

**JOB STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION IN CHILD WELFARE**

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS AND  
THE IMPACT OF SUPERVISION**

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**The Faculty of Graduate Studies**

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**By**

**Cheryl Martinez**

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS AND THE  
IMPACT OF SUPERVISION**

**BY**

**CHERYL MARTINEZ**

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University  
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree  
MASTER of SOCIAL WORK**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**This practicum was designed to identify levels and contributing factors of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in a northern agency. The interventions designed for this practicum were implemented through the context of supervision to determine if modifications to current supervisory practices in the agency can influence levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in the north. Supervision has been identified in the literature as an important contributing factor to job satisfaction among child welfare workers. .**

**The interventions included individual supervision contracts and a group supervision model. These supervision models differed from traditional supervision practices in the agency. The individual supervision contracts were developed through the forum of individual supervisory conferences and were designed as an attempt to more effectively individualize and prioritize workers supervision needs. The group supervision model was implemented as an attempt to increase support for workers, increase opportunities for professional growth, and increase independent and interdependent functioning, all of which have been identified as important for child welfare workers.**

**The central question addressed in this practicum is the extent to which modified supervision practices impact on overall levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. The findings confirmed that supervision is important to child welfare workers, but revealed more powerful influences on job stress and job satisfaction. Despite the limitations of the interventions, there were some encouraging results.**



## INTRODUCTION

The recruitment and retention of skilled social workers to provide child welfare services within my agency has been an ongoing issue. I have worked in child welfare as a field worker for eight years and as a supervisor for five years. My experience in the agency both as a field worker and supervisor continues to verify the high levels of stress and staff turnover among social workers delivering child welfare services. My experience has also been that social workers recruited to the child welfare field in the north are generally new graduates who enter the field unprepared for the high workload demands and challenges posed in practice resulting in high staff turnover.

Although there is no formal data collection system in the agency on turnover rates in child welfare, it has been my observation and experience that workers leave the system after two years. During the two year period workers become trained which increases their qualifications and they become more marketable to apply for other positions. My recollection of turnover of child welfare workers in my agency over the last few years is as follows. Two years prior to this study, four workers left the agency. One year prior to this study two workers left the agency. During the intervention phase, two workers left the agency.

If the issue of high staff turnover among child welfare workers is to be addressed, it is important to know not only the stresses the workers encounter, but also the satisfactions of the work that continues to motivate them. This practicum identifies factors of the work and work environment that are stressful for child welfare workers, as well as factors that attract and/or retain them to the field. This practicum was conducted at a time when there were workers within the child welfare field in my agency who had been recruited as new graduates and had less than two years experience in the field and were on the verge of making a

commitment to this area of practice. It is especially important to examine the job satisfaction levels of child welfare workers early in their careers, when they are on the verge of making their professional commitment to this area of practice. (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991:82)

The central question addressed in this practicum is the extent to which modified supervision practices impact on overall levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. Supervision has been identified in literature as a contributing factor to job satisfaction and buffer of stress among child welfare workers. The two interventions designed for this study were implemented through the context of supervision to determine if modifications to current supervisory practices in my agency can influence levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. These interventions included individual supervision contracts with workers and a group supervision model. These supervision models differed from traditional supervision practices in the agency.

The individual supervision contracts were developed through the forum of individual supervision conferences and were designed as an attempt to more effectively individualize and prioritize workers supervision needs. The group supervision model was implemented as an attempt to increase support for workers, increase opportunities for professional growth, and increase independent and interdependent functioning, all of which have been identified in literature as important for child welfare workers.

In summary, this study was designed for three purposes:

- 1) To collect data and examine levels and contributors of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in my agency. The examination of the stresses and sources of job satisfaction among the child welfare workers in my agency provides supervisors and administrators with a view of the issues pertaining to child welfare work in the north that impact negatively as well as positively on

child welfare workers. This data may be useful in supervision and program planning.

2) To determine if identified levels of job stress and job satisfaction can be modified through supervision.

3) To determine which of the identified factors if any relating to job stress and job satisfaction can be modified through supervision.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

My experience in the child welfare field and a review of literature suggests that stress levels and burnout are highly evident among social workers and more specifically social workers who deliver child welfare services. The literature further suggests that the recruitment and retention of child welfare workers is difficult given the demands and limitations within the child welfare system. Both at the field level and the supervisory level in child welfare, I have experienced the impact of a consistent high turnover rate and staffing crisis among child welfare workers in Northern Manitoba.

The intent of this literature review is to explore factors of the work and work environment that produce stress for child welfare workers as well as factors that attract workers and contribute to their continuing in the field. Literature on supervision in social work will be discussed given that supervision is being examined in this study as a potentially modifying factor to levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. As well, this chapter will include literature on group supervision.

#### **Job Satisfaction in Child Welfare**

This section of the literature review will discuss job satisfaction and job stress interchangeably, and the factors of the work and work environment in child welfare that contribute to job satisfaction and job stress. The literature recognizes that these are distinct entities, but also recognizes that they strongly impact upon each other. (Dean 1991:95).

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct meaning that it can be examined globally or in terms of different facets of the job, and that overall levels of job satisfaction are determined by levels of satisfaction for different facets of the job. (Jayaratne & Chess 1985: 761). It is basically the extent to which a worker is positively affected by his or her work situation, and the extent to which the latter contributes to the retention of workers in the job. Job stress on the other hand is the result of characteristics of the work environment that negatively affects workers and contributes to burnout and turnover. Increasing worker satisfaction and reduction of job stress can potentially deter turnover.

Several recent studies have revealed high levels of stress and turnover among social workers in child welfare practice. There have also been studies done among social workers in child welfare expressing satisfaction in their careers. (Jayaratne & Chess 1985 in Vinokur-Kaplan 1991:82). Vinokur-Kaplan (1991) examined the personal, organizational, and client-related factors that contribute to job satisfaction among social workers in public and voluntary child welfare agencies and found similarities between the two groups in terms of the factors that most contribute to job satisfaction, but also found differences related to the types of services provided. This study also found that the factors that contribute to job satisfaction are those that actualized professional goals such as work with clients and colleagues. The factors that most frequently contributed to job dissatisfaction were salary, working conditions, and the lack of feelings of accomplishment. Other responses indicated organizational factors such as poor supervision and bureaucracy as factors related to job dissatisfaction. (p. 86).

The factors predicting overall job satisfaction and the salience of these factors depended upon the agencies auspices, (ie: public vs. voluntary). (p. 87). Workers in voluntary agencies were more likely to mention salary as making them satisfied with their jobs than workers in public agencies. Voluntary agency workers were

significantly more likely to indicate that their work with clients made them satisfied with their jobs than public agency workers which Vinokur-Kaplan suggests is a reflection of the fact that public agency workers serve more involuntary clients than the voluntary agency workers. Voluntary agency workers were also more likely to mention working conditions as making them satisfied with their jobs than public agency workers. A significant difference was found among the public agency child welfare group who indicated that working conditions made them dissatisfied. Concerns regarding working conditions were attributed to physical environment, training, management techniques, caseload size, paperwork and documentation demands. (p.90).

Jayaratne & Chess (1985) examined factors related to job satisfaction and their association with turnover among child welfare workers. This study selected various facets or dimensions of the job which could be associated with job satisfaction and intent to turnover. These facets were tied to previous research done on job satisfaction and burnout among child welfare workers. They included comfort (comfort with physical surroundings), challenge (how stimulating the job is perceived to be by the worker), financial rewards (pay, security, fringe benefits), promotions (workers perceptions of promotional chances as well as fairness in the process), role ambiguity (perceptions the worker has about the clarity of the work), role conflict (conflicting demands that the worker perceives on the job), and workload (worker's perceptions about the amount of work that has to be done). (p. 761-762).

The global findings in the study conducted by Jayaratne & Chess (1985) revealed a high degree of job satisfaction and perceived success among the respondents in the study, however, despite this, there were elements of unhappiness with the job and intentions to leave. The data from this study suggested that workers reported being satisfied with their job if it is perceived as challenging, if the

opportunities for promotion were viewed as adequate, and if the financial rewards were fair and adequate. Financial rewards appeared to be the only factor in this study related to job discontinuance. Role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload did not emerge as significant correlates of either job satisfaction or job discontinuance. This finding was contradictory to findings in other studies. Jayaratne & Chess argued that these factors are correlates of burnout, which may later come out in their careers. (p. 766).

A previous study conducted by Jayaratne & Chess (1984) on work stress and strain among social workers provided a comparison of job perceptions of family services workers, community mental health workers, and child welfare (protection service) workers. Stress variables measured in this study were role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload. (p. 448). This study revealed higher levels of role conflict and value conflict among child welfare workers. Role conflict was best exemplified by the contradictions often present between legal requirements and agency's policies and procedures. For example, working in the best interest of the child may be at odds with court-ordered prescriptions and directives. The findings also revealed that child welfare workers constantly face moral dilemmas, such as those concerning the removal of children from their birth parents or the return of children to potentially abusive and neglectful homes. (p.450).

The literature has supported the concept that child welfare as a system has a very difficult role to fill in our society. Siegel (1994) examines these areas of difficulty for child welfare workers arising from the disparity between articulated and demonstrated values in child welfare. The areas of conflict discussed by Siegel include: (1) saying that children belong at home while allocating more funds for out-of-home placements; (2) stating that child welfare has a family focus while directing activities toward child rescue; and (3) maintaining that the system is acting in the best interest of children when it does not always provide services that do benefit

children. (p. 81). Siegel also proposes that child welfare workers must make decisions based on availability of resources and services rather than best practice. The worker caught in a value conflict is in a double bind where neither job gratification or a sense of integrity is possible which has negative implications for practice. (Kelly & Ransey, 1991; Marshall, 1991 in Siegel 1994:85).

According to Arches (1991) a workplace negatively affects workers in varying degrees because it constrains autonomy and promotes bureaucratization. As social workers become part of the bureaucracy, they are confronted by a reality that demands compromise with both personal and professional values. Bureaucracies, because of their rigid lines of decision making and authority, undermines professional autonomy and confronts workers with ethical dilemmas over which they have little control. (1994:91). Holland and Kilpatrick (1991) note that workers are confronted by limited resources on the one hand and unlimited demands on the other. This conflictual situation is an important reason for high levels of dissatisfaction and burnout among social service staff and translates to less effective services for children and families. (1994:191-192).

Child welfare practice is guided by stated values and principles. Principles and values that continue to be enunciated and articulated by the child welfare system are family preservation and reunification. Although these are stated values and principles in child welfare, how funding and resources are allocated is another demonstration of values. In child welfare, there is significantly less money allocated for the provision of preventive services for children and families or for supportive help to keep children at home during crisis periods than there is for service to children outside their own homes, in institutions or foster care. (Segal, 1991; Whittaker, 1991 in Siegel 1994:86). As long as more money is available to separate children from their families than to help them in their own homes, the child welfare system is demonstrating a discrepancy between their stated value of strengthening



families and their practice which separates families. (p.86). It has also been suggested that child welfare workers time is spent mostly on activities related to children in care of the system than on prevention services. Prevention services are directed primarily toward children identified at risk, not toward the prevention of risk itself. (Samantrai, 1992 in Siegel 1994:86). This also demonstrates a discrepancy in stated values within the system which pose as dilemmas for child welfare workers and implications for practice. To change the reality of practice in child welfare and achieve greater congruence between articulated and demonstrated values requires a major re-structuring of the entire social welfare system. (p. 92).

Reagh's article (1994) discussed the difficulty experienced by child welfare workers in trying to balance the needs of the clients and the requirements of the organization. Increasingly, workers find themselves practicing in a system that exists on a dichotomous continuum that consists of bureaucratic values at one pole and social work values at the other. Workers report that in order to maintain an equilibrium, they are constantly trying to balance the roles of caseworker and bureaucrat, while the environment around them is in a constant state of chaos. Their experience is that crisis is endemic to the field of public child welfare, which is always at risk of unplanned change through legislative mandate, public outcry, or change in federal or state regulations. (p.74).

Despite the disparities and adversities within the system, a study by Rycraft (1994) revealed that amid the exodus of caseworkers from the child welfare field remain a cadre of experienced professional social workers who choose to continue in the field. These child welfare workers contend that their interventions with children and families are necessary and meaningful. Their commitment to the protection of children and strengthening families is a steadfast and abiding dedication that retains them to the field. (Rycraft 1994:75). They draw on the intrinsic rewards that come from working with children and families. (Reagh

1994:75). However, even the most dedicated and committed worker experiences decreased energy and drive and the challenge for child welfare agencies is to renew their spirit. Vacations, transfers to other units, and the ability to put in extra time to catch up on backlog of work were identified as methods. (Rycraft 1994:77).

Rycraft's study (1994) also revealed that given the complexity of the child welfare system, an integral aspect of the caseworker's mastery of child welfare practice was the discovery of fit within their respective agencies. The suitability of a particular job assignment was deemed the all important factor influencing their decision to continue their employment. Another factor in establishing a fit within the agency is the recognition of the caseworkers limitations as well as limitations of the system. Coming to terms with the fact that despite their efforts, they will not always be successful brings a more realistic view of child welfare services and a greater acceptance of the job. (p. 77).

Davies (1989) discusses how child welfare workers are attacked and scapegoated as a result of well-publicized deaths of children involved with the system. As a result, the competence of social workers becomes publicly doubted which produces anxiety and fear within the system. Management's response to this has been to tighten policies and procedures in efforts to more closely to monitor front line practice. (p. 190). Davies proposes that these developments have considerable implications, such as an ambivalent attitude among front line practitioners regarding professional autonomy. The considerable degree of risk for child welfare agencies to public attacks has prompted the system to respond by trying to limit front line discretion through tightening of policies and procedures governing child protection practice. (p. 192). Feeling vulnerable and exposed on the front line, workers understandably seek support and protection in carrying out their jobs and formal procedures may be seen by workers as at least some measure of protection as well as a potential defense against public criticism. (p.194).

Despite management's efforts to reduce risk to child welfare workers and their agencies by tightening procedures, the reality on a day to day basis is that child welfare workers are required to make on the spot decisions and however much you try to standardize a procedure, each decision requires subjective, on the spot interpretation. (p. 195). This margin of maneuver may help to explain why child welfare workers often feel responsible for events that are beyond their control. Without this margin of maneuver, workers would unlikely feel, nor could they be made to feel anxious or responsible for the client's welfare. Yet, because the current climate of practice contains many constraints, and given the intense degree of anxiety that surrounds high-risk statutory work, the worker can find this discretion uncomfortable and have ambivalent feelings about their autonomy. (p. 198).

The ideology of professional autonomy suggests that practitioners ought to be capable of functioning independently in a sure and competent manner, but workers frequently do not feel this way. A contradiction exists between the ideology of professional autonomy, which characterizes the professional ideal, and the social worker's actual experience day to day practice in protective services, which, given the substantial number of grey cases, is more often characterized by chaos, uncertainty, and indecision. Faced with this contradiction child protection workers may seem to fall short of the professional ideal and may often experience feelings of personal inadequacy. (p. 197). Also, the characterization of decisions child welfare workers are required to make further compromises professional autonomy. The worker is required on a daily basis to weigh out the issue of risk to a child. Determining what poses less risk, removing the child from the home or leaving the child in the home are conflictual for workers. In either situation, there is risk to the child. When families are limited in their ability to meet the needs of their children, workers must weigh out if the needs of children which parents are not meeting can be met in the child's home, with a recognition that removal of a child from his/her

own home causes emotional risk because of the separation. Often these decisions are made based on availability of resources rather than what is best for the family or the child. (Siegel 1994:85).

Child welfare work holds notoriously difficult challenges for workers as they strive to deliver effective service to clients. Broadly speaking, the child welfare system has historically been fraught with social and political pressures, frequently placing workers in a thicket of mutually competing needs and interests from the "best interests" of children, to the concerns of parents and surrogates, to shifting public policies that filter down into the agency arena. (Guterman & Jayaratne 1994:100). Child welfare work environments house a paradox of low worker control coupled with high responsibility. (p. 101). Worker control can be thought of as worker's abilities to manage and influence events in the work environment. (p.100). Findings in a study conducted by Guterman and Jayartne (1994) revealed a correlation between worker control and worker's perceptions of professional effectiveness although this finding was not independent of other forms of work stress within child welfare work such as role conflict, role ambiguity, and workload. This study provided some evidence to suggest the possibility that when provided greater control to enact their professional responsibilities, child welfare workers may be able to reduce the at risk status of both their clients and themselves. (p.116).

Both role conflict and role ambiguity have been identified as important stressors in the work environment of child welfare workers. Role conflict occurs when inconsistent, incompatible, or inappropriate demands are placed upon an individual. (Jayaratne & Chess, 1983 in Hagen, 1994:582). Role ambiguity refers to a situation in which the role expectations are unclear. (Jones 1993:136). Role conflict and role ambiguity contribute to job dissatisfaction by reducing the clarity of goals and expectations in work with clients. They also hinder the development of positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors by contributing to confusion

regarding work responsibilities. (Hagen 1994:582). In child protective services, the conflict between the roles of helper and agent of social control are basic to the nature of the work. In addition, there are often multiple and conflicting role expectations by clients, community groups, courts, and other agencies. (Jones 1993:137).

Although role conflict has negative implications, literature has also proposed that role conflict can have positive effects on workers and agencies. Stout & Posner (1984) proposed that role conflict might be "more amenable to problem-solving or coping behaviors which results in less stress and less impact on job dissatisfaction". (Stout & Posner 1984 in Jones 1993:137). Sieber identified four ways in which adaptation to role conflict can be positive: (1) tolerance to discrepant viewpoints, (2) exposure to many sources of information, (3) flexibility in adjusting to demands of diverse role partners, and (4) reduction of boredom. (p. 137). The process of articulating role conflicts - of spelling out the relative merits and sanctions in several roles - can be a significant step in encouraging discussion, airing differences, and building consensus. (p.140).

The literature consistently voices the issue of high workload demands in the child welfare field. Inappropriately large caseloads have been documented as contributors to burnout, a costly consequence for agencies in terms of absenteeism, worker inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and turnover. (Hagen 1994:585). Koeske and Koeske (1989) argue that workload represents a demanding environment that, under certain conditions, will place the social worker under stress. A continuing condition of high stress places the worker at risk for emotional exhaustion. If the stress is not corrected or ameliorated, the social worker may experience a loss of morale, plan to leave the job, or develop psychological and physiological symptoms. (p. 243).

Jayartne & Chess (1984) reminds us that the measurement of workload needs to take into account the qualitative differences that exist in the nature of the presenting problems, and the subjective weight that is attributed to them independent of absolute workload and caseload. The number of cases per se may not be a good indicator of workload. (Jayartne & Chess 1984:451). The meaning of workload varies with the nature of the work setting and with critical characteristics of the clients. (Koeske and Koeske 1989:243). Also, perceptions of workload may be associated with characteristics of individual workers.

