of age and crime. One of the first studies of this nature mentioning the old prisoner was recorded by Duncan (1930). In this initial attempt to analyze age and crime relationships, records were studied of those incarcerated in the Texas penitentiary from 1906 to 1924. Duncan concluded that while the crime rate begins to decline after the age of 40 years is reached, advancement in years is not proof that crime will disappear. Although the crime rates of those from ages 50 to 59 were slightly less

than one-third of their predicted share of prison inmates, Duncan reported that rape was found to be a frequently occurring crime among old men.

Another pioneer paper on the older prisoner was produced by Schroeder in 1936. The population in this particular study consisted of 486 criminals, half younger than 40 and half 40 or over, ranging from 15 to 64 years of age. Schroeder observed from this study that, for the most part, persons who commit crime after 40 years of age represent a distinct group. They tend to commit such crimes of violence as murder and sex on the one hand and fraud on the other. In the first two types of crimes, he found the offenders tend to be relatively free from early records of delinquency and crime. In the second group, the criminal behavior tends to be a continuation of a pattern established at an earlier age. Schroeder (1936:15) further concluded that there is:

. . . fairly definite evidence that factors within the individual, perhaps constitutional, determine not only distinctive characteristics of criminals after 40 but also the cessation of criminal activities at about 40 years of age.

Pollak (1941) also published significant work relating to criminality and the aging process. He found that the amount of decrease in old age criminality differs for various types of crime. In order to support this particular supposition, Pollak investigated: (1) the higher incidence of crime (except for robbery and burglary) among those at the end of the 50 to 70 age period compared to those at the beginning of this period and (2) the higher rate for such

crimes as homicide, aggravated assault, sexual offenses, non-violent crimes against property, and violation of liquor laws. He concluded that general descriptions, case studies, and prison statistics have furnished us with the following facts about the criminality of the aged: (1) general decline of the crime rate with advancing years, (2) high incidence of first offenders, (3) relative frequency of certain types of crime, (4) characteristic strains of criminal behavior and specific groups of victims. For Pollak, these facts lead to the conclusion that criminality of the aged has a pattern of its own.

Using comparative statistics, Fox (1946) examined the variables of race, age, and intelligence quotient as they related to respective crimes. Using major headings such as homicide, burglary, and larceny, Fox (1946:50) concluded:

The statistical treatment indicates that some types of criminal behavior are selected by the older group, other types by the younger group, and that significant differences exist between the two.

Fox placed all inmates over 50 years of age in the "older group." He found that older men differed significantly from younger prisoners in their tendency to be drunk and disorderly and to break state securities' laws and to conspire "to obstruct justice or to commit crime." Fox (1946:151) summed up his study with the comments:

The younger men tend to select the cruder methods of stealing. The older men's thefts are involved in business and politics. Crimes of dissipation, such as those involving sex, alcohol, and drugs, appear to be more frequent among the older group.

In a similar manner, Moberg (1953) examined various aspects of age and crime. He found that among the aged criminals there is a high incidence of first offenders, and certain types of crimes tend to predominate, such as drunkenness, sex offenses, embezzlement, fraud, etc., while crimes which involve physical violence or a quick decision are relatively infrequent. Moberg (1957:772) also gives attention to the variations in criminal behavior by age and especially sexual crimes committed in old age.

Most writers dealing with the sexual crimes of old age indicate that underlying organic changes are related to them. Thewlis speaks of sexual recrudescence, which in its paroxysmal form drives the elderly person, unrestrained by reason, to attempt rape, especially rape of children for they are usually available Steckel explains the relatively frequent occurrence of exhibitionism in old age in terms of organic changes in the brain which result in the abolition of certain inhibitions which permit the primitive man to appear. The exhibitionism of old age is to him an evidence of psychic regression after the cessation of previous inhibitions. . . . Henninger believes the increased libidinous drive of many seniles is a final expression of the aging organism in its unconscious hope of leaving dependents on earth, and East says that sexual offenses in aged men are often due to the fact that fantasy and desire have outlived potency. Thus at least three explanations have been offered for the sexual offenses of old age: (1) The continuation of "normal" sex drives but with weakened moral inhibitions. (2) The revival of the sex life. (3) "Instinctive" desires, such as the subconscious hope of leaving descendants

During the Sixties, Adams and Vedder (1961) attempted to examine whether there is a significant social trend in aged persons committing crimes. They observed a phase of "unadjustment" followed by a permanent "maladjustment" in

their population. The authors further reported that the incidence of crimes of violence was twice that for the general population. They attributed this partly to the "conscious or subconscious" realization of physiological impotence. As observed in other studies, there was a slightly higher incidence of conviction for assault and a much higher incidence of conviction for embezzlement, forgery, gambling, and involvement in lotteries. However, Adams and Vedder concluded that there were not significant changes to indicate a broad social trend.

Hays and Wisotsky (1969) also contributed a related study with regard to older men with a history of chronic delinquency. It involved an investigation of offenders chronologically aged beyond 60 years, but whose crimes were committed in various stages of their lives. The sample consisted of 36 males drawn at random from the population of aged parolees in New York State Division of Parole. The authors found that these aged parolees do not appear to be especially influenced by any religious, ethnic, or familial factors. However, the basic loneliness of aged offenders was strongly confirmed in relation to marital status since most had no spouse. Finally, a subsidiary study of parolees indicated those who had committed less than three offenses showed a tendency toward better mental health, and a greater likelihood of marriage and employment as compared with men who had committed more than three offenses.

More recently, Carlie (1970) introduced the older offender's mobility as being significant to the type of criminal pattern in which he might engage. Her population consisted of arrest records from the St. Louis metropolitan area providing data on persons 45 years of age and older. Older arrestees were found to participate most in crimes against the public order (alcohol offenses, gambling) and less, in descending order, petty offenses (vagrancy and disturbing the peace), property offenses (burglarly and stealing and destruction of property), and least in crimes against persons (murder, rape, assaults, and robbery). Also, older persons committing crimes were found to have differing levels of mobility depending upon the type of crime committed. For example, persons committing crimes against property exhibited the highest mobility, while lessening degrees of mobility in descending order were found in crimes against the public order, petty crimes, and crimes against persons.

A more comprehensive contribution to the aging inmate has been provided by Cormier (1971). In this preliminary report the author dealt with offenders aged 40 and over who were admitted to the penitentiary in the province of Quebec and whose criminal record started after age 20. Thus, a group of prisoners over the age of 40, both recidivists and first offenders, were studied to determine why this particular group has persisted in criminality beyond the age when the majority have usually abated. Cormier assessed family

background, education, civil status, work record, and type of offense as possible determinants of continued criminality.

Conclusions from this study indicate that there are significant differences between first offenders after age 40 and recidivists or multi-recidivists of the same age. Table II presents Cormier's (1971:18) findings regarding the initial influence of age on certain offenses committed:

TABLE II
TYPE OF OFFENSE OF OFFENDERS AGE 40 AND OVER
ACCORDING TO AGE STARTED

	Age Offenses Were Started		
	20-24	25-39	40 & Over
Property	39	30	8
Fraud	27	23	23
Person	12	13	8
Sex	9	27	34
Homicide	6	4	10
Other	7	3	17
Total (%)	100	100	100

For Cormier, offenses against property (including fraud) account for 66 percent for those who started criminal activities between ages 20 to 24, and shows a gradual decline with increase in age of first offense. On the other hand, he reported crimes against persons (sexual offenses and homicide) accounted for 27 percent in the 20 to 24 age group, 44 percent in the group between the ages of 27 and 39, and 52 percent in the 40 and above group.

In relation to the family background, it was concluded that nearly two-thirds of the subjects were brought up in adequate homes during the earlier formative years. However, those individuals who started criminal activities early (ages 20 to 24) usually remained in the low socio-economic stratum. Although it was found that the educational record cannot be judged by itself as a causal factor to criminality, it was found that the presence or absence of a good work record has a significant relationship. Moreover, in the group of first offenders after age 40, it was found that 73 percent have married, whereas in the group whose legal onset was at ages 25 to 39, the percentage is 55, and this drops to 42 for those who started participating in crime between the ages 20 to 24. Thus, the older group in general has shown the capacity to marry and take responsibility for bringing up a family.

Barrett (1972) provides an interesting analysis using as a basis the Uniform Crime Reports. Including the most prevalent crimes of older persons age 65 and older, he

presents a series of tables depicting a comparison based on a five-year interval (1964-1969). After analyzing crime patterns concerning this age group, Barrett indicates that even though the number of offenses was small and the percent of the total aged population was insignificant, certain facts are suggestive. Among the seven crimes included in the crime index, percentage increases from 1964 to 1969 were noted in five. Only forcible rape and auto theft declined. More significantly, homicide increased by a staggering 144 percent, larceny by 67 percent, and burglary by 38 percent. Violent crimes in the index increased by 36 percent, property crimes by 62 percent, with the total index showing a rise of 54 percent. While the increase in the gerontological population over this five-year span was only 5.5 percent, the rise in crime becomes most significant. Barrett (1972:130) mentions the following theoretical explanation as to why delinquency may persist into old age:

As a usual rule, the need to achieve status is not a strong motivating force in old age However, if their need for prestige continues strongly, they may become delinquent, just as do children and adolescents, to build a feeling of importance. The individual may become a forger or commit fraud to enhance his personal feeling of superiority as he bilks another by his cunning. He may gamble, become a vandal, steal an auto or violate any number of statutes merely to satisfy his ego. At times he will tell friends and acquaintances about his activities to demonstrate his clever achievements Many gerontos become delinquent (just as children) in their search for companionship.

Bergman and Amir (1973:55) contend that "as is true of criminality in youth, physical, personal and environmental factors can explain the criminality of that minority of the

aged who do become involved in deviant behavior." They also list certain factors explaining the criminality of the aged:

- (1) Conditions of health, especially senility, causing deterioration of mental and physical abilities and of inhibitions, particularly with respect to sexual and aggressive behavior, which may lead the aged to become rigid, suspicious, quarrelsome or even violent.
- (2) Lack of communication with the young and loss of status accompanied by a sense of being useless, pushed aside, and forsaken by family and younger members of the community.
- (3) A national emphasis bordering on disrespect for the aged and for old traditions. This accelerates the loss of authority and respect in the eyes of the younger generation, including family members
- (4) A low level of tolerance which may lead them to commit such crimes as fraud, forgery, tax evasion, and other white-collar offenses and not to consider them as immoral activities.

In their investigation, the authors discovered two distinct groups of aged prisoners sharing similar characteristics. One group described consisted of white-collar offenders sent to the minimum security institution. This group tended to be more frightened and, on the other hand, more intelligent than other prisoners. The second group was composed of those who were aging in prison, having been given long sentences while fairly young.

A final exploratory study utilizing prison information was conducted by Sluga (1973). The population of this investigation consisted of 43 prisoners over age 60. Two subgroups were identified on the basis of offenses and correctional history: a group of later offenders and a group of

chronic offenders. These two groups also differed in other respects. Sluga reported that late offenders shared a better social status and had higher scores regarding religious attitudes, interest in the environment, and positive attitudes toward life when compared with the chronic offender.

Summary

The literature, although scattered, seems to suggest the fact that crime rates and types of crime vary with age, but in any age group crime causality and prisoner characteristics may vary with specific population and social conditions. Previous investigations reveal that the older offender possesses certain unique characteristics apart from the younger prisoner. Although the literature does not suggest any high correlation between prisonization and criminality, the personal characteristics of the prison clientele seem an important ingredient when discussing the impact of imprisonment. The significance of pertinent demographic and intrapersonal characteristics cannot be overlooked in developing a tentative model of aging in prison.

CHAPTER IV

INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEORETICAL MODEL

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the general literature relating to the global effects of institutionalization. A variety of terms, usually negative in connotation, have been used to describe the different socio-psychological effects in living in such institutions. Some of these summarized by Lieberman (1968:343) include "mortification and curtailment of the self" (Goffman), "institutional dependency" (Cosser), "apathy reaction including severe withdrawal" (Frankl), and "depersonalization" (Townsend). Townsend (1962:12) offers an excellent summary of most of the characteristics of institutional environments based on their social and physical structure:

In the institution people live communally with a minimum of privacy and yet their relationships with each other are slender. Many subsist in a kind of defensive shell of isolation. Their mobility is restricted, and they have little access to a general society. The social experiences are limited, and the staff lead a rather separate existence from them. They are subtly oriented toward a system in which they submit

to orderly routine, noncreative occupation, and cannot exercise as much self-determination. They are deprived of intimate family relationships and can rarely find substitutes which seem to be more than a pale imitation of those enjoyed by most people in a general community. The result for the individual seems fairly often to be a gradual process of depersonalization His personal habits may deteriorate, and occasionally he seems to withdraw into a private world of fantasy

In general, the evidence accumulated over the past 20 years leaves little doubt that institutionalized populations exhibit differences from non-institutional populations. And according to Lieberman (1968:343):

No matter what the particular characteristics of the population or the unique qualities of the total institution, the general thrust of empirical evidence emerging from many studies suggest that living in an institutional environment have noxious, physical, and psychological effects upon the individual, whether young or old.

