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THE ROLE OF THE FIELD WORK CONSULTANT IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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"A PROFESSION'S SEARCH FOR WISDOM IS ETERNAL,
A THING OF PERPETUAL MOTION"

Jeanette Regensburg
Council on Social Work Education
"Field Instruction in Graduate
Social Work Education: Old Problems
and New Proposals" 1966.

ABSTRACT

The present dissertation focuses on the role of the field work consultant in social work education. The term 'field work consultant' is defined as that member of the academic staff of a University department or school of social work who is responsible for organising and maintaining the field instruction programme for students. The traditional model of field instruction has been assumed, that is, a system in which the University places its social work students part-time in autonomous community welfare organizations and delegates to them the task of instructing students in the demands of professional practice in the field. The theris is stated that the University maintains ultimate responsibility for the field instruction of its students and the present study explores the principles and practices which should govern the relationship between the University and those community social welfare organizations which co-operate with it in the provision of field work placements for social work students.

The role of the field work consultant is conceptualised in terms of social systems theory. All the participants in the social work educational process are conceived of as elements in a social system designated in the present study as the field work system. Role is defined as behaviour expected of an individual by virtue of his position within a social system. The behaviour of any one element in a system is affected by, and in turn affects the activity of others within the system and it is within this context that the role of the field work consultant in the field work system is explicated.

An historical account of the role of the field work consultant at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, from 1937 to 1969 is provided.

This is followed by a description of an empirical study which secured data on details of the field instruction which twenty-two final year students from the above-named University received in community welfare organizations during 1968 and 1969. These students and the agency-employed social workers supervising their field instruction acted as respondents. The results indicate the specific ways in which the field work consultant should operate in relation to the programme so that it can more closely approximate models derived from the social work literature and the writer's experience. That the process of formal supervision in particular requires greater emphasis within field instruction placements emerged as a central finding of the study.

Having defined some of the specific aspects of field instruction requiring attention, the dissertation explores both the methods which the field work consultant should use in order to implement these changes, and the principles underlying the recommended methods. The triangular relationship between supervisor, student and field work consultant forms the core of the field work system and details of the field work consultant's activities in relation to both supervisors and students are described and supported by empirical data. Thereafter, her roles in relation to the constituents of both the agency and university sub-systems are discussed. The field work consultant's role is conceptualised as a blend of social work and educational principles, and it is demonstrated that the field work consultant has a strategic role in initiating and sustaining action to keep the field work system in a state of relative equilibrium.

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PART I

Background to the Study.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Place of Field Work in Professional Social Work Education

Education for social work has traditionally involved two aspects of teaching and learning: firstly, theoretical study in the university classroom, and secondly practical training or field work in agencies rendering direct social work service to the community. The rationale behind the dual concentration is that social work is a professional discipline involving not only the use of knowedge but also the exercise of skill on the part of the social work practitioner engaged in the process of giving social work service to clients. Margaret Schubert, one of the foremost American authorities on field instruction in social work education, quotes the following definition of skill from Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, 1963:[1]

> "... the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance."

while the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as "practised ability, facility in doing something." Skill in social work must involve the proficient use of self in social service to others and can be acquired only in the practical work situation which provides the setting within which the integration of theory and practice can occur.

Edith Abbott, Dean of the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago from 1924 to 1942 and doyen of social work educators in the United States of America, wrote in 1931 that 'proper service can be given only by those who are trained for the responsibilities of action."[2] To quote further from her views:

> The provision of adequate field work and its educational organisation is the most difficult and most unique side of our work and should be carried at the same time as the academic courses so that one may serve to strengthen the other...
>
> The necessity for field work proceeds from two causes: first, because in social work, as in medicine, we know that no two cases are exactly alike and that treatment cannot be prescribed by theoretical reading alone; ... second, ... only (under the careful supervision of experienced field instructors) can responsibility be developed and tested - the kind of responsibility that is needed for grave decisions involving the lives of human beings.[3]

Forty years after these sentiments were expressed, their applicability is no less valid.

An eloquent statement of the benefits to be derived from including practical experience as part of university professional education was made recently by a legal educationalist in the United States. Law Schools in that country and in South Africa have traditionally provided only a theoretical academic education, in contrast to medical schools and schools of social work, and it is significant that some of these law schools are now experimenting with the introduction of different types of practical work. In November, 1970, on the occasion of the centennial celebration of the Ohio State University at Columbus, Ohio, William Pincus, President of the Council on Legal Education for Professional Responsibility Inc., delivered an address entitled "The Clinical Component in University Professional Education". He outlined some of the advantages of including this component in university professional education in general as well as specifically in legal education. His views provide a broad perspective on the subject and are therefore relevant to social work education as well as to education for other professions.

A long period of classroom-type education has certain deficiencies in that the student's role is largely passive at a time when he is passing into adulthood. This can result in a "poignant sense of lack of fulfilment."[4] The developing personality of the student requires learning through doing which gives the student the knowledge that he can do something of consequence to others in the world outside the university. "It gives the student a real life role in the world as an integral part of his education."[5]

Secondly, clinical experience, by making the student "an actor as well as a spectator"[6], can serve "to make educators aware that they should concern themselves with the whole being which is the student."[7] Pincus expresses the view that "we will not truly educate, or even know the tranquility we need to educate, if we do not also address ourselves to the basics in human development"[8] as well as to intellectual problems.

The third function of clinical education according to Pincus is that it humanizes the educational process. It involves the student in a

> ... confrontation with the individual's share of the world's headaches... It teaches that while the professional's intellect dissects the larger problems and places the individual's plight in the larger setting, the professional's dedication and skill also have to be used in solving the individual's problems for the sake of the individual and not for the sake of the answer to the big problem. In the person-to-person helping role, the professional, still as a student, begins to add to his intellectual competence a feeling for humanity and decency. He learns through the insistent demands of another personality the necessity of placing restraints on his own leanings: to work out approaches that are suitable to more than his own inclinations, to repress the arrogance which would dictate answers for others.[9]

These words are reminiscent of Charlotte Towle's, expressed in her classic work, The Learner in Education for the Professions, as seen in Education for Social Work, in which she writes:

> If a profession is a field of service established to serve the common good rather than for the commonweal of its practitioners ... it is clear therefore that professional education does not prepare for individual self-expression, for individualistic creativity, for the independent acting-out of one's own urges in the interest of self-gratification or self-realisation. An individual may have entered a profession because he likes to influence, mould, reform, punish, cure or help people - he cannot serve them in ways that serve primarily his own need. Instead, he must subordinate his ideas and predilections to the ways of the profession and its instrument, the agency.[10]

It is through field work that professional education in social work, as in other spheres, can best achieve this particular objective as cited by Towle.

Pincus' fifth point concerns "clinical education's value in inculcating a bent for persistence and application, for sustained constructive effort, despite the inevitable frustrations of life."[11] This is particularly important in working with a generation of students who are the product of an affluent society and who are accustomed to self-gratification without undue effort and who consequently experience frustration and resentment when their desires and ideals are not rapidly fulfilled. Clinical education assists the individual in his passage to maturity by encouraging experience "which teaches us how to live with frustration as well as achievement, in fact to use each frustration as a launching pad to achievement."[12] Pincus continues:

> (Clinical education) rewards the person with an instinctively well-ordered direction and philosophy by giving him the opportunity to move toward his goal by tangible acts. Clinical education teaches that, no matter how well-conceived a grand scheme, it takes dedication and work over a long period to move toward realization of the scheme.[13]

This statement is particularly significant in a period which has witnessed student unrest and destruction on campuses in the United States and Europe on such a scale that Dr G R Bozzoli, vice-chancellor and principal of the University of the Witwatersrand stated in 1972 that "world student agitation in the past eight years had caused a revolution in university thinking."[14]

A final relevant point from Pincus is that the clinical component in professional education enables educators and students to remember that the ultimate purpose of the educational process is service to others, at a time when the educational field is bei g constantly enlarged by "so-called innovative and creative projects in which there is indeed greater and greater difficulty in telling the educationally sound from that which is spurious."[15]

After this general exposition of the functions of field work in university professional education, a consideration of social work education specifically and the local situation in particular will follow.

The Report of the Curriculum Study of the Council on Social Work Education in the United States published in 1959 cited the following as the major goals of field work specified or implied in social work literature:

a) to contribute to the student's identification with the profession as a whole;
b) to contribute to the student's self-awareness;
c) to facilitate the integration of knowledge, attitudes and skills learned in class;
d) to contribute to the student's skill in one method of social work;
e) to develop the student's knowledge about the other methods of social work;

f) to develop the student's skill on the level of beginning competence.[16]

The Study at the same time drew attention to the difficulty of achieving these, at times, incompatible objectives.

