

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH STUDENT SATISFACTION  
IN UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD PLACEMENTS,

BY

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## DEDICATION

The writing of a dissertation takes more than a commitment from the student. There was too much psychic energy needed to complete this project, without the additional commitment and support of family members, friends and colleagues. In pledging support, sacrifices of all kinds have been endured by all the individuals concerned. However, there also has been personal growth, maturity and independence for all of us, especially for my children.

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to three very patient and special people:

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## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

During the last decade there has been an increasing professional focus on undergraduate social work education. There are two major reasons for this growing interest: (1) a continued shortage of trained personnel in the human services occupations (Closing the Gap in Social Work Manpower, 1965; Meyer, 1976; Olmstead, 1973), and (2) a decision by the National Association of Social Workers to admit to full membership Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) graduates of programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The Council on Social Work Education's Curriculum Standard for Field Instruction indicates that the baccalaureate social work student must have the opportunity to apply and integrate classroom content with field instruction in order to develop skills required for entry level professional practice (Baccalaureate Social Welfare Programs, 1974; Schiller, 1972). This standard also specifies that there be a minimum of 300 required clock hours for field work with commensurate academic credit. As a result, in order to be accredited, an undergraduate program must provide training not only through academic work in the classroom but through field instruction as well. This dual approach to learning has in fact, been part of professional social work education since its inception in 1898 (Bisno, 1959).

The field placement experience is an integral, and possibly the most important, part of undergraduate training (Anderson, 1979).

Roberts (1973) has observed the near unanimity of students in selecting the practicum as the single most useful social work course. The content and quality of instruction and learning in field placement experiences are perceived as critical elements in the development of the professional baccalaureate social worker. "Without supervised field work the social worker is not only not expert but she is positively dangerous" (Abbott, 1931, p. 114).

The practicum, or field work training, is a critical step in attaining the general objective of baccalaureate social work education--the development of the capacity to provide professional service to clients. It is part of the curriculum where "the student has the opportunity to bring together all the knowledge from the curriculum, to identify and use its relevance to learn social work practice" (Simon, 1972, p. 70). Reaching this objective, however, is not solely a function of a concentrated effort to build knowledge and skill. As Tyler's (1950) theory of learning indicates, the satisfaction of the student with the learning experience (i.e., field work) is a necessary condition for the desired learning and behaviors to take place.

It has been shown that ability to provide professional (nursing) service is not only dependent on the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills, but upon the interest in the job and the satisfaction derived from it as well (Nahm, 1940). The issue of job satisfaction, which has become increasingly important to the professional social worker (Pines & Kafry, 1978), has been virtually

neglected as the student prepares for a professional role in the field placement. The field instruction component, seen as a quasi-work situation by Berengarten (1957), has been found to be an essential key to bridging the gap between student and professional status (Ormsby, 1977; Vinter, 1967). If the student is to be successful in making the transition to professional status, social work educators must consider not only the development of student knowledge and skill necessary for practice, but also consider the important element of satisfaction students derive from their (field) work. "There is a growing recognition of the close relationship which exists between the extent of satisfaction within a professional group and the quality of service which that group renders to society" (Nahm, 1948, p. 335).

The need to better organize and strengthen field instruction increases with the steady growth of the number of full time students enrolled in accredited undergraduate programs (Council on Social Work Education, 1979). Part of the knowledge needed to accomplish this can come from empirical research of student experiences in field instruction. Rosenblatt and Mayer (1975) clearly express this point of view:

If social work educators assume less and know more about experiences and perspectives of students, the more effective they can be in teaching future practitioners. Most beliefs about training come, not from the observations and experiences of students but from views of social work educators and supervisory personnel (p. 184).

Towle (1954) addressed the importance of understanding the professional learning process. She felt this could be done by studying "students responses to the professional educational situation. Professional education must do its own research" (p. 25).

The issues raised by the social work educators quoted above along with the lack of empirical research in the area of undergraduate field instruction became evident to undergraduate faculty in Virginia. They formed a group called Social Work Educators Council of Virginia (SWEC-VA)<sup>1</sup> and established by-laws in 1977. The purpose of this group was to share ideas, resource information and, in general, to discuss concerns related to undergraduate education. Field instruction has been the topic of discussion at several of the semi-annual meetings.

With eleven accredited undergraduate programs in the State of Virginia (1979) and an average of 200 students in field placement per year, there was a felt need by social work educators for state-wide comprehensive data on student and field instructor characteristics; types of agencies being utilized; kinds of learning experiences students were receiving; information on achievement of broad field instruction objectives; perceptions from students of their satisfaction with the learning experiences in the practicum; and, some guidelines based on empirical findings which would aid social work educators in better understanding the factors which contribute to an optimum learning experience in field placement.

The present study (hereafter called the Virginia study) investigated undergraduate social work students' perceptions of the satisfying and dissatisfying aspects of their field instruction experiences. The insights and understanding gained from the study should make a contribution to the strengthening of the undergraduate

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Note. This researcher was Vice-Chairperson of SWEC-VA during 1977-1979.



social work curriculum and the effectiveness of the training received by future BSW practitioners.

### Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the Virginia study is to empirically investigate the factors which may be associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placement. The study also sought to fulfill the following four (4) functions: (1) to gather demographic data for undergraduate social work students, their field instructors and field work agencies; (2) to determine if a relationship exists between demographic variables and student satisfaction and dissatisfaction in field placement (Ronan, 1970); (3) to obtain some empirical explanation for the expressed level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction; and (4) to contribute to the present limited body of knowledge in the area of undergraduate field instruction.

Research studies of students (Rothman & Jones, 1971) and supervisors (Kadushin, 1974), and field work evaluations (Schubert, 1960) have been carried out for social work graduate students. Perhaps certain lessons can be gained from looking at the existing graduate-oriented studies. The resulting insights could be useful in the study of undergraduate programs. However, Brennen and Arkava (1974) say that, "knowledge about graduate programs and graduate students is of only limited value on the undergraduate level. We must begin to pose the basic questions anew" (p. 15). To date, the

question of student satisfaction in field placement has not been addressed.

A careful review of the social work literature points to the overwhelming attention given to the relationship between worker (student) and supervisor (field instructor) (Kadushin, 1976; Towle, 1954). Although no reported study has empirically tested the contribution of supervision to student satisfaction, the general untested assumption in the social work field is that the relationship between student and field instructor is the major factor contributing to a satisfying or unsatisfying learning experience. Examples of this assumption are given by Kolevzon (1979) who believes that the intensity of the relationship between field supervisor and student is "unparalleled in the professional education of the social work student" (p. 241); by Rose (1965), who feels that, due to the intensity of the relationship between supervisor and student, one might anticipate that this relationship would be vulnerable to stresses or blockages in the learning process, and by Kadushin (1968) who emphasizes the control of the supervisor in terms of rewards and punishments through the use of evaluations, grades, and future opportunities for employment. Yet, with the emphasis and importance placed on the supervisory relationship, the findings of a pilot study of student satisfaction (see Appendix A for full details) showed that supervisory factors accounted for only one percent of the total variance of student satisfaction.

The Virginia study differs from previous and related research in social work in that its focus is on the field work setting rather than

on the professional social worker (Meisels, 1963; Miller, 1971; Weinberger, 1974) or faculty member (Jennings, 1966; Enos, 1976). In addition, as can best be ascertained, it is the first reported study whose major goal was to empirically identify the factors that contribute to undergraduate student satisfaction and dissatisfaction in field placement.

It is hoped that the results of this study will provide data useful for individuals presently engaged in the teaching and administration of the undergraduate field work curriculum, as well as for future investigators of undergraduate social work field instruction.

#### Importance of the Study

The field work course of an undergraduate social work student occupies more than 50 percent of that student's total senior year workload (Rodgers & Williams, 1977; Rothman, 1966). Although there has been increasing recognition of the importance of the practicum, empirical research in this area is extremely limited. With the increasing number of students entering undergraduate social work education, social work educators, agency field instructors and students require better information about the strengths and weaknesses of the practicum experience.

The primary objective of field placement is to provide students with a learning experience in the "real world" (Towle, 1954)--an objective which is shaped by learning theory as is classroom instruction (Finestone, 1967; Irving, 1969). In general, goals of

field instruction are supported by Tyler's (1950) theoretical work on educational objectives, who addresses the need and importance of selecting satisfying learning experiences in order to enhance the potential for achieving the desired learning. In reality, however, the literature does not indicate that social work educators consciously attempted to apply Tyler's satisfaction principle to field instruction. The primary reason for this is that there has been no attempt to empirically determine which elements or factors of the practicum experience contribute differentially to student satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Minimal research and broad CSWE guidelines for undergraduate field instruction may not, at this time, be compatible with demands for "educational accountability."

It is important to ask whether the same factors that affect job satisfaction of professional social workers also affect students. Each time a student is placed in a field agency, an assumption is made about the ingredients that will contribute to a satisfying learning experience. There is a need to determine which specific factors are significant in contributing to student satisfaction when subjected to statistical testing procedures.

Weinberger (1974) sees job satisfaction as an important variable in professional life: "For the professional, having a job serves far more than just earning a living. It means having a purpose in life, gaining a sense of accomplishment and experiencing oneself" (p. 472). Moreover, the field instruction course should at least be partially based on empirical knowledge similar to other components of

the undergraduate curriculum. In order for changes to occur, the educational institutions and field work agencies must receive feedback from those participating in the educational/work experience.

Since empirical information in the area of undergraduate field instruction was not readily available in the literature to the Virginia institutions, the present exploratory study sought to rectify this situation in part, by obtaining feedback from senior students in the 11 accredited undergraduate programs in regard to their satisfaction with field work experiences. Based on the findings of a pilot study conducted in 1978 (see Appendix A) and the research literature, an original questionnaire, the Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ), was developed, refined and utilized to survey the students who were completing a field placement. Existing job satisfaction instruments (Bullock, 1952; Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; Smith, Kendall & Hulin, 1969; Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) were not totally appropriate for the population being studied. The instrument devised by this researcher in order to assess student satisfaction in field placement drew selectively from the related job satisfaction research in industry and in social work, and additional items were included which appeared to be relevant to students in a practicum situation.

The significant outcomes of this study will be provided to the Virginia educational institutions, agency administrators and field instructors. This information will contribute to curriculum development, the selection of field related learning experiences and

the enhancement of educational opportunities provided by agencies that offer field placement experiences.

### Statement of the Problem

Changes in manpower needs and recent thinking about utilization of personnel have led to the general acceptance in the social work community that not every job in social welfare requires a worker with a masters degree. In attempting to prepare entry level practitioners, undergraduate social work education, and, in particular, the field instruction component has experienced modifications. Due to the progressively enriched undergraduate programs, it is probable that these programs will most

"likely provide the basic training for social work practice...Graduate schools will be pressed to train for work that is qualitatively different, i.e., for professional leadership and it will become apparent that different subject matter--research, administration, advanced clinical practice, supervision is required" (Schorr, 1971, p. 2).

Although undergraduate social work courses have been offered since the 1930's (George, book in preparation, 1979; Madison & Shapiro, 1973) community agencies, clients and educators have only had systematic, planned experiences with social work majors in field placement on any large scale for less than a decade. The fact that undergraduate social work programs have been accredited only since 1974, has resulted in a dearth of research in the area of undergraduate field instruction.

CSWE has collected annual nation-wide statistics for all accredited graduate schools and, on a limited basis, for undergraduate programs since 1950 (Enos, 1976). The national demographic data of undergraduate students and the types of agencies used in field placement are of limited use for programs that wish to better understand and/or improve the field instruction component of the curriculum.

The specific purpose of this study is to investigate the factors which are associated with satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who were completing their senior field placements in the State of Virginia during the Spring of 1979. In addition, the amount of satisfaction for each item studied will be determined in order to provide possible explanations for the expressed satisfaction. Factors which contributed to satisfaction and dissatisfaction were analyzed. An original instrument, the Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ), was developed. This instrument was based on previous research in the area of job satisfaction, organizational climate, supervision, and findings from a pilot study (see Appendix A).

The present study addressed the following eight research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of students who were enrolled in a field placement in the participating Virginia institutions during the Spring Quarter/Semester of 1979?
2. How are the demographic characteristics of these students related to their satisfaction in the undergraduate social work field placements?

3. What are the demographic characteristics of the field supervisors as reported by the students described in question 1?
4. How are the demographic characteristics of the field supervisors as reported by the students related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who were enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placement?
5. What are the demographic characteristics of the field placement agencies as reported by the students as described in question 1?
6. How are the agency characteristics as reported by the students related to the expressed satisfaction of the students enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placements?
7. How are the expressed explanations of the students perceptions related to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
8. What factor or factors make the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who are completing a field placement?

This study was exploratory in nature. Kerlinger (1973) states that, "It is possible to conduct research without hypotheses... particularly in exploratory investigations" (p. 26). In his discussions of exploratory studies, Lastrucci (1967) points out that the main emphasis of such a study is discovery. In addition, he feels that the main purpose of the exploratory study is "an examination of a given field in order to ascertain the most fruitful avenues of research. The study may...seek tentative answers to general questions in order to suggest fruitful hypotheses for research" (p. 105).

### Theoretical Framework

Field work is a learning experience which occurs in the workplace rather than in the classroom. Student learning takes place in the



actual performance of job related tasks. Consequently, Tyler's (1950) theoretical model (including his basic principles for the selection of learning experiences) and the construct of job satisfaction (including organizational climate) are directly relevant to this study.

### Tyler's Model

In attempting to identify the learning patterns of individual students in field work, Berengarten (1957) stressed that field instruction should focus on how to set up experiences in order to facilitate changes (in attitudes, knowledge and skills) through the learning opportunities provided to the student. This approach draws on the work of Tyler which has influenced higher education, including social work education (Baer & Federico, 1979).

In his book Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, Tyler (1950) provides a theoretical approach to curriculum development and analysis:

Significant change in behavior is the real purpose of education. Therefore, objectives should be statements of changes to take place in the students and must describe the kind of behavior the student is expected to acquire (p. 3).

Undergraduate field instruction as part of the total social work curriculum, shares objectives which relate to specific changes in student behaviors. These include:

1. To provide the student with an opportunity to experience self in the helping process (Schiller, 1972, p. 17);
2. To demonstrate practice skills by putting knowledge to use in the service of others (Zalba, 1972, p. 41);
3. To integrate social work knowledge, skill and values through direct practice experience (Dea, 1972, p. 51); and

4. To exhibit professional behavior (Simon, 1972, p. 64).

Matson (1970) shows how undergraduate social work programs have applied portions of Tyler's theoretical model in their attempts to achieve the above field work objectives. The programs engage in the process of:

1. Determining what changes in students' behavior are desired;
2. Identifying learning experiences that will lead to such behavior change;
3. Working cooperatively with agencies to determine which concepts should be taught in the field and through which kinds of learning experiences; and
4. Developing a system of measuring results through evaluation and grading.

Tyler's learning theory encompasses five basic principles which are necessary in the selection of learning experiences for students (pp. 65-68). The second principle is particularly relevant to this study:

Learning experiences must be such that the student obtains satisfactions from carrying on the kind of behavior implied by the objectives...If the experiences are unsatisfying or distasteful the desired learning is not likely to take place (p. 66).

The importance of this principle is recognized in the literature by Berengarten (1957), Murphy (1977) and Nahm (1940). The following statement, which appeared in the book Work in America (1974) prepared by a special task force for the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare seems to have particular relevance to Tyler's second principle of providing satisfying student learning experiences:

It may be the case, that a satisfying education would be the best precursor of satisfying work...If we think of the school as the workplace and that like every other workplace it should be satisfying, then changes have to be introduced that will increase the satisfaction of the workers, students and teachers alike (pp. 142-43).

### Job Satisfaction and Organizational Climate

In addition to Tyler's work, the areas of job satisfaction and organizational climate were used as part of the theoretical framework for the Virginia study.

Olmstead (1973), Pruger (1979) and Toren (1969) comment that social work students are primarily trained in complex, bureaucratic organizations. As such, these students are subject to many of the same satisfactions and frustrations associated with the work setting (Pruger, 1979). The job satisfaction research literature with respect to the industrial sector (Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson & Capwell, 1957; Hoppock, 1935; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Locke, 1976) and the human service occupations (Meisels, 1963; Nahm, 1948; Olmstead, 1973; Ormsby, 1977; Sarata, 1972; Snyder, 1969) are useful in the study of student satisfaction in field placement and were instrumental in the development of the SPSQ.

Studies of professional social workers (Meisels, 1963; Miller, 1971; Olmstead, 1973) have begun to investigate the impact of organizational factors on job satisfaction. In order to understand the behaviors and work attitudes of the social workers, it was necessary to go beyond the individual factors of personality, values, and needs and to include such organizational factors as structure, climate and decision-making (Friedlander & Margulies, 1969).

Since students remain at their field placement agencies for a limited time, what, if any, impact does the climate in the agency have on the satisfaction of the students' learning experience? If the factors which make-up organizational climate have a substantial impact on student satisfaction, then this component must become incorporated in the criteria used for selecting field work agencies and learning experiences. Pruger (1979) sees the potentially harmful consequences of social work educators neglecting to teach students the skills of bureaucratic survival: "As a result of this omission, social workers serve their agencies, clients and themselves less well than they otherwise could" (p. 149).

In order to help students achieve the educational goals of field instruction, social work educators, field instructors and agency administrators need to be aware of the components which contribute towards a satisfying learning experience. Therefore, the Virginia study utilized a theoretical framework that would be useful in determining the factors which contribute to satisfaction in field work.

#### Operational Definitions

In order to provide a clarification of special terms used in this study, the following operational definitions are included:

Accredited Undergraduate Social Work Programs: An undergraduate program or major, within a university or college, which has complied

with the Council on Social Work Education standards for accreditation, and has been granted accredited status for a specified period of time.

Field Instruction: Planned, educationally directed student learning which occurs outside the immediate environment of the college or university classroom. Students are assigned to an agency for a designated period of time and are under the supervision of a field instructor. Emphasis is on learning social work practice and is accomplished by having students actively participate in the delivery of social services to individuals, families, groups and communities.

Field Instructor: The practitioner in a co-operating agency who is directly responsible for the day-to-day experiences of the student for the duration of his/her assignment with the agency.

Host Agency: An agency where less than 50 percent of the professionals in the agency are social workers, and where social services is subsidiary to other professional services.

Organizational Climate: Those attributes of an agency which when taken together result in a particular atmosphere. Climate can be perceived directly or indirectly by students in the agency. In this study, climate factors included: hindrance, intimacy, risk, warmth and conflict.

Student Satisfaction in Field Placement: Expressed opinion of likes and dislikes of senior social work students which are related to their field placement experiences. Attitudes manifest themselves through student evaluation of the field placement, including supervisor and other agency factors.

### The Plan of Study

Chapter II contains a review of literature relevant to the Virginia study and will be organized into four sections. The first section briefly traces the development of undergraduate social work field instruction. The second section contains a summary of major trends of job satisfaction primarily related to the industrial setting. This section will also focus on the relevance and importance of organizational climate and its relationship to job satisfaction. Section three will review studies related to job satisfaction of professional social workers, social work students and related human services personnel. Section four examines Tyler's educational model and its relationship to student satisfaction.

Chapter III presents the development of the survey instrument (SPSQ). The methodology and statistical tests employed for the study will also be discussed.

In Chapter IV the findings are presented and discussed. Chapter V provides a summary of the study, discussions of the significant findings, implications for the professional social work educator, and recommendations for the conduct of future research on the social work field placement experience.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the investigation of undergraduate student satisfaction in field placement. The sources used included books, periodicals, professional organization publications, government documents, papers presented at professional meetings and unpublished dissertations. Several areas which are pertinent to the study of educational experiences within the work setting are examined:

1. A brief historical review of the development of undergraduate social work field instruction.
2. A literature review of the major theoreticians and research in the area of job satisfaction in industry, including more recent work on organizational climate.
3. A review of the literature on job satisfaction of professional social workers, social work students and related human services personnel.
4. A presentation of Tyler's educational model and its relationship to student satisfaction in field placement.

Since the overall focus of the Virginia study is on the undergraduate social work field placement, a basic understanding of the growth, development and present status of this curriculum component is provided in this chapter. The specific research interest

is to determine and analyze the factors associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements. Much of the research on job satisfaction of professional social workers, students and other human services personnel is based on findings drawn from research on worker satisfaction within the industrial sector. Consequently, highlights of this important literature and theoretical framework are provided chronologically, beginning with the work of Frederick Taylor in the early 1900's through the recent study of Friedlander and Margules (1969) on organizational climate and job satisfaction. This literature illustrates the influence of industrial and social psychologists in the area of employee morale, as well as on the selection of the methodology and specific variables used in the present study. Finally, a review of Tyler's educational model is important since the model deals explicitly with the role of satisfaction in the learning process as it applies to the achievement of curriculum objectives, irrespective of whether the learning takes place in the classroom or in a work setting. Tyler's theory also serves as a strong conceptual bridge between the several studies reviewed and the unique context of the field placement where the individual has the dual role of student and worker.

The review of the literature on job satisfaction in this study is not exhaustive. Locke (1976) reports that there are a minimum of 3,350 sources in the literature on the subject of job satisfaction. A comprehensive review of this research is beyond the scope of this study. Experts in the field of job satisfaction such as Herzberg,



Mausner, Peterson and Capwell (1957), Locke (1976) and Vroom (1964) have published major literature reviews in this area. The works included in this study are drawn, in part, from such comprehensive reviews and from the social work and human services literature.

### Historical Review of the Development of Undergraduate Social Work Field Instruction

The early, voluntary social work agencies established the first schools of social work. A practical and applied approach to service delivery was emphasized. Prior to 1898, "friendly visitors" learned through actual practice in the field under the direction of others who had learned by giving service. The first academic course in social work was offered by the Charity Organization Society of New York in the summer of 1898 (Bisno, 1966). Informal reading groups were also started to meet the need for more knowledge (George, book in preparation, 1979).

In the early days of social work, schools which were primarily run by social agencies emphasized field experience. "Formal education for social work at first adhered closely to the needs of voluntary agencies and differed little from the concept and content of apprenticeship training" (Rothman, 1966, p.1). Supervision in social work began with this master-apprenticeship era. The focus on supervision grew out of a concern with the large number of volunteers used by the social agencies and the necessity to train them to provide service (Engle, 1977). An individualized tutorial approach to

supervision emerged and has become the model for the profession (Watson, 1973). In his study of this particular phase of social work education, Engle (1977) observes:

The "master" controlled the activities of the "apprentice" and passed on his practice wisdom. As more volunteers became paid workers and gained experience, they too became masters supervising new, less experienced volunteers, thus perpetuating this system of supervision (p. 3).

As social work developed a stronger conceptual base, and became more diversified in practice settings, a different approach to field learning began to evolve (Shaefer & Jenkins, book in preparation, 1979). A shift from the apprenticeship model to an educational activity model in field instruction occurred. This latter model was based on John Dewey's (1938) principle of "learning through doing" (Austin, 1960). Social work educators began to recognize that an effective knowledge-based model of education progresses from "knowing" to "understanding" to "doing" (Shaefer & Jenkins, book in preparation, 1979). Knowing refers to the conceptual mastering of knowledge; understanding occurs when a person is able to perceive or make assumptions about a real situation and accurately interpret that situation; and doing reflects the most complex stage of learning in which the individual must use understanding and knowing to guide behavior directed outside oneself.

During the 1930's, half of the programs in social work education were at the undergraduate level but were considered pre-professional. In the 1940's and 1950's, the social work field raised its standards of practice. "By 1952, only schools fully on the

graduate level could obtain or retain accreditation as schools of social work" (Daly, 1969, p.47). In 1955, when the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) came into existence, membership was limited to individuals with the masters in social work (MSW) degree. At that time, graduates with a bachelors degree frequently obtained employment in an agency providing social work services. However, most administrators considered the bachelors level workers as unsatisfactory and a temporary stopgap until the professional schools could produce enough MSW's to meet the demand for manpower (Briggs, 1973).

Although the BA workers were seen as pre-professional, some schools (e.g., Ohio State University) offered undergraduate field experience in the 1940's and placed students in agencies such as public welfare, children's institutions, correctional facilities and rehabilitation programs (George, book in preparation, 1979). In the 1950's Michigan State University provided not only field experience but a two hour weekly field experience seminar. Nonetheless, undergraduate field experience was not permitted in most schools because it was felt that students were not mature enough.

As shown in Table 1, the Bisno (1959) study found that social work programs had three general patterns of administrative organizations. Programs which offered only courses and field experience (Type I) had the highest percentage of non-social work majors allowed to register for field experience (58 percent). In the programs that provided a social work concentration (Type II) with

field experience, the percentage of schools that permitted non-social work majors to enroll in field experience was considerably less (22 percent). The organizational pattern which seemed most prevalent (Type III) provided both a social work major and field experience. Field instruction courses were open to non-majors in only 17 percent of these programs. By the mid-1960's, a survey showed that 190 schools offered undergraduate social work programs. Of these, 159 had a field experience course and approximately 136 (or 72 percent) had students directly responsible for services to clients (Matson, 1967).

In 1967, CSWE revised its Guidelines and, for the first time, specified that "preparation for immediate employment in social welfare was a valid objective of an undergraduate program" (Brennen & Arkava, 1974, p.10). In the 1970's, two major developments helped place new emphasis on field experience at the undergraduate level. The first involved the decision in 1969 to admit graduates of programs accredited by CSWE as full members to the National Association of Social Workers. The second decision occurred in 1971, when graduate schools were permitted by CSWE to admit students into advanced standing if the student graduated from an accredited baccalaureate program. This provision acknowledged that at least some undergraduate programs were capable of providing professional content normally offered during the first year of graduate school. As Meyer (1976) points out, filling social work jobs with only MSW's would be impossible. With 79 graduate schools of social work in 1976, enrolling approximately 17,000 students a year and only the second year students graduating, it would be statistically impossible for

Table 1

Patterns of Departmental Organization  
of Undergraduate Social Work Programs, 1959<sup>a</sup>

	<u>Types</u>		
	I Social Work Courses Only	II Social Work Concentration Only	III Social Work Major
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Programs with Field Experience	66	60	92
Programs with Field Experience Open to Non-Social Work Majors	58	22	17

<sup>a</sup>The data are taken in part from Bisno, 1959

graduate education to keep up with the increasing gap between the supply and demand for masters degree social workers (Meyer 1976, p. 212).

In an analysis of undergraduate social work programs prior to accreditation, it was found that most schools had concurrent field placements (i.e., students divide their time between classroom and agency). Eleven schools used only block placements (i.e., students devote full time to their agency for one or two semesters), while twenty-three schools had both block and concurrent placements (Stamm, 1972). Only 19 percent of the schools did not offer a field seminar while 30 percent required that the field instructor hold an MSW degree.

Adopted in October 1974, the CSWE Curriculum Standards for Undergraduate Field Experience made it clear that the expectations of field instruction go far beyond the apprenticeship model of learning. The standards specify that educational institutions must (1) assume primary responsibility for the philosophy, content, organization and implementation of the field curriculum; (2) give students the opportunity to apply and integrate classroom content with field experience; and (3) familiarize students with a variety of social work interventive modes through means of sufficiently broad activities (Baccalaureate Social Welfare Programs, 1974).