From a social context perspective, our society has experienced rapid social changes that have affected society's concept of family life and have exerted tremendous pressures on the institutions, organizations, and agencies designed to serve and support families. One impact of these changes has been intrafamilial stress resulting in issues of domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse, and neglect, all of which have become well known to the child welfare practitioner. Each of these issues is complex, and the complexity of these issues has led to a growing recognition that child protective service work contains some of the most difficult cases. (Marks & Hixon 1986:418).

The environmental context is also conducive to job satisfaction and job stress. Sundet and Cowger (1990) examined the rural community environment as a stress factor for rural child welfare workers. High worker visibility and a mixing of personal and professional roles, role contamination, were identified as the two most problematic conditions of rural practice. (Sherman & Rowley 1977 in Sundet & Cowger 1990:98). Professional isolation and resource paucity were also identified as common stressors of rural practice. (p. 99). This study revealed the stressful elements of rural practice, and although environmental factors were stress producing, the findings showed that stress was most directly associated with organizational and workload factors. (p. 109).

Zapf (1993) discusses the intense stress reported by social workers after moving to remote northern communities. When workers enter the field in the north they are faced with the pressures of moving from an objective position as an outsider to identification as an insider in the community, struggling to redefine the work role to meet community needs. (Zapf 1985:187). The new social worker arrives to the north with a perspective acquired through professional training. Certain prescribed patterns of behavior arise from both the training and the job description of the employing agency, behavior which is guided and limited by professional ethics and employment regulations. Zapf suggests that the new worker is socialized into the professional and bureaucratic system, and at this stage continues to relate to the community as an outsider. Workers who remain practicing in the north are those who interact more personally with the community and begin to experience the community in an immediate sense. (p. 195).

Another consideration is the harsh climate in the north which presents severe cold and long hours of darkness in the winter, conditions which can escalate social problems. Winters in the north are long and prevail generally eight to ten months in the year. As well as adjusting to a new climate, the transitioning worker is also cut off from the familiar supportive contacts that contribute to personal and professional identity. (p. 190).

Stress experienced outside the workplace is another area for consideration when examining job stress and satisfaction. There is speculation that stress at home influences feelings of stress and satisfaction in the workplace, however, this is an under researched area. (Dean 1992:18).

A number of authors have suggested that job satisfaction and turnover can be buffered by social support. Buffering can be defined as those actions which ameliorate or eliminate the deleterious effect of stressors. (House 1981 in Himle, Jayaratne & Thyness 1989:20). Positive and supportive relationships with

coworkers and supervisors have been identified as the more prominent sources of social supports for workers. Coworkers and supervisors are an important source of social support, playing vital roles in helping practitioners to learn new skills, evaluate the effectiveness of their work, and understand the purpose and function of the agency. A study of social service workers found that workers having positive relationships with their co-workers, having someone to discuss work problems with, and receiving feedback from both co-workers and supervisors were less likely to burnout. (Pines & Kafry 1978 in Hagen 1994:582).

Supervision was identified in Rycraft's study (1994) as an important factor in developing professional socialization, increasing job satisfaction, and decreasing job turnover. Without adequate supervision, workers may lack direction in their efforts and become lost in the maze of demands and responsibilities inherent in child welfare practice. The supervisor is the person who best understands the responsibilities of and demands made on the worker, backs up decisions and casework activities, and advocates for workers and clients. The qualities and attributes desired in a child welfare supervisor include being accessible, being knowledgeable of the system and of casework practice, possessing management and leadership skills, and above all, being supportive. Caseworkers may or may not leave the system because of a particular supervisor, but the supervisor makes a considerable difference in the caseworker's ability to manage the demands and responsibilities of the workload. Unquestionably, the supervisor strongly influences the caseworker's decisions to continue employment with the agency. (p.78).



### Supervision in Social Work

The literature on supervision in social work describes three key functions of supervision: administrative, educative, and supportive. The administrative function is the management-oriented approach to supervision. Dorothy Pettes stresses the administrative role of the supervisor, highlighting the organizational base of social work, the linking between management and operations, and issues of organizational accountability and professional responsibility. (Akin & Weil 1981:472). The administrative function is directed toward ensuring compliance with policies, standards, and the administrative procedures of the agency. (Kadushin 1992:134). The supervisor is granted a measure of authority and power by the agency to exercise this function. (p. 134).

The educative function of supervision is directed toward teaching the worker what he/she needs to know to do the job and helping the worker to learn. (p. 135). Research on supervision in social work has emphasized the importance of the educational function. In Kadushin's study (1972) both supervisor's and workers rated "expert power" as the main source of influence of a supervisor. In the Olmstead & Christenson study (1973), "expert power" was the first source of influence ranked by workers with "positional power" second, "referent (relationship) power" third, and "reward and coercive power" last. (Shulman 1993:62).

The supportive function of supervision is geared primarily to worker job satisfaction and morale building. Kadushin (1985), discusses the importance of supportive supervision 1) preventing tension and stress from developing; 2) removing the worker from the source of stress; 3) reducing the impact of stress; and 4) helping the worker to adjust to stress. (p. 236). A study by Kadushin (1973) found that receiving emotional support was described as the strongest source of satisfaction with supervision. (Shulman 1994:61).

Other components of supervision that have been found be positively correlated with worker satisfaction are: 1) supervisor availability; 2) the ability of the worker to talk openly with the supervisor; 3) provision of a supportive atmosphere; 3) supervisor's helpfulness; 4) role clarification; 5) ability to help worker discuss taboo subjects; 6) understand worker's feelings; 7) ability to articulate worker's feelings; 8) partialize worker's concerns; and 8) provide relevant data. (Shulman 1994:59).

### Supervision in Child Welfare

The type of supervisory feedback and support in a supervisory relationship plays a significant role in contributing to job satisfaction and performance. Most feedback in human service organizations focuses on client needs paperwork, community, and funding demands. Infrequent supervision, supervisor's failure to acknowledge worker's feelings on cases, and supervision which is restricted to the reporting of events have been identified as factors relating to dissatisfaction with supervision among child protection social workers. (Ruston & Nathan 1996:361). An exploratory study by Ruston & Nathan (1996) revealed the difficulty supervisor's of child welfare have in providing routine supervision which has been noted to be strongly associated with worker's levels of satisfaction with supervision. A concern reported among child welfare supervisors regarding how they conducted supervision sessions, was the importance of structure and the attempt to fit all the demanding elements of supervision into the limited available supervision time and to decide on priorities. Also identified was the tension experienced when trying to find a balance between the professional ideals of supervision and practice realities. Although most supervisors had a firm approach to scheduling supervision, there clearly had to be a place for "on the hoof" availability in urgent cases. Anxiety over child deaths and injury, and attendant negative publicity has elevated the tendency for front line

workers to consult supervisors to cover any action. The need for both structure and flexibility in organizing supervision time was acknowledged. Supervision needs to function in an enabling way, resisting taking on all the worker's anxieties and helping workers not to take on all the guilt of the agency. (p. 362-363).

With increased stress resulting from more complex and demanding caseloads, as well as the stress resulting from cutbacks and cost-containment efforts, supervisors also experience job stress and job manageability difficulties. (Shulman 1994:64). Supervisors themselves need help and support if they are to provide these for their workers. Access to ongoing emotional support is associated with being an effective supervisor. (p. 64).

### Individual Supervision

An examination of readiness levels of individuals and leadership styles that recognize individuals readiness levels may influence job satisfaction and performance. Readiness levels consist of an individual's ability and willingness to do the job. Ability is determined by knowledge and skill levels, and willingness is determined by psychological readiness and motivation levels. Readiness levels are identified as follows: R1, the individual is unable and unwilling; R2, the individual is unable but willing; R3, the individual is able but unwilling; and R4, the individual is able and willing. The two types of supervisory behaviors are task and relationship behaviors. Task behaviors are directive and focus on skill building. Relationship behaviors are supportive and focus on relationship building. These behaviors can be exercised at varying degrees and interchangeably, to meet the changing needs of workers, and develop the leadership style that best suits the readiness levels of workers. (Blanchard 1985:4).

If an individual is assessed as R1 on the readiness scale, the leadership behaviors most effective for this individual are high task, low relationship behaviors.

This is a directing leadership role. An individual who is unable but willing, R2, the leadership behaviors most effective for this individual are high task, high relationship behaviors. This is a coaching leadership role. An individual assessed as R3 on the readiness scale, able but unwilling, works more effectively with a supportive leadership role, low task, high relationship behaviors. An individual who is R4, able and willing, works more effectively with a delegating leadership style, low task, low relationship behaviors. (Blanchard 1985:3).

An examination of individual's learning styles can also assist supervisors in motivating performance. This knowledge can assist supervisors to develop approaches to better facilitate the worker's learning of knowledge and skills required for the job. This information is also useful for the supervisor to have to better maximize learning opportunities for workers. Individual learning styles effect their attitudes, needs, and personal preferences, and knowledge of this can help the supervisor to more effectively meet the educative function of supervision, which is concerned with increasing the effectiveness of the worker through enhanced knowledge and skills. (Kadushin 1992:227).

The Competency Based Inservice for Supervisors delivered by the Institute for Human Services highlighted four prominent learning style descriptions and supportive interventions which can maximize transfer of learning. The inservice utilized materials adapted from the Learning Styles Questionnaire developed by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford and from the Personal Profile System by John G. Geier and Emotions of Normal People by William M Marsten. It is suggested that individuals possess dominant learning styles. Learning opportunities that are sensitive to the individual's most dominant learning style, can maximize and elicit the individuals best learning response.

Individuals who possess a sensor learning style as their most dominant learning style learn from feeling. These individuals tend to involve themselves fully

without bias in new experiences. They tend to thrive on the challenges of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer term consolidation. A motivating learning environment for these individuals allows for opportunities to discuss ideas, time for stimulation and fun activities related to learning, provides a democratic coaching relationship, and provides incentives for new learning.

Individuals who possess a reflector learning style as their most dominant learning style learn from watching and listening. These individuals tend to stand back and ponder experiences and analyze them from many different perspectives. They collect data and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusions. Their philosophy is to be cautious. A supportive learning environment provides for patience in drawing out their goals and plans. It is important to help these individuals define their roles and their place in any learning application situation.

Individuals who possess a thinker learning style as their most dominant learning style learn by thinking. They tend to adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They like to analyze and synthesize. They tend to be detached, analytical, and dedicated to objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. A supportive learning environment for these individuals allows for them to talk about pros and cons of the use of any learned material, the provision of precise explanations, and provides help in identifying step by step approaches to the use of learning in a patient manner.

Individuals who possess an actor learning style as their most dominant learning style learn by doing. They are interested in trying out ideas, theories, and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. A supportive learning environment for these individuals provides direct answers to questions, asks "what"

questions to support application of learning quickly, and outlines how use of learning will get results important to them.

No one learning situation is prominent over the other. All learning styles have relative strengths and weaknesses. (Honey & Mumford) Learning styles can be utilized interchangeably to fit the learning situation. A tool to determine an individual's dominant learning style is the Learning Styles Inventory by McBer and Company which has rankings according to how an individual would go about learning something. (Appendix 3). This tool can be used by supervisors to determine workers most dominant learning style and places the supervisor in a better position to tailor learning situations to the learner rather than the learner to the learning situation. The supervisor can adapt approaches and content to the learning needs of the individual. (Kadushin 1992:196).

Recognition of individual's personality traits and how these traits influence personal work styles can enhance a supervisory relationship. Awareness of individual's personal work styles helps the supervisor to identify and structure opportunities in the workplace that can allow the individual work in a fashion or position that best suits their personality types may increase job satisfaction and performance. The following information is derived from the Competency Based Training for supervisors in child welfare provided by the Institute for Human Services.

Individuals who have dominant personality characteristics possess a dominant work style. These individuals are generally driven to accomplish, focus on tasks and results, are risk takers, direct, conflict seeking, and decision-makers. A motivating work environment for these individuals allows for these individuals to exercise some authority, poses challenges, provides varied activities and assignments, and opportunities for advancement. Suggested strategies for supervision of individuals who possess a dominant work style are as follows. Provide direct answers, be brief

and to the point, stick to business, outline possibilities for the individual to experience results, solve problems, and be in charge.

Individuals who are people oriented, impulsive, persuasive, humorous, fun, attention-seeking, have a positive outlook, are optimistic, good communicators, and emotional have inducement characteristics and possess an inducement work style. A motivating work environment for these individuals allows for social recognition, popularity, freedom of speech, freedom from control and detail, favorable working conditions, and recognition of abilities. Provision of a friendly environment, opportunities to verbalize ideas, suggestions on how to transfer ideas into action, patience, and clearly defined roles and their place in the work environment, and support are suggested strategies for supervision.

Individuals who have steadiness characteristics are individuals who balance people with task, have a need to process things, are team oriented, careful decision-makers, good listeners, demonstrate genuine concern for others, and are patient. A motivating work environment for these individuals allows for security, time to adjust, appreciation, identification with a group, and opportunities for specialization. Suggested strategies for supervision of individuals who possess steadiness characteristics include provision of a sincere interest in them as a person, ask "how" questions to get their opinions, be patient in drawing out their goals, clearly define roles or goals and their place in the organization, and provide support.

Compliant individuals generally like order, weigh out pros and cons, are analytical, are concrete thinkers, and focus a lot on detail and facts. A motivating work environment for these individuals allows for security, minimal change, limited decision making responsibility, clear job description, controlled work environment, and continued reassurance. Suggested strategies for supervision of individuals who possess compliant characteristics include supporting ideas with accurate data, provision of reassurances, provision of detailed job descriptions with precise

explanation of how the job fits the big picture, and provision of feedback in a patient, persistent manner.

Shulman (1994) refers to the concept of parallel process in supervision. The concept of the parallel processes in work with clients and supervision of staff that is based on the similarity of the dynamics of supervision and worker-client dynamics. Behavioral patterns in the supervisor-worker interaction are similar to the worker-client engagement. (Shulman 1994:63-64). This concept suggests that supervisors need help and support to be able to provide this for their workers, and workers need help and support to be able to provide this for their clients. Supervisors become less effective in their ability to provide support to their workers and help them to manage stress if their own needs for support and stress management are not being met. Hence, workers become less effective with their clients as their needs for support and stress management are not being met.

### Group Supervision

The literature has revealed the struggles child welfare supervisors often have in effectively addressing their workers needs for support due to the pressurized work environment of child welfare agencies. (Rushton & Nathan 1996:357). As a field of practice, child welfare has generally relied on the traditional individual model of supervision. (Marks & Hixon 1986:419). Group supervision has been offered in literature as an approach to increase support for workers and buffer stress. (Kadushin 1992:407). Group supervision is defined as the use of a group setting to implement the responsibilities of supervision. In group supervision, the supervisor, given administrative, educational and supportive responsibility for a specific number of workers, meets with them as a group to discharge these responsibilities. (Kadushin 1992:404).



Group supervision is a structured group organized under the auspices of agency. Membership in the group is defined as a consequence of being a supervisee of a particular supervisor. The size of the group is determined by the number of supervisees for whom the supervisor has administrative responsibility. The members of the group have similarity in education and training, but are more concerned with similar problems and similar service. The fact that members of the group share concern about the same social problems and the same services suggest that they have high interaction potential. These factors make for considerable mutual predictability, enhancing group members' trust and confidence in each other. (p. 404-405).

A study by Carrilio & Eisenberg (1984) revealed that peer support produces higher worker morale. Workers involved in a peer support intervention reported less emotional conflict about their caseloads because of their sense that a case did not belong to one worker but to the group. Knowing that others are aware of a client's needs and the emotional issues in a given situation helps the worker to objectify the work and feel less burdened by a demanding caseload. (Carrilio & Eisenberg 1984:310). Kadushin (1992) offers, the opportunity for sharing of common problems encountered on the job is, in itself, a therapeutically reassuring contribution to individual morale. A worker often becomes aware that his/her problems are not unique, that failures and difficulties are not the result of his/her own particular ineptitude, and that other workers seem to be equally disturbed and frustrated by similar situations. The opportunity for a worker to share knowledge and experience with peers is a gratifying, morale building experience that reinforces a feeling of belonging to the group. (Kadushin 1992:407).

Kadushin (1992) also proposes that group supervision allows for the efficient utilization of a wider variety of teaching-learning experiences. It provides the opportunity for workers to share their experiences with similar problems

encountered on the job and possible solutions. Consequently, the sources for learning are richer and more varied than in the individual supervisory conference. (p. 406).

Group supervision can also provide a gradual step toward independence from the supervisor. As the process of group supervision requires active participation of the worker in lateral teaching of peers, by peers, such sharing emphasizes a greater measure of practice independence than is true for individual supervision. Not only does the supervisor share with the workers responsibility for teaching the group, the power of supervisor is also shared. The workers have greater measure of control and greater responsibility for the initiative of the group. This may gradually lead to less need for individual supervision and a greater measure of group supervision. In line with this idea, some agencies have used group supervision in explicit recognition of its potential as a vehicle for fostering independence and autonomy. (Kadushin 1992:412).

Research by Davies (1989) identified a further benefit of the group supervision model. The individualized nature of practice is broken down through group responsibility for many difficult decisions. Workers may thus feel it is okay to fall short of the "autonomous professional" ideal. This ideal is replaced by the value placed on team support and identity, which counters some of the anxieties and risks associated with child protection practice. (Davies 1989:197).

The literature also identifies some disadvantages of group supervision. A principal disadvantage of group supervision is that it cannot easily provide specific application of learning to the worker's individual needs. The advantage of the individual supervisory conference is that teaching and learning are individualized to meet the needs of workers. (Kadushin 1992:413). Also, as the group develops cohesiveness, it may be difficult to add a new worker into the group. A group with any continuity develops group identity, a pattern of interpersonal relationships, an

allocation of roles, development of cliques and subgroups, and a set of shared understandings. The newcomer threatens the established equilibrium. (p. 414). Group cohesion can also be seen as both a strength and weakness in group supervision. It operates as an advantage in influencing individual workers, however, it also tends to stifle individuality and creativity. Workers may feel the need to conform to the group and not express ideas and attitudes that are atypical, although these expressions may be of value and helpful to the group. The supervisor needs to act in a manner that preserves group cohesion and at the same time encourage atypical attitudes and ideas while being sensitive to a worker's ambivalence about expressing them, and establish as a norm for group interaction the accepting encouragement of such contributions to group discussion. (Kadushin 1992:416).

In general, research indicates that group supervision offers the opportunity to increase trust, decrease anxiety, and facilitate increased independent and interdependent functioning, all of which are important in child welfare practice. (Marks & Hixon 1986:420).

An agency introducing group supervision needs to prepare its workers. This modification of supervision should be introduced only with the concurrence of staff. The specifics of how group supervision will operate should be clearly interpreted following acceptance of this process. (Kadushin 1992:405). When mutual agreement on the purpose of group supervision has been reached, the group will have a tentative working contract. The supervisor's work will then focus on carrying out that contract and helping workers work effectively together to serve the group's purpose. (Shulman 1993:227).