The latest Curriculum Policy Statement of the same Council, released in 1969, substitutes the term "practicum" for "field instruction" but reaffirms that "the social work practicum is an essential component of professional education for social work" and that it must include "learning experiences that provide for students' direct engagement in service activities"[17]. The major objectives of the practicum are listed as follows:

> It should provide all students with opportunities for development, integration and reinforcement of competence through performance in actual service situations.
>
> It should permit students to acquire and test skills relevant to emerging conditions of social work practice.
>
> The practicum should also foster for all students the integration and reinforcement of knowledge, value and skill learning acquired in the field and through particular courses and concentrations.
>
> In the practicum the student should have an opportunity to delineate and comprehend questions for research which arise in the course of practice.[18]

At South African universities, as at most universities in the English-speaking world, the prevailing pattern of social work education involves the utilisation of social welfare organizations in the community in order to provide opportunities for field learning and teaching. In the United States especially, in the recent past many experimental projects have arisen which seek to alter this pattern and the 1969 Curriculum Policy Statement of the Council on Social Work Education emphasises that innovation, variation and flexibility are essential in field instruction.

However, even in the 1970's agencies will continue to have an important role. As recently as October 1971, the following statement was made by a Professor of Social Work in the United States:

> Changes in field instruction should emerge from genuine partnership with the agencies that are not only the immediate consumers of our educational products but the contributors to our "practice wisdom", the sine qua non of professional knowledge.[19]

These community agencies in the main are organisations which are independent of any university yet for a variety of reasons are willing to participate in the education of social work students. Some, for example the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, and the Witwatersrand Students' Community Organization (WITSCO), accept student training as one of their basic responsibilities. Others may be motivated by the desire to assure themselves of a continuing supply of qualified workers or the wish to achieve the status of being associated with a teaching institution. However, it is the university which retains the ultimate responsibility for its social work curriculum. Consequently, it should maintain a close relationship with those social work agencies and social workers on whom it depends for the field instruction of its students. This relationship is characterised by complexities and intricacies. For example, the university is both dependent on the agencies for their cooperation and in a position of authority in relation to them because of its responsibility to its students to provide an acceptable standard of education. In the words of Margaret Schubert:

> It cannot be anticipated that the sharing of educational responsibility between agencies and schools will ever be a placid and uneventful partnership but the partnership is worth maintaining even at the cost of a good deal of discomfort.[20]

It is aspects of this relationship between agency and university which the present study seeks to explore. Because it is the university which is the pivot around which social work

students and field instruction centres revolve, the dissertation will be concerned with explicating the role of that member of the academic staff at a university school or department of social work whose task it is to organise and co-ordinate the field work programme. The study will be confined to a consideration of that type of field work programme in which supervision of students is delegated by the university to social workers employed by agencies where students are placed for field instruction.

1.2 Reasons for Selecting this Topic

In January 1966 the writer was appointed to the staff of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in what was then known as the Department of Sociology and Social Work. She thereby left the practice of social work for the field of social work education and it seemed appropriate to pursue study and research which could equip her with some degree of more specialised knowledge of one aspect of this field.

The post occupied by the writer at the time of her initial appointment was that designated as "Supervisor of Field Work." The duties associated with this post involved the organization and co-ordination of the field work programme for the second, third and fourth year social work students in the department, in addition to teaching duties in the lecture room. The writer's interest was aroused in defining what the specific role associated with the position should be. Few written records or documents on the subject were available to the writer. The department seemed to have a relatively smoothly-functioning system of placing students for "practical training", in that agencies made themselves available and arrangements were made for student to be placed with them. However, there was no detailed information on what transpired during the placements and only brief evaluation reports were requested on students. It seemed to the writer that

additional data concerning the dynamics of field instruction could provide guidance in planning a programme designed to give additional depth and breadth to field teaching and learning.

Lilian Ripple, writing in Polansky's book on social work research, describes the impetus for research as a "felt difficulty" which she elaborates, quoting Dewey, as "an indeterminate situation ... uncertain, unsettled, disturbed."[21] As Supervisor of Field Work, the writer began to experience such a feeling of difficulty and uncertainty. It seemed that neither the students, their supervisors in the agencies, nor the writer herself, were clear on what was expected of them in the field work programme. Furthermore, there seemed to be the need to clarify terminology. For example, the same word - supervisor - was used to denote the university staff member concerned with field work and the agency staff member responsible for the student's field teaching. To what extent were their roles similar and in what degree, different?

Field work, and the central role played by agency supervision within it, was a topic of concern to all social work educators in South Africa at that time. This concern manifested itself two years later when supervision of students was the theme of the second conference of social work educators which took place in Kimberley in April 1968. Professor Erika Theron, doyen of social work educators in the Republic of South Africa, wrote in June of that year: "The dearth of suitable field work placements for students remains problem number one in connection with the education of social workers."[22] This statement reinforced the need to ascertain if this was indeed the situation in Johannesburg in 1968 and 1969.*

*South African social workers have persisted with their interest in field instruction of students in social work. This topic formed the subject of the first conference to be called by the Commission for Social Work of the National Welfare Board, which was held in Pretoria in June 1971, and was attended by about 150 delegates from educational centres and welfare bodies in South Africa.[23]

During the decade of the Sixties, there had been a growing interest in education for social work both in South Africa and abroad. In Britain, a new National Institute for Social Work Training came into existence in 1961, following a recommendation of the Working Party of Social Workers in the Local Authority Health and Welfare Services (the Younghusband Report)[24], and in 1962, a new Council for Training in Social Work was set up. Problems of field training and supervision received early consideration and 1966 and 1967 saw the emergence of three important British books on the subject:

S.C. Brown and E. Gloyne: The Field Training of Social Workers, 1966.
P. Young: The Student and Supervision in Social Work, 1967.
D. Pettes: Supervision in Social Work, 1967.

In the United States, the Council on Social Work Education launched a new journal in the Spring of 1965: The Journal of Education for Social Work, and this publication, together with the Council's older publication, The Social Work Education Reporter, first published in 1952, bristled with ideas for innovations in field work programmes.

Events at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1966 and 1967 gave further impetus to the present study. At the end of 1966 the University separated Social Work from the Department of Sociology. In December 1967 the appointment of a Director of Studies to administer the affairs of what was then called the School of Social Work saw the beginning of a time of review and future planning, in which the supervision of field work was to play a prominent part. Prior to this, ideas and queries had emerged from the meetings of supervisors of students in community welfare agencies organised by the writer at the end of 1966 and 1967. Furthermore, during the course of her work as Supervisor of Field Work, the writer had received requests from supervisors in agencies for guidance in relation to supervision of students.

For all these reasons, the writer was motivated to select the present topic for study.

1.3 Aims of the Study

i. To develop the concept of the role of the field work consultant* in terms of systems theory.

ii. To place in historical perspective the role of the field work consultant in the field instruction programme at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

iii. To formulate a model of certain aspects of field instruction and the supervisor-student relationship in social work education; to ascertain relevant facts relating to these specific features of field instruction at the University of the Witwatersrand; and further to identify the implications of the findings for the evolving role of the field work consultant.

iv. On the basis of a study of available literature, engagement in the activities associated with the role of field work consultant, and empirical research, to explore the functions and responsibilities of the field work consultant and to conceptualise the role relationships between the field work consultant and the other participants in the social work educational process conceived of as elements in a social system.

1.4 Setting and Scope of the Study

This dissertation will concentrate on empirical date from the University of the Witwatersrand School of Social Work. This university, which celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1972, introduced training for professional social work in 1937, and until the late 1960's was the only South African university to have a four-year

*The field work consultant is defined as that member of the academic staff of a school of social work who is responsible for the organisation and co-ordination of the field work programme of the school. The rationale for the choice of this term will be presented in the next chapter.

degree course in social work.

By the time students enter the fourth year of study, they have completed full introductory courses in the three primary methods of social work viz. social group work in the second year, social casework and community organisation, together with social work administration, in the third year, and a number of other supplementary sub-courses within the social work curriculum. These include an introduction to the philosophy and methods of social work, a study of community resources, social legislation, an introduction to the law of persons, the history of social welfare and social work, and medical information for social workers. They have also done the following field work:

> in the first year, visits of observation to community welfare institutions; (In 1971 a further requirement was introduced, namely, that students complete twenty hours of volunteer service in social welfare or allied activities); in the second year, two hundred and fifty hours of social group work, made up by eighty hours concurrent field work done at the rate of two afternoons per week plus four weeks block placement during university vacations;
>
> in the third year, three hundred hours of field instruction in social casework completed in eight weeks of block placement in two or three agencies in the university vacations. (In 1971 additional concurrent field instruction in community organisation and administration was introduced into the third year curriculum but prior to this, agencies acting as field instruction centres were expected to provide students with some experience of these methods in the course of their group work and casework placements in the second and third years of study).

