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The role of the field work consultant in social work education

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While it is important that cases be selected for students so that they can have a variety of experiences with different types of clients, and that sometimes in order to further a particular student's learning, she should be allocated cases which might present her with certain difficulties, nevertheless allowing the student some choice in the selection of cases can also aid professional development. If two equally suitable cases are available to the student, allowing her some self-determination can decrease anxiety and harness motivation. It is true that in practice social workers do not have this choice, but for the purposes of field instruction where the focus is on the development of the student, giving the student a certain degree of choice within limits can be beneficial to teaching and learning. In the present study, the majority of students over the two year period viz. 63,64% did participate in the decision to include specific cases or groups in their work load.

7.2.3 Number of Cases allocated to Students

It an essential principle of field instruction that the student's role in the agency is primarily that of a learner, "whose primary task is not the management of his cases, but a conceptual approach to the processes of treatment in which he will engage with his clients."[48] The main medium for this learning is the assignment to the student of a small number of cases. This enables the student to analyse the details of each case and his own practice in "slow motion."

Brown and Gloyne's study revealed some differences of opinion regarding the degree of concentration on a few cases bearing in mind the need to adapt to later pressures of employment and it was generally recognised that the pace should be quickened towards the end of a placement. However, many supervisors continued to emphasize the benefits of intensive rather than extensive experience

for learning purposes. In the United States, Selyan writing in 1968 stated as follows:

> The assignment of a limited number of cases reduces the possibility of escape into activity for activity's sake, or of exclusive attention to operational skills, and brings to focus the need for a progressively deepening understanding of the nature of psycho-social dysfunctioning and the development of increasingly selective modes of intervention [50]

What is the ideal number of cases a student should carry? There is no easy answer to this question as many factors are operative, for example the student's stage of learning, the amount of work necessary for each case and the demands made on the student by any particular case. A survey of the literature seems to indicate that traditionally students have carried loads of approximately 5-8 at one time, perhaps reaching a total of 12 over the full period of the placement.

Carol Meyer, Professor of Social Work at Columbia, is very critical of the traditional model of field practice and describes with admiration a project at her School whereby the social service department of a large city hospital in a ghetto area of New York was administered by School staff as a teaching centre for students. Yet she too cites 7-9 on-going cases as a suitable load for a student. However, the difference in her concept of field instruction, is that students should carry other responsibilities in addition, such as perhaps assignments in group work and community action. Meyer considers that such a programme equips students more adequately for the demands of future practice in social work[51] and the present writer as one FWC at Wits, supports this point of view.

In the present study, the questions* in the annual questionnaires designed to elicit information on this matter therefore made

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* Students' Annual Questionnaire Question 1
Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire Question 1.

provision for respondents to include cases and groups in the computation of the size of the student's workload. Responses are tabulated in the following table. It will be noted that the intervals in each category are not equal*. It was considered important to have twelve as the upper limit of the first class as this is the highest figure quoted in the literature for a desirable case load over the total period of a student's placement. The next interval ended at 20 in order to encompass another estimate quoted in the literature, namely that by Rosemary Reynolds. According to her, students in the second year of the Masters' curriculum in the United States could handle fifteen to eighteen cases at a time,[53] though this caseload is handled in three days per week in the agency whereas students in the present study worked only two days per week. Nevertheless this figure is found in the literature, and was used as the basis of the second lowest class in the categorization formulated for tabulation purposes.

*Authority for this procedure comes from Goldstein who states that "the difference between classes (on an interval scale) need not be equal."[52]

TABLE 17: NUMBER OF CASES/GROUPS IN STUDENT'S WORKLOAD AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Number of Cases/Groups in Student's Workload	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Super-visors	Students	Super-visors	No.	%	No.	%
1 - 12	4	5	4	4	8	36,36	9	40,91
13 - 20	2	1	3	5	5	22,73	6	27,27
21 - 30	3	2	2	1	5	22,73	3	13,64
31 - 40	2	2	1	1	3	13,64	3	13,64
No Infor-mation	0	1	1	0	1	4,54	1	4,54
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students'and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires

The responses of both supervisors and students indicate that only 40% (approximately) of students had workloads of 12 cases or under, which is the size of caseload many writers cite as the most desirable.

If one combines the figures falling within the first two categories, namely 1 - 12 cases and 13 - 20 cases, and computes the mean of student and supervisor responses, it appears that just over 60% of students (in round figures) had case loads falling within the limit quoted by Reynolds as desirable for second year Master's degree students nearing the end of their studies in the United States of America. Consequently almost 40% of students had caseloads in excess of even the highest figure cited as acceptable in the literature on the subject.

7.2.4 Attendance at Administrative Meetings and Visits of Observation as Part of Field Instruction

A recent trend in social work practice particularly in the United States has been a closer alliance between the methods of social work administration and community organization.[54] This has been reflected in the Wits. curriculum where the two methods have been taught in a combined course since 1968 and where innovative projects in field instruction specifically in these methods are being introduced in the 1970's.

However, within the traditional pattern of field instruction, how can the administration and community organization content be maximised, as well as the related content area of social policy?

As early as 1955, Finestone wrote as follows:

> The casework agency is an educational resource for the teaching not only of casework skill and knowledge but also of many other aspects of social work. Administration, community resources and need, the place of the agency in community organization, ... are some of these generic aspects [55]

In 1962, a CSWE Workshop on Field Instruction laid down as one qualification for a supervisor that he should have

> Capacity to teach the student to work collaboratively within all relevant aspects of an agency programme. This includes ... helping the student to understand the relationship of the agency services to the community and to other services, and to identify broad social issues affecting agency service; helping the student to understand the structure and sponsorship of the agency and to relate positively to lay leadership and community understanding [56]

The following are two ways in which students can be exposed to these aspects of social work practice even when placed for field instruction in an agency concentrating on casework services:

(a) Attending administrative meetings within the agency

(b) making visits of observation to other social welfare agencies and institutions in the community.

(a) Attendance at Administrative Meetings

The Wits. philosophy about social work practice is that the administrative process is inherent in social work service of all kinds and it is considered desirable therefore that students have experience of this within the agency. Initially students may perhaps be required to write a paper on the agency structure, sponsorship and functioning but in addition "the supervisor can and should provide him with opportunities to see policy discussed at all levels."[57] The student needs to become aware of what it means to be part of a total organisation and how agency policy and administrative procedures affect both the management of her cases, and wider issues. This can be done in several ways, one of which in a community agency, is through attending meetings of the Board and observing the actual process of policy-making.

As Dover points out, in the Jewish Guild for the Blind Demonstration Project, "meetings with the Board served the mutual purpose of bringing students face-to-face with top administration and observing at first-hand some of its activities. At the same time, such contacts served to keep alive the Board's strong and continued interest in the student training programme."[58] In agencies where the Board may initially be hesitant to allow students to witness their deliberations because, perhaps, of confidentiality, special meetings could be arranged to enable the students and Board members to meet each other more informally. In Government or Provincial Departments students could spend some time at the Head Office where policy and administration could be described by the head of the department and senior members of the administrative staff. Brown and Gloyne described similar special programmes in some British local authority services, but added that while understanding of policy and

administration was widely agreed to be important in their survey, educational programmes for this purpose were relatively "undeveloped or experimental."[59]

The position in the Wits field instruction programme in 1968-69 in this regard is reflected in Table 18 on page 207.

(b) Visits of Observation

An important element in social work expertise is extensive knowledge of community resources and their differential use for the benefit of clients. According to Aptekar the administration of a concrete service is what distinguishes social casework from counselling and psychotherapy,[60] while in Barbara Wootton's opinion, "in the complicated modern world with its ever more complicated system of social services, such expertise becomes more and more valuable" and "qualifies for professional status in its own right."[61]

At South African Universities, visits of observation feature routinely in social work courses. At Wits. for example they form part of the field instruction in the first year of study. They should however continue as one aspect of the content of field instruction in long-term concurrent placements such as in the 4th Year at Wits.

Shannon regards field trips to agencies offering a variety of services as an important teaching device. In describing a field work programme in a public assistance agency, she stated:

> It was felt that the student could develop a broadened and enriched concept of dealing with human need through actually seeing an agency and its facilities and hearing about the philosophy and practice of other agencies working on other aspects of the problems found in his cases. In addition, he would have a chance to enlarge his knowledge of the specific services offered by a variety of agencies.[62]

In the Student Unit Project described by Dover, three trips were generally arranged during the year to other services catering for visually handicapped persons and their families. These proved to stimulate thought in the students in terms of community organisation concepts, for example duplication of services and unmet needs.[63]

Visits of observation therefore enable students to develop a grasp of the administration of social services, , appreciate the inter-relationship of their field instruction centres and other agencies in the community and to build up a knowledge of resources available to a social worker in helping clients.

The extent to which attendance at Board Meetings and visits of observation to other services featured in the Wits field instruction programme in 1968-69 is presented in Table 18.*

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* Questions 7 and 8, Students' Annual Questionnaire.
Questions 7 and 8, Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

TABLE 18: STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE AT AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS AND VISITS OF OBSERVATION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Type of Activity attended by student	NUMBER OF RESPONSES																	
	1968						1969						Total 1968 and 1969					
	Students			Supervisors			Students			Supervisors			Students			Supervisors		
	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	Nc	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Administrative meetings	6	5	11	7	4	11	5	6	11	6	5	11	11	11	22	13	9	22
Visits of observation	7	4	11	8	3	11	8	3	11	9	2	11	15	7	22	17	5	22

SOURCE: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires

The responses of both supervisors and students indicate that more placements provided for visits of observation for students than for students' attendance at Board meetings or meetings of other committees concerned with the administration of the service provided by the agencies. The number of responses from supervisors and students on the latter point differed only slightly: 11 students and 9 supervisors over the two year period indicated that students had not attended meetings of administrative committees. The arithmetic mean of these two figures is 10. In other words, in approximately 10 out of the 22 placements, i.e. 45,5%, students did not observe the decision-making bodies in the agency at work. If one computes the mean of the negative responses from supervisors and students on the question of visits of observation i.e. 6 out of 22, it appears that only about a quarter of the students (27,27%) did not participate in this activity. In approximately three quarters of the placements therefore, students were given the opportunity to visit organizations and services whose work was related to the services offered by the field instruction centres where they were placed.

7.2.5 Writing Letters and Telephoning in Connection with Cases

The aim of field instruction is to develop professional competence in the student social worker. She must therefore assume responsibility for all aspects of the cases she is handling. This includes writing letters and making telephone calls in connection with the case as well as interviewing. Both these activities in social work require skill and the supervisor must give the student the opportunity to perform these tasks in order to develop the requisite skill.

The client's first telephone call to the agency may be a vital step in the process of engaging in casework treatment. The student must learn how to handle such calls competently. When

a student telephones a client at work or at home, and the client is out, the student must learn what type of message to leave, if any, in order to preserve confidentiality. A telephone interview during the course of treatment is often important also, and may be more difficult than a face-to-face interview where the visual dimension can aid in assessment. When a crisis arises in the client's life situation, dealing professionally with the client over the telephone may be crucial. The student must learn how to convey empathy, and how to respond appropriately merely by listening to the client's manner of speaking. In inter-agency telephone calls too, there are professional skills to acquire and the supervisor must arrange for students to gain experience in this type of work.

Letter writing is an important part of recording, and as Gordon Hamilton wrote "skill in practice and skill in recording are so closely interdependent as to be almost indistinguishable."[64] Students have to learn to record for the agency's files and for their own learning purposes and in addition they have to learn to produce reports and letters which will be sent out of the agency. According to Anderson, Pfeiffer, Schubert and Scott who in 1953 described the content of field work in a casework setting at the School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley, letters fall into three general classifications:

(i) Letters to clients

(ii) Letters to social agencies, including official reports, summaries for use in consultation, requests for service from other agencies.

(iii) Letters to non-social agencies or to persons not connected with social agencies.[65]

If possible students should have experience of writing all three types of letters. As Priscilla Young states: "Social workers ... have to learn to phrase their letters and reports in

ways which are comprehensible and acceptable to the recipients.... It is all too easy to create misunderstanding, confusion or ill will by failure to communicate clearly.[66] Social work students must master the art of communicating clearly in letters and reports.

Letters written to clients to make appointments for interviews at the office or on a home visit should be written with sensitivity as they are "an integral part of the total treatment process."[67] They should have a professional quality and yet sufficient informality so that the client would have a sense of personal contact. They should be specific enough about the purpose of the appointment so that no unnecessary anxiety will be aroused in the client but not so specific that he would feel limited in his response.