### Summary of Literature Review

In summary, a review of the literature offers a number of varying stress producing factors as well as factors that contribute to job satisfaction and the

retention of workers in the child welfare field which include intrinsic and personal factors, work and work environment factors, and broader structural factors. Challenging work, discovery of fit, financial rewards, feelings of professional competency, and commitment to the very nature of the work were identified as key intrinsic and personal factors that contribute to job satisfaction and retention in the field. Complexity of cases, role ambiguity, role conflict, value conflict, worker control and autonomy, and workload were identified as prominent work and work environment factors that produce stress for workers in the field. Bureaucratization and proceduralism of social work practice, the negative attacks of child protective services in the media, availability of resources, rural environment practice, and contradicting values within the system have been identified as some of the broader structural factors that are related to job stress and job satisfaction for child welfare workers.

Supervision was acknowledged in the literature review as a strong contributing factor to job satisfaction and retention of workers. Key qualities and attributes of supervision that the literature identified as appealing and desirable for child welfare workers are accessibility and availability, knowledge of the system and casework practice, and supportive. Group supervision was discussed as a model of supervision and the literature offered some merits to the model which included increased support for workers, increased opportunities for professional growth, and increased independent and interdependent functioning, all of which are important to child welfare practice.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **RESEARCH STATEMENT**

The literature review referred to previous research done in the child welfare field and presented the view that overall job satisfaction is relative to various factors of the work and work environment. This study intends to determine overall levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in my agency and identify factors of the work and work environment that are relative to their overall levels of job stress and job satisfaction. This study also intends to identify which of these factors if any can be modified through supervision.

The literature identified supervision as a factor associated with levels and job satisfaction. Supervision has been targeted in this study as an approach to influence job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in my agency. The theory contained in the literature suggests that increased support systems can buffer stress and influence levels of job satisfaction among child welfare workers. The interventions designed for this study were implemented within the context of supervision with the intent to increase support systems for child welfare workers in my agency.

Traditionally, supervision has been delivered through individual supervision conferences between child welfare supervisors and workers in my agency. One of the interventions designed for this study was the development of individual supervision contracts between child welfare supervisors and workers through the forum of individual supervision conferences. This intervention recognizes that individual workers have individual needs and that supervision has to be individualized to effectively meet the needs of individual workers. A tool was designed with the intent to facilitate an interactive and participative process between

the supervisor and the individual worker to evaluate their current supervisory relationship and identify and prioritize worker's supervision needs and determine roles of the supervisor to address these needs. It was expected that this process would increase workers levels of satisfaction with supervision, and feelings of competency among workers, and as a result increase workers overall levels of job satisfaction. The supervision contracting tool is a tool that has been designed specifically for this study and was designed out of knowledge gained from training on supervision in child welfare and from the literature review. This tool has not been used in supervision of child welfare workers in my agency prior to this study.

A group supervision model was also implemented as an intervention in this study. This model had not been practiced by child welfare supervisors in my agency prior to this study. The group supervision model was implemented with an intent to increase supportive relationships among coworkers, increase workers feelings of competence, and workers feelings of autonomy. These factors were identified in the literature review as factors associated with overall levels of job satisfaction among child welfare workers. It was expected that should these factors increase for workers as a result of the intervention, overall levels of job satisfaction should also increase.

The literature on group supervision implied that the participative and interactive components of the group supervision process can provide opportunities for workers who deliver similar services and deal with similar work pressures and demands to share common problems, knowledge, and experience. It is suggested in the literature that the opportunity for sharing common problems can promote mutual recognition and support among coworkers and act as a source of emotional support for workers. The literature also implies that the process of sharing knowledge and experience among workers can help workers to develop an awareness of their own strengths and skills as well as those of their coworkers. It is

expected that this can result in increased feelings of competency among workers. As workers begin to acknowledge and recognize skills and abilities in their coworkers it is expected that group members will develop trust and confidence in each other and begin to access each other more and feel more independent and be less dependent on their individual supervisor. This process should result in workers feeling more autonomous in their work.

The literature suggested that increased satisfaction with supervision, increased support systems, and increased feelings of competency and autonomy are factors that can buffer stress and increase levels of job satisfaction among child welfare workers. Supervision was described in the literature as a primary source of support for workers new to the child welfare field. It is anticipated that the interventions designed for this study within the context of supervision will increase these factors for workers. This study expects to find increased overall levels of job satisfaction among the child welfare workers in my agency following the intervention period. This study also expects to develop a supervisory approach that is better suited to meet the needs of child welfare workers.

Work pressure and workload have been identified in the literature as common stressors experienced by child welfare workers. Work pressure was described in terms of the difficulties experienced by child welfare workers in trying to balance the needs of clients and the requirements of the organization. (Reagh 1994). Workload factors include caseload size and complexity of cases. (Jayaratne & Chess 1984 and Loeske & Loeske 1989). Role conflict and role ambiguity were also identified as factors that contribute to worker stress in child welfare. Role conflict exists when inconsistent, incompatible, or inappropriate demands are placed upon an individual. (Jayartne & Chess 1983). Role ambiguity refers to a situation in which role expectations are unclear. (Jones 1993). This study recognizes that these factors may not be significantly influenced by the interventions designed for this study,

however, it is expected that the infusion of support through the interventions will buffer these stressors.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES**

The dependent variable in this study is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is measured through factors in the work environment that positively affect workers. Literature suggests that overall job satisfaction is dependent on relative levels of satisfaction with the various factors of the job. Previous studies have identified personal, client-related, organizational, and structural factors associated with overall levels of job satisfaction among child welfare workers. This study subscribed to some of these factors in its design. These factors are the independent variables in this study. These variables are measured by worker's perceptions of their work and work environment out of the belief that the worker's perceptions of their work and work environment is more important than the absolute nature of the work. (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984:761).

The variables were measured through the use of three questionnaires that were administered to the participating child welfare workers at two different intervals, pre and post intervention phase. The questionnaires included the Work Environment Scale (WES), Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ), and Supervision Questionnaire (SQ).

#### **Work Environment Scale**

The Work Environment Scale (WES) is a standardized self-report test that consists of ten subscales and measures the actual, preferred, and expected dimensions of the work environment. The subscales assess three underlying sets of dimensions: Relationship Dimensions, Personal Growth Dimensions, and System Maintenance and Change Dimensions. The Relationship Dimension is measured by

involvement, coworker cohesion, and supervisor support. The Relationship Dimension is the extent to which employees are friendly and encourage each other and the extent to which management encourages this. The Personal Growth Dimensions is measured by autonomy, task orientation, and work pressure. The Personal Growth Dimension is the extent to which employees are encouraged to make their own decisions and if work and time pressures are prevalent. The System Maintenance and Change Dimension is measured by clarity, managerial control, innovation, and physical comfort. The System Maintenance and Change Dimension is the extent to which employees know what to expect in their daily routines and how clear policies are communicated; the extent to which management uses rules and pressures to keep employees under control; the extent to which there is emphasis on change, variety, and new ideas; and employee's perception of the comfort and pleasantness of physical surroundings. (Moos 1994:1)

The WES is a standardized self-report test. The mean scores are presented for each respondent as baseline and follow up scores. The standard scores are presented for the baseline and follow up scores with mean = 50 and standard deviation = 10. The possible range of raw scores for each subscale is 0 - 9. High subscale scores indicate the work environment maintains a high emphasis on the domain. Low scores on the subscales would indicate there is little emphasis on the domain. High scores on the subscales do not necessarily indicate a positive experience for the respondent.

#### Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

The Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ )is a modified custom designed self-report test that was used in a previous job satisfaction study in my agency. The questionnaire includes rating and open-ended questions to assess levels of job stress and job satisfaction and issues related to job stress and job satisfaction among the

respondents. The range of scores for the rating questions is 1 - 5. High scores do not necessarily indicate a positive experience for the respondents. The open-ended questions for the JSQ are intended to provide qualitative data on job stress and job satisfaction. The open-ended questions identify primary sources of job satisfaction/job dissatisfaction, primary sources of job stress, what workers find most rewarding in their job, and factors that contribute to workers staying in their present job.

#### Supervision Questionnaire

The Supervision Questionnaire (SQ) is a custom designed self-report test. The questionnaire includes rating and open-ended questions to assess levels of satisfaction with supervision and issues related to supervision among the respondents. The range of scores for the rating questions is 1 - 5. High scores do not necessarily indicate a positive experience for the respondents. The open-ended questions in the SQ identify worker's perceptions of their supervisor's strengths and weaknesses, worker's perceptions of their supervision needs and suggestions that can help the supervisor more effectively meet the worker's needs.

#### Description of Variables

*Involvement* is a variable that measured levels of concern and commitment workers have toward their job. This variable is measured in the WES. Involvement is measured as a subscale of the relationship dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis within the work environment on concern and commitment toward the job.

*Relationship with coworkers-* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of levels of cohesion and support among coworkers-workers. This variable was measured through the use of two questionnaires, the WES and the JSQ. The WES

measured worker's perceptions of dimensions that emphasize coworker cohesion. *Coworker cohesion* was measured as a subscale of the relationship dimensions in the work environment. A high subscale score for coworker cohesion indicates the work environment places a high emphasis on coworker cohesion. The JSQ measured worker's perceptions of how supportive their coworkers are. This was measured by workers ratings on how supportive they perceived their coworkers. Scores ranged from very unsupportive to very supportive. A high score indicates that the worker perceives coworkers to be very supportive.

*Supervisor support* is a variable that measured the worker's perceptions of how supportive the supervisor is. The variable is measured in the WES and the SQ. The WES measured the worker's perceptions of the extent to which supportive supervision is emphasized in the work environment. Supervisor support is measured as a subscale of the relationship dimension. A high subscale score indicates the work environment places a high emphasis on supervisor support. The SQ measured supervisor support in relation to the overall management of caseload and when worker's are experiencing stress. Scores range from very supportive to very unsupportive. A high score indicates the worker perceives the supervisor as very supportive.

*Autonomy* is a variable that measured the worker's perceptions of how much independence and control they have over how they do their job. This variable is measured through the WES and the JSQ. The WES measured worker's perceptions of the dimensions of the work environment that emphasis autonomy. Autonomy is measured as a subscale of the personal growth dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis on autonomy in the work environment. The JSQ measured worker's perceptions of how much independence and control they have over their job. Scores range from very little to quite a lot. A

high score indicates the worker is feeling quite a lot of independence and control over how to do the job.

*Task orientation* is a variable that measures worker's perceptions on the emphasis within the work environment on good planning, efficiency, and getting the job done. This variable is measured in the WES. Task orientation is measured as a subscale of the personal growth dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis within the work environment on task orientation.

*Workload and work pressure* are variables that measured workers characterization of their workloads and work pressure. The JSQ measured how manageable workers perceived their workloads to be and worker's perceptions of workload distribution and rewards received in the workplace such as financial compensation and recognition compared to other workers in the workplace. Scores for characterization of workloads range from very low to too high/unmanageable. A low score indicates that the worker finds the workload too high and unmanageable. Scores for worker's perceptions of workload distribution and rewards received compared to other workers in the workplace range from very unfair to very fair. A high score indicates workers perceive workload distribution and rewards received compared to other workers in the workplace as very fair. The WES measured workers perceptions of the dimensions of the work environment that emphasize work pressure. Work pressure was measured as a subscale of the personal growth dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis on work pressure in the work environment.

*Role clarity* measures worker's perceptions on the emphasis on clarity of the work and the contradictions of role expectations within the work environment. This variable is measured in the WES. Role clarity is measured as a subscale of the

personal growth dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis in the work environment on role clarity.

*Managerial control* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of the emphasis on managerial control within the work environment. This variable is measured in the WES and the JSQ. In the WES this variable is measured as a subscale of the system maintenance and change dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis in the work environment on managerial control.

*Innovation* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions on the emphasis within the work environment of variety, change, and new approaches. This variable is measured in the WES. Innovation is measured as a subscale of the system maintenance and change dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score indicates there is high emphasis within the work environment on variety, change, and new approaches.

*Physical comfort* is a variable that measured worker's comfort levels with the physical environment of the workplace. This variable was measured through the use of the WES and the JSQ. The WES measured worker's perceptions of the dimensions of the work environment that emphasize physical comfort. Physical comfort was measured as a subscale of the system maintenance and change dimension of the work environment. A high subscale score for physical comfort indicates the work environment places a high emphasis on physical comfort. The JSQ measured worker's perceptions of comfort with their physical work environment by workers ratings on their *overall physical working environment* and the *availability and quality of equipment to do their job*. Scores for overall rating of physical work environment ranged from very good to very poor. A high score indicates that the worker perceives the physical work environment to be very good. Scores for availability and quality of equipment and supplies to do the job ranged

from very good to very poor. A high score indicates that the worker perceives the availability and quality of equipment and supplies as very good.

*Job security* is a variable that measured worker's feelings of job security in the workplace. This variable was measured through the JSQ. The JSQ measured how secure workers considered their jobs to be. Scores ranged from very insecure to very secure. A high score indicates that the worker considers the job to be very secure.

*Interesting work* is a variable that measured how interesting worker's perceived their work to be. This variable was measured through the JSQ. Scores ranged from never interesting to always interesting. A high score indicates that the worker finds the work interesting.

*Participation in major decision making* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions on how much participation they have in major decision making in the office. This is measured in the JSQ. Scores range from very little to quite a lot. A high score indicates workers participate in major decision making in the office a lot.

*Stress outside of work* is a variable that measured how much stress workers are experiencing in their lives outside of work. This variable is measured through the JSQ. Scores range from very little to quite a lot. A high score indicates that the worker is experiencing quite a lot of stress outside of work.

*Stress at work* is a variable that measured how much stress workers are experiencing in their jobs. The variable is measured through the JSQ. Scores range from very little to quite a lot. A high score indicates that the worker is experiencing quite a lot of stress in the job.

*Competency* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions about how competent they feel in their job. This variable is measured in the JSQ. Scores range from very competent to incompetent. A high score indicates the worker is feeling very competent in the job.

*Overall rating of job satisfaction* is a variable that measured the overall levels of job satisfaction. This variable is measured in the JSQ. Scores range from very high to very low. A high score indicates the worker is feeling very satisfied in the job.

*Supervision* is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of how satisfied they are with their supervisor and their overall levels of satisfaction with supervision. This variable is measured through worker's responses to questions associated with tasks related to supervision through the Supervision Questionnaire (SQ). Scores for *encourages independence* range from very little to quite a lot. A high score indicates the supervisor encourages independence. Scores for *involves in decision-making* range from always to never. A high score indicates the supervisor involves the worker in decision-making. Scores for *provides constructive criticism* when appropriate range from always to never. A high score indicates the supervisor provides constructive criticism when appropriate. Scores for *appreciates and recognizes accomplishments* range from never to always. A high score indicates the supervisor appreciates and recognizes the worker's accomplishments. Scores for *advocates for needs* range from always to never. A high score indicates the supervisor advocates for the worker's needs. Scores for *approachability* range from very approachable to very unapproachable. A high score indicates the supervisor is very approachable. Scores for *provision of regular scheduled, uninterrupted supervision time* range from very little to quite a lot. A high score indicates the supervisor provides quite a lot of regular scheduled, uninterrupted supervision time. Scores for *accessibility to immediate supervision* range from always to never. A high score indicates the supervisor is accessible to provide immediate supervision. Scores for *supervisor's knowledge/skill level* ranges from very poor to very good. A high score indicates the worker characterizes the supervisor's skill/knowledge level as very good. Scores for *provision of training and staff development*



*opportunities* range from always to never. A high score indicates the supervisor provides training and staff development opportunities for the worker. Scores for *supportive in the overall management of caseload* range from very supportive to very unsupportive. A high score indicates the supervisor is very supportive in the overall management of the worker's caseload. Scores for *supportive when experiencing stress* range from very supportive to very non supportive. A high score indicates the supervisor is very supportive to the worker when the worker is experiencing stress. Scores for *overall relationship with supervisor* range from very poor to very good. A high score indicates the worker has a very good relationship with the supervisor. Scores for *overall rating of supervision* range from very good to very poor. A high score indicates the worker is very satisfied with supervision.

### **Summary**

In summary, the Work Environment Scale (WES) assesses three dimensions of the work environment, the Relationship Dimensions, Personal Growth Dimensions, and System Maintenance and Change Dimensions. The Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ) assesses levels of job stress and job satisfaction and identifies issues related to job stress and job satisfaction among the respondents. The Supervision Questionnaire (SQ) assesses levels of satisfaction with supervision and issues related to supervision. Together, the three questionnaires provide both quantitative and qualitative data on job stress, job satisfaction, and supervision.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRACTICUM ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Setting**

This practicum was conducted in a multi-disciplinary agency in Thompson Manitoba. The agency provides services under two Departments, the Department of Health and the Department of Family Services. Health services include Mental Health, Public Health, Home Care, and Audiology. Family Services include Day Care, Mediation Services, Resource Development, Children's Special Services, Community Living and Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Child & Family Services. The target group in this study is the child & family services unit.

The City of Thompson is the hub for services in northern Manitoba. Thompson Region, the area served by the agency encompasses all of the non-reserve communities in the area north of the 53rd parallel, except for the area surrounding Flin Flon and The Pas, Manitoba. While Thompson is the largest community, with a population of approximately 15,000, there are many smaller communities. Some communities are accessible by gravel or winter roads, some by rail and others by air. Providing service to such a vast and varied area is a challenge.

#### **The Sample**

The participants in this practicum are child welfare supervisors and workers from this setting. At the time of the study the Child & Family Service Unit consisted of sixteen full time and one part time field positions and three supervisor positions. One full time abuse position was vacant due to a recent promotion of the worker previously in that position to a supervisory position. This supervisor and the

two full time intake workers under her supervision were not included in this study due to the transitioning process that needed to occur for this new supervisor and the two intake workers who had just been reassigned to her at the time of this study. Two of the thirteen workers did not participate in the study. The identified reason for not participating was the perceived paperwork burden of the questionnaires utilized in the study. Two workers left the agency during the intervention phase and were not involved in the follow up survey and are therefore omitted from the results of the study. One worker was hired into the Child & Family Services Unit during the later phase of the intervention. This worker participated in the group supervision process, but was not included in the sample for this study.

One part time and eight full time Child and Family Service workers and two supervisors participated in this study. The workers who participated in this study included two outlying area workers, a family preservation worker, an abuse worker, a long term child protection worker, an adoption worker, an expectant parent worker, a foster care coordinator and a foster care worker.