Although the literature indicates that the older prisoner has certain unique characteristics, a further review reveals a scarcity of research dealing with the underlying causes of criminal behavior or the impact of imprisonment for the older offender. Those deviant studies which have been conducted pertaining to the older prisoner are, for the most part, descriptive in nature and are lacking any basic theoretical orientation.

The theory of prisonization does examine the length of time served and the socialization processes within the prison environment and, particularly, the relationship between what an inmate experiences within the prison vis-a-vis his attachment to the outside world. This theory, however, does not

deal specifically with various phases of institutional career important to the study of old prisoners. It fails to consider the unique characteristics of the older prisoner and their relationship to the latter stages of his life cycle and their significance regarding prisonization and the phenomenon of institutional adjustment.

Wheeler's adaptive pattern, although attempting to investigate various phases of imprisonment, gives no special consideration for those who have spent a major portion of their life in an institutional setting. Instead, he focuses on the general prison population and the length of time remaining to be served. He, too, fails to address the old prisoner as a subgroup and the impact their unique characteristics might have on his U-shaped pattern of conforming responses.

On the other hand, reviewing several gerontological theories leads to the conclusion that although studies are numerous pertaining to maladjustment and disengagement, none are directed toward the institutional adjustment patterns of old prisoners. The institutions investigated are usually comprised of conventional rest homes or mental hospitals with little or no reference to aging within the confinements of a prison environment.

The omission of the institutionalization of the older prisoner as a focus for contemporary theories in aging and penology represents a gap in the life cycle perspective of the aging process. In an attempt to fill this void, the

focus of this chapter will be to develop a tentative model of institutional dependency based on the older prisoners' personal, social, and criminal characteristics.

Length of Imprisonment, Reference
Groups, and Social Roles

A review of the literature reveals that one possible frame of reference within which to describe and interpret changes that occur on the part of inmates as they move through total institutions features the length of time spent in a prison environment and its influence on the inmate's reference group. Although Clemmer stressed both of these factors, he felt the most important feature in determining the degree of prisonization was the degree of primary group affiliation inmates had with other inmates within the institution. Shibutani (1955) also concluded that although groupings vary, of greatest importance for most people are those groups in which they participate directly--especially those containing a number of persons with whom one stands in a primary relationship.

More specifically, Adams and Vedder (1961:179) addressed certain implications of institutional dependency regarding the final stages of imprisonment encountered by many older prisoners.

A long sentence may persist despite good prison conduct and parole may be denied reasonably because the prisoner has no family to whom he could go. Long confinement results in physical, intellectual, and emotional deterioration

If society has little place for the older man in general, it has even less place for the elderly prisoner or exconvict.

Webb (1959) has also suggested that those who had lived in institutions for long periods of time indicated more concern about reentry into the community and less willingness to attempt it. In a more general fashion, Sykes (1958) supports this viewpoint when he indicates that links with persons in the free community weaken as the years pass by.

For many inmates, the prison environment helps to destroy relationships with those who, at one time, might have been significant others. Severing family-and-friend ties may force the inmate to either withdraw unto himself or turn to the prison environment for emotional support. Clemmer (1958:303) gives proof of this when he describes:

. . . the inmate whose wife divorces him (and who) turns for response and recognition to his immediate associates. When the memories of pre-penal experience cease to be satisfying or useful, a barrier to prisonization has been removed

The break in the link with the free community can bring a traumatic experience for the older offender already attempting to adjust to certain physical and emotional changes associated with aging itself. If the social attachments outside the prison decrease, this broken relationship may serve to make the older prisoner more dependent on the institution, especially if he has no immediate family or friends on the outside in which to return. When accompanied by a shrinking social environment, the length of institutionalization as

well as old age itself may serve to decrease the number of significant reference groups on the outside.

The length of imprisonment, when linked with the concept of social roles, is another potential frame of reference which may have an impact on institutional adjustment. In this particular context, the notion of "role loss" and "role gain" should both receive important consideration. For instance, it has been argued by Rosow (1962) that the loss of major roles is possibly the strongest single alienating force in old age. With the loss of central positions and normal adult characteristics, the person's claim on the society is substantially weakened, his power dwindles, and his dependency on others increases. Moreover, in measuring role loss, Rosow postulated that those with high role losses should generally be more dependent on the local environment for their social life than those with few role losses.

More specifically, membership in an institution automatically disrupts and curtails previously established roles since the inmate's separation from the outside world is continuous and may exist through several stages of the life cycle (Goffman, 1961). In short, the longer the normal roles of the life cycle are disrupted, the more painful it will be for reestablishing specific roles. For instance, it may not be possible for the older prisoner to make up at a later phase of the life cycle the time missed in education or job advancement, in marriage, or in being the father of one's children. The older inmate then finds certain roles are

lost to him by virtue of the barrier that separates him from the outside world.

For many older offenders, however, the most important "role loss" influencing institutional adjustment is that of health. Baier (1961) found in The California Men's Colony, established as a specialized correctional institution for the elderly offender, that nearly all are ill at one time or another. With an average age of about 55 in an inmate population of approximately 1,360, there was found practically every type of disease. He concluded that the majority of conditions found are those that are concomitant with age and the normal deterioration that accompanies it.

Atchley (1973:6) appropriately summarizes some of the characteristics that might be present during the latter stages of the life cycle for the aging prisoner:

Middle age is the period when the individual first becomes aware of the fact that he is growing old. This phase of the life cycle usually occurs during the forties and fifties. At this time the individual becomes aware that he has less energy than he used to Chronic illness becomes more prevalent. In the fifties, vision and hearing begin to fail Later maturity is marked by an even greater awareness of aging and thereby a difficulty is remaining future-oriented. Chronologically it often corresponds to the sixties and seventies. There is a drastic reduction in available energy during this period, and the individual becomes very aware of his failing eyes and ears. . . . Old age is the beginning of the end. It is characterized by extreme frailty, disability, or invalidism. Mental processes slow down. The individual thinks a lot about himself and his past and tries to find some meaning in life. Activity is greatly restricted. Loneliness and boredom are thought to be common

Bergman and Amir (1973:155) also mention certain factors related to the nature of the older inmate's health and the impact this might have on his institutional adjustment:

Conditions of health, especially senility, causing deterioration of mental and physical abilities and inhibitions, particularly with respect to sexual and aggressive behavior, which may lead the aged to become rigid, suspicious, quarrelsome or even violent

In summary, it seems that the condition of the old prisoner's health may well be a significant indicator regarding the presence of institutional dependence. The older prisoner with health problems may be fearful of returning to the free community when he has adequate and convenient health care available within the prison environment. Therefore, poor health may hinder various community reintegration alternatives for the older prisoner and the tendency to develop a dependency on the prison community is likely to increase as health declines.

However, institutionalization may include not only a loss of certain conventional roles, but also the socialization into new roles within the prison environment. Recent discussions of the inmate social system have viewed prisoner roles as alternative patterns of adjustment to a variety of deprivations imposed by total institutions. Thus, for the prisoner, initial imprisonment is a type of forced social disengagement from his customary social milieu and axiomatic exposure to a new socialization process. In this light, institutionalization can be perceived as a positive process as well as negative for prisonization gives the prisoner a

new subculture, new role, new identity, and new social group--which are vital for the social and psychological well-being. The longer the normal roles of the life cycle are disrupted, the more likely the older prisoner will establish new roles in the inmate social system.

Moreover, previous research indicates that activity, in general, and interpersonal activity, in particular, seem to be important for predicting an individual's sense of well-being in later years (Lemon et al., 1972). In brief, the activity model of aging maintains that substitutes are necessary to fill certain voids (i.e., work, friends, loved ones). Implicit here is the proposition that old age brings with it a decreasing number of roles for the older person which may lead to a reorientation of attitudes and behavior to meet the requirements of the new situation (Cavan et al., 1949). The extent to which the individual successfully adapts to his new position may be termed as how well he has personally adjusted. Therefore, the older prisoner's psychological and social well-being perhaps can be attributed to how successfully he internalizes the norms and values and role prescriptions of the prison environment.

The Role of the Social Structure

Another important variable influencing institutional adjustment is the nature of the social structure within the institution itself. A number of investigators have studied the effects of institutionalization by focusing on three

basic design strategies: study of the psychological well-being of institutional persons as a function of alterations made in the structure of the institution; study of the effects on behavior of the length of time spent in an institution; and comparison of the effects on individuals of residence in various institutional settings (Lieberman, 1969).

Of these three strategies, those studies comparing a variety of institutions appear to offer the greatest potential for isolating specific effects on the psychological behavior of the aged and for determining the environmental characteristics associated with these effects. Townsend (1962) compared various types of institutions in a sample of 173 institutions. Utilizing scales based on adequacy ratings of physical facilities, staffing and services, mobility, freedom in daily life and social provision, he suggested that differences in occupations, the number of visitors received, and the amount of mobility occurred between "good" and "bad" institutions. Townsend's evidence, unfortunately, did not provide information associating the quality of the institution and the psychological characteristics attributed to institutional living.

Coe (1962), using a model for assessing institutional structure, found some association between the degree of depersonalization of environment and the effects of self-imagery. Finally, Bennett et al. (1964), using Goffman's framework (1961), suggested that the more total the institution (based on such items as orientation of activities,

scheduling of activities, provisions for dissemination of rules and standards of conduct, provisions for the allocation of staff time, and observation of the behavior of inmates, types of sanction system, how personal property is dealt with, decision-making about the use of private property, pattern of recruitment, voluntary-involuntary and residential pattern, congregate versus private), the greater its depersonalizing effects.

In short, this type of total institution has been described as having encompassing tendencies. Their total character is symbolized by the barrier to social intercourse with the society at large. Goffman (1961) refers to the total institution as a social hybrid which is partly a residential community and partly a formal organization. The effects can be overpowering. For instance, Gaddis (1972), in "Home at Last: The Prison Habit," concluded that one characteristic of the maximum security prison not often discussed is the reality of prison as a seduction. He presents the idea that there is some process other than overt crime and punishment which draws the criminal back behind bars. In a similar discussion, Jackson (1966) suggested that chronic convicts whose criminal and non-criminal careers outside of prison are marked by persistent failure often find the prison to be the only place they can settle in some comfort.

A further review of the literature indicates that current correctional systems increasingly depart from the closed institutional image, and it can be hypothesized that both

types of clientele and institutional programs exert an effect on the institutional adjustment for many older prisoners. Thus, in an attempt to offset the effects of institutionalization on the psychological and physical well-being of those within such an environment, attempts have been made to institute a therapeutic effect. Soloman (1976) defines the concept of "therapeutic community" as a carefully managed relationship within an institution that parallels as closely as possible to normal everyday life. The concept in its current sense can be traced to the work of Maxwell Jones (1962:53) who provides a general description of a therapeutic community:

. . . as distinctive among other comparable treatment centers in the way the institution's total resources, both staff and patients, are self-consciously pooled in furthering treatment. This implies, above all, a change in the usual status of patients. In collaboration with the staff, they now become active participants in the therapy of themselves and other patients and in other aspects of the over-all hospital work--contrast to their relatively more passive, recipient role in conventional treatment regimes.

More specifically, the therapeutic community, in a correctional sense, involves serious modifications of the traditional prison's social system and makes an all-out effort to generate and exercise a rehabilitative influence on the residents. According to Sandhu (1974:226), a successful therapeutic community should include a concerted effort on the part of the staff and inmates:

- (1) To work for the agreed goals as a team;

- (2) To coordinate their vocational, educational, recreational, and therapeutic programs to meet the needs of the inmates individually and the group collectively;
- (3) To therapeutize the social climate of the institution by removing undesirable practices and eliminating negative influences; and
- (4) To promote programs of creativity, seeking out voluntary participation of inmates and giving them roles of trust and responsibility.

In this type of environment, everything in the social milieu of an inmate is geared to prepare him for his reintegration into the larger community. When Clemmer conducted his initial study, correctional institutions were similar, classification between institutions weak, and the impact was assumed to be relatively constant across a range of institutions. However, this current diversity is shown in prison, being large, small, closed, open, prisons for long-termers, for short-termers, etc. The setting of the open institution, the medium-custody institution, or community treatment center is very much more conducive to the introduction of the therapeutic community concept because each already possesses several of the elements required for a therapy-centered institution (Soloman, 1976).

In summary, institutions providing a therapeutic focus with emphasis on inmate involvement with the outside community may effectively alter the degree of institutionalization for many inmates. On the other hand, a planned therapeutic program designed specifically for older prisoners may serve as a positive substitute for the outside community. In a

word, the prison subculture in a therapeutic setting may be the best environment the older prisoner can negotiate, and he may find it to be his most appropriate alternative.

In summary, the foregoing analysis disclosed several possible variables that seem to be significant influences regarding the concept of "institutional dependency." Depending on the structure of the prison community, length of institutionalization will usually have a greater impact on role loss and interaction with those in the free community. Therefore, if confinement is long enough, the older prisoner may exchange outside reference groups for inmate reference groups and conventional roles for roles assumed in the prison subculture. With poor health, and the lack of family or friends to return to, many older prisoners find the institution to be a home away from home.