Consequently, when they enter the fourth year of study, students are prepared for intensified, advanced theoretical study of social work and for achieving skill in the practice of social work. The fourth year is the time when the cur iculum concentrates on providing students with the opportunity to integrate theory and practice, to gain in self-awareness and to increase identification with the profession of social work in such a way that at its completion they are equipped with that level of beginning competence required to embark upon professional practice.

In the fourth year of study, students attend classes at the University on three days per week. During this time, they attend lectures and seminars in the fourth course of social work and in one other subject, usually Psychiatry and Mental Hygiene for Social Workers. They are also required to pursue a modest research project and to present a dissertation on a social work topic. Prior to 1973, students also attended a weekly group discussion with a clinical psychologist designed to increase their self-awareness in professional situations.

On the remaining two days per week, students are required to have field instruction in community agencies, state or provincial departments, or other organisations employing professionally-qualified social workers. The period of field instruction extends for approximately seven months, until the students have completed 400 hours of field work. The responsibility for the day-to-day field instruction of the students while placed in these field instruction centres, is delegated by the university to social workers in the centres who are required to act as supervisors. The university therefore, while retaining the ultimate responsibility for the social work student's education and maintaining a close interest in the field instruction of the student, does not undertake supervision itself but delegates this to a social worker in the field instruction centre.

It is in this fourth year that there is a crystallization of the educational process which prepares social work students to become social work practitioners. The research data in the present study therefore relates to the fourth year of study for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, with specific reference to the role of the university's field work consultant in the field work programme of the fourth year. It should be noted that as a result of the degree of development of social work practice in Johannesburg in the late 1960's, most of the agencies acting as field instruction centres utilised casework, mainly if not exclusively, as their form of social work intervention. Consequently the students who formed one group of respondents in this study, received field instruction primarily in this method of social work, while the social workers who formed another group of respondents were in the main experienced primarily in the practice of social casework.

The question of the academic status of this four-year degree is a somewhat delicate one. The University of the Witwatersrand recognises that the degree is equivalent to an Honours degree in the sense that there is no additional honours course and graduates are eligible for direct admission to study for the degree of Master of Arts in Social Work. However, for various reasons which will be pursued in Chapter 3, the degree is not given the title "Honours Degree" and the other universities in South Africa differ as to whether they regard the degree as having Bachelors or Honours status.

This study was designed to concentrate on the School of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand for the following reasons:

(I) When the School of Social Work came into existence in December 1967, education for social work at Wits. entered a new phase of vigorous advance and development, and it seemed important to do an in-depth study which would have special relevance and utility to the school where the writer was a member of the academic staff. The directions in which developments should occur would depend on the specific characteristics of the school itself, its cooperating agencies and its students.

(II) Each school of social work, like each social welfare agency, has its own philosophy, policy and procedures which influence its field work programme. As Quaranta has said recently when describing a meeting of the Middle States Committee of Field Work Directors which took place at Rutgers Graduate School of Social Work early in 1970:

> Discussions ... noted the importance of each school's having clarity concerning its mission. Thus, the school's overall objective will be formulated around its uniqueness in its relationship to the university, community, and the profession. [25]

Precedents for describing educational practices at individual schools of social work come from major works on social work education, in which the authors base their writings largely on the practices at the schools of social work where they worked as teachers of social work. These are:

(a) Annette Garrett's Learning Through Supervision, (1954) which is based on the Smith College School of Social Work, and which has great relevance to the present study.

(b) Virginia Robinson's The Dynamics of Supervision under Functional Controls, (1949), which describes a process "created" by the Pennsylvania School of Social Work.

(c) Charlotte Towle's The Learner in Education for the Professions as seen in Education for Social Work, (1954) where the author frequently refers to her experience in the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago.[26]

The empirical research is confined further to the two-year period 1968 to 1969, the first two years of the existence of the School of Social Work at this university as a separate entity, independent of the Department of Sociology. In summary, then, it may be stated that this study is located in the School of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand, and is concerned with the role of the field work consultant in relation to the field work programme in the fourth and final year of study for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work during the years 1968 and 1969.

Of the twenty-two final year students who were the student respondents in the present study, 16 or 72.7% received field instruction only in social casework. The remaining six or (17.3%) had exposure to social group work and community organisation practice as well as social casework.

1.5 Definition of Terms

(i) Social Work Education is that composite of theoretical teaching, field instruction and other opportunities for personal development which is provided by universities to students wishing to secure a professional qualification in social work. It is a process through which students acquire the knowledge and skill required to embark upon the practice of social work. The terms "Department" and "School of Social Work" will be used interchangeably in the text to refer to that part of a university responsible for providing social work education.

(ii) Field Work refers to that part of the social work curriculum which is undertaken by students outside of the university within social welfare agencies employing professionally qualified social workers. The purpose of such field work is that the

student should through her* own activity learn the professional behaviour and skills associated with the practice of social work, and the term field instruction will therefore be used synonymously with field work to emphasise the educational purposes of field work. Field work refers to what the student does; field instruction refers to what the student is expected to derive from what she does. Other terms found in social work literature to designate the same aspect of the curriculum are "field practice" and "field learning and teaching". The terms practical work and practical training were previously used to denote the same phenomena.

(iii) Agency refers to a welfare organisation, state department or provincial department which employs social workers in order to fulfil the purpose of promoting social welfare through the professional practice of social work. When by arrangement with a university it undertakes to accommodate social work students for field work and to provide them with field instruction, it is termed a field instruction centre or field work agency. These three terms will therefore be used interchangeably in the dissertation.

In the Guide to Field Instruction Centres of the School of Social Work where the study was located, a Field Instruction Centre is defined as "an organisation or social welfare agency in the community which by arrangement with the School of Social Work provides facilities for social work students to gain practical experience in social work."[27]

(iv) The Field Work Consultant is that member of the academic staff of a university's school of social work or department of social work who is responsible for the organisation and coordination of the school or department's field work programme. The field work consultant maintains close contact with the students, social workers and other involved in the programme but does not normally

*For purposes of simplified reading the student will be referred to in the feminine and the supervisor in the masculine gender.

undertake the direct supervision of the student's day to day work in the field instruction centre. The terms tutor, adviser, or director of field work may occur in quotations as alternatives to the designation field work consultant. For the sake of brevity, the abbreviation FWC will be used in the text to refer to the field work consultant.

(v) The term Supervisor is used to designate the particular member of staff assigned by the agency to assume the day to day responsibility for the student's learning experience in the agency. The medium through which the supervisor communicates the arrangements he has made for the student's field work programme and assists the student to derive educational benefit from that programme, is the supervisory session in which student and supervisor discuss the student's experiences in the field. The term field instructor will at times be used synonymously with the term supervisor.

(vi) Supervision is the process whereby a professional social worker in an agency enables a social work student to derive educational benefit from her field work experience. The process involves communication between supervisor and student in supervisory discussions and has administrative, teaching and helping components.

(vii) Student Consultation or Tutorial will be used to denote discussions between a student and the field work consultant within the university. The purpose of this session is, inter alia, to assist the student integrate his field work experience into the total social work curriculum.

(viii) The term Block Placement refers to the full-time attendance of a student at an agency for the purposes of receiving field instruction for a specified period of time. Placements occur during university vacations and the phrase corresponds to the term "vacation practical" as used by the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions of the Republic of South Africa.

(ix) The term Concurrent Placement refers to the part-time attendance of a student at an agency for the purposes of receiving field instruction. Placements occur during university terms while the student is concurrently attending lectures, and the term is equivalent to "continuous practical" as used by the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions.

(x) The term field work week refers to that part of a chronological week (usually two days) during which a student is working in an agency as part of a concurrent field instruction placement.

(xi) The terms client and case are used to refer to a unit of work with an individual, a group, or a community work project.

1.6 Hypotheses

In the light of the aims of the study and on the assumption that for the purposes of this study field instruction in social work is provided by agencies outside of the university, the following hypotheses were formulated:

I The position "field work consultant" involves certain identifiable role responsibilities which would make it a strategically important post on the establishment of a university school or department of social work.

Field instruction centres would differ with regard to the pattern of field instruction they provided and in particular with regard to the amount and type of supervision offered.

III With regard to the content of the supervisory sessions conducted at field instruction centres the following features would occur:

(i) Discussions related to case management or the objective factors in cases, that is, action in relation to the

situation, would occur more frequently than discussion of subjective factors, that is, the emotional aspects of the situation.

(ii) Discussions involving the integration of theory and practice would occur infrequently.

(IV) A series of seminars on supervision conducted by the field work consultant would be positively evaluated by the group of supervisors participating in the seminars.

(V) It would be demonstrated that there is a need for regular consultations between the field work consultant and students participating in the field instruction programme.