Since accredited social work programs are no longer viewed as pre-professional, field instruction has had to undergo changes and modifications (Gross, 1977). "The social work profession, reflected in NASW and CSWE and the social agencies' hiring practices, has moved

in the direction of official recognition of differentially educated manpower" (Meyer, 1976, p. 207). Schiller (1978) found it somewhat ironic that undergraduate social work education in 1978 was back where it was in the 1930's. That is, programs now, as then, are built on a strong liberal arts base with supporting social science courses. They also include professional courses that prepare for beginning level practice.

Field instruction, however, has moved beyond the goals of the 1930's. Such instruction is now student centered and is distinguished from apprenticeship training. The apprentice learned to give specific services, in a specific way, and in a specific agency (Simon, 1972). Undergraduate students today are trained as generalists and can apply a variety of intervention skills in a multitude of social service settings.

Social work education has had to change and adapt with the rapid changes in society. It has taken forty years for the profession to fully recognize the potential of the undergraduate social work programs. The newly accredited programs are still struggling to define appropriate curriculum content, educational goals and objectives (Brennen, Arkava, Cummings & Wicks, 1976). The most recent effort to study the appropriate objectives of the baccalaureate curriculum and the content that should be included was carried out by Baer and Federico in 1978. Five previous studies were conducted in order to define more effective ways of educating bachelor's level social work practitioners. The earlier studies included; (1) The Hollis-Taylor Study (1951); (2) Council on Social Work Education

Curriculum Study by Werner Boehm (1959); (3) Madison Study (1960); (4) Southern Regional Education Board Study by Teare and MacPheeters (1970); and (5) The Syracuse University Veterans Administration Project by Glick (1972). David (1967) perceives the expression of dissatisfaction as a sign of vigor and health in a profession:

The profession that is quite content with the ways in which new members are educated and trained, is patently in a state of rigor mortis. Dissatisfactions reflect, among other things, dynamic changes in professional knowledge and skills, fresh perceptions to the potentialities and responsibilities of a profession....(p. 9).

David's views can serve as a positive guide in the pursuit of greater understanding and study of satisfaction in field instruction and other components of the undergraduate social work curriculum.

In summary, field instruction began as apprenticeship training and very few undergraduate programs offered field work opportunities in the early days of the profession. Although a shift to an educational model occurred during the 1930's and 1940's, the undergraduate practitioners were viewed as pre-professional. This situation was reinforced by NASW, the professional organization of social workers, when it limited its membership to individuals holding the masters degree. The growth in the number of undergraduate programs in the 1960's brought greater opportunities for students to participate in field work. In 1969, NASW members voted to admit BSW practitioners into the organization and in 1974, CSWE began accrediting undergraduate programs. Accredited programs must provide a minimum of 300 hours of educationally guided field instruction.



Although learning through "doing" has been an important component of social work education history, the effort to define appropriate objectives and goals for undergraduate field work continues.

Major Theoreticians and Research  
Efforts in the Area of Job Satisfaction  
in Industry

This section focuses on the research of major theoreticians in the field of job satisfaction in industry. Contrary to the lack of literature in the area of student satisfaction, the voluminous research that exists for job satisfaction could not be totally included in the present review. Therefore, eight theoreticians were selected which could provide the reader with a sense of significant theoretical positions, as well as the trends that have occurred since the early 1900's.

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, concerns about workers attitudes toward work were not particularly important. The units of production were small and the pace was relaxed (Humbert, 1966). The Industrial Revolution brought increased competition and pressures for higher productivity. Individual craftsmanship was replaced by fragmented and meaningless tasks (Wilensky & Lebeaux, 1958). In his book Leadership in a Free Society (1936), T. N. Whitehead observed that industrialization brought unsatisfying work, class distinctions, class conflicts and disorganized, disintegrating community life (pp. 231-237). Industrial psychologists became interested in the efficiency and motivation of the individual employee as industrialization and specialization increased. The initial interests

of the industrial psychologists were centered on improving labor productivity by changing the physical work environment rather than enhancing the psychological welfare of the workers (Gruneberg, 1979).

Frederick W. Taylor (1911) was an early pioneer in the study of the industrial worker. His approach to increasing productivity involved financial incentives, technological changes, redesigning of equipment and the selection of appropriate personnel to accomplish a job. Taylors' famous study at the Bethlehem steelworks resulted in significantly higher productivity for his experimental subject, Otto Schmidt. The assumption underlying this experiment was that there was one best way to do a job; the planning of the job, a highly complex activity, could not be left to the workers.

Taylor's (1911) work, although important, has not been without criticism. Locke (1976) said that Taylor "implicitly assumed that a worker who accepted the scientific management philosophy and who received the highest possible earnings with the least amount of fatigue would be satisfied and productive" (p. 1298). Viteles (1932) felt that Taylor did not give sufficient attention to individual differences. In addition, depriving workers of control over their methods of work may have negative consequences. "Prescribing a single method for all workers to follow may increase productivity but will lead to a reduction in worker satisfaction" (Vroom, 1964, p. 140). Gruneberg (1979) comments that "changes in job satisfaction per se, have seldom been shown to have effects on production in the dynamic way illustrated by Taylor..." (p. 5).

Taylor observed that one way to increase productivity was to lessen physical fatigue through scheduled rest periods. This idea is currently being applied to emotional fatigue ("burn-out"), of human services personnel. Taylor's work motivated the present study to include questionnaire items in the following areas: (1) the amount of work assigned to students in field work; (2) the amount and type of opportunities available for emotional rest periods; and (3) the relationship these factors have to student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placement.

Taylor's work was followed by Elton Mayo and his colleagues who carried out the Hawthorne studies during the period 1924-1932. These studies were conducted at the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company in Chicago and consisted of the following five experiments (Carey, 1967, p. 404):

1. The Relay Assembly Test Room Study (New Incentive System and New Supervision);
2. The Second Relay Assembly Group Study (New Incentive System Only);
3. The Mica Splitting Test Room Study (New Supervision Only);
4. The Interviewing Program;
5. The Bank-Wiring Observation Room Study.

The first three experiments of the Hawthorne studies were similar to Taylor's work and began by examining ways in which changes in the physical conditions of work (e.g., shorter hours, rest pauses, friendly supervision, illumination and an incentive system) would affect productivity. In the Test Room Study, five women were observed

assembling telephone relays for a two year period. Their productivity was recorded while changes in their working conditions were made (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). The 30 percent increase in productivity was attributed to changes in "mental attitude" and not to physical changes in the working conditions. The authors concluded that changes in methods of supervision influenced changes in mental attitudes (Carey, 1967).

Improvement of employee attitudes was the major focus in the Interviewing Studies. Mayo and his colleagues found that, for the most part, an employee's reasons for dissatisfaction are based on feelings about the appropriateness of the job, working conditions and fair play. In the last set of studies, the relationship of fourteen men operating in a work unit were observed. An important conclusion was that, "social interactions can be highly rewarding to most persons and that experiences with one's co-workers may be a major satisfaction in work" (Vroom, 1964, p. 19).

The conclusion of the Hawthorne studies had a tremendous influence on the research efforts of the next two decades (Locke, 1976). The work by Mayo became the forerunner of the Human Relations Movement in industrial and organizational psychology and in other disciplines as well. Although these studies on workers continue to have great influence, several criticisms of their assumptions, clinical biases and their conclusions have been raised (Carey, 1967; Miller and Form, 1951; Sykes, 1965).

Locke (1976) and Viteles (1932) agree with Carey (1967) in doubting the validity of the conclusions of the Hawthorne study which

deal with the impact of incentives on employee motivation. Carey (1967) also questions the scientific worth of the Hawthorne study. He states:

A detailed comparison between the Hawthorne conclusions and the Hawthorne evidence shows these conclusions to be almost widely unsupported ...questions are raised about how it was possible for studies so nearly devoid of scientific merit, and conclusions so little supported by evidence, to gain so influential and respected a place within scientific disciplines and to hold this place for so long (p. 403).

Carey (1967) points to the following major difficiencies in the first three Hawthorne studies in support of his above stated criticism (p. 416):

1. No attempt was made to establish sample groups representative of any larger population. No generalizations are, therefore, possible.
2. No attempt was made to control data from the output records of the workers not under special experimental conditions.
3. Five subjects is too small a number to yield statistically reliable results.

The importance of the supervisor has been incorporated into most of the work carried out on employee morale and job satisfaction since the reporting of the Hawthorne study. An aspect of social work education which has not been fully investigated is the importance and contribution of the demographic characteristics and the technical, evaluative and interpersonal relationship skills of the supervisor on student satisfaction in field placement. Perhaps the profession has

overemphasized the supervisor-student relationship and de-emphasized other important factors as a result of the conclusion of the Hawthorne study and others from the Human Relations Movement. In addition to the supervisor, and work unit, other relevant factors have been uncovered as research in the area of job satisfaction developed. Unfortunately much of this work, until recently, has been overshadowed by the popularity of the Hawthorne studies (Locke, 1976).

Hoppock's (1935) work on job satisfaction was published two years after Mayo's report on the Hawthorne studies. Hoppock's comprehensive study included almost all employed adults in a small town, plus 500 school teachers located in different communities. His results showed that numerous factors could affect job satisfaction. Those that supported the findings of previous researchers were fatigue, monotony and supervision. The additional factors reported by Hoppock were working conditions, security, achievement and the manner in which individuals adjust to unpleasant situations. The factor which discriminated most between those teachers that were satisfied and those that were dissatisfied was emotional adjustment. This finding is in line with more recent research on the relationship between satisfaction and mental health and satisfaction and life adjustment (Kornhauser, 1965). Hoppock's findings "suggest that to some extent individual factors will determine whether someone will be job satisfied or not" (Gruneberg, 1979, p. 7).

Hoppock's orientation to job satisfaction has been termed the "traditional approach." He assumed that if a variable in the work situation led to satisfaction, then the absence of that variable would

lead to job dissatisfaction. Using this frame of reference, Hoppock found that 15 percent of the adults interviewed in the town of New Hope were not satisfied with their jobs. A major finding from the New Hope data, which has been most consistently supported in the ongoing job satisfaction literature, was that satisfaction with the job increases with age. The "traditional approach" was not challenged until the late 1950's when Herzberg et. al., (1959) published the Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

During the early 1950's Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory (1954) influenced not only Herzberg's work, but the work of those who designed incentive systems in the workplace (Locke, 1976). Maslow's work is set within the framework of ego psychology and was not a specific theory of work motivation. Within this context, the satisfaction which individuals seek in their jobs is seen as being motivated by gratification of needs.

Maslow's theory has been classified as a content theory of job satisfaction (Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler & Weick, 1970). "Content theories attempt to specify the particular needs that must be satisfied or the values that must be attained for an individual to be satisfied with his job" (Locke, 1976, p. 1307). Maslow suggests that individual motivation can be understood in relation to needs-seeking behavior. He proposed a hierarchy of needs which are grouped into the following five basic categories (Maslow, 1954, pp. 91-92):

Physiological Needs: air, food, sex, sleep, water;

Safety Needs: economic security, protection against danger,  
shelter;

Social Needs: belongingness, love;

Esteem Needs: achievement, self-respect, status, success;

Self-Actualization: continued self development, realization of one's potential, use of creative abilities.

According to Maslow needs are arranged in a hierarchy and lower level needs must be relatively satisfied before an individual can focus on higher level needs. Maslow's (1954) statement that "gratified needs are not active motivators" (p. 395) has been applied by Herzberg (1959) and others to the study of job satisfaction. In addition, management in industry has used the Needs Hierarchy Theory to describe the optimal job environment as one which corresponds to the individual's position on the needs hierarchy (Locke, 1976).

Locke (1976) has pointed to several drawbacks in Maslow's Theory. First, Locke feels Maslow has not proved that the categories of needs are, in fact, needs. "On what grounds...does Maslow claim that man has a need for self-esteem?" (Locke, 1976, p. 1308). Secondly, Locke sees a contradiction in the idea that need satisfactions occur in a fixed hierarchial order since Maslow (1954) states that, "behavior tends to be determined by several or all of the basic needs simultaneously rather than by one of them." (p. 102). Finally, Locke says that Maslow assumes a near perfect correspondence between values and needs, but Locke argues that a given hierarchy (of values) may or may not correspond to an individual's actual needs. (p. 1309).

Maslow's work helped re-focus research efforts in the area of job satisfaction -- away from the physical aspects of the job, to the more



psychological orientation of needs gratification. Maslow's theory influenced Frederick Herzberg, whose research has had the greatest impact on job attitudes and job satisfaction. In 1971, Management Review published an interview with Herzberg, who discussed his extensive work in the area of job satisfaction and his conceptualization of the Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1959).

As research director of Psychological Services (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), Herzberg's interest in aspects of mental health and job attitudes led him to publish a comprehensive review of the existing job satisfaction literature which included approximately 3,000 books and articles (Herzberg, et. al., 1957). The research findings from this voluminous literature were contradictory and it was difficult to draw conclusions from the studies that existed, yet, six independent factors were determined from the various factor analyses reported. These include; (1) general job satisfaction; (2) attitudes toward the company and its policies; (3) satisfaction with intrinsic aspects; (4) attitudes towards the immediate supervisor; (5) satisfaction of aspirations and (6) working conditions. Herzberg's own study was based on a mental health concept which he had previously developed and applied to job attitudes, and which proposed that mental health is not the opposite of mental illness. When this concept is applied to job attitudes, Herzberg predicted that factors related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction would be separate and independent.

Herzberg (1959) used the "critical incident" method to test his theory of job satisfaction. Two hundred engineers and accountants were interviewed and asked to recall and describe incidents which made

them feel satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs. What made people happy was related to what they did -- job content. The job content factor was expressed in terms of achievement, promotion, recognition, responsibility and interesting work. These variables were labeled Motivators which either fulfill or frustrate growth needs. The psychological need for growth motivates action only in a positive direction. According to Herzberg, psychological growth brings pleasure, but failure to grow does not bring displeasure.

Herzberg found that what made people unhappy related to the situation in which they did their job -- job context. The job context factor is comprised of supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, company policies and salary. These were called Hygiene variables. The Hygiene Factor only frustrates or fulfills an individual's physical needs. When physical needs are frustrated they produce discomfort but when fulfilled they produce relief from discomfort but not positive pleasure.

Herzberg's et. al., (1959) Motivator-Hygiene Theory challenged two established approaches to job satisfaction. The first was Hoppock's (1935) idea that if a variable present in the job situation provided satisfaction, its absence caused dissatisfaction. The second was that his findings ascribed a negligible role to interpersonal relationships in job satisfaction. Therefore, his conclusions did not support the basic assumption of the Human Relations movement that the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee is the single most important determinant of employee morale or job satisfaction.

Herzberg's theory has been both widely challenged (Dunnette & Kirshner, 1965; Locke, 1976; King, 1970; Miller, 1971) as well as supported (Ewen, 1964; Meisels, 1963; Myers, 1964). Gruneberg (1978) points out that Herzberg does not deal with overall job satisfaction. "It (overall job satisfaction) might be regarded as the issue in measuring the degree to which an individual is or is not satisfied with his job. To the extent that Herzberg plays down this problem, his theory is weak in giving an account of the nature of job satisfaction" (p. 16).

Locke (1976) has criticized Herzberg on the following points:

1. There is no mind-body dichotomy in people.
2. Psychological or physical needs do not cause-affect in one direction only.
3. The "critical incidents" were not consistently and logically classified.
4. The results are based purely on frequency data.

In Ronans' (1970) review of job satisfaction research, he notes that,

The weight of evidence would appear to show that job satisfaction is much more complex in its dimensional relations than postulated by Herzberg (1959) and, in addition, is related to both demographic and situational variables (p.3).

The weaknesses in Herzberg's theory do not detract from the contribution his work has made to research in the areas of job satisfaction, enrichment and job redesign. In the present study, both job content and context variables appropriate to the student experience were included in the study questionnaire. The critical incident technique was not utilized in any of the studies of job

satisfaction of social workers reviewed by this researcher. Although Meisel's (1963) findings support the two factor theory, and Miller's (1970) work does not, neither researcher used Herzberg's (1959) method of gathering data. Since the present study is exploratory in nature, and deals with a population in which little empirical data exist, use of a two factor theory would be limiting, especially with respect to organizational variables and demographic characteristics.

At the same time that Herzberg (1959) was developing his two-factor theory, a group of vocational psychologists (Dawis, England, Lofquist & Weiss) had been working at the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Minnesota on a "Theory of Work Adjustment." An assumption which underlies this theory is that "each individual seeks to achieve and maintain a correspondence with his environment, and work is viewed as a major environment to which an individual must relate" (Enos, 1976, p. 8). The research based on the "Theory of Work Adjustment" has resulted in the development of several instruments which attempt to predict job satisfaction from worker needs and elements in the work environment which act as reinforcers of those needs.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967) consists of 100 items and 21 scales. Normative data have been gathered from adult males and females in 25 different occupations including social workers. The 21 scales measured by the MSQ include:

ability utilization  
achievement  
activity

moral values  
overall satisfaction  
recognition

advancement  
 authority  
 company policies and practices  
 compensation  
 co-workers  
 creativity  
 independence

security  
 social services  
 social status  
 supervision-human relations  
 supervision-technical  
 variety  
 working conditions

The researchers that developed the MSQ believe that the instrument should be applied to diverse research areas including educational research. "In order to develop effectively in individuals, sets of abilities and needs compatible with the realities of work environments, educators need to know how to structure stimulus situations for maximum ability utilization and optimal reinforcement" (Dawis, England, Lofquist, 1964, p. 22).

In the last two decades, psychological research began using variables such as organizational size, structure and climate to explain changes in job satisfaction (Payne & Pugh, 1976). The first studies of psychological climate have ranged from McGregor's (1960) discussion of climate as derived by leader behavior to Bowers' (1969) definition of climate as the accumulated effects of the behavior of superior organizational levels, and have included definitions in terms of organizational characteristics such as authority, social relations, management policies and autonomy. Forehand and Gilmer (1964) see climate as the characteristics that describe an organization including size, structure, complexity, leadership style and goal definition.

In their book, Motivation and Organizational Climate (1968), Litwin and Stringer acknowledge that the concept of climate is a new and somewhat different tool for describing behavior in organizations. They used the concept of climate as a bridge between

theories of individual motivation and behavior and organizational theories. According to Litwin and Stringer (1968) climate refers to,

The perceived, subjective effects of the formal system, the informal style of managers and other important environmental factors on the attitudes, beliefs, values and motivation of people who work in particular organizations (p. 5).

Litwin and Stringer (1968) hypothesized that different environments aroused different types of motivation. This theory was demonstrated by manipulating the leadership style and thereby producing different climates of groups who played a business game. The researchers found that a reasonable degree of structure was correlated positively with a climate of support, identity and willingness to take a risk. Friedlander and Margulies (1969) support Litwin and Stringer's (1968) integrative approach. They state that, "neither individual factors nor situational factors will separately account for a substantial proportion of the variance of criteria such as performance or satisfaction" (p. 172).

Friedlander and Margulies (1969) believe that climate can be measured through the perceptions of the individuals whose behavior is being studied. They revised the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) adapted from Halpin and Crofts (1963) in order to study the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction. Eight climate dimensions were related to the satisfaction dimensions of interpersonal relationships, self realization and advancement. The climate dimensions used include:

Aloofness: Formal and impersonal behavior.

Consideration: Behavior characterized by an inclination to treat members as human beings.

Disengagement: The work group is going through the motions.

Hindrance: Members feel they are burdened with routine duties; busy work.

Intimacy: Enjoying friendly relationships.

Production emphasis: Close supervision by management.

Esprit: Social needs satisfied and a feeling of task accomplishment.

Thrust: Management behavior is task oriented and viewed favorably by members.

These dimensions were used as a basis for a questionnaire survey of 95 employees in a research and development organization. The data indicated that organizational climate had the greatest impact on satisfaction with interpersonal relationships on the job, and least on self realization from task involvement. A climate which is rated high in satisfying social needs (Esprit) and management behavior is task oriented (Thrust) and rated low in busy work (Hindrance) contributes toward maximum worker satisfaction in the area of interpersonal relationships in the work situation.

Litwin and Stringer (1968) isolated important dimensions of organizational climate appropriate for organizations which function primarily around a task or a group of tasks. Organizations which provide social services can be included in such a categorization. Litwin and Stringer (1968) developed and tested a fifty item

organizational climate questionnaire using the following nine climate scales:

Conflict: Feeling that managers don't want to hear different opinions.

Identity:<sup>a</sup> Feeling of belonging to the company and that each person is a valuable member of a working team.

Responsibility: The feeling of being your own boss.

Reward: Reward for a job well done; perceived fairness of the pay and promotion policies.

Risk: Emphasis on taking calculated risks, or playing it safe.

Standards: Emphasis on doing a good job.

Structure: Emphasis on "red tape" and going through channels or loose and informal atmosphere.

Support:<sup>b</sup> Helpfulness of the managers and other employees in the group.

Warmth:<sup>c</sup> General good fellowship that prevails in the work group atmosphere.

Selected climate scales from the work of Litwin and Stringer (1968) and Friedlander and Margulies (1969) were utilized in the present study questionnaire in order to assess the contribution of agency climate to student satisfaction in social work field placements, and to incorporate the more recent research findings from the job satisfaction literature.

Forty years have passed since Hoppock (1935) found that the great majority of the people he studied were satisfied with their jobs. The

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a,b,c These three scales are strongly related to each other and tap a common dimension of climate. Litwin and Stringer recommend that these scales be combined and refined into one scale in future research efforts. (p.83).



majority of the American workers still express overall satisfaction with their jobs (Fronz, 1976, p. 12). Yet, as the decade of the 1980's begins, this trend seems to be changing. In a recent article in Business Week, John Hoerr (1979) reported the results of the third national survey on the quality of employment conducted by the University of Michigan, Research Center. The report shows that there has been a slight but significant drop in overall job satisfaction particularly between 1973 and 1977; 36 percent of the American workers feel their skills are under-utilized; 32 percent felt over-educated; and more than 50 percent were concerned about a lack of control over the days they work and their job assignments. Specific aspects of job satisfaction found to have declines were challenge, comfort, financial rewards and resources available to perform the job.

The findings from the quality of employment survey seem to support Litwin and Stringer's (1968) concern about the fact that young people make occupational choices with limited data about psychological climate and its impact on motivation and satisfaction. Future work on organizational climate needs to involve the...."development of educational programs to teach young people and adults to be able to discriminate, cope with and influence organizational climates" (Litwin & Stringer, 1968, p. 194). The authors attempted to teach concepts of organizational climate to their classes but found only moderate to poor success in student understanding and application of these principles. They concluded that dramatic conditions need to be established in which "participants can experience, analyze and

understand in terms of their subjective reactions and the objective reality what is presented" (p. 195).

The undergraduate social work programs through field instruction, provide an excellent opportunity for students to experience a myriad of organizational climates under "dramatic" conditions. Student perceptions of field experience can be utilized by social work educators to (1) further refine knowledge of the nature and effects of different agency climates on students and (2) to select field work agencies which contribute to satisfying learning experiences.

Social work researchers have utilized the various methodologies and research findings from the job satisfaction literature in industry in order to investigate and better understand the job satisfaction of professional social workers. The next section will review the research related to job satisfaction of professional social workers, social work students and related human services personnel.

#### Job Satisfaction of Professional Social Workers, Social Work Students and Related Human Services Personnel

##### Professional Social Workers

Researchers that have investigated the job satisfaction of social workers have borrowed heavily from the work carried out with industrial workers. However, the existing literature in the area of job satisfaction of the professional social worker is mainly in the form of doctoral dissertations, and has focused more recently on job burn-out.

One of the earliest research efforts dealing with job satisfaction of professional social workers was completed by Meisels (1963). His sample consisted of 72 caseworkers in the greater Kansas City area. He hypothesized that there would be an association between self concept, job perception and job satisfaction. Meisels found that 93 percent of the caseworkers surveyed expressed from mild to high satisfaction with their jobs. Workers were satisfied with intrinsic job factors (job content) and dissatisfied with extrinsic factors (work environment and working conditions).

Although Meisels did not use Herzberg's (1959) "critical incident" technique, his conclusions support the Motivation-Hygiene Theory of job satisfaction. "High job satisfaction,...relates to the intrinsic content rather than the context of the job" (Meisels, 1963, p. 74). In addition, Meisels found that a relationship existed between self concept and job perception but that job satisfaction was not a discriminating factor.

Miller (1970) studied the job satisfaction of social workers during their first year after graduate school. The dimensions investigated by Miller were overall satisfaction, salary, job content, supervision, agency policies, administration and working conditions. The population consisted of all students who had graduated from the graduate schools of social work in Chicago in 1968. Miller found that the personal characteristics of the 211 respondents were representative of the national profile of social workers (NASW membership information for 1968). Sixty-four percent of the respondents were female and 79 percent were under 30 years of age.

Miller (1970) found that 71 percent of all beginning workers were satisfied, while 29 percent were dissatisfied. Miller points out that the percentage who were dissatisfied was more than double than in all occupations in 1965 (13 percent) and four times as high as reported earlier by Meisels (7 percent). Contrary to other research findings, Miller found sex to be the only demographic characteristic that significantly differentiated the satisfied and dissatisfied beginning workers. Males were experiencing more dissatisfaction than females. Those in Family Service, Child Welfare and Medical Settings were the more satisfied workers. As found in other studies (Galambos & Wiggins, 1970; Olmstead & Christensen, 1973; Weinberger, 1974), those working in Public Assistance were the most dissatisfied.

In Miller's study, agency policies and administration were the major determinants of general worker satisfaction. Miller concluded that his findings did not support the results of Meisels (1963) or the Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) because an extrinsic job factor (agency policies) was found to be the major determinant of job satisfaction.

An intensive field study was directed by Olmstead (1973) and the results reported by Olmstead and Christensen (1973). This study was part of a larger seven year program of research which dealt with social welfare and rehabilitation workers, the work they perform and the settings in which the work takes place. Data were gathered from 12 public welfare, 9 private welfare and 10 public rehabilitation agencies throughout the United States. The study sample consisted of 1,662 workers with a ratio of females to males of 3:1. This ratio is

representative of the profession as a whole. Overall satisfaction was found to be moderately high; employees in private agencies evidenced the greatest satisfaction, lower satisfaction in rehabilitation agencies and the least satisfaction in public welfare agencies.

According to the results reported by Olmstead and Christensen (1973), structure of the agencies accounted for 56 percent of the variance in the agency climate, but structure had no statistically significant association with perceptions, attitudes, values or satisfaction of personnel. The influence of structure is indirect and operates only through its impact upon climate. The strongest determinant of worker satisfaction found in this study was agency climate which accounted for 79 percent of the variance. The strongest elements of climate contributing to satisfaction were agency goals, agency policies, supervision and communication.

A summary of other relevant findings from the Olmstead and Christensen (1973) report include:

1. Younger and better educated employees were less satisfied;
2. Supervisors were rated highest in private agencies and significantly lower in public agencies;
3. No significant differences were found in attitudes and perceptions of the workers after controlling for sex, degree, or work experience, and college major;
4. Individuals working in social welfare and rehabilitation agencies are highly motivated when there is opportunity for stimulating and challenging tasks, professional development, responsibility over outcome of work, freedom to exercise

judgment, control of work and decisions, and evidence of success and progress.

Weinberger (1974) identified and evaluated those job factors which were important to the job satisfaction of 95 agency child welfare workers and first line supervisors in San Francisco. Sixty nine respondents were employed in public agencies and twenty six in voluntary agencies. Weinberger found a positive association between professional climate in the agency and job satisfaction. A positive relationship was also found between type of agency and job satisfaction. That is, those employed in private agencies had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than did those in public agencies.