While the concept of prisonization may be adequate to describe the initial socialization into the inmate cultural system, it is proposed that the concept of "institutional dependency" better describes the final stages of imprisonment for the older prisoner.

Research Rationale and Propositions

Only by testing the hypotheses derived from this analysis can the validity of this conceptual framework be adequately determined. The following model is specifically formulated as a theoretical framework by which to analyze the effects of institutionalization on older prisoners within

the confinement of a prison environment. Any specific model which attempts to predict human behavior is based on certain basic assumptions regarding that behavior. Before deducing specific hypotheses from these theoretical statements, a nominal definition of the major variables is in order.

Reference Group

While there are numerous definitions of this concept, it will be viewed in this particular study as a group, collectively, or person which the older prisoner feels is the most important to him for self-appraisal and which provides the most support for his own ideas. The perceived bond of understanding is greatest with the reference group.

Life Satisfaction

One of the most frequently used indicators of successful aging is the variable of life satisfaction. Primarily used as a dependent variable, life satisfaction is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional, social psychological variable which reflects a psychological well-being of the older adult. Neugarten et al. (1961) indicate that the concept of life satisfaction is composed of a number of individually-oriented components. Among them are: (1) whether the individual takes pleasure from the round of activities that constitute his everyday life; (2) whether he regards his life as meaningful and accepts resolutely that which life has been; (3) whether he holds a positive image of himself; (4) whether

he feels he has succeeded in achieving his major goals; and (5) whether he is able to maintain happy and optimistic attitudes and moods. Thus, life satisfaction is generally defined as the degree to which one is presently content or pleased with his general life situation.

Institutional Dependency

Institutional dependency is defined in this study as simply the formal attachment to the prison environment and the acceptance of a new role, a new subculture, and a new social group due to the loss of outside reference groups and roles.

Social Structure

This variable is conceived as being a configuration in which a variety of people are bound together within a network of relationships; the concept implies that people are bound within networks of relationships (groups) in which they interact with one another in terms of certain shared understandings (cultural patterns) that define the behavior expected of them as given kinds of people (Zanden, 1970:634).

Length of Imprisonment

According to Clemmer, the usual way of treating the time variable is to classify persons according to their length of exposure to the new social setting. This conception is usually employed in studies of prison adjustment and was

explicitly stated by Clemmer (1940:294) as "the manner in which the attitudes of prisoners are modified as the men spend month after month in the penal milieu."

Older Prisoners

Older prisoners can be divided into three basic categories: (1) late offender--one whose delinquent behavior is confined to a single episode leading to imprisonment, (2) chronic offender--a recidivist whose life is characterized by a series of delinquent episodes and imprisonments, and (3) lifers or those who have grown old in prison after having committed a rather serious crime early in life.

Hypotheses

While the nature of this research will be, for the most part, exploratory in nature, directional hypotheses will be stated where there appears to be an adequate theoretical foundation to warrant prediction. Basically, the underlying assumptions of this research endeavor will be derived from Clemmer's concept of "prisonization." This theoretical nexus will merely serve as a point of departure, however, with significant theoretical input being contributed by activity theory as well as the conceptual framework of reference group theory. An attempt will be made to review the significance of various socio-demographic variables within this research framework.

Hypothesis Related to Reference Group

The concept of reference group has become one of the central analytic tools being used in the construction of hypotheses concerning a variety of social phenomena. For Shibutani (1955), the reference group perspective may be utilized in viewing the inconsistency in behavior as a person moves from one social context to another as well as modifications in social attitudes related to changes in group associations. The literature in both gerontology and penology stresses the importance of the reference group as a basis for norm and value formation. Two viewpoints seem to emerge regarding the use of the reference group as a means of analysis for the concept of institutional dependency. One view maintains that the greatest importance for most people is those groups in which they participate directly. However, the other conception centers on the ideal of positive social relationships prior to imprisonment and whether these relationships can be preserved across time as influencing factors for institutional dependency.

Hypothesis 1: There is an inverse relationship between the influence of outside reference groups and degree of institutional dependency.

Hypotheses Related to Personal and Correctional Variables

Due to the dearth of studies focusing on the old prisoner, developing a descriptive profile will be an important

contribution of this particular study. Previous research indicates the "possibility" of the presence of distinct subgroups of old prisoners. Moreover, the distinguishing characteristics between these subgroups may have a direct bearing on the process of prisonization and eventual institutional adjustment. Two of these subgroups have been identified on the basis of their previous crime careers--a group of late offenders and a group of chronic offenders. To define our terms, a late offender is one whose delinquent behavior is confined to a single episode late in life leading to imprisonment, while a chronic offender is a recidivist whose life is characterized by a series of delinquent episodes and imprisonments. A third subgroup has been identified on the basis of their previous institutional history or those who have grown old in prison after having committed a rather serious crime relatively early in life.¹

Thus, age at the time of institutionalization is determined by the older inmate's career criminal patterns and may be a potential factor in determining whether dependency may exist. For example, the older late offender may find it more difficult to adjust to the deculturalization process found in the prisonization process. In essence, the older inmate may be less susceptible to pressure to conform to the influence from the inmate culture, and due to their rigidity,

¹Since no distinct third subgroup emerged in the present study, only those classified as chronic and late offenders will be referred to in the remaining chapters.

he may resist being socialized into the prison system and thus maintain an outside reference group.

Health, one of the most extensively investigated biological variables, also appears to have the capacity to influence the older prisoner's institutional adjustment. The inevitable decline in one's physical attributes many times alters the quality of life in both objective physical terms as well as more subjective psychological terms. As Adams (1963:65) has stated, "Health is the kind of variable upon which everything else depends." For the older prisoner, health may be a determining factor in his ability to maintain a normal work role as well as influencing participation in other social activities. Poor health may result in the older prisoner becoming more dependent on his immediate social environment. In extreme cases the older prisoner may even prefer to remain in the confines of a familiar prison community vis-a-vis being placed in an unfamiliar social situation on the outside.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a direct relationship between length of imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency.

Hypothesis 3: There will be an inverse relationship between perceived health status and degree of institutional dependency.

Hypothesis 4: There will be an inverse relationship between age at time of imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency.

Hypothesis 5: The degree of institutional dependency will be greater for the chronic offender than for the late offender.

Hypotheses Related to the Social Structure

In recent years there has been an increase in social gerontological attempts to assess a variety of aspects of an individual's institutional environment. Moreover, in the field of penology, Cressy (1966) reported that some 60 percent of the penal institutions across the country differ in varying degrees regarding their formal and informal organization and operation. This growing differentiation of correctional institutions reinforces the need for comparative efforts when developing a model of aging in prison.

Although research is inconclusive, it has been generally hypothesized that the more "total" the institution the more depersonalizing its effects on the individual. Presently, therapeutic attempts are being made in some institutions to neutralize the negative impact of the total institutional environment and to create modifications in the socialization process. In this effort, one of the basic objectives of the therapeutic concept is the development of a more positive self-concept through specially designed activity programs. Following the activity theory frame of reference, an enhanced sense of self-worth should result in a higher life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: The life satisfaction of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment will be higher than the life satisfaction of older prisoners in a conventional prison environment.

Hypothesis 7: The dependency of older prisoners in a conventional prison will be higher than the dependency of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment.

CHAPTER V

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Setting

Since the principal concern of the present study was the development of a more systematic model of aging in prison, it was felt that a comparison of polar type institutions would enhance the validity of this endeavor. One portion of the sample was comprised of a group of 40 older prisoners housed in a segregated facility at the Lexington Regional Treatment Center in Oklahoma. This institution has two primary functions: protection of society, and providing assistance and opportunities for medium security inmates to make positive changes in their job skills, educational levels, attitudes, and behavior. The inmates selected for confinement at this institution are generally non-violent offenders. A key reason for selecting this institution included the fact that presently an attempt is being made at this particular institution to develop a therapeutically-oriented treatment program for those inmates classified as geriatric. Aspects of this special program will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

For comparative purposes, another sample of 55 subjects was obtained from Cummins Prison, a maximum security

institution in Arkansas. Here the older respondents were integrated into the prison population as a whole. The general atmosphere at Cummins was much more formal, and possessed the basic characteristics of Goffman's description of the "total" institution. The inmates housed at this institution consisted of both violent and non-violent offenders. This institution was chosen on the basis of representing a more conventional prison atmosphere where rehabilitation centered around the notion of prisonization being strictly a punitive function.

The Sample

Having identified the necessary institutional social structures, the researcher then needed cooperation from both the prison officials and the older inmates in order to finalize the study. Complete cooperation was received at both institutions involved. In fact at the Cummins unit, the respondents were instructed by the staff to cooperate or risk the loss of their status based on their work record and positive attitude over time. Although the researcher was unaware that this procedure was being used, it should serve as a glimpse of how a maximum security prison is organized. At the Lexington unit, complying to the instrument was encouraged by the counselor but in no way forced upon the respondents. Again, not a single older inmate was uncooperative or unwilling to respond to the interviewer's questions.

In keeping with the objectives of the study, it was decided to interview all of the older prisoners at the respective institutions that met the previously selected criterion of 55 years of age and holding the qualification of having lived in the institution for no less than one month. Due to the small size of the prison population meeting the age requirements, this research utilized a "purposeful" sampling procedure. It should also be mentioned that although other older inmates were a part of the general prison population, the Lexington sample was restricted to only those older inmates residing in the geriatric dormitory.

Given the fact that some of the older inmates were unable to read or write, the writer felt that the structured interview would be the most feasible in this study. In addition to this method, the researcher was given access to the inmate records at the Lexington unit. This proved to be most useful in providing a clear-cut analysis of the older offender's career crime pattern, health problems, and other demographic data of interest. Due to the inmate records being inaccessible at Cummins, comparative measures were impossible with this particular data. However, this method provided an in-depth look at one of the chosen groups yielding valuable insights into some of the significant problems of aging in a penal institution.

The present study will also utilize the methodological technique of simple observational procedures. Included in this qualitative analysis will be general reactions from

interviews with the staff and subjects regarding the institutional adjustment of this special group. Direct observations will also be made regarding the activities and life style found in each institution. These observational procedures will vary, depending on the institution since the writer was not given free access for long observation periods at the Cummins unit. Thus, the descriptive analysis of Lexington will be more detailed. In spite of these variations, it was felt that first-hand observation of various activities within the institutions would provide an alternative source of information regarding the residents' attitudes and behavior. Since both qualitative and quantitative analyses have limitations, the researcher hoped that by using one to supplement the other, more accurate results might be obtained.

The Questionnaire

Socio-Demographic Data

The first section of the questionnaire contained eight items representing the socio-demographic variables which appear to be important in developing a general profile of the aging prisoner. Although much of the information generated in this section is not directly relevant to testing the theoretical model of this study, it is believed that certain socio-demographic variables may prove significant regarding institutional adjustment for the older offender. The

following table summarizes these variables and their respective item numbers. The questionnaire itself is found in the Appendix.

TABLE III
ITEM NUMBERS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Item Number	Variable
1	Race
2	Age
3	Occupation Prior to Imprisonment
4	Present Income
5	Education
6	Health Status
7	Health Compared to Others
8	Number of Times Married

Reference Group

Another portion of the questionnaire was devoted to determining the nature of the older prisoner's reference group. Utilizing a modification of Rosen's (1955)

operational form of the reference group, the following questions were asked:

Of all the people you know, who do you feel closest to?

Family members

Friends on the outside

Other inmates

Staff

Other

Who do you feel understands you the best?

Family members

Friends on the outside

Other inmates

Staff

Other

Not including members of your family, who do you consider to be your best friend?

Other inmates

Staff

Friends on the outside

Unfortunately, the first two items failed to discriminate in this study and will not be used in the data analysis (i.e., over 90 percent of the respondents indicated family members). In an attempt to distinguish significant reference groups that might exist beyond family members, the third question was asked. Since a large number of the subjects indicated that they had no friends in the institution, even though they gave no indication of any friends on the outside, this item

also appears to be an invalid measure of older prisoners' reference group.

Institutional Dependency

The third section of the questionnaire consisted of a series of questions which were devised in an exploratory attempt to develop a measure of the concept "institutional dependency." One portion of the index included questions attempting to address a variety of behavioral dimensions of reference group interaction (e.g., visits, letter writing, support). Another series of questions were aimed at the respondents' perceptual dimensions of the prison environment vis-a-vis life on the outside.

The index consisted of eight open-ended questions and check list items that were administered and scored by the researcher on a three-point scale. The scoring for this index ranges from 0 to 16. In an attempt to measure internal consistency and the scalability of the items, correlations utilizing the Pearson (r) and factor analysis were used.

The portion of the item analysis reporting r values for each of the eight items suggests that the items vary together in a consistent pattern. The original correlation values are shown in Table IV. From this analysis, the institutional dependency index appears to have a high degree of internal consistency. All of the individual items had correlation coefficients well above .30 with a mean correlation of .63.