Students should have to write letters using a variety of styles ranging from the strictly formal to the easy, colloquial style suitable when the recipient is a child.

Letters of referral are particularly important. The purpose of the letter must be clearly and explicitly stated and necessary, relevant background information provided. Correct titles should always be used and accurate reference numbers cited.

In dispatching the letter from the agency students must learn to observe the agency's administrative requirements, for example, relating to who is entitled to sign a particular letter.

Figures indicating how many Wits, students were given the opportunity to make telephone calls and write letters* as part of their field work placement in 1968-1969 are presented in the following table:

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* Questions 9 and 10, Students' Annual Questionnaire
Questions 9 and 10, Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

TABLE 19: DRAFTING OF LETTERS AND TELEPHONING BY STUDENTS AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Type of activity	NUMBER OF RESPONSES																	
	1968						1969						Total 1968 and 1969					
	Students			Supervisors			Students			Supervisors			Students			Supervisors		
	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Sub-Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Drafting letters	8	3	11	10	1	11	11	0	11	11	0	11	19	3	22	21	1	22
Telephoning	10	1	11	11	0	11	11	0	11	11	0	11	21	1	22	22	0	22

SOURCE: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires

This table reveals that according to the responses of both students and supervisors, virtually all placements gave students the opportunity to draft letters and use the telephone in connection with the work of the Agency. In 1968, there was at least one agency, and possibly three according to the students, in which students did not perform these tasks, but by 1969 all 44 responses were positive.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.), 1963, The Future for Field Instruction: Agency-School Commitment and Communication, p.6.

2. Rosemary Reynolds. "The Relationship of Field Placement to Classroom Teaching from the Standpoint of the Supervisor" in Family Service Association of America (F.S.A.A.), Techniques of Student and Staff Supervision, pp.55-56.

3. Ruth Smalley, Theory for Social Work Practice, p.142.

4. Dorothy Pettes, Supervision in Social Work: A Method of Student Training and Staff Development, p.29.

5. Bessie Kent, Social Work Supervision in Practice, p.17.

6. C.M. Patterson and W. Clayton. "One to One Method of Field Work Training." Social Casework, 42: 181, 1961.

7. Pettes, op. cit., p.62.

8. P. Young, The Student and Supervision in Social Work Education, p.33.

9. Renee Berg. "Developing a Broadened View of the Educational Contribution of Field Practice." Journal of Social Work Process, 17:61, 1969.

10. Pettes, op. cit., p.63.

11. Ibid., pp.20 and 24.

12. C.S.W.E. 1962, Agency, Board, Executive and Supervisory Support Conducive to Productive Field Instruction, p.7.

13. Pettes, op. cit., p.62.

14. S.C. Brown, and E.R. Gloyne, The Field Training of Social Workers: A Survey, p.81.

15. Pettes, op. cit., p.16.

16. Ibid., p.58.

17. Brown and Gloyne, op. cit., p.59.

18. Ibid., p.60.

19. Pettes, op. cit., pp.57-58.

20. C.S.W.E. 1962, op. cit., p.7.

21. C.S.W.E. 1963, op. cit., p.8.

22. N. Botha, Supervisie in Maatskaplike Werk met Besondere Klem Op Die Partikuliere Welsynsorganisasies, p.167

23. C.S.W.E. 1962, op. cit., p.7.

24. S. Berengarten. "Educational Issues in Field Instruction in Social Work" in F. Dover, Field Instruction in Casework. p.101.

25. Ibid., p.100.

26. Ibid.

27. C.S.W.E. 1963, op. cit., p.7.

28. Margaret Schubert. "Making the Best Use of Traditional and Atypical Field Placements." Betty Lacy Jones (ed., Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education, p.8.

29. Annette Muller, Opleiding vir Maatskaplike Werk met Spesiale Verwysing na Suid-Afrika, p.135.

30. Patterson and Clayton, Loc. cit.

31. Brown and Gloyne, op. cit., p.98.

32. Berengarten, ibid.

33. Grace, M. Llewellyn. "Orientation: A Conceptual Approach to Field Work." F.S.A.A. Trends in Field Work Instruction, p.66.

34. Mary, C. Hester. "Educational Process in Supervision." F.S.A.A. Techniques of Student and Staff Supervision, p.18.

35. The Association of Social Workers of Great Britain, Report of the Seminar on Supervision, p.15.

36. Pettes, op. cit., p.66.

37. Young, op. cit., p.38.

38. Pettes, op. cit., p.66.

39. M. Dwyer and M. Urbanowski. "Student Process Recording: A Plea for Structure." F.S.A.A. Trends in Field Work Instruction, p.69.

40. Samuel Finestone. "Selected Features of Professional Field Instruction." Betty Lacy Jones (ed.), op. cit., pp.71-72.

41. Kent, op. cit., p.6.

42. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Training for Social Work: Third International Survey, p.261.

43. Frances T. Dover, Field Instruction in Casework. A Five Year Agency - School Demonstration Project, p.25.

44. Pettes, op. cit., p.99.

45. Mary Anderson, E. Pfeiffer, M. Schubert, L. Scott. "The Content of First-Year Field Work in a Casework Setting." F.S.A.A. Techniques of Student and Staff Supervision, p.64.

46. Young, op. cit., p.52; and Pettes, op. cit., p.64.

47. Young, op. cit., p.60.

48. Alice Selyan. "Learning Theories and Patterns in Block and Concurrent Field Instruction." Betty Lacy Jones (ed.), op. cit., p.88.

49. Brown and Gloyne, op. cit., p.38.

50. Selyan, ibid.

51. Carol Meyer. "Integrating Practice Demands in Social Work Education." Betty Lacy Jones (ed.) op cit., pp.33-40.

52. Harris K. Goldstein, Research Standards and Methods for Social Workers, p.90.

53. Reynolds, op. cit., p.55.

54. See Ralph Kramer. "Community Organization and Administration: Integration or Separate but Equal." Journal of Education for Social Work. 2 No. 2: 48-56, 1966.

55. Samuel Finestone. "The Scientific Component in the Casework Field Curriculum." F.S.A.A. Trends in Field Work Instruction, p.21.

56. C.S.W.E. 1962, op. cit., p.8.

57. Pettes, op. cit., p.101.

58. Dover, op. cit., p.47.

59. Brown and Gloyne, op. cit., pp.36 and 41.

60. Herbert Aptekar, The Dynamics of Casework and Counselling, p.114.

61. Barbara Wootton, Social Science and Social Pathology, p.296.

62. Ruth Shannon. "Developing a Framework for Field Work Instruction in a Public Assistance Agency." F.S.A.A. Trends in Field Work Instruction, p.33.

63. Dover, op. cit., pp.43-44.

64. Gordon Hamilton, Principles of Social Case Recording, p.30.

65. Anderson et al. op. cit., p.73.

66. Young, op. cit., p.70.

67. Anderson et al., ibid.

CHAPTER 8

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

SUPERVISION

The content of field instruction has many components but the nerve centre of the programme should be the supervisory process. The interaction between supervisor and student should provide the student with a constructive learning experience which furthers her professional development by bringing together for her the diverse elements of her field work experience.

What is supervision? Etymologically, to supervise means "to oversee, to direct, to superintend."[1] Robinson states however that in practice supervision has "taken on itself the additional responsibility of teaching the learner the skill required. In every field of work - in the crafts, the arts, the professions - supervision has evolved its own peculiar method appropriate to the field and the nature of the skill it teaches and supervises."[2] In modern industry, human relationship considerations now enter into the supervisory process, but it remains basically a form of control which holds workers to standard performance in time and quality of work.

In social work also, the administrative component in supervision was paramount initially. Lola Selby describes pre-1917 education for social work practice as follows:

> It was a form of apprenticeship training carried on in agencies, with experienced practitioners taking over responsibility for helping the inexperienced to "learn the trade".... New workers learned defined tasks and procedures by doing them under supervision...

> The supervisor's job was more administrative than educational.... The supervisor had the task of assigning a work load, and checking on the new worker's performance in order to determine if he or she was abiding by the rules and procedures of the agency. [3]

However, gradually supervision in social work acquired different connotations. In 1936 Virginia Robinson of the Pennsylvania School of Social Work defined it as

> an educational process in which a person with a certain equipment of knowledge and skill takes responsibility for training a person with less equipment.... In the field of social casework, this teaching process is carried by a succession of conference discussions between the supervisor and the student. [4]

In other words, social work supervision was now viewed as both a teaching and administrative process. By 1949, Robinson added another element to her conception of supervision by stating:

> Since supervision in social casework teaches a helping process, it must itself be a helping process so that the student experiences in his relation to his supervisor a process similar to the one he must learn to use with his client. [5]

The third element had been added to the concept, namely, helping.

The modern approach to supervision has been succinctly summed up by Charlotte Towle who wrote in 1963:

> Supervision in social agencies has been defined as an administrative process in the conduct of which staff development is a major concern. Supervision is a process in the conduct of which the supervisor has three functions - administration, teaching and helping. [6]

It is interesting to note that in a footnote in the same article, Towle refers to the trend in the United States to designate student supervisors as "field work instructors."

To/le dissociated herself from this trend, preferring to retain the title "supervisor" because it gives prominence to the interplay of the three functions rather than concentrating on the educational function to the relative exclusion of the other two.[7]

The conception of supervision as a three-fold process has been widely developed in British and American literature. For example, Pettes' comprehensive statement on supervision is based on this framework and it is interesting to note that Pettes represents both American and British influences. She is an eminent social work educator from the Uni'ed States who spent two years working in Britain as a Senior Fulbright Scholar.

In South Africa, until the very recent past, the concept of supervision was not as clearly defined. At the 1959 Conference held at Wits. on the theme "Supervision in Social Work", Wagner, Hough and Seawright gave papers incorporating the modern, professional viewpoint[8] but in 1963 the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions published a booklet entitled "The Responsibilities, Skills and Personal Attributes of the Supervisor"[9] which tended to depict the supervisor's role in the narrow sense more appropriate to an industrial enterprise than a social agency employing professional staff. In Barette's words, "the ideas though excellent in themselves, are phrased in a language foreign to social work" and could be "misleading and open to misinterpretation."[10]

Subsequent writing in South African social work clarified the concept, however. In 1965, G.A. de Plessis, a Senior Professional Officer in the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions wrote a Master's thesis on the subject followed by an article in the journal "Social Welfare and Pensions." Muller's doctorate referred to the issue and Bopape's and Botha's dissertations each gave a full exposition of the subject. There have also been

articles by Shaw, Van Rooyen, Barette and Stewart on the subject.*

Because the present study emanated from the need of the FWC to observe the supervision of students in practice, it will concentrate on defining aspects of supervision in operational rather than theoretical terms. According to Lilian Ripple, in order to explicate a concept in operational terms

> one develops a concrete statement, or set of statements, which encompass the "operations" or "signs" by which the concept is specifically described in the context of the observation - taking procedures of this particular investigation.[11]

The present study set out to answer the following questions:

Within the concept of supervision as a teaching, helping, administrative process arising out of the relationship between supervisor and student:

1. What should characterise the supervisory process in terms of its form, duration, frequency, organization, time and content: in terms of form is it informal and/or formal? in terms of duration, how long does it last? in terms of frequency, how often does it occur? in terms of organization, who is responsible for it? in terms of time, when does it occur? in terms of content, what is discussed? Related questions are also discussed, such as the use of process records and evaluation in supervision, and the use of group supervision.

2. To what extent do these characteristics feature in practice?

3. What is the relevance in terms of the role of the field work consultant?

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* Details of these works are provided in the bibliography at the end of the present study.

8.1 General Characteristics of Supervision

In terms of the traditional pattern of field instruction a model description of supervision would be as follows:

Supervision consists of a succession of individual conferences between supervisor and student, which are of a tutorial nature. These conferences are scheduled on the initiative of the supervisor for a specific and regular time each week and for a relatively fixed duration of about an hour and a half. The supervisor is available to the student for informal discussions between scheduled supervisory conferences but as the placement progresses the student should attempt to contain her queries until the formal supervisory session. The content of the supervisory sessions should be such as to fulfil the educational, helping and administrative functions of supervision.

In the questionnaires administered in the present study, questions were included to gain information on all these aspects, which will now be discussed seriatim.