Hanna (1975) utilized the MSQ, the Organizational Inventory, Scale of Values and Professional Scale to determine if job satisfaction of social workers was related to social work values, professionalism, educational level and organizational structure. Hanna surveyed social workers from 12 children's aid societies in Ontario, Canada. Job satisfaction among these workers, as those in the Weinberger (1974) study, was relatively high. Workers were more satisfied when organizations where they worked were low in bureaucracy (e.g., organizations that reduce standardization and hierarchy while encouraging autonomy). The level of job satisfaction was found to be affected by value orientation, professional attitudes, perceived organizational structure and worker's educational level.

Several other dissertations have looked at job satisfaction of social workers. These include research by Bridges (1970) which

measured job satisfaction of B.A. and MSW level workers in a public welfare agency using the MSQ; a study by Meyer (1971) which examined the relationships between social characteristics and levels of job satisfaction of Army social work officers and their retention in the military; and a study by Pitts (1973) which examined descriptive characteristics of B.A. level social workers in Veterans Administration hospitals to determine their job satisfaction and their training needs. The predominant factors in these studies which were associated with satisfaction included autonomy, job security and the provision of social services. Dissatisfaction was related to agency policies, advancement, pay and supervisory practices.

More recently, the research literature has given attention to job "burn-out" -- an extension of the job dissatisfaction continuum. This occupational hazard is closely and negatively related to job satisfaction. Pines and Kafry (1978) gathered data from 129 social service workers who attended a workshop on occupational burn-out in 1976. External characteristics such as work relations, work sharing, support, time-out, and social feedback from supervisors and colleagues had a significant negative correlation with tedium. Pines and Kafry (1978) concluded that a positive climate provides individuals with support systems that serve as buffers against job stress.

#### Social Work Students

Although the research literature on undergraduate social work students is limited, it is beginning to grow as undergraduate programs continue to develop. Five studies were found in the literature which have some relevance to student satisfaction in field instruction. The

first, sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board during 1969-70 and reported by Galambos and Wiggins (1970), is known as the Social Welfare Manpower Project. The purpose of this two part project was to improve the utilization, education and recruitment of B.A. level workers for the field of social welfare. Although student satisfaction was not a major focus of this study, one survey asked students about their attitudes toward different components of the undergraduate curriculum (including field instruction).

In Part I of the Social Welfare Manpower Project, graduates from social welfare programs in 35 institutions located in the Southern Region (see note) responded to questionnaires which focused on the problems students faced in finding employment after graduation. In addition, the graduates were asked to rate the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their current jobs.

Of the graduates that responded, 75 percent felt their jobs met their expectations, but 70 percent were dissatisfied with the opportunity to participate in policy decisions. After nine months of employment, 33 percent felt that the job did not meet their expectations. Graduates were most satisfied with three job elements: relationship with supervisor (96 percent); interesting job (94 percent); and relationship to staff (94 percent). The three job elements which gave rise to dissatisfaction were: opportunities for advancement (45 percent); job meets expectations of what agency should do (35 percent); and job meeting personal expectations (33 percent).

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Note: The states which participated in the study and are part of the Southern Region include: Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.



Part II of the Manpower Project focused on the attitudes of students still enrolled in the undergraduate social work programs. Of the 569 students who received questionnaires, 194 (34 percent) responded. The results of the survey showed that the typical, social welfare student was a white, single, female age 22 and under. A large majority (83 percent) had a positive attitude toward their field placement experiences. Those placed in private agencies had a higher proportion (91 percent) reporting a positive field experience than those in any public agency.

The three components of field instruction which were found to have influence on positive attitudes toward a career in social welfare in the Galambos and Wiggins (1970) study, were:

1. Providing direct services to clients;
2. A sense of success or accomplishment in helping clients;
3. Exposure to a broad range of the agencies activities during the placement.

A second study which examined the job satisfaction of B.A. level social welfare graduates was reported by Walton and Walz (1971). This exploratory study looked at the work-history patterns of a sample of students from the University of Minnesota who graduated in 1965-1966 academic year. The MSQ and other instruments were used in order to measure work, personality and job satisfaction. The researchers found that 65 percent of the graduates were satisfied with their jobs. The job elements which were reported as most contributory to job satisfaction were variety of work, security, autonomy, working relationships with co-workers, salary and opportunity to be of

service. Elements which contributed to dissatisfaction included agency policies, lack of status and lack of opportunity for career advancement. Comparison of the results of Galambos and Wiggins (1970) and this study indicates that several similarities exist even though the samples were drawn from different parts of the country.

Almost a decade after these two initial studies, Anderson (1979) looked at the kinds of jobs BSW's from accredited schools enter and their level of job satisfaction. His sample of 70 BSW graduates consisted of 74 percent females and 26 percent males. One-third of the participants had a county or city department of social services as their senior field placement and 70 percent maintained a B average while in college. Job satisfaction of the graduates was assessed in relation to material satisfaction (salary, working conditions and promotion) and affective satisfaction (co-workers, supervisor, type of work). Overall satisfaction combined all six areas, with the affective items scoring consistently higher than material items. Satisfaction with co-workers was ranked highest and satisfaction with promotion ranked lowest. Respondents who had higher undergraduate GPA's (grade point averages) tended to be less satisfied both materially and affectively with their job (p. 12).

Rothman and Jones (1971) conducted a three year nation-wide study of students in accredited graduate schools of social work whose concentration was Community Organization. In order to collect information on the nature of the field placements and to make an assessment of student experiences, a survey of community organization students, field instructors and chairpersons for the community organization curriculum sequence was conducted.

Similar to the findings of the Galambos and Wiggins (1970) and Walton and Walz (1971) studies, Rothman and Jones (1971) found that 65 percent of the graduate students considered their placements satisfactory; 25 percent were ambivalent (responding both "yes" and "no" to this question); and less than 10 percent felt that their placements were unsatisfactory. One fourth of the students felt that there were serious efforts being made to integrate class and field work. A larger percent (33 percent) said that there were some efforts being made. In addition, 8 percent thought that field and class were often contradictory, resulting in knowledge gaps and confusion for the students. This finding points to the need for more effectively organizing learning experiences. According to Tyler (1950) the three major criteria needed to build effective learning experiences include continuity, sequence and integration. "Integration refers to the horizontal relationship of curriculum experience. The organization of these experiences should be such that they help the student increasingly to get a unified view and to unify his behavior in relation to the elements dealt with" (Tyler, 1950, p. 85).

The last study comes from a small segment of a doctoral dissertation by Ormsby (1977). She used 17 selected statements from the MSQ and administered the instrument to 75 undergraduate social work students who were enrolled in five different schools and who were completing or had completed a senior field placement. Demographic information was obtained for the students, their field instructors and the agency involved. The major purpose of the Ormsby study was to describe the impact of field work placements of baccalaureate social

work students on their professional attitudes. Student satisfaction in field placement was examined in order to determine if perceptions (of social work as a profession) vary in association with certain characteristics of the agencies where students are placed or in association with students' satisfaction with their field work.

In the Ormsby study, the ratio of females to males was 3:1. Almost 79 percent of the students were between 20 and 24 years old with approximately 40 percent of the total sample having little or no previous paid or volunteer social work experience. Two-thirds of the students were in concurrent placements while the rest had block placements.

The largest percent of the students' field instructors were employees of the agency (68 percent); 22 had a supervisor who was a member of the faculty; and the supervisor of 16 students was a graduate student either in social work or another field. In terms of educational backgrounds of the supervisors Ormsby found that 48 (64 percent) had at least one social work degree (i.e., BSW, MSW or DSW).

Since size of organization and work unit have been found to be related to satisfaction, Ormsby explored these variables in relation to students in their field placements. Thirty-five percent of the 75 students were placed in large organizations, yet 47 percent worked in small units (1-5 professionals) within the agencies.

Kruse (1960) provides a description of the two types of structures within which social work functions. In the first, social work is the primary service and social work personnel administer the agency and determine the policies. Only 22 percent of the students in

Ormsby's (1977) study were placed in agencies with this structure. The second structural type consists of those agencies where social services are subsidiary to, or are coordinated with other professional services; the social workers do not alone determine agency policies. A total of 77 percent of the undergraduate students in Ormsby's study were placed in agencies where social work involves a minority of the professional staff.

Only six students in the Ormsby (1977) sample were dissatisfied with their field placements. The areas which students found to be dissatisfying were: (1) policies and practices toward students in the agency; (2) working conditions; and (3) the spirit of cooperation among the staff. It was also found that there were no significant associations between supervisor or agency characteristics and field placement satisfaction as well as no association between students' perception of social work as a profession and field placement satisfaction.

#### Related Human Services Personnel

There are a limited but growing number of research articles which have investigated the internship experiences and the job satisfaction of people in human services other than social work (Sarata, 1972). An early study of the job satisfaction of nurses was conducted by Nahm (1940). The study investigated the factors associated with satisfaction and determined whether or not there was a relationship between nursing school experiences and later job satisfaction, and whether these two factors were related to attitudes towards nursing as an occupation. Nahm found that 98 percent of the nurses had satisfactory attitudes towards nursing as a profession.

Nahm extended her research on nursing satisfaction and studied nursing students in 12 schools of nursing (1944) and in a later study (1948) looked at the satisfaction of freshman, sophomore and senior nursing students at Duke University School of Nursing. The major conclusion from these studies was that a sharp decrease in satisfaction with nursing occurs as the student progresses from sophomore to junior year. Rose, Lowenstein and Fellin (1969) drew a similar conclusion in that they observed a definite increase in the intensity of criticism of supervision by casework graduate students with each semester of learning.

Labovitz and Orth (1972) were interested in the job satisfaction of college students employed as summer interns in extended health care facilities (nursing homes). Students found their job dissatisfying when there was not enough direct patient care. Both student satisfaction and patient care improved when the quantity and quality of direct patient-student interactions improved. When the content of the job was adequate, jobs were perceived as satisfying even when policies, salary and working conditions were dissatisfying.

Employee satisfaction, and its relationship to leadership behavior has been investigated by Aiken, Smits and Lollar (1972) in state rehabilitation agencies. To the counselor in a rehabilitation agency, the interpersonal relationships and behavior between supervisor and counselor were more important than working conditions or the reward system of the agency. On the other hand, when Myrtle and Robertson (1979) studied health care workers' (mainly nurses) job satisfaction with supervisors, they found that job conditions and

organizational climate were more important than the actual behavior of the supervisors. The authors were surprised to find that many of the factors which were related to satisfaction with the supervisor were external to the supervisor-subordinate relationship. "Two of the most important predictors of satisfaction are not related to supervisory attitudes or behaviors but instead to conditions of the job or organizational climate" (p. 372). The two major predictors referred to in the above study were: (1) the manner in which the hospital set objectives and (2) motivational conditions inherent in the work itself (e.g., a job which allowed nurses to use their skills and abilities, allowed for learning and growth in their profession and provided feedback).

Sergiovani's (1969) work on teacher satisfaction followed Herzberg's (1959) critical incident methodology. Results of the study supported the Motivation-Hygiene Theory; satisfaction and dissatisfaction were found to be mutually exclusive. Recognition, achievement and responsibility contributed to job satisfaction while interpersonal relationships, school policies and technical supervision were identified as hygiene factors. Sergiovani observed that the primary focus in dealing with the job satisfaction of teachers has been on trying to eliminate factors which are related to dissatisfaction. According to the Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), this solution will not contribute to job satisfaction for teachers. What is recommended is increasing the recognition, autonomy and responsibilities accorded to teachers.

From the existing research on professional social worker satisfaction and the few available studies published in the literature related to social work student satisfaction in field placement, very little can be utilized by social work educators which could promote better understanding or planning of educational practicum experiences. Since undergraduate social work students in their field placements are primarily concerned with learning, the understanding of the importance of satisfaction with this practical learning experience can be enhanced by (1) examining an educational theoretical model which supports the necessity of satisfaction for goal attainment and (2) continued research efforts in the area of student satisfaction such as the efforts described in the present research. Tyler's model provides the link between the concept of satisfaction and its application to undergraduate social work field instruction.

#### Tyler's Model

Tyler's work has been instrumental in helping educators focus on measurable learning experiences as well as in evaluating the level of achievement of the goals set by the educational program. According to Tyler, the selection of appropriate learning objectives and the conditions in which the learning takes place are essential in the learning process. "The climate or atmosphere of the school influences the student without conscious planning by the faculty" (Council on Social Work Education, 1960, p. 19). As has been shown by organizational climate research, the atmosphere of an agency influences the worker without conscious planning by the administration.



One problem frequently faced by educators in selecting learning experiences for students in field instruction, is how to structure the experiences in order for the desired learning to occur. Tyler (1950, p. 64) feels that one factor that must be taken into account when considering selection of learning experiences is the background of the student. Knowing demographic information helps in predicting which situation will bring about the desired reaction and the necessary changes in behavior patterns by the students.

Although learning experiences vary, Tyler believes that there are general principles which can be applied in the selection of learning experiences, regardless of the objectives. The following principles are enumerated by Tyler when he was invited by CSWE to participate in a national social work curriculum project (Council on Social Work Education, 1960, pp. 65-68):

1. In order to attain an objective a student needs learning experiences that allow the practicing of one kind of behavior implied by the objective;
2. Students must obtain satisfaction from carrying out the behaviors implied by the objective. The teacher requires information, not only about the students' interests but also about basic human satisfaction so as to be able to judge whether or not certain learning experiences are likely to prove satisfying to the students.
3. Experiences must be appropriate for the student's educational level.
4. Many experiences can be used to attain the same educational objectives.

5. The same learning experiences will bring about several outcomes.

Additional factors which need to be considered in selecting learning experiences are (Council on Social Work Education, 1960, p. 13):

1. Motivation of student;
2. Provisions for sufficient learning experiences;
3. Sufficient time;
4. Sources available for student satisfaction such as: grades, perception that student's new behavior is similar to classroom and field instruction, and student peer group;
5. Available means for student to appraise own behavior.

Satisfaction with a learning experience is an integral part of Tyler's model. In selecting field work learning experiences for students, the concept of satisfaction must be taken into account if learning is to be more permanent and program goals are to be achieved (Tyler, 1960, pp. 14-15). At the present time, the factors which contribute to a satisfying learning experience in undergraduate field work have not been delineated to any great extent. Chapter III will describe the methodology and instruments used by this researcher to investigate factors associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placement.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placement. This chapter describes in detail the methods employed in analyzing the data generated by the Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ), the survey instrument used in this study. The chapter focuses on the Virginia study and includes: (1) Population and Sample; (2) Revisions of Pilot Instrument and Pretesting; (3) Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ); (4) Data Collection; and (5) Data Analysis.

#### Virginia Study

##### Population and Sample

Since the pilot study (see Appendix A) looked at the undergraduate social work students at one university (George Mason), the present study expanded the number of participants to include the undergraduate, senior social work students in the State of Virginia who were completing a senior practicum during the Spring quarter/semester of 1979. Only students from accredited undergraduate social work programs (Council on Social Work Education, 1978) were surveyed. In 1979, there were eleven accredited undergraduate social work programs in Virginia. Table 2 lists the colleges and universities in which the programs are located, and the number of students in senior practicum during Spring 1979. A total of 216

Table 2

Institutional Location of Accredited  
Undergraduate Social Work Programs in  
Virginia and Number of Students in  
Field Placement, Spring 1979

College/University	Number of Students in Field Placement <sup>a</sup>
Eastern Mennonite College	17
Ferrum College	34
George Mason University	23
Longwood College	19
Madison University	20
Norfolk State College	19
Radford College	12
Virginia Commonwealth University	36
Virginia Intermont College	3
Virginia State College	24
Virginia Union College	9
Total	216

<sup>a</sup>Data provided by the Director of Field Instruction at each school.

students were in field placements in Virginia's accredited undergraduate programs in the Spring of 1979.

Although random sampling is the least biased method of selecting subjects for a research study, Kerlinger (1973) states that nonprobability samples "are often necessary and unavoidable. Their weakness can, to some extent, be mitigated by using knowledge, expertise and care in selecting samples..." (p. 129).

The following arguments are provided as a rationale for employing the sample within this study:

1. The major intent of the study was to gain information about the Virginia students and programs.
2. The Virginia student sample was judged to be similar, to what would be found nationwide.
3. Since a questionnaire served as the basis of data collection, it was important to maximize the rate of return. Having the ability to control the distribution and return of the survey instrument would serve to insure a relatively high response rate. Kerlinger (1973) states that "returns of less than 40 or 50 percent are common. Higher percentages are rare. At best, the researcher must content himself with returns as low as 50 or 60 percent." (p. 414).

The eleven existing accredited programs in Virginia appear to be similar in both program and student characteristics found in undergraduate accredited social work programs nationwide. "Representative means to be typical of a population, that is, to exemplify the characteristics of the population...The sample has approximately the characteristics of the population relevant to the research in question." (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 119) After examining the Virginia and available national data, a purposive sample (Freund, 1967) of the Virginia undergraduate senior social work students in field placement was selected as the study sample.

The adequacy of a sample can be ascertained by using an outside criterion. Kerlinger (1973) recommends the use of information from the last census as such a criteria. "We can check the proportions of men and women, races, educational level, ages and so on" (p. 418). However, census data would not be appropriate as an outside criterion for this study because a specific, selective college population is being examined rather than the general population which is the focus of the census data. Instead, a similar procedure can be used to establish adequacy of the sample by using national available data that are specific to accredited undergraduate social work programs and students enrolled in such programs.

Table 3 compares selected undergraduate program and student characteristics of the Virginia study with national data reported by CSWE and other available sources. The table suggests that the Virginia programs and students appear to be typical of the undergraduate student population and closely match the characteristics of the national population. The percent difference between the two populations ranges from .02 to 8.0 percent. Another factor supported the use of a judgment sample in addition to the selected data shown in Table 3 and the arguments presented on page 61. Since all programs used in the present study have been accredited by CSWE, it can be assumed that the standards and procedures applied to the Virginia programs (including the field work component) are similarly applied to the undergraduate programs across the country that sought and attained accredited status.

Table 3

Comparison of Selected Program and Student  
Characteristics of Virginia Sample with  
Available National Data

<u>Program/Student Characteristics</u>	<u>Virginia Sample Percent</u>	<u>National Data Percent</u>
<u>University/College Auspice</u>		
Public	63%	71% <sup>a</sup>
Private	36	29
<u>Size of University/College</u>		
Small (10,000 and Under)	72	70 <sup>a</sup>
Large (over 10,000)	27	30
<u>Social Work Program Auspices</u>		
Sociology and Other Discipline(s)	55.0	60.8 <sup>b</sup>
Department/School of Social Work	45.0	39.3
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	17.6	17.9
Female	82.2	81.1
<u>Age</u>		
19-24	88 <sup>c</sup>	81 <sup>b</sup>
25 and up	12	19

<sup>a</sup>Data from Enos (1976)

<sup>b</sup>Data from Hughes (1979)

<sup>c</sup>Data for age in the Virginia sample included individuals from 19-29; this may account for the higher percent in that age group than that reported for the national data.

The information sought in this study had not previously been collected on a large scale. Therefore, a high response rate from a representative group was both desirable and important. The method of data collection (to be described in a later section) helped to achieve the response rate of this study (78 percent).

The Virginia study sample consisted of students who were attending accredited, undergraduate social work programs in Virginia during the Spring of 1979 and were completing a senior social work field placement. Of the 216 students in field placement, 170, or 78 percent, responded to the survey instrument. Specific demographic data about the sample will be provided in Chapter IV.

The Virginia study utilized an original satisfaction questionnaire (SPSQ) since available instruments found in the literature were not totally appropriate for the population under study, and no instrument could be found which contained items geared to the student in a work setting.

In his book Work and Motivation, Vroom (1964) recognizes the difficulties involved in using the same job satisfaction measures with different populations. He writes,

Unfortunately, there has been little standardization of job satisfaction measures. Most investigators "tailor-make" an instrument for the particular population they are studying. Investigators more commonly "adapt" old instruments or devise new ones to meet their requirements at a given time (p. 100).

Table 4 represents critical elements which previous researchers in the area of job satisfaction in industry and in the human services found to impact on worker satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Several assumptions were made in this study with regard to the student factors.



Table 4

Factors Influencing Professional Social Workers  
and Social Work Student Satisfaction

Workers Only	Common Factors	Students Only
Advancement	Achievement	Length of Stay
Power	Agency Climate	is Time Limited
Primary Purpose--Service	Agency Goals	Policies Related
Promotion	Agency Policies	to Students
Size of Caseload	Agency Size	Primary Purpose--
Status	Agency Type	Learning
	Code of Ethics	Receive College
	Communication	Credit and/or
	Decision-Making	Grade
	Funding	
	Host or Social Work	
	Agency	
	Meetings	
	Paperwork	
	Relationships	
	Remuneration	
	Responsibility	
	Size of Work Group	
	Supervision	
	Work Satisfaction	
	Working Conditions	

First, the six factors listed under the column "workers only" did not seem relevant to the student in field placement and were, therefore, not included as items in the study instrument (SPSQ). Secondly, those factors listed under the column, "students only" are not relevant to the position of professional worker, but could have an impact on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of students in field placement. The third assumption of the study is related to the factors listed as common to both workers and students. Workers as well as students engage in the professional delivery of services in similar complex organizations. It appears that certain factors which have been found to affect the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of professional social workers would also contribute to student satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Gruneberg's (1979) work on job satisfaction warns that there are dangers in generalizing from one work group to another. Although there are valid arguments against generalizing from one work group to another, using satisfaction variables found to be significant to professional social workers seemed to be the most viable alternative for the Virginia study.

#### Revisions of the pilot questionnaire and pretesting of the Virginia study instrument

On the basis of the findings of the pilot study (see Appendix A), additional data for the questionnaire were deemed necessary. Specific studies which could be utilized in revising that portion of the survey instrument which dealt with demographic data about students, field instructors and, in particular, agency factors were of interest to this researcher.

Ten questions in Part I of the pilot questionnaire were either added or revised prior to the pretest; eight items in Part II of the pilot questionnaire were added or revised. During the first revision of the survey instrument, a total of 18 items were either revised or added. (For details on revisions, additions and explanations, see Appendix C.)

For the most part, the scales, individual items, and questionnaire response format (very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, satisfied, very satisfied) were derived from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ).. The MSQ manual provides data on the reliability, internal consistency and the content validity of the MSQ. In addition, results from factor analytic studies carried out with seven occupational groups are reported in the manual. Hoyt reliability coefficients were computed for 27 occupational groups for all 20 scales of the MSQ plus general satisfaction. Of the 567 coefficients, 83 percent were .80 or higher and only 2.5 percent were lower than .70. The MSQ manual also indicates that the instrument can differentiate among occupational groups. Data for 25 occupational groups showed that group differences were significant at the .001 level. The mean score for social workers on the General Satisfaction Scale was 77.22.

The pretest questionnaire for the Virginia study consisted of 20 demographic items in Part I and 52 items in Part II. In order to establish content validity, the pretest questionnaire was administered to five undergraduate social work students completing a field placement at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

and 17 undergraduate social work students in field placement at Florida International University in Miami, Florida. The 22 students served as a panel capable of providing relevant feedback, since they were undergraduate, senior social work students from accredited schools, and were completing the senior practicum. "After drafts of the interview, schedules are completed, and other instruments are completed, they are pretested on a small representative sample of the universe. They are then revised and put in final form" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 416).

The two schools were selected for the following reasons:

1. Willingness on the part of the respective Directors of Field Instruction to ask students to participate in the pretesting of the instrument.
2. Catholic University is a private institution with a small undergraduate program and a large, well-established graduate school. Its location is close to George Mason University where the pilot study was carried out.
3. In contrast, Florida International University is a public institution with a large undergraduate program. The school is not in close proximity to where the pilot was carried out, and it does not have a graduate program in social work.
4. These schools possessed characteristics similar to the Virginia institutions which were to be surveyed in the percent study.

The students who participated in the pretesting of the revised instrument were asked to indicate their views on the clarity of the instructions and items, accuracy, omitted options, and areas which were important but were omitted. The results of the field testing of the survey instrument indicated that six demographic items in Part I and only one item in Part II required revision. (For details and explanations of revisions, see Appendix D.)

Since the pilot questionnaire did not contain any agency climate variables (see Appendix B), the findings from the organizational climate literature provided a conceptual basis for increasing the number of items that addressed agency climate factors. Although there are similar needs, goals, and rewards for staff and students in an organization, there are some differences. Just as standardized job satisfaction questionnaires (e.g., MSQ) could not be utilized in their entirety, climate instruments also had to be adjusted in order to better fit the group (students) being studied.

The second revision of the SPSQ, therefore, involved the addition of 17 climate items to Part II of the SPSQ. These items were adopted from Litwin and Stringer (1968) and Friedlander and Margulies (1969). During the second revision, two items (no.'s 74 and 75) were included in order to have an additional indicator of student satisfaction with their field placements. The last item (no. 76) elicited additional comments from the students regarding their field placements. (For complete details and explanations of the addition of climate variables, see Appendix E.)

At the time of the second revision of the instrument, this researcher consulted with Dr. Edwin Locke at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.<sup>1</sup> As a result of his extensive research in the area of job satisfaction (Locke, 1969; 1973; 1976; Locke, Cartledge & Knerr, 1970; Locke, Smith, Kendall, Hulin & Miller, 1964), Locke recommended the addition of another portion to the questionnaire. That is, in addition to asking the students to

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<sup>1</sup>Personal interview, January, 1979.

indicate their level of satisfaction, the student was also to be asked to indicate the extent that a particular item was present in the placement experience. These subsequent questions ranged from "much too little" to "much too much." Locke (1976) states:

"Just as too little challenge can result in dissatisfaction, so can too much. If the degree of challenge is so great that the individual cannot successfully cope with it, he will experience a sense of failure and frustration with this work." (p. 1320)

Information gained from this section of the SPSQ was used to answer one of this study's research questions and led to a greater understanding of reasons for student satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

#### Final Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ)

##### Part I - Demographic Information (SPSQ)

Part I of the SPSQ contains 27 demographic variables. In addition to the variable school attended, there are twelve (12) demographic questions which are student specific. These variables are: type of placement; sex; age; GPA; marital status; amount of paid work experience; amount of volunteer experience; grade expected for field work (past semester/quarter); grade received (past semester/quarter); grade received (present semester/quarter); remuneration received for field work activities; and preference for type of agency placement.

Four (4) demographic variables relate to the field instructor and include: sex, employment status, highest educational degree, and previous supervisory experience.

The final ten (10) demographic variables which pertain to the agency and complete Part I of the SPSQ are: type of agency, funding, size of work unit, size of total agency, social work or host agency, location of agency, previous training of undergraduate social work students, training of graduate social work students, training by agency of students in other fields, and primary tasks available at agency.

The demographic variables which were included in the questionnaire were derived from the pilot study, the pretesting phase of questionnaire development, as well as variables which appear in the job satisfaction literature. Of the demographic variables included, a decision was made to include all the student variables, all the field instructor variables, and six of the ten agency demographic variables in the Ormsby (1977) study in the SPSQ.

#### Part II - Student Satisfaction Data (SPSQ)

The second part of the SPSQ contains 73 Likert-type items which require the student to give two responses for each question. To assist the reader in following the text, two (2) questionnaire items below are included for reference.

Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about.....	Much too little	Too little	Just right	Too much	Much too much	Not applicable
1	2	3	4	5	NA	1. The number of individuals I was assigned to work with during field placement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	2. The number of groups I was assigned to work with during field placement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

As can be seen from the sample, the student was asked to make two responses. On the left hand side of the questionnaire, the student indicates his/her level of satisfaction (from Very Dissatisfied to Very Satisfied) or indicates that the question is not applicable to one's experiences. On the right hand side of the survey instrument, the student explains the level of satisfaction for each question by indicating whether he or she was satisfied or dissatisfied because there was "too much," "too little" or "just the right" amount of the experience in the placement.

Two items on the SPSQ (74 and 75) asked the students if they would (1) accept a job at their agency; and (2) recommend the agency as a field placement. The last item solicited additional comments through an open-ended question. Seventy-one students (41.7 percent) responded to the open-ended question.



The SPSQ contains eight (8) primary scales with two (2) scales (Climate and Supervision) encompassing five (5) and three (3) subscales, respectively. Table 5 shows the scale name, number of each scale and the number of items in each scale. The SPSQ has an average of 5.2 items per scale compared to an average of 5.0 items per scale in the MSQ (see MSQ Manual, p. 3).

The seven scales used for data analysis in the pilot study (see Appendix A) were incorporated into the SPSQ. Although some scale names were changed, the content has remained the same. The job satisfaction literature has demonstrated that several variables seem to have an association with worker satisfaction. Consequently, the following variables were incorporated into the SPSQ: (1) Climate (Friedlander & Margulies, 1969; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Olmstead & Christensen, 1973; Pines & Kafry, 1978; Weinberger, 1974); (2) Agency Structure (Olmstead & Christensen, 1973; Payne & Pugh, 1976); Supervision (Herzberg et. al., 1957; Miller, 1970; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1968); (4) Activity (Galambos & Wiggins, 1970; Herzberg, et. al., 1957; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1968); (5) Agency Policies and Practices (Herzberg et. al., 1957; Miller, 1970; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1968); (6) New Learning (Locke, 1976; Tyler, 1950); (7) Autonomy (Herzberg et. al., 1957; Hanna, 1975; Miller, 1970; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1968); (8) Overall Satisfaction (Anderson, 1979; Gruneberg, 1978; Olmstead & Christensen, 1973; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1968). Appendix F provides a list of each scale in the SPSQ and more fully describes each "item."

Table 5

Scale Name, Number, and Items Per Scale of SPSQ

Scale Name		Scale No.	Number of Items
<u>Climate</u>			
Hindrance	1	3	
Intimacy	2	5	
Warmth/Support	3	5	
Risk	4	2	
Conflict	5	2	
<u>Structure</u>			
	6	6	
<u>Supervision</u>			
Technical Competence	7	11	
Evaluative	8	6	
Qualitative/Educational	9	7	
<u>Activity</u>			
	10	8	
<u>Policies and Practices Toward Students</u>			
	11	5	
<u>New Learning</u>			
	12	5	
<u>Autonomy</u>			
	13	7	
<u>Overall Satisfaction</u>			
	14	1	

In summary, the SPSQ underwent a total of two revisions. First, the pilot consisting of 13 demographic items and 51 field work satisfaction variables was revised to include an increased number of items to further capture demographic and attitudinal characteristics. This revision provided the basis for the development of the pretest instrument. Second, as a result of the written feedback from students in two undergraduate social work programs outside of the State of Virginia, the pretest questionnaire underwent further refinement in terms of accuracy and clarity. In order to better assess the contribution of the agency factors, 17 agency climate items were added to the final form of the instrument. The SPSQ not only records the level of student satisfaction, but also obtains an explanation of the satisfaction level by having students indicate the amount that each situation (variable) was present in the placement experience. An open-ended item permitted students to make additional comments regarding their field work experiences. Seventy-one students made additional comments.

#### Data Collection

Towards the end of the fall semester (1978) the Director of Field Instruction in each of the 11 accredited undergraduate social work programs in Virginia were contacted by telephone. The purpose of the contact was to:

1. Explain the nature and purpose of the Virginia study;
2. Solicit ideas the directors might have on the topic to be studied;

3. Ascertain the approximate number of students in field placement at each school for the academic year;
4. Explain the data collection procedure and the role they would each play; and
5. Initially request their assistance in collecting data.

The Director of Field Instruction of each program agreed to have their students participate and to cooperate in collecting the data.

At the beginning of the Spring 1979 semester, a short note was sent to each Director of Field Instruction to request the number of students in field placement, to remind them that a survey instrument would be sent towards the end of the semester, and to sign the information sheet if they planned to assist the researcher in the study.

This method of data collection was selected because there were several drawbacks to mailing the survey instrument directly to the students' place of residence. Schools are generally reluctant and/or unable to release the names and addresses of their students. Furthermore, even if this information had been secured, the response rate to mailed questionnaires has been steadily declining (Dillman, 1978). A viable alternative, and the one used in the study, was to mail the of questionnaires to the Director of Field Instruction at each of the schools, and to have them distribute the questionnaires in an appropriate class (generally it was the Senior Seminar); the students would then complete the questionnaire in class and return it to the instructor.

The SPSQ was mailed with accompanying instructions for administering the instrument (see Appendix G) to the Director of Field

Instruction of each participating program. The questionnaires were mailed approximately three weeks prior to the end of the Spring semester/quarter. A telephone call to each Director followed the mailing of the questionnaires in order to ascertain if the questionnaires were received and if there were questions regarding the instructions or the instrument. Each Director was encouraged to emphasize that each question required two answers and to assure students that their responses would be kept confidential.

The final form of the SPSQ takes approximately 25-30 minutes to complete. Students were given time during a class to complete the instrument. In two schools this procedure was not possible. Students were given the instrument to take home, complete, and return to the Director of Field Instruction. Students who were absent on the day of distribution were to be given the instrument when they returned to school and were encouraged to respond.

A 78 percent rate of return was achieved through the method of data collection utilized in this study.

### Data Analysis

In order to address the eight research questions posed in Chapter I, four statistical procedures and Factor Analysis from the SPSS computer program (Nie and Associates, 1975) were utilized. In addition, the responses to the open-ended item (which asked for additional comments) were grouped into categories of positive, neutral, or negative statements and a more descriptive analysis was applied.

The major focus of the data analysis was the factors which contribute to student satisfaction in field placement as indicated by student responses to the SPSQ. Reliability coefficients of .94 and .95 for the SPSQ were established by using Cronback's "Coefficient Alpha" (1951). "The index resulting from this method ... has, among its other properties, that of being the average split-half correlation for all possible ways of dividing one test into two parts" (Selltitz, Jahoda, Deutsch & Cook, 1961, p. 175). For reliability of the demographic data, Kerlinger (1973) states that, "it has been found that reliability of the personal factual items, like age and income, is high" (p.417).

The computer subprogram "Frequencies" provided information about the distributional characteristics of each categorical variable used. The 27 variables in Part I of the instrument (demographic characteristics of students, field instructors and agencies) were used as input for this procedure. Computation of one-way frequency distribution tables helped to formulate the following three research questions:

Question 1: What are the demographic characteristics of students who were enrolled in a field placement in the participating Virginia institutions?

Question 3: What are the demographic characteristics of the field instructors as reported by the students described in question 1?

Question 5: What are the demographic characteristics of the field placement agencies as reported by the students described in question 1?

Two programs were utilized to examine the relationships between demographic characteristics and student satisfaction: t-test and

Multiple Regression Analysis. Student, supervisor, and agency characteristics as represented in Part I of the SPSQ were utilized as independent variables. The dependent variable was represented by a calculated variable, Average Student Satisfaction (STUAVE). Average Student Satisfaction was computed for each student; the values assigned to items checked in part II of the SPSQ (left side responses only) are summed and divided by the number of items. That is

$$STUAVE = (SQ_1, \dots, SQ_{73})$$

where

$$SQ_1, \dots, SQ_{73} = \text{student}_i \text{ with respect to 73 items of SPSQ.}$$

$$\text{Average Student Satisfaction} = \frac{\sum STUAVE_i}{N}$$

The t-test for independent samples was used to determine if differences in demographic characteristics and level of satisfaction had occurred and whether the differences were statistically significant. Multivariate analysis was employed in order to analyze the relationship between the dependent variable (Average Student Satisfaction) and a set of independent variables.

Multivariate analysis and the t-test were used to address the following three research questions:

Question 2: How are the demographic characteristics of the students related to their satisfaction in the undergraduate social work field placements?

Question 4: How are the demographic characteristics of the supervisors related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who are enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placements?

Question 6: How are the agency demographic characteristics related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who are enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placements?

The subprogram, Pearson Correlation, was utilized to measure if an association existed between the amount a variable was present in the learning experience and student satisfaction. The analysis of these data was relevant for the following research question:

Question 7: How are the expressed explanations of the students' perceptions related to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

In order to study the factors which are associated with student satisfaction, Factor Analysis was utilized. Factor Analysis is a mathematical tool which helps to reduce data to a smaller set of factors or components in order to determine whether some underlying pattern of relationship exists. One approach to data reduction in Factor Analysis is called principal-component analysis (Nie and Associates, 1975) in which extracted factors are independent or uncorrelated from one another. Each variable of the set is assumed to be a linear function of orthogonal or independent factors. Each factor itself is a linear combination of the original variables in the set. The basic factor analysis model can be expressed as:

$$Z_j = a_{j1}F_1 = a_{j2}F_2 + \dots + a_{jm}F_m = d_j u_j \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

where  $Z_j$  = variable  $j$  in standardized form

$F_i$  = hypothetical factors

$u_j$  = unique factor for variable  $j$

$a_{ji}$  = standardized multiple-regression coefficient of variable  $j$  on factor  $i$  (factor loading)

$d_j$  = standardized regression coefficient of variable  $j$  on unique factor  $j$



The first principal component extracted through Factor Analysis provides the single best summary of linear relationships in the data. If the second component accounts for the proportion of the variance not accounted for by the first factor, the second factor is orthogonal to the first and, therefore, provides the second best linear combination of variables.

The variables which are combined within a single factor are those which are most intercorrelated and are at the same time most independent of the variables found in the other factors. The coefficient which relates each observed variable to each of the common factors ( $a_{ji}$ ) is known as a factor loading. "Since the squared factor loadings represent the relative contribution of each factor to the total standardized variance of a variable, the sum for each variable of its squared factor loadings (known as "communality") indicates the extent to which the common factors account for the total unit variance of the variable..." (Adelman & Morris, 1967, p. 132).

Once the initial factor pattern is secured by the method of principal components, the factors are rotated in order to obtain the simplest factor structure possible. The maximum number of factors which can be generated in the analysis is equal to the number of variables in the set. However, the number of factors which are usually shown in the rotated factor matrix are either controlled through a "default" option in the computer program or the investigator.

The factors are named first by observing those variables which are most highly correlated with any given factor, and then seeking a

common underlying influence. For example, if there are high factor loadings on the variables measuring physical fitness and near zero loadings for the other variables on the set, then the factor could be designated as a "physical fitness" factor.<sup>1</sup>

Principal components factoring with varimax orthogonal rotation was used in the analysis of the data. The separate factors thus formed contributed a certain percentage of the variance observed in the dependent variable. For the Factor Analysis, Item 69 (Overall Satisfaction with Placement) was utilized in lieu of Average Student Satisfaction. The variable, Average Student Satisfaction, was mathematically derived from the responses given by students to questionnaire items 1 through 73. The manner in which Average Student Satisfaction was created resulted in a near perfect linear correlation between the dependent variable and the questionnaire items (the independent variables). Therefore, using Average Student Satisfaction in the factor analysis would have been tautological. Since the correlation between questionnaire Item 69 (Overall Satisfaction with Field Placement) and Average Student Satisfaction was .68, Item 69 was used as the dependent variable in the Factor Analysis.

Through the Factor Analysis procedure, the last research question was addressed:

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<sup>1</sup>For additional information concerning the method and problems of applying factor analysis, the reader is referred to: R.J. Rummel, "Understanding Factor Analysis," Journal of Conflict Resolution, XI (1967), pp. 444-480; G. Thompson, The Factorial Analysis of Human Ability. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1951; L. Thurstone, Multiple Factor Analysis. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947. Nie and Associates, SPSS Manual. New York: McGraw Hill, 1975.

Question 8: What factor or factors make the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who are completing a field placement?

### Summary

This chapter describes the Virginia study carried out by this researcher in the Spring of 1979. The Virginia study consisted of 170 undergraduate, senior students who were completing a field placement in accredited social work programs during the Spring of 1979. The study instrument (SPSQ) underwent two revisions and a pretest prior to being administered to the Virginia social work students. The SPSQ (Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire), a Likert type instrument, was used to determine the factors that contribute to student satisfaction in field placement. The SPSQ consists of 27 demographic items in Part I and 73 satisfaction variables in Part II. An open-ended item provided additional descriptive information by the 71 students who responded.

The Director of Field Instruction at the eleven accredited undergraduate social work programs in Virginia were mailed questionnaires three weeks prior to the end of the Spring 1979 semester. They distributed the questionnaires in a senior class, where the practicum students were enrolled; the students completed the questionnaire, and the Director of Field Instruction returned them to the researcher. Students who were absent on the day of distribution were to be given the instrument when they returned to school. This method of data collection resulted in a 78 percent return rate.

Cronbach's "Coefficient Alpha" (1951) was used to test the reliability of the SPSQ. Four statistical procedures and Factor Analysis were employed in order to answer the eight research questions of this study. The subprogram "Frequencies" was utilized to address questions 1, 3 and 5. The t-test and Multivariate Regression Analysis were used to address questions 2, 4 and 6. Pearson correlation and Factor Analysis were used to address questions 7 and 8 respectively.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the level of student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements in Virginia, and attempted to determine the factors that contribute to student satisfaction. The findings of this investigation are presented in this chapter, and are reported according to the focus of the questions and the statistical procedures utilized. The level of aggregation was at the student level rather than individual institutions. Therefore, data pertaining to the individual schools will not be reported. The findings will address the research questions in the following order:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of students who are enrolled in a field placement in the participating Virginia institutions during the Spring Quarter/Semester of 1979?
3. What are the demographic characteristics of the field instructors as reported by the students described in #1?
5. What are the demographic characteristics of the field placement agencies as reported by the students described in #1?
2. How are the demographic characteristics of these students related to their satisfaction in the undergraduate social work field placements?
4. How are the demographic characteristics of the field instructors (as reported by the students) related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who were enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placement?
6. How are the agency characteristics (as reported by the students) related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who were enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placements?

7. How are the expressed explanations of the students' preceptions related to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
8. What factor or factors make the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who are completing a field placement?

The first three questions to be addressed (1, 3, and 5) entailed a descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the students, field instructors and agencies.

### Student Demographic Characteristics

#### Question 1

As shown in Table 6, the typical undergraduate social work student completing a field placement in the Spring of 1979 in Virginia could be described as:

A single female, between 19-29 years of age, who had a GPA of 3.0 or under and was in a concurrent field placement. The student typically did not have previous paid social work experience, but did have some volunteer work experience. In addition, the student received the agency of their first choice as a field placement and did not receive remuneration for field work activities.

With respect to the student's grade for the field placement, it should be noted that since the SPSQ was completed by the students prior to receiving their grades, most students did not know their actual field grades. It was not feasible to use the expected field grades as a proxy for the actual grade received at the end of the semester since major discrepancies were observed. For example, although 80 students expected a grade of A in field work (previous semester), only 46 students actually received an A; no student expected a C, yet 8 students received a C. Consequently, the variable

Table 6  
Virginia Study Student Demographic Characteristics  
(N=170)

Demographic Characteristics	Number	%
<u>Type of Placement</u>		
Concurrent	80	(47.1)%
Block	64	(37.6)
Other	24	(14.1)
No response	2	(1.2)
<u>Sex</u>		
Female	139	(81.8)%
Male	30	(17.6)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Age</u>		
19-29	150	(88.2)%
30-39	14	(8.2)
40-49	5	(2.9)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>GPA</u>		
1.5-2.0	1	(.6)%
2.1-2.5	25	(14.7)
2.6-3.0	66	(38.8)
3.1-3.5	49	(28.8)
3.6-4.0	28	(16.5)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Single	133	(78.2)%
Married	27	(15.9)
Separated	3	(1.8)
Divorced	7	(4.1)

Table 6 (Continued)

Demographic Characteristics	Number	%
<u>Previous Paid Social Work Experience</u>		
5 or more years	2	(1.2)%
2-4 years	2	(1.2)
Less than 2 years	28	(16.5)
No paid experience	138	(81.2)
<u>Previous Volunteer Social Work Experience</u>		
5 or more years	6	(3.5)%
2-4 years	30	(17.6)
Less than 2 years	114	(67.1)
No volunteer experience	19	(11.2)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Remuneration for Field Work</u>		
Stipend from agency	2	(1.2)%
State or federal grant	6	(3.5)
Money from college	3	(1.8)
Paid salary	1	(.6)
No money	143	(84.1)
Other	11	(6.5)
No response	4	(2.4)
<u>Choice of Agency</u>		
First choice	99	(58.2)%
Second choice	28	(16.5)
Third choice	3	(1.8)
Open to any type of agency	27	(15.9)
Not among first three choices	11	(6.5)
No response	2	(1.2)



Field Grade was eliminated from further analysis since information on actual grade was not available.

The data show that the ratio of females to males (in excess of 4:1) closely approximates the findings in the reported pilot study (Appendix A) carried out at George Mason University as well as the national data on undergraduate social work students (see Table 3, p. 63). The students who indicated something other than concurrent or block placements generally explained that they had a block placement but were taking one course along with field placement. Students who checked "Other" in the remuneration category explained that they were reimbursed for travel related to their field placement.

In general, the demographic characteristics of the undergraduate Virginia students were found to be similar to the demographic characteristics previously reported in the literature by Galambos and Wiggins (1970) and by Ormsby (1977) (see Chapter II).

#### Field Instructor Demographic Characteristics as Reported by Students

##### Question 3

Table 7 summarizes the field instructor characteristics as described by the students completing senior field placements. The typical field instructor can be described as:

A female who is an employee of the agency, and who has a social work degree and some previous supervisory experience.

There are two findings in this descriptive analysis that should be of particular interest to social work educators and agency personnel. First, eight students (4.7 percent) did not know the educational degree held by their field instructor. Second, 17.1 percent did not know

Table 7

Virginia Study Field Instructor Demographic Characteristics  
As Reported by Students

Demographic Characteristics	Number <sup>a</sup>	%
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	57	(33.5)%
Female	109	(64.1)
No response	4	(2.4)
<u>Employment Status</u>		
Employee of agency	125	(73.5)%
Member of faculty	27	(15.9)
Graduate student	8	(4.7)
Other	7	(4.1)
No response	3	(1.8)
<u>Educational Degree</u>		
MSW	90	(52.9)%
BSW	27	(15.9)
Doctorate other field	1	(.6)
MS other field	15	(8.8)
BA other field	22	(12.9)
No college	1	(.6)
Don't know	8	(4.7)
Other	4	(2.4)
No response	2	(1.2)
<u>Previous Supervisory Experience</u>		
Never supervised	39	(22.9)%
1-3 years	63	(37.1)
More than 3 years	37	(21.8)
Don't know	29	(17.1)
No response	2	(1.2)

<sup>a</sup>Since some field instructors supervise more than one student, some responses may reflect a duplicate count.

whether their field instructor had previous supervisory experience. This situation was found even though each student spent a minimum of 300 hours in the field work agency (as required by CSWE of accredited programs).

In Virginia, over 50 percent of the students who responded to the questionnaire were supervised by a field instructor holding the MSW degree. An additional 16 percent were supervised by a field instructor who had a BSW degree. That is, approximately 70 percent of the students who participated in the study were supervised by someone with a social work degree.

Approximately one-fourth of the field instructors were new to supervision during the 1979 academic year. The majority of the supervisors (73.5 percent) were employed by the agency where they worked and the ratio of females to males was 2:1. As was found for student demographic characteristics, the demographic characteristics of the Virginia field instructors closely parallel the demographic profile described by Ormsby (1977) in her study of undergraduate social work students.

#### Agency Demographic Characteristics as Reported by Students

##### Question 5

Ten agency demographic characteristics were investigated. As shown in Table 8, the typical field work agency in which undergraduate social work students in the accredited schools in Virginia were placed can be described as:

A large, urban, host public agency (e.g., correctional agency or department of social services) where both undergraduate and graduate students in social work and in

Table 8  
Virginia Study Agency Demographic Characteristics  
as Reported by Students

Demographic Characteristics	Number <sup>a</sup>	%
<u>Type of Service</u>		
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	7	(4.1)%
Community Organization/Planning	12	(7.1)
Corrections	27	(15.9)
Department of Social Services	27	(15.9)
Family Services	9	(5.3)
Group Homes	5	(2.9)
Hospital	13	(7.6)
Mental Health	15	(8.8)
Mental Retardation	4	(2.4)
Public School	6	(3.5)
Nursing Home/Aged Services	12	(7.1)
Other	30	(17.6)
No response	3	(1.8)
<u>Funding</u>		
Private	39	(22.9)%
Public (Local)	100	(58.8)
Federal/Military	9	(5.3)
Federal/Other	5	(2.9)
Other	12	(7.1)
Don't know	5	(2.9)
<u>Size of Unit</u>		
Small	96	(56.5)%
Medium	55	(32.4)
Large	10	(5.9)
Don't function in unit	8	(4.7)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Size of Agency</u>		
Small	42	(24.7)%
Medium	52	(30.6)
Large	74	(43.5)
No response	2	(1.2)

Table 8 (Continued)

<u>Demographic Characteristics</u>	Number <sup>a</sup>	%
<u>Social Work or Host</u>		
All staff social workers	17	(10.0)%
More than half social workers	33	(19.4)
Less than half social workers	94	(55.3)
No social workers	25	(14.7)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Location of Agency</u>		
Urban	86	(50.6)%
Rural	46	(27.1)
Suburban	37	(21.8)
Don't know	1	(.6)
<u>Prior Training of Undergraduate Social Work Students by Agency</u>		
Yes	123	(72.4)%
No	36	(21.2)
Don't know	10	(5.9)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Prior Training of Graduate Social Work Students by Agency</u>		
Yes	81	(47.6)%
No	51	(30.0)
Don't know	37	(21.8)
No response	1	(.6)
<u>Agency Train Students in Fields Other Than Social Work</u>		
Yes, undergraduate only	24	(14.1)%
Yes, graduate only	7	(4.1)
No, only social work	46	(27.1)
Both undergraduate and graduate	57	(33.5)
Don't know	35	(20.6)
No response	1	(.6)

Table 8 (Continued)

<u>Demographic Characteristics</u>	Number <sup>a</sup>	%
<u>Type of Tasks Performed at Agency</u>		
Short term	21	(12.4)%
Contract 8-12 sessions	17	(10.0)
Long term	22	(12.9)
Combination of two of the above	90	(52.9)
Other	18	(10.6)
No response	2	(1.2)

<sup>a</sup>Since more than one student can be placed in the same agency, some responses may reflect a duplicate count.

other fields have been previously trained. The majority of the students function in small units and have the opportunity to perform a variety of tasks.

Student responses showed that 10 percent (17 students) were placed in agencies where all the professional staff were social workers. In addition, 19.4 percent (33 students) were in agencies where more than half, but not all professionals were social workers. When these two categories are combined, the data show that 29.4 percent of the students were in agencies where the majority of the professional staff were social workers. On the other hand, over 70 percent of the students were in host agencies. Of the 94 students placed in host agencies, 25 or 14.7 percent were in agencies where there were no social workers. There were more students (25) placed in agencies where there were no social workers than in agencies where all the professional staff were social workers (17). The largest concentration of undergraduates (31.8 percent) were placed in correctional agencies and departments of social services while the smallest percentage (2.4) were placed in agencies that serve the mentally retarded. Ormsby's (1977) study population of undergraduate students showed that the greatest number of students were placed in mental health, family services and social action agencies, while the least number of students were placed in mental retardation agencies.

#### Additional Descriptive Information

The questionnaire contained three items (74, 75 and 76) which provided additional descriptive information about students, field instructors and agencies. Item 74 asked students if they would accept a job at their agency. The majority (60 percent) responded "yes". An

equal number of students (25) said "no" or "don't know" (25). Five students (5.3 percent) said they would accept the job only if they were "desperate".

Item 75 asked students if they would recommend their field placement agency to other students. A sizeable majority (85.9 percent) said they would do so, while 9.4 percent said they would not recommend the agency and 1.8 percent didn't know.

The last item of the SPSQ (76) was open-ended and asked students for any additional comments regarding their field placement. The data from the 71 responses were first classified into positive, neutral and negative statements. Each statement was then analyzed for specific content and the statement was placed in an appropriate category. The four major content categories addressed by students were: (1) Agency; (2) Supervision/Field Instructor; (3) Overall Placement; and (4) Other. Although there were 71 responses, some students wrote several comments. Each statement was coded separately. There were a total of 95 coded statements.

An example of a statement that was coded in the "Positive Field Instructor" category was:

"My field instructor was excellent."

An example of a statement that was coded in the "Negative Agency" category was:

"The placement (agency) was not a good place for concurrent placements because we never had special caseloads."

Table 9 shows that there were 22 statements (23.1 percent) that related to the Agency and a total of 28 statements (29.5 percent)



Table 9

Results of Open-Ended Item of SPSQ --  
 Additional Comments (Item 76)  
 (N=95)

	Agency		Supervision/ Supervisor		Overall		Other		Total <sup>a</sup>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Positive	10	(10.5)	11	(11.6)	30	(31.6)	5	(5.3)	56	(59.0)
Neutral	0	(0.0)	4	(4.2)	3	(3.1)	0	(0.0)	7	(7.3)
Negative	12	(12.6)	13	(13.7)	4	(4.2)	3	(3.1)	32	(33.6)
Total	22	(23.1)	28	(29.5)	37	(38.9)	8	(8.4)	95	(99.9)

<sup>a</sup>Totals do not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

concerning Supervision/Supervisor. The largest number of statements, 37 (38.9 percent), were overall comments about the student's field experiences. Eight statements (8.4 percent) which did not relate to either the Agency, Supervision/Supervisor or to the Overall experience, were placed in the "Other" category.

Table 9 also shows that 59 percent of all the comments were positive, 7.3 percent neutral, and 33.6 percent negative. When students evaluate the Agency and Supervision/Supervisor, the number of positive and negative statements are almost equal. However, the students appeared to be positively oriented toward their placements in an "Overall" sense.

The SPSS subprogram Frequencies was utilized to gain descriptive information on the demographic characteristics of students, field instructors and agencies (reported above). The subprogram Condescriptive was used to gain additional descriptive information through the means and standard deviations of the SPSQ satisfaction items (1-73).

Table 10 shows that the ten questionnaire items with the highest mean scores (most satisfied) were found in the Agency Climate (Warmth), Supervision (Technical, Human Relations), Autonomy, New Learning and Overall scales. Five of the ten items with the highest means were related to Supervision and two related to New Learning. The ten questionnaire items with the lowest mean scores (least satisfied) were in the Agency Climate (Conflict, Hindrance and Risk), New Learning, Structure and Activity. Three of the ten items with the lowest means were related to Climate, three to Activity and two to New Learning.

