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The role of the field work consultant in social work education

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the Johannesburg Board of Charities*, the Probation Office and the Children's Aid Society. By the early 1940's other agencies had been incorporated into the programme, for example, the Mental Health Society of the Witwatersrand, the Rand Aid Association, the Social Services Association, the Social Affairs Department of the Johannesburg Municipality, the Johannesburg Child Guidance Clinic and the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital.[39]

The FWC also explored new avenues as possible placements for students. In 1948 for example, she approached the Transvaal Memorial Hospital for children to enquire whether final year students could work there. As there was no social worker on the staff at the time she suggested that Dr. Gordon of the John Grey Community Health Centre Staff and Honorary Tutor at the University, could supervise the students, but in fact she paved the way for the appointment of a social worker at the Hospital itself by outlining what tasks could be undertaken by such a person.[40]

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* Miss I. Etheridge of the Johannesburg Municipality kindly supplied the following information about this body: "In 1926 the Provincial Administration enacted the Charitable Institutions (Control) Ordinance under which was appointed, at first by the Administrator of the Transvaal and from 1941 to 1951 by the Minister of Social Welfare, the old statutory Johannesburg Board of Charities subsequently known as the Johannesburg Welfare Board. This was at first an active body which was responsible for many progressive measures in Johannesburg, such as the setting up of the first Case Register, encouraging the University to found a Social Science Department and the City Council to establish its Social Welfare Department." One of its founders, Mr. J.L. Hardy was responsible for establishing the non-statutory Social Welfare Committee on which every welfare organisation in the city was entitled to representation.

Contact between the FWC and the staff of the agencies used for practical training was maintained in various ways. Staff from some of the agencies were invited to give lectures at the University from time to time although they were not accorded the status of honorary tutors. The FWC also visited the agencies periodically and served on the Boards of a number of them.[41]

In 1960, the FWC drew up a document entitled "Details of Practical Training in Social Work" which provides valuable inform tion on how the Wits. field work programme operated in practice at that time. The agencies used for placements were listed as follows:

Union Department of Social Welfare and Pensions

Provincial Hospitals including general hospitals (European and Non-European); and maternity, children's and psychiatric hospitals.

City Health Department (Tuberculosis Section)

City Parks and Community Services Department

City Non-European Affairs Department

Voluntary welfare agencies, including -

- Child Welfare Society
- Mental Health Society
- Child Guidance Clinic
- Rand Aid Association
- Cripples Care Association
- Society to help Civilian Blind
- S.A. Association of Youth Clubs etc.

In describing supervisory practices in these agencies, the FWC stated that the quality and nature of the supervision were not uniform. Both individual and group supervision were provided, and the document continued:

> Arrangements are flexible and varied. Apart from attendance at case discussions, staff meetings or programme planning discussions and periodic discussions with a senior member of staff, much of the supervision is carried out on an informal basis. ... It is our belief that co-operation between the University and the agencies is of greater importance than any fixed provisions for supervision, and we are gratified at the interest shown in the supervision of our students. ... I do not know whether it is possible or desirable to attempt to lay down hard and fast rules for supervision. What seems to be important is that supervisors should have an understanding of inter-personal relationships as well as proficiency in their work and that we should endeavour to help students to adapt to and learn from different types of experience. [42]

As far as meetings of Supervisors are concerned, the FWC first arranged such a gathering at the University in May, 1958. This was attended by 21 representatives of the various organisations providing practical training for social work students and had the stated purpose of finding out "whether there could be closer co-operation between the University and social work and other personnel directly concerned with the practical training of students" [43] and of promoting discussion of common problems.

This meeting was followed in 1959 by a one week course on "Supervision in Social Work" organised by Professor Wagner and Dr. T. Seawright for supervisors of staff and students in social work agencies.

The course was planned as a team effort and the lecturers and group leaders were drawn from the disciplines of clinical psychology, psycho-analysis and psychiatry as well as social work.

After the Conference, the papers delivered were published in a duplicated booklet entitled "Supervision in Social Work." [44]

Arising out of this course, a number of weekly discussion groups for supervisors were organised in 1959 and 1960. These were under the leadership of Dr. Julian Katz, at that time Medical Director of the Johannesburg Child Guidance Clinic, and Mr. R. Gluckman, clinical psychologist at Tara Hospital, and participants paid a fee for attending.

In the ensuing years the FWC periodically arranged informal meetings which were attended by case supervisors and other staff members from field instruction centres. The discussion centred around the training programme and difficulties which arose. One meeting held early in 1963 emphasised the importance of close communication between the FWC, the agency, the supervisor and the student, and noted that it was imperative to provide supervisors with details of the students' syllabus and individual characteristics.[45]

From October 1966, annual end-of-year meetings of supervisors and agency executives from field instruction centres were instituted on a formal basis. The 1966 meeting expressed the view that

> contact and communication between student and agency supervisor through the medium of the Supervisor of Field Work was important to ensure the integration of theory and practice. It was decided that the Supervisor of Field Work interview individually all third and fourth year students after the completion of their practical training in agencies, and thereafter discuss any general issues pertaining to student training with the supervisors in all training agencies.[46]

This was a significant statement in that it represented a mandate from the agencies to the FWC to develop her role in the future as a facilitator of communication between agency, student and University.

At the meeting held in October 1967, a senior member of the University administration, Professor S.P. Jackson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University gave a welcoming address in which he thanked the agency representatives for "their invaluable contribution to the student training programme in social work."[47] This was the first time since the inception of such meetings that the University Administration had played an active part in recognising the extent to which community welfare organisation participated in the curriculum for the B.A.(Social Work).

On the 1st April, 1968, the University were hosts at a morning coffee party given at the Women's Residence on the Campus for senior social work staff of all agencies and organisations participating in the field work programme. This too represented increased recognition on the part of the University authorities of the contribution made by these agencies and facilitated the cultivation of cordial working relationships between the FWC's and the agencies.

At the 1968 Annual meeting of supervisors and agency executives, the FWC gave a short talk on supervision and much discussion followed on the nature of the process and the necessity for introducing training courses for supervisors. This led to the introduction of seminars for supervisors in 1969, and the drafting of the Guides to Field Instruction Centres which specified the School's requirements for the field instruction of its students.

In November, 1968, the Director of Studies of the School of Social Work attended a meeting at Tara Hospital to discuss the possibility of affording teaching status to para-medical staff in teaching hospitals of the Provincial Hospital

Administration, as was already the case with medical staff and physicists. Mr. Glyn Thomas, Academic Adviser to the Office of the Principal at Wits., acknowledged the need to recognise dual functions when teaching services were rendered by persons outside the University staff and suggested that honorary University status should be accorded to people in such a position. However, as Director of Studies of the School, Dr. Brümmer expressed the view that the per capita basis of payment for supervisory services rendered met the case effectively as far as the School of Social Work was concerned, and therefore no change was contemplated at that time.[48]

4.7 The Field Work Consultant's Practices and Procedures in relation to students receiving field instruction in community welfare organisations

When Dr. F. Brümmer as Research Officer of the new State Department of Social Welfare visited training institutions offering courses for social workers in 1938, he reported favourably on the University of Stellenbosh and one or two other Universities. His reports on these institutions provide an indication of what the Department of Social Welfare at that time regarded as the various components which should make up the role of an adequate field work consultant. Relevant points are:

Cultivating co-operation with outside agencies and keeping in close touch with them.

Providing strong supervision and guidance for the practical work.

Discussing cases and problems in field work in seminars with groups of students.

Giving students individual interviews regularly in order to discuss cases, keep in touch with the students' progress and give advice in a tactful manner about the

> students' general behaviour and other personal characteristics which could influence her work as a social worker.[49]

He therefore advocated close contact between the FWC and students in connection with their practical work. However, this seems to have been a relatively neglected dimension of the FWC's role at the University of the Witwatersrand until 1968 and 1969.

Individual interviews were held with students from time to time, for example, when placements were being arranged, as these were done on the basis of student preferences wherever possible. In the late 1950's and early 1960's students were helped to decide on their preferences by the practice of inviting agency personnel to give a lecture at the University to third year students on the work of their particular agencies.[50] At the first meeting of Supervisors which took place at the University in 1958, it was agreed that in the case of certain agencies of a specialised nature, for example, the Johannesburg Child Guidance Clinic, the FWC should arrange for the agency to interview students who wished to receive practical training there prior to placement. However, in general, the policy at Wits. seems to have been to use student preference as the starting-point for placement in field instruction centres.

At times during the period under review, the FWC would also have individual interviews with students just prior to their placements in order to prepare them for work in the agencies.[51,52] However, there does not seem to have been an on-going process of communication between the FWC and individual students in relation to their field instruction experience.

The policy in relation to showing students their evaluation reports also seems to have been unclear. In the mid-1960 s it seems that the FWC initiated the policy of allowing students to read their reports at the University,[53] but prior to this, students were as a rule only shown their evaluation reports if trouble had arisen during the placement, and not because this was a logical step in a continuous learning process. Very often, when interviews were held between the FWC and students, these were crisis-oriented and occurred when serious problems had cropped up during a placement.

There does not appear to have been a close association between the FWC, students and agency supervisors. If and when the FWC visited agencies to discuss placements, the students seem not to have been informed of this as a general rule.

Class discussion of case material from the agencies however does seem to have been a feature of the relationship between the FWC and the students for most of the period under review. In the early 1940's students were expected to write full reports on their placements, which were discussed in class;[54] later in that decade liaison was facilitated by inviting social workers from the agencies to lead case discussions with third and fourth year students at the University for which they were paid a nominal fee;[55] at the first meeting of supervisors held at the University in 1958, a decision was taken which sanctioned the discussion of case material in class provided all identifying data were excluded. The purpose of such class discussions would be to help students with difficulties in integrating theory and practice.[56] Throughout the period under review, these case discussions with the FWC tended to focus on the intellectual aspects of practice, and from 1954 onwards group discussions with a clinical psychologist were arranged by the University to

to aid final-year students with the more personal, emotional aspects of their professional development.

4.8 Summary of Trends

When social work education was introduced at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1937, the field work component was not initially given sufficient emphasis. Community welfare organisations were used to provide practical training but the situation was unsatisfactory in terms of equipping graduates for professional practice in posts subsidised by the Department of Social Welfare. The situation was improved in 1939 by the appointment of a temporary assistant to deal with the practical training of students. This post was converted into a junior lectureship in 1942 and a lectureship in 1945. The incumbents of these posts had teaching commitments as well as responsibility for field work, but developments occurred in the field work curriculum nevertheless. Noteworthy were the introduction of evaluation outlines for reports on students' practical work and the important role played by the Community Health Centre (University of the Witwatersrand) in the field work programme. Throughout Phase One in the historical development of the Wits. course (as defined in the previous chapter) the regulations for the degree made reference to practical training and this remained the case until 1949.