Two of the full time workers delivered itinerant services to communities outside of Thompson but their main offices were located in the Thompson office. These workers were responsible for the delivery of services to South Indian Lake, Wabowden, Thicket Portage, and Pikwitonei. These workers were referred to as the generic workers as they were also responsible to deliver services beyond the scope of child welfare services to these communities such as mental health, home care, vocational rehabilitation and community living services. The bulk of the caseload carried by these generic workers, however was child welfare cases. Both these workers had Bachelor of Social Work Degrees and obtained their degrees with the University of Manitoba. Both these workers were recruited to the agency as new graduates were in these positions less than two years at the time of this study.

The family preservation worker was a full time permanent worker who was transferred out of another position in child welfare to deliver services to this program which was a new program at the time of this study. This was a voluntary transfer. This position focused on the development and provision of intensive in-home services for high risk families to prevent the removal of children from their families. This position supervised four family support workers who were not participants in this study. This position was protected in terms of the number of cases assigned to the position. This worker had a Bachelor of Social Work Degree and obtained her degree at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. At the time of this study this worker had just over two years experience in child welfare with the agency. She had no previous experience in child welfare.

The child abuse worker was a full time worker who investigated and provided treatment for child abuse referrals. This position was involved with the apprehension and placement of children who were in need of protection from their families and work with families toward reunification. This worker had a Bachelor of Arts Degree and obtained her degree at the University of Manitoba and worked in child welfare with the agency for one year at the time of the study. She had no previous experience in child welfare.

The long term protection worker was a full time worker who worked with child protection cases that required service beyond a three month period. This worker provided services to families whose children were in care of the agency and worked with families toward reunification. This worker also worked with families whose children were not in care of the agency but due to child protection concerns required involvement from the agency to prevent the removal of children from the home. This worker had a Bachelor of Social Work Degree and obtained her degree at the School of Social Work in Thompson, Manitoba and worked in child welfare

with the agency for two years at the time of this study. This worker was recruited to the agency as a new graduate.

The adoption worker was a full time worker who recruited adoptive homes, conducted home studies, facilitated adoption placements, monitored and supported adoption placements, and worked with biological families and adult adoptees through the reunion process. This worker had a Bachelor of Social Work Degree and obtained her degree at the School of Social Work in Thompson, Manitoba. She was recruited to the agency with very minimal experience in child welfare. She worked in child welfare with the agency for two years at the time of this study.

The expectant parent worker was a full time worker who provided services to minor expectant adolescents and young single parents. Her responsibilities included birth resolution counseling, assessment, and provision of supportive services to the expectant parents and their families. This worker worked with both voluntary and involuntary cases. This worker had a Psychiatric Nursing Degree and obtained her degree at the University of Brandon, Manitoba. She was recruited to the agency as a new graduate. She worked in child welfare with the agency for two years at the time of this study.

The foster care coordinator was a full time worker whose responsibilities included recruited foster homes, conducted home studies, licensed foster homes, facilitated foster care placements, and provided support and training to foster parents. This worker had a Bachelor of Social Work Degree and obtained her degree from the University of Manitoba. This worker worked in child welfare with the agency for two years at the time of this study. She had no previous experience in child welfare.

The foster care worker was a part time worker and provided support to the foster care coordinator in the delivery of services to the foster care program. This worker had a Bachelor of Arts Degree and obtained her degree at the University of

Manitoba. She worked in child welfare with the agency on a part time basis for two years at the time of this study. She had no previous experience in child welfare.

#### Summary of Practicum Environment

In summary, the workers who participated in this study were nine child welfare workers and two child welfare supervisors within the agency of Health & Family Services in Thompson, Manitoba. All participating workers were female. The two supervisors were also female. Four workers were between the ages of 20-30, four between the ages of 30-40, and one worker within the 40-50 age range. The two supervisors were within the age range of 30-40. All of the participating workers were Caucasian. The two supervisors were Caucasian as well. Six of the nine workers had a Bachelor of Social Work Degree. Two workers had a Bachelor of Arts Degree, and one worker had a degree in Psychiatric Nursing. Prior to coming to the agency, all of workers had none to limited experience in child welfare. At the time of the study the workers had two years or less experience in the field.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Description of Methods**

The methods in this study included the following:

- 1) A meeting with the workers to introduce them to the study and identify willingness to participate
- 2) A written consent was obtained by the Acting Regional Director of Health & Family Services providing consent to perform the study in the setting of the agency.
- 3) A written consent was obtained by each worker who participated in the study.
- 4) The Work Environment Scale (Real Form), Job Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Supervision Questionnaires were administered to the workers and collected in mid November 1995 pre- intervention phase, by Dr. Rob Williams, a member of the committee. The workers were randomly assigned numbers and the questionnaires were numbered according to the appropriate number assigned to the worker in attempt to ensure anonymity of the workers responses to the questionnaires. This was done to promote open and honest responses from the workers and increase the reliability of the study. The same questionnaires were readministered to the workers in May 1996, post intervention phase by Dr. Rob Williams.

#### **Individual Profiles**

Individual profiles were developed for each worker through the use of the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) provided by the Institute for Human Services, the Learning Styles Inventory, and individual interviews between the

worker and the supervisor to determine worker's training needs, readiness levels, worker's personal work styles, and performance discrepancies.

The Individual Training Needs Assessment is a tool developed by the Institute for Human Service used to assess worker's training needs in the field of child welfare. The training needs assessment is based on a prescribed set of core competencies. This was completed individually by each worker and reviewed with the supervisor to include the supervisor's assessment of the worker's training needs.

The Learning Styles Inventory was utilized as a tool to assess the workers learning styles and determine the worker's most dominant learning style and help the supervisor to develop approaches to better facilitate the worker's learning of knowledge and skills required for the job. The Learning Styles Inventory was completed individually by the workers and reviewed with their supervisor.

The worker's readiness levels were determined by an assessment of the worker's levels of skill and ability to do their job and were identified through individual interviews between the worker and the supervisor. This process was intended to determine the supervisory style best suited to meet the worker's readiness level.

The worker's personal work styles were determined to identify motivators and compliance triggers that can result in higher job satisfaction and performance. This process involved the examination of personality traits of individual workers and the identification of how these traits influenced their personal work styles. The information on personal work styles was derived from The Competency Based Inservice for Supervisors in Child Welfare delivered by the Institute for Human Services.

Performance difficulties were identified for individual workers and with time lined steps and activities for workers and supervisors to address these difficulties. This information was intended to assist workers and partialize excessive work



**demands into manageable tasks and develop strategies for workers to more effectively complete work tasks.**

**The individual profiles were expected to have been completed for all workers in October 1995. They were not completed until December 1995 due to uncontrollable workload pressures and demands experienced by both workers and supervisors to protect the time for this process.**

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTIONS**

Two interventions were designed for this study through the context of supervision to determine if modification to the current supervisory practices in the agency can influence levels of job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. The interventions included individual supervision contracts and a group supervision model. These interventions differed from the traditional supervisory practices in the agency.

Individual supervision contracts were developed through the forum of individual supervisory conferences and were designed as an attempt to more effectively individualize and prioritize workers supervision needs. A group supervision model was implemented as an attempt to increase support for workers, increase opportunities for personal growth, and increase independent and interdependent functioning among workers.

#### **Individual Supervision Contracts**

Individual supervision contracts were developed with each worker and their supervisor during individual supervision sessions. The contracts were developed from the individual profile data. The purpose of individual contracting with each worker was to develop a formalized working document between the worker and the supervisor that defined and prioritized the individualized needs of the worker and roles of the supervisor during the intervention phase. The frequency and content of individual supervision sessions varied depending on the outcome of the individual supervision contracts. The contracts were not completed until December 1995 due to the delays experienced in completing the individual profiles.

This intervention was implemented out of the recognition that a disadvantage of the group supervision model is that it cannot easily provide for individualized needs of workers. This intervention was also implemented as an attempt to extend supervision beyond the reporting of events and case discussions which were identified in the literature as factors relating to dissatisfaction with supervision among child welfare workers. This intervention also intended to provide a tool to assist workers and supervisors to partialize excessive and overwhelming workload demands into manageable tasks, which could potentially increase feelings of competence and a sense of control over the job. It was expected that this intervention would assist the supervisor to more effectively meet the individualized needs of workers and result in increased satisfaction with supervision.

The main intent of this intervention was to increase workers levels of satisfaction with supervision. It was expected that increased satisfaction with supervision would increase levels of job satisfaction. This intervention also intended to develop a supervisory approach that is better suited to meet the individual needs of workers.

#### Group Supervision Model

The group supervision model was delivered by the two supervisors to the group of workers under their supervision. The setting of the group supervision sessions was determined by the workers and were located both within and outside the workplace. The sessions for the two groups were scheduled at alternate times to allow for the groups to cover for one another to avoid the potential for the sessions to be disrupted due to crisis situations. A worker from the alternating group was identified to the switchboard to deal with emergencies on workers caseloads from other group. The schedule for the group supervision sessions and

designated back up workers were posted on a supervisor's door. Two sessions a month were scheduled for each group and sessions occurred for 2 - 3 hours.

The workers identified agenda items and a purpose for each session and the supervisors were responsible for the facilitation of participation and interaction among the workers toward achievement of the identified purpose. The content of the sessions focused on activities intended to foster mutual learning, problem-solving, and support for workers. Activities included general discussions, case presentations, use of video tapes, presentations on articles, and role playing sessions. The content of the sessions focused on common work-related interests and concerns among the workers.

Group norms were established during the initial sessions. Group norms included workers having shared responsibility for preparation of the sessions, shared contribution to group discussions, listening to others with respect and attention, respectful of other members of the group, and willingness to accept members of the group as resources for learning and problem-solving. The supervisor's role was to lead the group and stimulate group interaction that focused on the needs of the group and as well as individual needs.

The group supervision sessions were delivered over six months and evaluated at the end of that period. The primary intent of this intervention was to increase levels of coworker support and buffer the effects of job stress. It was expected that the opportunity for workers to formally come together and share common problems, knowledge, and experiences would increase supportive relationships among workers. This increase support would buffer job stress and increase job satisfaction. It was also expected that the process of mutual sharing during group supervision sessions would help workers to develop an awareness of their own strengths and skills as well as those of their coworkers, and this would result in increased feelings of competency among workers. It was expected that as workers began to

acknowledge and recognize skills and abilities in their coworkers, trust and confidence would develop among workers and they would begin to access each other more and independent and interdependent functioning among workers would increase.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **DATA COLLECTION**

**Dr. Rob Williams collected and organized the data obtained from the three questionnaires pre and post intervention phase, and shared the data with the supervisors in May 1996. The supervisors shared the data with the workers for further comments and feedback on the data.**

**Other forms of data collection included process notes recorded by the supervisor on observations and experiences with the group supervision sessions. Notes during individual supervision sessions were also taken during the intervention phase in attempt to capture comments and significant issues raised during individual supervision that were relative to job stress and job satisfaction. Key themes were noted and extracted from these processes and are utilized as qualitative data.**

**These data collection processes and the open-ended questions on the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Supervision Questionnaire formulated the qualitative data in this study. The rating questions in the Work Environment Scale, the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, and the Supervision Questionnaire, formulated the quantitative data. Both sources of data will determine if the interventions had any impact on job stress and job satisfaction among child welfare workers in my agency and will form the basis for the evaluation of supervision as an intervening variable. Equally important, if no measurable change has occurred as a result of the interventions, the data will serve as information and may have other useful implications for agencies, administrators, supervisors, and workers in the child welfare field.**

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This section describes a comparison of data collected at two different times intervals, pre and post intervention phase. As described in the methodology, the questionnaires were administered to 13 child and family service staff. Two of the 13 staff did not participate in the baseline survey. Six months following the collection of the baseline data the questionnaires were readministered and collected. Two staff left the organization during the intervention phase and were not involved in the follow up survey. These findings will describe the experiences of 9 Child & Family Service workers with the interventions and their perceptions of the factors relating to job stress and job satisfaction.

The findings will include the results of the Work Environment Scale (WES), Job Satisfaction (JSQ) and Supervision Questionnaires (SQ). Supplemental data includes comments and observations by child & family services workers and supervisors during the intervention phase and following presentation of the data. This section will described the data for each variable and identify if any noteworthy changes have occurred as a result of the interventions.

The mean raw scores and the standard scores are reported in the WES. The mean scores are reported in the JSQ and the SQ. The results from the WES, JSQ, and SQ are reported in Appendices 8, 9 & 10. A comparison of the baseline and follow up findings for the Work Environment Scale (WES), the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ), and the Supervision Questionnaire (SQ) are reported in Appendices 11, 12 & 13.

### Description of Findings

**"*Involvement*"** is a variable that measured levels of concern and commitment workers have toward their job. This variable was measured in the WES. The findings for involvement suggest that there is a fairly high degree of concern and commitment among workers to their job. There is a slight increase in the follow up score. This finding suggests there is emphasis within the work environment on concern and commitment toward the job.

**"*Relationship with coworkers*"** is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of levels of cohesion and support among coworkers. This variable was measured in the WES and the JSQ. The JSQ measured worker's perceptions of how supportive their coworkers are. The coworker cohesion findings in the WES suggests workers are experiencing an above average degree of support from each other. There is a notable increase in the coworker cohesion follow up standard score. This is consistent with the findings for coworker support in the JSQ, which also indicates there is a high degree of support among workers. There is an increase in the coworker support follow up score. The open-ended responses for primary sources of job satisfaction and most rewarding in job identify "*supportive coworkers*" in both the baseline and follow up responses which further supports the quantitative findings for coworker support. These findings show a positive direction of change. This positive finding may have been influenced by the group supervision model as expected.

**"*Supervisor support*"** is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of how supportive their supervisor is. This variable is measured in the WES and the SQ. The WES measured the worker's perceptions of the extent to which supportive supervision is emphasized in the work environment. The SQ measured supervisor support in relation to caseload management and job stress. The findings for supervisor support in the WES show below average scores in both the baseline and



follow up scores with a notable decrease in the follow up score. This was an unexpected finding. It was expected that the interventions would increase levels of supervisor support for workers.

The baseline and follow up scores for "*supportive in caseload management*" in the SQ are moderate to high with no notable change in the follow up score. The baseline and follow up scores for "*supportive when stressed*" in the SQ are moderate with a slight decrease in the follow up score. The open-ended responses identify "*lack of support from management*" as a primary source of job dissatisfaction and job stress. The open-ended responses for supervisor's weaknesses identify a "*need for more time and support from supervisor when under stress*". These findings are consistent with the WES findings for "*supervisor support*" and provides further evidence to indicate that the interventions did not positively influence levels of supervisor support for workers. The decrease in the scores suggest that there may have been other factors to influence this finding that are more powerful indicators of job satisfaction and less likely to be influenced by supervision.

"*Autonomy*" is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of how much independence and control they have over how they do their job. This variable is measured through the WES and the JSQ. Both the baseline and follow up scores for autonomy in the WES are above average with no change in the follow up score. This finding suggests that workers are encouraged to be self-sufficient and able to make their own decisions in their work. The baseline and follow up scores for "*independence and control*" in the JSQ are high with no change in the follow up score. This finding suggests that workers are experiencing high levels of independence and control in their jobs which is consistent with the WES findings for autonomy. These findings reveal high baseline scores with no change in the follow up scores, which suggests that the interventions had no influence on worker autonomy. It was expected that the intervention of the group supervision model

would increase levels of worker autonomy, however, this did not occur. Also, given the high baseline scores, the extent to which the interventions could increase worker autonomy is minimal.

The baseline and follow up scores for "*encourages independence*" in the SQ are high with an increase in the follow up score. The open-ended responses for supervisor's strengths in the SQ identified "*promotes autonomy*" as a strength in both the baseline and follow up responses. These findings suggests that supervisors encourage autonomy which is consistent with the quantitative findings in the WES and JSQ. "*Lack of autonomy*" was identified in the open-ended responses as a primary source of job dissatisfaction in the JSQ. This is not consistent with the quantitative findings for autonomy.

Two explanations are offered for this inconsistency. The inconsistency may be indication of individual preferences or comfort levels with autonomy. Also, workers may feel more autonomous with some aspects of the work and less autonomous with others. Notes and observations taken during the intervention period, as well as verbal feedback following presentation of the data, revealed that workers feel more autonomous with the clinical aspects of the work and less autonomous with the administrative aspects. This is also reflected in the findings for "*involvement in major decisions*" and "*managerial control*". The qualitative findings revealed that although workers are encouraged to be autonomous in their work, individual comfort levels with autonomy vary with levels of experience. Workers also identified the importance of supervision and identified "*support*", "*accessibility*", and "*approachability*" as supervision needs. This makes sense given the difficulty and complexity of cases involved in the child welfare system.

The baseline and follow up scores for "*provides sufficient supervision*" are moderate with no change in the follow up score. This finding suggests that workers are generally satisfied with the amount of supervision they receive. A more notable

increase was expected in the follow up score given that more supervision was provided through the group supervision intervention. Workers continued to receive individual supervision as well as additional supervision through group supervision. An interpretation of this finding could be that although additional supervision was provided through group supervision, this intervention may not have been received by workers as a source of supervision and may have rated supervision based on the traditional individual supervision practices they are more accustomed to. Rather, the intervention may have provided for other needs, such as coworker support. Also, the model may require more time to develop.

Another interpretation could be related to the issue of protected supervision time. The need for "*protected supervision time*" was identified as a supervision need in the SQ. This suggests that supervision time is disrupted. During the intervention phase, both individual and group supervision experienced some disruptions due to uncontrollable workload demands for workers and supervisors ie: crisis on caseload, emergency meetings, public inquiries. Although some mechanisms were developed to protect supervision time ie: close office door during individual supervision, put phone on call forward, hold group supervision sessions outside of the workplace; there continued to be situations where supervision time was disrupted. Optimal implementation of the intervention did not occur as a result of these uncontrollable workload demands.

"*Task orientation*" is a variable that measured worker's perceptions on the emphasis within the work environment on good planning, efficiency, and getting the job done. This variable is measured in the WES. The findings for task orientation reveal average baseline and follow up scores with a slight increase in the follow up score. This finding may have been influenced by the contracting process with workers during individual supervision. The contracts permitted workers to partialize excessive and difficult work demands into manageable tasks. The

identification of performance difficulties and the development of activities and time lines with workers to more effectively meet performance expectations is a process that emphasizes task orientation. It is therefore logical that worker's perceptions on the emphasis of task orientation in the workplace increased following this intervention. .

A common performance difficulty that was identified in the supervision contracts was the difficulty for workers to complete the required paperwork demands. This was commonly identified as an execution issue for workers as they had the knowledge and skill to do this, but excessive workload demands and the inability to protect time for paperwork acted as barriers to their ability to execute this knowledge and skill. Designating regular protected paperwork days and prioritizing paperwork tasks were identified as a strategies to address this issue for workers. Workers scheduled paperwork days and developed mechanisms to protect this time and avoid disruptions ie: work at home, find alternate work space in the office, put phone on call forward, plan with back up worker to handle emergencies on caseload, and leave instructions for switchboard operator that worker is not available. This strategy permitted workers to prioritize paperwork over other workload demands on a scheduled basis and attempted to make paperwork a more manageable task.