Table 10

Item, Means, Standard Deviation, Scales for Ten Most Satisfied  
and Ten Least Satisfied Items

Most Satisfied Items Reported by Students				Least Satisfied Items Reported by Students			
Item	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Scale	Item	$\bar{Y}$	S.D.	Scale
66. Relationship between myself and other staff	4.36	.93	Climate (Warmth)	29. Tension between individuals or group	3.04	1.16	Climate (Conflict)
61. Ability to make decisions on my own	4.34	.86	Autonomy	11. Amount of time spent on paperwork	3.06	1.19	Climate (Hindrance)
64. Supervisor ability to make decisions	4.30	.98	Supervisor (Technical)	46. Chance to observe supervisor work with community	3.16	1.41	New Learning
55. Supervisor helpful when I had difficulty	4.28	1.01	Supervisor (Technical)	36. Rules and red tape in agency	3.26	1.26	Structure
8. Supervisor helpful in understanding human behavior	4.26	.98	Supervisor (Human Relations)	44. Chance to observe supervisor work with groups	3.29	1.38	New Learning
69. Overall satisfaction with placement	4.24	1.13	Overall Satisfaction	39. Opportunity to participate in administrative decisions	3.38	1.34	Activity
57. See supervisor when need arose	4.24	1.09	Supervisor (Technical)	2. Number of groups assigned	3.38	1.43	Activity
68. Agency as a place to learn about social work	4.21	1.11	New Learning	35. Opportunity to learn about about research	3.43	1.30	Activity
58. Weekly meetings	4.20	1.13	Supervisor (Technical)	40. Working conditions	3.43	1.29	Structure
73. Feelings of accomplishment I get from my work	4.20	1.10	New Learning	13. Workers being client advocates	3.44	1.31	Climate (Risk)

Table 10 shows that items within the Climate and New Learning scales were among the ten most and ten least satisfying experiences for the students. Although the Climate items come from different subscales (Warmth, Hindrance and Risk), it seems that the Agency Climate contributes both to student satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction. A similar situation occurs with the New Learning Scale. Although the items that contribute to satisfaction differ from those that contribute to dissatisfaction, they all belong to the New Learning Scale. Herzberg's et. al., (1959) work showed that factors that contribute to job satisfaction (Satisfiers) do not also contribute to job dissatisfaction (Hygiene).

#### Relationship of Demographic Variables to Student Satisfaction

The next three research questions were addressed through use of the t-test and Multiple Regression Analysis (SPSS subprograms). These three questions were:

Question 2: How are the student demographic characteristics related to student satisfaction?

Question 4: How are the field instructor demographic characteristics as described by students related to student satisfaction?

Question 6: How are the agency demographic characteristics as reported by students related to student satisfaction?

#### Question 2

With respect to the t-test, Table 11 shows that of the nine student demographic characteristics, Demographic 2 or Type of Placement (Concurrent, Block) and Demographic 5 or GPA both showed a statistically significant difference between the group means when examined in relation to the dependent variable Average Student Satisfaction. The value of

Table 11

Summary of t-Test for Student  
Demographic Characteristics  
with Average Student Satisfaction

	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>	<u>t</u>
<u>Type of Placement</u>				
Concurrent	80	3.740	0.586	-2.95 <sup>a</sup>
Block	64	4.024	0.557	
<hr/>				
<u>Student GPA</u>				
Low GPA (1.5-3.0)	92	4.030	0.564	2.60 <sup>b</sup>
High GPA (3.1-4.0)	77	3.796	0.606	

<sup>a</sup>p. < .004

<sup>b</sup>p. < .01

t for both student demographic variables was significant at the .01 level. The means of students in block placement was significantly higher (more satisfied) than those in concurrent placements. Students with lower GPA's (1.5-3.0) appeared to be more satisfied than those with higher GPA's (3.1-4.0).

There was no statistically significant difference between group means with respect to the dependent variable Average Student Satisfaction for the remaining seven student demographic characteristics (sex, age, marital status, paid social work experience, volunteer experience, remuneration and preference for type of placement).

In summary, the following relationships between student demographic characteristics and student satisfaction (Question 2) were demonstrated by the t-test:

- The type of placement appears to be positively associated with student satisfaction (i.e., students in block placements were more satisfied than students in concurrent placements).
- Student GPA seems to be inversely related to student satisfaction (i.e., the lower the student GPA, the more satisfied the student was with the field placement).
- Seven demographic characteristics did not show a statistically significant relationship with Average Student Satisfaction in field placement.

The computer program t-test is a procedure which shows the difference between group means for one variable at a time. Therefore, in order to determine the multivariate relationship between the dependent variable and all the demographic characteristics of the students, field instructors and agencies, Multiple Regression Analysis was used to supplement the results of the t-test. Multiple Regression

Analysis makes it possible to determine the unique contribution of each independent variable to the variance of the dependent variable while holding other possible explanatory variables constant. Forward stepwise inclusion of the independent variables was an option selected for the Multiple Regression procedure.

Table 12 illustrates the results of the Multiple Regression Analysis between the dependent variable, Average Student Satisfaction, and all the demographic characteristics. The total multiple correlation (multiple R) was .521 and the unadjusted coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was equal to .272. This indicates that 27.2 percent of the variance of Average Student Satisfaction was accounted for by the demographic variables. The adjusted  $R^2$  coefficient of determination (adjusted for degrees of freedom) was equal to .157. The overall F-ratio for this equation was 2.37468, significant at the .01 level.

The two student characteristics, Demographic 2 (Type of Placement) and Demographic 5 (GPA), which both showed a statistically significant difference between group means when the t-test procedure was utilized, also showed a statistically significant relationship with Average Student Satisfaction in the regression analysis at the .01 level. However, in the regression analysis, an additional student characteristic, Demographic 12 (Remuneration) shows a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable at the .01 level. Remuneration is inversely related with Average Student Satisfaction (i.e., those students receiving some remuneration for field work appeared to be more satisfied) accounting for 1.0 percent of the variance exhibited by the dependent variable. Type of Placement and GPA

Table 12

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Student, Field Instructor and  
Agency Demographic Characteristics and the Dependent Variable Average Student Satisfaction  
(N=170)

Multiple R = 0.52177		D.F.	F
R Square = 0.27225		23	2.37468*
Adjusted R Square = 0.15760		146	
Standard Error = 0.54436			

  

Variables	Multiple R	Beta	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F
27. Preference type of agency	0.05771	0.05545	0.00333	0.534
2. Type of placement	0.35604	0.33698	0.12343	20.194*
3. Sex of student	0.35879	-0.00762	0.00196	0.011
4. Age	0.36071	-0.09826	0.00138	0.926
5. GPA	0.39635	-0.18811	0.02698	6.081*
6. Marital Status	0.39677	-0.00768	0.00033	0.006
7. Previous paid social work experience	0.40058	-0.06415	0.00304	0.693
8. Previous volunteer social work experience	0.40385	-0.05568	0.00263	0.513
12. Compensation received	0.41643	-0.11497	0.01032	2.382*
13. Sex of field instructor	0.41644	-0.04195	0.00001	0.298
14. Employment status of field instructor	0.42348	-0.05587	0.00591	0.470
15. Degree of field instructor	0.43104	0.13404	0.00646	2.566*
16. Field instructor previous supervision	0.43145	0.02213	0.00036	0.080
17. Service type	0.43434	-0.06086	0.00250	0.582
18. Funding type	0.44608	-0.8193	0.01033	1.129
19. Size of unit	0.44863	-0.07180	0.00229	0.802
20. Size of total agency	0.45013	0.06446	0.00135	0.582
21. Social work or host agency	0.45819	-0.11060	0.00732	1.889**
22. Location of agency	0.46334	-0.10006	0.00475	1.194**
23. Prior training; undergraduate students	0.49505	0.21340	0.03040	7.304*
24. Prior training; graduate students	0.51191	-0.13938	0.01698	3.122*
25. Agency train students in other fields	0.51226	-0.03369	0.00035	0.197
26. Type of tasks	0.51277	0.10987	0.00984	1.974**

\*p. < .01

\*\*p. < .05



accounted for 12.3 and 2.6 percent of the variance in Average Student Satisfaction, respectively. Of all the student demographic characteristics, the one which had the greatest impact on student satisfaction was Demographic 2 or Type of Placement (Block), accounting for 12.3 percent of the variance in the dependent variable.

A statistically significant relationship was found to exist between the following three student demographic characteristics and Average Student Satisfaction in the Regression Analysis:

1. Type of placement (p. < .01)
2. GPA (p. < .01)
3. Remuneration for field work (p. < .01)

Of the three student demographic characteristics which are significantly related to Average Student Satisfaction, two are capable of being manipulated or controlled by the faculty member responsible for field instruction (Type of placement and Remuneration).

#### Question 4

When the relationship between the four field instructor demographic characteristics and student satisfaction was examined using the t-test, no statistically significant differences between group means on any of the field instructor characteristics and Average Student Satisfaction were found. Although Demographic 15 (Educational Degree of the Field Instructor) was not found to be statistically related to Average Student Satisfaction, five separate questionnaire items showed statistically significant differences between the group means of students who had field instructors with social work degrees and those with field instructors with other than social work degrees. The group mean of the students with field instructors with other than social work degrees on the five items was significantly higher.

The results of the t-test for field instructor demographic characteristics and their relationship to student satisfaction (Question

4) indicate that:

- There appears to be no statistically significant relationship between any of the field instructor demographic characteristics (sex, employment status, educational degree and previous supervision) and the dependent variable Average Student Satisfaction.

Although the t-test showed no statistically significant relationship between field instructor demographic characteristics and the dependent variable, in the regression analysis, Demographic 15 (Educational Degree of the Field Instructor) is shown to have a statistically significant relationship with Average Student Satisfaction at the .01 level. Since the relationship is inverse, students seem to be more satisfied with their field placement when their field instructor does not have a social work degree. The educational degree of the field instructor, however, contributes only 0.64 percent to the total variance of Average Student Satisfaction.

#### Question 6

Ten agency characteristics were examined in order to determine how these characteristics were related to student satisfaction. As illustrated in Table 13, two agency characteristics, Demographic 18 (Funding Type) and Demographic 21 (Social Work or Host Agency), showed statistically significant differences between group means with respect to Average Student Satisfaction. Funding of the agency was inversely associated with the dependent variable. That is, students in Private (Auspices) agencies were more satisfied than students in Public

Table 13

Summary of t-Test for Agency  
Demographic Characteristics  
with Average Student Satisfaction

	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>	<u>t</u>
<u>Auspices</u>				
Private Auspices	37	4.144	0.520	-2.76 <sup>a</sup>
Public Auspices	114	3.854	0.582	
<u>Agency Type</u>				
Social Work Agency	50	4.086	0.568	-2.19 <sup>b</sup>
Host Agency	119	3.873	0.578	

<sup>a</sup>p. < .007

<sup>b</sup>p. < .03

(Auspices) agencies. Demographic 21 (Social Work or Host Agency) also showed an inverse relationship with Average Student Satisfaction; students in social work agencies had significantly higher group means (more satisfied) than those in host agencies.

The remaining eight agency demographic characteristics (service type; size of work unit; size of total agency; location of agency; prior training of undergraduate social work students; prior training of graduate social work students; training of students in other fields; and type of tasks) did not show statistically significant relationships with Average Student Satisfaction when the t-test was carried out.

In summary, the results of the t-test for agency demographic characteristics and their relationships to student satisfaction showed that:

- The type of agency funding appears to be inversely associated with student satisfaction (i.e., students in private agencies are more satisfied than students in public agencies).
- Students in social work agencies seem to be more satisfied than those in host agencies.
- Eight agency demographic characteristics did not show a statistically significant relationship with Average Student Satisfaction in field placement.

As shown in the results of the regression analysis in Table 12, there were five agency demographic characteristics that had a statistically significant relationship with Average Student Satisfaction. These variables included:

- Demographic 21 - Social Work or Host Agency (p. < .05)
- Demographic 22 - Location of Agency (p. < .05)
- Demographic 23 - Prior Training by Agency of Under-graduate Social Work Students (p. < .01)
- Demographic 24 - Prior Training by Agency of Graduate Social Work Students (p. < .01)

Demographic 26 - Type of Tasks Available to Students  
(p. <.05)

Three variables (Demographic 21, 22 and 24) were inversely related to student satisfaction and indicate that: students in social work agencies seemed more satisfied than those in host agencies; students whose agencies were in urban settings appeared to be more satisfied (the students' school may have been in a different setting than the agency); and those students who were in agencies where graduate social work students have been previously trained were more satisfied than in agencies where graduate social work students had not been trained.

Although the t-test showed only two agency demographic characteristics to have a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable (Demographic 18 - Funding Type and Demographic 21 - Social Work or Host Agency), Funding Type is not significantly related to Average Student Satisfaction when it is entered in the regression equation in combination with student, field instructor and agency characteristics.

The agency characteristics which had the greatest (negative) impact on the total variance of Average Student Satisfaction is Demographic 23, Previous Training of Undergraduate Social Work Students by Agency, accounting for 3.0 percent of total variance. The column labeled "R<sup>2</sup> Change" in Table 12, shows that all five agency characteristics contribute a combined 6.78 percent to the total variance of Average Student Satisfaction. This contribution is approximately half of the contribution to the variance of the dependent variable by the student demographic characteristic, Type of Placement (12.3 percent). The five agency demographic characteristics which are significantly related to

Average Student Satisfaction can be controlled through the selection of the agencies by the undergraduate programs.

### Relationship between Expressed Explanations by Students and Student Satisfaction

#### Question 7

The study instrument (SPSQ) required that students indicate their level of satisfaction for each item and, in addition, also "explain" their response by indicating the "amount" of the item present in the field experience. Question 7 looked at the relationship between expressed explanations by students and student satisfaction. Specifically, the research question asked:

How are the expressed explanations of the students perceptions related to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

In order to determine how these student explanations were related to the reported level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, the SPSS subprogram Pearson Correlation was utilized. Each questionnaire item, 1 through 73, was correlated with each respective "amount" 1 through 73 (e.g., item 1 was correlated with amount 1; item 2 with amount 2). In addition, the relationship between Average Student Satisfaction and Average Amount was also explored.

Except for three items (discussed below), all satisfaction items showed a positive correlation with the corresponding "amounts" (explanations) at the .01 level of significance. Average Student Satisfaction and the variable Average Amount were also positively correlated at the .01 level. This means that as the level of student satisfaction increased, the closer the

ratings for the explanations ("amounts") approached the response "just right" (a rating of 3.0).

The three satisfaction items which showed a statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ) inverse correlation with their corresponding "amount" (explanations) were:

- Item 11. Amount of Time Spent on Paperwork
- Item 29. Tension Between Individuals or Groups in Agency
- Item 36. Rules and Red Tape in Agency

As previously shown on Table 10 (p. 98), these three items were among the five items with which students were most dissatisfied. The inverse correlation between these items and the expressed explanations ("amounts") shows that students were dissatisfied because there was "too much" paperwork, tension and rules in the field experience.

As shown on Table 14, the satisfaction items with the highest means had corresponding means for "amount" close to 3.0 ("just right"). On the other hand, students were dissatisfied because there was "too much" of some experiences (Items 11, 29 and 36) as well as "too little" of other experiences (Items 46, 44, 39, 2, 35, 10 and 13).

The data obtained from the correlation matrix (Pearson Correlation) of satisfaction items with corresponding "amounts" also provided information on selected SPSQ scales. For example, students were generally satisfied with a great majority of the items of the three Supervision Scales (7, 8 and 9) and in turn rated the items within the scale "just right". However, scales such as Activity (Scale 10) and Policies and Practices Toward Students (Scale 11) show a low level of

Table 14

Summary of Pearson Correlation Between Satisfaction Items and Corresponding "Explanations" ("Amounts")  
- Ten Most Satisfied Items and Ten Least Satisfied Items

Most Satisfied Items Reported by Students					Least Satisfied Items Reported by Students				
Item	Item x	Amount x	r	p	Item	Item x	Amount <sup>a</sup> x	r	p
66. Relationship between myself and other staff	4.36	2.90	.6078	.01	29. Tension between individuals or group	3.04	3.16	-.5221	.01
61. Ability to make decisions on my own	4.34	2.86	.3149	.01	11. Amount of time spent on paperwork	3.06	3.43	-.4055	.01
64. Supervisor ability to make decisions	4.30	2.85	.6266	.01	46. Chance to observe supervisor work with community	3.16	2.15	.8191	.01
55. Supervisor helpful when I had difficulty	4.28	2.80	.7217	.01	36. Rules and red tape in agency	3.26	3.23	-.2933	.01
8. Supervisor helpful in understanding human behavior	4.26	2.80	.69	.01	44. Chance to observe supervisor work with groups	3.29	2.27	.7958	.01
69. Overall satisfaction with placement	4.24	2.81	.5527	.01	39. Opportunity to participate in administrative decisions	3.38	2.36	.6364	.01
57. See Supervisor when need arose	4.24	2.79	.7122	.01	2. Number of groups assigned	3.38	2.27	.7538	.01
68. Agency as a place to learn about social work	4.21	2.79	.7671	.01	35. Opportunity to learn about research	3.43	2.35	.6862	.01
58. Weekly meetings	4.20	2.72	.7671	.01	40. Working conditions	3.43	2.39	.7126	.01
73. Feelings of accomplishment I get from my work	4.20	2.78	.7388	.01	13. Workers being client advocates	3.44	2.53	.5667	.01

<sup>a</sup>  $\bar{X}$  = 3.0 (Just Right)  
 $\bar{X}$  < 3.0 (Too Little)  
 $\bar{X}$  > 3.00 (Too Much)



satisfaction (but not dissatisfaction) with the explanations showing "too little" of the experience present in the field placement. With respect to the Activity Scale, the undergraduate students felt they had too little to do, rather than too much. This is a finding similar to that which has been found for workers on the job (Herzberg et al., 1957).

In summary, the data show that there is a statistically significant and generally positive correlation between the expressed explanations of the students' perceptions and their recorded level of satisfaction in field placement. However, there is a statistically significant and inverse correlation between the expressed explanation of students' perceptions and their level of dissatisfaction on three items. For the scales that show a low level of satisfaction, the explanations indicate that, in the majority of the cases, there is "too little" rather than "too much" of the experience present in the field placement.

#### Factors Associated with Student Satisfaction in Undergraduate Field Placement

##### Question 8

Question 8 asked:

What factor or factors make the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who are completing a field placement?

The last research question required the utilization of the Factor Analysis procedure. This procedure was used in order to determine what factor or factors made the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who were completing a field placement. As in the regression

model, factor analysis shows the interdependence between the variables selected for examination.

As stated in the previous chapter, Item 69, Overall Satisfaction With Field Placement, was used in lieu of the dependent variable Average Student Satisfaction for the factor analysis only. The percentage of the explained and total variance of the dependent variable (Item 69) which is accounted for by each factor can be obtained by observing the factor loadings across the Item 69 row in the rotated factor matrix and noting the associated communality (sum of the squared Item 69 loadings or  $R^2$ ). For example, the first row in Table 15 gives the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Item 69} &= 0.24F_1 + 0.23F_2 + 0.29F_3 + 0.12F_4 \\ &\quad + 0.77F_5 + 0.11F_6 + 0.03F_7 \\ \text{Communality } (R^2) &= (0.24)^2 + (0.23)^2 + (0.29)^2 + (0.12)^2 \\ &\quad + (0.77)^2 + (0.11)^2 + (0.03)^2 \\ R^2 &= 0.815 \end{aligned}$$

All seven factors account for 81.5 percent of the total variance of the dependent variable, Item 69 (Overall Student Satisfaction). The fifth factor alone accounts for  $(0.77)^2$  or 59.3 percent of the total variance and 72.7 percent of the explained variance of Overall Satisfaction. (This is derived from the ratio of 0.593 to 0.815.) However, explanation of the variance of the dependent variable will not necessarily imply causation.

Table 15  
Factor Matrix and Communality for  
Factor Analysis

Variables	Factors							Communality
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R <sup>2</sup>
Item 69	.24	.23	.29	.12	.77	.11	.03	.815
Item 1	.14	.15	.27	.04	.39	.11	.06	.288
Item 2	.04	.09	.20	.42	.11	.07	.06	.256
Item 3	.27	.16	.25	.33	.31	.04	.06	.379
Item 4	.07	.33	.13	.26	.47	.24	.08	.491
Item 5	.19	.42	.27	.03	.35	.35	.01	.543
Item 6	.38	.40	.41	.05	.15	.26	.05	.579
Item 7	.11	.44	<u>.54</u>	.15	.25	.26	.03	.674
Item 8	.19	.24	<u>.66</u>	.16	.32	.04	.01	.680
Item 9	.18	.16	<u>.72</u>	.22	.19	.05	.06	.680
Item 10	.23	.10	.22	.10	.42	<u>.52</u>	.06	.596
Item 11	.15	.11	.01	.14	.06	<u>.02</u>	<u>.52</u>	.337
Item 12	.52	.12	.28	.02	.04	.10	.12	.396
Item 13	.26	.06	.31	.27	.08	.20	.00	.300
Item 14	.33	.26	.45	.26	.02	.32	.05	.569
Item 15	.24	.34	<u>.61</u>	.22	.20	.18	.02	.673
Item 16	<u>.71</u>	.06	.28	.05	.15	.09	.17	.661
Item 17	<u>.62</u>	.19	.22	.18	.00	.05	.01	.513
Item 18	.29	.30	<u>.62</u>	.20	.11	.04	.06	.627
Item 19	.33	.14	<u>.57</u>	.21	.18	.08	.09	.558
Item 20	.25	<u>.56</u>	.15	.06	.06	.00	.28	.496
Item 21	.40	.12	.09	.08	.24	<u>.42</u>	.19	.474
Item 22	.37	.05	.19	.29	.12	<u>.06</u>	.17	.321
Item 23	<u>.68</u>	.03	.21	.09	.11	.08	.00	.541
Item 24	.23	<u>.71</u>	.23	.20	.14	.00	.05	.680
Item 25	.09	<u>.58</u>	.25	.08	.21	.20	.03	.517
Item 26	.07	<u>.51</u>	.39	.16	.05	.09	.02	.469
Item 27	.56	.24	.19	.30	.10	.06	.05	.526
Item 28	<u>.69</u>	.09	.07	.18	.08	.14	.05	.565
Item 29	.51	.19	.20	.17	.12	.04	.18	.424
Item 30	.39	.48	.33	.12	.01	.05	.22	.567
Item 31	.04	<u>.56</u>	.25	.20	.42	.05	.19	.651
Item 32	.22	.23	.03	.38	.22	<u>.43</u>	.03	.501
Item 33	.29	.08	.16	.42	.27	.05	.03	.379
Item 34	.30	.19	.10	<u>.51</u>	.17	.04	.01	.446
Item 35	.22	.08	.16	<u>.64</u>	.19	.06	.15	.570
Item 36	.27	.09	.11	.40	.09	.25	.38	.484
Item 37	.31	.11	.15	.39	.00	.34	.32	.513
Item 38	.53	.12	.20	.17	.08	.11	.11	.412
Item 39	.31	.13	.16	.45	.12	.05	.06	.373
Item 40	.20	.09	.00	.14	.31	.02	.11	.186

Table 15 (Continued)

Variable	Factors							Communality
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R <sup>2</sup>
Item 41	.16	.38	.40	.35	.17	.17	.05	.520
Item 42	.27	.15	.16	.31	.32	<u>.47</u>	.02	.563
Item 43	<u>.73</u>	.14	.17	.08	.14	.13	.09	.647
Item 44	.23	.22	.18	<u>.54</u>	.08	.13	.09	.470
Item 45	.51	.31	.04	.12	.22	-.02	.13	.455
Item 46	.15	.34	.24	<u>.57</u>	-.01	.09	.06	.553
Item 47	.23	.42	.27	.21	.06	.18	.16	.425
Item 48	.17	.35	.48	.22	.07	.15	.01	.476
Item 49	.23	.38	.31	.25	.11	.13	.19	.527
Item 50	.37	.25	.09	.33	.29	.09	.10	.437
Item 51	<u>.63</u>	.17	-.04	.44	.09	.11	-.07	.661
Item 52	<u>.63</u>	.20	-.01	.50	.04	-.04	-.04	.698
Item 53	<u>.61</u>	.06	.10	.12	.21	.20	.06	.504
Item 54	<u>.68</u>	.15	-.00	.45	.14	-.08	-.09	.735
Item 55	.12	<u>.62</u>	.27	.09	.30	.10	.05	.599
Item 56	.00	<u>.44</u>	.20	.40	.14	.11	.07	.452
Item 57	.13	<u>.58</u>	.06	.25	.15	.27	-.26	.600
Item 58	.17	<u>.48</u>	.18	.10	.19	.26	-.35	.555
Item 59	.11	.43	.20	.08	.31	.08	-.08	.370
Item 60	<u>.61</u>	.24	.03	.06	.18	.28	-.13	.584
Item 61	.15	<u>.57</u>	-.01	.04	.38	-.19	.22	.494
Item 62	.19	<u>.69</u>	.04	.10	.15	-.05	.11	.577
Item 63	.03	<u>.46</u>	.09	.16	.02	.04	-.07	.577
Item 64	.08	.42	.42	.16	.22	-.01	.10	.461
Item 65	.09	.47	<u>.63</u>	.12	.29	.06	.01	.743
Item 66	.47	.18	.03	.14	.28	.18	.04	.401
Item 67	<u>.65</u>	.07	.12	.14	.15	.27	.05	.576
Item 68	.27	.28	.33	.10	<u>.58</u>	.12	-.20	.687
Item 70	.23	.25	.37	.18	<u>.63</u>	.09	.03	.704
Item 71	.26	.21	.12	.34	<u>.36</u>	.33	.17	.524
Item 72	.25	.18	.18	<u>.53</u>	.13	.24	-.03	.497
Item 73	.15	.27	.11	.22	<u>.50</u>	.10	.07	.438

Communality by Factor and Total (R<sup>2</sup>)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R <sup>2</sup>
.058	.053	.084	.014	.593	.012	.001	.815

### Results of the Factor Analysis

First factor ( $F_1$ ) -- the eleven variables with maximal loadings in  $F_1$  (as shown in Table 15) consist of seven (7) Climate variables, three (3) Autonomy variables and one (1) Structure variable. Six of the seven Climate variables fall in the Warmth and Intimacy subscales (Item 16, 23, 28, 43, 53 and 60). The three Autonomy variables (Item 51, 52 and 54 which load high on a predominantly Climate factor, may indicate that where warmth and intimacy are part of the agency Climate (e.g., trust people have for each other; willingness of people to help each other; friendliness between administrators and staff), opportunity to exercise autonomy by the students also exists.

With respect to the dependent variable, Item 69, (Overall Student Satisfaction), Table 15 shows that 5.8 percent of the total variance and 7.1 percent of the explained variance is attributable to the first factor, Agency Climate. Although Table 10 (p. 96) indicates that the two items with which students were most satisfied also fell in the Climate (Warmth) (Item 66) and Autonomy (Item 61) scales, these items did not show high loadings on factor 1. Item 66 (Relationship between myself and the staff) did have its highest factor score (.46) on the first factor yet the loading was relatively low compared to the other variables which described the factor. The correlation coefficients for Item 66 and 61 Climate/Autonomy variables which load high and describe factor 1 range from .29 to .65. There appears to be a low to moderate association between the relationship of the student and agency staff and the Climate of the agency. Item 61 (Ability to make decisions on my own) an Autonomy variable, loads high on factor 2. This implies that

the agency Climate has little or no impact on the ability of students to make decisions on their own. The negligible association between student decision making and agency Climate is supported by the correlation coefficient of Item 61 and the Climate/Autonomy variables which load high and describe factor 1. The coefficients ranged from .14 to .25.