From 1947 to 1956 the University published no syllabus details in its Calendar. Therefore, from 1950 when the regulations ceased to refer to field work as a requirement, until 1957 when the published syllabus again described the rules relating to practical training, the University calendars contained no reference to field work. This component reappeared in the regulations in 1961.

During the second phase of the history of the degree, from 1947 to 1967, its name changed from Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies to Bachelor of Arts in Social Work(1956) and the theoretical curriculum underwent important developments. Progress was made in the recognition of the field work component. Apart from the inclusion of field work in the regulations, a post entitled "Supervisor of Field Work" was created, and sporadic courses and meetings for supervisors were held. On the whole however contact between the FWC and supervisors was informal and irregular, and neither was there on-going communication and contact between the FWC and individual students.

Towards the end of Phase Two, annual meetings for supervisors were introduced and the University Administration began to give increased recognition to the contribution of community welfare organisations to the education of social work students. With the advent of the School of Social Work, the field work staff was expanded, guides to field instruction centres were drawn up, contact with students intensified and seminars for supervisors organised. Remuneration for field instruction services was also introduced, payment being made to agencies on the basis o the number of days worked by individual students. Prior t this, the only agency which had received payment from the University was the Johannesburg Child Guidance Clinic which from 1948 was given an annual grant of R500 for training students. This agency was therefore exempted from the per capita payment, and a second exception was made in the case of WITSCO which also received a lump sum payment for services rendered to the University.

At the end of the period under review therefore, that is, the end of 1969, the field work component in the curriculum was poised on the brink of full maturity. The appointment of a full-time staff member to act solely as field work consultant

with the assistance of the junior field instructor heralded a period of further expansion in which the field work programme was placed under the administration of a Committee of three staff members, the Field Instruction Committee of the School of Social Work, which meets frequently and reports to the staff periodically, and in which provision was made in the regulations for the degree Bachelor of Arts in Social Work for the formal quantitative assessment of students' performance in the field and for the inclusion of these marks in the students' final examination marks.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar, 1938, pp.122-123.

2. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar, 1943, pp.139-140.

3. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar, 1961, p.90.

4. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar, 1965, p.210.

5. Univ. of W'Rand Calendar, 1959, p.94.

6. Univ. of W'Rand. Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Arts, 11th May, 1944. F.A.S./127/44/Minute 4.

7. South Africa: Department of Social Welfare. Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into the Training and Employment of Social Workers, UG13/1950, para. 291, p.43.

8. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar 1957, pp.412-413.

9. Univ. of W'Rand: Calendar 1964, p.254.

10. Ibid., p.186.

11. Univ. of the Witwatersrand, "Memorandum on the Urgent Need for Developing the Scientific Study of Social Problems at the University" attached to Document Miscellaneous S/51/33, pp.1-2.

12. Univ. of W'Rand: "Minutes of a Meeting Convened by the Principal to Consider the Question of Training for Social Work and Organised Research in Social Problems". 31st July 1933. Miscellaneous S/51/33, Minute 4(b).

13. Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, File SW47, letter from Dr. F. Brümmer to Miss Edith Abbott, 8th October 1937, p.5.

14. Department of Social Welfare, "Proposed Agenda. Conference in Connection with the Training of Social Workers" 1938, p.1.

15. Ibid. p.2.

16. Department of Social Welfare "Notes on Conference in Connection with the Training of Social Workers" 8.3.1938.

17. Department of Social Welfare, Letter from the Secretary, Mr. G.A.C. Kuschke to Mr. H. Raikes, Principal of the Univ. of W'Rand enclosing report by Dr. F. BrUmmer entitled "Univ. W'rand, Johannesburg".

18. Department of Social Welfare, "Memorandum to the Secretary for Social Welfare from the Under-Secretary Forsyth: Training of Social Workers - W'Rand University" Pretoria, 28.4.1939.

19. Univ. of W'Rand, Letter from the Registrar, Mr. I. Glyn Thomas to the Secretary for Social Welfare, 27.6.1939.

20. Univ. of W'Rand 'Report of the Staffing and Promotions Committee, April-June 1949", Miscellaneous GPS/214/49. Item 4(r)(i).

21. Department of Social Welfare. Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into the Training and Employment of Social Workers UG 13/1950, paragraph 299, see also paras. 336, 340, 595.

22. Univ. of W'Rand "Staffing and Promotions Committee. Report for the period 10th May to 4th June, 1955" S.P.C./217/55 Item 24.

23. Univ. of W'Rand, School of Social Work. Advertisement for Post of Qualified Organiser of Field Instruction (Social Work) November, 1969.

24. Proceedings of Conference on the Training of Social Workers, September 1936 (roneoed) pp.5-6.

25. Univ. of W'Rand, Letter from Professor J.L. Gray to Miss Troughton, Secretary of the Children's Aid Society, Johannesburg, 7th March 1938, pages 1 and 2.

26. Children's Aid Society, Johannesburg. Note dated 14.4.1935 written on letter to the Secretary from Professor J.L.Gray, Univ. of W'Rand, 28.3.1938.

27. I. Glyn Thomas, Academic Adviser to the Principal, Univ. of W'Rand, Personal Communication to Writer 15th July, 1971.

28. Ibid.

29. Univ. of W'Rand "Memorandum on Request for Financial Assistance to the Johannesburg Child Guidance Clinic Referred by Principal to the Staffing and Promotions Committee" 21.9.1948.

30. Ibid.

31. Univ. of W'Rand, Department of Sociology and Social Work "Suggestions made by Members of the Supervisors Discussion Group o Student Training" 8th April, 1963. (duplicated).

32. Univ. of W'Rand Department of Sociology and Social Work "Proceedings of the Meeting of Supervisors of Student Training in Social Welfare Agencies 25.10.1966" 1st December, 1966.

33. Univ. of W'Rand School of Social Work "Proceedings of the 1968 meeting of Supervisors of 3rd and 4th year students' Field Instruction in Social Welfare Agencies", p.1.

34. Dept. of Social Welfare. "Proposed Agenda. Conference in Connection with the Training of Social Workers." 1938.

35. Sonnabend, H. '"We Cannot Wait till the Long Run" The late Professor J.L. Gray'. Common Sense, March, 1947: 102-103.

36. Community Health Centre (Univ. of W'Rand), "First Report for the period 1st January, 1943 to 31st December, 1944" p.2.

37. Univ. of W'Rand, Calendar 1945, p.77.

38. Op. cit., No. 32 above, page 19.

39. Personal communications to writer from Mrs. L. Arnold, Mrs. S. Cuckow and Mrs. M. Elkan (nee Colman)

40. Johannesburg Hospital "Social Services: T.M.H. for C. Request from Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Studies, Univ. of W'Rand". Memorandum by Dr. K.F. Mills, Superintendent. 1.5.1948.

41. Personal communication to writer from Mrs. C. Muller, FWC at Wits. 1946-1949.

42. Univ. of W'Rand, Department of Sociology and Social Work "Details of Practical Training in Social Work" T.R. Seawright 1960.

43. Univ. of W'Rand, Department of Sociology and Social Work. Letter from Professor O.J.M. Wagner to Mrs. M. Uys, Secretary of the Child Welfare Society, June 1958 and Annexures thereto, being Minutes of an Informal Meeting of Representatives of Social Welfare and Other Organisations concerned with the Practical Training of Social Work Students 29.5.1958 and Comments thereon by Professor O.J.M. Wagner.

44. Univ. of W'Rand Department of Sociology and Social Work. Supervision in Social Work. Papers read at a post-graduate course for social work supervisors held in April/May 1959. (mimeographed).

45. Op. cit., Note 31 above.

46. Op. cit., Note 32 above.

47. Univ. of W'Rand, School of Social Work "Proceedings of the meeting of Supervisors of Student Training in Social Welfare Agencies 31.10.1967". 12th December, 1967. (duplicated).

48. Tara Hospital, "Report on a Preliminary Discussion to Consider the possibility of affording teaching status to Para-medical Staff in Teaching Hospitals, held in the Office of the Superintendent on Thursday, 28th November 1968 at 9a.m.", pages 3-4.

49. Department of Social Welfare, Dr. F. BrUmmer's reports on social work training at the Universities of Cape Town, Pretoria and Stellenbosch, 1938.

50. T.R. Seawright, formerly Senior Lecturer in Social Work, Univ. of W'Rand. Personal communication 30.7.1971.

51. Univ. of W'Rand, Department of Social Studies, Letter from Professor J.L. Gray to Secretary, Children's Aid Society 6.8.1938.

52. S.M. Cuckow, Field Work Consultant at the Univ. of W'Rand 1950-1952, Personal Communication to writer 22.7.1971.

53. B. Unterhalter, now Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Univ. of W'Rand, Personal Communication to Writer 15.7.1971.

54. Personal communication to writer from Mrs. L. Arnold.

55. Univ. of W'Rand, Department of Social Studies, Letters from Mrs. C. Muller to Secretary of Child Welfare Society, Johannesburg, 22.3.1948 and 11.3.1949.

56. Op. cit., Note 43 above.

Part III

Aspects of the Field Instruction Programme at the University of the Witwatersrand 1968-1969 and Implications for the Role of the Field Work Consultant.

CHAPTER 5

FUNDAMENTAL POLICY DECISIONS IN FIELD INSTRUCTION: GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE FIELD WORK CONSULTANT'S ROLE

Field instruction is an integral part of social work education and it is therefore important for schools of social work to define their policy with regard to this area of the curriculum. While the 1959 Curriculum Study of the Council on Social Work Education in the United States made some proposals about field work it did not concern itself with this issue in any depth. One writer in fact has commented that the study left field instruction "unstudied and unresolved"[1] and it has only been in the subsequent decade that Schools of Social Work in the United States have given concentrated attention to this question and have undertaken a limited number of empirical research projects in this area.*

Schubert writing in 1965 differentiated between two types of policy decisions which schools should make about their field instruction programmes. On the one hand, there are fundamental policy decisions which relate to questions such as the following:

1. Should the educational emphasis in field work be on skill in practice or on knowledge about practice? In either case how many methods should be included?

2. Should class and field courses have shared content and objectives or are there certain objectives which are unique to field instruction?

3. What should be the time distribution between class and field, both in terms of quantity and spacing? This introduces the question of block and concurrent field work.

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*See for example work by Margaret Schubert, Sales and Navarre, Sheldon Rose listed in Bibliography.

4. Who should be responsible for field teaching, school or agency based instructors? How many placements should each student have during each year of the course?