1.7 Methodology

In order to put the role of the field work consultant at the University of the Witwatersrand in historical perspective, documentary research was done into original sources within the university. These included statements relating to the regulations governing the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work and to the syllabuses published in the University Calendars, minutes of meetings from 1937 - 1969 of the Faculty of Arts and some of its sub-committees, and correspondence between the Department of Sociology and Social Work at the university and its cooperating agencies. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven individuals who had been responsible for organising the field work at the university prior to the time that the writer assumed this task, as well as with selected graduates who had qualified at various times during the period from the inception of the degree until the time the writer joined the staff.

In order to explore the contemporary role of the field work consultant, the following methods were used:

(i) The available literature on social work education in general and supervision of field work was surveyed in order to

determine the practice wisdom developed in schools of social work in Great Britain, the United States and South Africa, and on the basis of this to construct a theoretical model of what the field work consultant's activities should entail.

(ii) The writer recorded her own activities in this capacity in order to assess these in relation to the theoretical model derived from the literature. These activities involved interviews with agency staff members and students.

(iii) Finally, in order to determine what the role of the field work consultant at the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Social Work should be, in what way the field work consultant should guide the field work programme, a study was conducted to ascertain certain facts relating to the field instruction students were receiving in agencies at that time. The rationale behind the use of this method was as follows: the field work consultant could not lay down standards based on the theoretical model alone. The conditions existing in the agencies had to be taken into account and therefore had to be ascertained. A questionnaire was constructed to discover what the level of practice in field instruction was in the agencies participating in the field work programme for fourth year students. Questions were included on the basis of the literature survey and of the writer's experience with the field work programme in 1966 and 1967, and the final version of the questionnaire was based on an exploratory study done with fourth year students in 1967 and the outcome of discussions with experienced colleagues both within the university and in the field of social work practice.

It was decided to use both supervisors and students as respondents in order to elicit from each group their perception of the field instruction transaction. Two slightly different versions of the questionnaire were therefore designed, one for each group of respondents.

These questionnaires (to be referred to as the annual questionnaires) were administered in October 1968 and October 1969 to the students and supervisors involved in the field instruction programme in each of those years. There were eleven students in the final year class in each of those years. As each supervisor completed a questionnaire in respect of each student he supervised there were therefore 44 responses in all, twenty-two from students and twenty-two from supervisors.

In 1969 an additional project was undertaken, namely, a more intensive study of supervision throughout the duration of the students' period of field instruction. Another questionnaire was constructed, parts of which were identical to parts of the annual questionnaire. This will be designated "the weekly questionnaire" as students completed it after each week they spent in their field instruction centres. Supervisors were not used as respondents in this supplementary project although they were fully informed that it was in progress.

The study therefore combined two categories of research as described by Kahn:

(i) An exploratory or formulative study exemplified in the review of the literature and the "experience survey". This type of research, in the words of Kahn, "helps one to decide where, most strategically, a study should be 'pitched' from the point of view of the status of knowledge or the development of research technology."[28]

(ii) A diagnostic or descriptive study in which, according to Kahn, "the objective is a descriptive view, which may be qualitative, quantitative, or both, of a situation, agency, programme, or client group. It often has value for planning, policy selection, and programme implementation."[29]

The study is however also an example of what Parad[30] and Helen Perlman[31] have described as "action research", after the model of Lindemann[32] who "investigated while he healed". The need of the students and supervisors participating in the field instruction programme was too great to allow the school to delay introducing innovations until the results of the research were available. Supervisors were requesting courses on supervision[33] and on the basis of the experience gained by the writer in sporadic interviews with students during 1968, it was clear that there was the need for the field work consultant to have regular, scheduled interviews with all students.

This view was reinforced in December 1968, when the writer travelled overseas and had discussions with Mr Noel Timms at that time lecturer in Social Science and Administration at the London School of Economics, Mr Peter Leonard, lecturer in charge of the course in Social Work Education at the National Institute for Social Work Training in London, and Dr M J Neipris, a member of the faculty of the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work, Jerusalem. It became clear that the introduction of regular tutorials or consultations with students was of top priority.

At the beginning of 1969 therefore, an additional part-time member of staff was appointed to the school. This enabled the present writer to introduce:

(a) fortnightly consultations of one half-hour's duration with every fourth-year student to discuss field work and other aspects of the student's educational experience;

(b) a course of five seminars on supervision for supervisors of student field work in agencies.

Detailed records of both these activities were kept and an analysis of their content is presented in this dissertation.

In addition, students were asked to evaluate their consultations in semi-structured interviews, while supervisors evaluated their course of seminars by means of an attitude scale technique for evaluating meetings devised by Kropp and Verner.[34]

1.8 Limitations

I It is possible that the study was subject to "the Hawthorne effect" as described by Maas and Polansky[35] and that the act of investigating field instruction may have influenced it. However, if, as Mary MacDonald has said,

> The objectives of the social work practitioner and the research worker are the same - simply, the improvement of practice , and further
>
> Social work research is applied research in that it derives from and contributes to the practice of social work.[36]

it is submitted that this is not a serious limitation.

II The study contains data relating only to one university in the Republic of South Africa, and this university is situated in a large city where many social welfare organisations are available as potential field instruction centres.

III Only field instruction in the fourth year of study for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand was subjected to scrutiny. This involved concurrent field work concentrating mainly on social casework. Neither block systems of field work nor field instruction primarily in social group work or community organisation were investigated as such, although certain of the placements studied had group work and community organisation components.

IV The data obtained relate only to a two-year period and the number of fourth year students in each of those years was small, namely, eleven in each year, making a total of twenty-two. The number of supervisors and agencies participating was therefore also small.

The respondents however constituted the total population in each case.

V As students and supervisors were used as respondents to report upon the field instruction programme in which they themselves were engaged, their responses may have been influenced to some extent by subjective factors.

1.9 Previous Studies on the Subject

There is relatively little in the social work literature specifically on the subject of the role of the field work consultant in social work education.

British articles on this topic comprise those by Woodcock, Edwards and Morris, while American articles on the same subject are those by Sentman, Nolan and Basch. However, many other books and articles on related subjects such as social work education in general, and field instruction and supervision in particular, contain references to the topic to a greater or lesser degree. Among the most relevant are works by Annette Garrett and Virginia Robinson from the United States, and by Bessie Kent, Dorothy Pettes, Priscilla Young, and Brown and Gloyne from the United Kingdom. Schubert has reported on two empirical research projects on field instruction in the United States.

In South Africa a similar situation exists. Annette Muller and Moses Bopape have written dissertations on related subjects, which in parts allude to the field work consultant's role, while du Plessis and Botha have each written a master's dissertation on aspects of the supervisory process in social welfare agencies.

1.10 Potential Usefulness of the Study

I At the Conference on the Field Instruction of Students in Social Work held in Pretoria in 1971, Professor Erika Theron

stated that training centres did not always have the necessary academic staff to educate students theoretically and in field work, and further, that lecturers often lacked zeal for research and intensive study.[37] It is hoped that the present study will make a contribution towards remedying this situation, a contribution to what is referred to in the United States as "faculty development", or the specialised preparation of university staff for the teaching of social work.

II Members of staff who are responsible for organising field work at universities other than the University of the Witwatersrand may be able to apply certain general principles emerging from this study to the field instruction programmes within their particular academic and social welfare communities, and may be guided in the formulation of their particular roles.

III The results of the study will enable the School of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand to develop its ideas on some of the directions which its field instruction programme should take. In some instances it may provide empirical validation of the benefits of changes already introduced. In general it is hoped that it will assist the University of the Witwatersrand to plan more effectively to achieve a rich and meaningful system of education for the professional practice of social work.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

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30. H.J. Parad, 'Part 1 : Theoretical Explorations', Parad H.J. (ed.) Crisis Intervention : Selected Readings, p.5.

31. H. Perlman. 'Casework and the "Diminished Man"', Social Casework, 51 : 222, 1970.

32. Erich Lindemann. 'Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief', reprinted from American Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 101, September 1944, in Parad, H.J.(ed.) Crisis Intervention : Selected Readings 1965, pp. 7-21.

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34. R. Kropp and C. Verner. 'An Attitude Scale Technique for Evaluating Meetings', Adult Education, Summer 1957.

35. H. Maas and N. Polansky. 'Collecting Original Data'. N. Polansky, (ed.) Social Work Research, p.127.

36. Mary Macdonald. 'Social Work Research : A Perspective', N. Polansky (ed.) ibid., op.1 and 5.

37. Annette Muller, op cit., p.174.

CHAPTER 2

EXPLICATION OF CONCEPTS

According to Lilian Ripple writing on "Problem Identification and Formulation" in Polansky's book "Social Work Research", to explicate a concept "means to define as precisely as possible the meaning that is given to particular verbal symbols."[1].

In what way have the following terms been conceptualised in the present study?

1. Role;
2. Field Work Consultant;
3. Social Work Education.

2.1 Role

The concept of role as it is used in this dissertation is to be viewed against a background of social systems theory.