The first factor shows a positive association with the dependent variable. Therefore, students in field placement seemed to be more satisfied with a warm and intimate Climate in which there was freedom to ask questions and express ideas.

Second factor ( $F_2$ ) -- The following nine variables show their highest loadings on this factor: Item 24, 25, 26, 31 (Supervisor/Evaluative Functions); Item 55, 57 (Supervisor/Technical Functions); Item 20, 61, 62 (Autonomy). The second factor can be described as a combination of the evaluative and technical functions of the supervisor. The factor also includes three Autonomy variables. The factor analysis showed that different items of the Autonomy scale loaded high on two separate factors. Three variables (Item 51, 52, 54) had high factor scores on the first factor (Climate/Warmth) and three (Item 20, 61 and 62) on the second factor (Supervision/Evaluative/Technical). These variables seem to be more closely associated with the two separate factors on which they load than with each other as a separate scale. Three of the six Autonomy variables could be incorporated with the Climate (Warmth) scale and the remaining three into the Supervision scale, thereby eliminating Autonomy as a separate scale as originally set up for this study. For students, autonomy is

facilitated through the agency Climate and the technical and evaluative functions of the supervisor.

With respect to the dependent variable, Item 69 (Overall Student Satisfaction), Table 15 shows that 5.3 percent of the total variance and 6.5 percent of the explained variance is attributable to the second factor. It appears that factor 1, Climate (Warmth and Intimacy) and factor 2 (Evaluative and Technical functions of the Supervisor), contribute approximately equally to explaining the variance of student satisfaction. Although three variables which load high on factor 2 are among the ten variables with which students were most satisfied, (Item 55, 57, 61)) this factor contributes a relatively small amount to the total and explained variance of Overall Student Satisfaction.

Third factor ( $F_3$ ) -- Seven variables exhibit a high loading on the third factor. These items are 7, 8, 9, 15, 18, 19 and 65. All items except 65 are in the Supervisor-Human Relations Scale. The results of the factor analysis show that the human relations functions of the supervisor are orthogonal (independent) of the evaluative and technical functions of the supervisor. Evaluative and technical aspects of supervision load high on the same factor (2) while Supervisor-Human Relations clearly loads high on a separate factor (3).

The third factor, Supervisor-Human Relations, contributes 8.4 percent of the total variance and 10.3 percent of the explained variance of the dependent variable, Overall Student Satisfaction. Although Human Relations aspects of Supervision contribute a slightly higher percentage of the total variance to the dependent variable than the technical and evaluative aspects of supervision, this factor still only contributes a

relatively small percentage of the variance. If factor 2 and 3 are combined in order to account for the three supervisory scales studied, the contribution of Supervision to Overall Student Satisfaction is 13.7 percent of the total variance and 16.8 percent of the explained variance.

Fourth factor ( $F_4$ ) -- Five variables show high loadings on this factor. The items that load on this factor are drawn from various scales and the factor does not fall as neatly into place as the previous three factors. Item 34 and 72 (Policies and Practices Toward Students), Item 35 (Activity) and Item 44 and 46 (New Learning) all load on factor 4. Three of the five items (35, 44, 46) appear on Table 10 (p. 98) as items with which students were most dissatisfied. Although students were dissatisfied with these aspects of the field placement, the dependent variable (Item 69) is positively correlated with the factor.

Since the variables that load high on factor 4 are not from the same scales, the underlying theme that groups them together is the participation and observational opportunities of the students. The fourth factor can be ascribed as Indirect Service, Participation and Observation factor. The contribution of this factor to the variance of the dependent variable is negligible at 1.4 percent of the total variance and 1.7 percent of the explained variance.

Fifth factor ( $F_5$ ) -- Although only three variables (Item 68, 70 and 73) load high on factor 5, this factor contributes 59.3 percent of the total variance and 72.7 percent of the explained variance of Overall Student Satisfaction. This factor has two variables from the New Learning Scale and one from Activity. Two variables from the New



Learning Scale (Item 44 and 46) contributed relatively little to the total variance of the dependent variable in factor 4. The present factor (5) shows that two different variables from the New Learning Scale (Item 68, 73) contribute a large percentage of the total variance of Item 69.

Since factor 5 contributes almost 60 percent of the variance of the dependent variable, it is important to provide a more extensive explanation of the factor described as "New Learning". The variables in factor 5 seem to be conceptually tied to the objectives for field instruction previously outlined in Chapter I. That is, according to Tyler (1950), educational objectives should be statements of changes to take place in the students. In addition, learning experiences must allow the student to obtain satisfaction from carrying out the kind of behavior implied by the objectives. The results of the factor analysis supports Tyler's theoretical position in that students obtained the most satisfaction (59.3 percent) from variables which provided the opportunity to perform the behaviors implied by field work objectives delineated in the literature (e.g., opportunity to experience self in the helping process; demonstrate practice skills by putting knowledge to use; integrate social work knowledge, skill and values through direct practice experience).

Since the factor with which students are most satisfied is related to achieving field work objectives, a possible way of measuring the attainment of field work objectives is to carry out an empirical test (as done in this study) on student satisfaction. Factor analyzing the responses to the SPSQ may provide undergraduate programs with one vehicle of assessment in achieving field work program objectives.

Two of the three variables which load high on factor 5 can be manipulated. These two variables are:

- Item 68 - Agency as a place to learn about social work.
- Item 70 - Chance to use abilities and skills.

As shown earlier in the chapter, the director of field instruction can manipulate most of the demographic variables which show a significant relationship to student satisfaction in field work. At the same time, the results of the factor analysis show that variables which contribute a large percentage to the variance of Overall Satisfaction (and the variables which are highly correlated with those in factor 5) can also be appreciably manipulated to increase the level of student satisfaction. According to Tyler (1950), satisfaction with the learning experience is a necessary condition for certain desired behaviors to occur. These behaviors are related to the achievement of educational objectives. The factor analysis in this study empirically documents which learning experiences made a maximum contribution to student satisfaction. In addition, the results provide social work educators with a theoretical model for developing and refining field work objectives which has had some empirical testing.

Sixth factor ( $F_6$ ) -- Four items have maximal loadings on factor 6. Items 10, 21 and 42 are on the Agency Structure Scale, while item 32 is on the Policies and Practices Toward Student Scale, as shown in Table 15. This factor contributes 1.2 percent of the total variance and 1.4 percent of the explained variance. This negligible contribution to the variance of the dependent variable by a Structure factor seems to bear out the previous findings in the literature that Agency Structure plays a relatively small role in Overall Satisfaction.

Seventh factor ( $F_7$ ) -- This has one variable which loads high on the factor. Item 11 (amount of time spent on paperwork), a Climate (Hindrance) Scale variable which contributes .1 percent of the total variance and .12 of the explained variance of the dependent variable. There is an inverse relationship between Item 69 and the Climate Variable, "Amount of Time Spent on Paperwork". This relationship seems to be logical in that the more time that must be spent on paperwork the less time there is for clients and the less satisfied the student will be.

### Summary of Findings

In summary, this chapter presented the findings with respect to the eight research questions which included: the typical demographic characteristics of Virginia senior undergraduate social work students, their field instructors and agencies in which they were completing a field placement; the relationship between the demographic characteristics and student satisfaction in field placement; the relationship between expressed explanations of the student's perceptions and their level of satisfaction; the factors which contributed to the variance of Overall Student Satisfaction. Specifically, the study found that:

- The typical undergraduate social work student completing a field placement in the Spring of 1979 in Virginia was a single female, between 19-29 years of age, who had a GPA of 3.0 or under and was in a concurrent field placement. The student typically did not have previous paid social work experience, but did have some volunteer work experience. In addition, the student received the agency of their first choice as a field placement and did not receive remuneration for field work activities;
- The typical field instructor is a female, employed by the agency, who has a social work degree and has previous supervisory experience.

- The typical agency was a large, urban, host, public agency where both graduate and undergraduate social work students as well as students in other fields have been trained. Students operate in small units and have the opportunity to perform a variety of tasks.
- Students were most satisfied when they had a block placement; received remuneration; had a low GPA; the field instructor did not have a social work degree; they were in urban social work agencies where graduate social work students have been previously trained; the agency had not previously trained undergraduate students and they could perform a variety of tasks;
- As the level of student satisfaction increased, the closer the ratings for the explanations ("amounts") approached the response "just right".
- The factor that makes the greatest contribution (59 percent) in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students is "New Learning". This factor is related to the achievement of field work objectives.

The next chapter provides a summary of the study, its findings, a discussion based on the data, as well as recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a summary of the study and a discussion based on the findings. In addition, implications for student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements and recommendations for the conduct of further research are discussed.

#### SUMMARY

Students in accredited undergraduate social work programs are required to spend a minimum of 300 hours in a senior year field placement. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has also specified general objectives for the field work course. Satisfaction with a learning experience is seen by Tyler (1950) as one of the necessary conditions for achieving desired behavioral outcomes (objectives) by students. Prior to this investigation, undergraduate social work faculty and field instructors could only make generally untested assumptions about the factors that contribute to satisfying learning experiences in field work. This situation was, for the most part, the result of the limited research available in the area of student satisfaction in field placement. The selection of student learning experiences by social work educators can consequently benefit from the study of the major factors contributing to student satisfaction in field work.

In an effort to determine the factors which were associated with student satisfaction in field placement, a pilot study was conducted by this researcher in the Fall of 1978 at George Mason University. As an outgrowth of the pilot study, an original survey instrument -- The Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ) -- was developed. The SPSQ was used in the Virginia study in order to examine the factors that are associated with student satisfaction and dissatisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements in the eleven accredited social work programs in Virginia.

#### Restatement of the Problem

Accredited status has been accorded to undergraduate social work programs since 1974. This recent action (accreditation) by CSWE has intensified the attention given to the undergraduate social work curriculum. A corollary of this has been the realization by social work educators of the dearth of available demographic and other empirical information in the area of undergraduate field instruction. Efforts on the part of educators in the area of curriculum development for field work have been thwarted by this lack of data.

In 1977, a group called Social Work Educators Council of Virginia (SWEC-VA) was formed in order to address some of the mutual concerns of undergraduate faculty in Virginia. This group expressed the need to have comprehensive, state-wide demographic data for the students, field instructors, and agencies in the state. In addition, questions

were raised regarding students' perceptions of the factors that contribute to optimum satisfaction in field placement.

As a result of these concerns, the present study was designed to:

expand the present limited body of knowledge in the area of undergraduate field instruction;

to supply empirically-based knowledge to social work educators in the area of curriculum development;

to enhance the selection of optimum field learning experiences by delineating those significant variables or characteristics which students found satisfying and dissatisfying in field placement; and

to provide information to agency administrators and field instructors which enables them to better assess the educational opportunities provided by their agency to undergraduate social work students.

Eight research questions were framed to guide the investigation of this problem.

1. What are the demographic characteristics of students who were enrolled in a field placement in the participating Virginia institutions during the Spring Quarter/Semester of 1979?
2. How are the demographic characteristics of these students related to their satisfaction in the undergraduate social work field placements?
3. What are the demographic characteristics of the field supervisors as reported by the students described in question #1?
4. How are the demographic characteristics of the field supervisors (as reported by the students) related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who were enrolled in the under-graduate social work field placements?
5. What are the demographic characteristics of the field placement agencies as reported by the students described in question #1?
6. How are the agency characteristics (as reported by the students) related to the expressed satisfaction of the students who were enrolled in the undergraduate social work field placements?

7. How are the expressed explanations of the students' perceptions related to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
8. What factor or factors make the greatest contribution in explaining the variance of the expressed satisfaction of undergraduate social work students who are completing a field placement?

### Methodology of the Study

The study population consisted of the undergraduate senior social work students in Virginia who were completing a senior year practicum during the Spring Quarter/Semester of 1979. Only students from the eleven accredited undergraduate programs were surveyed. Of the 216 students in field placement at these institutions in the Spring of 1979, a total of 170 (78 percent) responded to the study questionnaire.

The Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ), an original survey instrument devised by this researcher, was utilized for the present study. The SPSQ underwent two revisions prior to its use with the Virginia students. The first revision occurred after the completion of the pilot study at George Mason University. The second revision of the SPSQ took place after receiving feedback with regard to the accuracy and clarity of questionnaire items from students in two accredited undergraduate programs outside of the State of Virginia. The final form of the SPSQ contained 27 demographic variables, 73 Likert-type satisfaction items, and 73 corresponding explanations ("amounts") for the expressed satisfaction items. Three final items elicited further information on student satisfaction with



their field placements. Reliability coefficients of .94 and .95 were determined for the questionnaire by calculating Cronback's (1951) "Coefficient Alpha."

The director of field instruction in each of the eleven accredited schools agreed to co-operate in the research by distributing the study questionnaire to senior practicum students in their school, and by returning the survey instrument to this researcher after students had responded to the SPSQ.

The analysis of the data was accomplished by using the computer system at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The SPSS program Frequencies was used to address Research Questions 1, 3, and 5. The relationship between demographic characteristics and student satisfaction (Research Questions 2, 4, and 6) was addressed through the use of SPSS programs for the t-test and Multiple Regression Analysis. Research Question 7 was investigated by using the SPSS program Pearson Correlation; while Research Question 8 was addressed by means of the program Factor Analysis.

### Significant Findings

The first major finding stems from analysis of Research Questions 1, 3, and 5 which provided descriptive information of demographic characteristics of the senior undergraduate students completing a field placement, their field instructors and the agencies in which they were placed. (A detailed analysis of these characteristics was provided in Chapter IV -- FINDINGS.) In general, the study found that the majority of the undergraduate social work students in Virginia who

were completing a field placement were female, and between the ages of 19 and 29. Slightly under half of the students were in concurrent placements. That is, students divide their time between classroom and agency. The majority of these students had GPA's which ranged from 2.6 to 3.0 and did not receive remuneration for field work. The field instructors were described by the students as primarily being employees of the agency where they worked, and having a social work degree with some previous supervisory experience. The agencies where the students were trained were primarily large, public agencies where most of the professional staff were not social workers (host agencies).

The significance of the demographic characteristics derived from these data is two-fold. First, to this researcher's knowledge, this is the first instance that state-wide demographic information for Virginia undergraduate social work students and their respective field instructors and agencies have been collected, analyzed and made available for reference. Secondly, as was shown in the results of the Multiple Regression Analysis (summarized below), specific demographic characteristics appear to make a statistically significant contribution to the variance of the dependent variable, Average Student Satisfaction with field work.

Analysis of questionnaire items 74, 75, and 76 showed that the majority (60 percent) of the students would accept a job at the agency where they completed their field work, and that 86 percent would recommend their agencies to other students. Seventy-one students provided responses to an open-ended item. The comments indicated that

students appeared to assess the field work experience as "overall" positive. These results seem to be in agreement with the research findings of Galambos and Wiggins (1970), Walton and Walz (1971) and Ormsby (1977). Just as the percentage of satisfied and dissatisfied workers on the job has remained fairly stable over time (80-85 percent satisfied), the limited research on social work student satisfaction seems to also show some consistency (overall, 65-75 percent of the respondents were satisfied with their placements).

The descriptive analysis provided two additional findings which were interesting in light of Herzberg's et. al., (1959) two-factor theory. One variable from the Climate subscale Warmth and one from the Climate subscale Conflict were found to be the most satisfying and least satisfying experiences, respectively, to students in field placement. Table 10 (p. 98) also shows that different items, although all from the New Learning Scale, contribute to both Satisfaction (Herzberg's et. al., Satisfiers) and Dissatisfaction (Herzberg's et al., Hygiene Factor). In addition, two Supervision factors which encompassed Technical/Evaluative and Human Relations Skills contributed to student satisfaction in this study, but were found to be Hygiene factors by Herzberg et. al., (1959). The findings reported in the previous studies that do not use the "critical incident" technique, do not generally support a two-factor theory. This was also the case for the undergraduate students in field placements in this study. The Virginia study seems to indicate that a two-factor theory would not be the most helpful in uncovering or understanding the areas that contribute to satisfaction and dissatisfaction of undergraduate social work students.

Another major finding stems from the t-test and multiple regression analysis which were used to analyze Research Questions 2, 4, and 6. These three questions were concerned with the relationship between demographic characteristics and student satisfaction. All demographic characteristics (except for field work grade which could not be accurately ascertained) were included in the full regression model. Demographic characteristics accounted for 27.2 percent of the variance of the dependent variable Average Student Satisfaction; the overall F-ratio for the regression equation was significant at the .01 level. The variable which explained the greatest percentage of the variance of student satisfaction was Type of Placement (Block--students devote full time to an agency for one or two semesters). Ormsby's (1977) study did not find any demographic characteristics significantly related to student satisfaction, including Type of Placement. The discrepancy between the Ormsby (1977) findings and those of the present study may be due to three (3) possible factors: (1) there were 17 satisfaction items in the Ormsby (1977) study, while the Virginia study questionnaire (SPSQ) included 73 satisfaction items; (2) Ormsby does not state if the 75 students surveyed were from accredited programs; (3) of the 27 demographic characteristics in the Virginia Study, only 15 were similar to those found in the Ormsby (1977) study.

The following nine (9) demographic variables were found to be significantly related to Average Student Satisfaction with the field placement:

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Direction of Relationship</u>
Type of Placement	Positive
Grade Point Average	Inverse
Remuneration	Positive
Field Instructor Degree	Positive
Social Work (Host Agency)	Inverse
Location of Agency	Inverse
Previous Training of Social Work Graduate Students	Inverse
Previous Training of Under- graduate Social Work Students	Positive
Variety of Tasks	Positive

In all but one case (grade point average), the variables are subject to external manipulation or control. For example, the director of field instruction can institute block placements if none exist or increase the number which already exist. More placements that offer remuneration or grants for undergraduates can be sought and utilized. Decisions to place students in urban, social work agencies where previous graduate students have been trained is a further example of how these characteristics could be utilized to enhance student satisfaction in field placement.

The variables GPA and Variety of Tasks have been reported in the literature as contributing to student satisfaction; these earlier findings are supported in this study.

The following sets of demographic variables were found to not be significantly related to student satisfaction in field placement:

Student variables--age, marital status, preference for type of agency, previous paid or volunteer experience, sex;

Field Instructor variables--employment status, previous supervisory experience, sex;

Agency variables--previous training of students from other fields, size of agency, size of work unit, type of funding.

The variables, employment status of field instructor, size of agency and size of work unit have been reported in the literature as not being associated with student satisfaction; these earlier findings are supported by this study.

A major finding of this study deals with the relationship between the expressed explanations ("amount") of the student's perceptions and their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Research Question 7). Seventy (70) satisfaction items and their corresponding explanations ("amounts") were significantly and positively correlated at the .01 level. Three items and their corresponding explanations ("amounts") showed a significant and inverse correlation at the .01 level. Table 10 (p. 98) presented an analysis of the 10 most satisfied items and the 10 least satisfied items. Students were satisfied when the variables were present in the field experience at the "just right" amount. On the other hand, the corresponding explanations ("amounts") indicated that students were dissatisfied when the items were present "too little" or "too much" in the field experience. The three variables that were present "too much" were: red tape, paperwork, and tension between individuals and groups in the agency. In general, students tended to have "too little" work rather than "too much." This part of the instrument seems to have greater power in explaining dissatisfaction than satisfaction.

Factor analysis was the mathematical tool used to analyze Research Question 8. This procedure helped to highlight the factors which made the greatest contribution to student satisfaction in field

placement. Varimax orthogonal rotation of seven (7) factors was used. These seven factors (Climate/warmth/intimacy; Supervisor/technical/evaluative; Supervisor/human relations; Indirect Service/participation/observation; New Learning/achieving objectives; Structure; Climate/hindrance) accounted for 81.5 percent of the variance of the dependent variable specifically used for the factor analysis (Overall Student Satisfaction). Climate factors were found to contribute 5.8 percent of the variance while combined Supervisory factors (Factor 2 and 3) accounted for 13.7 percent of the variance of the dependent variable. Factor 5 contributed almost 60 percent of the variance of the dependent variable. This factor was best explained as a "New Learning" factor and primarily consists of the agency as a place to learn about social work, the feelings of accomplishment the student gets from the work and the chance to use one's abilities and skills. Although Myrtle and Robertson (1979) studied satisfaction of health care workers and not students, they also found that important predictors of satisfaction were related to jobs which allowed nurses to use their abilities and skills as well as contributed to learning and growth in the nursing profession.

The literature has shown that some of the factors that influence professional social worker satisfaction are related to agency climate, supervision, working conditions, autonomy, agency policies, responsibility and achievement. The findings of this study seem to confirm that some of the same factors impact upon undergraduate social work student satisfaction in field placement (e.g., climate, supervision, achievement). However, the factor which made the largest

contribution to the variance of the dependent variable in this study was New Learning (59.3 percent). That is, the actual achievement of field work objectives (new learning) is strongly and positively associated with student satisfaction which, in turn, is one necessary condition for the occurrence of appropriate student behaviors in the learning process.

The results of the factor analysis support Tyler's (1950) theoretical position in that students obtained the most satisfaction (59.3 percent) from variables which provided the opportunity to perform the behaviors implied by field work objectives as delineated in the literature. For example, the field work objectives (cited in Chapter I, p. 13) "to demonstrate practice skills by putting knowledge to use" is related to Item 70 (New Learning Factor) "the chance to make use of my abilities and skills." Similarly, the field work objective "to integrate social work knowledge, skill and values through direct practice experience" (Chapter I, p. 13) is related to Item 68 (New Learning Factor) "The agency as a place for students to learn about and develop skills in social work" and Item 73 (New Learning Factor) "The feeling of accomplishment I get from my work."

The major factor associated with student satisfaction -- New Learning -- is itself a desired outcome of field placement. Consequently, measuring the relative attainment of student satisfaction may help to predict the relative attainment of certain field work objectives. In classroom courses, achievement of educational objectives can be assessed through exams, term papers, class presentations, group discussion, etc. In field work, these



methods are not appropriate. Factor analysis of the responses to the SPSQ may provide undergraduate programs with a vehicle for determining the fulfillment of field work program objectives.

### Discussions

Discussions of the Virginia study will focus on the following four (4) major points: (1) Characteristics of students, field instructors and agencies (Questions 1, 3 and 5); (2) Relationship between demographic characteristics and student satisfaction (Questions 2, 4 and 6); (3) Relationships between student satisfaction and expressed explanations (Question 7); and (4) Factors which are associated with student satisfaction.

#### Question 1, 3 and 5

Although the students who were selected for inclusion in this study were from the state of Virginia, the findings from the demographic data appear to be in agreement with the work of Galambos and Wiggins (1970) and with Ormsby (1977) whose populations were drawn from other sections of the country. The limited available data seem to show a consistency in the demographic characteristics of undergraduate social work students, their field instructors and the agencies utilized for field placement. This information not only provides state-wide data to the Virginia schools, but also makes a general contribution to the social work education literature (including field instruction). The information that demographic variables seem to show stability over time could serve at least two

purposes: (1) it could be utilized in assessing new trends in student populations or agencies serving as field placements in Virginia, and (2) it could help stimulate further research in the area of undergraduate field instruction.

#### Questions 2, 4, and 6

The nine demographic characteristics which were found to be significantly related to student satisfaction can be of use to undergraduate social work faculty presently involved in placement decisions. For example, the accredited social work program in this study that had the highest mean satisfaction score (338) was a rural school which only utilized block placements. (The placements were in both rural and urban locations.) Traditionally, rural programs have used block placements because of the distance between the school and the field work agencies. However, in schools located in urban areas (where there are a larger number of social agencies and students commute to school) block placements are often not seen as necessary. Usually, the type of placement offered is based on faculty teaching schedules or administrative decisions made outside of the social work programs.

In trying to better understand the relationship between block placements and student satisfaction, this researcher recently interviewed 5 (female) undergraduate students who had completed a block placement offered for the first time at the students' school. Each student expressed similar sentiments. They felt their lives were fragmented and harried, having to go from school to jobs, to families. The block placement experience allowed them to concentrate

on one major segment of their lives which helped them feel much less fragmented and more satisfied with all the roles they needed to take on. Perhaps it isn't the block placement itself that is important in student satisfaction, but the impact it has on other aspects of the student's life that generates a positive placement experience. In order to explore this issue further, a method of data collection different from that of this study, (such as personal interviews) could be employed. Survey instruments such as the SPSQ tend to provide breadth of information. For in-depth insights, a different type of instrument or an alternative research methodology would be required. It seems important for undergraduate social work programs in Virginia to look at the type of placement options they offer students and reconsider the rationale for offering (or not offering) block placement since this demographic variable made the greatest contribution to the variance of the dependent variable.

The inverse relationship found between GPA and student satisfaction may indicate that students with higher GPA's have higher expectations and are more demanding of their field placements and their field instructors. These students may be more critical of agency policies and the abilities and skills of their field instructors. Since there generally seems to be "too little" for students to do rather than "just the right amount" or "too much," perhaps higher GPA students are bored and need more of a challenge. The study found that academically weaker students were generally more satisfied. Therefore, the placement experiences of the academically stronger student may need more attention and careful planning.

The finding that students are more satisfied with field instructors without social work degrees leads to additional research questions. This variable was found to contribute less than 1 percent (0.64) to the variance of Average Student Satisfaction. Since its contribution (although statistically significant) was so negligible, perhaps the field instructor's skills and abilities in technical, evaluative and human relations areas are the key factors rather than educational degree. If future studies support this finding, implications would exist for criteria to be used in the selection of field instructors and for the re-evaluation of accreditation guidelines as presently established by CSWE with regard to undergraduate field work.

The finding that students were satisfied in agencies where graduate social work students had been previously placed, but not where undergraduates have been trained, can possibly be understood as a function of time. Agencies have had a great many years of experience in the training of graduate students, but very limited time in training undergraduate students. An agency that has had experience with graduate level performance can perhaps better select appropriate assignments for undergraduate students. The statistical significance of this finding could be expected to disappear with time and increased interaction between undergraduate students and field work agencies. Another factor that will possibly aid in diminishing the significance of this finding is the ability of undergraduate educators to better define field work objectives.

Although demographic characteristics are often difficult to manipulate, those characteristics included in this study which were significantly related to student satisfaction, are subject to external control (except for GPA). This means, that to some extent, student satisfaction in field work may be enhanced through the use of significant demographic characteristics in placement decisions.

Demographic characteristics contributed approximately 27 percent of the variance of student satisfaction. Their importance in student placements need to be kept in perspective and utilized in placement decisions according to their relative contribution to student satisfaction. Since there also are demographic characteristics which have not yet been studied, conclusions regarding the relationships found between demographic characteristics and student satisfaction should be considered tentative and used with some caution, especially by programs outside of Virginia.

#### Question 7

Satisfaction with field work experiences were significantly correlated with the experience being present at the "just right" amount. Dissatisfying experiences were significantly correlated with the experiences being present "too much" or "too little." According to Tyler (1950), satisfaction with a learning experience is a necessary condition for certain behaviors to occur in the learning process. Assuming that Tyler's model is valid, what happens to the desired behaviors (defined by each program but guided by accreditation standards) if dissatisfaction occurs due to a lack of ("too little")

or an excess of ("too much") particular experiences? If desired behaviors are not occurring fully, it can be assumed that some students may be entering beginning level practice less than fully prepared. This assumption requires theory testing which was not the intent of this dissertation. However, a necessary preliminary step to testing Tyler's theory was undertaken in this study by identifying and delineating the most and least satisfying student experiences in field placements.