Subsidiary decisions relate to aspects of field instruction such as the following:

1. Amount and timing of orientation of students to agency.
2. Timing of assignments that involve assumption of professional responsibility.
3. Selection of assignments.
4. Number of assignments.
5. Expectations of the students recording.
6. Use of individual and group supervisory conferences, and their content.
7. Use staff meetings and consultations with specialists.
8. Sources of observation of the student's work.
9. The evaluation process.[2]

This dissertation is concerned mainly with some of these subsidiary factors. The question of the amount of time allocated to field instruction, the relationship between block and concurrent placements, and the optimum number of placements for each student, will not be explored. Discussion will be concentrated on the role of the field work consultant within the existing structure of the fourth year of study for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand as stated earlier. This involves the placement of students with one community agency for concurrent field work on two days per week until 400 hours have been accumulated, and during the placement an agency-based supervisor is responsible for the field instruction programme.

However, certain fundamental aspects of field instruction policy at Wits. will be described as these form the context within which the FWC operates.

Betty Lacy Jones in her Introduction to the book "Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education" published in 1969 suggested that the following questions were helpful in "identifying the parts of field instruction that are arranged in different combinations to form individual patterns in schools of social work."

> What is curriculum content for field instruction?
> Where does field instruction take place?
> Who is the field instructor?
> How is the teaching done?
> When does field instruction take place and for how long?

She added that the answers to these questions are determined partly by a particular school's educational approach, partly by exigencies and practical considerations, partly by individual preferences, and perhaps, partly by chance.[3]

From the historical account of social work education at Wits. in chapters three and four of the present study, it is clear that field instruction at this University has virtually, from its inception, been generic in that students were expected to have experience in all methods of social work at one time or another during the course. However, curriculum objectives were not explicitly stated until 1969 when for the first time a Guide to Field Instruction Centres entitled "Field Instruction in Social Work for Senior Students" was compiled by the School.* This Guide referred to the field instruction of both third and fourth

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* See Appendix 4

year students. Later in the same year, an additional "Guide to Students"* was compiled. This was based on the Agency Guide but it laid down objectives for fourth year field instruction in more specific terms. It described the purpose of field instruction as follows:

"1. Field instruction forms an integral part of the professional education of social workers. Its aim is to enable the student to relate theory and practice, gain skill in social work practice, and develop self-awareness. To achieve these objectives, the field instruction of students is the shared responsibility between the School of Social Work and field instruction centres in the community.

2. In the fourth year of study, field instruction is aimed at en[illegible]he student to develop her skill in social work. She may co[illegible]ate primarily on social casework, or in certain instances on social group work or community organisation, yet field instruction should also equip her to use a combination of these primary social work methods.

3. It is also regarded as important for a student to receive field instruction in the secondary processes of social work, viz. social work administration and social work research during the course of her learning one or more of the primary methods."

Margaret Schubert in another article on field instruction published in 1969 states that two main approaches to educational objectives seem possible: firstly, a problem approach which seeks to help the student acquire mastery of a particular human problem area, for example aging; and secondly, a methods approach. Within this latter approach "one could conceive of a number of variations. One might seek mastery of one method and ability to use it in one type of agency or in a variety of settings. Or there might be concentration in one method with some ability to use others in

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*See Appendix 5.

one type of agency or in a variety of settings. And, finally, one might envision an objective that includes the use of multiple methods in one type of agency or in a variety."[5]

It is clear from the statements in the Wits.Guides quoted above that the Wits. field work curriculum in the fourth year is designed to enable students to concentrate on one method but develop some ability to use others in one type of agency. Owing to the practical realities of the social work agencies in Johannesburg which at the time of this study provided, in the main, only casework services to clients, most students concentrated on this method virtually to the exclusion of group work and community organisation. Therefore the present study is concerned mainly with the role of the FWC in relation to agencies providing field instruction opportunities in casework as one of the three primary methods of social work.

However, the curriculum at the Wits. School also laid a great deal of emphasis on social work administration on the assumption that this is a vital process in any agency rendering services in any one of the primary methods. Even in an agency which perhaps views itself as providing only a casework service, social work administration is an inherent part of its organisation, being concerned with the formulation of agency policy and its translation into service. The School therefore regarded administration as an important component of the curriculum for field instruction and one of its objectives was that the student should have the opportunity to learn about aspects of administration as part of her placement.

Social work research is mentioned in item 3 of the Guide too. Should the agency be engaged in any research project, it is desirable that the student be exposed to this either in an

observational or participatory capacity. However thus far in practice, this has seldom been the case. The student's main exposure to research occurs through the writing of the dissertation based on a modest research project (see Items 30-33 in Guide to Field Instruction Centres, 42-45 Guide to Students*) and though this may be based on empirical data from the agency, it is supervised by a staff member from the School and therefore is not part of field instruction within the agency.

The first of the items from the Field Instruction Guide quoted above illustrates too what the Wits. approach is to the first of the fundamental policy questions cited by Schubert viz. whether the emphasis in field work should fall on skill in practice or on knowledge about practice. This is a complex question which is being examined in discussions of innovations in field instruction patterns in American social work at present. The Wits. approach may be described as being similar to that of Schubert viz.

> The educational emphasis in field instruction should be in the direction of the development of skill in practice, with an important modification. The professional person should know what he is doing; he should be able to describe his actions and his purposes and to analyze his successes and his failures. [6]

This does not represent an extreme position in favour of skill to the exclusion of the knowledge component. Neither does it imply an apprenticeship model of teaching and learning which, in the words of Finestone "takes the current state of social work knowledge and practice as fixed."[7] The type of field instruction envisaged should enable the student to develop skill in the exercise of professional judgement in the analysis of the complex number of factors involved in social work situations, as well as skill in the constructive use of her own resources in relation to changing circumstances. As Schubert states: "Professional

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* See appendices 4 and 5.

education (in contrast to apprenticeship) recognises change and uncertainty as a continuing fact of life"[8] and one of the unique contributions of field work to such education is the opportunistic way in which the good field teacher or supervisor can make use of unexpected events and relate these to a conceptual framework. Schubert describes it this way:

> The orderliness of the field has to do with the way the field teacher helps the student to perceive and respond to the apparent chaos of real life [9]

Yet another objective of social work education which can be attained only in the field and not in the classroom is the full awareness in real terms of the stress of professional responsibility, as Lyndell Scott has pointed out.[10] Participating in decisions and events which affect the lives of "real" human beings is a very different experience from considering such matters intellectually in the classroom.

These are some answers from Wits. to the first of Betty Lacy Jones' questions, viz, what are the educational objectives and curriculum content of field work?

The second question, "where?", relating to the location of field work, is also a complex one occupying a great deal of attention at present in the United States. Many American schools are currently experimenting with innovative models such as teaching centres and service centres, which are described for example in Betty Lacy Jones' compilation of articles, published in 1969.[11] By virtue of the fact that the Wits. field work programme features the placement of students in community agencies for field instruction, it may be said that Wits. uses what Hale has called the traditional model of field instruction.[12] It is the FWC's role in relation to this model which is the object of the present

study. However, the rationale of using agency placements for field instruction will be briefly stated here. The writers of the Functional School of Social Work theory such as Virginia Robinson, Rosa Wessel, Goldie Basch Faith, and Ruth Smalley, from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, and Ruth Gilpin from the University of North Caro , lay a great deal of emphasis on the importance of experience within an agency for the education of social work students. In 1953 Goldie Basch Faith wrote that a salient trend in the history of the University of Pennsylvania School has been "the seriousness of its long-maintained interest in the student's experience gained in the service agency".[13] An explanation for this interest may be found in an excerpt from P· inson written in 1942:

> We have learned to value the actual agency experience as an essential element in student training. His field placement gives the student from th. beginning a responsibility as a functioning part of an agency offering service to clients, more real than is possible when he is placed in a training district set up and controlled by the School.[14]

The same views are reiterated in Smalley's book published in 1967, but this approach is by no means confined only to the faculty of the Pennsylvania School. Schubert states categorically that "the agency has an important role in professional education" and adds that it is in "the real world of social work practice ... where the student must find himself, perhaps trying on various models for size before he reaches his own professional identity."[15] She and others recognise however, that there are difficulties inherent in the partnership between school and agency by virtue of the fact that the school's primary function is education of students while the agency's primary function is service to clientele.

To ease these difficulties, to facilitate a constructive working relationship between school and agency, and to assist the

student in the task of unifying class and field experiences - these constitute the focus of the FWC's role.

As stated earlier in the text, the question "When?" relating to the timing of field instruction will not be considered here, so that Betty Lacy Jones' fifth question does not apply. The third and fourth questions remain:

Who is the Field Instructor?

How is the teaching done?

The first of these involves a number of issues, one of which may be regarded as a fundamental policy issue in Schubert's terms and others which are subsidiary issues. The basic issue relates to whether the field instructor or supervisor should be an agency employee or a member of staff of the School of Social Work. This is yet another complex, controversial point in formulating field instruction policy and there are advantages and disadvantages attached to both types of arrangements. However, the Wits. situation at the time of this study followed the traditional pattern of using agency employees as supervisors and it is therefore the implications of this type of arrangement for the role of the FWC which will be considered in the discussion which follows.

Prior to this however, the main features of the traditional model of field instruction will be described. This model is being questioned in the United States at present (the early 1970's), and much experimentation is taking place. As Younghusband wrote in 1960, after the publication of the Curriculum Study: "in truth, the United States is the world's laboratory of social work education", but, she added, "it must be remembered ... that the practice of social work elsewhere is not generally at as advanced a level as in North America."[16]

This remains true of contemporary South African social work. As Van Rooyen has stated, social work in the Republic has not yet attained the status which it enjoys in the United States, and there is a shortage of funds and senior personnel which affects the field instruction of students.[17] This partly accounts for the relative lack of experimentation in this country where the traditional pattern still predominates.

This pattern which, according to Mark Hale, has evolved over many years and has in general been supported by faculties as an effective learning system, has been characterized by him in the following terms:

1. The focus is on development of practice skill in some one method of practice.
2. Field learning and class learning proceed concurrently with relatively early introduction of the student to case-carrying, service-giving responsibilities and learning experiences. Some schools intersperse the class and field learning at regular intervals, using a system of "block" placement in agencies.
3. The field learning experiences are based primarily in the agency where the student is placed.
4. The learning experiences are organised and directed by the agency's function and the service needs of the clients included in the student's caseload.
5. The primary teaching-learning method is the tutorial or individual conference based on relationship and role identification with the chief mentor - the field instructor.
6. Work components in the experience are high, inasmuch as the student is expected to perform the work role of an employee in accord with the agency's policies and procedures .[18]

Within this traditional model, what are the detailed requirements which the School has of the agency, relating to the

supervisors assigned responsibility for the field instruction of students within agencies, and the methods of field teaching? In terms of Schubert's classification cited at the beginning of this chapter, these are subsidiary decisions about field instruction, and it was these which were addressed in the research project in the present study.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. Rita A. Mc Guire. "Forecasting the Future of Field Learning and Teaching" in Betty Lacy Jones (ed.) Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education, p.20.