The term "role" will be used to refer to those patterns of behaviour which can be expected of a person occupying the position of field work consultant in a university school or department of Social Work. This corresponds to definitions of role such as those by Ruddock[2], viz., role is behaviour expected of one by virtue of one's position, and Kaplan, viz., the expectations of people in general about appropriate behaviour for individuals occupying a certain position.[3]

Dr. David Limerick of the Graduate School of Business Administration of the University of the Witwatersrand has presented a useful analysis of the concept of role[4] in which he points out that it has been used in a number of different and sometimes

confusing ways. Part of the confusion has stemmed from a failure to distinguish between two uses of the word:

(i) as a social structure concept;

(ii) as another word for imitation and certain allied processes.

As a social structure concept, the term role can be used to describe a unit within a social structure. This idea is expressed in a definition by Argyle which describes role as "the similar behaviour of people occupying the same position, including their social behaviour towards people in other positions"[5] and in another definition quoted by Limerick viz., that roles are "definite sets of complexes of customary ways of doing things, organised about a particular problem, or designed to attain a given objective." The notion of function therefore is the most common nucleus around which the pattern of behaviour is organis This is clearly applicable to the field work consultant whose function is to organise the field work of social work students and to enable students to derive the maximum educational benefit from the experience.

Conceptualised in this social structure sense, a role is defined not in terms of specific behaviour but in terms of the organised patterns and boundaries of behaviour. This concept is to be distinguished, according to Limerick and others, from the second, psychological use of the word, which is more appropriately designated role behaviour or role performance. Limerick differentiates between the two uses of the term in this way:

> Whereas role refers to an organised pattern of behaviour common to all in a position, role behaviour refers to the specific behaviour of an individual, which is within the modal pattern of behaviour associated with the role. Where a person's role behaviour is generated by imitation, by apprehension of the demands or stereotypes of others (role perception), the individual's behaviour is called "role-playing".[6]

Limerick goes on to say that because a role is defined by function and relations pertinent to that function, it can therefore be prescribed. On the other hand, as Paterson points out in another work on management theory, "role behaviour, even though it is expected, varies with the occupant of the role and therefore cannot be prescribed, though limits can be set" It is therefore possible "to find somewhat different forms of individual behaviour within the same roles, as long as the behaviours are within the limits set by functional requirements - as long as, in Argyle's terms, 'the actual behaviour of an individual is sufficiently similar to the modal behaviour'".[8]

This dissertation will be concerned primarily with attempting to prescribe the role of the field work consultant, but role behaviour, the stamp of the individual personality of the specific person acting as field work consultant, will also be incorporated into the discussion.

A fundamental feature of role as a social structure concept is that it is defined not only by function but also by the relationships pertinent to that function. Limerick quoting Inkeles states that roles are "generally recognised and defined by the participants in a social system. They are, therefore, intimately tied to a set of expectations about which acts go with others, in what sequence, and in which conditions", and he adds therefore: "role ... is essentially a systems level concept".[9]

The general systems approach is gaining ground in social work theory at the present time. It is based on the assumption that matter in all its forms both living and non-living, can be regarded as systems and that systems, as systems, have certain discrete properties which can be studied. Individuals, groups

and other more complex human organisations can all be regarded as systems. The systems concept is useful in that it reduces highly complex social realities to manageable constructs and provides added clarity about the effects of interaction between individuals and groups and the most effective point of professional entry into a system in order to enhance the social functioning of people. It has been suggested that the systems approach could be helpful in the attempt to build an holistic conception of social work, and it will be employed in the present study in order to define the role of the field work consultant as fully as possible.

Lathrope writing on "The General Systems Approach in Social Work Practice" states that "General Systems Theory is a name which has come into use to describe a level of theoretical model building which lies somewhere between the highly generalised constructions of pure mathematics and the specific theories of the specialised disciplines".[10] In his view, the combination of systems ideas, role theory ideas and model construction ideas and their application to the details of social work practice represents an avenue for significant practical advance in the profession. The term social work practice encompasses all the social work methods and levels of practice and, according to Lathrope, does not "exclude social work education and the social work educator where the formulation is applicable".[11]

What is meant by the term "system"? A system may be defined as a set of interrelated elements and is distinguished both by the nature of its elements and the manner in which the elements are interrelated. Shulman, writing on the mediating model in social work, states that the term refers to "a group of objects within a boundary, each object having a defined function and a structural relationship to the other objects

within the boundary. The entire complex is involved in a process".[12] Thus, in the words of an applied mathematician, "we think of a physical body as a system of particles or molecules spatially interrelated, a machine as a system of components interrelated functionally, a musical tune as a system of notes arranged temporally, a painting as a system of colours interrelated spatially on a canvas",[13] while Shulman gives the example of the sun and the planets which constitute the solar system characterised by a boundary, structural and functional relationships between its objects and a process which is the maintenance of its equilibrium.

When general systems theory is applied to the social activity of human beings it is called social system theory. Gordon Hearn who was one of the first social work theorists to apply systems concepts to social work, defines a social system as "consisting of persons arranged in some ordered fashion".[14] This arrangement constitutes the social structure which is involved in a social process determined by function. In other words, the process, or general activity of the system, is the result of people functioning within an ordered structure.

Warren states that a social system comprises a more or less enduring pattern of social interaction. For this interaction to be patterned there must be regularities of behaviour, and the concept of social role is useful in analysing these regularities in behaviour. A social system may therefore be said to be constituted of an interrelated pattern of roles,[15] and Polsky endorses this definition when he describes a social system as "a structure of roles".[16]

One of the important characteristics of a social system is reciprocity in relationships. Shulman quotes the social

psychologist George Mead, and William Schwartz, social work author of the mediating model, to the effect that the individual is both affected by and in turn affects the activity of others within the system in which he is an element. In other words, it is not possible to isolate and understand one part of the system without taking into consideration the function, structure and process of the system as a whole.

Systems can be conceptualised at different levels. For example, man's digestive or circulatory systems could each be analysed as a system in itself, but taken together they, along with others, form a higher level, more complex system, the human body. The concepts of closed and open systems apply here. A closed system is one in which the interrelation between elements is confined solely to the elements under consideration. An open system is one in which the elements are not only related to each other, but also related to elements outside the system. Usually, a sub-system within a larger system is an open system in this sense; the remainder of the system then constitutes the environment.

One of the characteristics of an open system is that it must exchange materials with its environment in order to survive. The difference between what it imports and what it exports is a measure of the conversion activities of the system. Lathrope presents this well-known systems formulation another way, viz., "Input + Processing = Output".[17] Rice applies this formulation to the University as an institution in his book "The Modern University: A Model Organisation". He states that the intakes into the teaching system of a university are students, and the outputs are graduates and those who failed to learn. Teaching represents the activities of the conversion systems. Provided the quality of its outputs (graduates) is maintained, the

University continues to receive resources and to attract students.*

The measure of the productivity of the system is the difference between intakes and outputs. The resources required for task performance are teachers and the appropriate buildings and equipment. Rice presents the following diagram to represent the import-conversion-export process:[20]

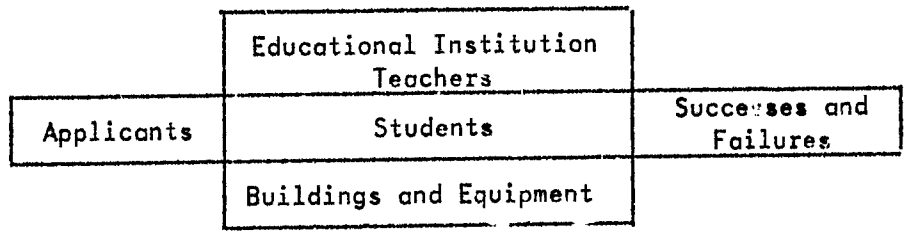


Figure 1: Dominant import-conversion-export process for the primary task of education.

If one considers the education of social work students taking into account field instruction, one could represent the process diagramatically as follows:

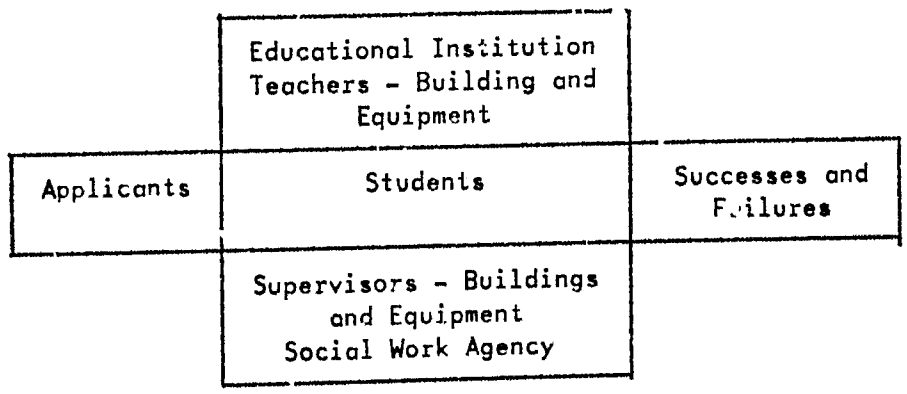


Figure 2: Dominant import-conversion-export process for the primary task of educating social work students.