TABLE IV
ITEM CORRELATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY INDEX
(N = 94)

Item	r
1. How often do you receive visits from members of your family or friends?	.66
2. How often do you receive letters from members of your family or friends?	.58
3. If you are paroled, do you have friends or family on the outside you can depend on for support?	.75
4. Generally, what do you spend most of your time thinking about?	.55
5. When you think about parole and life on the outside, what do you feel? What do you think about?	.78
6. How do you feel knowing that you have all of your basic needs provided for here (i.e., food, housing, health care, etc.)?	.66
7. Here is a newspaper article showing an older prisoner who decided to stay in prison after his sentence was commuted--what are your feelings about that?	.64
8. If you were told that you had to spend the rest of your life here, how would you feel?	.47

Factor analysis is a technique used to discover patterns among the variations in values of several variables. In this process, the method of principal components analysis is used in helping to distinguish an appropriate number of factors.

Finally, a matrix of factor loadings is produced which experiences a rigid (orthogonal) rotation determined by Kaiser's varimax criterion (Service, 1972).

The factor matrix is comprised of a table of coefficients that express the relationships between the tests and the underlying factors. Regarding interpretation, the factor loadings are interpreted the same as correlation coefficients (-1.00 through zero to +1.00). In short, the factor loadings express the correlations between tests and factors. Rotation is the process by which the various factors are isolated out to determine which items go together.

The composition of the first unrotated factor is found in Table V. This particular unrotated factor accounted for 48 percent of the variance of the institutional dependency items and 76 percent of the variance explained by the factor analysis. The presence of these percentages, as well as the observation that none of the eight items failed to reach a loading of .30 on the first factor, offered substantial support for the argument of a generalized dimension.

In addition, Table VI presents a rotated factor matrix. Factor one accounted for 58 percent of the variance and included the first five items dealing mainly with the behavioral dimensions of the index. Factor two comprised 41 percent of the variance and included a clustering of the final three perceptual items.

In summary, the institutional dependency index appears to have a high degree of internal consistency. All of the

TABLE V
 UNROTATED LOADINGS ON FACTOR ONE OF
 INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY INDEX

(N = 94)

Item	Factor 1
1. How often do you receive visits from members of your family or friends?	.65
2. How often do you receive letters from members of your family or friends?	.57
3. If you are paroled, do you have friends or family on the outside you can depend on for support?	.76
4. Generally, what do you spend most of your time thinking about?	.54
5. When you think about parole and life on the outside, what do you feel? What do you think about?	.79
6. How do you feel knowing that you have all of your basic needs provided for here (i.e., food, housing, health care, etc.)?	.66
7. Here is a newspaper article showing an older prisoner who decided to stay in prison after his sentence was commuted--what are your feelings about that?	.65
8. If you were told that you had to spend the rest of your life here, how would you feel?	.46

TABLE VI
 ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX OF INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY INDEX
 (N = 94)

Item	Fac- tor 1	Fac- tor 2
1. How often do you receive visits from members of your family or friends?	.67	-.17
2. How often do you receive letters from members of your family or friends?	.78	.05
3. If you are paroled, do you have friends or family on the outside you can depend on for support?	.72	-.29
4. Generally, what do you spend most of your time thinking about?	.61	-.07
5. When you think about parole and life on the outside, what do you feel? What do you think about?	.79	-.24
6. How do you feel knowing that you have all of your basic needs provided for here (i.e., food, housing, health care, etc.)?	.25	-.77
7. Here is a newspaper article showing an older prisoner who decided to stay in prison after his sentence was commuted-- what are your feelings about that?	.25	-.76
8. If you were told that you had to spend the rest of your life here, how would you feel?	-.02	-.83

individual items had correlation coefficients well above .30, with a mean correlation of .63. The scale items also loaded well together on Factor 1 of the unrotated factor matrix.

Life Satisfaction

The fourth part of the questionnaire consisted of the Life Satisfaction Index B (LSIB) which was used to measure life satisfaction. This scale was devised in an extensive study of older people in the Kansas City area by Bernice Neugarten, Robert Havighurst, and Sheldon Tobin (1961). Grounded primarily in the framework of the activity theory of successful aging, the authors constructed this scale as a multi-dimensional instrument. The index was formulated to measure five dimensions of life satisfaction including: (1) zest for life as opposed to apathy, (2) resolution and fortitude as opposed to resignation, (3) congruence between desired and achieved goals, (4) high physical, psychological, and social self-concept, and (5) a happy, optimistic tone (Neugarten et al., 1961:141).

Although not used as frequently by investigators as LSIA, the LSIB has been subjected to a validity test. A correlation of $r = .58$ was found when tested against the Life Satisfaction rating (Neugarten et al., 1961). The authors also reported a mean score of 15.1 for the LSIB and a standard deviation of 4.7. The scoring procedure for this scale yields scores ranging from 0 to 23. The index consists of 12 open-ended questions and checklist items to be scored by

the researcher basically on a three-point scale. Once again, the Pearson r and factor analysis were used in measuring the internal consistency and scalability of the items.

In Table VII the correlation coefficients are presented for the LSIB. Items 2, 6, and 9 do not appear to be scaling with the other items and, perhaps, are not measuring the same dimension of life satisfaction. It appears these three items failed to scale on the basis of the population sampled and not a weakness of the index itself. Since this was not a normal population in the literal sense, it would be difficult to appropriately adapt all items of any scale. With this reasoning in mind and with the fact that a comparable life satisfaction score could not be realized through exclusion, it was felt that all 12 items should be retained.

The structure of the first unrotated factor for the Life Satisfaction Index is shown in Table VIII. The unrotated factor accounted for only 27 percent of the variance for the items and only 41 percent of the variance explained by the factor analysis. These relatively low percentages, together with the observation that three of the twelve items failed to reach a loading of .30 on the first factor, leaves some doubt concerning the presence of a generalized dimension.

Table IX presents a rotated factor matrix for the twelve items on the LSIB. Upon rotation, five factors were indicated. Factor 1 accounted for 33 percent of the variance and contained six of the twelve items. The other four factors consumed the remaining variance in a relatively even

TABLE VII
 ITEM CORRELATIONS FOR LIFE SATISFACTION INDEX B
 (N = 94)

Item	r
1. What are the best things about being the age you are now?	.32
2. What do you think you will be doing five years from now? How do you expect things will be different from the way they are now in your life?	.12
3. What is the most important thing in your life now?	.33
4. How happy would you say you are right now compared with the earlier periods in your life?	.69
5. Do you ever worry about your ability to do what people expect of you--to meet demands that people make on you?	.46
6. If you could do anything you pleased, where in this institution would you most like to live?	.023
7. How often do you find yourself feeling lonely?	.51
8. How often do you feel there is no point in living?	.35
9. Do you wish you could see more of your close friends than you do?	.25
10. How much unhappiness would you say you find in your life today?	.65
11. As you get older, would you say things seem to be better or worse than you thought they would be?	.60
12. How satisfied would you say you are with your way of life here?	.52

TABLE VIII
UNROTATED LOADINGS ON FACTOR ONE OF
LIFE SATISFACTION INDEX B

(N = 94)

Item	Factor 1
1. What are the best things about being the age you are now?	.35
2. What do you think you will be doing five years from now? How do you expect things will be different from the way they are now in your life?	.09
3. What is the most important thing in your life now?	.27
4. How happy would you say you are right now compared with the earlier periods in your life?	.70
5. Do you every worry about your ability to do what people expect of you--to meet demands that people make on you?	.47
6. If you could do anything you pleased, where in this insitution would you most like to live?	.06
7. How often do you find yourself feeling lonely?	.53
8. How often do you feel there is no point in living?	.38
9. Do you wish you could see more of your close friends than you do?	.17
10. How much unhappiness would you say you find in your life today?	.68
11. As you get older, would you say things seem to be better or worse than you thought they would be?	.62
12. How satisfied would you say you are with your way of life here?	.56

TABLE IX
 ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX OF LIFE SATISFACTION INDEX B
 (N = 94)

Item	Fac- tor 1	Fac- tor 2	Fac- tor 3	Fac- tor 4	Fac- tor 5
1. What are the best things about being the age you are now?	.03	.04	-.19	-.14	-.72
2. What do you think you will be doing five years from now? How do you expect things will be different from the way they are now in your life?	.09	.61	.33	-.09	-.25
3. What is the most important thing in your life now?	-.06	.01	-.85	.00	-.03
4. How happy would you say you are right now compared with the earlier periods in your life?	.71	.05	-.15	-.23	-.14
5. Do you ever worry about your ability to do what people expect of you--to meet demands that people make on you?	.62	-.16	.18	.05	-.07
6. If you could do anything you pleased, where in this institution would you most like to live?	.12	-.83	.09	-.17	.02
7. How often do you find yourself feeling lonely?	.45	.28	-.41	.22	.16
8. How often do you feel there is no point in living?	.17	.09	.16	.19	-.77

TABLE IX (Continued)

Item	Fac- tor 1	Fac- tor 2	Fac- tor 3	Fac- tor 4	Fac- tor 5
9. Do you wish you could see more of your close friends than you do?	.08	.04	-.03	.87	-.04
10. How much unhappiness would you say you find in your life today?	.54	-.25	-.47	.12	-.18
11. As you get older, would you say things seem to be better or worse than you thought they would be?	.43	.37	-.35	-.20	-.25
12. How satisfied would you say you are with your way of life here?	.73	-.02	.13	.14	.06

fashion. Factors 2 and 5 both contained two of the items and 16 percent of the variance each. Finally, Factors 3 and 4 were each represented by one item and explained 19 percent and 14 percent of the variance respectively.

It is somewhat difficult to summarize the results of the LSIB Index analysis. Three of the twelve items failed to load significantly on Factor 1 of the unrotated matrix. However, in the rotated factor matrix, Factor 1 explained twice the amount of variance (33 percent) as did the other four factors. Although the LSIB Index was originally developed along five dimensions, locating five factors on a twelve-item scale is reason for concern.

Activities

Another part of the questionnaire was designed to determine the type of activities older inmates engage in. This section was basically composed of only those activities that are either allowed or encouraged as part of the older inmate's personal development while incarcerated. The data generated from this section of the instrument was used as a comparative measure of activity participation of the respondents between the polar institutions selected. The final index consisted of 16 specific activities. In addition to the 16 activities, an open-end item was included for those respondents whose activities were omitted from the original list. The activities included are found in Table X.

TABLE X
LIST OF ACTIVITIES

Walking
Gardening
Watching TV or Listening to the Radio
Checkers or Dominoes
Visiting Friendsffrom the Outside
Fishing
Making Jewelry
Reading
Craftwork or Woodworking
Painting (Art)
Visiting Other Inmates
Religious Activities
Working
Making Walking Canes
Making Visits on the Outside
Repairing Toys
Writing

From the acitivity list, the respondents were asked to name the five most frequent things engaged in during an ordinary week. In addition to the activity list, the respondents

were asked to choose the one activity which they considered to be the most important to them.

Correctional Data

For the purpose of distinguishing any viable link between career crime patterns and institutional dependency, a separate section focused on the older prisoner's correctional history. Data was gathered from the inmate's penal records at Lexington and from the inmates themselves at the Cummins unit. These items were also used as the criteria for classification of the older inmates into various stages of imprisonment: late offender, chronic offender, and lifer. The final contribution of this section was toward the development of a general profile of the aging prisoner. Questions generating this data are presented in Table XI.

Analysis Procedures

Since the present study has been characterized as exploratory, it contained nominal, ordinal, and interval levels of measurement. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, data analysis was approached in three separate phases: (1) descriptive analysis; (2) test of hypothesis dealing with institutional dependency and life satisfaction; (3) test of hypotheses dealing with the socio-demographic and correctional variables.

Percentages and frequencies are used to describe the demographic nature of the sample and to provide a descriptive

TABLE XI
CORRECTIONAL DATA BY ITEM

Item	Variable
1	Juvenile Record
2	Age at First Imprisonment
3	Length of Time of Present Sentence
4	Length of All Imprisonment
5	Time Left to Serve
6	Time Before Parole Eligibility
7	Types of Crime Committed

profile of the older prisoner. Testing the hypotheses included the use of several test statistics. The means of certain variables are compared when determining the impact of contrasting social environments. The difference of means (t-tests) are used in this analysis process. When appropriate, the Pearson Correlation was chosen as the statistic for testing association. The coefficient of correlation (r) is used to measure the relationship between two variables when both are continuous and the relationship is linear. When the variable did not meet the statistical criteria of the t-test and Pearson r , the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test was used. When the chi square test was utilized, gamma or phi, both

measures of association, were incorporated to determine the strength of the relationship. Finally, the level of significance will be set at .05, as has traditionally been used.

