HM Prison & Probation Service
The Impact of CFO3 Activities on Offender Employment

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Introduction

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service Co-Financing Organisation (CFO) co-ordinates large-scale programmes to support offenders into employment. It is designed to engage the most 'hard-to-reach' offenders, through a number of areas: employability, education, health awareness, financial guidance and resettlement advice. A set pathway is used, shown in the diagram below. As an intern at HMPPS, I analysed the outcomes of each stage and activity, in terms of the proportion of participants that went into employment. I presented this in a formal report.

Enrolment → **Core Activities** → **Supportive Measures** → **Education Courses** → **Employment**
24,473 Participants   17,421 Participants   9,097 Participants   3,424 Participants

Objectives

The report aimed to understand the relationship between offenders' participation in activities and employment gained on leaving. I used the CFO's dataset, which came from the CATS+ (Case Assesment and Tracking System) database. Here, caseworkers track the needs and progress of offenders as they move along a specialised pathway . This data contained all offenders on the programme from 1 July 2015 to 1 July 2019. Providers also record whether offenders have gone into employment within one year of leaving the programme.

Method

Firstly, the three stages, and activities within them, were grouped accordingly. The number of activities in each group was:

Core Activities **27**   Supportive Measures **4**   Education **17**

The percentage of participants who were employed prior and post-taking an activity,was calculated in each individual stage.
Putting the data into SPSS, an odds ratio could then be calculated under this equation:

$$\frac{(employed\ participants\ /\ employed\ non\text{-}participants)}{(unemployed\ participants\ /\ unemployed\ non\text{-}participants)}$$

If an odds ratio <0 then a participant has less chance of getting a job after completing the activity. If it is >0 then a participants likelihood of gaining employment increased by the odds ratio itself.
P earson's Chi square was then used to test the statistical significance of the relationships that were identified between activity and employment.

Results andConclusions

Core Activities

Core activities provide intervention in employment skills, financial advice, personal development and wellbeing.The diagram shows circles which are proportionate to odds of employment following each individual activity. They are aligned across a y-axis. With the more popular activities higher up the axis.
The activities that yield the highest likelihood of employment tend to be activities that have directly relations to employment e.g: industry specific cards, job search, interview training.

Bubble chart to show the odds of employment for core activities

This is because they are usually targeted at individuals who are close to the labour market already.
The least employable activities seem to be workshops like self-esteem, team working, goal setting, and health awareness. This is because they focus on personal and social development, which in the short term does not appear to lead to employment.
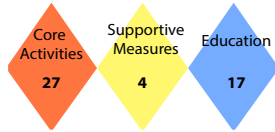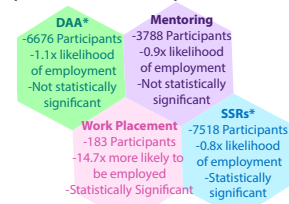
Supportive Measures

Supportive Measures have a more specialised approach than core activities. They refer participants to specific measures to support personal development and employability.
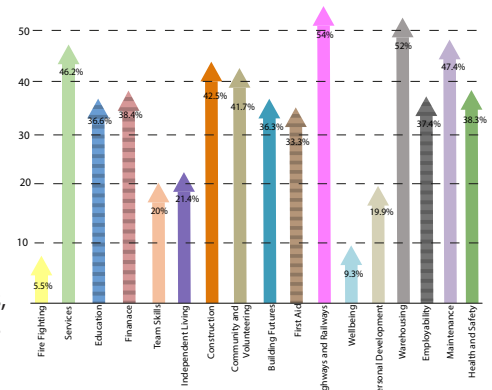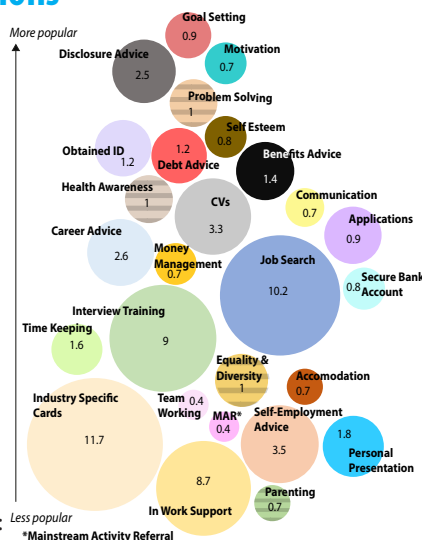

DAA*
-6676 Participants
-1.1x likelihood of employment
-Not statistically significant

Mentoring
-3788 Participants
-0.9x likelihood of employment
-Not statistically significant

Work Placement
-183 Participants
-14.7x more likely to be employed
-Statistically Significant

SSRs*
-7518 Participants
-0.8x likelihood of employment
-Statistically significant

*DAA- Development Advice and Assistance
*SSR- Specialist Support Referrals

As evident here, work placements are the only activity that have a positive, statistically significant relationship with employment . However this activity is only available to 183 participants. Mentoring and DAAs have no statistical significant impact on employment, while SRRs show a negative effect on the odds of employment.

Education Courses

This chart orders training courses from left to right with increasing popularity. More popular courses are usually more open-ended. Courses that lead higher proportions of people into employment tend to be in broader professions for example in warehousing, railways, maintenance whereas niche skills like firefighting are not so successful. Also, more subjective courses like personal development and wellbeing do lead to progress in individuals' lives but not necessarily in employment.

The percentage of participants in employment after completing education courses

Conclusion

Overall, it appears the skills-based learning and directly employable activities are far more successful in increasing employability than wellbeing activities. However. this does not mean they should be disregarded as they are still meaningful to a particpants' wellbeing.

Key Skills Learnt

Over the course of the internship, my confidence in statistical analysis increased a large amount. I now know how to clean and present large datasets, and the work to a fine degree of accuracy. I also learnt how to work in a team, time manage and got a taster of life after university!

HM Prison & Probation Service
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Q-Step
A step-change in quantitative social science skills
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