*The concept of the primary task is relevant here. Rice defines this as "the task that any institution or sub-institution must perform if it is to survive".[19] In the case of the teaching organisations of a university (as opposed to research organisations) the primary task is the education of students.

A model may be defined as "a symbolic representation of a perceptual phenomenon". As Lathrope states in Hearn's booklet on the general systems approach, "models and model construction represent a highly general and versatile approach to the extraction, verification, accumulation, codification, presentation, transmission and use of knowledge. They are used in social work, as in the arts and sciences and in other professions, to discipline and organise thought and action without imprisoning them".[21] He adds: "Although our best models still appear to be fragmentary and crude", model construction is the most powerful intellectual tool available for the task of "organising knowledge and skill for effective use in problematic situations".[22]

The most appropriate model for human systems is the organismic one which "displays patterns of internal and external relations, with boundaries that create an identifiable entity represented as a system of energy or structured function". It also supports the concept of changes in time, moving us away from the view of what we are studying as static".[23]

The following pictorial model is presented as an aid to understanding the role of the FWC in the context of the complex web of relationships between all the parties concerned with the field instruction of students.

Other models appearing in the literature are those presented by M. Elizabeth Edwards[24] in England in 1966, and by Charles Levy[25] in the United States in 1972, but neither of these concentrate specifically on utilising the systems approach to the subject under consideration.

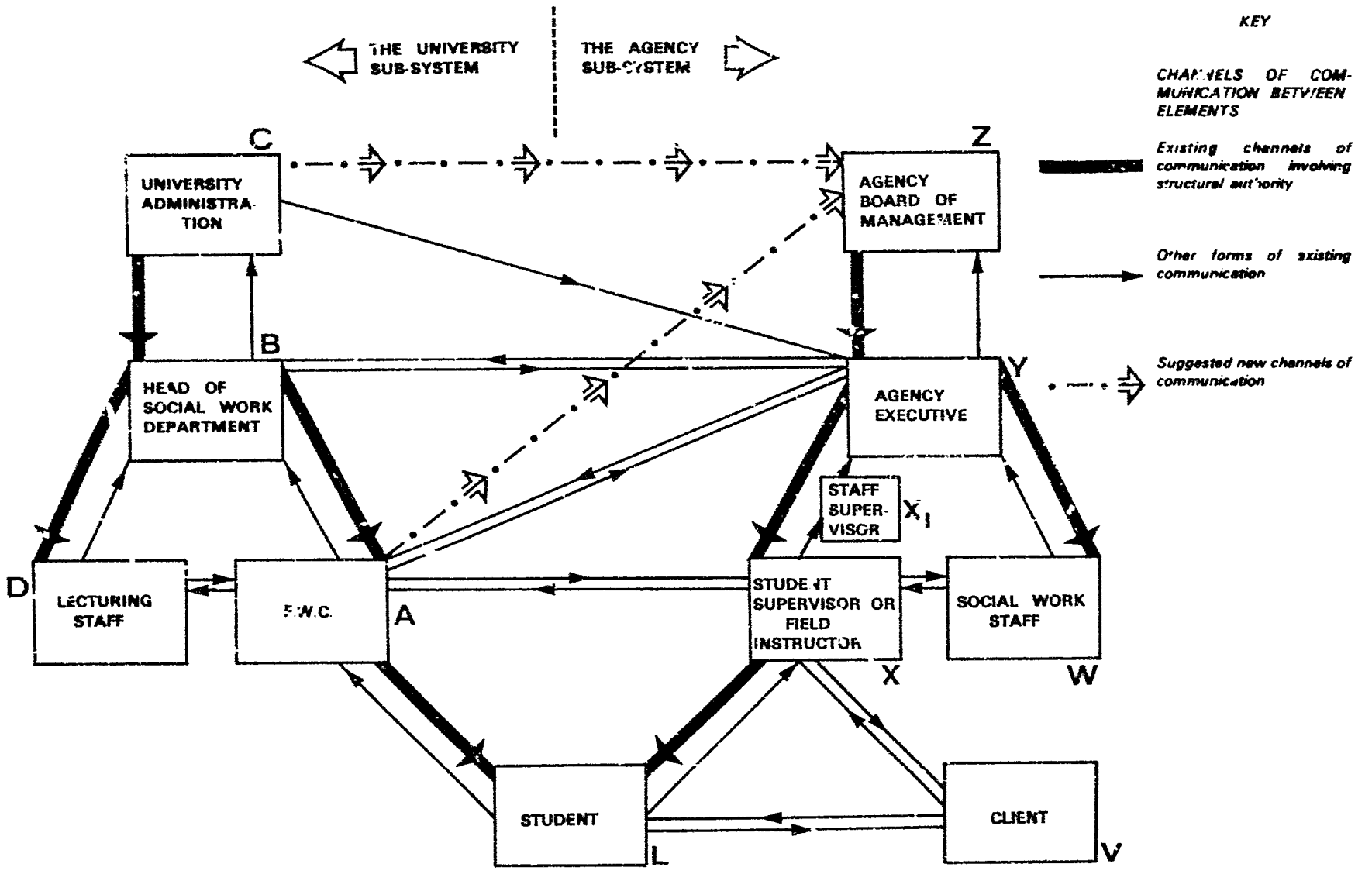


Figure 3: Model of the field work system

What are the features of this model which require comment?

The main point of the model is to convey the idea that the role of the field work consultant cannot be viewed in isolation. In this dissertation, the role of the FWC will be viewed within the context of what has been conceptualised here as the field work system, that is, that structure of interrelated persons and groups engaged in the process of the field instruction of university social work students within community agencies.

The model represents the elements in the system as rectangles which in some cases represent individuals and in others groups. The lines between these elements represent the flow of information, that is communication, between the elements.

It will be noted that in most cases this interchange is mutual, going both ways between inter-connected elements.

The flow in certain directions contains a stronger component of structural authority, i.e., involving the right to command, than in other directions, and this is represented by thick lines. The broken lines represent suggested new channels of communication which will be discussed in Chapter 13.

The role of the FWC will be analysed in terms of its reciprocal relationships with other elements in the system.

The sub-system which will receive the greatest attention will be what some authorities have referred to as the field work triad. These are the parties most directly involved in the field instruction process, viz., the FWC, the student supervisor (or field instructor) in the agency, and the student (sub-system [A,X,L]).

It should be noted here that though applicants to the University are the imports in Rice's model, and graduates and failures are exports, while they are taken up into the conversion process as students, they in fact become part of the system. Students are not static, inanimate objects which remain passive as they are processed but are vital participants in the educational process and must be viewed as such. In the model of the field work system they are therefore depicted as one of the inter-acting elements. Indeed, within the system, communications from students would be important as feedback in the system i.e., consequences of outputs "which are fed back into the input and processing to affect succeeding outputs".[26] Well-timed feedback from students is one essential factor in adjudging how smoothly the system is functioning and in assessing whether the system is performing its primary task of supplying growth-producing experiences to its students. The question of timing would be important here because of the complex of psychological factors involved in the process of professional growth. At certain times student discontent may not necessarily represent feedback requiring radical changes in system operations, while at other times it might.