In order to analyze the data in a more complete fashion, certain variables will be operationalized into differing levels or categories. The concept of institutional dependency involved a division of the index into: (1) low dependency (ranging from 0 to 2), (2) medium dependency (ranging from 3 to 6), and (3) high dependency (ranging from 7 to 16). The primary objective was to get each cell as equal in size as possible. Length of imprisonment was also separated into the following three categories: (1) 0 to 4 years, (2) 5 to 14 years, (3) 15 years and above. This particular division was based on what appeared to be natural breaks in the data. Finally, age at time of imprisonment was placed into a dicotomy utilizing the median as the point of focus.

Summary

The focus of this chapter has been to describe the basic research design, including the various methodological techniques by which the researcher has attempted to operationalize the concepts and hypotheses. Procedures for both social environments and individual sampling were detailed. Each of the scales utilized by the present study were described and evaluated. Finally, the statistical methods that will be used to analyze the data were briefly outlined.

CHAPTER VI

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

In the initial section of this chapter, the sample of 94 respondents is examined with respect to the socio-demographic variables. As was previously stated, each of these variables was selected because of its possible linkage to the dependent variable, institutional dependency. Activity participation and correctional history of older inmates will also be examined in this section.

Section two of this chapter will deal with the quantitative analysis of the seven hypotheses previously presented. In this exploratory attempt, other significant findings will be presented when appropriate.

Characteristics of the Sample

Age and Race

One of the most common descriptions given in any study is that of age and race. During the period of this analysis, the mean age of the selected respondents was 61 years of age. Interestingly, an age range of 55 to 82 was found in both

penal populations examined. The age distribution is found in Table XII.

TABLE XII
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY AGE

Age	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
55-59	42	54	49
60-64	25	19	21
65-69	17	11	14
70-74	8	9	8
75-79	5	5	5
80-84	3	2	2

Another important descriptive measure utilized in this study is the variable of Race. Table XIII shows both Whites and Blacks to be well represented among the older inmates. Interestingly, however, when comparing the two distinct samples, the Cummins unit consisted of 48 percent of older Blacks, while the Lexington population was represented by only 25 percent.

TABLE XIII
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY RACE

Race	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
Black	28	48	38
White	70	52	60
Indian	2	0	2

Occupation

The respondents' occupational potential is represented in Table XIV. The most frequent responses fall into the categories of "unskilled laborers or farm workers" and "skilled workers or craftsmen." A small portion reported that they were either retired or disabled prior to imprisonment. Although the influence of occupational status on the process of institutional adjustment is probably remote, older ex-con's without a specific skill may find it more difficult to negotiate a successful return to the outside, and may even be aware that this increases their dependency on the institution.

TABLE XIV
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
Unskilled Laborer, Farm Worker	46	44	44
Skilled Worker, Craftsman	29	31	32
Office Worker	3	4	3
Owner, Large Farm	2	4	3
Disabled or Retired	20	17	18

Income

When examining the distribution of the older inmate's present monthly income, findings revealed a substantial financial decline for many. Over 50 percent of those sampled receive no monthly income. This group is primarily comprised of those unable to qualify for a monthly retirement pension due to age. Of those reporting a monthly income, the median fell in the \$134 category. These distributions are found in Table XV.

TABLE XV
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY MONTHLY INCOME

Income	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
No Income	53	53	53
0-99	8	15	12
100-199	35	26	29
200-299	2	4	3
300 or Above	2	2	3

Education

When compared to contemporary educational standards, the educational achievement of this sample is relatively low. Well over one-half of the respondents failed to go beyond the eighth-grade level. While only a significantly small percent reported attending college, this data must be interpreted carefully due to the age of the population. It is unlikely that an education at any particular level some 40 to 50 years ago could be compared with the same level today either in content or in meaning for the older inmate. The education achievement of this special population is shown in Table XVI.

TABLE XVI
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY EDUCATION

Educational Level	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
No Formal Training	2	6	4
First - Fifth	35	33	34
Sixth - Eighth	28	31	30
Ninth - Eleventh	15	13	14
High School	18	9	13
Some College	2	8	5

Health

Another important factor in the evaluation of this particular sample is that of health, for health may influence one's adjustment in any environment. It should be mentioned, however, that the information presented here is based on the respondent's subjective evaluation of his health and is therefore not socio-medical data. Table XVII provides a distribution of the general health problems reported by the older inmates. Respiratory and heart disease appear to be the most prevalent among the population sampled. However, 24

percent of the total reported an absence of any particular health problem.

TABLE XVII
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HEALTH PROBLEMS

Health Problems	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
None	20	26	24
Arthritis	8	5	6
Respiratory Disease	20	15	17
Diabetes	5	7	6
Hypertension	5	6	5
Heart Disease	20	15	17
Cancer	2	4	3
Other	20	22	22

When asked to compare their health with the health of other aged inmates in the community who were their age, responses were rather evenly distributed--the exception being in the "excellent" and "poor" categories, where the responses were more varied. Interestingly, 13 percent of the Cummins

sample perceived themselves to be in excellent health, contrasted to 16 percent of the Lexington sample who felt their health to be in a poor status. A complete distribution of the older inmate's health perception is found in Table XVIII.

TABLE XVIII
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY HEALTH COMPARISON

Health Condition	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
Excellent	3	13	8
Very Good	20	20	20
Good	33	30	31
Fair	28	28	28
Poor	16	9	13

Marital Status

As previously indicated, an important aspect of institutional adjustment lies in the continued establishment of social relations with the outside world. Perhaps one of the most important variables in maintaining this continued

connection with the outside is that of marital status. Only 29 percent of the sample reported being married at the present time with another 9 percent reporting being separated from their spouse before incarceration. As can be expected, 34 percent of the subjects were divorced, and another 21 percent were classified as widowed. A breakdown of the marital status of the subjects can be found in Table XIX.

TABLE XIX
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
Married	20	35	29
Widower	30	15	21
Divorced	38	31	34
Never Married	7	6	6
Separated	5	13	10

Activity Participation

Another important aspect of aging in prison can be found in determining the type of activities utilized by older

inmates and the impact they have on institutional adjustment. Watching TV, playing checkers or dominoes, reading, visiting family and friends from the outside, and working appear to occupy most of the older prisoner's time at Lexington. However, at Cummins, only reading, working, and watching TV were mentioned with any consistency. A distribution of all activities is found in Table XX. When asked the most important activity at both institutions. Table XXI provides a ranking of the most important activity engaged in each institution.

Criminal Characteristics

The correctional history of the old prisoner is a viable part of the overall descriptive profile of this unique population. In developing a criminal overview from a life cycle perspective, 13 percent of the respondents reported having been arrested as juveniles. Regarding age at first imprisonment, Table XXII shows that one-half of the older inmates in this study were incarcerated for the first time after the age of fifty. Another 20 percent appeared to be chronic offenders who were imprisoned during their twenties.

Total length of imprisonment of this sample is characterized along a continuum of one month to 55 years. The mean years of imprisonment for all respondents is ten. Table XXIII provides a picture of the total length of imprisonment for the older inmates in the two samples represented.

Although over one-half of the older prisoners sampled were classified as being chronic offenders, a more specific

TABLE XX
ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Activity	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Working	37	100
Watching TV	67	65
Religious Activities	5	17
Checkers or Dominoes	45	11
Gardening	2	--
Walking	17	--
Visiting Friends from Outside	42	--
Fishing	10	--
Making Jewelry	5	2
Craftwork or Woodworking	12	11
Visiting Other Inmates	32	11
Visiting Groups on Outside	22	--
Writing	5	7
Sitting and Thinking	7	4
Movies	--	5
Reading	45	37
Other Activities	5	4

Respondents were asked to select as many as five activities; therefore, the percentages far exceed 100 percent.

TABLE XXI
MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY

Activity	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Working	30	68
Watching TV	8	2
Religious Activities	3	10
Checkers or Dominoes	8	2
Gardening	--	--
Walking	--	--
Visiting Friends from Outside	8	--
Fishing	--	2
Making Jewelry	--	2
Craftwork or Woodworking	8	4
Visiting Other Inmates	3	--
Visiting Groups on the Outside	11	--
Writing	--	--
Sitting and Thinking	3	--
Movies	4	--
Reading	5	5
Other Activities	9	5

TABLE XXII
DISTRIBUTION OF AGE AT FIRST IMPRISONMENT

Age	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
14-19	5	7	6
20-29	20	20	20
30-39	13	12	12
40-49	7	13	10
50-59	28	28	28
60-69	15	15	19
70-79	2	5	3

TABLE XXIII
DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL LENGTH OF ALL IMPRISONMENT

Years	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
(Reported by Percentage)			
Less Than 5	47	30	37
5 to 9	25	24	25
10 to 14	5	15	11
15 to 19	5	11	9
20 to 24	2	11	7
25 to 29	3	7	5
30 to 34	3	-	3
Over 35	10	2	3

classification of offenses reveals the general criminality of the population. Of the crimes committed, 67 percent were crimes of violence against another individual, with 33 percent committing crimes against property. Of the subjects, 41 percent were convicted murderers, 14 percent were sex offenders, 9 percent were convicted on manslaughter charges, 9 percent on armed robbery, and 3 percent on assault charges. A distribution of these crimes is presented in Table XXIV.

TABLE XXIV
DISTRIBUTION OF CRIMES COMMITTED

Offense	Lexington N = 40	Cummins N = 54	Combined N = 94
	(Reported by Percentage)		
Murder	20	57	41
Sex Offense	8	18	14
Assault	5	2	3
Burglary	10	9	10
Drug Violation	15	6	9
Manslaughter	20	--	9
Forgery	5	2	3
Weapons	2	--	1
Embezzlement	--	2	1
Armed Robbery	15	4	9

In order to establish a more descriptive profile of the aging prisoner, another objective of the present study was to investigate distinguishing differences emerging from the older offender's criminal classification. A further breakdown of crime distribution between those classified as chronic and late offenders reveals an interesting typology. For each distinctive group, four crimes tended to dominate their criminal activity. For the late offender, murder, sex offenses, drugs, and manslaughter comprised 89 percent of all crimes. Murder, sex offenses, burglary, and armed robbery were the most common crimes committed by the chronic offenders totaling 76 percent of all crimes committed by this sample. This distribution is found in Table XXV.

Other socio-demographic differences emerge between these two groups that perhaps can be linked to the dependent variable, institutional dependency. Table XXVI presents interesting differences in marital status between chronic and late offenders. Due to a high incidence of divorce, chronic prisoners appear to have a more unstable family atmosphere than do late offenders.

Moreover, when comparing the two groups, other questions revealed distinguishing differences regarding outside reference group interaction and support. Chronic offenders are less likely to receive regular visits to the prison (Table XXVII). Also, chronic offenders are less likely to expect any support from family or friends when paroled (Table XXVIII).

TABLE XXV

DISTRIBUTION OF CRIMES BY CRIMINAL CLASSIFICATION

Offense	Criminal Classification	
	Late N = 36	Chronic N = 58
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Murder	47	37
Sex Offense	17	12
Assault	5	2
Burglary	3	14
Drug Violation	14	7
Manslaughter	11	7
Forgery	--	5
Weapons	--	2
Embezzlement	3	--
Armed Robbery	--	14

TABLE XXVI

DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL STATUS
BETWEEN LATE AND CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Marital Status	Correctional History	
	Chronic N = 58	Late N = 36
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Married	17	47
Widower	19	25
Divorced	45	17
Never Married	7	6
Separated	12	5

TABLE XXVII

DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCES IN VISITS
BETWEEN LATE AND CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Frequency of Visits	Criminal Classification	
	Chronic N = 58	Late N = 36
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Never	45	22
Occasionally	33	31
Fairly Often	22	47

TABLE XXVIII
 DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCES IN OUTSIDE SUPPORT
 BETWEEN LATE AND CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Outside Support When Paroled	Criminal Classification	
	Chronic N = 58	Late N = 36
	(Reported by Percentage)	
Yes	59	92
Uncertain	7	--
No	34	8

In summary, the populations sampled from two contrasting institutions are rather homogeneous with respect to most of the socio-demographic data presented. However, there did appear to be certain differences between the two separate populations in respect to race and health perceptions. The Cummins sample contained a significantly greater portion of blacks than did the Lexington population. With regard to health, although the middle categories were evenly distributed, the subjects at Cummins appeared more frequently in the excellent health category, while the Lexington sample was more likely to classify themselves in the poor health category.

When dividing the sample with respect to the correctional history of older offenders, distinguishing differences

emerged between those classified as chronic versus late offenders. Although murder and sex offenses were common crimes among both groups, the chronic offender was more likely to be involved in burglary and armed robbery, while the late offender was more likely to be represented in the manslaughter and drug violation categories. In addition, when compared to late offenders, chronic offenders were usually found in an unmarried status and generally interacted less with those on the outside. These important differences will be examined in greater detail in the following section.

Quantitative Analysis of the Hypotheses

The first five hypotheses presented are concerned with various socio-demographic and correctional variables and the influences these factors have on the dependent variable, institutional dependency. Due to its descriptive nature, this data will be analyzed with the chi-square test of significance followed by the gamma or phi to measure the strength of the relationships. Hypotheses six and seven investigate the contrasting institutional environments and the significant differences each exerts on the variables, life satisfaction and institutional dependency. The t-tests of significance are utilized in testing the final two hypotheses.