2. Margaret Schubert, "Curriculum Policy Dilemmas in Field Instruction". Journal of Education for Social Work, 1 no. 2: 36-39, 1965.

3. Betty Lacy Jones (ed.), op. cit., "Introduction". p.xi-xiii.

4. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, School of Social Work. Field Instruction in Social Work for Fourth Year Students. Guide to Students, p.1.

5. Margaret Schubert, "Making the Best Use of Traditional and Atypical Field Placements"in Betty Lacy Jones (ed.) op. cit., p.5.

6. Margaret Schubert. "Curriculum Policy Dilemmas in Field Instruction". op. cit., p.44.

7. Samuel Finestone. "Selected Features of Professional Field Instruction". Journal of Education for Social Work, 3 no.2: 14, 1967.

8. Margaret Schubert. "Curriculum Policy Dilemmas in Field Instruction." op. cit., p.40.

9. Ibid., p.44.

10. Lyndell Scott. "The function of field work in professional education". Social Service Review, 25: 442, 1951.

11. See articles by Schubert, Hale, Meyer and Brieland in Betty Lacy Jones (ed.), op. cit. See two Janet R. Johnston. "New Methods of Field Instruction in the U.S.A., an overview." Australian Social Work, 26 No. 1: 5-10, 1973.

12. Mark Hale, "Innovations in Field Learning and Teaching" in Betty Lacy Jones (ed.), op. cit., p.21-22.

13. Coldie Basch Faith. "The Professional School and the Social Agency" in Rosa Wessel and G B Faith, Professional Education based in Practice: Two Studies in Education for Social Work, p.118.

14. Virginia Robinson (ed.), Training for Skill in Social Casework, p.4.

15. Margaret Schubert, op. cit., p.44.

16. Eileen Younghusband, "The Curriculum Study: International Implications for Social Work Education". Social Casework, 41: 34,36.

17. I.J.J. Van Rooyen, „Maatskaplike Werk - Opleiding, Teorie en Praktyk". Tydskrif vir Maatskaplike Navorsing, 17 no.1: 5, 1968.

18. Mark Hale, op. cit., p.22.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In a 1970 American publication describing a research project dealing with field instruction Esther Sales and Elizabeth Navarre state that "field instructors have traditionally been given the autonomy to structure supervision in the manner best suited to their abilities and judgements of student learning needs."[1] They add that field instructors have "occasionally expressed a desire for clearer guidelines for performance of their role "but it would seem from other statements in social work publications and from the writer's experience in social work education in Johannesburg, that supervisors in fact welcome more frequent and authoritative guidance from the University on what is expected of them in field instruction. The British literature on supervision alludes frequently to this point. Deed, for example, stated in 1962 that "for some time past social workers have been saying that they wish universities would tell them exactly what they expect in the way of experience and supervision for their students."[2] This request is phrased in extreme terms which Deed goes on to question. There is a need for field work consultant and supervisor to work closely together in planning and executing a field instruction programme which will be maximally beneficial to the student. The supervisor cannot be autonomous in the field instruction situation and even if he could, from where would he derive the expertise which would enable him to decide how to function? Woodcock conducted a study in Britain into the reactions of 40 supervisors to the beginning stages of supervision. This revealed that the vast majority had faced with alarm and anxiety the prospect of taking students for supervision and the general view summarised by one respondent was that "the referring college should take an active part in first training the supervisors before letting them loose on helpless students" and should continue working co-operatively

with supervisors afterwards[3]. Pettes too refers to the need for mutual consultation and planning, but clearly the first steps must be taken by the University.[4] As Goldie Busch Faith of the Pennsylvania School of Social Work states:

> Pivotal to the school-agency relationship is the clarity of the School's thinking about the nature of appropriate field work. Out of all its rich potential for experience, what is the agency expected to offer the student in order that his field work will be geared to an educational purpose defined and shared? [5]

This was the central question which guided the research described in the following sections of this chapter and the subsequent chapters.

6.1 Research Design

6.1.1 Rationale

On the basis of the writer's experience as FWC at Wits. in the two years preceding this research project, combined with a study of available literature on the subject, certain selected features of field instruction were identified as important prerequisites for ensuring that the students learning experience in the agency would be a constructive one fostering professional development.

As Bernece Simon stated in 1966:

> If we try to identify all possible or desirable experiences, we shall have a never-ending list.... A design of learning experiences cannot be worked out in specific detail by the school to cover the range of field placements used. A design of learning experiences should be a guide to the field instructor .... For the school, this guide should constitute a guaranty of a minimum equality of learning opportunity for all students. A design of learning experiences is simply a framework by which to organise content in field teaching. [6]

Clearly, it is an important feature of the FWC's role to formulate objectives relating to the method and content of field instruction. However, as Charlotte Towle wrote in 1954, "it is to be remembered that a profession's leaders cannot advance it beyond the level of common practice."[7]

The existing circumstances of the field work programme in the community welfare agencies co-operating with the University would be an important determinant of the FWC's role. It was decided therefore to discover empirically what the level of current practice in field instruction was within the agencies providing field instruction opportunities to fourth year students. The findings would serve to suggest ways in which the field work consultant could guide the future development of the field instruction programme.

Each student's field instruction placement, with the student-supervisor relationship at its core, was selected as the object of study.

As Stiles wrote in 1963:

> What is the current practice of supervision in social work agencies? Do social workers know the extent to which supervision is used in the field, the average duration of supervision..., how it is used or how it is done?.... Until verifiable data are available, social workers will have difficulty in evaluating supervision accurately. [8]

She was referring to the supervision of social work practitioners but her remarks are no less applicable to the field instruction of social work students. As a CSWE workshop report in 1962 stated:

> The school assumes responsibility for all educational decisions .... The school must, therefore, keep in close touch at all times with the student's programme."[9]

Examples of research projects based on a similar rationale are those reported by Taber in 1967 and Rose, Lowenstein and Fellin in 1969. Taber described evaluative research in field instruction being conducted by George K. Herbert and others on the faculty of Tulane University, New Orleans, who adopted an "information system approach" which provided for continuous weekly feedback of information about learning experiences to a faculty committee which analyzed the information, discussed it and made adjustments in current planning if required.[10] Sheldon Rose and his associates questioned 261 student respondents from the University of Michigan School of Social Work. They "sought to demonstrate the usefulness of an instrument designed to measure student perception of field instruction" and concluded from their study that "data so obtained can provide some direction for the school's effort in the development and improvement of field instruction."[11]

6.1.2 Respondents

The fourth-year students of the School of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1968 and 1969 and their supervisors in the field instruction centres were used as respondents. The rationale for this procedure was as follows:

a. As supervisors were responsible for providing field instruction, it was considered important to ascertain from them, what the agency's policy with regard to field instruction was, how they implemented this policy, how much of their time was occupied in supervision and what the content of supervisory discussions was, as well as certain of their professional characteristics.

b. As students are the consumers of the educational process it was considered important to ascertain how they perceived their field instruction experience.

c. As one of the essential aspects of field instruction is the communication existing between supervisor and student, it was

considered that it would be valuable to compare the responses of supervisors and students.

All the fourth year students receiving field instruction in 1968 and 1969 and the social workers acting as their supervisors were used as respondents, with two exceptions.

In each of the two years one placement was omitted from the study because of exceptional circumstances. These two omissions left a total of 11 students in each year. Each student acted as a respondent, making a total of 22 student respondents.

A number of different arrangements existed in the different field instruction centres regarding the allocation of supervisors to these 22 students. These were as follows:

a. In some cases, one student was placed in an agency and one social worker was responsible for her supervision. This social worker then completed a questionnaire in respect of that student's placement. This applied in the case of five students over the two-year period, three in 1968 and two in 1969.

b. In other cases, one student was placed in an agency and more than one social worker was responsible for her supervision. The supervisor most closely concerned with the student's day to day supervision was then selected to act as respondent and the other social workers involved in the supervision were designated "additional supervisors." This applied in the case of three students over the two-year period, two in 1968 and one in 1969.

c. The third arrangement involved two students placed in an agency where one and the same social worker was responsible for the supervision of both students. In these instances, the supervisor filled in a questionnaire in respect of each student's placement. This applied in two agencies both in 1968 and in

1969, and in one other agency only in 1969, thereby affecting ten students, four in 1968 and six in 1969.

d. The final possibility involved two students placed in the same agency but supervised by two different social workers, each of whom then completed a questionnaire in respect of his particular student's placement. This applied in two agencies, one in 1968 and another in 1969, and involved four students, two each year. In five cases the same agency was used as a field instruction centre in both years of the study. In three of these instances, the same social worker acted as a supervisor in both years. In two of these three instances, an additional social worker also acted as a supervisor in one of the two years, as there was an additional student that year. In the remaining two agencies, different supervisors operated in the two years of the study.

In addition to the five agencies used as Field Instruction Centres over the full two year period, three agencies were used in 1968 only and another two were used in 1969 only. Over the two year period, therefore, ten agencies were used for student placements. These were made up as follows:

4 family welfare agencies, one of which was a multi-service agency with an emphasis on community work.

1 child guidance clinic.

1 social work department in a psychiatric hospital.

1 community psychiatric agency.

1 community agency for the physically disabled.

1 residential institution for alcoholic persons.

1 residential institution for mentally retarded persons.

The field instruction centres have been designated alphabetically from A to J in order to protect the anonymity of the agencies and the supervisors. They were selected as field instruction centres by the University mainly on the basis of the availability of suitable supervisors and in addition, on the basis of the desire of individual students to gain experience of the particular types of service offered by the agency.

Within these ten agencies involved in the study over the two year period, 14* individual social workers acted as supervisors and were therefore used as respondents. Five of these completed more than one questionnaire as they supervised more than one student either in the course of one year or over the two year period. There were, therefore, 22 responses to the questionnaire, one in respect of each student placement. These figures are reflected in the following table.

Because supervisors were assured of total anonymity and a number of them did in fact, return their questionnaires anonymously, a matched pairs technique could not be used in the analysis of the data.

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* 3 acted as supervisors in both years of the study, 1968 and 1969.
  6 acted as supervisors in 1968 only and
  5 acted as supervisors in 1969 only.

TABLE 4. FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISORS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERVISING DIFFERENT NUMBERS OF STUDENTS 1968 - 1969

Number of Students Supervised by One Supervisor			Number of Supervisors for each distribution of students	Number of Responses to Questionnaire (Product of Columns 1 & 2)		
1968	1969	Total 1968 & 1969		1968	1969	Total 1968 & 1969
1	0	1	5	5	0	5
0	1	1	4	0	4	4
2	0	2	1	2	0	2
0	2	2	1	0	2	2
1	1	2	1	1	1	2
1	2	3	1	1	2	3
2	2	4	1	2	2	4
		TOTAL	14	11	11	22

Four additional social workers were involved in supervising students as additional supervisors, but they were omitted from the group of respondents as they merely supplemented the supervision given by other social workers who were directly responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the students concerned.