8.2 The form of Supervision: Formal and/or Informal Supervision

As Dorothy Pettes wrote: "The student supervisor teaches in an infinite variety of ways, but the major teaching setting is within the individual supervisory session."[12] The identical view is expressed by many other writers on the subject such as Annette Muller and F.C. Shaw in South Africa, Priscilla Young and Lola Selby in Britain, and inter alia Anderson, Pfeiffer, Schubert and Scott in the United States.* Ruth Shannon perhaps provides the most comprehensive motivation for the system in the

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* Details of these publications are to be found in the Bibliography at the end of the present study.

following statement published in 1962:

> In the tutorial method characteristic of field instruction, the individual conference with the student is the basic vehicle for teaching. The individual conference (after the field instructor has read the student's process recording of his cases) enables the instructor to understand the student's particular learning needs and problems, the quality of his thinking and feeling, and his potentiality for becoming a caseworker. The regular weekly conference is the medium through which the field instructor provides the individually planned educational experience that is the heart of the field work teaching method in social work. It is also through this medium that the instructor creates the kind of learning atmosphere in which the student can feel most comfortable. By means of the relationship established in the conference, the instructor offers the student the support and help he needs in trying himself out in the new and uncharted ways of helping people in trouble. [13]

Research support for the system is provided by Solomon Green, who found in his doctoral dissertation presented at Pennsylvania in 1965, that "the supervisory conference is a significant teaching-learning relationship, perhaps not as fully appreciated by field instructors."[14]

Discussions between the supervisor and the student need not be confined to the individual formal supervisory session, and in practice this is seldom so. Unscheduled informal discussions may also occur between formal conferences. These may be particularly important to the student near the beginning of the placement when her uncertainty and anxiety increases her dependency needs. Even the student who reacts to her initial uncertainty with a strong desire to demonstrate competence and coping abilities and who appears excessively independent will usually experience a period of great dependency. Early in the placement therefore the supervisor should make it clear

to the student that he expects her to come for help frequently. As Pettes points out, the student will be less hesitant to do so if the supervisor gives her some indication of the circumstances under which he may or may not be interrupted.

At the same time however, the supervisor should indicate that as time passes the student will be expected to keep as many of her questions as possible for the formal conference. The supervisor should always be available for consultation in case of emergencies, but as Cunliffe states:

> It is important that students get a sense of programming in their agency experience, and it is also important that they learn a certain amount of self-discipline.... Here it is also important that the supervisor develops this same sense of timing and disciplines herself in relation to her work with the student.[15]

Nevertheless, both formal and informal channels of communication are ever present in organisations and the supervisor must be aware of these and use them appropriately. Students can learn much from professional discussions over lunch or tea or perhaps en route to observational home visits, and such discussions can take place with the supervisor and with other members of staff. Pettes considers that such communications can be both valuable and at times dangerous, and the supervisor must therefore

> be constantly aware of the relationship between informal and formal communication, make use of both, and take responsibility for seeing that appropriate matters are transferred from one to the other.[16]

In the present study, questions were included in the Annual Questionnaire administered to students and supervisors on the incidence of informal and formal supervision in the placements. 43 out of the 44 responses from students and supervisors indicated

that both formal and informal supervision occurred during placements. The one exception was a student in 1969 who reported that no informal supervision occurred. In fact, an examination of the weekly sheets submitted by this student during the year revealed that short periods of informal supervision had occurred early in the placement, but that no informal discussions were held with the supervisor for the last 13 weeks of her placement. Data derived from the student's comments on her weekly questionnaires and from interviews between the student and the FWC indicate that the reason for the dearth of informal contact was the poor relationship between supervisor and student. The nature of the relationship is reflected in a comment on a formal supervisory session written by the student four weeks before the end of the placement:

> "In this session, I discussed my feelings about termination with my supervisor. He did not help me with these feelings. I felt as though he was so threatened by what I was saying that he could only defend himself, and not even listen to me. I was told that 'parting is a reality of life'; and that if 'one' gets upset about it, then 'one' will have a depressive breakdown. 'One' assured him that this was not the case!"

This student was clearly distressed about the impersonal approach of her supervisor and the undercurrents of hostility in the relationship accounted for the absence of informal discussions in the placement.

Responses of students and supervisors as to whether formal or informal supervision was the predominant pattern are reflected in the following table.*

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* See Questions 17 a,b,c Students' Annual Questionnaire
Questions 13 a,b,c Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

TABLE 20: TYPE OF SUPERVISION PREDOMINATING AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Type of supervision	Number of Responses							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	No.	%	No.	%
1. Only formal supervision	0	0	1	0	1	4,55	0	0
2. Formal supervision predominating	5	8	6	10	11	50,00	18	81,82
3. Informal supervision predominating	6	2	4	1	10	45.45	3	13,64
4. Considerable time on both types	0	1	0	0	0	0.00	1	4,54
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors Annual Questionnaires.

If response one is combined with response two and compared with response three from supervisors and students, p = ,08, which is not significant statistically. Nevertheless, there is a tendency towards significance in the fact that 81,82% of supervisors perceived that formal supervision was the predominant pattern during the placement while only 54,55% of students had a similar perception.

If the responses in category three are isolated, namely, responses from supervisors and students stating that informal supervision was the predominant pattern, and the binomial test is applied, p = ,046 which is statistically significant. In other words, a significant majority of students perceived that informal supervision was the predominant pattern of supervision during their placements. The inference to be drawn is that the

communications between supervisors and students as to what was formal supervision and what was informal were not sufficiently clear.

Responses to questions* on the weekly questionnaire completed by students in 1969 also shed light on this issue. These are presented in Table 21:

TABLE 21: OCCURRENCE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPERVISION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS, 1969

Type of Supervision Provided	Field Work Weeks	
	Number	Percentage
A. Only Formal Supervision	42	15,79
B. Both Formal and Informal	134	50,37
C. Only Informal Supervision	72	27,07
D. Neither Formal nor Informal	18	6,77
TOTAL	266	100,00
Sub-Total: Formal (A + B)	176	66,16
Sub-Total: Informal (B + C)	206	77,44

Source: Students' Weekly Questionnaires.

This table reveals that the most frequently occurring pattern was for students to have both formal and informal supervision in any one field work week. This occurred in 134 of the 266 field work weeks, that is approximately 50% of the total. However, an examination of the weeks in which only one type of supervision occurred, reveals that informal supervision alone occurred in

* Students' Weekly Questionnaire. Questions 1 and 7

in a greater number of weeks (72) than did formal supervision alone (42). Informal supervision therefore seems to have occurred more frequently than formal supervision during the 1969 field work year in the student group as a whole. Informal supervision occurred in 206 of the 266 field work weeks worked altogether i.e. in 77,44% of the total, while formal supervision occurred in 176 of the total of 266 i.e. 66,16%.

An examination of the results of individual students reveals that only 3 students had more weeks with formal supervision than informal supervision. One reported an equal number of weeks for each. In the case of 3 other students, although the number of weeks with informal supervision exceeded the number of weeks with formal supervision, the difference ranged between 1 and 4 weeks only. In view of this small difference, it is possible that at the end of the year when these students completed the annual questionnaires, they perceived the pattern of supervision as having been predominantly formal. They would therefore have made up the group of 7 students in Table 20 who reported in 1969 that formal supervision was the predominant or the only type of supervision they experienced. This may have been their perception too in view of the fact that participants in the field instruction dyad may be more aware of formal supervision as supervision than of informal supervision which may in retrospect appear more like casual conversation than as a teaching-learning situation.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that in terms of the number of weeks in which each type of supervision occurred, whether separately or together with the other type, the number of weeks with informal supervision exceeded the number of weeks with formal supervision by 30 (206 minus 176) for the group as a whole.

One student who had her first formal supervisory session in the 17th week of her placement, that is after two thirds of her placement had elapsed, commented as follows on her weekly questionnaire:

> "This was my first formal supervisory session with my supervisor this year. I can hardly describe the tremendous difference it has made. There is no comparison at all between formal and informal supervision. In formal supervision both student and supervisor have prepared for the discussion, and then it is a real learning experience. With informal supervision everything is so aimless and almost chaotic, one is not very sure what further action to take in cases."

8.3 Duration of Supervision: Informal and Formal

8.3.1 Duration of Informal plus Formal Supervision

The usual estimate cited in the literature of the amount of time a supervisor must devote to student supervision is eight hours per week.[17] However this figure provides for all the activities related to supervision, such as preparation, reading students' records, attending meetings and consulting with the FWC as well as the time devoted to actual supervision, both formal and informal. In a time study of supervision done by Noel Timms in England in 1962, the supervisor's activities were described as follows:

A. Reading records of the supervisor and of other staff to find suitable cases for the student.
B. Discussions with other staff members relating to case selection for student
C. Preparing students for work on cases
D. Reading students' records.
E Supervisory Conference
F. Other discussion with the student (for example, unscheduled discussion about casework in particular cases).

G. Ccrework by the supervisor on students' cases not on the supervisor's own caseload.

H. Discussion with University Staff, both in regular meetings (e.g. Seminars) and about individual students.

I. Other activities, such as compilation of reports on students, introduction of student to agency and other tasks.

Timms' figures show a considerable variation both in total time spent and in the proportions of total time devoted to the different activities. In order to reduce the variations he considered the time spent over the first six weeks of the placement only. This revealed that 7 out of the 11 supervisors spent between 16 and 21 hours in supervisory activities over the 6 week period.[18] On the basis of Timms' figures, the present writer computed that the mean time per week spent on supervisory activities by these 7 supervisors was 2 hours 18 minutes. In 1967-8, Sales and Navarre also did a time study of supervisory activity in agencies providing field instruction to students of the University of Michigan School of Social Work. They listed these activities as formal, planned contacts, emergency contacts, informal contacts and preparation, and their mean weekly time per student amounted to 3 hours 42 minutes.[19] This time did not include some of the activities listed by Timms, for example, contacts with the University. It was confined to activities more directly related to supervision rather than to field instruction in general but what is interesting is that both these empirical time studies produced figures of time spent well below the 8 hours quoted by Pettes and others and based only on estimates.

Few references could be located in the literature which described the amount of time per week which should be devoted

only to supervision, if supervision comprises both formal and informal discussions. Timms' research does contain some figures relating to both these activities but these are difficult to assess because they are presented in the form of total number of hours devoted to these activities over the whole placement, in 11 placements stretching over differing periods of weeks ranging from 6 to 22. The mean number of hours spent on supervision per week was not calculated.

Sales and Navarre's study using field instructors as respondents does present figures for mean time per student per week spent on the formal, planned supervisory conference, informal contacts and emergency contacts. Informal contacts are described as being mainly "casual talk regarding practice" while Emergency Contacts are listed as follows:

Student needs specific item of information.
Student requests advice on problem in his practice.
Student wants help with chronic deficiency.
Special conference to convey agency information
Field instructor feels student needs additional instruction.
Other.

Figures extracted from Table 1 in Sales and Navarre's project are:

101,28 minutes spent on formal conference.
28,02 minutes spent on emergency contacts.
22,38 minutes spent on informal contacts.
Total: 151,68 minutes on supervision

In their study, therefore, according to field instructor respondents 2 hours 32 minutes was spent weekly on supervision, both formal and informal.[20]

Sales and Navarre also asked students to indicate on a research instrument how much time was devoted to their supervision by the field instructor. Students supervised individually indicated that the weekly conference with the field instructor took up 79,57 minutes on average, and other contacts with him involved 54,64 minutes. This made a total of 134,21 minutes or 2 hours 14 minutes spent with the field instructor for supervision both formal and informal.[21] The authors comment on the discrepancy in the reports from students and field instructors on the length of the formal supervisory conference and state as follows:

> No reason for this discrepancy can be found in the data as obtained and it can be accounted for only by assuming some subjective distortion on the part of field instructors, students or both.[22]

In the present study, a question was included in the annual questionnaires administered to students and supervisors asking them to estimate how much time per week was devoted to supervision both in informal discussions and/or formal supervisory sessions.* The results are presented in the following table:

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* Question 11 on Supervisors' Questionnaire
  Question 15 on Students' Questionnaire

TABLE 22: TIME SPENT ON SUPERVISION EACH WEEK AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Time devoted to supervision each week	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	%	No.	%
1-59 mins.	3	0	1	0	4	18,18	0	0
60-119 mins.	6	8	7	8	13	59,09	16	72,73
120-239 mins	1	3	3	3	4	18,18	6	27,27
240 mins. or more	1	0	0	0	1	4,55	0	0
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires.