Analysis of Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one: There is an inverse relationship between the influence of outside reference groups and degree of institutional dependency. It was felt that being a viable part of a family relationship could well serve to neutralize the impact of imprisonment and, eventually, institutional dependency. For the older prisoner, marital status itself was hypothesized as providing the most significant outside influence. The computed chi-square of 18.33 was found to be significant at the .0002 level, indicating a distinguishing difference between the marital status of the older prisoner and degree of institutionalization. Moreover, a gamma of $-.72$ indicated an extremely strong relationship between the variables under discussion. The results are presented in Table XXIX.

Analysis of Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two: There will be a direct relationship between length of imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency. Using the chi-square statistic, a value of 6.89 was not significant at the .05 level. However, a further interpretation of the specific cells in Table XXX indicates that there appears to be a direct relationship between the variables. The observed frequencies totaling 44 percent in the 0 to 4 year category indicated low dependency, an observed frequency comprising 41 percent in the 5 to 14 year

TABLE XXIX
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND
DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Institutional Dependency	Marital Status		Total
	Married	Unmarried	
Low	16 (59)	14 (21)	30
Medium	10 (37)	24 (36)	34
High	1 (4)	29 (43)	30
Totals	27	67	94

Chi-square = 18.33; df = 2; $p < .01$ Gamma = $-.72$
Percentages in parentheses

TABLE XXX
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LENGTH OF IMPRISONMENT AND
DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Institutional Dependency	Length of Imprisonment			Total
	Years 0-4	Years 5-15	Years 16 & Over	
Low	16 (44)	9 (24)	5 (24)	30
Medium	13 (36)	15 (41)	6 (29)	34
High	7 (20)	13 (35)	10 (47)	30
Totals	36 (100)	37 (100)	21 (100)	94

Chi-square = 6.89; df = 4; $p > .05$ Gamma = $-.42$
Percentages in parentheses

cell deposited a medium dependency classification, while an observed frequency containing 47 percent in the final cell indicated a high degree of dependency. This indicates a consistent pattern in the expected direction regarding the relationship between length of time and institutional dependency. A gamma of $-.42$ does support the argument that although the chi-square was not significant, length of imprisonment does appear to have a direct influence on degree of institutional dependency.

Analysis of Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three: There will be an inverse relationship between perceived health status and degree of institutional dependency. In order to meet the chi-square requirement regarding expected values (i.e., no more than 20 percent of the cells being less than 5.0) the excellent and very good categories were collapsed together. Surprisingly, there was no significant difference found between degree of institutional dependency and perceived health status. The resultant chi-square value for these two variables was only 4.27, which well exceeded the .05 rejection level. A gamma of $-.14$ also failed to indicate any significant strength between perceived health and institutional dependency. The results of the test are found in Table XXXI.

TABLE XXXI

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY
AND PERCEIVED HEALTH STATUS

Institutional Dependency	Perceived Health Status				Total
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	
Low	9 (33)	8 (26)	8 (31)	5 (42)	30
Medium	9 (33)	13 (48)	10 (38)	2 (16)	34
High	9 (33)	8 (26)	8 (31)	5 (42)	30
Totals	27	29	26	12	94

Chi-square = 4.27; df = 6; $p > .05$ Gamma = -.14
Percentages in parentheses

Analysis of Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis four: There will be an inverse relationship between age at time of first imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency. The results of the chi-square are found in Table XXXII. The chi-square value of 8.09 was significant at the .01 level. A computed gamma of .46 indicates moderate strength between age at time of imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency.

TABLE XXXII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AGE AT FIRST IMPRISONMENT AND
DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Institutional Dependency	Age at First Imprisonment		Total
	Age 14-49	Age 50-78	
Low	9 (20)	21 (44)	30
Medium	17 (37)	17 (35)	34
High	20 (43)	10 (21)	30
Totals	46 (100)	48 (100)	94

Chi-square = 8.09; df = 2; p < .01 Gamma = -.46
Percentages in parentheses

Analysis of Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis five: The degree of institutional dependency will be greater for the chronic offender than for the late offender. Again, dividing institutional dependency into three levels, Table XXXIII reveals a significant difference between the dependency of late and chronic offenders. The chi-square value of 6.47 was found significant at the .03 level. A gamma of -.33 confirmed significant strength between the two variables tested.

A difference of means (t-tests) was used to further evaluate hypothesis five. Regarding the institutional

TABLE XXXIII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LATE AND CHRONIC OFFENDERS
AND INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Institutional Dependency	Criminal Classification		Total
	Late	Chronic	
Low	15 (42)	15 (26)	30
Medium	15 (42)	19 (33)	34
High	6 (16)	14 (41)	30
Totals	36 (100)	58 (100)	94

Chi-square = 6.47; 2 df; $p < .05$
Percentages in parentheses

Gamma = $-.33$

dependency scale, late offenders had a computed mean of 3.94 compared to a mean score of 6.13 for the chronic offender. This resulted in a calculated t value of 2.98 significant at the .01 level. The results of this test are shown in Table XXXIV.

Analysis of Hypothesis Six

Hypothesis six: The life satisfaction of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment will be higher than the life satisfaction of older prisoners in a conventional prison environment. In evaluating hypothesis six, an analysis of the data revealed a life satisfaction mean of 13.12

TABLE XXXIV
DIFFERENCES IN INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY BETWEEN
LATE VERSUS CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Group	Mean	SD	df	t	sig
Late	3.94	2.78			
vs			46	2.98	.01
Chronic	6.13	4.33			

for the Cummins sample and a similar mean of 13.42 for the Lexington population. A difference of means (t-tests) reported a t of .39, indicating no significant difference between the structure of the prison environment and life satisfaction. The computation is presented in Table XXXV.

Analysis of Hypothesis Seven

Hypothesis seven: The dependency of older prisoners in a conventional prison will be higher than the dependency of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment. An analysis of the institutional dependency index revealed a mean score of 5.29 for the combined groups at both institutions. A comparative analysis showed a dependency mean score of 5.16 for the older prisoners at Cummins compared to a similar mean of 5.47 for the older prisoners at Lexington.

TABLE XXXV
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRISON ENVIRONMENTS
AND LIFE SATISFACTION

Environment	Mean	SD	df	t	sig
Cummins	13.12	3.59			
vs.			46	.39	>.05
Lexington	13.42	3.70			

The difference of means (t-tests) in Table XXXVI reveals that a t of .37 is not significant and fails to confirm hypothesis seven.

TABLE XXXVI
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRISON ENVIRONMENTS
AND INSTITUTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Environment	Mean	SD	df	t	sig
Cummins	5.16	3.73			
vs.			46	.37	>.05
Lexington	5.47	4.26			

Further Considerations

Due to the exploratory nature of this endeavor, further investigation generated significant findings beyond those presented with the foregoing hypotheses. As Table XXXVII indicates, a late offender is more likely to be married than a chronic offender. A chi-square of 9.75 was found to be significant at the .002 level. A phi of .32 does offer tentative support to the strength of the relationship between marital status and criminal classification.

TABLE XXXVII

DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL STATUS BETWEEN
LATE AND CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Criminal Classification	Marital Status		Total
	Married	Unmarried	
Late	17 (63)	19 (25)	36
Chronic	10 (37)	48 (75)	58
Totals	27	67	94

Chi-square = 9.75; 1 df; $p < .01$ Phi = .32
Percentages in parentheses

As expected, the length of years spent in prison also appears to be influenced by significant outside reference groups or in this case marital status of the older prisoner. A chi-square of 7.42 was found to be significant at the .02 level. A gamma of $-.39$ can be interpreted as showing moderate strength between these two variables. Findings for this data are presented in Table XXXVIII.

TABLE XXXVIII
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND
LENGTH OF IMPRISONMENT

Length in Years	Marital Status		Total
	Married	Unmarried	
0-4	16 (60)	20 (30)	36
5-15	6 (22)	31 (46)	37
16 and Above	5 (18)	16 (24)	21
Totals	27	67	94

Chi-square = 7.42; df = 2; $p < .05$
Percentages in parentheses

Gamma = $-.39$

Although both tables indicate significant results regarding criminal classification, length of imprisonment, and

marital status, causal direction of the relationship cannot be adequately determined. The data is unable to show whether a crime career was continued due to older prisoners being unmarried or whether, in fact, a chronic offender's criminal behavior and eventual imprisonment brought about this particular marital situation.

Summary

A descriptive analysis is provided in section one developing a general profile of the older prisoner. Differences were compared between prisoners from two separate social environments as well as those with divergent criminal classifications. The results of the main hypothesis by which the theoretical model was tested are presented in section two. The variables of marital status, length of imprisonment, and differences in criminal classification tended to support the model of institutional dependency. The influence of the social structure on life satisfaction and institutional dependency failed to materialize as significant factors in the model. Likewise, perceived health status failed to show a positive relationship with the dependent variable, institutional dependency.

CHAPTER VII

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

In an attempt to support the quantitative procedures used in this research, qualitative comments derived from interviews with both staff and inmates as well as simple observation will be presented. The following discussion will be an attempt to give the researcher's general overall impressions of the two separate institutions with respect to the impact these relevant differences may have on certain hypotheses of the present study. This descriptive analysis will include the physical settings as well as the attitudes and observed behavior of the older prisoners and staff. In the conclusion of this section, the institutional dependency model will be reviewed in relation to the author's subjective impressions of the two residences.

Lexington

The Lexington Regional Treatment Center was selected as representative of institutions attempting to develop a therapeutic environment within which the negative impact of institutionalization is discouraged. This particular therapeutic environment is located in a separate facility for geriatric

residents who have chronologically or functionally been classified as geriatric and are unable to participate in the regular program of the institution. The geriatric program addresses itself to the particular problems of the aging inmate and the difficulties these persons encounter upon re-entry into the mainstream of society.

This Program is directed by the Unit Manager who serves as the coordinator of the different activities which form the nucleus of this endeavor. The Unit Manager is currently aided by a Corrections Training Officer who coordinates many of the dorm activities. Student interns have been instrumental in helping implement and meet specific objectives of the program. In order to organize and to encourage the older inmates, the Unit Manager has also recruited a select group of younger inmates to live in the geriatrics unit even though age 55 is usually required for admission. Finally, personal involvement and support of the entire staff as well as the necessary cooperation from the outside community have provided the final supportive touches in the initial development of the experimental program.

In an effort to achieve a therapeutic community environment, the following program has been instituted. However, new activities are constantly being introduced as specific interests of the residents change and as the necessary resources in the outside community become available.

- (1) Senior Citizen Visitation. Two separate groups of retired senior citizens come to the facility

several times a month to visit certain elderly residents. Occasionally, return visits are made by the inmates to the respective senior citizen facilities. The primary goal of this activity is to insure that every inmate maintains contact with someone on the outside since many of the inmates have no family to visit them. Also, the people who visit may be able to assist the resident with many of his problems concerning parole programs and other difficulties he may encounter while incarcerated.

- (2) Geriatric Unit Representative. Several times each year residents residing in the dorm meet for the purpose of selecting dorm representatives. The basic purpose of this function is to help the residents realize that even though they are incarcerated they still are able to exert some control over their environment by making certain democratic decisions affecting their lives.
- (3) Toy Repair. This year-round unit activity consists of the repair of toys that have been collected by various civic organizations for the purpose of being sold to needy families at greatly reduced prices. This activity serves to help the residents feel that they

have made a significant contribution to the community. Hopefully, this involvement will strengthen their self-esteem.

- (4) Arts and Crafts. Each resident is encouraged to participate in a variety of ongoing projects within the unit. Some of these activities include the creation of unique walking canes, making jewelry, building wagon lamps, and engaging in pottery-making. In addition to making a profit on these leisure activities, the residents also learn to use their time in a creative fashion. It is felt that many of the residents will continue to engage in these or similar activities once paroled.
- (5) Leisure Activities. Other useful activities provided to encourage group involvement include a monthly domino tournament with the winner receiving a prize, fishing when weather permits, and pitching horseshoes as well as other organized games. The purpose of these activities is to involve older residents in recreational activities that will not only pass the time of imprisonment, but will also prove to be meaningful activities.
- (6) Business Activities. One group of older residents has organized themselves into a business venture of selling popcorn during visitation

periods. The goal of this particular activity is to help the residents learn to work together and hopefully to give them a greater sense of responsibility. As profits are shown, self-pride will increase.

The physical facilities of the Lexington Center include an open dorm system outside the main prison structure. Although the residents refer to the facility as "Hooks Hotel" in honor of the Unit Manager, the unit actually takes on the characteristics of a rest-home atmosphere. Beds are lined the length of the dorm in two rows. Residents, especially those in poor health, can be found sleeping or lying in bed almost any time of the day. A television is attached to the wall at one end and is surrounded by numerous crude chairs. Several inmates can usually be found in this vicinity. Although one small storage room has been converted into a wood-working space, most of the individual-oriented activities take place near the resident's sleeping area. Dominoes are played in an open area approaching the bathroom facility. Despite the lack of working space, the major objectives of the program appear that they are being met. Careful observation and discussions with the residents indicated, however, that a majority of those in the geriatric dorm were not actively engaging in the ongoing activities. However, those that were active appeared to be highly engaged.