These and other statistics mentioned previously are reflected in the following table:

TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF 4TH YEAR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS IN WITS. FIELD INSTRUCTION CENTRES, 1968 - 1969

AGENCY	1968				1969				Total 1968 and 1969			
	Number of Students	Number of Supervisors	No. of additional Supervisors	Total Supervisors	Number of Students	Number of Supervisors	No. of additional Supervisors	Total Supervisors	Number of Students	Number of Supervisors	No. of additional Supervisors	Total Supervisors
F.I.C. in 1968 and 1969												
A	2	①*	-	①	2	①	-	①	4	1	-	1
B	2	①+1=2	-	2	2	①	-	①	4	2	-	2
C 5	2	1	-	1	2	1	-	1	4	2	-	2
D	1	①	-	①	2	①+1=2	-	2	3	2	-	2
E	1	1	-	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	4
F.I.C. in 1969 only												
F 2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	1
G	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	1
F.I.C. in 1968 only												
H	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2
I 3	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2
J	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Totals: 10 1968: 7 1969: 7	11	9	2	11	11	8	2	10	22	14	4	15

* NOTE: A ringed number, thus ①, indicates the same social worker acting as Supervisor in both years, 1968 and 1969

Abbreviation F.I.C. signifies Field Instruction Centre

In summary then: eleven student placements in each of the years 1968 and 1969 formed the object of study. Information was elicited from the students and their individual supervisors in respect of each placement, and results were therefore based on 44 responses, 22 from students and 22 from supervisors. In the case of the students each response came from a different student, and the total number of student respondents was therefore 22. However, as some supervisors were assigned responsibility for more than one student, the total number of individual supervisors providing data was 14. The number of field instruction centres where these 22 placements were located was 10, five of which were involved over the two year period.

6.1.3 Questionnaire Construction

Questions were formulated in order to elicit from students and supervisors certain factual data relating to the field instruction placements in general and the supervisory process in particular. These were based on a study of the relevant literature and on the writer's experience with the field work programme in 1966 and 1967. In 1967, fourth year students had written unstructured accounts of their weekly experiences in their field instruction centres and this had served as an exploratory study which provided a rich source of data for the structured questionnaires used in the research project itself. The final versions of the questionnaires were based on discussions with experienced colleagues both within the University and in the field of social work practice.

Two parallel questionnaires were constructed, one for supervisors and one for students.* The supervisors' questionnaire contained

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*The questionnaires are reproduced in Appendices 1 and 2 of the present study.

22 questions, the students' 21. Of these, 19 questions covered the identical subject matter relating to aspects of field instruction in general and supervision in particular. As supervision is the educational core of the field instruction process, it was considered essential to discover to what extent the existing supervisor-student relationships measured up to the model as derived from the literature. This would determine in what direction and at what pace the field work consultant should operate in her efforts to guide the field work programme.

6.1.4 Administration of Questionnaires

These questionnaires (to be referred to as the annual questionnaires) were administered in October 1968 to the eleven students and nine supervisors from eight agencies involved in the field instruction programme that year, and in October 1969 to the eleven students and eight supervisors from seven agencies involved in the fourth year field instruction programme that year. October was selected as the most suitable time to administer the questionnaires as all the student placements in each year had terminated during the immediately preceding weeks.

The 22 student questionnaires were distributed to students personally at the School of Social Work and were returned in the same manner. The 22 supervisor questionnaires were mailed to the agencies concerned. Each questionnaire had a detachable slip attached, stating the name of the student in respect of whose placement the questionnaire was to be completed. Respondents were assured of anonymity and a stamped addressed envelope was enclosed to facilitate return of the questionnaire.

6.1.5 Supplementary Project

The annual questionnaires described above were completed at the end of the academic year and referred to a seven month

period dating back to March of each year, when the students' concurrent placements had commenced. The responses to these questionnaires were therefore of a generalized nature and were based on the respondents' impression of events during that extended period.

At the end of 1968 it was decided to supplement this project in 1969 by another project viz.a more detailed, up-to-the-minute study of supervision as it occurred week by week throughout the student's placement. Another questionnaire was designed containing similar questions to those on supervision in the annual questionnaire; this will be referred to as the weekly questionnaire.* Supervisors were informed about this additional project but it was decided to use only the students as respondents in this case because of the time involved in completing the questionnaire each week in a situation where the field instruction by itself was hypothesised by the writer to be making serious inroads on the supervisor's limited time.

These questionnaires were given to the 11 student respondents at the School of Social Work and they completed and returned them weekly to the writer. Each student completed one questionnaire in respect of one chronological week during which she did field work in the field instruction centre to which she had been allocated. The University regulations specified 400 hours as the time required for fourth year field instruction and, as a general rule, the students worked two full days per week (Thursday and Friday) in their agencies for twenty-five weeks during the academic year in order to fulfil these requirements i.e. working a total of 50 eight-hour working days. However,

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*This questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix 3 of the present study.

many exceptions arose: in some weeks, either the Thursday or Friday was a Public or a Religious Holiday or the student could miss a day through illness. In the short vacations, students were permitted to work up to five days in order to make up time, so that their field work could terminate earlier in the year, thereby giving them more time for concentrated study before the final examination in November.* Consequently the eleven students worked at slightly differing rates and for differing numbers of weeks before completing the required four hundred hours.

It was considered that supervisors could not reasonably be expected to provide more than one supervisory session per calendar week, even if the student worked more than two days in that week; in other words, the writer considered that it would be unreasonable to expect a supervisor to provide a formal supervisory session for every two days worked unless those two-day working periods occurred in separate calendar weeks. Consequently, student respondents completed <u>one</u> questionnaire for every <u>one</u> calendar week of the academic year whether they worked one, two or more days in the agency that week.

Altogether the students as a group completed a total of 276 field work weeks. For certain valid reasons, such as the exigencies of the timetable, the range was from 23 to 27 weeks per student. The mean number of weeks worked was 25,09, and the mode , 25 weeks.

Of these 276 field work weeks, however, 10, that is, one week for each of ten students, involved attendance at a Conference relevant to the students' courses, and this left a total of 266 <u>agency</u> field work weeks, that is, weeks in which students received one or more days of field instruction in their

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*Students were not at that time permitted to engage in field instruction activities during the four-week mid-year winter vacation.

field instruction centres, and therefore weeks for which they completed one of the weekly questionnaires. The manner in which these weeks were made up is reflected in the following table.

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Field Work weeks of varying lengths, 1969

Number of days in agency field work week	Number of weeks	Percentage
2 days in agency	209	78,57
1 day in agency	30	11,28
2½-5 days in agency	17	6,39
1 day in agency + 1 day on a visit of observation	10	3,76
TOTAL	266	100%

Where it is appropriate, results derived from student responses to the weekly questionnaires will be presented to supplement the results from the annual questionnaires.

6.2 Methods of Data Analysis

The data from the annual questionnaires used in this study were obtained from two independent populations which were small in size, namely, 22 students, and 14 supervisors who contributed 22 responses. Where it was necessary and relevant, namely in those instances where there appeared to be a marked difference in the responses from the two populations, the Fisher Exact Probability Test was applied to determine the level of confidence with which it could be stated "that differences could have not occurred by chance."[12]

The Fisher Exact Probability Test has been described by Siegel as "an extremely useful nonparametric technique for analyzing discrete date ... when the two independent samples are small in size."[13] According to Harris K. Goldstein, non-parametric theoretical methods of drawing inferences are "not based on the assumption about any distribution of the statistic in the population but on the sample statistics alone."[14]

He goes on to state that non-parametric techniques are generally newer than parametric statistics and many of them, since they require only nominal or ordinal scales, fit social work data better than some parametric statistics.

In the case of the present study, with two independent populations of small size, the Fisher Exact Probability Test appeared the most appropriate test to apply.

Siegel describes the test as follows:

> It is used when the scores from two independent random samples all fall into one or the other of two mutually exclusive classes. In other words, every subject in both groups obtains one of two possible scores. The scores are represented by frequencies in a 2 x 2 contingency table:

	+	-	Total
Group I	A	B	A + B
Group II	C	D	C + D
Total	A+C	B+D	N

Figure 4.

Groups I and II may be any two independent groups, in this case, students and supervisors. The column headings, here arbitrarily indicated as plus and minus, may be any two classifications, such as for example, formal and informal supervision. The test

determines whether the two groups differ in the proportion with which they fall into the two classifications. For the data in the table sketched above, (where A,B,C and D stand for frequencies) it would determine whether Group I and Group II differ significantly in the proportion of pluses and minuses attributed to them.

The exact probability of the observed occurrence occurring by chance is given by the following formula:*

$$p = \frac{(A + B)!(C + D)!(A + C)!(B + D)!}{N!A!B!C!D!}$$ [15]

Where [illegible] 30 or smaller and where neither of the totals in the right-hand margin is larger than 15, Table I in Siegel's appendix can be used to determine significance levels.

The binomial test was also applied when relevant. This is a one-sample test described by Siegel. It is the method of choice when "the data are in two discrete categories and the design is of the one-sample type."[16] For any population of two classes (for example, students and supervisors reporting on one particular issue), if we know that the proportion of cases in one class is P, and the total population equals 1, then the proportion in the other class must be 1 - P for which the symbol Q is used. In the present study, the null hypothesis is that $P = Q = \frac{1}{2}$. In other words, one would expect supervisor and student responses to be equal, each being half of the total of the two groups. Furthermore, $N \leq 25$ in this case, and consequently Table D on page 250 of Siegel could be used to determine p.

It should be noted that while statistical tests of significance were applied in this project, the population was

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*The explanation for the symbol ! is as follows, taking 4! as an example:

$4! = 4.3.2.1 = 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 24$

small and in effect each difference was significant since in the context, the field instruction experience of every student is significant to the School which is equipping all its students for responsible professional practice.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. E. Sales and E. Navarre, Individual and Group Supervision in Field Instruction, p.4.

2. D.M. Deed, "Dangers of Stereotypes in Student Supervision", Case Conference, 9 No.1 : 15, 1962.

3. G.D.C. Woodcock, "A Study of Beginning Supervision", British Journal of Psychiatric Social Work, Vol. 9: 70, 1967.

4. D.E. Pettes, Supervision in Social Work: a Method of Student Training and Staff Development, p.59.

5. R. Wessel and G Basch Faith, Professional Education Based in Practice: Two Studies in Education for Social Work, p.113.

6. B.K. Simon, "The Design of Learning Experiences in Field Instruction", Social Service Review, Vol. 40(4): 404, 1966.

7. C. Towle, The Learner in Education for the Professions: As Seen in Education for Social Work, p.5.

8. E. Stiles, "Supervision in Perspective", Social Casework, Vol.44(1): 23, 1963.

9. Council on Social Work Education, "Agency Board, Executive and Supervisory Support Conducive to Productive Field Instruction", p.6.