Although an increased emphasis on task orientation can be interpreted as positive, the open-ended responses in the JSQ identified "*pressure from management regarding work tasks*" as a primary source of job stress, which contradicts this interpretation. This findings suggests that increased emphasis on task orientation may be producing additional work pressure and be a source of stress for workers. This finding may offer some explanation for the below average scores for supervisor support.

*"Work pressure and workload"* are variables that measured worker's perceptions of work pressure and worker's characterization of their workloads. The WES measured the emphasis of work pressure in the work environment. JSQ measured how manageable workers perceived their workload to be, worker's perceptions of workload distribution, rewards received in the workplace such as financial compensation, and recognition compared to other workers in the workplace. Work pressure scores are high. There is no change in the follow up score. This result suggests that high workload demands and pressures are high. The findings for workload in the JSQ indicate that the workers are finding their workloads too high and unmanageable. The decrease in the follow up score suggests that workloads are becoming even more difficult to manage. This finding is consistent with the WES finding for work pressure. Work pressure and workload are notable findings as these scores vary significantly from other scores. The consistent negative ratings in the baseline and follow up scores indicate that the interventions did not influence work pressure and workload. Baseline and follow up scores for *"fairness of rewards"* are the same and indicate a moderate level of satisfaction with the rewards received from the work and a sense of fairness in the distribution of workload compared to others in the workplace. This finding reveals that workload distribution is comparable to other child welfare workers in the workplace.

The open-ended responses in the JSQ identify *"lack of time to complete paperwork"*, *"too much paperwork"*, *"unmanageable caseloads/high workloads"*, and *"lack of resources"* as primary sources of job dissatisfaction. *"Pressure from management regarding work tasks"*, *"high workloads/caseloads"*, *"lack of resources"*, and *"lack of time to complete paperwork"*, are identified in the open-ended responses as primary sources of job stress which mirrors the responses for primary sources of job dissatisfaction. The noted consistency in the quantitative and

qualitative findings suggests work pressure and workload are significant issues for the workers.

Further examination of "*workload management*" findings reveals a difference in the average mean scores for workers who deliver involuntary services and the workers who deliver voluntary services. The mean baseline workload management score for workers who deliver involuntary services is 1.0. The mean follow up workload management score for workers who deliver involuntary services is 1.5. The mean baseline workload management score for workers who deliver voluntary services is 1.6. The mean follow up workload management score for workers who deliver voluntary services is 1.8. Workers who deliver involuntary services rated their workloads as high and unmanageable. Workers who deliver voluntary services rated their workloads as high and manageable. This suggests that workload is high for both groups, but workers perceptions regarding the manageability of workloads is related to the different aspects of the job.

The mean baseline "*job satisfaction*" score for workers who deliver involuntary services is 3.0. The mean follow up job satisfaction score for workers who deliver involuntary services is 3.3. The mean baseline job satisfaction score for workers who deliver voluntary services is 3.8. There is no change in the mean follow up job satisfaction score for workers who deliver voluntary services. Workers who delivery voluntary services appear to have more manageable workloads and higher levels of job satisfaction than workers who deliver involuntary services. These findings suggest there is a relationship between workload manageability and job satisfaction.

The process of identifying and partializing excessive and overwhelming work demands into manageable tasks during individual supervision does not appear to have increased workers sense of control over their work as expected. It would

appear from this negative finding that worker's characterization and perceptions of their workloads are not amenable to change through supervision.

The open-ended responses in the SQ identified *"difficulty balancing management's needs with workers needs"*, *"other demands on time"*, *"unrealistic expectations"*, and *"frustration and impatience with worker's issues resulting from stress upon the supervisor"* as supervisor's weaknesses. Baseline and follow up responses for supervision needs in the SQ identify *"protected supervision time"* and *"priority should be worker's needs versus management's needs"* which further suggests that supervision is disrupted due to other work demands and strengthens the finding that supervisors are experiencing difficulty in managing and balancing worker's needs with management's needs. These responses also support the findings in the JSQ that supervisors are also experiencing high work pressure and workload demands and this impacts on the supervisor's ability to effectively address worker's needs. These findings reveal that work pressure and workload are significant factors for both workers and supervisors, and the ability of supervision to influence these factors is minimal. Given the high work pressure and workload demands identified in the findings among workers and supervisors, it is conceivable that the ability to deliver and feel supported is minimal. This may have also influenced the negative findings for supervisor support.

*"Stress at work"* is a variable that measured how much stress workers are experiencing in their jobs. This variable is measured in the JSQ. The findings for stress at work show a notable decrease in the follow up score which suggests that stress at work has reduced for workers following the interventions. This finding shows a positive direction of change which suggests that the group supervision intervention may have buffered job stress as was expected. This finding may also have influenced the increase in the *"overall job satisfaction"* score which supports the hypothesis that buffered job stress can increase overall levels of job satisfaction.

The findings for "*stress outside of work*" show a negative direction of change. Stress outside of work is a variable that measured how much stress workers are experiencing in their lives outside of work. This variable was measured in the JSQ. The baseline and follow up scores suggests that workers are experiencing some to quite a lot of stress outside of work. There is a notable increase in the follow up score.

"*Role clarity*" is a variable that measured worker's perceptions regarding the clarity of the work and the contradictions of role expectations within the work environment. The variable is measured in the WES. The baseline and follow up scores for clarity are below average with a decrease in the follow up score. This suggests there is some confusion among workers as to their roles and how explicitly rules and policies are communicated. The decrease in the follow up score indicates that the intervention did not influence role clarity.

"*Managerial control*" is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of the emphasis on managerial control within the workplace. This variable is measured in the WES and the JSQ. The scores for managerial control indicate there is a low emphasis on managerial control in the work environment. The JSQ measured this variable by worker's perception on how much participation they have in major decision making in the office. The baseline and follow up scores are low with a slight decrease in the follow up score. This finding is not consistent with the WES finding. The open-ended responses in the JSQ identify "*lack of information from management*" and "*lack of input regarding management decisions*" in both the baseline and follow up responses for primary sources of job dissatisfaction. These qualitative findings are consistent with the JSQ quantitative findings.

This contradiction in findings could be interpreted by distinguishing types of decisions and levels of worker involvement in these decisions. The results from the WES may be suggesting that workers experience less managerial control and more



involvement in clinical decisions on their caseloads, but experience more managerial control and less involvement in administrative decisions such as budgetary decisions that impact on service delivery. During group discussion workers identified feeling restricted by policies and procedures and in their ability to make financial decisions on their caseloads. Workers also identified frustration with the length of time decisions and approvals take to receive due to the fact that these decisions require approval from various levels of management.

The contradiction in the findings for "*managerial control*" and "*involvement in major decisions*" mirrors the contradiction in the findings for "*autonomy*" and "*encourages independence*" which further supports the contention that the administrative imperatives in the child welfare system impedes worker autonomy.

"*Innovation*" is a variable that measured worker's perceptions of the emphasis within the work environment on variety, change, and new approaches. This variable is measured in the WES. Innovation scores are low for both the baseline and follow up scores with a notable decrease in the follow up score. This is a negative finding which suggests the interventions had no influence. This finding may be related to the findings on involvement in major decision-making in the JSQ. It was identified in discussion of the findings that during times of fiscal restraint, workers are feeling more pressured and controlled by management and this has an impact on how innovative they can be.

The findings for "*work pressure*" and "*workload management*" may be related to the negative findings for innovation. High work pressure and workload demands extracts intensive time and energy and limits workers ability to broaden knowledge and skills beyond the day to day management of the work. The ability to feel innovative also becomes difficult given that time and energy that is directed toward reactive crisis work versus proactive change efforts. Given these factors, the emphasis becomes more on survival in the workplace. "*Greater diversification*",

*"more diversity of work tasks"*, and *"increased learning opportunities"* were identified in both the baseline and follow up responses in the JSQ as factors that would contribute to workers staying in their present job. This further supports the WES findings for innovation.

*"Physical comfort"* is a variable that measured worker's comfort levels with the physical environment of the workplace. This variable is measured in the WES and the JSQ. The baseline and follow up scores for physical comfort in the WES are high. The baseline and follow up findings in the JSQ for *"overall perceptions of the physical environment"* and *"availability of equipment and supplies"* are high. This is consistent with the WES finding.

*"Job security"* is a variable that measured worker's feelings of job security in the workplace. This variable is measured in the JSQ. The baseline and follow up scores for job security indicate feelings of job security among workers are at a moderate level. There is a notable decrease in the follow up score which suggests that workers are becoming more concerned about job security. This is indicative of the economic climate faced by government agencies. At a time of fiscal restraint, more pressure is exerted upon government agencies to scrutinize their utilization of resources. The follow up data was collected at the beginning of a new fiscal year, a time when decisions are made regarding renewal or non-renewal of work contracts. During this time, contract workers experienced the threat of non-renewal of their work contracts, which may explain the decrease in the follow up score.

*"Interesting work"* work is a variable that measured how interesting workers perceived their work to be. This variable was measured through the JSQ. The baseline and follow up scores are high which suggests that workers find their jobs interesting. The open-ended responses in the JSQ identify *"challenging work"*, *"working with clients"* and *"client change"* as primary sources of job satisfaction and

most rewarding in job. These factors were also identified as factors that contribute to workers staying in their present job.

*"Competency"* is a variable that measured workers perceptions about how competent they are in their jobs. This variable is measured in the JSQ. The baseline and follow up scores indicate that workers are feeling competent in their jobs. There is a slight increase in the follow up score. It was expected that the interventions would increase feelings of competency among workers and it appears from the findings that this occurred to some degree. The group supervision intervention facilitated a process of mutual sharing of knowledge and experience among workers. This process may have contributed to an increased awareness among workers of their own strengths and skills, and increased feelings of competency. The individual supervision contracts facilitated a process of partializing workload demands into manageable tasks for workers. As work tasks become more manageable for workers, their ability to complete the task increases, which enables workers to feel more competent in their work. The individual supervision contracts were reviewed with workers at the end of the intervention phase. During this review process, workers were able to identify tasks that were completed which may have increased feelings of accomplishment and competency.

*"Recognition of good work"* and *"knowing you're doing a good job"* were identified as factors that are rewarding in the job. *"Acknowledging a good job"* is identified as a supervision need in the SQ which supports the JSQ qualitative findings. These findings suggest that although workers feel competent in their jobs, there is a need for more recognition for the work they do which may explain the minimal change in the follow up score. Also, given that the baseline scores were already high, the extent to which the interventions could increase feelings of competency among workers is limited.

The open-ended responses in the JSQ identified *"lack of recognition for work done"* as a primary source of job dissatisfaction. Findings in the SQ indicate a *"need for more recognition"* among workers. The baseline and follow scores for *"recognizes accomplishments"* in the SQ are moderate to low with a slight decrease in the follow up score. These findings are consistent and further supports the finding that there is a perception among workers that supervisors do not regularly acknowledge and recognize good work. Given the volume of work in child welfare for both workers and supervisors, it is not surprising that minimal time is devoted toward acknowledging and recognizing accomplishments. The main emphasis appears to be on getting the job done.

The baseline and follow up scores for *"provides constructive criticism"* in the SQ are in the moderate range which suggests that supervisors provide constructive criticism on an occasional basis. There is a slight decrease in the follow up score. This is consistent with the previous findings and continue to support the need for more feedback from supervisors. Workers are feeling feedback from their supervisor is constructive, but add that it needs to occur on a more regular basis. Another interpretation from this finding could be that workers are feeling that feedback isn't constructive at times. This may be related to the SQ open-ended responses for supervisor's weaknesses which indicated when supervisor's are perceived as being stressed, they become frustrated and impatient with worker's issues and are perceived as being intimidating and directive.

The findings for supervisor *"approachability"* and *"accessibility"* are moderate with no notable changes in the follow up scores. The baseline and follow up responses in the open-ended questions identified *"greater accessibility"* and *"unapproachable at times"* as supervisor's weaknesses in the SQ. *"Greater accessibility"* and *"more time from supervisor"* were identified as supervision needs.

The findings for "*supervisor accessibility*" indicate that supervisors are generally accessible to workers, but suggests a need for more accessibility. Workers in the child welfare field are confronted with a lot of crisis situations that require difficult and critical decisions. Notes and observations identify the need for ongoing and immediate accessibility to their supervisor among workers for direction and consultation. This need has been articulated by less experienced as well as seasoned workers. Notes and direct experience indicate this is a struggle for supervisors given their work pressures and demands. Although mechanisms to increase supervisor accessibility, such as travel calendar on office door to make workers aware of their supervisor whereabouts, the ability to have your supervisor paged through the intercom system, and ability to access other child welfare supervisors in the absence of their immediate supervisor, findings indicate difficulties with supervisor accessibility continue to exist.

It was expected that the group supervision model would help workers to recognize individual strengths among each other encourage workers to access each other for consultation regarding their cases. The results suggest that workers continue to have a need to rely heavily on their supervisor. This may be an indication that more time is needed for the group supervision model to produce this finding. This may also be suggesting that the nature of the work and fosters this dependency. High risk statutory work inherent in child welfare practice subjects workers to feelings of anxiety and vulnerability. (Davis 1989).

The findings for "*approachability*" suggests that workers find their supervisors somewhat approachable. The findings suggest that supervisors become less approachable when they are experiencing stress. This was identified in the open-ended responses for supervisor's weaknesses. The responses also revealed that when supervisors are perceived as being stressed, their ability to support workers under stress reduces.

The baseline and follow up scores for *"provides sufficient training"* are moderate. There is a decrease in the follow up score which is an unexpected finding. It was expected that the identification of individual training needs and training activities in the supervision contracts would positively influence this finding. It was also expected that the process of sharing knowledge and experience among workers during group supervision would increase opportunities for learning and become a source of training for workers. The open-ended responses identified *"increased training opportunities"* as a contributing factor to staying in present job. This finding suggests that although training is provided on a day to day basis through supervision processes and experience gained from the job, there is a perceived need for more training. Formal training opportunities have been reduced for workers in an attempt to comply with fiscal restraints which may have had a more direct influence on this finding.

An example of a training need identified in an individual supervision contract was development of knowledge on child development. A training activity identified to address this training need included a review of appropriate literature. A further training activity included a presentation of the literature during group supervision as a strategy to integrate and transfer the knowledge gained. A third training activity included attending appropriate workshops. Given that formal training opportunities such as attendance at workshops have been reduced for workers, this training activity was unable to be met.

The baseline and follow up scores for *"overall relationship with supervisor"* are moderate to high with a slight increase in the follow up score. The baseline and follow up scores for *"overall rating of supervision"* is moderate to high with an increase in the follow up score. These findings suggest that workers are satisfied with their relationship with their supervisor and satisfied with the supervision they receive. Although there is only incremental change in the follow up score, change

has occurred in a positive direction which is an encouraging finding and suggests that the interventions had some success at enhancing supervision. The individual supervision contract may have had more of an influence on this finding.

The baseline and follow up scores for "*overall job satisfaction*" are moderate to high with a slight increase in the follow up score. This finding suggests workers are satisfied with their jobs. Although there is only incremental change in the follow up score, change has occurred in a positive direction which suggests that the interventions had some positive influences and may have contributed to increased levels of job satisfaction. The limited increase in the follow up score may be related to the fact that the baseline scores were already high. Also, the interventions may need more time to significantly influence overall levels of job satisfaction.

### Summary of Findings

In summary, the findings show an increase in overall levels of job satisfaction. Although limited, this increase implies that the interventions were somewhat successful in increasing job satisfaction. This finding may be related to the increases in coworker support and satisfaction with supervision and the decrease in stress at work. These related findings offers some support to the hypothesis that increased coworker support and increased satisfaction with supervision can buffer stress and increase job satisfaction.

The findings for coworker support show a notable increase in the follow up score. It was expected that the group supervision process would increase levels of coworker support, and the positive change in the follow scores for coworker cohesion and coworker support implies that this has occurred. The increase in the overall job satisfaction scores may be related to the increase in the coworker cohesion and coworker support scores which supports the hypothesis that increased coworker support can increase levels of job satisfaction.

Stress at work has decreased following the interventions which suggests the modifications to supervision was somewhat successful at buffering stress among workers. This positive finding along with the positive findings for coworker support and overall job satisfaction offers some support to the hypothesis that increased coworker support can buffer work stress and increase job satisfaction.

The findings for workload, and supervisor support showed change in a negative direction and these factors varied significantly from the findings for other factors which indicates these factors are significant for workers. It appears from the findings that these factors may be related. The findings indicate that lack of support from supervisors occurs when supervisors are stressed as a result of the high work pressures and demands exerted on them.

Although lack of supervisor support was identified as a significant contributing factor to job stress, the overall findings for supervision and relationship with supervisor indicate workers are generally satisfied with the supervision they receive. The positive change in the follow scores for supervision and overall relationship with supervisor suggests the interventions had some influence on these findings. This individual supervision contracting intervention may have had more of an influence on this finding.

The findings confirmed that supervision is important to workers, however, also revealed more powerful factors that influence job satisfaction such as workload, and role clarity as evidenced by the consistently negative ratings given to these items in the baseline and follow up findings. The findings for these items indicate that the interventions did not influence these factors which was expected. It was expected that the infusion of support through the interventions would buffer these stressors. The negative change in the follow up scores for these items suggests this did not occur. These factors are rooted within the larger working environment beyond the



organizational level, and it is unlikely that such factors are amenable to change through supervision.

Task orientation increased following the interventions which quantitatively indicates a positive finding and it was suggested that the individual supervision contracts may have contributed to this. The qualitative data contradicted the interpretation that increased task orientation is a positive finding. The qualitative data indicated that increased emphasis on task orientation within the work environment produces additional work pressure for workers and is source of stress.

The findings show incremental change in a positive direction in the follow up score for perceived job competency which suggests the interventions had some influence on worker competency which was expected. A more significant change in perceived job competency was expected from the interventions, however this did not occur. Given the high baseline scores for competency, the extent to which positive change could have occurred from the interventions is minimal.

It was expected that worker autonomy would increase as a result of the group supervision intervention, however the findings show no change in the follow up score for independence and control and a minimal negative change in the follow up score for autonomy which suggests the interventions had no positive influence on worker autonomy. The positive findings for managerial control and involvement in decisions contradict the findings for independence and control and autonomy. One would expect that the decrease in managerial control and the increase in involvement in decisions would result in increased independence and control and autonomy.. Two explanations were offered for this contradiction in findings. The inconsistency may be an indication of individual preferences or comfort levels with autonomy. The inconsistency also implies that administrative and bureaucratic imperatives inherent in the child welfare system impede worker autonomy. Also, given the high baseline scores for autonomy and independence and control, the

extent to which positive change could have occurred from the interventions is minimal.

The findings for innovation decreased following the interventions. This negative finding suggests there may have been other influencing factors such as the bureaucratic imperatives within the system and excessive workload demands and pressures.