In-depth interviews with the administrator and staff revealed a keen awareness concerning typical problems of old

age. The Unit Manager has established excellent communications with the older inmates, and a great deal of trust was evident. Moreover, several inmates indicated that the Unit Manager took a personal interest in their welfare. All of the subjects interviewed indicated that they preferred to reside in this particular segregated community. The most common rationale was the fact that they felt comfortable being around those their own age. In short, morale seemed to be quite high in this particular prison population.

One special area of concern for the Unit Manager was getting adequate cooperation from the security staff. Since the therapeutic approach instilled in this dorm resulted in special treatment, certain confrontations emerged between those in charge of security and those responsible for maintaining a community reintegrated focus. On the writer's last visit to this institution, a security guard was noticed volunteering to transport a group of older prisoners fishing on his day off. This appears to reflect a continued development between the security staff and the goals of the therapeutic community.

The subjects' most common complaint among this special group was the lack of an adequate diet line for those with stomach problems. One respondent was unable to eat the regular diet due to the lack of dentures. At the conclusion of this study, investigations were being made regarding the establishment of special foods being made available to those with special health problems.

Cummins

As was previously mentioned, there was a contrasting social structure at the Cummins Prison where the environment was much more rigid. In this punishment-centered prison, the officials ran a formal organization designed to maintain almost total control over inmates through concentration of power and routinizing inmate behavior. This institution can be characterized by its lack of any specific activity program oriented toward the aging prisoner. In fact, all but one of the respondents reported that most of their time was spent working. There appeared to be a significant amount of pride in their work on the prison farm. Most inmates were working seven days a week since this was the most successful avenue in coping with an extremely long prison sentence.

There was no indication that the older inmates received any special favors at this institution. The staff here was somewhat insensitive to the problems of older inmates, and treatment appeared to be the same regardless of age. For example, when this writer initially arrived to begin the interviewing process, the entire group of subjects were lined up along a wall to await their turns. Since each interview took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete, this meant that the majority had to wait several hours before the process was finalized. Of course, the staff rationale included the argument that "the inmates weren't going anywhere anyway."

Goffman (1961:257) mentioned that "the inmate undergoes a series of abasements, degradations, humiliations of self

in a total institution." Informal discussion with the respondents revealed that many refused to place family or friends on the visitation list because of the strict authoritarian structure experienced at Cummins. Thus, due to the nature of the environment itself, some residents chose not to maintain a physical contact with those on the outside. Common responses were: "You can't visit in a place like this" or "I don't want my family to see me here." The writer also observed on several occasions inmates removing their clothing for inspection, another example of the constant debasement found in a maximum security prison.

The residents at this institution were integrated with the prison population as a whole. All but one individual indicated they were happy with this arrangement and wouldn't want to change. Most of those interviewed were residing in a new residential section sharing a small room with one other individual. Several had recently moved from trailers to this section, and satisfaction from this transfer was apparent.

In spite of the contrasting conditions at this closed environment, the residents seemed to be, as a whole, well adjusted. General observations revealed that their health was generally better than the Lexington sample. In addition, their general outlook on life appeared to be positive in nature.

Interpretation of the qualitative findings here should be received in a guarded fashion, however, since the

researcher was unable to gain free access to the Cummins unit. Rather, qualitative information used in this analysis was, for the most part, gathered during the process of the formal interview.

Summary

One assumption made in this study was that the nature of the social structure itself will play a vital role in the life satisfaction and institutional adjustment of the older inmate. An institutional structure which attempts to neutralize the pains of imprisonment and encourages the resident to maintain viable connections with the outside may influence the individual's behavior in a positive manner. Likewise, the individual who resides within an institutional social structure producing a negative impact by condoning breaks with the outside world may influence the aged individual's self-concept and behavior in a negative manner. Having completed a general description of the contrasting social structures, it is appropriate to analyze relevant hypotheses within this framework.

The theoretical model of the present study is based on the assumptions of institutional dependency, including the premise that it may be the only alternative for those aging in prison. Discussions with the staff of both institutions disclosed that certain older inmates did in fact possess distinguishing characteristics of institutional dependency. The staff relayed a variety of previous conversations with

aging prisoners indicating that they preferred not to be paroled. One individual was paroled to a nearby nursing home, but chose to remain at the prison. It was learned that another individual cried when he was paroled to a nursing home and became so angry he refused to talk to a prison staff member who visited him there the following week.

The inmates themselves were familiar with the concept "institutionalized" and individual after individual stated that they were aware of certain "other" inmates being in this category. When asked what characterized a typical institutionalized person, the most ordinary response was "someone that didn't have 'anyone' or 'anything' on the outside--they have been imprisoned so long this is the only life they know."

Further impressions were derived from casual conversations with the subjects. Several of the subjects told this writer that they intended to "flatten" their time instead of taking early parole. Their rationale was based on the inconvenience of having to report to the parole counselor, but also could be interpreted as a fear of being unable to cope with life on the outside. One inmate, having spent considerable time on death row, indicated "he was so happy now that he couldn't sleep." Another resident explained that he was imprisoned at age sixteen and served fifteen years before parole which resulted in a return trip to prison. He commented, "I want to stay here until I'm sure I can make it

next time. I want to be able to get along with people on the outside, but I don't know how."

In summary, although some measure of institutional dependency was evident at both institutions, subjective impressions through interviews and direct observations tended to only partially verify these hypotheses. Institutional dependency tended to be characterized by the inmates themselves as a lack of a particular reference group on the outside coupled with the length of imprisonment, rather than by the nature of the social structure. Regarding life satisfaction, although the Lexington subjects tended to be a more relaxed group with an optimistic attitude, the emphasis on leisure activities tended to be offset to some degree by the concept of work as an important role identity at Cummins.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The primary purpose of the present study has been an attempt to establish a more systematic analysis of aging in prison. The principal intent of the study is the development, formal, and explicit, of a theoretical model implicit in the fields of penology and gerontology. The basic framework from which this model was derived focused on the concept of "institutional dependency" as a viable alternative for certain older prisoners in the final stages of the life cycle. This approach is based on the assumption that the aging prisoner represents a unique population in respect to criminal pattern, medical care, problems of institutional adjustment, and problems of family relationships posing difficulties regarding rehabilitation and eventual community reintegration.

A second goal of the present study was to empirically test hypotheses derived from the tentative theoretical model as a means of illustrating theory-development applied to common propositions in penology and gerontology. In order to test the model more thoroughly, the research was designed to measure the effects of specific institutional social

structures. As the "life-space" of the older prisoner tends to narrow (due to poor health, decline of outside reference groups, etc.), the type of institution itself may become an essential factor in motivating behavior toward community reintegration.

The implementation of this exploratory research design entails various complications and limitations. Two divergent institutions were appropriately conceived and a basic design was developed which was comprised of three methodological techniques, including a content analysis of inmate records at one institution as well as interview and simple observational procedures. The major barrier in this process was the establishment of a relevant measure of the concept "institutional dependency." Utilizing feedback from staff perceptions, and after pretesting a panel of older inmates, an index was tentatively established. Demographic and attitudinal data were elicited from residents at both institutions. Due to the study being exploratory in nature, the data was analyzed in a variety of quantitative forms. In order to support the quantitative methodological techniques, qualitative observations were also made. Before providing an interpretation of these findings, certain limitations of the study will be summarized.

Methodological Limitations

The basic research design of the present study failed to incorporate a control group. The respondents of both

institutional social environments could be described as experimental in nature. The actual presence of a legitimate control group would have provided a comparative base against which to measure the contrasting experimental groups. The use of qualitative and quantitative data analysis may help identify significant differences in the instruments being tested. However, without a control group, the researcher is unable to positively ascertain that the differences are directly related to the independent variable of institutional social structures. In short, unidentified intervening variables may have influenced the findings.

As was previously mentioned, the nature of the study inflicted certain limitations regarding the choice of available sampling procedures. In an attempt to look at an experimental therapeutic environment, only those subjects residing in a particular dorm were included in the purposeful sample. This limited the sample at Lexington to only 40 subjects. The only two other qualifications were that the respondents be at least fifty-five years of age and be a resident of the institution for no less than one month. This is a relatively short period of time to measure any significant differences regarding the impact a therapeutic social structure might have on institutional adjustment. In drawing inferences about the characteristics of populations from sample statistics, the assertion is frequently made that the sample should be drawn at random from the population. Obviously, the sample used in this study does not approach

randomness, and inference can only be made to the groups sampled.

It should be noted that although all interviews were conducted by the researcher, allowing for a fairly standardized interpretation of the items, other types of biases emerged. After visiting the Lexington unit over a period of several days, some respondents began to identify the researcher with the prison staff. Although this was not a widespread occurrence, certain answers could have been modified if such were the case.

In addition, the nature of the sample itself produced related limitations. For example, many inmates, having spent years in prison, were expert con-artists. Although various methodological procedures were utilized, it was difficult to establish any valid crosschecks in response to this perceived reaction. Too, some subjects probably responded to the interview in such a manner to insure that good relations with the staff would be continued. Other questions may have been negotiated in a cautious fashion to insure that parole would not be hindered. Thus, establishing communications in an environment where little trust is evident is certainly no easy task and has a variety of built-in limitations.

In retrospect, a specific evaluation of the questionnaire yielded several definite limitations. A definite drawback to the data analysis was the lack of access to the inmate records at Cummins. Although some general

correctional history was generated, some information was too specific to gather within an interview framework. Being able to review the subject's personal file beforehand would have given the researcher a definite frame from which to focus each interview. Of course, the major drawback resulting from this limitation was the lack of a conclusive comparative analysis comparing those from each institution as well as late versus chronic offenders.

Another definite limitation of the questionnaire was the inability to establish a viable measure of the inmate's general reference group. Even though it appeared certain respondents relied on each other for friendship purposes, many responded by refusing to admit that they actually maintained any friends within the prison social environment. Other respondents indicated that their family influenced them the most, while in some cases the inmate's family had not been heard of for over 20 years. This limitation was impossible to overcome since the use of other alternative methods to solicit the desired response would have, in turn, produced unreliable and unobjective data as well. Due to this shortcoming, it was impossible to adequately test any relationship between a general reference group orientation and the institutional dependency index.

Although interview and observational techniques were used to evaluate the staff within each institution, it might have proved beneficial to administer a questionnaire with items focusing on specific problems of aging in prison and

institutional adjustment of older prisoners. Analysis of such questionnaires could have been utilized to supplement other methodological procedures in evaluating the institutional dependency index and general staff perceptions of the older offender. With the limitations of research design, sampling procedure, and questionnaire design, the following section will be an attempt to interpret the qualitative and quantitative findings.

Summary of Results

In the evaluation of the findings of the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data will be jointly reviewed in order to provide insights into the hypotheses derived from the tentative theoretical model. Each hypothesis will be considered as it provides information regarding the institutional adjustment of older prisoners in two separate environments.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis of the present study expected that there would be an inverse relationship between the influence of outside reference groups and institutional dependency. Quantitative procedures appeared to support this particular hypothesis. Marital status emerged as a significant factor in the degree of institutional dependency shown by older prisoners. In fact, 29 of the 30 respondents found in the high dependency category were not married.

Hypothesis one was extremely difficult to evaluate in a qualitative manner. A majority of the subjects did not want to readily admit that they maintained close friendships with other inmates. Although certain respondents indicated they had family or friends on the outside who would give them support if paroled, this did not always appear to be the case. Some of the family members mentioned lived in remote sections of the country, while others had not actually been communicating with the subjects on a regular basis. An in-depth interview with one inmate revealed that a majority of the older offenders do have at least one close friend that they rely on to discuss their problems, etc. This view is supported by Glaser (1964) who found that for most inmates strong ties with other inmates seemed entirely absent, or were limited to a few other inmates only. Glaser also found that married prisoners were somewhat more frequently inclined toward isolation from other prisoners than were single inmates.

Due to the nature of the research design, it is difficult to determine under what conditions outside reference group influence is the greatest. However, both qualitative and quantitative data appears to support the hypothesis that the lack of a significant outside reference group results in the older prisoner becoming more dependent on the social relationship within the institution itself. Thus, the family appears to serve as an important pull factor in offsetting institutional dependency. This evidence tends to reinforce

our thought that continued social involvement with the outside world serves as a preventive measure regarding dependence on the institution and improved prospects for community reintegration.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two predicts that the length of imprisonment will have a direct relationship on the degree of institutional dependency found among older inmates. An analysis of quantitative data did not provide consistent support of this hypothesis. While the Pearson (r) and gamma supported a modest degree of association between the variables, the chi-square statistic failed to statistically support the relationship. However, a further interpretation of specific chi-square cells reveals there is a uniform consistency present between the length of imprisonment and degree of institutional dependency.