10. M. Taber, "A Sampling of Techniques for Evaluative Research in Field Instruction", Social Work Education Reporter, Vol.15 (3): 22, 1967.

11. Sheldon Rose et.al., "Measuring Student Perception of Field Instruction", in Betty Lacy Jones (ed.) Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education, p.143.

12. Harris K. Goldstein, Research Standards and Methods for Social Workers, p.275.

13. Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioural Sciences, p.96.

14. Goldstein, op. cit., p.276.

15. Siegel, op. cit., p.96-97.

16. Ibid., p.39.

CHAPTER 7

SELECTED FEATURES OF THE FIELD INSTRUCTION PROGRAMME: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND EMPIRICAL DATA I

The data presented in the following sections have been organized according to topic rather than research instrument, since parallel questions were frequently asked on all three research instruments. In order to ease the reader's task, the source for data presented on each table will be indicated beneath that table.

7.1 Who were the Supervisors? What were some of their characteristics?

7.1.1 Was there one, clearly-defined supervisor?

The social worker in the agency who acts as the student supervisor is a most important member of the educational team as he* has central responsibility for teaching the student in the field. As Tybel Bloom of the University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Work said at a CSWE meeting in 1963

> The crucial value and obligation of this position, to the student, the School, and the agency cannot be overemphasized ... He is equipped to help the student to know what he is doing, why it is necessary to do it, and how his effort relates to the larger social context of the community and the profession as well as to the client's "world". [1]

Logically therefore, in relation to any student placement, there should be no confusion as to the answer to the question "Who is the supervisor?" The identity of the supervisor should be clear and unambiguous.

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*The reader is reminded that for simplified reading the supervisor will be referred to in the masculine gender and the student in the feminine.

As Rosemary Reynolds, writing in 1951, stated categorically: "Each student works consistently and regularly with one supervisor during his entire field placement in an agency." She added that this constituted "the real core of field work." It is policy at the University of the Witwatersrand that the student is placed for field instruction with the agency as a whole, not with an individual social worker functioning as an independent entity. The entire organisation must be involved to a greater or lesser degree with the field instruction programme. The Board or Head Office must sanction it, the Executive Director must assist in the planning and be involved in the selection of the supervisor, and other staff members must take an interest, perhaps providing the student with cases and having informal discussions with the student. But sound administrative practice demands that the lines of responsibility be clearly defined within an organisation. If this is not so, confusion can result which will be detrimental to the execution of the task which the organisation must carry out. Consequently, one supervisor specifically so designated, should be allocated the task of organising the student's field instruction programme and of assuming responsibility for her supervision.

The relationship between supervisor and student is a vital factor in the student's learning process. It is a professional relationship with the purpose of developing the capacities of one party in the relationship, and like all such relationships, it has a beginning, a middle and an end and develops as a relationship throughout these time phases. This concept is summarised in the second of Ruth Smalley's principles generic for social work practice:

> The effectiveness of any social work process, primary or secondary, is furthered by the worker's conscious, knowing use of time phases in the process (beginnings, middles and endings) in order that the particular potential in each time phase may be fully exploited for the other's use.[3]

Smalley cites the processes of social work education and supervision as secondary or facilitating processes in social work and the writer identifies with this view. It follows then that one and only one member of staff in the agency should be allocated the task of supervising the student, and the student in turn should be quite sure of the identity of the social worker who is to act as her supervisor. It is obviously important too that this relationship should continue unbroken throughout the student's placement.

The supervisor himself may consult others both inside and outside the agency about the student's supervision. If he is a rank-and-file social worker or what Pettes calls a social worker at the field level[4] he may have his own supervisor within the agency with whom he discusses his own cases and/or his supervision of the student. Supervision is an exacting task and particularly an inexperienced supervisor will in all likelihood have the need to discuss the dynamics of the supervisory process. The FWC has an important role in this connection, but so have experienced practitioners. Kent refers to the importance of providing consultation services to the "novice" supervisor[5] and Patterson and Clayton believe that such services are important for all supervisors regardless[6] of length of experience. Consultation can be provided by senior members of the agency staff, or even by a consultant outside the agency. However, these are the supervisor's relationships, and the student should clearly perceive that she is accountable only to her own supervisor. She should not feel that her field instructor's supervisor is also directly available to her for supervision. The field instructor himself must be able to contain the anxiety within the situation and not deflect part of the responsibility on to his own supervisor.

According to Pettes, if the student should be dealing with some cases from administrative sections in the agency other than

that of which the supervisor is a member, it is the supervisor and not the student who must carry responsibility to the other administrative heads concerned.[7]

The supervisor will also discuss the student's field instruction with his colleagues, particularly those who have allocated clients from their case-loads to the student for the period of her placement. The student too should have contact with other social workers in the agency, both rank-and-file workers and the executive director or head of department, as well as with agency volunteers. As Young says:

> However reluctant to be involved, the total staff has to accept students who are placed for training in the agency, and the student's experiences and opportunities for learning will be much greater if he is readily accepted. [8]

However, it is the supervisor-student relationship that is the central one for purposes of the student's field instruction; it is the central clearing house through which the student's experiences with all other people in the field, colleagues as well as clients, may if necessary be channelised, discussed and integrated into the student's professional development process. Renee Berg, Professor of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, sums up this type of viewpoint as follows: if the current conception of field work is that it should offer learning opportunities related to all parts of the curriculum, then as a consequence "the field agency is called on to provide an educational setting in which many staff members will responsibly contribute to the student's education, although the supervisor will remain the key person who will help him integrate various facets of his learning."[9]

The extent of the participation of other staff members is according to Pettes "one of the most delicate areas to work out."[10]

It may sometimes happen that a student will attempt to use other staff members inappropriately in order to avoid use of her supervisor. In such instances the other staff must be alert to the need to refer the student back to her supervisor. There are no rigid rules about this, but there must be awareness that the problem can arise.

In the present study, the annual questionnaires administered to students and supervisors contained questions* aimed at determining whether there was one social worker responsible for the student's supervision, or whether two or more members of staff were involved either at one and the same time or at different times during the placement.

TABLE 7: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FROM SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS REGARDING THE NUMBER OF AGENCY STAFF MEMBERS ASSIGNED SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY AT ANY ONE TIME DURING THE STUDENT'S PLACEMENT

Number of Supervisors at any one time	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
	Students	Super-visors	Students	Super-visors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	9	9	10	10	19	86,36	19	86,36
2	2	2	1	0	3	13,64	2	9,09
3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4.55
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

* Questions 12, 13, 14 Students' Annual Questionnaire.
Questions 16, 17, 18 Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

Table 7 reveals that 19 out of the 22 respondents (86,36 percent) in each group over the two-year period reported that only one supervisor was responsible for the supervision of the student at any one time during the placement. In the case of three placements however there were multiple supervisors at one time.

Additional data on this subject were derived from the students' annual questionnaire.* These are reflected in Table 8.

TABLE 8: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES REGARDING THE NUMBER OF AGENCY STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERVISION THROUGHOUT THE PLACEMENT.

Number of Supervisors	Number of Student Responses			
	1968	1969	Total 1968 and 1969	
			Number	Percentage
1 throughout placement	4	6	10	45,45
2 concurrently throughout placement	2	1	3	13,64
2 at separate times: Sub-total:	5	4	9	40,91
Supervisor on leave	2	4	6	27,27
Supervisor left agency	3	0	3	13,64
TOTAL	11	11	22	100,00

Source: Students' Annual Questionnaire.

This table reveals that while 19 out of the 22 students had only one supervisor at any one time during their placements (see previous table) only 10 or 45,45% of these, i.e. less than half

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* Question 11, Students' Annual Questionnaire

the total number of students, retained one supervisor throughout their placements. The remaining nine students had two supervisors during their placements, each at a different time. Of these nine, six had alternate supervisors when the usual supervisor went on leave, while three students changed supervisors in the last month of their placements because the original supervisor left the agency.

Data from the weekly questionnaires* confirm that 4 students in 1969 had formal supervisory sessions with supervisors other than those initially appointed to supervise them. This occurred in 9 out of the 266 field work weeks worked by the group as a whole, the distribution for the 4 students being 1,1,4 and 3 weeks respectively. The one student who had two supervisors throughout the placement, viz. a social worker at the field level and his supervisor, had formal supervisory sessions with both of them. This particular student had only six formal supervisory sessions throughout the 24 weeks of her placement. Of these, four took place with her main supervisor and two with that supervisor's supervisor. The group as a whole therefore had formal supervision with supervisors other than the one officially assigned to them in 11 out of the total of 266 field work weeks, that is 4,13%.

7.1.2 Where was the Student Supervisor located in the agency hierarchy and was he relieved of any part of his workload for purposes of student supervision?

Whether the social worker selected to act as student supervisor should be at the field level, at the staff supervisory level or at the executive level within the agency hierarchy requires consideration by the FWC. According to Pettes, ideally the supervisor is in a middle management position in the agency

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* Students Weekly Questionnaire, Question 2.

i.e. in an intermediary position between field workers and the chief of the agency or department. He would therefore be at the staff supervisory level mentioned above.[11]

Irrespective of where the student supervisor is located in the agency hierarchy, he should not be expected to assume the task of student supervision without some adjustment to his workload. The 1962 CSWE workshop report makes this point[12], as does Pettes who states "the all too prevalent custom of simply adding a student to his usual workload is fair neither to supervisor nor student".[13] Brown and Gloyne's survey also revealed that senior social work staff considered that if a high standard of professional education was to be maintained, some re-adjustment in the work responsibilities of the supervisor was necessary in order to release time for students.[14] Because of the relevance of this principle, the annual questionnaire administered to supervisors contained questions dealing with these matters.* The responses are tabulated in the following table:

TABLE 9: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISORS IN AGENCY HIERARCHY, INDICATING WHETHER THEY WERE RELIEVED OF PART OF THEIR WORK LOAD FOR PURPOSES OF FIELD INSTRUCTION

Position in Agency Hierarchy	Number of Supervisors 1968 and 1969			
	Workload Reduced		Total	
	Yes	No	Number	Percentage
Administrator	1	6	7	50
Supervisor	1	4	5	35,71
Field Worker	1	1	2	14,29
TOTAL	3	11	14	100,00

Source: Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

* Questions 20 and 21(c) Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

Half the supervisors involved in the field instruction programme were at the top level of the agency hierarchy, occupying posts such as Director, Secretary/Social Worker, or Senior Social Worker. In one such case, the supervisor was the only social worker employed in a secondary setting. Only two supervisors were social workers at the field level and the remaining five (35,7%) were at the middle-management level described by Pettes as the most desirable.[15] However, only one student supervisor at each of the levels in the agency hierarchy i.e. three altogether out of the total number of 14 supervisors, (21,43%) were relieved of their usual work-load to any extent in order to release time for student supervision.