The majority of respondents in both groups i.e. supervisors and students, reported that 60-119 minutes i.e. between one and two hours per week were devoted to supervision both formal and informal. Less time was therefore devoted to supervision in general in the Wits. field instruction programme in 1968-1969 than in the Michigan project in 1967-68, in terms of the reports of either students or field instructors in that project.

8.3.2 Duration of Informal Supervision

While informal supervision is alluded to in works on supervision by Pettes[23] and Kent[24] there is little mention of it in general in the literature and according to Sales and Navarre "this type of informal contact ... is seldom an explicitly stated expectation for the field supervisor's role."[25] However, both their time study and that of Timms revealed that supervisors do

spend a portion of their time in this type of contact with students. Only one of Timm's Supervisors had no "other discussions" with students, while the other ten supervisors in the study devoted an average of 13,6%* of total time devoted to supervisory activity, to this type of informal supervision, the range being from 2% to 29% of total time[26]. Sales and Navarre reported that on average 50,4 minutes per week were devoted to informal supervision i.e. 28,02 minutes for emergency contacts and 22,38 minutes for informal contacts. The authors considered this an interesting finding. In spite of the lack of emphasis on this activity in educational planning by schools it apparently involved more time than "other activities which receive frequent mention in the literature."[27]

In the present study, a question was included in the supplementary project in which students were asked to estimate how much time each week was devoted to their supervision other than in individual, formal supervisory sessions.

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* This figure was computed by the present writer on the basis of figures appearing in Table C of Timms' article

TABLE 23: DURATION OF INFORMAL SUPERVISION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS IN 1969

Duration of Informal Supervision	Field Work Weeks: 1969		
	Number	% of Total N = 266	% of Weeks with Informal Supervision N = 206
1- 59 mins.	112	42,11	54,37
60-119 mins.	69	25,94	33,50
120-239 mins.	21	7,89	10,19
240 + mins.	4	1,50	1,94
Sub-total: Weeks with formal supervision	206	77,44	100,00
No time	60	22,56	
Total:	266	100,00	

Source: Supplementary Project:
Weekly Questionnaires 1969

According to the responses, informal supervisory sessions of less than one hour in duration occurred most frequently. This time-period corresponds with that in the Sales and Navarre study i.e. 50,4 minutes although it should be noted that this period of informal supervision occurred only in 112 (42,11%) of the total of 266 field work weeks. When this figure is computed as a percentage of the number of weeks in which informal supervision occurred i.e. 206 weeks, the figure is 54,37%. This figure would seem to be rather low in that it means that in the remaining weeks in which informal supervision occurred, i.e. 45,63% an hour or longer was devoted to informal supervision each week.

This would seem to represent a high proportion of the student's time in the agency since in the majority of weeks the students spent only two days in the field.

8.3.3 Duration of formal Supervision

In contrast to the dearth of literature on the question of the duration of informal supervision, much has been written on the duration of the formal supervisory conference. Rosemary Reynolds refers to one two-hour session per week[28], while Priscilla Young states that "about an hour and a half is the usual time allowed for each supervisory session."[29] Dorothy Pettes discussed the question fully in her book and made the important point that the time allotted for each session may vary with individual circumstances. She wrote as follows:

> Probably about an hour and a half is the most usual time set, although anything from an hour to two hours is fairly common. It will depend on the individual circumstances of students and supervisors. For instance many supervisors who have large groups of students find it difficult to get in more than an hour's session and yet manage very well, perhaps because a weekly group session with all the students provides sufficient supplementation. On the other hand, even in the unlikely event of a supervisor having unlimited time for supervisory sessions, some limit should be set on the length of sessions in the interests of good teaching and learning. One must take into account limits of interest span and ... energy .... Balance too, is important, and time spent in supervisory sessions means less time for work with clients, less time for recording and so forth. Finally there is the development of working patterns to consider. A time limit set upon the supervisory sessions helps the student to develop the ability to organise his thoughts and to select priorities for discussion. [30]

It is clear from these quotations that an hour is the minimum acceptable length of the formal supervisory conference while ideally it should not exceed two hours in length.

In the present study, data on this issue were obtained both from the annual questionnaires administered to supervisors

and students, and from the weekly questionnaires completed by students only in 1969.* Table 24 presents statistics derived from the Annual questionnaires:

TABLE 24: DURATION OF FORMAL SUPERVISORY SESSIONS, AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Time devoted to formal supervision each week	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Super-visors	Students	Super-visors	No.	%	No.	%
1-30 mins.	2	1	3	1	5	22,73	2	9,09
31-60 mins.	9	9	7	9	16	72,73	18	81,82
61 mins. or more	0	1	1	1	1	4,54	2	9,09
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Question 18b and Question 14b respectively on Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires.

Only one student and two supervisors over the two year period reported having had formal supervisory sessions lasting over an hour on average. In a large majority of placements therefore formal supervisory sessions involved the minimum period desirable, i.e. one hour, or less.

The supplementary project in which each student in 1969 recorded the length of her formal supervision each week yielded the following data.**

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* Question 18b on Students' Annual Questionnaire.
Question 14b on Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.
Question 4 on Students' Weekly Questionnaire

** Question 4 on Students' Weekly Questionnaire.

TABLE 25: DURATION OF FORMAL SUPERVISORY SESSIONS AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS IN 1969

Time in minutes devoted to formal supervision each week	Number of Field Work Weeks		
	Number	% of Total No. of Weeks worked N = 266	% of Weeks with Formal Supervision N = 176
1- 59	93	34,96	52,84
60-119	69	25,94	39,20
120-135	3	1,13	1,71
No information	11	4,14	6,25
Sub-total: weeks with formal supervision	176	66,17	100,00
No time	90	33,83	
TOTAL	266	100,00	

Source: Supplementary Project
Weekly Questionnaire 1969

These figures reveal that the duration of formal supervisory sessions was the optimum period of one to two hours in only 25,94% of the total number of field work weeks.* In 68,79% of weeks (34,96% + 33,83%) students either had no formal supervision or supervision lasting less than one hour.

8.4 Frequency of Formal Supervision

Reference has already been made to the fact that formal supervisory sessions should occur weekly. As Pettes states: "The usual practice is to arrange supervisory sessions once a week, and experience has shown that this is a reasonable time span for most students."[31] Annette Muller expresses a similar view:

* Please see figure 6, page 244 for further data on this subject.

> Die supervisor se metode van onderrig bestaan hoofsaaklik uit gereelde periodieke individuele besprekings met die student. Dit moet minstens een maal weekliks op 'n gesette tyd plaasvind. 32

In a concurrent system of field instruction such as that at Wits, students work in their field instruction centres on two days each week as a rule. There is therefore a five day intermediary period between successive attendances at the agency and in order to ensure some continuity in the student's learning experience it is essential that she meet her supervisor on a formal basis by appointment each week. It would seem desirable, from the point of view of learning to organise time and work in a disciplined fashion, that only one formal supervisory session should occur each week, although as Pettes pointed out, circumstances do vary in agencies and one should not be rigid in this stipulation.

How frequently did the Wits. fourth-year students receive formal supervision during the period under review? Data derived from the annual questionnaires appear in the following

TABLE 26: FREQUENCY OF FORMAL SUPERVISION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Frequency of Formal Supervision	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	No.	%	No.	%
Weekly	6	9	9	11	15	68,18	20	90,91
Fortnightly	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Irregularly	5	2	2	0	7	31,82	2	9,09
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

No respondents reportea that formal supervision occurred at fortnightly intervals. If it occurred with any regularity, the interval between conferences was one week, and this was the situation reported in the majority of student and supervisor responses (68% and 90% respectively) over the total period

When the Fisher test was applied to the data for the total period, p = ,1 which is not statistically significant.

The more intensive study conducted in the supplementary project revealed that formal supervision occurred in only 176 of the 266 (66,16%) field work weeks during which students worked in their agencies. In a certain number of the weeks in which formal supervision did not occur, however, a specific reason was cited for the omission, for example, the absence of the supervisor through illness. These and other data appear in the following table.

TABLE 27: DISTRIBUTION OF FORMAL SUPERVISORY SESSIONS OVER STUDENTS' CONCURRENT PLACEMENTS 1969

NUMBER OF FORMAL SUPERVISORY SESSIONS PER WEEK	NUMBER OF FIELD WORK WEEKS																					
	AGENCY F		AGENCY E		AGENCY B				AGENCY C				AGENCY D		AGENCY A				AGENCY D		AGENCY C		TOTAL
	STUDENT 1		STUDENT 2		STUDENT 3		STUDENT 4		STUDENT 5		STUDENT 6		STUDENT 7		STUDENT 8		STUDENT 9		STUDENT 10		STUDENT 11		ALL STUDENTS	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ONE	4	16	5	20,83	10	41,67	12	50	15	68,18	18	78,26	20	83,33	14	51,85	11	44	16	66,67	12	50	137	51,50
TWO	0	0	1	4,17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	37,04	12	48	6	25,00	10	41,66	39	14,66
SUB-TOTAL	4	(25)	6	(25)	10	(41,67)	12	(50)	15	(68,18)	18	(78,26)	20	(83,33)	24	(88,89)	23	(92)	22	(91,67)	22	(91,66)	176	66,16
NONE, FOR A VALID REASON	1	4	2	8,33	3	12,50	4	16,67	4	18,18	3	13,04	4	16,67	2	7,41	0	0	2	8,33	1	4,17	26	9,75
SUB-TOTAL	5	20	8	33,33	13	54,17	16	66,67	19	86,36	21	91,30	24	100,00	26	96,30	23	92	24	100,00	23	95,83	202	75,94
NONE	20	80	16	66,67	11	45,83	8	33,33	3	13,64	2	8,70	0	0	1	3,70	2	8	0	0	1	4,17	64	24,06
TOTAL	25	100	24	100	24	100	24	100	22	100	23	100	24	100	27	100	25	100	24	100	24	100	266	100

SOURCE: Supplementary Project
Students' Weekly Questionnaire.

The ringed figures represent the number of field work weeks in which formal supervision occurred, expressed as a percentage of the total number of field work weeks worked by each student.

Students were ranked and numbered in ascending order according to these figures, taken to the nearest whole number.

The mean percentage of weeks in which formal supervision occurred was 56,06%

It should be noted that the arbitrary designation from A to G of the seven field instruction centres operating in 1969, as introduced in Table 5, Chapter 6, has been retained.

In view of the central importance of formal supervision in field instruction, the incidence of formal supervisory sessions in a student's placement was regarded as one of the chief indices of the quality of that placement. The students were therefore ranked in ascending order in terms of the number of weeks in which they received formal supervision expressed as a percentage of the total number of field work weeks worked by each student in her field instruction centre. Students were designated with numbers one to eleven according to this ranking. Students 9, 10 and 11 were so ranked in spite of minor statistical differences between them, in order to facilitate comparisons between the field instruction centres where they were placed.

The percentage sub-totals in table 27 have been graphically depicted in figure 5, which illustrates the relationship between the percentage number of field work weeks in which formal supervision occurred and the percentage number of field work weeks in which it did not occur because of some valid explicit, reason involving the supervisor.