A qualitative analysis tended to provide substantial support of the second hypothesis. Inmates themselves mentioned length of imprisonment as a major characteristic of being institutionalized. Those who had experienced long confinements appeared more disoriented toward the outside. Some even admitted a fear of returning to the outside world. Although in some cases those experiencing extremely long confinement denied any dependency, their peers relayed private conversations indicating that they preferred to remain in prison instead of returning to the outside world. In

summary, both qualitative and quantitative analysis appear to generally support the hypothesis expecting the length of imprisonment to influence the degree of dependence on the institution.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three indicated an inverse relationship would exist between perceived health status and institutional dependency. A quantitative evaluation revealed that older prisoner's perception of health status was not a determining factor in the process of institutional adjustment. The chi-square value failed to show any significance between these two variables.

Likewise, qualitative observations failed to support the third hypothesis with any marked consistency. Generally, the older prisoners at Cummins were perceived to be in better health than the comparative sample. Certain older prisoners in both institutions indicated that due to their illness they would never leave the prison. These were the exceptional cases, however. As one older prisoner stated: "I have cancer and will probably never live to see the outside. I enjoy working on the ranch here since that was my job before I came to prison." Perhaps the nature of the sample itself was a contributing influence regarding the lack of support for hypothesis three.

A brief survey of the sample indicates that 49 percent of the respondents were found to be under sixty years of age.

This could well account for the positive health perception of the sample. Moreover, several of the older prisoners at Lexington had been paroled to rest homes. As prison conditions become more crowded, certain older prisoners not considered dangerous will no doubt continue to be paroled.

Another factor that should be considered when evaluating the findings of hypothesis three is summarized by an older prisoner in a recent study of Wiltz (1973:55):

They say that these places (prisons) preserve a man. I think that's very true. Your regular hours of eating and sleeping preserve your health. If a man doesn't catch something here, I believe he can live to be 110 or 115 years old.

Thus, if the perceived health status of those sampled in the present study is any indication, their health--being better than average--does not significantly influence institutional adjustment.

Hypothesis Four

Age at the time of first imprisonment was expected to be inversely related to the degree of institutional dependency. It is particularly difficult to verify this hypothesis through observational techniques. It can be noted that interviews and informal conversations with specific subjects appeared to support the proposed relationship. As one older inmate remarked:

I was only sixteen when I was imprisoned on a murder charge. Prison life 40 years ago was hard on a man. If a noise was made in a cell, everyone in the entire cell row was whipped. I was just a kid at the time

Other older inmates revealed similar accounts regarding the negative impact that earlier prison experiences had made. Conversations with these chronic offenders indicated that they had never overcome this initial prison experience.

The statistical data verified the hypothesis with a significant chi-square value at the .01 level. The cells showed an extremely consistent pattern regarding age and low, medium, and high dependency. In conclusion, the limited qualitative data and, very impressively, the quantitative data seemed to support the hypothesis that age at the time of imprisonment is inversely related to the concept of institutional dependency.

Hypothesis Five

The fifth hypothesis predicted that institutional dependency will be greater for the chronic offender than for the late offender. Due to the nature of the variable of criminal classification, it is again difficult to systematically evaluate this hypothesis in a qualitative fashion. General observations and interviews did reveal major differences between the two groups that seemed to influence institutional dependency. Late offenders were more likely to mention missing their families, while chronic offenders seemed more guarded in their answers and appeared to be more aware of an operating prison subculture. Of course the criminal classification itself indicates that the chronic offender is more likely to be unmarried, imprisoned for

greater lengths, and not as susceptible rehabilitation, when compared to the late offender. Moreover, it was felt that these classified as late offenders did experience more difficulty in adjusting to prison life. The late offender appeared to be more remorseful in nature and unaccepting of the fact of growing old in prison. There was some indication of late offenders being abandoned by their families on the outside resulting in some anxiety. While the chronic offender appeared to be better adjusted to the institution, it appeared that the late offender had not fully internalized his new role identity resulting in a feeling of double jeopardy and helplessness.

Several statistical observations confirmed this hypothesis in a very positive fashion. A chi-square, gamma, and difference of means (t-tests) all supported the hypothesis in a consistent fashion. In summary, the results of the data presented tend to support the hypothesis that those classified as chronic offenders will possess a greater level of dependency than those classified as late offenders.

Hypothesis Six

Regarding hypothesis six, it was predicted that the life satisfaction of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment would be higher than the life satisfaction of those in a conventional prison environment. A mean score of 13.2 on the LSIB with a standard deviation of 3.6 was found for the combined sample. The mean was slightly lower than

the mean of 15.4 for the LSIB and a standard deviation of 4.7 reported by Neugarten et al. (1961). Quantitative data failed to distinguish any significant differences regarding the life satisfaction score between the respondents of the respective institutions.

Various subjective observations can be offered to explain the lack of support for hypothesis six. It appears that work at the Cummins unit is functional to the point that it structures the lives of those inmates as well as providing them with time-consuming activities, which is essential if an inmate is to realize a progress in his sentence. For it is through employment that an individual is able to maintain his contact with middle age and maintain his positive self-concept. On the other hand, there appears to be a gap in the thinking of the staff of Lexington and the perception of the older inmate regarding what constitutes a therapeutic environment. Although numerous activities are stressed at Lexington, they are not required and do not appear to be "meaningful" to the extent that they provide the necessary structure or role support that is needed in this age group. Health could be a factor in that the subjects at Cummins did appear to be in better health. The fact that some inmates at Lexington are residing in the Geriatrics Dorm because of poor health supports this argument. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative data indicate that for those sampled in this study, life satisfaction appears the same in spite of the differing social environment.

Hypothesis Seven

The final hypothesis expected that the dependency of older prisoners in a conventional prison will be higher than the dependency of older prisoners in a therapeutic prison environment. The statistical results failed to confirm the predicted relationship. In fact, the means of the institutional dependency index were almost identical for the two groups.

Qualitative observations tended to support the quantitative findings. Although it was evident that dependency did exist, interviews and observations failed to distinguish any main differences between the institutions. Inmates at both prisons labeled certain respondents as highly institutionalized and generally characterized them in the same descriptive manner. In summary, the nature of the prison environment failed to distinguish any consistent level of dependency. Instead, it appears that the characteristics of the individual are more important in determining whether dependency will persist.

Final Implications for the Model

While some of the proposed relationships failed to support the tentative model being tested, significant patterns of aging in prison did emerge. The concept of institutional dependency was established as a possible alternative for certain older prisoners. It is realized that the

development of this model is at the infant stages and future research will be necessary to test its reliability. Although certain refinement is needed, it is felt that the Institutional Dependency Index is an instrument with research promise.

In retrospect, certain weaknesses of this study should lend themselves to the future testing of a more comprehensive model of aging within a prison environment. Due to the broad scope necessary to test the proposed model, there appears to be a need for further exploration focusing on single dimensions within the model. Certainly reference group orientation was not adequately assessed. Friendship patterns were based on the perceptions of older prisoners and not actual interaction patterns, which contributed to the limitations of the study. Due to the significant differences emerging between chronic and late offenders, a more in-depth study will prove fruitful in identifying criminal behavior and problems of rehabilitation. Finally, in order to determine the validity of the model based on age itself, comparative studies comprised of younger age cohorts could provide significant insights regarding the development of institutional dependency from a life cycle perspective.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Race:
 - _____ 1. White
 - _____ 2. Black
 - _____ 3. Indian
 - _____ 4. Other _____

2. _____ Age

3. _____ What is your occupation?

4. _____ Income: Social Security, Retirement Check, etc.

5. _____ What was the highest grade you completed?

6. Do you have any immediate health problems?
 - _____ 1. Yes
 - _____ 2. NoIf yes, please list _____

7. Which of the following best describes your health, as compared to others your age?
 - _____ 1. Excellent
 - _____ 2. Very good
 - _____ 3. Good
 - _____ 4. Fair
 - _____ 5. Poor

8. Marriage status at present:
 - _____ 1. Married, and spouse living
 - _____ 2. Widower
 - _____ 3. Divorced
 - _____ 4. Never married
 - _____ 5. Separated

9. _____ Number of times married?

10. Now let's talk about other members of your family. Do you have any living:
 - _____ 1. Parents
 - _____ 2. Brothers
 - _____ 3. Sisters
 - _____ 4. Children

11. Of all the people you know, who do you feel closest to?

- 1. Family members
- 2. Friends on the outside
- 3. Other inmates
- 4. Staff

12. Who do you feel understands you the best?

- 1. Family members
- 2. Friends on the outside
- 3. Other inmates
- 4. Staff

13. Not including members of your family, who do you consider to be your best friend?

- 2. Other inmates
- 1. Staff
- 0. Friends on the outside

Institutional Dependency Index

14. How often do you receive visits from members of family or friends?

- 2. Never
- 1. Occasionally (1-2 times a year)
- 0. Fairly often (monthly)

15. How often do you receive letters from members of family or friends?

- 2. Never
- 1. Occasionally (1-2 times a year)
- 0. Fairly often (monthly)

16. How often do you write letters to members of your family or friends?

- 2. Never
- 1. Occasionally (1-2 times a year)
- 0. Fairly often (monthly)

17. If you are paroled, do you have friends or family on the outside you can depend on for support?

- 2. No
- 1. Uncertain
- 0. Yes

18. Generally, what do you spend most of your time thinking about?
- _____ 2. Things on the inside only
 _____ 1. Things on the inside and outside
 _____ 0. Things on the outside only
19. When you think about parole and life on the outside, what do you feel? What do you think about?
- _____ 2. Problems
 _____ 1. Uncertain--mixed thoughts or feelings
 _____ 0. No problems--good thoughts or feelings
20. How do you feel knowing that you have all of your basic needs provided for here (i.e., food, housing, health care, etc.)?
- _____ 2. Positive thoughts or feelings
 _____ 1. Mixed thoughts or feelings
 _____ 0. Negative thoughts or feelings
21. Here is a newspaper article showing an older prisoner who decided to stay in prison after his sentence was commuted. What are your feelings about that?
- _____ 2. Positive thoughts or feelings
 _____ 1. Mixed thoughts or feelings
 _____ 0. Negative thoughts or feelings
22. If you were told that you had to spend the rest of your life here, how would you feel?
- _____ 2. Positive thoughts or feelings
 _____ 1. Mixed thoughts or feelings
 _____ 0. Negative thoughts or feelings

Life Satisfaction Index B

23. What are the best things about being the age you are now?
- _____ 1. A positive answer
 _____ 0. Nothing good about it
24. What do you think you will be doing five years from now? How do you expect things will be different from the way they are now in your life?
- _____ 2. Better, or no change
 _____ 1. Contingent "it depends"
 _____ 0. Worse

25. What is the most important thing in your life now?
- _____ 2. Anything outside of self, or pleasant interpretation of future
_____ 1. "Hanging on"; keeping health, or job
_____ 0. Getting out of present difficulty, or "nothing now," or reference to the past
26. How happy would you say you are right now, compared with the earlier periods of your life?
- _____ 2. This is the happiest time; all have been happy; or hard to make a choice
_____ 1. Some decrease in recent years
_____ 0. Earlier periods were better; this is a bad time
27. Do you ever worry about your ability to do what people expect of you--to meet demands that people make on you?
- _____ 2. No
_____ 1. Qualified yes or no
_____ 0. Yes
28. If you could do anything you pleased, where in this institution would you most like to live?
- _____ 2. Present location
_____ 0. Any other location
29. How often do you find yourself feeling lonely?
- _____ 2. Never; hardly ever
_____ 1. Sometimes
_____ 0. Fairly often, very often
30. How often do you feel there is no point in living?
- _____ 2. Never; hardly ever
_____ 1. Sometimes
_____ 0. Fairly often, very often
31. Do you wish you could see more of your close friends than you do?
- _____ 2. OK as is
_____ 0. Wish could see more of friends
32. How much unhappiness would you say you find in your life today?
- _____ 2. Almost none
_____ 1. About as expected
_____ 0. Worse

33. As you get older, would you say things seem to be better or worse than you thought they would be?

2. Better
 1. About as expected
 0. Worse

34. How satisfied would you say you are with your way of life here?

2. Very satisfied
 1. Fairly satisfied
 0. Not very satisfied

35. From the following activities, name the five most frequent things you do in an ordinary week:

1. Walking
 2. Gardening
 3. Watching TV
 4. Checkers or dominoes
 5. Visiting friends from the outside
 6. Fishing
 7. Making jewelry
 8. Reading
 9. Craftwork or woodworking
 10. Sitting and thinking
 11. Painting (art)
 12. Visiting other inmates
 13. Participating in an encounter group
 14. Working in the prison
 15. Making walking canes
 16. Making trips or visiting groups on the outside
 17. Repairing or making toys for children
 18. Other _____

36. Of all the activities that you participate in, which is the most important to you?

Correctional History

37. Do you recall if you were ever arrested as a juvenile?

1. Yes 2. No

38. If yes, what age and what offense?

Age _____ Offense _____

VITA ²

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