Shafer in his contribution to Hearn's book describes how the systems concept is applicable to an understanding of the group. All the characteristics he lists are clearly applicable also to the small group comprising FWC, supervisor and student which forms part of the field work system. He writes as follows:

> In social systems theory, behaviour is considered to be a consequence of the total social situation in which an individual subsystem, group subsystem, or other social unit finds itself. In a social situation, interacting social units form bounded systems which define a field consisting of social characteristics standing in definite relationship to each other and in which social units can be located. The systems themselves persist in time while the position of social units within them may change. The person in the family or group, the group in the community, and the community in society are illustrations of this construct. ...
>
> Group members relate to one another producing effects noticeable in the larger context in which interaction is taking place. A reciprocal influence is detectable in the individuals composing the group. However, the group's interactions are partly determined by the larger context in which it exists. (Within the group there) must be:
>
> (1) communications and interactions;
>
> (2) some role differentiation;
>
> (3) a set of values and norms;
>
> (4) existence over a time span;
>
> (5) special procedures for entering or leaving the group; and
>
> (6) engagement of all members in a common task requiring some part of each person's effort. Within this structure, the group must:
>
> (1) discharge its function, and
>
> (2) satisfy the needs of its members. ... Both of these elements ... are vital to group homeostasis. [27]

In the case of the sub-system formed by the elements [A,X,L] in the model i.e., the group FWC, student supervisor and student, the primary task is to provide the student with a growth-producing experience of social work practice in the field while concomitantly satisfying the needs of the participants in the process at basic level. If this is not the case, the group

will be in a state of disequilibrium, and could disintegrate. The desired equilibrium is, of course, only relative, however. As Levy states, to talk of

> maximum congruence of effort and application among all participants ... is not to suggest absolute harmony ... or the obliteration of conflict. On the contrary, an educational institution or programme without strains, conflicts, uncertainties, and ambiguities would not be only dull but relatively unproductive. The issue here is the extent to which the various participants and functional responsibilities pull in the same direction which, for the schools of social work, is its professional education mission [28]

This statement leads on to the next point which is that the field work triad is clearly not a closed system as each element is part of another system; the FWC is part of the university, and the supervisor is part of the agency. Their roles and their interrelationships are therefore influenced by the processes at work within each of these institutions operating themselves as systems. The student too is part of a family and a community system, but these factors will be largely excluded for purposes of analysis on the assumption that when individuals enter the university system as students they subject themselves largely to the normative prescriptions of that institution. The university itself and the agency are also subject to influences from the wider community, for example in the form of support both moral and financial. However, for the purposes of aiding the analysis of processes within the field work system, this factor will be excluded (or to put it in another way, held constant), most of the time, and the model of the field work system is therefore depicted as a closed system with its boundaries enclosing the university and the agency as they are linked through the field work programme for students.

This then is the meaning which is attached to the term "role" as it is used in this dissertation. The role of the FWC will be analysed not in isolation but in relation to the structure, function and process of the field work system in its entirety. The concept implies the need, to quote Schwartz, to "reflect the activity of the social worker (in this case, the FWC) as it affects, and is affected by the activity of others within the system".[29]

2.2 Field Work Consultant

Many terms appear in social work literature to denote that staff member at a University School of Social Work who is responsible for organising and co-ordinating the field work programme. In Britain, the accepted term is "tutor". This appears in the writing of authorities on the subject such as Dorothy Pettes, Priscilla Young, Bessie Kent, M. Elizabeth Edwards and G.D.C. Woodrock.

In the United States, a wide variety of titles is used. Writing in 1949, Sentman used the term "faculty representative" stating that this was in accordance with a report of the American Association of Schools of Social Work on a "Study of Administrative Aspects of Field Work" which proposed that term to refer to the person having responsibility for liaison work between the school and the field work agency.[30] This term is, however, a nondescript one, providing no clue as to the nature of the activity involved in the performance of such a role. The same criticism could be applied to the South African term, „veldwerkbeampte" used by Annette Muller in her doctoral dissertation „Opleiding vir Maatskaplike Werk met spesiale verwysing na Suid-Afrika," and defined by her as „'n Personeellid van 'n opleidingsentrum wat onder meer verantwoordelik is vir die organisasie en verloop van praktika, asook vir supervisie".[31]

To digress briefly to consider the South African situation in general, it may be said that there is a dearth of literature on social work education in this country. Dr. Muller has pointed out this fact in a recent article.[32] In the work on field instruction which is available, there is no clarity about terminology. In fact, the National Conference on the Field Instruction of Students in Social Work held in Pretoria in 1971 pointed out that there was uncertainty regarding the division of responsibility between educational centres and agencies employing social workers. The Conference report states as follows:

> Een aspek van hierdie onduidelikheid spruit voort uit die algemene vaagheid oor wie eintlik verantwoordelik moet wees vir die praktykopleiding van studente, naamlik een of meer dosente, of 'n spesiale persoon op die personeel van die opleidingsentrum of werkgewende instansie? Hierop sal verder ingegaan moet word.[33]

It will be noted that in this uncertain situation no specific term is proposed to refer to the staff member at an educational institution who is responsible for field instruction or aspects thereof.

Bopape in his thesis on "Student Supervision in Casework Training" refers to the "student supervisor (lecturer) and agency social worker who supervises students"[34] while Muller in her thesis also referred to the term "supervisor of field work" which was used at some universities, (including the University of the Witwatersrand). There would seem to be a clear need in South Africa for the clarification of terminology and appropriate role prescription which would then hopefully lead to a greater clarity of understanding about division of responsibility.

The term "supervisor" appears in American literature too, with reference to University staff. For example, in Annette

Garrett's important contribution entitled "Learning through Supervision" which describes the system at the Smith College School for Social Work, she refers to the faculty supervisor. This term at least has the merit of describing where this "supervisor" is located, viz., on the school faculty, in contrast to her colleague, the supervisor in the agency. Yet clearly the use of the same noun is potentially confusing, particularly when the roles of the two parties involved are to be differentiated as they clearly must be. The terms "supervisor" and "supervision" are entrenched in social work literature to refer to a person and a process within agencies, though in some instances in latter years they have been replaced by the terms "field instructor" and "field instruction" to refer respectively to agency personnel and the process they use to teach students in the field. It would seem, however, that field instruction is a broad term to refer to a number of experiences provided for students in agencies while supervision remains the core administrative, teaching and helping experience which helps the student give focus to the wider field instruction experience in the agency. An alternative term should be found for the School staff member, therefore.

Perhaps one of the most popular and widely used terms in American literature is "adviser" which is incorporated into longer phrases in various ways such as, for example, field adviser, faculty adviser, faculty field adviser, casework faculty adviser. In fact, in recent years Smith College has adopted this term in preference to the term "supervisor" used in Garrett's time,[35] and it is also the title used by the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University.[36] Many of the large American Schools have a large number of faculty responsible for field work and often have a higher-level post entitled, for example, Director of Field Work or Co-Ordinator of Field Practice, as well as

posts for advisers, but what is of concern in this dissertation is the definition of the role of the person who is in direct contact with students and agencies vis-a-vis the field work programme.

Though "adviser" is popular, and other terms such as "faculty liaison" also appear, the terms "faculty consultant" and "field work consultant" are also frequently used. The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration employs the term "field consultant" at the present time,[37] Abrahamson in his book "Group Methods in Supervision and Staff Development" talks of the "field work consultant"[38] and in fact Bessie Kent writing in 1969 identifies this term as the one which was in current use in the United States.[39]

Which of these terms is the most appropriate to the South African situation? Many South African Universities are based on models of British Universities and use British terms to refer to their hierarchy of staff positions. The most obvious example is the term "lecturer". If South African Universities were to follow the British example, the term "tutor" should be used. However, this lays emphasis on the staff member's role in relation to students, whereas the essential feature of the field work situation is that it involves a three-cornered relationship between the University department as represented by one member of staff, the field instruction centre as represented by the supervisor or field instructor, and the student. The relationship between the University staff member and agency supervisor is essentially one of peers - both are academically-qualified and experienced social work practitioners. The term "tutor" is therefore not an appropriate one to describe the University staff member's role in relation to agency supervisors. Another term should be found which expresses the University staff member's

dual responsibility, to student and to agency undertaking field instruction.

The term "adviser" with its directive implications also seems to be less appropriate in the University-Agency relationship than the term "consultant", though advising is one component of consultation. Lydia Glover Nolan has written a full motivation for the substitution of the term "consultant" for the term "adviser" in which she points out that "the word 'advise' has the connotation of telling, dictating or transmitting from one in a superior position to one in a lower position".[40] Though not necessarily the case, in the minds of many the word seems to imply that the recipient of the advice is under an obligation to follow that advice. The verb "consult" has a more egalitarian connotation. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary provides the following definitions of this word relevant to the present study: "to take counsel together, deliberate, confer; to take counsel to bring about; to plan, devise; to ask advice of, seek counsel from; to have recourse to for instruction or professional advice". Clearly, the words "adviser" and "consultant" are related. In the writer's view, however, the latter has connotations more appropriate to the role relationships involved in the position.

It is clear from Figure 3 that the FWC is not part of the same hierarchical structure as the supervisor - the former is part of the University, the latter part of the Agency. The University and the Agency are independent organisations which establish a relationship for the purposes of field instruction on a more-or-less formal basis. It is useful to turn once again to business management theory to gain clarity on the nature of the authority components in such a relationship.

Authority is legitimized as opposed to coercive power. It is power which the people over whom it is exercised consider to be right and which conveys "the right to do something or other".[41] Authority is therefore a normative concept. Paterson distinguishes four types of authority which he terms structural, sapiential, moral and personal. The latter two enhance the exercise of the former two and will be omitted for purposes of discussion at this point.