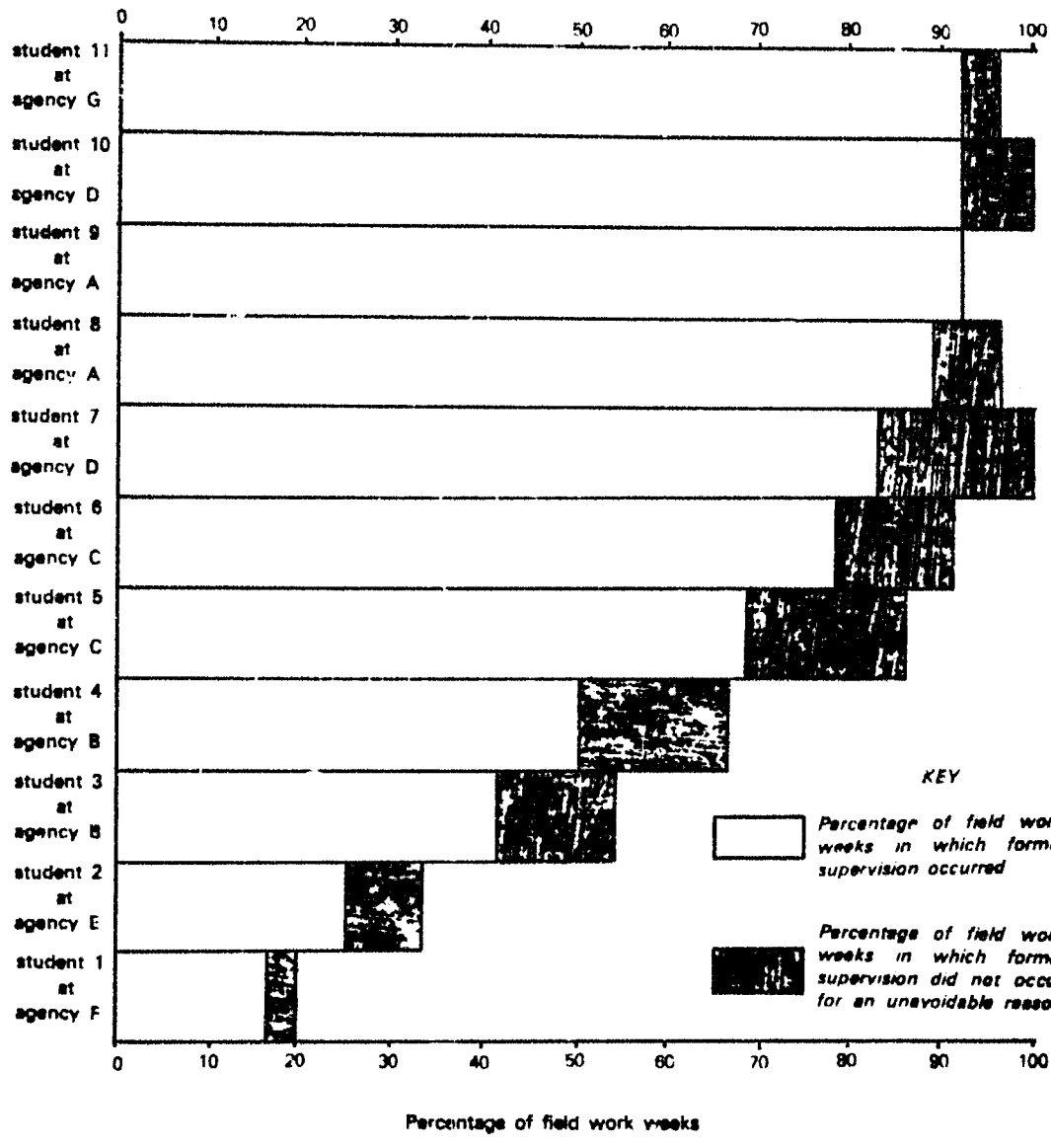

Figure 5 — BAR CHART: Incidence of formal supervision in eleven student placements 1969

This figure reveals that not one student in the group had formal supervision every week of her placement. There was also a wide variation in the patterns of the various agencies. Two agencies (F and E) scored very low, with formal supervision provided to the students in 16% and 25% of weeks respectively. These agencies each accommodated only one student. Two other agencies (B and C) each accommodating two students, provided supervision in 40-80% of the weeks, the first providing it to its two students in 42% and 50% of weeks respectively, and the other in 68% and 78% of weeks, respectively. The other three agencies (D, A and G) provided formal supervision in 80% of weeks or more, the highest percentage being 92% which applied to three students, one from each of these three agencies.

However, when unavoidable contingencies in life such as the illness of the supervisor are taken into account, and a calculation is made of the number of weeks in which formal supervision was missed for a definite reason such as this, the picture changes somewhat. In the case of two students both at the same agency, (Agency D) the resulting total is 100%. In other words when these students missed formal supervision, it was never by default but always for a valid reason which was explicitly stated.

This additional calculation does not materially affect the results of the two agencies with the lowest scores, however.

In the following figure, a comparison is presented between the number of field work weeks in which each student received formal supervision, and the number of weeks in which the duration of that formal supervision was 1 - 2 hours (see Section 8.3.3) p.237. The figure demonstrates the fact that there was a large discrepancy between these two parameters. Even when formal supervision was provided, it lasted the optimum period of 1 - 2 hours in far fewer instances than the number of weeks in which formal supervision occurred.

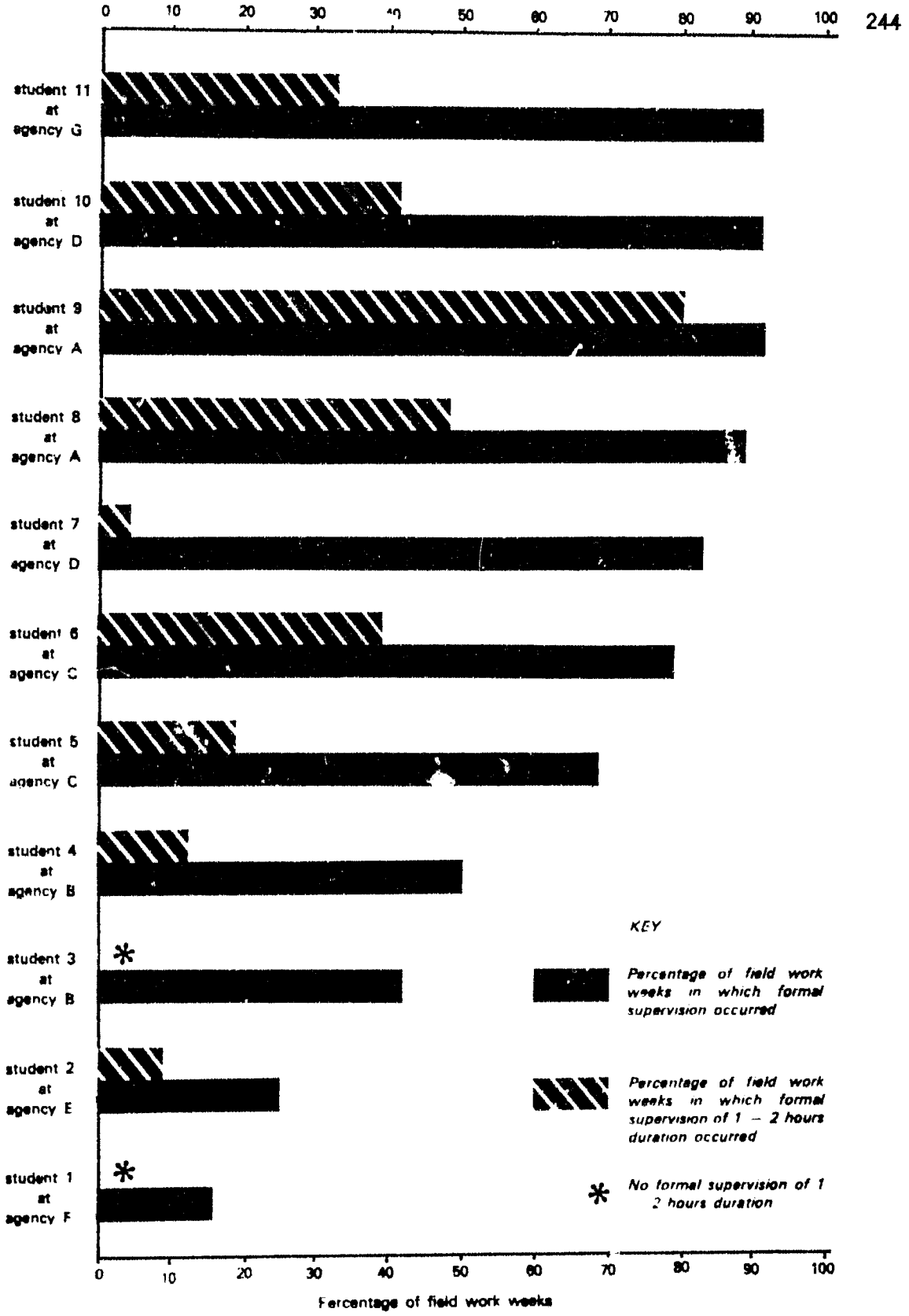

Figure 6 – GROUPED BAR CHART: Incidence of both formal supervision in general and formal supervision 1 – 2 hours in duration in eleven student placements, 1988

8.5 Who Initiated Arrangements for the Formal, Supervisory Session?

By definition, the supervisor is responsible for the field instruction of the social work student in the agency. The relationship between supervisor and student is the medium through which field learning and teaching occurs and the student is expected to participate actively in this process. The student can express criticisms or make suggestions for changes in her field instruction programme, and should be encouraged to do so. However, the primary responsibility must be the supervisor's and it is he therefore who is expected to structure the student's field instruction programme. As Van Rooyen states: „Praktykopleiding moet 'n georganiseerde, weldeurdagte en doelgerigte proses wees met 'n bepaalde vorm en inhoud."[33] As formal supervision is the core teaching-learning element in this programme the supervisor must take the initiative in informing the student that a formal conference will take place, at a particular time convenient to both parties and at a particular place. Lola Selby in describing the educational responsibilities of the fieldwork supervisor outlined a number of principles related to supervisory method "that are always essential to observe if the supervisory relationship is to serve its professional purpose" and one of these is phrased as follows:

> "The supervisor should arrange a regular tutorial time which should be protected from interruption in so far as possible."[34]

Both Bessie Kent and Dorothy Pettes too emphasise the importance of this aspect of field instruction particularly at the beginning of the placement. The uncertainty and anxiety of the student at this time has been described earlier in the present study. Pettes refers to the ambivalence involved in beginning practice. The student is eager to start, yet uncertain of how much may be demanded of her, and afraid of hurting the client.

In these circumstances the supervisor can do much to allay the student's anxiety by spelling out the supervisory process.

> He needs to give the student firm assurance that he will safeguard him from making serious blunders, that the student will have ample opportunity to discuss the case with his supervisor both before and after seeing the client. At the same time he will need to convey the importance of the student's participation, that it is 'discussion", and that he will value the student's ideas. 35

Elsewhere, Pettes emphasises the importance of the supervisor taking an active role in the following terms:

> The student has come to learn, and it is important that his teacher knows his job and has something to teach him.... He needs the security and support of someone who knows what it's all about. 36

Throughout the placement, the supervisor should continue to take the initiative in ensuring that there is no confusion about when and where formal conferences will take place. In this way, he can reassure the student of his continuing interest in the student's progress.

In the present study, the weekly questionnaire, contained a question*relating to this issue. Responses are presented in the following figure. Once again a comparison is presented between the number of weeks in which formal supervision was provided in general, and the number of weeks in which that supervision was pre-arranged on the initiative of the supervisor.

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* Question 3, Students' Weekly Questionnaire.