The findings for job security decreased following the interventions. The interventions were not expected to have any influence on job security. This finding is reflective of the economic climate and the tightening of resources, which is not amenable to change through supervision.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Although the interventions had some limitations, there were some positive findings. Coworker support and cohesion increased following the interventions. Stress at work decreased. Perceived job competence increased. Overall relationship with supervisor and rating of supervision increased. Overall levels of job satisfaction increased. There is suggestion from the quantitative and qualitative data that these positive results are related. These increases, although limited, suggest the interventions had some positive influences and if continued have the potential to influence more positive results.

Workload, role clarity, and supervisor support showed change in a negative direction. Autonomy decreased slightly and independence and control showed no change. There is suggestion from the quantitative and qualitative data that these negative results are related. Workload, role clarity, and autonomy are factors that are rooted within the larger working environment. The ability for supervision to positively influence these factors is minimal.

The intent of this chapter is to discuss the findings and identify if and how the interventions may have made a difference for the workers in this study. The strengths as well as the limitations of the interventions will be discussed.

#### **Coworker Support**

Coworker support and cohesion were identified by the workers in this study as primary sources of job satisfaction and most rewarding in the job. The quantitative data for coworker support also verifies workers are feeling supported by their coworkers. A limitation of this study is the failure to capture specific

definitions of support which would have been useful in further examination of the findings. It is important to acknowledge however that a supportive climate exists among co-workers and this is critical considering the significant levels of work demands and pressures. Also critical is the need to strengthen this source of support which can be achieved through the group supervision process.

Coworker support has been identified in the literature as a significant contributing factor to job satisfaction and retention. Child welfare workers have identified coworker support as a vital source of support and the lifeline that holds workers to the field. Coworkers have been identified as necessary in times of difficulty, for recognition, validation, and on occasion for socialization and personal friendships. (Rycraft 1994: 78).

The intervention of the group supervision model was developed and implemented with the intent to increase emotional support systems among workers and buffer the impact of work stress. This intervention was designed and structured to allow workers to share common problems encountered on the job and promote the recognition that problems experienced at the individual level are not unique. The process of sharing frustrations and difficulties in a group setting promotes mutual recognition and support. (Kadushin 1992: 407). As suggested from the findings, this occurred to some degree given that the coworker support scores increased following the intervention phase.

The findings for coworker support showed more of an increase in the follow up scores than coworker cohesion scores. An extended intervention phase may have resulted in higher follow up cohesion scores. As levels of support increase it is expected that cohesion would increase. As mentioned in the findings section, the intervention phase experienced some disruptions due to uncontrollable work demands which is reflective in the significant findings for high unmanageable caseloads. These unanticipated disruptions may have had a significant influence on

this finding that was not accounted for at the onset of this study. This speaks to the inability to control workload volume in child welfare. The disruptions occurred out of the need for both workers and supervisors to respond to uncontrollable workload demands such as crisis on caseload, emergency meeting, and public inquiries. Although there was expressed commitment at the onset of the intervention to protect time for the group supervision process, and mechanisms developed to protect the time such as holding the sessions outside the workplace and group coverage, there continued to be some instances where workers and supervisors could not participate due to these uncontrollable work demands inherent in the work. As a result, optimal implementation of the intervention was somewhat constrained.

The baseline scores for coworker support and cohesion were high which suggest that prior to the intervention phase workers were already experiencing significant levels of support from their coworkers. An interpretation of this finding could be that worker's needs for support were captured on an informal unstructured basis. This suggests that the nature of the work and work environment encourages workers to naturally come together and form supportive networks. An example may be informal debriefing sessions following an apprehension of a child. The physical environment is also conducive to building networks among coworkers as coworkers share offices. Coffee breaks also provide opportunity for workers to come together on an informal basis and promotes social networks among workers. This form of professional socialization helps to make the job more bearable and manageable for workers. (Rycraft 1994: 78).

An observation to be noted among child welfare workers in my organization is the natural social networks formed among the workers during their work hours has also become their personal social networks. This is not surprising given that the trend for recruitment of workers to the child welfare field in the north tends to be

young new graduates from the south. These workers come to the north with minimal personal support networks. As a result social networks formed in the workplace often becomes their personal social networks as well. Although these relationships may strengthen as a result, their ability to establish boundaries between their professional and their personal lives becomes more difficult. This can potentially magnify work related stress.

I experienced this when I was a field worker and continue to observe this among field workers in my agency. This issue was discussed during group supervision and during this discussion it was identified that some of the workers have become personally connected and work-related issues become the topic of conversation during personal social gatherings and therefore they never feel as though they are able to put their work to rest. Workers identified the difficulty in establishing boundaries between their personal and professional lives due to the stressful nature of the work and the need to continually reach out for support from those who share similar experiences. Workers recognized the need to set boundaries and some strategies were discussed. One strategy is to debrief with coworkers or supervisors at the office prior to leaving the office. Other strategies included collectively setting some ground rules during social gatherings not to discuss work activities, and inviting people to social gatherings who do not work in the system in an attempt to expand personal social networks and diversify conversation topics.

Working with clients, client change, interesting and challenging work, and a high degree of concern and commitment to the job were noted in the findings as primary sources of job satisfaction and most rewarding in the job. These findings are important to this study as they identify some of the factors that contribute to workers remaining in the child welfare field. When examining the issue of high staff turnover in child welfare, workers reasons for staying in the field are of equal

importance to recruitment and retention of workers as reasons for leaving. (Rycraft 1994: 75). The questionnaires did not allow for elaboration on aspects of the job that are interesting which is noted as a limitation in this study. This information, however, does allow for further examination and provides direction for agencies employing child welfare workers interested in developing strategies to address the issue of staff turnover in the field.

These findings are consistent with some of the findings cited in previous research on recruitment and retention in child welfare. Commitment to helping others, a priority of working with children, and a belief in the importance of child protection work have been identified as factors contributing to worker retention in child welfare. (Rycraft 1994: 76). The quantitative findings for involvement in the WES remained consistently high in both the baseline and follow up scores which suggests that there is a fairly high degree of concern and commitment among the workers to their job.

Although these factors were not explicitly identified in the quantitative findings of this study, discussion during group supervision sessions and larger group meetings made reference to these factors. Workers talked about their concern for and commitment to helping children and families. It was recognized in these discussions that the work is difficult and challenging which is stressful, but there was some acknowledgment among the group that challenging work is a motivating factor and one of the reasons they remain in the field.

### Workload

Child welfare has been recognized in the literature as one of the most stressful fields in social work practice. A number of characteristics in the nature of the work contribute to this stress. High workload demands and complexity of cases are identified as significant contributing factors to a very pressured work environment

and high levels of job stress among child welfare workers. (Rushton & Nathan 1996 and Marks & Hixon 1986). These factors are more pronounced for child welfare workers practicing in rural and northern community environments due to the uniqueness and nature of the rural northern context. (Zapf 1993 and Sundet & Cowger 1990). Some of the rural environment factors that contribute to this uniqueness include high worker visibility, professional isolation, role contamination and limited resources. (Sundet & Cowger 1990: 98).

Findings in this study reveal high unmanageable workloads and work pressure as significant sources of stress and job dissatisfaction among the workers. This is a notably consistent finding throughout the study in both the baseline and follow up scores. The environmental context may have contributed to these findings. The environment for this study can be described as a rural environment as it is isolated and situated in the north. The City of Thompson is the hub for services to the North. Also, the agency in this study is a regional agency that is responsible for the delivery of services to rural communities within the north. Some communities are accessible by gravel roads or winter roads, some by rail and others by air. Providing services to such a vast and varied area is a challenge given that a fair amount of time is absorbed by travel.

Northern communities have a limited number of child welfare workers and as a result workers become more known and visible to the community. (Sundet & Cowger 1990). This could result in increased referrals and high caseloads. Also, workers who are more visible and have fewer professional resources to access could inevitably carry more responsibility and roles beyond the scope of their job expectations. One can presume that these issues are more prevalent in the more rural communities and among the workers who deliver services to the more rural communities in this study although the data does not demonstrate this. A limitation in this study is the small sample size of rural workers.



The issue of being more visible and lack of professional resources was identified and discussed during group and individual sessions. The two participating outlying workers talked about how a lot of their work with clients is done on the community roads as clients pass them by. In the rural community, it is difficult for workers to schedule meetings with clients at the community office because if they attend the office to meet with the social worker, their problems become more visible to the community. For this reason, clients prefer to meet with workers on a more informal basis and in a setting that is less structured. Workers in rural communities need to be very flexible and be prepared to work with little structure and routine.

One rural worker talked about a situation where she felt at risk because there was no RCMP in the community to access. This worker walked to a home visit, which was approximately one mile from the community office. This was not a scheduled home visit as she just wanted to check in on the family. When she got to the home she found six children left unattended. As she was getting the children together the parents who were very intoxicated came home and became both verbally and physically threatening toward the worker. The worker's safety was at risk. She had no access to a telephone and even if she had there was no RCMP in the community to respond to the situation. The worker managed to free herself safely from the situation with the children. She walked with the children, all under the age 10 to the community office. Several community members drove by her as she was walking to the office, however, no one stopped to offer her any assistance. This situation was both time and labour intensive, and also fueled a lot of emotions for this worker. This is an example of the vulnerability of workers in rural communities with minimal resources. This situation also highlights the lack of predictability in child welfare work and shows how the emotional aspects add to the complexity of the work. (Callahan in Wharf 1993:74). Following this situation, the agency contracted the rental of a vehicle for this worker when she is in the

community as an attempt to provide her with a resource that would increase her safety while in the community.

Issues of high unmanageable workloads and work pressure may also be related to the fact that child welfare practice is difficult to regulate. Child welfare services are mandated services which are prescribed in the Child & Family Services Act. The Child & Family Services Act has a broad mandate which encompasses a wide range of services to families and children. The major themes in the mandate are "child's best interests", "child protection" and "family preservation". These are very broad themes that make it difficult to establish parameters for service delivery and exercise discretion in practice.

For example, a common situation faced by the child welfare system is allegations of child abuse from separating and divorcing parents. Child welfare workers are often called upon to investigate allegations of child abuse made by angry separating and divorcing parents. If the initial allegations are unfounded and the allegations continue, which is often the case, child welfare continues to be involved as the mandate obligates the child welfare system to investigate all allegations of abuse even if it has been assessed by the system that false or malicious reporting has occurred. Following investigation of the allegations, child welfare workers then become caught up in the role of helping families assist their children through the separation/divorce process, and not to play out their issues through the children. They are then dragged into custody hearings to provide testimony regarding their involvement. These services are in line with the themes of "child's best interest" and "child protection" but also overlap with family conciliation services. The broad definition of service delivery within the mandate creates difficulty for the system to establish parameters for service delivery and exercise discretion in practice.

**This situation demonstrates the lack of discretion workers have in their work given the statutory nature of the work. If an allegation of child abuse is reported to the agency, the legislation requires them to investigate, even if their experience suggests that the allegation is probably false. This situation also demonstrates the complexity of child welfare work. The activities of investigating, supporting, and counseling families are time consuming that involve a variety of roles and the use of these roles interchangeably.**

**The freedom to exercise discretion is deemed as a traditional attribute of any profession. Within social work, claims to professional status have been tied to the exercise of discretion within the individual casework model. (Davies 1989: 186). Although child welfare practice allows for some discretion through casework, this discretion is significantly tied to various bureaucratic and administrative procedures. Excessive paper work, court work, and the number of approval processes required to access funding are examples of bureaucratic and administrative procedures inherent in child welfare practice. Child welfare workers are tied to standards and regulations contained within the Child & Family Services Standards Manual. The proceduralization of child welfare practice can be perceived as an effort to increase conformity to prescribed standards of practice and ensure accountability within the system. However, the clinical aspect of practice that attracts workers to this profession can get lost in the midst of these bureaucratic and administrative procedures. (Davies 1989).**

**The issue of bureaucratization and proceduralization of child welfare practice and its impact on workload management were identified and discussed as an issue during group supervision sessions. Workers verbalized frustration levels with their inability to comply with standards and feel "caught up" in their work due to "unrealistic expectations". This creates a lot of stress for workers. Workers need acknowledgment of the fact that workload demands exceed standards expectations.**

Continued discussion of these issues as a group can potentially relieve some of the stress encountered with these issues and promote mutual support among workers. This process can be very gratifying for workers and a morale-building experience. The opportunity for sharing common problems encountered on the job is, in itself, a therapeutic contribution to individual morale. The worker is given appreciation of the fact that these problems are "our problems" rather than my problems. This decreases the tendency to personalize problems. (Kadushin 1992: 407 & 408).

The issue of workload demands exceeding standard expectations was discussed during some of the group supervision sessions. Although no magical solutions were identified from the discussion, the discussion provided acknowledgment of the issue as well as recognition that the problem is broader than and beyond the control of the individual worker and the supervisor.

The individual supervision contracting process during individual supervision allowed workers to identify overwhelming work demands, and partialize and prioritize work tasks. As an example, the partialization and prioritization of overwhelming and outstanding paperwork demands provided workers with some sense of structure and control with the work. Feedback from workers both during and following this process indicated that workers felt some sense of control and accomplishment as a result of this process. Although this intervention was somewhat successful at partializing and prioritizing work demands, the reality of child welfare work is that it is very complex and cannot easily be reduced into quantifiable pieces. (Callahan 1993:90)

Rapid social and economic changes experienced by society in recent years have affected the structure and functioning of families. Shrinking incomes, decreased stability in the labor market, high levels of unemployment, and the simultaneous cutbacks in resources allocated to systems to enhance family functioning such as social allowance, day care, and unemployment benefits places

families in crisis and magnifies service needs. The majority of clients served by child welfare agencies are from relatively disempowered groups who have the fewest resources, such as the poor, minorities, and female single parents; groups that are most impacted by these changes. (Hegar & Hunzeker 1990:499).

The client groups more commonly serviced by the agency in this study are Aboriginal, single parent families with females as the head of family. In Northern Manitoba there are slightly more unemployed with more females looking for work, increasing the need for Day Care services. Housing is also an issue in the North as the vacancy rate is low. There are also more people living in each household than the provincial average which produces overcrowded living conditions. These client groups become disempowered further in the course of child protection investigations through possible removal of their children, placement of their children with others, and perhaps ultimate termination of parental rights. (Heger & Hunzeker 1990).

Workers also experience the disempowering effects of cutbacks. The fact that child welfare agencies generally serve socially devalued groups, contributes to feelings of helplessness and disempowerment among workers because the help these client groups need most is not in the armory of the worker or agency. The work environment is constrained by lack of sufficient resources to fulfill agency responsibility. Inadequate funding results in insufficient resources and support for workers to meet demands for service. (Hagen 1994:582). Workers see themselves as fighting on the front line with limited resources, little support, and less appreciation by a general public whose dirty work they do. (Heger & Hunzeker 1990:500).

This brings to mind a conversation that took place during one of the group supervision sessions following presentation of a case by a worker. The worker discussed her feelings of helplessness trying to assist an abused women in a small

remote community who recognized risk to herself and her children in this relationship, and was seeking financial assistance for transportation to leave the community. The worker attempted to assist this woman, however, the resources she needed were not immediately available to her. The worker did not have the ability within her program guidelines to provide transportation for this woman, and she did not meet the funding criteria for other agencies. Given the fact that her and her children were not at immediate risk, no resources were available to her. The worker talked about the feelings of disempowerment for the client as well as her own feelings of disempowerment in working with this client, as the help the client really needed was beyond her ability to provide.

The immediate result from this process was the infusion of peer group support for this worker. Heger and Hunzeker (1990) propose the use of worker-led mutual support can empower workers and help empower clients. They refer to Sherman and Wenocur (1983) who argued that:

peer group support weakens the impact of the disempowering socialization process in an organization by creating an internal subculture governed by workers' values. Also, practically speaking, since workers usually cannot single-handedly create changes in a complex organization, a sustained support group can provide a base of coalitional power. (Sherman & Wenocur 1993 in Heger & Hunzeker (1990:500).

Given the significant findings for workload it is expected that work pressure is also a significant factor. Internal sources of work pressure that have been identified by the workers include excessive paper work demands, deadlines for reports, inability to comply with standards, restrictive policies and procedures, and lack of resources. External sources of work pressure identified by the workers include expectations from other systems such as court, police, schools, other child caring agencies, etc. Also mentioned was client hostility and resistance toward service.

Child welfare services are generally not an accepted service when the protection and removal of children from their families is required. The act of removing children from their families on an involuntary basis places the worker in a position of power with the family. This power is legitimized power and not expert power which is fundamental to therapeutic working relationships. (Shulman 1993). The nature of child welfare practice places workers in a position of legitimized authority with their clients. This leads to a public perception that child welfare workers are policing agents versus social service providers. (Jones 1993: 138). There is also the issue of trying to help families who do not want to be helped. Child welfare services are mandated services, which implies that not only is the worker required to provide services, but clients are often required to accept them whether they want to or not. (Jones 1992: 137). The act of removing children from their families also prolongs the engagement process between the family and the worker which is also fundamental to therapeutic working relationships. (Shulman 1993). These factors were identified in some of the open ended responses as well as in discussions during individual and group supervision sessions.

Child welfare practice requires workers to make critical decisions that affect the safety and well being of children on a daily basis. Given the urgency of situations involving child protection, workers often are pressured to make decisions in a limited time frame. During group discussions workers identified their fears and anxieties of consequences that could occur if they overlooked something on their cases or are unable to complete a specific task due to the uncontrollable workload demands and pressures they experience on a daily basis. The most fearful consequence is the potential death of a child on their caseload. These anxieties and fears are magnified by attacks by the media on the child welfare system when there is a death of a child involved with the system. Workers feelings of competence are compromised by these attacks. (Davies 1989: 190).

These incidents are well beyond the control of the worker yet the outcome is a sense of individual responsibility. This highlights the need workers to be able to verbalize their feelings, normalize and validate their feelings, and obtain feedback about their performance to alleviate this sense of individual responsibility. Coworker and supervisory support is essential here. Group supervision provided opportunity for workers and supervisors to commiserate with and support each other.

I recall a comment made by a worker during a group meeting that illustrates this point. This worker talked about feeling so overwhelmed with her workload to the point that when she goes to bed at night she has difficulty falling asleep due to a nagging feeling that she forgot to do something on her caseload, and a fear that a child may be at risk because of something she forgot to do. This led to a discussion that allowed other workers to identify similar feelings and fears. Further discussion led to workers talking about their feelings and responses to child deaths on their caseloads. Workers identified that when there is a child death in the system, they know that they are not directly responsible, however, they find themselves questioning their competency and asking themselves if there was something they overlooked or forgot to do that may have resulted in the child's death. These feelings are magnified with media attacks and exploitation. Workers indicated that although media attacks are generally directed toward the system, they feel personally attacked.

The recent arrest and charging of an Ontario Catholic Children's Aid worker with criminal negligence in the starvation death of an infant is an example of the emphasis on individual responsibility within the child welfare system. This incident leads to increased feelings of individual responsibility and further compromises feelings of competency among workers in the system.