Since graduate social work students were not surveyed, it is not known if the most and least satisfying field work experiences found for the undergraduate students in this study also apply to graduate students. Further empirical testing is necessary in order to determine if the findings are unique to undergraduate students or if similarities exist between the two groups of students.

Findings from Research Question 7 indicate that there are specific areas in the field work experience that could be improved. Unless supervisors, agencies and the faculty have concrete feedback from student experiences, changes or improvement in curriculum might not occur, or are likely to occur in inappropriate areas. Students have indicated that they have "too little" to do in the placement. They also are lacking in enough opportunities for direct observation of their field instructors. The expressed explanation ("amount") for student satisfaction and dissatisfaction with specific elements of the field placement can guide the appropriate increase or decrease of certain experiences in order to increase the level of student satisfaction and decrease the level of dissatisfaction.

Question 8

Although the literature points to the importance of the relationship between Agency Climate and Supervisory factors and the job satisfaction of professional social workers, these factors contributed a total of 19.5 percent to the variance of the dependent variable in this study. The most important factor (Factor 5) to the student was "New Learning." It was shown that similar factors contribute to both worker and student satisfaction, but there seems to be a major difference. The focus of students' satisfaction is related to achieving their objectives as students -- new learning. However, this finding should be used with caution until further research is carried out in the area of student satisfaction in field placement which utilizes factor analysis. When factor analysis is used, the researcher is allowed wide latitude in interpreting the common thread that ties the variables of a particular factor together, and subsequently in also naming the factor. Therefore, at this stage of research, the individual items which comprise the "New Learning" factor may be more important than the name ascribed to the factor.

Implications

The subject of job satisfaction has been under investigation and close scrutiny for approximately 80 years. Each research effort on the subject has contributed to the understanding of the larger unfolding picture. The insights gained from the findings of this study have implications for (1) The general knowledge base of job satisfaction and, more specifically, for student satisfaction in

undergraduate social work field instruction; (2) instituting curriculum changes; and (3) CSWE accreditation guidelines with respect to undergraduate field instruction.

Over the years, researchers have found that they either needed to modify existing job satisfaction instruments or develop completely new ones. Vroom (1964) saw this as a weakness of past research efforts in the area of job satisfaction. A satisfaction instrument which addressed the special needs of students in a quasi-work setting did not exist when this study was undertaken. Tailoring an instrument to this unique group has had some definite benefits. First, an instrument is now available which can be used by other social work programs who wish to assess the level of student satisfaction in field placements in their programs and to explore the achievement of field work objectives. More importantly, the findings from this study's unique instrument (SPSQ) can be used by social work faculty, field instructors and agency administrators in their ongoing joint efforts to develop and change curriculum. The issue of validity would require further study by those using the SPSQ on populations outside of Virginia.

The results of this study showed that there are both demographic and attitudinal variables which are associated with student satisfaction in field placement. For the most part, the variables which are statistically significant are manipulable. Therefore, the empirically based findings of this study can be of assistance to directors of field instruction in placement decisions that will contribute towards the enhancement of field learning, and toward



student satisfaction. In addition, the use of SPSQ can provide one vehicle for assessing the achievement of field work objectives.

This study has possible implications beyond individual undergraduate social work programs. That is, there are implications for the CSWE accreditation standards and guidelines in the area of undergraduate field instruction. CSWE presently has very general guidelines for field work; a minimum of 300 hours in field placement; a preference for a field instructor with an MSW degree; and, a generic rather than specialized field experience. As the study shows, the educational degree of the field instructor makes practically no contribution to the variance of student satisfaction. In addition, the students felt that there was "too little" group work and community organization experiences (part of generic practice) present in field placements. At the present time, CSWE is undergoing a review of both undergraduate and graduate accreditation standards. It appears that the areas of the feasibility of generic placement experiences, the achievement of field work objectives and the necessity for an MSW supervisor (versus other criteria such as technical and human relations skills) need further attention and possible reconsideration. Perhaps a student satisfaction instrument for a random sample of undergraduate programs should be considered by CSWE. This could be used as an objective tool in the accreditation process when assessing the field work component of the program curriculum.

Students were most dissatisfied with variables that related to bureaucratic issues (red tape, paperwork, tension between individuals

and groups). Since the majority of students are placed in large, urban agencies, the programs need to incorporate into the curriculum issues and problems that relate to bureaucratic survival. Coping mechanisms should be taught both in class and in the field work agencies.

It is important for the members of SWECA-VA (Social Work Educators Council of Virginia) and other undergraduate social work faculty in Virginia to receive summary information of the results of this study. Each school will be apprised of their rank (among the 11 accredited schools) in terms of Average Student Satisfaction in field work. In addition, state-wide demographic information of the students, field instructors and agencies will be shared with the undergraduate programs. Factors which influence the satisfaction of students enrolled at their respective institutions will also be reported. The implication for low scoring schools is that the field work curriculum may need review and possible change and/or that placement decisions need further refinement. If CSWE were to require undergraduate programs to use a field work satisfaction instrument, programs that continuously scored below the mean (in relation to other programs in their state or nationwide) on such an instrument, could be assisted in looking at the adequacy of placement decisions, the curriculum and the achievement of some of the field work objectives.

#### Recommendations

This study was a beginning step in the investigation of the complex issue of work satisfaction as it applies to undergraduate

students. Several recommendations for future and improved research efforts can be derived from the findings. Specific recommendations follow:

1. National surveys which would include data on undergraduate social work student, field instructor and agency characteristics need to be undertaken. Since demographic characteristics relate to student satisfaction, additional variables not included in this study should be collected and statistically tested for their relationship to student satisfaction.
2. The study instrument, Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ), needs some refinement, further examination of the validity of the instrument and additional testing. This could include the addition of demographic characteristics as well as other New Learning variables which could account for an even higher percentage of the variance of Average Student Satisfaction.
3. There is a general lack of information and knowledge in the literature of both undergraduate field instruction and student satisfaction. A contribution to the literature could be made by building on the present study and engaging in further empirical work in the area of field instruction. Specifically, graduate social work educators could explore the level of satisfaction of graduate social work students in field placements.
4. A rigorous testing of Tyler's theory and its applicability to student satisfaction is recommended. That is, are students who are very satisfied with their field work experiences exhibiting more appropriate behaviors (as defined by the individual programs or as more broadly defined, by CSWE) than those students who are less satisfied?
5. To this researcher's knowledge, no study has been reported in the literature which looks at the decision-making process in field placement. A national study could be undertaken to determine how placement decisions are made. One possible finding from such a study would indicate if any of the significant satisfaction variables found in the present study are utilized in placement decisions.
6. The findings of job satisfaction studies of different work groups have resulted in a broad literature base and a better understanding of work satisfaction. Additional job satisfaction research on student populations in practicum settings would continue to build a wider data base for work

satisfaction in general and for students specifically. Wider use of the SPSQ could be used to determine the applicability of the instrument beyond undergraduate social work students in Virginia.

7. After the results of this study are shared with the 11 accredited programs in Virginia, it is recommended that the SPSQ be given to undergraduate students over a 5 year period to determine if faculty have implemented any changes in field work and if these changes made a difference in the level of Average Student Satisfaction. Further research efforts which utilize the SPSQ would have to examine the validity of the instrument.

Utilizing Tylers (1950) educational model, this study investigated the factors which are associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements. The beginning insights provided by this research can stimulate changes in the field work curriculum and the training of future BSW practitioners.

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## APPENDIX A

### The Pilot Study - George Mason University



## Pilot Study - George Mason University

### Population and Sample

In the Fall of 1978, this researcher conducted a pilot study of undergraduate social work student satisfaction in field placement at George Mason University. This study involved the use of a pre-existing survey instrument, which had been developed several years earlier and routinely filled out by the social work students at the end of their practicum experience. Data generated from the George Mason instrument, however, had not been analyzed prior to the time this researcher conducted the pilot study.

A total of 27 questionnaires from students who were enrolled in an accredited undergraduate program at George Mason University and who had completed concurrent placements in the Spring of 1978 were examined. The pilot instrument contained a minimal amount of demographic information about the students, field instructors and agencies in which the students were placed. As the Director of Field Instruction at George Mason University, this researcher was able to obtain additional information via records and/or personal contacts. These additional items were subsequently added to the instrument (SPSQ) developed for the Virginia study. Data on student characteristics included: sex, age, marital status, previous paid or volunteer social work experience, grade point average and field work grade. The agency characteristics included: social work or host agency, primary intervention used, type of funding and type of service provided. Tables 16, 17, and 18 which follow, provide a summary of the student, field instructor and agency characteristics for the pilot study population.

Table 16

## Pilot Study Student Characteristics

(N = 27)

Demographic Characteristics		Number	Percent
<u>Sex</u>			
	Female	23	(85.2)%
	Male	4	(14.8)
<u>Age</u>			
	19-29	17	(63.0)
	30-40	7	(25.9)
	41-51	1	( 3.7)
	52-62	2	( 7.4)
<u>Marital Status</u>			
	Single	11	(40.7)
	Married	14	(51.9)
	Separated	1	( 3.7)
	Widowed	1	( 3.7)
<u>Previous Paid or Volunteer Social Work Experience</u>			
	Yes	3	(11.1)
	No	24	(88.9)
<u>Grade Point Average</u>			
	1.6 - 2.0	2	( 7.4)
	2.1 - 2.5	3	(11.1)
	2.6 - 3.0	7	(25.9)
	3.1 - 3.5	10	(37.0)
	3.6 - 4.0	5	(18.5)
<u>Field Work Grade</u>			
	A	24	(88.9)
	B	3	(11.1)

Table 17  
Pilot Study Field Instructor Characteristics  
(N = 27)

Demographic Characteristics		Number	Percent
<u>Sex</u>			
	Female	14	(51.9)%
	Male	13	(48.1)
<u>Highest Educational Degree</u>			
	DSW	1	( 3.7)
	MSW	11	(40.7)
	Other Masters	4	(14.8)
	BSW	3	(11.1)
	College degree other than Social Work	3	(11.1)
	Other	5	(18.5)
<u>Previous Supervisory Experience</u>			
	Yes	16	(59.3)
	No	11	(40.7)

Table 18  
Pilot Study Agency Characteristics  
(N = 21)

Demographic Characteristics	Number	Percent
<u>Type of Agency</u>		
Host	16	(59.3)%
Social Work	11	(40.7)
<u>Primary Intervention</u>		
Casework	23	(85.2)
Group Work	3	(11.1)
Community Organization	1	( 3.7)
<u>Type of Funding</u>		
Public (Local)	12	(44.4)
Private	10	(37.0)
Federal/Military	3	(11.1)
Federal (Other)	2	( 7.4)
<u>Type of Service</u>		
Corrections	9	(33.3)
Department of Social Service	6	(22.2)
Settlement - YMCA	3	(11.1)
Mental Health	2	( 7.4)
Group Homes	2	( 7.4)
Other	5	(18.5)

### Development of the Pilot Study Instrument

Development of the instrument utilized for data collection began with an examination of a questionnaire used at George Mason University since 1973. This instrument consisted of 51 items which were subjective and perceptual in nature. The ratings for student satisfaction ranged from 0 (inadequate) to 5 (outstanding). The only identifying information included the student's name, agency name, name of field instructor and date. Additional demographic data, described in the previous section (Population and Sample), were incorporated for students, field instructors and agencies. Such demographic data helped the survey to focus on "people, the vital facts of people, and their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behavior" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 411).

The pilot study questionnaire consisted of eight scales. The major dimensions of the scales and the number of items in each scale are listed in Table 19. (A copy of the pilot questionnaire appears in Appendix B.)

Scale I (Direct Service to Clients) consisted of the first seven items on the questionnaire. These items addressed satisfaction with direct service to clients. The questions are similar to the scales of Variety and Activity of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). According to Labovitz and Orth (1972) in their study of summer interns in long-term care facilities, "the nursing aid's job is perceived as dissatisfying when the content, i.e., direct patient care, is deficient" (p. 435). The student interns were most satisfied by engaging in direct patient care.

Table 19

## Scales and Number of Items in Pilot Study Questionnaire

Scale	Number of Items
Direct Service to Clients	7
Indirect Service to Clients	5
Observational Experience	6
Experience as a Staff Member	6
Supervision - Technical	10
Supervision - Qualitative	9
Evaluative Functions of Supervisor	6
Overall Evaluation (General Satisfaction)	2
TOTAL	51

Scale II (Indirect Service to Clients) consists of the next five items in the pilot instrument. This scale generally relates to Company Policies and Practices in the MSQ except that, in the student satisfaction questionnaire, it relates more to policies and practices towards students. This scale gives an "objective sense" of agency climate as it relates specifically to students (i.e., how the agency perceives its role with respect to student placement). It lies in the realm of objective climate because each item can be quantified (e.g., the students can determine whether they were or were not notified of meetings; the students either did or did not receive orientation to the agency; and how long orientation lasted). In a sense, these objective experiences can be translated to subjective feelings in terms of the student's perception of their importance in the agency (does the agency care enough to orient the student, notify them of meetings, ask them to participate in meetings, or expose them to decision making, etc.).

The six questions of Scale III (Observational Experience) address two different dimensions. The first three questions relate to the dimension in the general satisfaction literature called "Opportunity for New Learning" (in the pilot study this opportunity was obtained through observation by the student). According to Locke (1976) opportunity for new learning has been found to be related to work interest and satisfaction (p. 1319). New learning, similar to creativity, autonomy and decision-making all involve using one's conceptual faculty. "In the absence of an adequate mental challenge or in the presence of a work task that is accomplished automatically

one experiences boredom..." (Locke, 1976, p. 1319-1320). The last three questions in Scale III related to the field instructor's respect and concern for the client, agency and community system.

Scale IV is similar to the social status scale of the MSQ. The last three questions of the scale in the pilot study were written in such a way that two choices were contained within one question (e.g., "Were you given status as a staff member or as a student by your supervisor?") Coding the responses of these three questions was, therefore, not possible. Consequently, only the first three questions in Scale IV were used in the analysis of the data.

Scales V, VI and VII relate to different aspects of supervision. There were 25 items (10, 9 and 6, respectively) in the pilot questionnaire relating to supervision. Scale V relates not only the technical aspects of supervision but the way the educational component was carried out. The job satisfaction literature generally looks at the administrative and human relations aspects of the supervisor's job. However, the educational responsibility of the supervisor has not been stressed in the literature. In the case of students, it is a dimension which must be considered and its contribution to field placement satisfaction tested.

The qualitative aspects of the supervisor are encompassed in the next scale (VI). These items relate to the human relations component of supervision. Within this scale the last three items also indicate the amount of Responsibility and Autonomy (two scales in the MSQ) given to the student by the supervisor. Recognition, Accomplishment and Achievement are scales which have been extensively used in



research instruments dealing with job satisfaction. These variables are addressed in Scale VII (Evaluative Functions of the Supervisor). In addition, the objectivity (or fairness) in grading by the supervisor was also ascertained. The last scale (VIII) dealt with the Overall Satisfaction of the student with the agency and field instructor.

In summary, the instrument used for the pilot study at George Mason University was a preexisting survey instrument. Demographic data consisting of 13 items were added to the 51 field placement satisfaction variables. The ratings for student satisfaction ranged from 0 to 5 and the eight major headings of the instrument comprised the scales which measured student satisfaction with different aspects of their field experience.

#### Data Collection

In the Fall of 1978, this researcher used an ex-post facto design<sup>a</sup> to study the level of student satisfaction in field placement at George Mason University. The study population comprised 27 students who were in their senior practicum at George Mason University and who completed a questionnaire at the end of the Spring Semester, 1978.

Since the pilot questionnaire did not contain any demographic information the researcher used social work program records to gather

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<sup>a</sup>"Ex-post facto research is systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 379).

student data. A "Data Sheet for Advisor for Practicum" includes sex, age, marital status, previous paid or volunteer experience and grade point average; each student must fill out this form prior to entering field placement. Final grade sheets were used to determine field work grade. The field instructor characteristics were determined from this researchers personal contacts with the individual field instructor or through a telephone call in which needed information was ascertained. Agency characteristics were gathered through personal knowledge of the agencies which were utilized as field placements. In addition, as Director of Field Instruction, this researcher had visited each agency prior to its being approved as a field placement.

Bias in data collection was minimized since the demographic data were of a factual nature (e.g., age, sex, agency funding, highest degree held by supervisor) and the questionnaires were completed a semester before the study took place.

### Data Analysis

Several statistical procedures were applied to the response of the 27 questionnaires. The computer program used in analyzing the data of the pilot study was SPSS written by Nie and Associates (1975).

Reliability of the pilot study questionnaire was established by utilizing Cronbach's "Coefficient Alpha" (1951). The reliability coefficients obtained were .83 and .90. "Most test makers and researchers are satisfied if they obtain reliability coefficients of .90 and above but dissatisfied if they get coefficients below .70" (Ary & Associates, 1972, p. 209). The reliability of the pilot instrument was, therefore, established.

The subprogram "Frequencies" provided a descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the students, field instructors and agencies. The ratio of females to males in the pilot study was 5:1 and the median age was 23.7 years. The majority of the students were married and most did not have previous paid or social work experience. Over 60 percent of the students had a grade point average (GPA) between 2.6 and 3.5. The ratio of A's to B's in field work was 8:1. The students in the pilot study had field instructors that were almost evenly divided between males and females and the majority of instructors had a social work degree (DSW, MSW, BSW). Approximately 60 percent of the instructors had previously supervised. The majority of students were in host agencies where the primary method of intervention used was casework. The majority of agencies were funded from tax dollars (public, military, federal) and over half of the senior student field placements were in correctional agencies and in departments of social services.

A t-test was conducted to determine whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between the scale means. A statistically significant difference between the mean of Scale II (Indirect Service) and the means of Scales I, III, IV, VI and VII was found. The results of the t-test helped in the formulation of the SPSQ by highlighting the low level of satisfaction with the indirect service component.

In subprogram "Breakdown" a criterion variable called Average Student Satisfaction (TAVG) was computed. Breakdown allows the researcher to examine the means and variances of the dependent

variable among several subgroups in a sample. In the George Mason University student population, the variable age showed a curvilinear (U shaped) relationship with field work satisfaction. The older (52-62 years) and younger (19-29 years) students were the most satisfied with their placements. This finding supports the numerous studies found in the literature which indicate similar results with workers on their jobs.

The most and least satisfied students were in private, host agencies. There was a tendency for the most satisfied to be placed in correctional agencies or group homes, while the least satisfied were in settlement/YMCA types of agencies. In general, students seemed more satisfied with female field instructors who had previous supervisory experience. Students in the GPA group of 3.6 - 4.0 were most dissatisfied irrespective of type agency or previous supervisory experience of the field instructor. In other words, an inverse relationship was found between GPA and field work satisfaction -- the lower the GPA the more satisfied the student.

As determined by means of the subprogram "Regression," a composite profile of the most satisfied student in the pilot study is as follows:

- Low GPA
- Field Instructor was female with previous supervisory experience
- Host agency (type)
- Private agency (funding)
- Corrections or group home (service)

From the above mentioned variables, GPA (14 percent) and Type of Agency (Host) (25 percent) made the greatest contribution to the dependent variable TAVG.

A preliminary factor analysis was carried out for the 51 satisfaction variables. The result tended to support the findings of the regression analysis in that agency factors were most helpful in understanding student satisfaction in field placement.

The results of the pilot study were instrumental in the design of the SPSQ which was used to examine the level of satisfaction of BSW students in social work field placements in Virginia.

## APPENDIX B

### Pilot Study Questionnaire

## GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Name of Student

Name of Field Instructor

Date

Name of Agency

Student Evaluation of Field Placement

Instructions: Please assign a rating for each item below. The questions relate to your experiences in the field and to your field instructor. Use the following scale: 5 highest, 0 lowest; use NA when Not Applicable. (5 = Outstanding, 0 = Inadequate). In the space provided for comments, please give a fuller explanation of your ratings (whether positive or negative) or any additional relevant information you wish to include.

I. Student ExperienceA. Direct Service to Clients

1. Were you assigned cases, early in the semester?

a. individuals	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

b. groups	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

c. community experiences	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

2. Did you feel you were assigned sufficient cases during the semester?

a. individuals	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

b. groups	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

c. community experiences	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	0	1	2	3	4	5	

3. Were you given the opportunity to participate in the selection and/or development of learning experiences?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

4. Comments:

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B. Indirect Services to Clients

1. Were you notified of meetings, institutes, workshops, etc., related to social work outside the agency?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

2. Were you able to participate in any professional meetings outside your agency?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

3. Were you given any opportunities to learn more about research or directly participate in on-going research?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

4. What exposure did you have to administrative decision making? (Board meetings, hiring-firing policies, budget meetings, policy making relating to the clients?)

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

5. How would you rate the orientation you received about the agency (structure and function) and the clients with whom you would be working?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
 0   1   2   3   4   5

6. Comments:

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### C. Observational Experience

1. Were you given the chance to observe your supervisor and/or other professionals work with

a. individuals  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

b. groups  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

c. community  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

2. Do you believe that your field instructor has respect, concern and interest in the dignity and worth of others in

a. the client system?  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

b. the agency system?  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

c. the community system?  $\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

3. Comments:

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### D. Experience as a Staff Member

1. Did the agency provide necessary space, resources, etc.

$\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

2. Were you given the opportunity to participate in staff meetings?

$\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

3. Did you feel free to ask questions, disagree, express your own ideas, etc., at agency meetings?

$\frac{\quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad / \quad /}{0 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5}$

4. Were you given status as a staff member or as a student by the supervisor?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

- a. by other staff

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

- b. by the admin-  
stration

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

5. Comments:

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## II. Field Instruction

### A. Amount and Format

1. Did your supervisor make his or her expectations of you, as a student, clear at the beginning of the year?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

2. Did you have regular weekly conferences?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

3. Was your supervisor actively helpful when you had difficulty?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

4. Were you able to see your supervisor whenever the need arose, rather than having to wait for conference times?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

5. Comments:

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## B. Presentation of Subject Matter

1. Did the supervisor present material in a well organized fashion?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

2. Were you able to integrate the material from the field with classroom learning?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

3. Was your supervisor familiar with your cases?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

4. Could your supervisor admit that he or she "didn't have the answer" and help you find a source that did?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

5. Did he or she use enough examples or illustrations to clarify the material?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

6. Comments:

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## C. Qualitative Aspects

1. Did you supervisor appear sensitive to your needs?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

2. What was the extent of his or her helpfulness of supervision in:

a. Understanding human behavior /   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

b. Understanding social process/     /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

c. Understanding community resources     /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

d. Learning social work practice     /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

e. Understanding and using self     /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

3. Were you held accountable for your specific assignments?

    /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

4. Do you feel you had the appropriate freedom to make mistakes?

    /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

5. Did you feel free to ask questions, disagree, express your own ideas, etc., with your supervisor?

    /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

6. Comments:

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#### B. Evaluative Function of Field Instructor

1. Was your supervisor fair and impartial in his dealings with you?

    /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

2. Did he or she tell you when you have done particularly well?

    /    /    /    /    /    /      
0 1 2 3 4 5

3. Could he or she offer constructive criticism?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

4. Was the supervisor open to your opinions and requests?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

5. To what degree were you involved in your own evaluation?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

6. Do you think you were graded fairly?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

7. Comments:

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### III. Overall Evaluation

1. How would you rate your instructor as a field teacher?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

2. What overall rating would you give to the Agency as a place for students to learn about and develop skills in social work?

/   /   /   /   /   /   /  
0   1   2   3   4   5

3. Give overall assessment of your Field Placement. (What aspects were particularly good? Negatives? etc.)

## APPENDIX C

### Revisions Prior to Field Testing

These items were added to the original questionnaire prior to the pretest.

### Demographic

Item number 2: Type of placement current semester/quarter? (check one)

1. Concurrent - I am taking courses at the same time that I am doing my field placement.
2. Block - I am taking no courses while in field placement and am completing placement in one semester/quarter.
3. Other  
(specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

Item number 7: Amount of paid or volunteer social work experience prior to this field placement. (check one)

1. Five or more years of paid social work experience
2. Two through four years of paid social work experience.
3. Less than two years of paid experience.
4. No paid experience.
5. Volunteer experience.
6. No experience at all.

Item number 8: What did you expect your final grade to be in the Fall (1978) semester/quarter (Fall)?

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. D
5. Not applicable

Item number 9: What field work grade did you actually receive in the Fall semester/quarter?

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. D
5. Not applicable

Item number 10: What field work grade did you receive this current semester/quarter? (check one)

1. A
2. B
3. C

4. D
5. Don't know yet but I expect to receive the grade of
6. A
7. B
8. C
9. D

Items 8, 9 and 10 were necessary since the questionnaire will be given prior to students receiving their grades. It was felt that if the student's expected grade was the same as the grade they actually received in a previous semester or quarter, that the grade for the semester being considered could be more accurately predicted.

Item number 12: What is the employment status of your current field instructor (check one)

1. My field instructor is an employee of the agency.
2. My field instructor is a member of the faculty of my school.
3. My field instructor is a graduate student in social work.
4. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

This item was not considered in the pilot study questionnaire because all field instructors for George Mason University are employed by their agencies. (This is not the case in other schools.)

Item number 15: Options increased from original 6 to 13 revised.  
Type of agency where you are currently doing field placement. (check one)

1. Alcohol/Drug Abuse Agency
2. Community organization/Planning Agency
3. Corrections/Juvenile or Adult probation, parole/jails, court
4. Department of Social Services
5. Family Service Agency
6. Group Home (Foster care type)
7. Hospital
8. Mental Health Agency
9. Mental retardation agency
10. Public School



11. Residential treatment - Emotionally disturbed-adult or children
12. Nursing home/services to aged
13. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

Item number 17: In terms of professional staff (social worker or other disciplines) is your current placement in a small, medium, or large agency? (check one)

1. small (1 - 5 professional staff)
2. medium (6 - 20 professional staff)
3. large (over 20 professional staff)

An important factor found in the job satisfaction and organizational climate literature was noted by Payne & Pugh (1976), pp. 1155-1157) who stressed the importance of the size of agency as a structural factor which affects satisfaction.

Item number 19: Check the appropriate statement about the location of your current field placement agency.

1. My agency is in an urban community.
2. My agency is in a rural community.
3. My agency is in a suburban community.
4. Don't know.

Item number 20: Did you receive any of the following specifically for your field work activities?

1. I received a stipend from the agency where I did my placement.
2. I received money through a State or Federal grant.
3. I received money available through my own college or university for field work.
4. I am being paid my salary by an agency while I go to school.
5. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

This would add an item to the extrinsic factors related to placement satisfaction. It will be interesting to see if those students who receive some remuneration for their field work are more satisfied than those who do not receive any compensation. This factor

has not been shown to be significant in the job satisfaction literature. Hopefully the results of this study will shed some light on the ongoing debates in social work between those who feel students should be paid and those who wish to separate the learning experience from a paid staff experience.

In the questionnaire items the following were added or changed:

Item number 7: Original - Supervisor  
Revised - Supervisor sensitive to my educational needs.

The original item was too vague and the supervisor is not there to attend to all needs.

Item number 13: Added - The extent of supervisors help in applying the social work code of ethics in my work

This item was used to further assess supervisors technical skills and to look at supervisors ability to use him/herself as role model.