Structural authority derives from one's position within a social system or structure. Every such position carries with it certain rights and obligations. According to Paterson, "Structural authority, the right to command, stems from the moral contract that members of an enterprise undertake on entering it, from the necessity for control and co-ordination of functions".[42] The communications which flow from persons with structural authority to others over whom the authority is exercised within the social structure involve two types of imperatives giving rise to two types of relationship. Firstly, there is the relation of responsibility, in which the imperative is the categorical "you will". Structural authority in this case is the right to command and to enforce obedience. The second relationship is accountability. This exists where there is the right to command which has been delegated, but not the right to enforce obedience, which remains vested in a person higher up in the hierarchy. The imperative in this instance is the parenthetical "you must or else ...".

If structural authority is the right to command, sapiential authority is the right to be heard. It "stems from the necessity to use all available knowledge in the decision process. Whereas structural authority is primarily vested in the position in the structure, and secondly in its occupant, sapiential authority

is vested primarily in the person".[43] Sapiential authority is the authority of wisdom, deriving from specialised knowledge and expertise. If a person has such specialised knowledge, he has the right to be heard and others have the reciprocal right to ask him to communicate that knowledge. As in the case of structural authority, sapiential authority can give rise to two types of communicative relationships, firstly an advisory relationship and secondly an informative relationship. When the expert knowledge is "used as advice necessary for fulfilling a function, the relation is one of advisability, and the imperative is the hypothetical, 'you must do ... if you are to fulfil your function'". In this case, sapiential authority is exercised in relation to functions, and to procedures specific to functions. The informative relationship involves the exercise of authority in relation to procedures which are not specific to function, and the imperative is the injunction "you should" or "you ought" which is weaker than the hypothetical imperative "you must". Paterson writes that though philosophers might argue the point, within a specific social system "must" involves a sense of obligation while "ought" involves only "expectation".[44]

Sapiential authority is sometimes loosely called "staff" authority and structural is called "line" authority. The following diagram presents the main features of Paterson's analysis schematically:

TABLE 1· PATERSON'S CLASSIFICATION OF TYPES OF AUTHORITY

Type of Authority	Legitimized Right	Types of Relationship	Nature of Imperative	Communication Involved
Structural Authority	The right to command	Responsibility	Categorical Imperative	"You will" i.e. right to command and enforce obedience
		Accountability	Parenthetical Imperative	"You must or else" i.e. the right to command but not to enforce obedience
Sapiential Authority	The right to be heard	Advisability	Hypothetical Imperative	"You must do ... if you are to fulfil your function"
		Informability	Imperative is an Injunction	"You should" or "You ought" in relation to procedures not specific to function

In what way does this outline of authority factors apply to the field work system? This system is a pluralistic system composed of two independent sub-systems whose movements in relation to each other are determined by negotiation. The University and the Agency are two independent organisations linked contractually. Clearly then there is no possibility of the exercise of structural authority between the FWC and the Supervisor. No member of the University staff has the right to command any member of the Agency staff. This type of authority can exist only within one formal organisation.*

Relationships involving sapiential authority can, however, exist between two independent organisations which relate to one another in pursuit of a common goal. The University and the Agency come together with the common purpose of equipping students to become practitioners with beginning competence in the field. The relationship between the two organisations is channelised through the FWC and the supervisor who interact with each other and the student in what has been called the field work triad. This triad may be regarded as a small group in which, to quote Limerick, the members are differentiated as to their functions for the task of achieving a common goal. If leadership is viewed as Limerick views it, viz., as facilitative behaviour which meets the four social process functions of support, goal emphasis, work facilitation and interaction facilitation, it is clear that it is the University staff member who must lead the group by virtue of her expertise in social work education. She therefore possesses sapiential authority in relation to the other members of the group for the purpose of the educational function of the

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*The writer is indebted to Dr. David Limerick of the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand, for discussion of these ideas.

group. She therefore has the right to be heard and the other partners have the reciprocal right to consult her about field instruction, which is or should be the perceived common goal of all three participants.

The nature of the relationship would appear to be an advisory one, to use Paterson's terminology. The nature of the communication from the University to the agency would involve the hypothetical imperative, which is "if you want to fulfil your function as a field instructor you must do ...". Suggestions for procedures specific to function will be made, but always with the knowledge that in fact because University personnel have no structural authority within the agency, that agency has the choice to decline or act on that advice; this is one of the characteristics of sapiential authority, according to Paterson.[45]

It is true that the University and the Agency have a contractual relationship though the nature of the contract may be more or less explicit. In the writer's view, the more explicit the terms of the contract, the more effective will the relationship be. If the University clarifies the financial aspects of the contractual relationship this will make the relationship even more effective as the University can then lay down what it requires from the agency in return. However, even in these circumstances the University can never compel the agency to comply with its requirements. It can only "advise" in Paterson's sense - it cannot either expect or enforce obedience, which are elements of structural authority. In the event of the agency failing in an extreme degree to fulfil the expectations either implicit or explicitly stated in the contract, all the University can do is terminate the contract, withdraw from the relationship.

Once this aspect of University-Agency relationship has been clarified it seems that the term "consultant" is an

appropriate one to refer to the University staff member who is responsible for liaison with agencies with regard to field instruction. Furthermore, an examination of social work literature on the subject of consultation reveals a description of processes which are relevant to the activity of the FWC in this situation. Authorities on the subject such as Lippitt[46] and Rapoport[47] have pointed out that the term "consultation" has been used to denote a wide variety of relationships, yet attempts have been made to define the core of the process. Gorman states that consultation is a problem-solving process directed towards p d change, that is change which derives from a purposeful decision to effect improvements in a social system (or personality system) and which is achieved with the help of professional guidance.[48] The university's FWC is a professional social work educator. Through the consultation process with agency personnel, she can assist the supervisor and other members of the agency staff to solve problems relating to supervising students in the field and to devise ways of changing so that the agency could function more efficiently as a field instruction centre without in any way impairing its service-rendering functions.

Gilmore defines the consultative situation as requiring the following four concomitant conditions:

1. It is an indirect, as opposed to direct, service activity. The consultation is for the consultee's use in behalf of a third party or social system i.e., institution or organisation.

2. It necessitates a voluntary, co-ordinate relationship. It cannot take place in a mandatory situation involving a superior and a subordinate.

3. It is task-oriented and involves a work-centered, circumscribed problem or segmented situation within a limited time-span. It is not concerned with total personality or global-type organisational goals that can develop indefinitely.

> 4. It is a process of making knowledge, experience, and professional attitudes and values available to others under their auspices and their responsibility, to use and implement as they choose or not. It is not an administrative relationship that requires adherence, utilization or accountability. [49]

The core of field instruction is the relationship between supervisor and student in the agency acting as field instruction centre. The University staff member offers her knowledge, experience and professional attitudes and values to the supervisor to use in relation to the student, a third party. FWC and supervisor are colleagues and each has an area of responsibility which is different in kind but not degree. Gilmore's words are clearly applicable:

> The consultant has the responsibility to bring his professional knowledge and experience to bear on the problem; the consultee has the responsibility to implement <u>some</u> solution to the problem, hopefully making use of what the consultant has to contribute. A co-ordinate relationship implies absence of a superior, subordinate relationship. It implies further a relationship of equal order or importance in regard to respective areas of competence. It does not imply equal status for consultant and consultee within the consultation relationship since the consultant, by definition, is an expert. The consultant may suggest <u>good</u> solutions to the problem, but only the consultee is in the position to assess what are the <u>workable</u> solutions in terms of the local conditions affecting implementation [50]

From the above discussion, it seems clear the "consultation" is an apt term to describe the relationship between FWC and supervisor. But what of the relationship between FWC and student? An examination of Figure 3 of the Field Work System reveals that the student is in an intermediary position between the University sub-system and the Agency sub-system. In a system

of concurrent field work, the student spends her field work days in the agency and on those days she becomes part of the agency system. The FWC offers her consultation relevant to her experiences there, primarily regarding her relationship with her supervisor and others in the administrative hierarchy of the agency. It is true that as a university student she is subject to the structural authority of staff members within the university system and to that extent the term "consultation" is less suitable to describe what the FWC offers the student than to describe what she offers the supervisor. Yet it offers advantages which could enhance the creativity of the relationship between the student and the university staff member responsible for field work. The process of helping and educating a student in relation to her field work may be said to be related to social work processes as well as educational processes. It involves enabling the student to develop freely in her own way within the limits set by the school of social work, the agency and the demands of reality. Only the student herself can determine what she will make of her experiences: in this philosophical sense, education cannot be imposed and the student has the freedom to choose how she will use the field instruction opportunities offered to her. It is in this sense, too, that a member of the university staff can act as a consultant to her; she must exercise skill in separating her structural authority from her sapiential authority in relation to the students for this purpose.

In her article on "The Faculty Consultant in Relation to the Social Work Student" Nolan concedes that the university staff member will have to give the student practical direction in certain aspects of the field work programme, but she adds that it is important for the student not to feel that she needs practical direction in her total functioning. Indeed, experience has shown that students resent any such implication in the

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