7.1.3 Qualifications and Experience of Supervisors

The qualifications and experience of the social worker are other important criteria for the selection of the supervisor. A student supervisor, according to Pettes, must be a competent practitioner with an interest in teaching, and must be firmly integrated in his agency, with the ability to use its administrative machinery effectively. Other qualifications are "as many and varied as the students to be taught."[16]

However, the professional qualifications and work experience of the prospective supervisor are always significant considerations. Clearly it is highly desirable that the supervisor should have professional qualifications in social work, and the FWC should strive to attain this ideal in all placements. Brown and Gloyne illustrate this point by quoting one University lecturer who in response to their queries stated that "It should be made clear to the agencies in the first instance that the selection of supervisors without professional qualifications is an exception."[17] Yet the exigencies of the practical situation sometimes require that this exception be made. In a community with limited field work

opportunities or in a situation where expanded facilities are required, the FWC needs at times to be flexible in this regard. Brown and Gloyne found in their survey that some courses in Britain had used some very gifted supervisors among those with no professional qualifications in social work.[18] Should such individuals be used as supervisors, the FWC would have very particular responsibilities in preparing and supporting them.

Opinions vary as to how many years of practice the student supervisor should have had, and in practice, choice is often governed by the law of supply and demand. Pettes states that generally at least two years professional experience is considered desirable,[19] and the 1962 CSWE workshop report cites a similar time period viz. two or three years of practice in the same method the supervisor is teaching, after attaining the professional qualification which in the U.S.A. is a master's degree.[20] When exceptions are made for substantial pre-professional education experience, this should be qualitatively evaluated. In another CSWE publication, Tybel Bloom commented as follows on the use of recent graduates as student supervisors:

> While these may be persons of promising calibre who have had the benefit of new knowledge in their own recent educational experience and who comprehend the educational purpose, they still need to be "seasoned" as professional social workers before undertaking supervision of students.[21]

In South Africa, the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions will provide a subsidy for a supervisory post only in respect of persons with a minimum qualification of a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and eight years experience.[22]

In the present study, questions* were included in the supervisors' annual questionnaire to ascertain details of the respondents' professional qualifications and years of experience. The results are tabulated in the following table:

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* Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire Questions 21(a) and 21(b).

TABLE 10: ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OF SUPERVISORS AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Academic Qualifications	No. of Supervisor Responses 1968 & 1969						
	Years of Experience					TOTAL	
	2-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	No.	Percent
1. Post-graduate qualification in Social Work (Degree or Diploma	2					2	14,3
2. Bachelors Degree in Social Work	2	2		2	1	7	50
3. Arts degree plus Post-Graduate Diploma in Social Work		1	1			2	14,3
4. Diploma in Social Work		1				1	7,1
5. Arts degree		1		1		2	14,3
TOTAL	4	5	1	3	1	14	100,00

Seven out of the 14 supervisors who acted as field instructors over the two year period under review had the basic professional qualification for social work practice in South Africa, namely, a Bachelors Degree in Social Work, and one had a Diploma in Social Work. Two of the seven graduates stated that they were at the time studying for post-graduate degrees in social work, while another two of the 14 supervisors already had post-graduate qualifications in social work.

It will be noted that two of the supervisors participating in the programme had Arts degrees which did not include social work as a subject. They were nevertheless used by the School for the following reasons: one supervisor had an honours degree in psychology and much clinical experience in counselling and was assisted in supervising the student by a colleague with a Bachelor's

degree in Social Work. The other supervisor with an Arts degree was in the final year of study for a post-graduate diploma in social work and had many years of experience of social work practice.

As far as experience is concerned, no supervisor had less than two years experience and ten out of the fourteen had more than five years of experience in social work practice since graduation. On the whole therefore the supervisors were an experienced group of practitioners.

7.1.4 For what period of time did the supervisor commit himself to act as supervisor?

Another important qualification for a student supervisor cited by the CSWE workshop report is that the field instructor is expected to perceive his educational role "in a responsible fashion in regard to his continuing as field instructor for a reasonable period of time."[23] This means that certainly within a student's placement the supervisor should be committed to his role, and furthermore he should ideally continue as a supervisor from one year to the next. This ideal has not been attained in practice even in the United States. In 1961, Berengarten reported an "alarming rate of turnover of field instructors"[24] in American Schools and the FWC in contemporary South Africa also needs therefore to examine this aspect of the field instruction programme.

In the present study, only three of the 14 supervisors (21,73%) acted as field instructors for the two year period under review. (See Chapter 6, Section 6.1.2.) The remaining six social workers who acted as supervisors in 1968 did not continue student supervision in 1969, and were replaced by five supervisors who were new to the Wits. 4th Year field instruction programme. Over the two year period of the study therefore the staff turnover was high.

The figures presented in Table 8 reveal further that a significant proportion of supervisors did not supervise for the full duration of the students' placements. Nine students or 40,91% of the total population had supervision from substitute supervisors during the course of the year. In six instances (27,27% of placements) the supervisor assigned to the student went on leave during the time the student was at the agency, and in three instances (13,64%) the supervisor left the agency approximately one month prior to the termination of the placement. In the remaining thirteen placements 59,09%, the supervisor acted as such for the entire period of the student's placement.

7.1.5 Number of Students per Supervisor

A final point to be considered in relation to the supervisor is whether it is educationally desirable to allocate one or more students to each supervisor. Authorities quoted in the literature are divided on this subject. Sidney Berengarten, Director of Field Instruction at the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University regards the field placement of a single student with an agency supervisor as "a serious problem."[25] The curriculum study undertaken at the same school by Herman Stein in 1960 revealed that student preferences for field placements as reflected in responses to questionnaires administered to several hundred graduating students and alumni were heavily in favour of the unit pattern, i.e. where one supervisor was responsible for 4-6 students or more. The multiple pattern followed in popularity i.e. where a number of students were placed with a number of supervisors in one agency, while the single pattern was heavily rejected.[26] However, in practice in many schools in the United States it would seem that agencies frequently take only one student at a time. In 1963, Tybel Bloom reported that of 121 supervisors employed in the Master's Degree programme of the University of

Pennsylvania's School of Social Work, 81 supervised only one student;[27] While in 1969, Margaret Schubert calculated that a large number of students, perhaps half of all master's degree students, are placed with agency field instructors, each of whom supervise one or two students at a time.[28] Annette Muller writing in 1965 considered that in South Africa it was undesirable to place more than one student at a time in any agency unless it was a very large organization such as the Department of Social Welfare, and in fact practical realities in this country often dictate the single placement of a student in an agency.[29] However, this is a costly and time-consuming process from the point of view of developing competence in the supervisor and can be frustrating for the supervisor when his student is on a learning plateau or regressing educationally. Patterson and Clayton present arguments for and against the system.[30] However, FWC's should become acquainted with the advantages and disadvantages of each arrangement. Brown and Gloyne studied 12 student units in Britain where the agency appointed a member of its staff for the special purpose of supervising a group of 3-4 students at a time and found empirical evidence of their value.[31] Though in all cases the supervisor was regarded as a full member of staff it is interesting to note that in 9 of the 12 units financial support for the unit came directly or indirectly from public funds. The danger of student units is that they can become insulated from the rest of the agency and it is important to take steps to prevent this. One method quoted by the authors is for the student unit supervisor to share responsibility for supervision with other members of staff. Such a system then approximates the multiple pattern. The central point is that though some students prefer to be the only student in an agency, there are many advantages to a system where two or more students share a placement either with a joint supervisor or separate supervisors. Students learn from each other, and give support to each other. In addition to knowledge which can be

acquired through the group method as well as through individual supervision, "the presence of other students helps dilute the intensity of the dependency on the supervisor. The time pattern of professional maturation often becomes accelerated."[32]

How were the students in the present study distributed? These figures were presented in Table 5, Chapter 6. An examination of this table reveals that a total of 10 agencies participated in the field work programme over the two year period. 5 of these participated for one of the two years only, 3 in 1968 and 2 in 1969. Each of these five featured single student placements. Of the five agencies which acted as field instruction centres in both years, one had a single student placed with it each year, and one other (Agency D) had one student in 1968 but two in 1969. Eight of the 22 students in the population (36,36%) were therefore placed singly in agencies. The remaining fourteen students were placed in pairs in four agencies, three of which took two students each year of the study period and one of which took two students only in 1969. Of these seven "double" placements, five involved the allocation of the two students to one supervisor and the other two involved a multiple pattern that is, two students each with a different supervisor.

In no agency was there a student unit as such, although the placement of more than one student with one supervisor resembles the student unit pattern of placement.

7.2 Selected features of Field Instruction Placements

7.2.1 How is the Student's Status in the Agency presented to clients?

When a student first arrives at an agency for a placement, she often feels strange and apprehensive and as Llewellyn points out an important first step is "to help the

students orient themselves physically and psychologically to the setting."[33] Mary Hester describes it this way: "Since anxiety is aroused when one is in an 'unknowing' position, it follows that the supervisor's aim is to reduce this by giving knowledge quickly when needed."[34]

This knowledge refers to the physical lay-out of the agency, where the student must sit when interviewing or writing and where she must keep her personal possessions and files, the time and place of tea-breaks, student's access to secretarial assistance and telephones, and similar matters. Communicating such information to the student enables her to feel accepted and welcomed and is an important step in aiding her identification with the agency and consequent integration of learning.[35]*

One of the most important orientating pieces of information is how the student is to introduce herself to clients. The student is a learner in the agency but part of her learning involves assuming the responsibility of a worker. Many authorities such as Pettes and Young in England and Rosemary Reynolds in the United States, consider that students who are at an advanced stage of their training and who are placed for a lengthy period in an agency should be given a different status with clients from that of a student. According to Pettes, in most agencies the student assumes the role of worker and does not tell clients she is a student.[36] This helps students to have more confidence with clients and "proclaims the fact that the agency considers them capable of carrying responsibility."[37] It also protects the client from the

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* The orientation of students to the agency will not be discussed in greater detail here as in the Wits. system, this occurs during the short block placement in the same agency which invariably precedes the concurrent placement in the 4th Year of Study.

anxiety of feeling that his worker is irresponsible and incompetent simply because she is a student. Some agencies prefer to confer special titles on their students, for example, Temporary Assistant or Part-Time Social Worker. Another possibility when students are introducing themselves to clients is to say: "I am Miss Jones from the ABC Agency" thereby not committing themselves to a specific description of status.