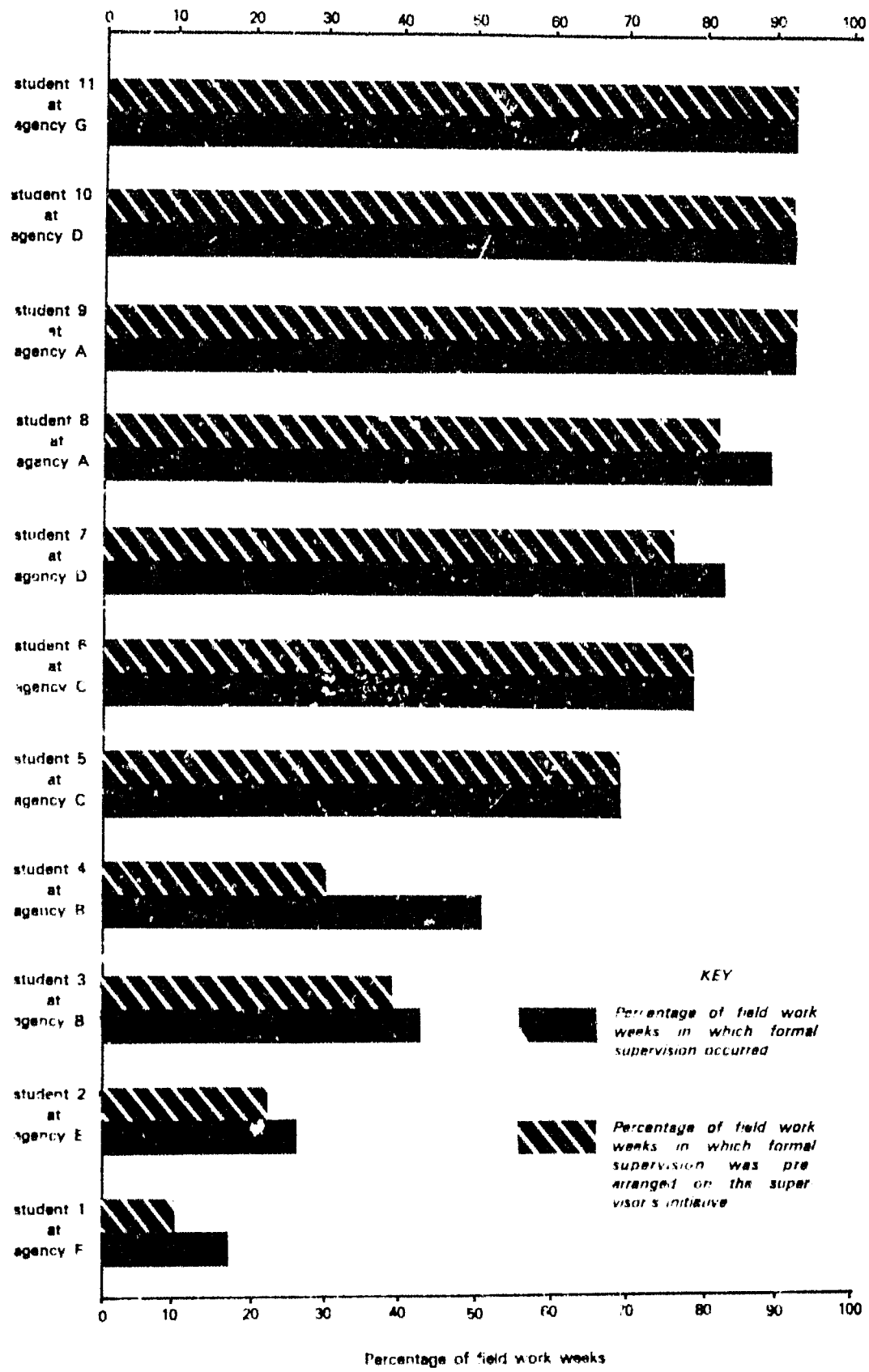

Figure 7 GROUPED BAR CHART: incidence of both formal supervision in general and formal supervision pre-arranged on the supervisor's initiative in eleven student placements, 1969

The figure reveals a close relationship between the number of weeks in which formal supervision occurred in each student's placement, and the number of weeks in which such sessions were pre-arranged at the instigation of the supervisor. In other words when formal supervision did occur, in most cases it was the supervisor who took the initiative in making the appointment for such supervision.

As with the incidence of formal supervision, the agencies differed widely in the extent to which the supervisors initiated formal supervision. The range extended from 8% to 92% of the total number of field work weeks. Two agencies, F and E, where students one and two were placed respectively, fell below the 25% mark. In other words the supervisors in these agencies initiated arrangements for formal supervisory sessions in less than 25% of the total number of field work weeks. In the case of students 9, 10 and 11, placed respectively at Agencies A,D and G, they all received formal supervision in 92% of field work weeks and in each case it was the supervisor who arranged for the supervisory session to take place. At Agency C the supervisor also took responsibility for organising every formal supervisory session that was held, although in this case such sessions occurred in only 68% and 78% of field work weeks for each of the two students placed at that agency.

8.6 The Time of Formal Supervision

One of the ways to ensure that formal supervision occurs regularly is to set aside a specific time each week for the supervisory session. For several reasons it is desirable that the formal supervisory conference commence at a regular time each week.

Two South African academics who have expressed support for this view are Dr Annette Muller of Stellenbosch University and Professor F.C. Shaw of Natal University. The latter wrote in 1969 that students' acceptance into agencies could be facilitated b, clarifying details of supervisory sessions"at the onset so that they are not just hit-and-run affairs fitted in as part of a busy day."[38]

Several British and American writers also emphasise this procedure. Walsh states that "specific conference times and ways of working together should be established at the very beginning."[39] while Pettes reiterates this view.[40]

Why is it important for supervision to occur at the same time each week? There are a number of related reasons. Firstly, the knowledge that a particular period of time each week has been set aside by the supervisor expressly for the purpose of supervising the student, provides the student with a sense of security which enables her to contain her anxieties and queries as far as possible at other times. It can therefore contribute to a more economical use of time. As Muriel Cunliffe wrote:

> It is important to try to keep the time set. I know this is difficult in a busy office but the advantage to be gained through this in the development of the student-supervisor relationship and giving the student a sense of security, is invaluable. [41]

Emergencies do arise in agencies which can disrupt time schedules; but what is important is that there should be some structuring of time in every social worker's work load. It is one of the objectives of field work that the student should learn to organise her time and work, as this is one of the features of professional practice. As Berkowitz states, careful planning of conference time is one way of teaching the

student the value of sound administrative procedures in helping individuals integrate their work with the total programme of the agency.[42] Anderson, Pfeiffer et al. make the point that "the scheduling of appointments for all types of interviews is an efficient, business-like procedure that expresses respect for the rights of both client and student."[43] If the supervisor makes and keeps a definite appointment with the student for supervision, he is providing a model on which the student can base her practice.

Rhoda Sarnat gives another, psycho-dynamic, reason for setting a fixed time for supervision. The way in which the student reacts to this structure can provide diagnostic information about her attitude to her work and to supervision. Sarnat quotes the case of an older, experienced student who was having problems in re-assuming the student role and who manifested his difficulties partly by "inadvertent scheduling of appointments with clients during periods assigned to supervisory conferences, and tardiness at these conferences."[44]

In the present study, the weekly questionnaire included a question* asking the student to record what time her supervisory session commenced whenever she had such a session. It was difficult to calculate the number of weeks in which formal supervision occurred at a regular time because the pattern was uneven in the case of most students and furthermore the contingencies of life in a social work organization had to be taken into account to some extent. For example, it is possible and acceptable for the supervisor and student to change the time of their appointment

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* Question 5 - Weekly Questionnaire, Supplementary Project, 1969.

from one fixed time to another fixed time during the course of the year. In general, if there were at least 3 consecutive sessions occurring at the same time before the time changed to another recurring time, then those 3 were counted as occurring at a fixed time. However, in certain cases exceptions were made. The writer used her discretion, after consultation with a practising social worker acquainted with the supervisory situation and the research project. Figures were interpreted at times in relation to the overall pattern of each particular student. A "fixed time" was defined as a recurring, specific time of day plus or minus fifteen minutes. For example, providing 11 a.m. on Thursday featured most frequently as the time when supervision commenced, any time between 10.45 a.m. and 11.15 a.m. would be counted as the same starting time. Because of emergencies which arise in the daily events in the agency, it was considered that this leeway should be given. On the other hand, a supervisor can be expected to organise his work to the extent that an appointment with a student for formal supervision should not be altered to a time more than quarter of an hour before or after the appointed time.

Two students (Students Numbers 9 and 11) omitted this information from their questionnaires in more than 50% of their field work weeks and had to be omitted from the calculations. The results of the remaining nine students are depicted in the following figure. For the purposes of the figure, the nine students were once again ranked according to the number of weeks in which formal supervision occurred expressed as a percentage of the total number of field work weeks, and as before these totols were also presented in order to allow for comparison.

Kindly note:

Students 9 and 11 were omitted from this chart owing to lack of information

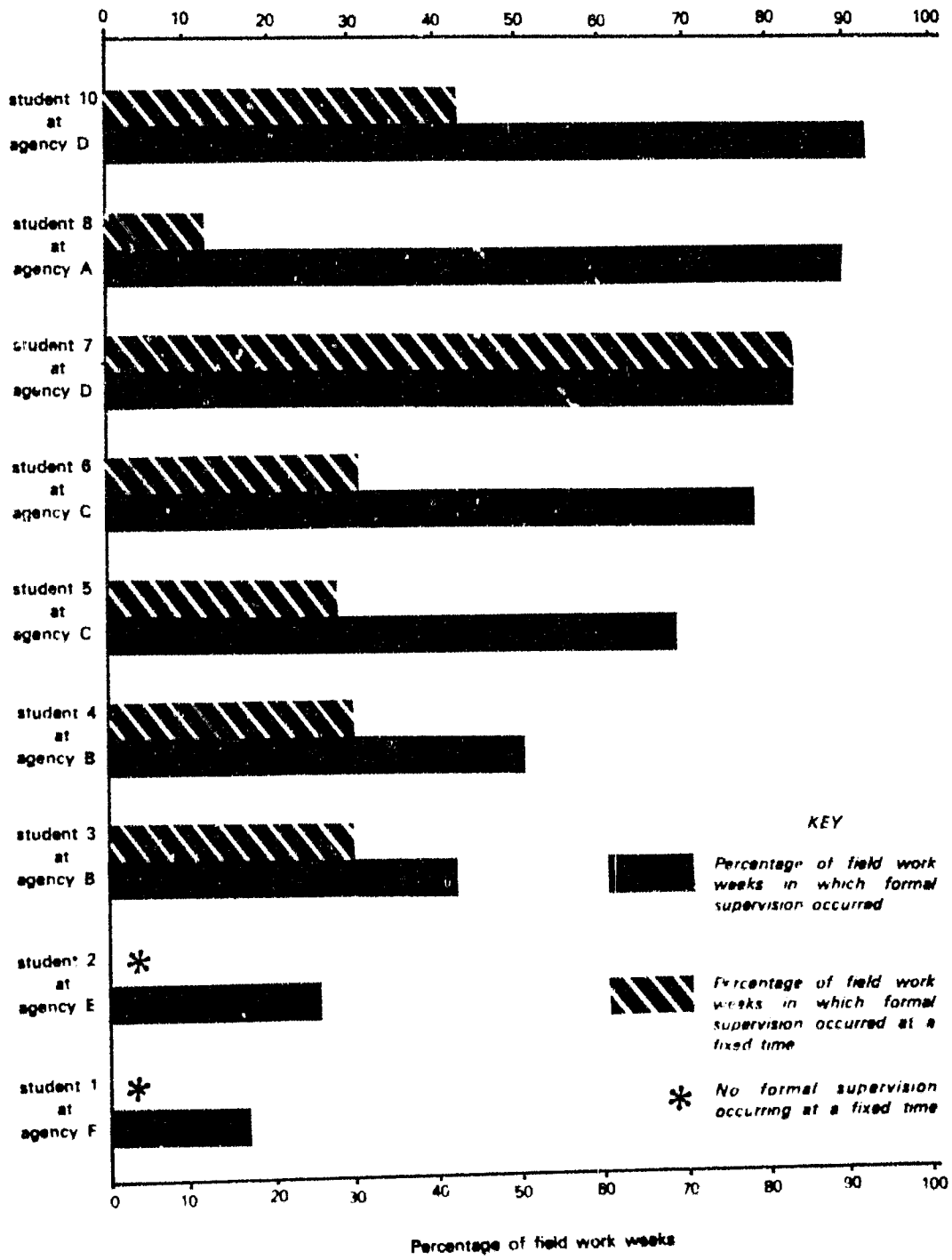

Figure 8 - GROUPED BAR CHART: Incidence of both formal supervision in general and formal supervisory sessions commencing at a fixed time in eleven student placements, 1969

This figure reveals a wide variation in the results from the different agencies. In the case of two students (Students 1 and 2), each working at two different agencies, the score was zero. They had very few formal supervisory sessions and all of these occurred at different times. In the case of one student (Student 7) who had formal supervision in 83% of the field work weeks she worked in her agency, her formal conferences commenced at a regular time in all cases.

The modal score was approximately 30%. Four students had supervision at a fixed time in about 30% of weeks worked. Eight out of the nine students for whom information was available, therefore, had formal supervision at a regular time in less than 45% of the weeks in which they received field instruction in field instruction centres.

8.7 Use of Process Records in Formal Supervision

Process records of students' contacts with clients are a valuable tool for teaching and learning in the supervisory situation. Process recording should be differentiated from verbatim recording. The latter "sets out the dialogue exactly, or almost exactly, as it was spoken, as in a theatrical script."[45] This type of recording may be used for a brief period at the beginning of a placement but very early on a student should be encouraged to record her observations and assessments of the interview in addition to the details of the conversation. Process recording is that type of recording in which the process or interaction between worker and client is recorded in chronological order. As Young states: "It is designed to highlight interpersonal relations, and it therefore has to be a very detailed record, including the worker's contribution as much as that of the client or group."[46] Gordon Hamilton describes it as a slow motion picture revealing every detail of the interaction between the worker and the client.[47]

Agencies generally use briefer types of recording such as condensed narrative or summary for service and administrative purposes. Students must learn to be proficient in these forms of recording too and must fulfil the agency's recording requirements in respect of the c they carry.