The inability to control and plan the work day has been identified as a significant source of work pressure among child welfare workers. The nature of the work requires workers to respond immediately to crisis situations involving risk to children. A worker may have the day planned to complete outstanding paperwork, however, if a crisis occurs on the worker's caseload or a new referral comes in that involves risk to a child, the worker is expected to respond to this immediately. The paperwork remains outstanding and the worker continues to feel the pressure of getting the paperwork done and experiences additional pressure in trying to determine an alternate time to complete this task. In response to these demands, it is often necessary for the worker to work overtime to complete the tasks. This also becomes a source of stress for the worker as their personal lives become affected. These factors were presented in some of the qualitative findings as well as in discussions during group and individual supervision sessions.

A strategy identified during individual supervision was to designate paperwork days. For this to be successful a back up worker would need to be available to handle emergencies. Workers would also need to put their phones on call forward and provide directions to the switchboard operator to direct emergencies on cases to the back up worker. Some workers identified the need to physically leave the office to do paperwork to avoid disruptions. Workers who have implemented this strategy have found it to be somewhat successful, and acknowledged that this requires planning and self-discipline.

Further discussion also revealed that workers generally don't like paperwork, and their reasons for entering the field is to do "people work" not "paperwork". There was consensus among the workers that they prioritized client contact over administrative tasks, due to their dislike for paperwork. Although this was recognized, it was agreed that no one was seeing clients unnecessarily, and this did

not minimize the feeling that no matter how much workers tried to balance the client work with the paperwork, they are not able to keep up with workload demands.

Although paperwork was identified as the most time consuming and burdensome task and a source of job stress, responding to urgent and emergency situations that require quick decisions was also identified as sources of job stress. The findings in this study show a difference in levels of workload manageability and job satisfaction for workers who provide involuntary services and workers who provide voluntary services. Workers who provide involuntary services have less ability to control and plan their work because of nature of situations they deal with. These workers have more exposure to vulnerable high risk situations that require quick decisions than the voluntary program workers. Both work groups identified their workloads as being high, but the manageability of workloads varied.

The stress experienced from high workload demands and pressures often result in increased sick leaves and deployment workers to other program areas. This produces even more workload demands and pressures for workers who are required to cover caseloads until additional staffing resources are recruited. Recruitment of staff to the child welfare field in the agency has been a difficult and time consuming process. This results in less supervisory support for workers as supervisors are required to spend more time in recruitment practices. Staff recruited to the child welfare field in the north are generally new graduates who require intensive training and orientation to the field from the supervisor. This also results in reduced supervision for the workers who are expected to carry additional work responsibilities. This situation produces increased stress for workers as well as supervisors. Workers experience increased stress in trying to keep up with additional workload demands resulting from turnover of staff and supervisors experience increased stress resulting from their inability to effectively address workers needs for additional support.

The high levels of workload and work pressure experienced in child welfare agencies and are not amenable to any immediate changes given the nature of the issues. The intensity of these issues may increase over time with the continuation of fiscal restraint. Although the interventions did not result in any significant changes in workload and work pressure, the process of group discussion promoted the recognition that workload and work pressure are symptoms of broader structural issues that are not directly amenable to change via the supervision process. However, the discussion of the issues during group supervision allowed the workers to normalize and validate their feelings and experiences with workload management and work pressure. The process of group supervision provided opportunity for workers to identify, examine, and externalize the issues related to workload and work pressure. These discussions also helped workers to contextualize the factors and release their sense of individual responsibility in addressing these issues. The tendency to personalize and individualize the issues decreased. (Kadushin 1992: 408). One can speculate that the continued examination of these issues in terms of context can be a lifting experience for workers as the weight of individual burdens are placed at the contextual level.

Also, a sustained support group can provide a base for coalitional power. (Hegar & Hunzeker 1990). Workers can overcome the feeling and reality of powerlessness by developing an entrepreneurial spirit, and engaging in political advocacy. An entrepreneurial spirit means being one's own authority, taking responsibility, encouraging self-expression, making commitments, and believing in the rightness of these actions. Political advocacy begins within the organization but also extends into the organizational environment. (Hegar & Hunzeker 1990:500). The group supervision process may lead to these actions as the group continues to develop.

### Role Clarity

The broad mandate of the Child and Family Services Act places a dual responsibility on child welfare agencies to protect children and preserve families. Historically, child welfare practice was more widely known as a practice that removed children from their families with minimal efforts toward family reunification and preservation. Now child welfare practice is more strongly guided by principles of family reunification and preservation. Although this may have resulted in a more widely accepted role for child welfare by society, the implications for child welfare workers is more role diversity and role contradiction.

These contradictions include: save the child from harm but keep families together; police family performance yet support family strengths; satisfy personal and professional obligations for good practice yet deliver service within the mandate of employing organization; work collaboratively yet bear the responsibility of the work individually. These contradictions lead to role conflict and role ambiguity and together are crucial components of job dissatisfaction for child welfare workers. (Callahan 1993:84).

Diversified roles can result in role ambiguity, a situation where role expectations are unclear. The potential for role ambiguity, the inability to know what is expected and what constitutes success is high child welfare given that much of the work is invisible, and the differing expectations of workers, supervisors, and clients. Ambiguity robs workers sense of competency. (Callahan 1993:85). Role conflict, where an individual is expected to fulfill two or more roles that are incompatible or in conflict with one another; and role stress, when a role contains a number of expectations and there are too many things to do also result from diversified tasks and impact on worker satisfaction in child welfare. (Jones, 1993: 136). The findings in this study suggest that role ambiguity, role conflict, and role

stress are prevalent among the workers. Both the baseline and follow up scores for clarity are below average with a slight decrease in the follow up score.

In practice it is difficult for the worker who apprehends a child from a family to provide reunification and preservation services to the family as well. The removal of a child from a family produces an emotional atmosphere of anger, conflict, and resistance in the relationship between the family and worker, unless done so on a voluntary basis. The ability for the worker to continue to work with the family toward reunification and preservation within this atmosphere is difficult and produces additional stress for workers. The roles of protecting children and preserving families in practice can become conflictual for both workers and families. The conflict between the roles of helper and agent of social control are basic to the nature of the work in these programs. (Jones 1993: 137). Cutbacks in resources also produce issues of role clarity for child welfare workers as they need to make decisions based on availability of resources and services rather than best practice. (Siege 1994:85).

The findings for role clarity in this study suggest that the interventions did not have a positive influence on role clarity. Although resolution was not achieved through modifications in supervision, the process permitted workers to examine the issue of role clarity. The discussion of this issue during group supervision, helped workers to realize that their experiences on the job are shared by others and are inherent in the nature of the work rather than their individual performance. Continuation of the process may potentially assist workers to develop strategies to address this issue.

Jones (1993) offers strategies to address this issue and emphasizes the notion that involving individuals toward resolution is significant as a coping mechanism. The process of identifying ambiguous roles and reframing them as conflicting roles is an important first step. (Jones 1993: 139) This process occurred during some of

the group supervision sessions. Workers talked about the difficulties they experience in attempting to work with families toward reunification if they are the apprehending worker. They discussed the negative impact apprehending a child from a family has on their relationship with the family and the length of time it takes to work through feelings of anger, conflict, and resistance. The relationship becomes further infested with anger and conflict when the worker has to apply to the court for an order of guardianship on their child. Workers talked about their discomfort when testifying in front of families in court, and their difficulties in re-engaging with families following the court process. The role of helper, and the ability to help families toward reunification is compromised with the authority and power imposed upon families through the role of protecting children.

The next step, that of weighing the relative merits and sanctions of the conflicting roles, then becomes a manageable task. (Jones 1993:139). Although these roles produce conflict for workers, each are equally important and have merit. Workers talked about their feelings toward removing children from their families, and acknowledged that although this is a difficult task, the protection of children is necessary. They also talked about the importance of families and the value in strengthening and preserving families.

The third step, redefining and expanding one of the roles to include the other, could lead to role expansion and other positive coping strategies. (Jones 1993: 139). Although the process toward family reunification comes slowly and not without regressions, the act of apprehending children from their families is often necessary and may be the first step toward strengthening and preserving families.

Diversity of tasks was identified in the open-ended responses as a primary source of job satisfaction among some of the workers in this study. An argument has been made in the literature that diversity or discrepant expectations of work which leads to role conflict can also have positive outcomes for workers. (Jones

1993: 137). Sieber identified four ways in which adaptation to role conflict contributes to good mental health. These include tolerance of discrepant viewpoints, exposure to many sources of information, flexibility in adjusting to the demands of diverse role partner, and reduction of boredom. It has also been suggested that multiple and conflicting roles can be energy creating. (Sieber in Jones 1993: 137). Comments such as *challenging* and *flexible* were identified in connection with diversity in some of the open-ended responses among the workers in this study as primary sources of job satisfaction.. These findings support the concept that diversity and role conflict can have positive outcomes for workers.

Although these issues can have positive outcomes for workers, the real problem lies in attempting to reconcile the caring and controlling functions, the contradictions and discrepancies that make workers feel impotent and ineffectual in their work.

Rural social work practice has been identified as a factor that produces role contamination, a mixing of professional roles. (Sundet & Cowger 1990: 98). Two of the workers in this study provided services to outlying rural communities. These workers are expected to provide additional program services such as mental health, home care, children's special services, and community living. In Thompson such services are provided by designated staff in these programs. In the rural outlying communities serviced by the agency in this study, the outlying area worker assigned to the community is generally the only social worker who provides service to the community. In comparison, the Thompson workers provide services under specific program that provides them with some clarification of service delivery expectations. Although the service model for outlying communities offers more diversity for workers servicing these communities, the potential for role ambiguity and role conflict is greater. The sample size of outlying workers in this study limits the

extent to which any conclusions can be made in comparison to the Thompson workers on role clarity.

During group and individual supervision sessions the rural workers talked about the need to wear a number of different professional hats while in the community and their difficulties in attempting to balance and reconcile these roles and feel some sense of success in their work. Delivering a variety of services with limited knowledge and experience, produced feelings of ineffectiveness and a sense that all you are doing is managing from crisis to crisis, versus affecting some real change in clients.

### Innovation

The negative findings for innovation in this study suggest that workers feel restricted in their ability to be innovative in their work. This can be explained through further examination of the structural factors that impact on the organization's ability to encourage innovation among workers. Organizations are influenced by changing political climates. During times of fiscal restraints, social services organizations have undergone a process of bureaucratization and centralization of managerial power and control. (Davies 1989: 187). Budgetary restrictions and cutbacks, as well as tightening of administrative control, shadows workers and restricts their ability to feel innovative in their work. The consumption of time and energy spent on adhering to bureaucratic and administrative practices devalues direct practice work. (Davis 1989: 188). Workers tend to function more on a survival level and attempt to protect what they have rather than experiment, take risks, and be creative. (Davies 1989: 194). Budgetary restraints and cutbacks are structural factors that are not directly controllable or amenable to change by workers or supervisors.



Another structural factor that may have influenced the findings for innovation is the high workload demands and work pressures inherent in child welfare practice. The nature of the work makes it difficult for workers to feel innovative. Excessive workload demands and pressures related to the mandated programs is generally consumed with crisis reactive work which involves intensive time and energy and limits opportunities for workers to broaden and exercise knowledge and skills toward proactive preventive work such as group facilitation and community development. The emphasis becomes more on survival with the immediate demands of the work.

The negative findings for innovation suggest that the interventions did not influence this factor. It was expected that the group supervision model would positively influence the findings for innovation. The negative findings suggest budgetary restraints and cutbacks and workload demands and pressures are more powerful influencing factors for workers, and the extent to which supervision can counter these influences is minimal. One can assume that the group supervision intervention might foster some innovation and creativity with time.

### Task Orientation

The quantitative findings for task orientation show a significant increase in the follow up score. The qualitative findings suggests workers are increasingly feeling pressured to be efficient and get the job done. The bureaucracy and proceduralism within the system breeds increased task orientation practices. However, recognition of work done is generally tied to the administrative imperatives within the system. Much of the difficult work such as helping children and families through separation, recruiting resources for families and children, supporting foster parents and foster children in their placements, tends to go unrecognized as these activities generally go unrecorded and are concealed at the case level. Given that these aspects of the

work are invisible, they are unrecorded, and in time can become devalued by workers and the organization. (Callahan 1993:79). The group supervision process became an opportunity for workers to mention the invisible aspects of the work that they value and feel good about.

Efficient closure of cases is encouraged in the child welfare system to keep up with the incoming workload. This is difficult given the complexity of cases and the need to constantly react to crisis situations. This can result in a shift from a therapeutic orientation of practice toward a bureaucratic-procedural consciousness within the system. (Davies 1989: 193). The clinical aspect of the work that attracts workers to the field becomes secondary. The time and energy workers spend on bureaucratic-procedural tasks depletes the time and energy they can spend on clinical functions. Workers need the opportunity to become more connected to the clinical aspect of child welfare practice and develop a sense of professional identity. (Marks & Hixon 1986: 422).

An example of movement toward bureaucratic-procedural consciousness within the system is the implementation of computerization in child welfare. This is a technological attempt at ensuring accountability and conformity and generating efficiencies within the system. Workers and supervisors received brief intensive training, and are expected to utilize the computers on a daily basis to document and track casework activities. The induction of computers into the child welfare system raised anxiety among workers and supervisors because of their lack of confidence in their ability to use computers and the perceived length of time it would take to acquire and master the necessary skills. As well, feelings of resentment toward the system festered. As one worker commented, "I entered social work to work with people, not computers". There was some trepidation among workers that time to perform clinical functions would be dissipated with the induction of computers which further threatened their sense of professional identity.

Informal and formal training opportunities are offered as strategies to sustain professional identification. The interventions provided these opportunities for workers. Individual contracting with workers during supervision identified workers training needs and mechanisms to address these training needs which included individual supervision, group supervision, and access to more formal training opportunities as available. Developmental activities that occurred during group supervision sessions included case presentations and discussions, presentations on articles related to social work practice, viewing video resources, and sharing of teaching resources utilized for casework practice. The open-ended responses identify lack of specialized and formalized training as primary sources of job dissatisfaction. Although training opportunities are provided to workers through individual and group supervision, workers emphasized the need for more specialized and formalized training in the field. Although the findings did not reveal an increased sense of professional development following the interventions, progressive development of the interventions may produce this result.

Specialized training focused at developing core competencies for child welfare practice has been adopted by the Province and is being offered to workers in the field. It is encouraging that child welfare is finally being recognized as a specialized field and acknowledgment has been given to the need for more specialized training for workers in the field. This training is currently being delivered to child welfare workers throughout the province and it is anticipated that the training will provide workers with increased confidence and professional identity.

### **Autonomy**

The bureaucratization and proceduralism of child welfare practice exerts pressure on managers and supervisors to exercise more control over the workers in the system. The quantitative findings for managerial control in this study suggest there is a low emphasis on managerial control in the work environment and show a significant decrease in the follow up score. The findings for worker autonomy suggest that workers feel autonomous in their work. Discussions during group supervision and feedback from the workers following the presentation of the data to workers, identified that levels of managerial control and autonomy are relative to aspects of the work. Workers identified that they feel more autonomous and less managerial control with the clinical aspects of practice which they perceive as positive, and identified feeling less autonomous and more managerial control with administrative practices which they perceive as negative.

Restrictive policies and procedures are examples of administrative practices that impact on levels of managerial control and worker autonomy. Public child welfare agencies share the characteristics of other bureaucracies, including rigid lines of authority, top-down decision making, and inertia. In many ways, the agency is a disempowering force in the lives of those who must deal with it, child welfare workers as well as clients. (Hegar & Hunzeker 1990:500).

Workers identified frustrations with the number of hierarchical levels administrative decisions need to be vetted through before receiving approval. A specific example is the amount of paper work, number of processes, and the length of time and it takes for workers to get approval for funding for case-related activities. During time of fiscal restraint there is more pressure on management to scrutinize and exercise more control over program budgets. Economic restraint is a structural factor and management's responses to contain and control expenditures in the system is an organizational factor. These factors may impede worker autonomy

and engender disempowerment. The ability of management to exercise less control is dependent upon progressive changes in the economic climate which is beyond the scope of the agency.

The significant decrease in the follow up score for managerial control could imply that the interventions may have had some influence on this factor. Through the use of group supervision, the supervisor can bridge the hierarchical distance that is structurally imposed upon the supervisory relationships with workers. The process of the supervisor sharing as a mutual member of the group can develop greater consciousness among workers regarding the structural factors that are similarly imposed on the supervisors as well as their impact on the supervisor. This bridging can increase workers levels of trust toward their supervisor and reduce the emphasis of managerial control for workers. Group discussion regarding the structural factors impeding on worker autonomy can also facilitate increased independent and interdependent functioning between the workers and the supervisor and among workers. (Marks & Hixon 1986: 420). Although the data in this study for worker autonomy does not reflect this, one can speculate that continued implementation of the group supervision process could impact levels of worker autonomy.

### Supervisor Support

The open-ended responses for supervisor's weaknesses in the supervision questionnaire identify some of the supervision issues experienced for workers in this study. These findings also give flavor to some of the issues experienced among the supervisors in child welfare which are not dissimilar from the issues experienced among field workers. The need for supervisory support was strongly identified in the findings. The findings indicate that workers experience less supervisory support when supervisors are perceived as being stressed. The findings reveal that when

supervisors are perceived as being stressed, they become less accessible and approachable to workers both in physical and emotional sense. Findings also revealed that supervisors have other demands on them and have difficulty balancing worker's needs with management's needs.

Workers rely on their supervisors to help make the job both bearable and manageable. The supervisor is in a pivotal position in the agency and is seen by workers as the person who best understands the responsibilities of and the demands made on the caseworker, backs up decisions and casework activities and advocates for both caseworkers and clients. (Rycraft 1994: 78). Supervisors in child welfare also experience high workload demands and work pressure and high levels of stress. The pressures involved in helping workers to manage complex and demanding caseloads and cutbacks and cost-containment efforts places the supervisor under a great deal of stress. (Shulman 1993: 64).

Shulman's concept of parallel process in work with clients and supervision of staff is based on the similarity of the dynamics of supervision and worker-client dynamics. Behavioral patterns in supervisor-worker interaction are similar to those in worker-client engagement. (Shulman 1993: 63 & 64). The processes of identifying work demands that are overwhelming and unmanageable for workers, and partializing these demands into manageable units and establishing goals and time frames that occurred during the development of individual supervision contracts mirrors Shulman's concept of parallel process. This process modeled good casework practice which can have positive implications for clients.

Further to this concept, when supervisors are experiencing stress and minimal support within the system, it becomes more difficult for them to support workers and help them to manage their stress. This pattern in the supervisor-worker interaction impacts worker-client interaction. Workers become less effective in their ability to provide support to their clients and help them manage stress if their own

needs for support and stress-management are not being met. This concept suggests that supervisors themselves need support if they are to be able to provide this for their workers. (Shulman 1992: 64).