#### Added

Item number 25: The policies related to students in the agency.

Item number 26: The manner in which students are informed about agency policies.

Item number 27: The way agency policies are administered.

All three questions were added in order to get a broader input into agency factors - structures and climate. These questions will provide a feeling for policies and practices towards students specifically as well as agency policies in general.

Item number 49: The relationship between myself and the other staff members.

The area of satisfaction with relationships with peers and co-workers (work group) has been found to be an important factor in job satisfaction (in particular to social workers - Pines & Kafry, 1978).

Added

Item number 44: The opportunity to make decisions on my own.

Item number 47: The competence of my supervisor to make overall decisions

## APPENDIX D

### Revised and Added Items After Pre-Test

From the 22 responses received in the pretest, it was discovered that the following items needed to be further clarified

Demographic Information

Item number 7 - Students who had both paid and volunteer experience could not follow the instructions to check just one option. Therefore, this question was divided into two questions and reads as follows:

Item number 7: Amount of paid social work experience prior to this field placement. (check one)

1. Five or more years of paid social work experience.
2. Two through four years of paid social work experience.
3. Less than two years of paid experience.
4. No paid experience.

Item number 8: Amount of volunteer social work experience prior to this field placement. (check one)

1. Five or more years of volunteer social work experience.
2. Two through four years of volunteer social work experience.
3. Less than two years of volunteer experience.
4. No volunteer experience at all.

The questions of field grade excluded the option credit/no credit or pass/fail. These options were added to the questions dealing with field grade.

Item number 16 - wording was changed from:

I worked in a (check one) to

My current field placement is in a

Item number 17 - in trying to ascertain the size of the agency students were asked to check if there were in a small, medium, or large agency (according to number of professional staff). Some

students indicated that their unit, department (work group) was small or medium but the agency itself was either medium or large. This question was divided into 2 questions: size of unit and total size of agency.

Item number 17: In terms of professional staff (social workers and other disciplines) is your work unit small, medium or large?

1. small (1 - 5 professional staff)
2. medium (6 - 20 professional staff)
3. large (over 20 professional staff)

Item number 18: In terms of professional staff (social workers and other disciplines) is your total agency

1. small (1 - 5 professional staff)
2. medium (6 - 20 professional staff)
3. large (over 20 professional staff)

Item number 20 omits the option "I did not receive any money for field work activities".

The questions and options now read: Did you receive any of the following specifically for your field work activities?

1. I received a stipend from the agency where I did my placement.
2. I received money through a State or Federal grant.
3. I received money available through my own college or university for field work.
4. I am being paid my salary by an agency while I go to school.
5. I did not receive any money for field work activities.
6. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

The following five items were added after the pretest but were not generated from the feedback of the 22 tested student responses.

23. Has your field placement agency trained undergraduate social work students prior to your being placed there?

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Yes
- \_\_\_\_ 2. No
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Don't know
24. Has your field placement agency trained graduate social work students within the last five years?
- \_\_\_\_ 1. Yes
- \_\_\_\_ 2. No
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Don't know
25. Does your field placement agency serve as a placement for undergraduate or graduate students in fields other than social work?
- \_\_\_\_ 1. Yes, undergraduate only
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Yes, graduate only
- \_\_\_\_ 3. No, only social work placements
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Both undergraduate and graduate students in other fields are also placed at this agency
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Don't know
26. In my field placement, tasks involved:
- \_\_\_\_ 1. Only short term, crisis work (at most 2-3 contacts)
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Only contracted with clients, for approximately 8-12 sessions.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Only long term on-going contacts.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. A fairly even combination of at least two of the above situations.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

27. The type of agency I was placed in was

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My first choice (preference)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My second choice (preference)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My third choice (preference)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I was open to any type of agency. It didn't matter where I was placed
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Not among my first three choices

Questionnaire Items

Item number 40 - One student indicated her supervisor observed her through video tape. This was included in the item. It now reads: My supervisor directly (or through video tape) observes me with clients. (individual/group/community).

In addition, item number 8 omitted the words "in field work". The question previously read: What did you expect your final grade to be in the Fall (1978) semester/quarter? The question reads: What did you expect your final grade in field work to be in the Fall (1978) semester or Winter 1978 quarter?



## APPENDIX E

### Climate Factors

Payne and Pugh (1976, p. 1143) show in diagram form the questionnaires and Climate Indices which have been used to measure climate and structure in subjective and objective ways. They include the structure scale of Litwin and Stringer as a way to measure subjective structure. The rest of the Litwin and Stringer scales can be used to measure subjective climate.

As there are objective structure questions included in the demographis portion of the questionnaire (size, host or social work agency, type of agency service, funding, location) the following questions from Litwin and Stringer's structure scale were added to Part II of the instrument so that a larger number of items will be available for the agency structure scale.

1. Everyone's job in the agency being clearly defined.
2. The policies and agency structure having been clearly explained.
3. The rules, administrative details and red tape involved in my agency.
4. Ability people have to determine who has the formal authority to make decisions.

Subjective climate scales drawn from Friedlander and Margulies and Litwin and Stringer which seem to have relevance for students in practicum include:

(From Friedlander and Margulies)

1. Hindrance
2. Intimacy/Consideration (From Litwin & Stringer)
3. Risk

4. Warmth and Support (combined scales)
5. Conflict

#### Hindrance

1. The amount of time people generally need to spend on forms and paperwork.
2. The number of meetings workers generally have to attend.
3. People's work generally being facilitated by the way the agency is run.

#### Itimacy-/Consideration

1. The friendliness between administrators and workers.
2. The competition between workers.
3. The staff's feelings of respect for the client system.
4. The staff's feeling of respect for the community system.
5. The feeling of respect for fellow human beings in the agency.

#### Risk

1. How secure people felt in offering new and original ideas.
2. Being an advocate for clients by workers even if it means going against accepted policy and procedures.

#### Warmth and Support

1. The trust people have for each other in the agency.
2. The willingness of people in the agency to help each other professionally (caseloads, special projects).
3. How willing people in the agency are to get to know each other.

4. In general, the amount of support people receive for mistakes or error in judgement.
5. The relationship between myself and the other staff members.

#### Conflict

1. People being encouraged to give their opinions even if it means disagreeing with supervisors and administrators.
2. The tensions between individuals or groups within the agency.

Four items on agency structure and seventeen on climate were added to the questionnaire.

## APPENDIX F

### SPSQ Scales and Items in Each Scale

## SCALES

### Climate

#### Hindrance

- Item 11. The amount of time people generally need to spend on forms and paperwork.
- Item 22. The number of meetings workers generally have to attend.
- Item 37. People's work generally being facilitated by the way the agency is run.

#### Intimacy

- Item 12. The competition between workers.
- Item 23. The staff's feeling of respect for the client system.
- Item 38. The staff's feeling of respect for the community system.
- Item 43. The feeling of respect for fellow human beings in the agency.
- Item 60. The friendliness between administrators and workers (staff).

#### Risk

- Item 13. Being an advocate for clients by workers even if it means going against accepted policy and procedures.
- Item 27. How secure people felt in offering new and original ideas.

#### Warmth/Support

- Item 16. The trust people have for each other in the agency.
- Item 28. The willingness of people in the agency to help each other professionally. (caseloads, special projects, etc.)
- Item 45. In general, the amount of support people receive for mistakes or errors in judgement.
- Item 53. How willing people in the agency are to get to know each other.
- Item 66. The relationship between myself and the other staff members.

#### Conflict

- Item 17. People being encouraged to give their opinions even if it means disagreeing with supervisor and/or administrators.
- Item 29. The tensions between individuals or groups within the agency.

### Agency Structure

- Item 10. The jobs in my agency being clearly defined.
- Item 21. Everyone's job in the agency being clearly defined.

- Item 36. The rules, administrative details and red-tape involved in my agency.
- Item 40. The working conditions (space, telephone, resources, etc.)
- Item 42. The policies and agency structure having been clearly explained.
- Item 67. Ability people have to determine who has the formal authority to make a decision.

### Supervision

#### Technical

- Item 5. My supervisor making expectations of me clear at the beginning of placement.
- Item 6. My supervisor's familiarity with my cases (individual/group/community).
- Item 47. My supervisor's ability to present material in a well organized manner.
- Item 48. My supervisor's help with integration of field and classroom learning.
- Item 49. My supervisor's use of sufficient examples to clarify material presented.
- Item 55. My supervisor being helpful when I had difficulty.
- Item 56. My supervisor directly (or through video tape) observing me with clients (individuals, groups, and community).
- Item 57. My ability to see my supervisor when the need arose rather than wait for conferences.
- Item 58. Being able to meet with my supervisor on a weekly basis.
- Item 64. The competence of my supervisor to make overall decisions.
- Item 65. My supervisor's overall ability as a field teacher.

#### Qualitative/Educational

- Item 7. My supervisor being sensitive to my educational needs.
- Item 8. The extent of supervisor's helpfulness in understanding human behavior.
- Item 9. The extent of supervisor's helpfulness in understanding social processes.
- Item 14. The extent of supervisor's helpfulness in understanding community resources.
- Item 15. The extent of supervisor's help in learning social work practice.
- Item 18. The extent of supervisor's help in understanding and using self.
- Item 19. The extent of supervisor's help in applying the social work code of ethics in my work.

#### Evaluative

- Item 24. My supervisor's objectivity in dealing with me.
- Item 25. The feedback from my supervisor when I did a good job.

- Item 26. My supervisor's offer of constructive criticism.
- Item 30. My supervisor being open to my opinions.
- Item 31. My performance being graded fairly.
- Item 63. The degree I was involved in my own evaluation.

#### Activity

- Item 1. The number of individuals I was assigned to work with during field placement.
- Item 2. The number of groups I was assigned to work with during field placement.
- Item 3. The number of community experiences I was assigned during field placement.
- Item 4. The opportunity to participate in the selection of my learning experience.
- Item 38. The staff's feeling of respect for the community system.
- Item 39. The opportunity to participate in administrative decision making. (Board meetings, budget meetings, policy making relating to clients.)
- Item 50. The opportunity to participate in staff meetings.
- Item 70. The chance to make use of my abilities and skills.

#### Policies and Practices Toward Students

- Item 32. The orientation I received about the agency.
- Item 33. Being notified of meetings, workshops, etc., related to social work outside the agency.
- Item 34. The opportunity to participate in decision making regarding policies relating to students.

#### New Learning

- Item 41. The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with individuals.
- Item 44. The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with groups.
- Item 46. The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with a community.
- Item 68. The agency as a place for students to learn about and develop skills in social work.
- Item 73. The feeling of accomplishment I get from my work.

#### Autonomy

- Item 20. The freedom to disagree with my supervisor.
- Item 51. The freedom to ask questions at agency meetings.
- Item 52. The freedom to disagree at agency meetings.
- Item 54. The freedom to express own ideas at agency meetings.
- Item 59. The extent I was held accountable for specific assignments.
- Item 61. The opportunity to make decisions on my own.
- Item 62. The freedom to make mistakes.



Overall Satisfaction

Item 69. My overall satisfaction with my current placement.

## APPENDIX G

Letter of Instruction to Directors of  
Field Instruction and The  
Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ)

April 4, 1979

Dear Field Director,

Enclosed you will find the Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire that I will be using for my dissertation.

Please remind students that there are two answers to every question - It is important that they answer every question.

It would be best (for return rate) if students could complete the questionnaire at school and return it immediately to you.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is included for your convenience in returning the instrument.

I sincerely appreciate your interest, time and cooperation in this study.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me

Sincerely,

Miriam Raskin  
Director of Field  
Instruction  
Social Work Program  
George Mason University

P.S. Please be sure to tell the students that questions are phrased "current placement" but if they were in a block placement they are to answer it in terms of their last placement.

Undergraduate Social Work Student Satisfaction  
Questionnaire

This questionnaire is concerned with your experience in Senior Field Placement. The answers you provide will assist faculty and agency personnel clarify issues related to the field work component of undergraduate social work education.

It is important that you keep the following points in mind when completing the questionnaire:

- A. This questionnaire will in no way identify you, your field work supervisor or your agency. All questionnaires will be returned directly to the researcher and your individual responses will be kept confidential.
- B. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Your responses will indicate your opinion and feelings about an educational experience.
- C. Please answer every question. Feel free to include additional comments in the space provided at the end of the questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this study.

Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ)

Part I: Demographic Information

1. Name of your school (check one)

- ☐ 1. Eastern Mennonite College
- ☐ 2. Ferrum College
- ☐ 3. George Mason University
- ☐ 4. Longwood College
- ☐ 5. Madison University
- ☐ 6. Norfolk State College
- ☐ 7. Radford College
- ☐ 8. Virginia Commonwealth University
- ☐ 9. Virginia Intermont College
- ☐ 10. Virginia State University
- ☐ 11. Virginia Union College

2. Type of Placement current semester/quarter (check one)

- ☐ 1. Concurrent - I am taking courses at the same time that I am doing my field placement.
- ☐ 2. Block - I am taking no courses while in field placement and am completing placement in one semester/quarter.
- ☐ 3. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_.)

3. Sex

- ☐ 1. Male
- ☐ 2. Female

4. Age at last birthday (check one)

- ☐ 1. 19-29
- ☐ 2. 30-39
- ☐ 3. 40-49
- ☐ 4. 50 and over

5. What was your cumulative GPA when you entered field placement? (check one)

- ☐ 1. Below 1.5
- ☐ 2. 1.5 - 2.0
- ☐ 3. 2.1 - 2.5
- ☐ 4. 2.6 - 3.0
- ☐ 5. 3.1 - 3.5
- ☐ 6. 3.6 - 4.0

6. What is your marital status? (check one)

- ☐ 1. Single
- ☐ 2. Married
- ☐ 3. Separated
- ☐ 4. Divorced
- ☐ 5. Widowed

7. Amount of paid social work experience prior to this field placement. (check one)

- ☐ 1. Five or more years of paid social work experience.
- ☐ 2. Two through four years of paid social work experience.
- ☐ 3. Less than two years of paid experience.
- ☐ 4. No paid experience.

8. Amount of Volunteer social work experience prior to this field placement. (check one)

- ☐ 1. Five or more years of volunteer social work experience.
- ☐ 2. Two to four years of volunteer social work experience.
- ☐ 3. Less than two years of volunteer social work experience.
- ☐ 4. No volunteer experience at all.

9. What did you expect your final grade in field work to be in the Fall (1978) semester or (Winter 1978) quarter?

- ☐ 1. A
- ☐ 2. B
- ☐ 3. C
- ☐ 4. D
- ☐ 5. Pass
- ☐ 6. Fail
- ☐ 7. Credit
- ☐ 8. No Credit
- ☐ 9. Not applicable

10. What field work grade did you actually receive in the Fall semester/quarter?

- ☐ 1. A
- ☐ 2. B
- ☐ 3. C
- ☐ 4. D
- ☐ 5. Pass
- ☐ 6. Fail
- ☐ 7. Credit
- ☐ 8. No Credit
- ☐ 9. Not applicable

11. What field work grade did you receive this current semester/quarter? (check one)

- ☐ 1. A
- ☐ 2. B
- ☐ 3. C
- ☐ 4. D
- ☐ 5. Pass
- ☐ 6. Fail
- ☐ 7. Credit
- ☐ 8. No Credit
- ☐ 9. Not applicable

Don't know yet but I expect to receive the grade of:

- ☐ 10. A
- ☐ 11. B
- ☐ 12. C
- ☐ 13. D
- ☐ 14. Pass
- ☐ 15. Fail
- ☐ 16. Credit
- ☐ 17. No Credit
- ☐ 18. Not applicable

12. Did you receive any of the following specifically for your field work activities?

- ☐ 1. I received a stipend from the agency where I did my placement.
- ☐ 2. I received money through a State or Federal grant.
- ☐ 3. I received money available through my own college or university for field work.
- ☐ 4. I am being paid my salary by an agency while I go to school.
- ☐ 5. I did not receive any money for my field work activities.

13. Sex of your current field instructor?

- ☐ 1. Male
- ☐ 2. Female

14. What is the employment status of your current field instructor? (check one)

- ☐ 1. My field instructor is an employee of the agency.
- ☐ 2. My field instructor is a member of the faculty of my school.
- ☐ 3. My field instructor is a graduate student in social work.
- ☐ 4. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

15. What is the highest educational degree held by your current field instructor? (check one)

- ☐ 1. DSW (Doctorate in Social Work)
- ☐ 2. MSW (Masters in Social Work)
- ☐ 3. BSW (Bachelors in Social Work)
- ☐ 4. A doctorate in another field
- ☐ 5. A masters degree in another field
- ☐ 6. A bachelors in another field
- ☐ 7. No college degree
- ☐ 8. Don't know
- ☐ 9. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

16. What is your current field instructor's previous experience in supervising students? (check one)

- ☐ 1. Never supervised students before
- ☐ 2. Supervised students 1-3 years
- ☐ 3. Supervised students more than 3 years
- ☐ 4. Don't know

17. Type of agency where you are currently doing field placement. (check one)

- ☐ 1. Alcohol/Drug Abuse Agency
- ☐ 2. Community organization/Planning Agency
- ☐ 3. Corrections/Juvenile or Adult probation parole/jails, court
- ☐ 4. Department of Social Services
- ☐ 5. Family Service Agency
- ☐ 6. Group Home (Foster care type)
- ☐ 7. Hospital
- ☐ 8. Mental Health Agency
- ☐ 9. Mental retardation agency
- ☐ 10. Public School
- ☐ 11. Residential treatment
- ☐ 12. Nursing home/services to aged
- ☐ 13. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

18. My current field placement is in a (check one)

- ☐ 1. Private agency
- ☐ 2. Public/State/County agency (e.g. Dept. of Social Services)
- ☐ 3. Federal agency (e.g. Dept. of Health, Ed. & Welfare)
- ☐ 4. Military agency (e.g. VA hospital)
- ☐ 5. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).
- ☐ 6. Don't know

19. In terms of professional staff (social workers and other disciplines) is your department or work unit small, medium or large?

- ☐ 1. Small (1-5 professional staff)
- ☐ 2. Medium (6-20 professional staff)
- ☐ 3. Large (over 20 professional staff)

20. In terms of professional staff (social worker and other disciplines) is you total agency small, medium or large?

- ☐ 1. Small (1-5 professional staff)
- ☐ 2. Medium (6-20 professional staff)
- ☐ 3. Large (over 20 professional staff)

21. Check one of the following statements about your current field placement agency. (Consider the total agency, not just your unit or department.)

- ☐ 1. the entire professional staff is comprised of social workers.
- ☐ 2. More than half are professional social workers.
- ☐ 3. Some, but less than half of the staff are professional social workers.
- ☐ 4. No social workers on the staff.



22. Check the appropriate statement about the location of your current field placement agency.

- ☐ 1. My agency is in an urban community.
- ☐ 2. My agency is in a rural community.
- ☐ 3. My agency is in a suburban community.
- ☐ 4. Don't know

23. Has your field placement agency trained undergraduate social work students prior to your being placed there?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know

24. Has your field placement agency trained graduate social work students within the last five years?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know

25. Does your field placement agency serve as a placement for undergraduate or graduate students in fields other than social work?

- ☐ 1. Yes, undergraduate only
- ☐ 2. Yes, graduate only
- ☐ 3. No, only social work placements
- ☐ 4. Both undergraduate and graduate students in other fields are also placed at this agency
- ☐ 5. Don't know

26. In my field placement, my tasks involved

- ☐ 1. Only short-term, crisis work (at most 2-3 contacts)
- ☐ 2. Only contracted with clients for approximately 8-12 sessions.
- ☐ 3. Only long term on-going contacts.
- ☐ 4. A fairly even combination of at least two of the above situations.
- ☐ 5. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).

27. The type of agency I was placed in was

- ☐ 1. My first choice (preference)
- ☐ 2. My second choice (preference)
- ☐ 3. My third choice (preference)
- ☐ 4. I was open to any type of agency. It didn't matter where I was placed.
- ☐ 5. Not among my first three choices.

Part II

INSTRUCTIONS: FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS YOU ARE TO MARK TWO (2) DIFFERENT RESPONSES. ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE QUESTION, CIRCLE THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION THAT BEST EXPRESSES YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES IN YOUR CURRENT FIELD PLACEMENT. ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE, CIRCLE THE ANSWER WHICH BEST EXPLAINS YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION.

Satisfaction Scale:

1=Very Dissatisfied	4=Satisfied
2=Dissatisfied	5=Very Satisfied
3=Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied	NA=Not Applicable

Amount which explains your Satisfaction:

6=much too little	9=too much
7=too little	10=much too much
8=just right	NA=Not Applicable

In my field placement, this is  
how I feel about .....

1	2	3	4	5	NA		6	7	8	9	10	NA
1. The number of individuals I was assigned to work with during field placement.												
1	2	3	4	5	NA		6	7	8	9	10	NA
2. The number of groups I was assigned to work with during field placement.												

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
1	2	3	4	5	NA	3. The number of community experiences I was assigned during field placement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	4. The opportunity to participate in the selection of my learning experiences.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	5. My supervisor making expectations of me clear at the beginning of placement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	6. My supervisor's familiarity with my cases (individual/group/community)	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	7. My supervisor being sensitive to my educational needs.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	8. The extent of supervisor's helpfulness in understanding human behavior.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	9. The extent of supervisors helpfulness in understanding social processes.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	10. The jobs in my agency being clearly defined.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	11. The amount of time people generally need to spend on paper work.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	12. The competition between workers.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	13. Being an advocate for clients by workers even if it means going against accepted policy and procedures.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	14. The extent of supervisors helpfulness in understanding community resources.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	15. The extent of supervisors help in learning social work practice.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	16. The trust people have for each other in the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	17. People encouraged to give their opinions even if it means disagreeing with supervisor and/or administrators.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	18. The extent of supervisor's help in understanding and using self.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	19. The extent of supervisor's help in applying the social work code of ethics in my work.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	20. The freedom to disagree with my supervisor.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	21. Everyone's job in the agency being clearly defined.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	22. The number of meetings workers generally have to attend.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
217	1	2	3	4	5	NA	23. The staff's feeling of respect for the client system.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	24. My supervisor's objectivity in dealing with me.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	25. The feedback from my supervisor when I did a good job.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	26. My supervisor's offer of constructive criticism.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	27. How secure people felt in offering new and original ideas.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	28. The willingness of people in the agency to help each other profes- sionally. (caseloads, special projects, etc.)	6	7	8	9	10	NA

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	29. The tensions between individuals or groups within the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	30. My supervisor being open to my opinions.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	31. My performance being graded fairly.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	32. The orientation I received about the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	33. Being notified of meetings, workshops, etc; related to social work outside the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	34. The opportunity to participate in any professional meetings outside the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	35. The opportunity to learn about research.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	36. The rules, administrative details and red-tape involved in my agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	37. People's work generally being facilitated by the way the agency is run.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

	Very Dissatisfied					Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied											
219	1	2	3	4	5	NA	38.	The staff's feeling of respect for the community system.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	39.	The opportunity to participate in administrative decision making. (Board meetings, budget meetings, policy making relating to clients).	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	40.	The working conditions (space, telephone, resources, etc.)	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	41.	The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with individuals.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	42.	The policies and agency structure having been clearly explained.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	43.	The feeling of respect for fellow human beings in the agency.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	44.	The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with groups.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	45.	In general, the amount of support people receive for mistakes or errors in judgement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	46.	The opportunity to observe my supervisor work with a community.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, _____ is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
1	2	3	4	5	NA	47. My supervisor's ability to present material in a well organized manner.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	48. My supervisor's help with integration of field and classroom learning.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	49. My supervisor's use of sufficient examples to clarify material presented.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	50. The opportunity to participate in staff meetings.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	51. The freedom to ask questions at agency meetings.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	52. The freedom to disagree at agency meetings.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	53. How willing people in the agency are to get to know each other.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	54. The freedom to express own ideas at agency meetings.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	55. My supervisor being helpful when I had difficulty.	6	7	8	9	10	NA



	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	56. My supervisor directly (or through video tape) observing me with clients. (individuals, groups, and community)	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	57. My ability to see my supervisor when the need arose rather than wait for conferences.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
221	1	2	3	4	5	NA	58. Being able to meet with my supervisor on a weekly basis.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	59. The extent I was held accountable for specific assignments.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	60. The friendliness between admini- strators and workers (staff).	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	61. The opportunity to make decisions on my own.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	62. The freedom to make mistakes.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	63. The degree I was involved in my own evaluation.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
	1	2	3	4	5	NA	64. The competence of my supervisor to make overall decisions.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	In my field placement, this is how I feel about .....	Much Too Little	Too Little	Just Right	Too Much	Much Too Much	Not Applicable
1	2	3	4	5	NA	65. My supervisor's overall ability as a field teacher.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	66. The relationship between myself and the other staff members.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	67. Ability people have to determine who has the formal authority to make a decision.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	68. The agency as a place for students to learn about and develop skills in social work.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	69. My overall satisfaction with my current field placement.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	70. The chance to make use of my abilities and skills.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	71. The amount of communication to students about agency policies.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	72. The opportunity to participate in decision making regarding policies relating to students.	6	7	8	9	10	NA
1	2	3	4	5	NA	73. The feeling of accomplishment I get from my work.	6	7	8	9	10	NA

74. Would you accept a job at your field placement agency if it was offered?
- ☐ 1. Yes
  - ☐ 2. No
  - ☐ 3. Don't know
  - ☐ 4. Only if I was desperate for employment.
  - ☐ 5. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).
75. Would you recommend your agency as a field placement to other social work students who had similiar interests to your own?
- ☐ 1. Yes
  - ☐ 2. No
  - ☐ 3. Don't know
  - ☐ 4. Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_).
76. Additional comments regarding your current field work placement.

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FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH  
STUDENT SATISFACTION IN  
UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD PLACEMENTS

by

Miriam S. Raskin

(ABSTRACT)

Since the accreditation of undergraduate social work programs in 1974 there has been an increasing emphasis and focus on undergraduate education and especially on the content of the curriculum. The field work course has been described by undergraduate students as the most important and useful component of the curriculum. In order to determine the factors that contribute to student satisfaction in field placement a pilot study was undertaken at George Mason University in 1978.

In 1979, the pilot instrument was revised and pre-tested. The Student Practicum Satisfaction Questionnaire (SPSQ) was subsequently developed and utilized in the present study. The SPSQ consists of 27 demographic variables, 73 Likert-type satisfaction items plus three items which provided additional information. One hundred and seventy students responded to the student questionnaire.

The program Frequencies was used to address three research questions (1, 3 and 5) which dealt with the demographic characteristics of the Virginia students, their field instructors and placement agencies. The t-test and Multiple Regression Analysis were utilized to address the three research questions (2, 4 and 6) which looked at the relationship between the demographic characteristics and student satisfaction. Pearson correlation was employed to explore the

relationship between the expressed explanations of the student perceptions and level of satisfaction. The last research question (8) was addressed through the program Factor Analysis and the factors which made the greatest contribution to the variance of Overall Student Satisfaction were identified.

The study results showed that the demographic variable Block Placement made the greatest contribution to student satisfaction. Other demographic variables which were found to be significantly associated with student satisfaction were: GPA (inverse), remuneration, degree of field instructor (inverse), social work (inverse), urban agency, prior training of graduate social work students, of undergraduate social work students (inverse) and variety of tasks. The factor which made the greatest contribution (59.3 percent) to student satisfaction was New Learning or ability to achieve field work objectives.