However, for learning purposes, process recording is indispensable. Dwyer and Urbanowski describe it as "one of the most central elements in the student's field instruction"[48] while Pamela Lewis, Head of the Social Work Department at London Hospital, in a paper delivered at the University of Natal in 1970, referred to it as "the best tool that we have (in teaching - the one we use most.)"[49] Brown and Gloyne, in their survey of field training of social workers in Britain, found that process recording was encouraged by academi aff and used by most supervisors as a basis for discussions with students.[50]

From the beginning of the placement the supervisor should make explicit his expectation that the student should submit process records some time before the scheduled supervisory confe ence so that the supervisor has time to read them. The case to be discussed may be selected by the student or the supervisor, and as Young states "often there is no need to give any thought to the choice of the case, since one will present itself naturally as the most interesting or difficult which the student is handling."[51] Sometimes it is useful to analyse an interview in which the student considers she has done well, and not always to concentrate on difficult or unsatisfactory cases.

Students often find it helpful if the supervisor gives them some idea of the form the record should take. Dwyer and Urbanowski suggest that a useful outline for process records

contains the following: Purpose of interview, observations, chronological account of content, impressions, worker's role and plan.[52] Pettes stresses that structure should be flexible so that the student can develop her own individual, recording style.[53] Although the selection of material recalled is bound to be subjective to some extent, Young points out that the record is nevertheless useful and in time students develop the ability to recall interaction with greater accuracy.[54]

What is the purpose of process recording? Kent describes the student's record as "a communication from the student to the supervisor indicating where the student is in his thinking and practice."[55] In writing the record, the student is forced to rethink what occurred in the interview with the consciousness that her interaction with the client must emerge clearly for the supervisor who will read the record. Thereby, the student may become aware of certain aspects of the case which had previously escaped her. The student's description of her own role in the interview enables the supervisor to keep in touch with how the student is handling a particular situation. The supervisor can individualise both the student and her clients, and can assess the student's ability to respond to the client at an emotional level and to integrate her theoretical knowledge and past experience into her practice; using the record as a basis for discussion gives the supervisory session a structure and focus. Together, supervisor and student can analyse the interview, and identify the student's weaknesses and strengths in an atmosphere of acceptance. As Young states, "the improvement of skill must come from analysing one's own work, not another's."[56] The student can also increase her self-awareness through such analysis. As a final advantage to be gained from writing process records, Dwyer and Urbanowski point out that it gives the student an opportunity to gain the ease and freedom in written expression that are important for her professional development.[57]

In using the process record for teaching purposes the supervisor must exercise skill in selecting aspects for discussion. As Young states, "successful supervisory teaching is a question of finding a balance between offering the student sufficient stimulation in the form of knowledge and ideas, criticism and challenge, while at the same time allowing, and indeed expecting, him to learn for himself."[58]

It is clear therefore that process records should play a prominent part in field instruction for the major part of the placement. Towards the end of the period of field work when the student has developed skill in observation, assessment of dynamics and description, it may sometimes be acceptable to lessen the emphasis on detailed recording, and base supervisory sessions on the student's condensed record amplified by a verbal account of interaction.

To what extent were process records used in the Wits. field instruction programme during the period under study?

A general picture of whether process records were used or not is obtained from supervisors and students responses to a question* on the annual questionnaires. These are presented in the following table:

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* Question 19 - Students' Annual Questionnaire
  Question 15 - Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

TABLE 28: USE OF PROCESS RECORDS IN SUPERVISION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Were Process Records Required for Supervision	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
	Students	Super-visors	Students	Super-visors	Students		Supervisors	
					No.	%	No.	%
Yes	7	11	8	11	15	68,18	22	100,00
No	4	0	3	0	7	31,82	0	0
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students and Supervisors Annual Questionnaires.
For 1968 p = ,05
For 1969 p = ,107
For 1968 & 1969 p = ,02

Of the 8 students in 1969 who indicated that they were required to present process records for use in supervision, two added that , occurred infrequently. Therefore, of the fifteen students who ated that they had been required to write process records for ervisory purposes only 13 students or 59,09% of the total group of . epo ed that this requirement operated for any significant perio uring the placement. As far as the supervisors are concerned however, all 22 reported that the students they supervised were required to present process records for purposes of supervision.

However, even aking the table as it stands, that is, with 15 students (68,18%) reporting that they were required to use process records and 7 not, and 22 supervisors reporting that students were required to present process records and nil not,

when the Fisher test is applied p = .02 for the two year period. In other words, the responses of the two groups are significantly different at the 2% level of confidence. Clearly, supervisors and students perceived the situation differently, with supervisors reporting a higher incidence of the use of process records than did the students.

A question* was also included in the weekly questionnaire in 1969 so that a more detailed answer could be provided regarding the extent to which process records were utilised in formal supervision. The 11 students reported that process records were used as a basis for discussion in individual, formal supervisory sessions in 112 out of the 266 field work weeks in which they received field instruction in their agencies. This represents 42,86% of the total number of weeks worked and 63,64% of the total number of weeks in which formal supervision occurred i.e. 176 weeks.

In other words, when one examines the picture as a whole, process records were used as a basis for discussion in almost two-thirds of the formal supervisory sessions that were held. This is a fairly low figure but not excessively so if one considers that towards the end of a placement, when the student's skill has increased, her verbal presentation of the dynamics of an interview may be sufficient basis for a supervisory discussion. However, because of the relatively low number of weeks in which formal supervisory sessions were held, when the number of weeks in which process records were used is calculated as a percentage of the total number of weeks worked, the figure drops to 42,8%, that is, less than half the full number of field work weeks.

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* Question 6 Weekly Questionnaire
Supplementary Project, 1969

An examination of the results of individual students reveals a wide range in the extent to which process records were used in the different placements. This is reflected in the following table:

TABLE 29: DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF FIELD WORK WEEKS IN WHICH PROCESS RECORDS REQUIRED FOR FORMAL SUPERVISION, 1969

Percentage of Total Number of Field Work Weeks in Which Process Records Required	Number of Students
Nil	2
1 - 33 1/3%	4
Over 33 1/3 to 66 2/3 %	1
Over 66 2/3 up to 100%	4
TOTAL:	11

It is clear therefore that while at the end of 1969, all 11 supervisor responses and 8 of the 11 student responses indicated that process records had been used, in fact 7 out of the 11 students were required to present process records for less than two thirds of the length of the placement. Four of these used process records less than one third of the total time, while two students did not present process records in any formal supervisory sessions at all.

The responses of the 11 students on the extent to which process records were used throughout their placements are reflected in the following figure.

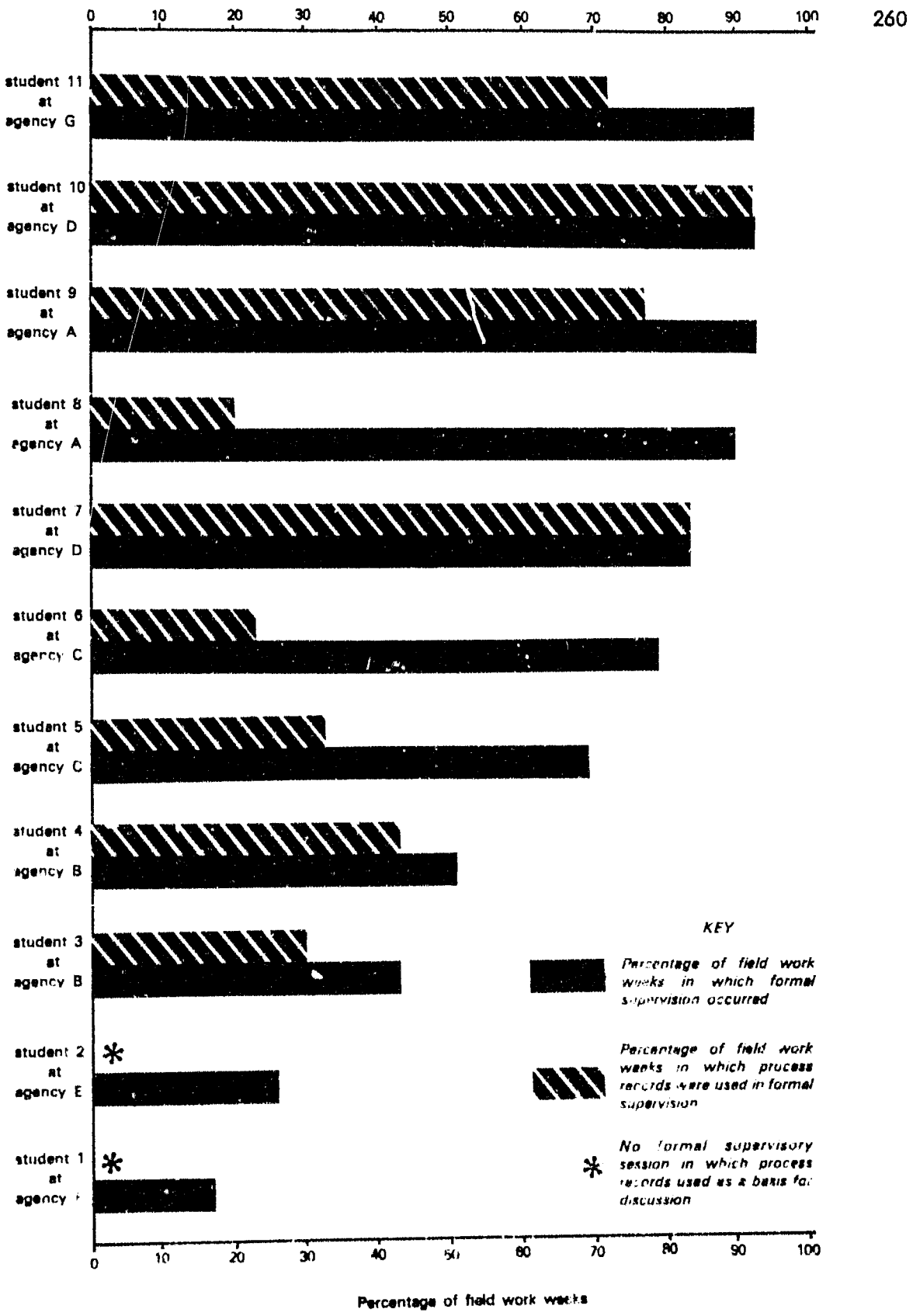

Figure 9 – **GROUPED BAR CHART: Incidence of both formal supervision in general and formal supervision in which process records were used, in eleven student placements 1969**

Two students both working in the same agency (students 7 and 10 at Agency D) used process records as a basis for discussion in 100% of the formal supervisory sessions that were held. Another two students each from a different agency (Students 9 and 11) used process records in over 70% of the total number of field work weeks, and the remaining five were required to present process records in approximately 20 - 40% of the weeks worked. Seven out of the eleven students therefore were required to write process records for supervisory purposes in less than 50% of the total number of weeks in their placements.

8.8 The Evaluation Session

The central purpose of field instruction is to enable the student to develop that degree of professional competence which will equip her to embark on the practice of social work in the community. The evaluation of the student's performance in field work is therefore an issue of great importance.*

The purpose of evaluation of field work is a twofold one: firstly, to assess the student's work and progress, and secondly, to further the student's learning. Particularly at the end of a degree course in social work, it is important to assess the student's performance in the field as one criterion of her readiness to leave the University and enter the world of practice. However, the other function of evaluation is equally important. Constructive appraisal during supervisory sessions of what the

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* At the time of writing (1973) another research project is underway at the School of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand which is investigating the assessment of field work and only a few brief remarks on the subject will therefore be presented here.

student has achieved and still has to achieve can be a useful aid to the student in her development.