The most important consideration is that the Agency should formulate some policy in this connection and communicate it clearly to the student. The supervisor must go further however and should make sure that, whatever the arrangements, "all staff know them, including, most importantly, the telephone operator, porter or receptionist and clerical staff. Anyone who may have contact with the student's clients should know, not only the student's designation, but what explanation may be given on days the student is not present and to whom (usually the supervisor) any emergencies should be referred."[38]

The importance of clear communication between supervisor and student cannot be overemphasised, both in this connection and in respect of other aspects of field instruction, such as time of supervisory conferences. The FWC must continually be aware of this fact and communicate it to supervisors.

As Dwyer and Urbanowski point out: "As in classroom courses, the content of field instruction needs to be identified and planfully communicated to the students."[39]

In the present study, questions* were included in the annual questionnaires administered to respondents in order to gather data on these matters.

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* Questions 3,4,5,6 Students' Annual Questionnaire
Questions 3,4,5,6 Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

Responses to the question asking whether the supervisor informed the student about the manner in which she should introduce herself to clients, are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11: RESPONSES OF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS REGARDING WHETHER STUDENTS WERE INFORMED OF AGENCY POLICY AS TO HOW THEY SHOULD INTRODUCE THEMSELVES TO CLIENTS

Was Policy about Introductions Communicated to student?	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 & 1969			
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	%	No.	%
YES	6	11	7	11	13	59,09	22	100,00
NO	5	0	4	0	9	40,91	0	100,00
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

Note: For 1968 $p = ,02$

For 1969 $p = ,045$

For 1968 & 1969 $p = ,001$

One hundred per cent of the supervisors over the two year period responded that they had informed the students how to introduce themselves to clients, but only 59% of the 22 students reported that they had been informed of agency policy in this regard; and this difference is statistically significant at the 0,1% level of confidence. The inference to be drawn is that the two groups perceived the situation differently.

TABLE 12: CONTENT OF SUPERVISOR'S INSTRUCTION TO STUDENT AS TO HOW SHE SHOULD INTRODUCE HERSELF TO CLIENTS, AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Content of Instruction as to manner of Introduction	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 & 1969			
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	%	No.	%
As a student	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	13,64
As a staff member	1	2	4	0	5	22,73	2	9,09
No specific designation	5	7	3	10	8	36,36	17	77,27
No instruction	5	0	4	0	9	40,91	0	0
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

In those cases where an instruction was given, the majority of responses from supervisors and students indicated that students were told to introduce themselves in a non-specific fashion, such as "I am Miss X, from the ABC Agency." The Fisher test indicates that in this case there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups of responses, however.

This non-specific type of introduction has the advantage of neither arousing the client's anxiety nor of misrepresenting the student's true status. If subsequently the client should ask the student if she is a student, she can answer truthfully without embarrassment to herself.

TABLE 13: RESPONSES OF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS REGARDING WHETHER THE AGENCY'S TELEPHONIST/RECEPTIONIST WAS INSTRUCTED AS TO HOW THE STUDENT'S STATUS SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO CLIENTS

Was instruction given to telephonist-receptionist?	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 & 1969			
	Students	Super-visors	Students	Super-visors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	%	No.	%
Yes	1	6	4	10	5	22,73	16	72,73
No	9	4	4	1	13	59,09	5	22,73
Do not know	0	0	2	0	2	9,09	0	0
Not applicable	1	1	1	0	2	9,09	1	4,54
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

Note: For 1968 $p = ,01$
For 1969 $p = ,05$
For 1968 and 1969 $p = ,01$

There is a statistically significant difference between the responses "Yes" and "No" given by supervisors and students to the question:

> "Was any instruction given to the telephonist/receptionist of the Agency as to how the status of the student in the Agency should be indicated to clients?"

Over the two year period, 72,73% of supervisors answered in the affirmative to this question while only 22,73% of students answered positively. Once again the inference to be drawn is that there was not clarity of communication between supervisor and student on this matter, and misunderstandings arose as a result.

One student reported an incident which illustrated the possible consequences of ignorance on the part of the telephonist in this connection. She had presented herself as a social worker to a particular client, but when the client telephoned the agency on a day when the student was at the University, the telephonist referred to the student as a student. The client was surprised and distressed and subsequently refused further contact with the agency.

TABLE 14: CONTENT OF INSTRUCTION TO TELEPHONIST/RECEPTIONIST AS TO HOW STUDENTS' STATUS SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO CLIENTS, AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Content of instruction to telephonist-receptionist as to how students are described to clients					Total 1968 and 1969			
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	Students			
					No.	%	No.	%
As a Student	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	9,09
As a staff member	1	5	3	4	4	18,18	9	40,91
In an evasive manner	0	0	1	5	1	4,55	5	22,73
No instruction given	9	4	4	1	13	59,09	5	22,73
Not applicable/Do not know	1	1	3	0	4	18,18	1	4.54
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100.00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires.

In those cases where respondents reported that an instruction had been given to the telephonist/receptionist, the largest number of supervisor responses (40,91% of the total) and the largest number of student responses (18,18% of the total) indicated that

the telephonist/receptionist was told to refer to the student as a staff member. However the difference between these responses and those where the telephonist was told to refer to the student as a student is not significant statistically. (p = .55 for the 2 y[illegible]eriod, 1968 and 1969)

7.2.2 Selection of Cases for Students*

This subject has been widely canvassed in social work writing in England, the United States and South Africa, and the Third International Survey of Training for Social Work published by the United Nations in 1958 also gave attention to this matter.

One of the fundamental criteria in selecting a case for a student is the educational value of the case. As Finestone says p[illegible]sional field instruction as opposed to apprenticeship involves conceptual learning, i.e. the product of a method of teaching which stresses learning of generalizations drawn from specific related experiences. Therefore, in selecting a cas[illegible] "the aim is not service per se, although this must and will take place, but the generalized learning which can be distilled out of the experience of giving service. The aim is not to have the student learn [illegible] case, but to learn from it. The field instructor selecting and preparing for assignment of a case to a student, asks himself not only 'What does the case need?' but 'What can the student learn from this case? What concepts, propositions and principles are involved? How are these related to those that the student i[illegible] learning from class and reading?'"[40]

Of course, the student's caseload has to be drawn from the current clientele of the agency, and clients cannot be produced

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* Because students have had preliminary block placements in similar agencies in the third year of study it is assumed that they are assigned direct responsibility for carrying cases virtually as soon as the fourth year concurrent placement commences.

to order. However, the supervisor's awareness of the learning needs of the particular student can act as a general guide to the selection of cases. These needs may be formulated into an educational diagnosis, perhaps based partly on information furnished by the FWC and partly on the supervisor's own assessment. Kent makes the point that while such a diagnosis may be used in selecting cases for the student, how it should be used is debatable. For example, the same need might be dealt with differently depending on the stage of the student's training.[41]

One of the most important needs which all students have, particularly in the early stages of the placement, is to gain reassurance about their ability to be of service to others. In the words of the United Nations Third International Survey:

> It is an essential principle of initial case selection that early cases should be such as to give students confidence in social work as a helping method and themselves as helpful persons.[42]

Examples of such cases are people who have the ability to relate easily to others but are experiencing some disturbance in the environment which is amenable to amelioration by the utilization of community resources. The student needs to be given an opportunity to see some movement in the [illegible] and to achieve some degree of success. She should not be assigned families or individual clients with a record of lack of movement over a prolonged period.

Sometimes what appeared to be a "simple" case initially develops into a complicated and difficult situation. In such a case, rather than terminate the student's contact with the client, the supervisor should assist the student in carrying through a social work service. Students need to experience also difficult and frustrating cases in order to prepare themselves for the realities of practice but there should not be too many of these in the student's small caseload as this could discourage the

student. However, in order to simulate the demands of real practice, some supervisors stop selecting cases towards the end of the student's placement so that she can learn to cope with whatever type of problem is presented.

In general, it is important that the student's caseload should provide her with a variety of learning experiences. Frances Dover, in describing a five-year demonstration project involving a Student Training Unit at the Jewish Guild for the Blind for students of the New York School of Social Work, stated that one major consideration in selecting cases was "to allow the student a wide range of experience with the kinds of life situations that come to the attention of this particular agency setting[43] and other authorities reinforce this view. Peltes points out that students should have experience of collaborative work in some cases,[44] Anderson, Pfeiffer et al advocate the assigning of both short-contact and long-term cases because of the specific teaching values of each.[45]

This criterion for selection often implies that cases must be drawn from a number of social workers in various parts of the agency (if it is a large agency) and not only from the supervisor's workload. This involves administrative and relationship complications, and the Supervisor must be made aware of these and take care in reassuring his colleagues that all is well with their cases. Some workers are dubious of a student s ability to handle cases and it is important for the FWC to assure the supervisor and other social workers in the agency that though students may be young and relatively inexperienced, they have some professional knowledge and usually a great deal of enthusiasm and concern for clients and therefore seldom make mistakes which cause clients irreparable harm.[46]

According to Young, many supervisors prefer to build up a student's caseload from new work coming in to the agency and "there is much to recommend this plan"[47] as events often move quickly at the beginning of a case. However, either system of selection is acceptable in a field work programme.

In the present study, the annual questionnaire administered to supervisors contained a question* in which the supervisors were asked to state the basis on which they selected cases for inclusion in the student's workload. The supervisor's responses are tabulated in the following table.

TABLE 15: BASES FOR SUPERVISORS' SELECTION OF CASES FOR STUDENTS

Reasons for Selecting Cases for Students	Number of Supervisor Responses		
	1968	1969	Total 1968 and 1969
1 Relatively uncomplicated cases	5	2	7
2 To provide comprehensive experience of the agency's clientele	3	4	7
3 Cases offering particular types of learning opportunities	3	3	6
4. Cases appropriate to students' ability and learning needs, including need to achieve	2	4	6
5. Only new cases	1	0	1
6. No selection late in placement	2	1	3
TOTAL	16	14	30

Source: Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

* Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire Question 2.

It was possible for each supervisor to cite more than one reason on the basis of which cases for students were selected, and the number of supervisor responses is therefore 30, which exceeds the number of placements supervised (i.e. 22) by eight. The reasons given have been categorized on a nominal scale. The categories however are not entirely mutually exclusive. Some could refer to a similar basis of choice which was however motivated differently, for example, relatively uncomplicated cases could have been selected to meet the student's need to experience achievement, but need not have been.

The categories named are all similar to those described in the literature as appropriate bases for the selection of cases for students. There is a more or less equal distribution of responses over the first four categories which describe intrinsic qualities in cases which predispose supervisors to select them for inclusion in a student's workload.

Students were asked in their annual questionnaires* whether they participated in the decision to include specific cases or groups in their workload. Their responses are presented in the following table:

TABLE 16: STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN CASE SELECTION

Did Student participate in case selection?	Number of Student Responses			
	1968	1969	Total 1968 and 1969	
			No.	%
YES	5	9	14	63,64
NO	6	2	8	36,36
TOTAL	11	11	22	100,00

Source: Students' Annual Questionnaire

* Students' Annual Questionnaire Question 2.

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