As such, evaluation should be an on-going process throughout the placement. Kent points out that "contrary to the belief of many supervisors, students know they have a great deal to learn and become very anxious if offered nothing but positive comments about their work."[59] They appreciate constructive criticism and sincere commendation and reassurance. Anderson, Pfeiffer, Schubert and Scott in describing supervision in the field work programme at Berkeley, stated as follows:

> Evaluation of casework performance was a continuous process that took place in weekly conferences, but periodic written evaluations help students to see their work in perspective, to become aware of their limitations and their areas of competence, and to look toward next steps in learning. The students themselves were helped to take some responsibility in the evaluation process. [60]

Semi-formal or formal evaluation discussions are useful at the end of the student's orientation period in the agency and mid-way through a lengthy placement, and certainly at the end of the placements, supervisors in all training courses are expected to present a formal, written document evaluating the student's performance. Many supervisors find this difficult for a variety of reasons; partly it may be because they do not know what criteria for evaluation should be used and partly perhaps because they lack confidence in their ability to judge the student's performance. It is therefore essential for the school to provide the supervisor with a guide to the form the evaluation report should take.

The Wits, research project mentioned above is investigating the validity of quantitative assessment of field work according to certain criteria, a system which has been in operation at Wits.

since 1971. A number of earlier studies overseas devised outlines under various headings. One of the first important studies was that by Rosemary Reynolds in 1946, and the standard report form contained in her book was used by many schools on the Continent of Europe in modified form in the 1950's.[61] Another significant contribution has been made by Aleanor Merrifield ana other faculty members and agency staff members participating in field instruction in the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago. This School issued two publications in 1964 and 1969 reporting on the construction of schedules to measure acceptable levels of performance in graduate students of social work in the United States.[62] In her book, Dorothy Pettes reproduces another outline from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne.[63] Margaret Schubert has also made a valuable contribution to the subject.[64]

However difficult it may be for the supervisor to face the prospect of communicating an evaluation of the student's work in a face-to-face interview with the student, authorities on the subject are agreed that it is most important for the supervisor and student to discuss the student's progress in one of their supervisory sessions towards the end of the placement. Brown and Gloyne found that in Britain "frank discussion of their progress with students is encouraged by all training bodies and academic staff."[65]

Priscilla Young discusses in detail why an evaluation discussion between supervisor and student is necessary. The student must be given the opportunity to participate. Otherwise, if her opinions were in conflict with those of the supervisor, she will feel a "victim of injustice."[66] The evaluation discussion is best carried out in two stages according to Young,

the main discussion occurring before the written evaluation is finally drafted, and a second shorter one, when the document has been written. This procedure ensures that the evaluation will be regarded as part of the supervisory teaching. It also ensures that if there are areas of disagreement between supervisor and student, these can be discussed again so that the final written document is as far as possible an agreed statement. If the evaluation is to be a joint, thorough review of the student's knowledge and capabilities, both supervisor and student should prepare for the evaluation session, using the headings in the evaluation outline as a guide. The final process will be greatly facilitated if the student and supervisor are aware of the form of the outline from the beginning of the placement, and if evaluation has been an on-going process throughout the placement.

Evaluation was not one of the major dimensions explored in the present research project. One question was included in each of the annual questionnaires* administered to supervisors and students merely to enquire whether or not an evaluation discussion took place before the student left the agency.

The results are presented in the following table:

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* Students' Annual Questionnaire, Question 20.
Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire, Question 19.

TABLE 30: OCCURRENCE OF EVALUATION DISCUSSION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Did an evaluation discussion take place?	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968 and 1969			
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	9	11	8	11	17	77,27	22	100,00
No	2	0	3	0	5	22,73	0	0
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100.00

Source: Student and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires.

All the supervisor responses in both years of the study indicated that evaluation sessions had occurred at the end of the students' placements. Two students in 1968 and three in 1969 indicated to the contrary however. The difference is not statistically significant as $p = .09$ for the two year period.

8.9 Use of Group Supervision

Although the traditional model of field instruction features supervision of an individual, tutorial nature, group supervision has also been used for many years and is gaining popularity as an additional, or in some cases, the major, form of supervisory teaching. It can be a useful innovation at a time when the educational resources of agencies are being strained by increasing numbers of students requiring field instruction.

Abrahamson states that one of the major contributions of the group work field has been to broaden and deepen the understanding

of group methods in supervision,[67] and he has made a major contribution to the literature on the subject, together with other writers such as Margaret Williamson, Chichester, Abels and Mayers.*

In many experimental programmes in the United States group supervision is used in combination with individual supervision to greater or lesser degree.** In 1970 Mc New and de Young described an innovative approach to field instruction introduced at Marywood College School of Social Work in Pennsylvania in which group teaching was used as the primary mode of field teaching, but even they conceded that "obviously there is a differential need for supplemental conferences with the individual student"[68] and in the same way, a traditional programme of field instruction using primarily individual supervision could benefit from the use of supplementary group sessions.

Sales and Navarre in their detailed research study of individual and group supervision confirmed their hypothesis that from the supervisor's point of view the latter method involved considerable time saving per student while students spent equivalent amounts of time with their supervisors in each mode of supervision. Students were found to perform equally well under each mode of supervision according to supervisor's ratings of their practice skills. Sales and Navarre concluded as follows:

> Our advocacy of extended use of group supervision based on the findings from this study, should not be read as a rejection of all individual supervisory activities, but rather as a suggestion for incorporation or extending group methods into the overall process of supervision. [69]

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* Details of these publications will be found in the bibliography at the end of the present study.

**See for example, published works by Mark Hale, Margaret Schubert and Mary Lewis et al. listed in the bibliography.

Group supervision is particularly useful when there is a student unit in an agency but could be used whenever a number of students are together in one agency for field instruction. For students, the group learning situation as in the classroom may be more familiar than the one-to-one setting. Getzel and his co-authors make the point that a current trend in social work education as in other spheres of higher education is for students to participate more fully in the educational process even at the policy-making level. Within this context, they state, supervision in groups takes on a particular significance:

> It seems more pertinent for today. Conceptually, it explicitly acknowedges that all people involved in a particular social experience bring knowledge and skill in terms of their own lives and work experiences that they can use to help others. [70]

The mobilisation of peer learning is one of the main advantages of group supervision. There is a mutual sharing of ideas and feelings and participants experience a sense of support through group discussion of common problems. Some students may feel more protected in the group situation, each feeling "less under observation and his individual performance less highlighted." Williamson also points out that group supervision minimises the "grapevine" phenomenon. "The need for help is great, and an astonishing amount of mininformation and misdirection can get going in the pursuit of this."[71] This can happen frequently in a situction where one supervisor is supervising two students and where one feels the other is preferred. Tension and resentment can be generated which can be more easily controlled when students and supervisor confront each other simultaneously in a group situation.

The participation of the supervisor in the group is most important. His leadership is a vital factor in the effectiveness of the method. For this and other reasons, a number of studies

have reported that the transition from individual to group patterns of supervision arouses anxiety and resistance on the part of the supervisors involved.[72]

The present study did not examine group supervision in any detail but attempted to ascertain* whether or not group discussions occurred at all in the placements under investigation.

TABLE 31: OCCURRENCE OF INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP FORMAL SUPERVISION AS REPORTED BY STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Type of supervision occurring	NUMBER OF RESPONSES							
	1968		1969		Total 1968		1969	
					Students		Supervisors	
	Students	Supervisors	Students	Supervisors	No.	%	No.	%
Only individual	10	7	10	9	20	90,91	16	72,73
Only group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both individual and group	1	4	1	2	2	9,09	6	27,27
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	22	100,00	22	100,00

Source: Students' and Supervisors' Annual Questionnaires.

Not one placement featured group supervision exclusively. Although there are discrepancies in the responses of students and supervisors, with regard to the other combinations, both groups

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* Questions 18 c,d, in Students' Annual Questionnaire
Questions 14 c,d, in Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire

indicate that in the majority of the placements, i.e. approximately three quarters of the 22 placements or more, individual supervision was the only type used. In the cases where both individual and group supervision occurred, all the responses indicated that individual supervision predominated.* Group supervision was therefore used to a minimal degree in the placements under scrutiny.

The supplementary project in 1969 confirmed this. Three students reported that they had had formal supervision in a group, but each reported that this had occurred only once during the placement. Group supervision therefore occurred in only 3 out of the total of 266 field work weeks studied.

8.10 Content of Formal Supervisory Sessions

In mid-1968 when the annual questionnaire used in the present study was being constructed the writer was unable to find a categorization of the content of supervisory sessions recorded in the social work literature. There were descriptions of the supervisory process in terms of its functions and goals and some other descriptions of what the supervisor should teach in supervision. On the bases of these published descriptions and the writer's exploratory study in 1967, in which the fourth year students of that year wrote narrative accounts of their field instruction and supervision experiences, the list of topics used in the present study was drawn up. As Margaret Schubert wrote of a similar instrument which she constructed and which she described in an article published in September 1968 when the present study commenced, "the great difficulty of making clear observations lay in the fact that every conference touched on so many different topics."[73] Holtzman's research at Columbia

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* Questions 18e on Students' Annual Questionnaire
Question 14e on Supervisors' Annual Questionnaire.

in 1966 confirmed the view that field teaching was a complex phenomenon in which the supervisor predominantly used a combination of teaching methods.[74] The classification in the present study is presented as a modest beginning, attempt to construct an instrument to study empirically the content of supervisory discussions between supervisor and student. As in Schubert's case, there is inevitably some overlapping between the several subject areas and certain problems of definition. The five main topics were selected on the basis of what seemed most pertinent in the practical situation obtaining at the time, and provision was made for a sixth residual category termed "other."

The five topics listed in both annual questionnaires and in the weekly questionnaire, are as follows:

1. Objective action taken in the case - what has been done and what must be done next.

2. Subjective aspects of the case i.e. dynamics of the interview; the student's feelings and reactions; the student's role in the interview; process of interaction between student and client.

3. Integration of theory and practice i.e. relationship between theoretical concepts and events in the interview or case, and/or recommendations of reading matter relevant to case.

4. Policy and administration of agency i.e. procedure relating to translation of policy into service.

5. Office procedures such as keeping of records, content and style of letters, reports.

A sixth category termed "other topics" was also included and respondents were asked to specify which other topics were included here if they checked this item. It should be noted

further that as in Austin's article in which she stated that "supervisory teaching is centered on the teaching of a 'case'"[75] the term "case" was used to mean a unit of work with an individual, a group, or a community organization project and by the same token the term "client" was interpreted as an individual, a family, a group or a community group. This was not recorded on the questionnaire, but was communicated verbally to respondents.

These topics were selected firstly on the basis of the three-fold task of supervision described in the literature namely, teaching, helping and administration. The classification was an attempt to translate these three functions into operational terms; in other words to answer the question: What topics should the supervisor discuss with the student during supervisory sessions if he is to fulfil his teaching, helping and administrative functions?

The classification was also designed so as to reflect certain other features of supervision described in the literature.

For example, the following ideas, expressed in quotations from the social work literature, served as orientating concepts:

> Supervision, as it has been developed in social work, is commanding respect in other professions as well as in social work education and training. Because in supervision the basic laws of learning have been applied in new and meaningful combinations, it is making a distinctive contribution to education methods. It has synthesized knowledge about intellectual processes, derived from the educational field, with knowledge about the emotional and social components in learning, derived from both psychoanalytic psychology and social work practice. [76]
>
> Lucille Austin 1952.

> A very important part of the supervisor's teaching will include ensuring that the client's needs are met and that the student works correctly within agency function and policies... The two major threads of continuity that should run through the supervisory sessions are the client's progress and the student's learning. [77]
>
> Dorothy Pettes 1967.

> The supervisor is teaching constantly. She is enlarging the student's knowledge about herself and her fellow human beings - her clients, her colleagues, and her supervisor - and indicating ways of helping and working with people. Social work teaching, particularly in the field, involves very much more than the mere conveying of a body of knowledge ... (It involves) the intermixture of intellectual functioning and emotional learning as the student struggles to develop her capacity to use her <u>total</u> self-intelligence, humour, sensitivity - for the benefit of her clients. [78]
>
> Bessie Kent 1969.

Another criterion for the formulation of the particular topics used was that they should be relevant to the current level of supervisory practice in Johannesburg as gauged from the preliminary data gathered in 1967. The categorization is therefore not as sophisticated as that developed by Schubert but does cover the same areas as those described by others in the literature. For example, at the 1968 Conference of South African Educators in Social Work, Miss M. de Bruyn of the University of South Africa, described the purposes of supervision as "the integration of theory and practice, the development of the students' abilities and skills and the stimulation of the emotional growth of the student." [79]

Another relevant formulation is that by Ruth Shannon, who, in 1962, wrote that during the supervisory conference, the

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