Workload demands and pressures experienced by supervisors makes it difficult to protect supervision time. A very pressurized work environment poses challenges and struggles for supervisors to provide routine and structured supervision. Supervision functions include administration, education, and support, and the attempt to prioritize and deliver these adequately is a challenging and demanding task for supervisors. (Rushton and Nathan 1996: 362) Supervisors attempt to schedule and structure supervision, however, the crisis nature of the work often requires supervisors and workers to postpone supervision and prioritize other service needs.

The nature of the work also requires supervisors to be readily accessible to workers on an immediate basis to assist workers with urgent cases. (Rushton and Nathan 1996: 362). The qualitative findings in this study identify that workers need their supervisors to be more available and accessible to them.

The group supervision intervention was an attempt to help workers become more autonomous from their supervisor by increasing levels of coworker support and coworker cohesion. It was expected that the group supervision process would promote recognition of individual strengths and skills among workers and build confidence in each other's abilities and encourage workers to seek each other out when their immediate supervisor is not readily available to them for consultation and advise on cases. The findings suggest workers continue to be very dependent on their supervisor. This may partially be a result of time. More time may be required for the intervention to produce a significant result. This may also be a result of the nature of the work. Child protection workers are charged with the responsibility of making critical decisions that affect the lives of children and families. The critical

nature of the decisions creates anxiety and may increase the need for workers to be dependent on their supervisor to cover their actions. (Rushton & Nathan 1996: 363).

Two significant themes emerge from these findings. Although it is important for supervisors to encourage autonomy, it is also important for supervisors to be accessible and available to workers on a structured and immediate basis. There is also an emphasis on the need for the supervisor to deal effectively and assist workers to deal effectively with the highly emotional nature of the work. (Rushton & Nathan 1996:359). Although the findings do not reveal any significant changes in the overall ratings relationship with supervisor and overall ratings of supervision following the intervention phase, they do reveal some minimal change in a positive direction.

These findings also offer some evidence in support of the contention that the integration of support and demand is difficult for human service supervisors. (Shulman 1993: 62). The findings reveal that the issues for supervisors are similar to the issues for workers and reflects the parallel process concept that suggests that supervisors themselves need help and support if they are able to provide these for their workers. (Shulman 1993: 64).

Group supervision became a source of support for me, the supervisor. The process of sharing as a mutual member of the group raised consciousness among workers that supervisor's share the same issues and are also disempowered by the impinging broader structural factors in child welfare. This awareness prompted validation, recognition, and support between supervisors and workers. As well, it provided opportunity for supervisors and workers to engage in mutual problem-solving and strategizing processes which had some empowering effects for both supervisors and workers. The interdependent functioning that occurred through the process reduced the tendency for workers and supervisors to personalize and



individualize issues but rather fostered more cooperative and collaborative approaches to issues. The group supervision process allowed me to be on common ground with workers and provided for some bridging of the hierarchical distance that is structurally imposed upon supervisory relationships with workers.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS**

**This practicum was undertaken for three purposes:**

- 1) To identify levels and contributors of job satisfaction and job stress among child welfare workers in my agency.**
- 2) To determine if identified levels of job stress and job satisfaction can be modified through supervision.**
- 3) To determine which factors if any relating to job satisfaction and job stress can be modified through supervision.**

**The overall findings indicate workers are satisfied with their jobs. The results show only incremental change between the baseline and follow up job satisfaction scores. The direction of change was positive which is an encouraging result, however, given the minimal change in the overall job satisfaction follow up scores, the interventions did not produce any significant positive changes as hypothesized. Two conclusions are offered:**

- 1) Although supervision is important, there are more powerful influences on job satisfaction rooted in the larger environment that are not amenable to direct change through the use of supervision.**
- 2) Given the already positive scores in the baseline data, the extent to which the interventions could positively influence change was minimal.**

**Workload and work pressure were identified as significant sources of job dissatisfaction and job stress among child welfare workers in this study. The social and economic crisis experienced by society in recent years has produced increased vulnerable client populations, and the simultaneous cutbacks in resources has constrained the ability for child welfare agencies to fulfill their responsibilities. The**

bureaucratization and proceduralism of child welfare practice have become conditional responses to the broader contextual changes. These conditions exert pressure on agencies to exercise more control over workers through restrictive policies and procedures, hierarchical decision making, and tightened administrative practices, all of which limits the ability for workers to exercise discretion and feel some control over their work. Excessive paperwork demands, computerization, length of time to obtain funding approvals, and lack of resources were identified as sources of stress for workers as these conditions impede worker innovation, autonomy, and threaten professional identity.

The need to respond immediately to situations and make critical decisions, and the inability to control or plan the work day, and the inability to keep up with the administrative demands of the job, were identified as significant sources of work pressure. Given the nature of the work and the urgency of situations involving child protection, workers are required to make critical decisions within limited time frames. These pressures have raised some anxiety among child welfare workers regarding their ability to make competent decisions and the fearful consequence of the death of a child in the system. These feelings are heightened when the competency of the system is publicly doubted and attacked by the media.

Workload and work pressure were strongly emphasized as issues and sources of job dissatisfaction and job stress throughout the study. This study identified high stress levels among supervisors which are linked to high workload demands and pressures experienced by supervisors in the field. These factors negatively influence the supervisory relationship, as supervisors become less accessible and approachable with workers when stressed. The pressurized work environment in child welfare offers challenges and struggles for supervisors as well as workers, and the ability to provide and feel support within such a system becomes difficult. The negative findings for supervisor support are reflective of these conditions.

Role clarity is identified as a stressful factor for workers in this study as well, in terms of the number of roles child welfare workers are expected to fulfill in practice. Workers are confronted by limited resources on the one hand and unlimited demands on the other which poses conflict for workers in their attempt of fulfill their roles. Also, the roles of protecting children and reunifying families prescribe conflicting actions for workers, which become difficult to balance and integrate in practice. The act of apprehending a child places the worker in a position of authority with the family, which breeds an emotional atmosphere of anger, conflict, and resistance in the relationship between the family and the worker. The ability to move forward with the family toward reunification and preservation services comes slowly and not without regressions which is also stressful for workers.

Given the contextual flavor to these issues, and the consistent negative emphasis placed on these factors as shown in the findings, it appears as though the extent to which supervision can impact these factors is questionable. It would appear from the consistent negative ratings following the intervention, that no impact was made. To change the realities of practice in child welfare requires major contextual changes which are beyond the limits of supervision.

The incremental increase in the job satisfaction and supervision findings suggests that the individual supervision contracts were positive for workers. My experience with the process and feedback from the workers further supports the contention that this intervention was positive for the following reasons:

- 1) This intervention recognized and prioritized individual supervision needs of workers and defined roles of the supervisor best suited to meet the individual needs of workers.
- 2) This style of supervision offered a more proactive approach to supervision versus a reactive approach.

3) The identification of training needs in a formalized fashion offer leverage for workers to attend appropriate training functions.

4) The process of identifying learning styles was enjoyable for workers as it increased self-awareness.

5) The process helped workers and supervisors to partialize excessive and overwhelming work demands into manageable tasks which increased feelings of competency and offered some sense of control over the work.

6) When the contracts were reviewed following the intervention phase, workers were able to identify tasks that they completed which increased feelings of accomplishment.

7) The process modeled good casework practice which could have positive implications for clients.

8) The contracts can be utilized by supervisors as a performance management tool and provide data for performance appraisals.

9) Following the intervention period, the individual contracts were reviewed and revised. These contracts continue to be utilized during individual supervision.

Given the positive features of this intervention, it is recommended that individual supervision contracts be utilized as model of supervision in child welfare. It is recommended that the contract be revised to include a section to document the completed tasks. This will provide the workers, and the organization with a documented record of their accomplishments which can help workers gain optimism about their own development and uncover some of the hidden work that is usually not recognized by the organization.

The incremental increase in job satisfaction and the increase in coworker support suggests the group supervision intervention was positive for workers. The decrease in stress at work suggests this intervention may have buffered job stress which was expected. My experience with this process and feedback from workers

further suggests the finding that this intervention was positive for the following reasons:

1) The processes of mutual sharing of common issues and experiences that occurred during group supervision helped workers to develop an appreciation of the fact that issues inherent in child welfare practice are collective which decreased the tendency for workers to personalize and individualize problems.

2) The process provided opportunity for workers and supervisors to identify what is within their control to change, and work toward developing coping and problem-solving strategies.

3) The process allowed workers to contextualize and partialize issues which can potentially overcome feelings of disempowerment and increase feeling of control over the work.

4) With continued positive reinforcement and sustained support, there is potential for the group to develop coalitional power and become an avenue for lobbying and advocacy for change within the system.

5) The process became a source of support for the supervisor. The process of sharing as a mutual member of the group raised consciousness among workers that supervisors share similar issues and are also disempowered by the impinging influences of the larger working environment. As well, it provided the supervisor with the opportunity to engage in mutual problem-solving and strategizing processes which had some empowering effects for the supervisor.

6) The process fostered more collaborative approaches to issues among workers and supervisors which provided for some bridging of the hierarchical distance that is structurally imposed upon supervisory relationships with workers.

7) Following the intervention period, workers requested the group supervision process continue which suggests workers found this process helpful and supportive.

Given these encouraging results, it is recommended that the group supervision process be utilized as a supervision model in child welfare. It is recommended that the process continue as designed for this practicum. I suggest continued regular sessions every two weeks. The length of time is dependent on the agenda for each session. Sessions should have some structure with an agenda or purpose for each session, however, allow for flexibility to go with the mood of the group deal with issues not originally set out in the agenda. I found the process more effective when sessions were held outside the office to avoid disruptions. Feedback from workers supports this. Also, it is recommended that a designate be provided for workers and supervisors to provide back up coverage to further minimize the potential for disruptions.

Although the interventions did not significantly influence the findings in this study, they have presented some positive features and were good for their own sake. The failure to demonstrate more positive results, the impact of more powerful sources combined with a need for further development of the interventions, are limitations of this study. Both group supervision and individual supervision processes experienced some unanticipated disruptions due to uncontrollable work demands, which may have influenced the findings.

It is important to note that despite the stressors within the system, the child welfare field can be attractive for workers and produce job satisfaction. Findings from this study identify working with clients, client change, challenging and interesting work, and high degree of concern and commitment for the job as primary sources of job satisfaction. A further limitation of this study is that it did not allow for elaboration on the aspects of the job that are interesting and challenging which would have been useful to further understand what motivates workers to stay in the field. The commitment and concern for the protection of children and strengthening of families is a motivating spirit among child welfare workers, and is

important for agencies and supervisors to find ways to renew and revitalize this spirit in attempts to retain workers and combat the forces that influence turnover.

One strategy proposed by Rycraft (1994) which is within the control of child welfare agencies and supervisors is to recognize the importance of and allow opportunities for workers to rotate jobs and find the "right fit" for them. Allowing workers to rotate jobs provides diversity for the worker, allows the worker to develop various skills, and find the job most suitable for them. Some personality types, interests, and skills are better suited for some jobs than others, and helping workers to find their match in the system is a strategy to address the turnover crisis in child welfare. When I reflect on my years and experience in the system, I believe my survival was partially due to the ability to transfer to various positions in the system which provided me with diversity, the ability to broaden skills and knowledge, and find my "match" in the system. This has to be done with caution to ensure service continuity for the client and not to undermine the development of competency for the worker. Another factor in establishing a fit within the system is the recognition of the worker's personal limitations, as well as the limitations of the system.

Given the constant and excessive demands and stressors inherent in the child welfare system, workers will experience regular bouts of decreased energy and drive, which for some cannot be renewed and the best thing may be to move on to other job. Also, some workers may never find a fit within the system despite retention efforts. When this is discovered, it is the professional obligation of the system to support and facilitate a termination process between the worker and the system.

One year following this practicum, one child welfare worker has left the agency. This is a decrease from the previous years. Although at this time I cannot state that the interventions decreased turnover, the findings from this study reveal



**some positive features of the interventions. Given these positive features, and some of the unique implications of these interventions for child welfare workers in the north, there is some promise and it is hopeful that the utilization of these supervision models may potentially influence a decrease in turnover in child welfare.**

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**Appendix 1**

**CONSENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Acting Regional Director of Health & Family Services hereby give my consent to Cheryl Martinez to perform her practicum in the setting of this agency and to utilize the Child & Family Services workers as participants in her practicum. It is understood that the data and knowledge obtained through this practicum will be shared with the agency and used to develop recommendations and strategies for the agency and management staff toward more effective recruitment and retention of staff in the child welfare field.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Acting Regional Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix 2**

**CONSENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, employee of Health & Family Services, Thompson Region agree to participate in the MSW Practicum of Cheryl Martinez. I agree to respond openly and honestly to questionnaires designed specifically for this practicum as well as a standardized questionnaire. I also agree to participate in the development of a supervision contract with my supervisor. I agree to participate in group supervision sessions as designed and structured for the purpose of this practicum.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

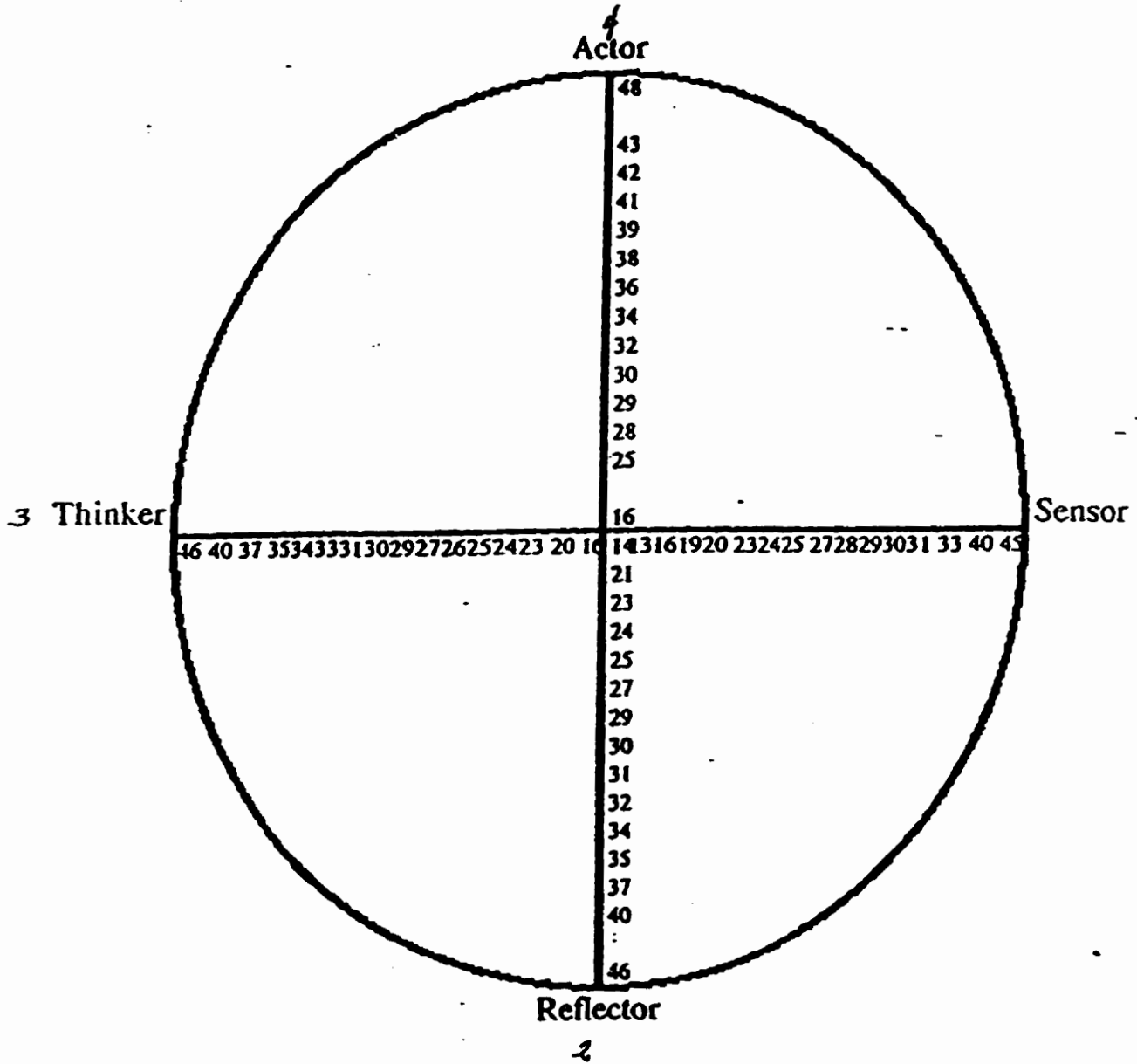


LEARNING STYLES: INVENTORY

Please complete the 12 sentences below. Each has four endings. Rank the endings according to how well you think each one fits how you would go about learning something. Try to recall recent learning experiences related to your work. In the spaces provided next to each ending rank a "4" for the ending that describes you the *best*, down to a "1" for the ending that describes you *least*. Rank all the endings for each sentence. Please do not create ties.

- |                         |   |  |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 1. When I learn:        | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to deal with my feelings      | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to watch and listen    | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to think about ideas                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to be doing things          |
| 2. I learn best when:   | <input type="checkbox"/> I trust my hunches and feelings      | <input type="checkbox"/> I listen and watch carefully  | <input type="checkbox"/> I rely on logical thinking                         | <input type="checkbox"/> I work hard to get things done     |
| 3. When I am learning:  | <input type="checkbox"/> I have strong feelings and reactions | <input type="checkbox"/> I am quiet and reserved       | <input type="checkbox"/> I tend to reason things out                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I am responsible about things      |
| 4. I learn by:          | <input type="checkbox"/> feeling                              | <input type="checkbox"/> watching                      | <input type="checkbox"/> thinking   | <input type="checkbox"/> doing                              |
| 5. When I learn:        | <input type="checkbox"/> I am open to new experiences         | <input type="checkbox"/> I look at all sides of issues | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to analyze things and break them into parts | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to try things out           |
| 6. When I am learning:  | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an intuitive person             | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an observing person      | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a logical person                              | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an active person              |
| 7. I learn best from:   | <input type="checkbox"/> personal relationships               | <input type="checkbox"/> observation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> rational theories                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> a chance to try out and practice   |
| 8. When I learn:        | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel personally involved in things | <input type="checkbox"/> I take my time before acting  | <input type="checkbox"/> I like ideas and theories                          | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to see results from my work |
| 9. I learn best when:   | <input type="checkbox"/> I rely on my feelings                | <input type="checkbox"/> I rely on my observations     | <input type="checkbox"/> I rely on my ideas                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I can try things out               |
| 10. When I am learning: | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an accepting person             | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a reserved person        | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a rational person                             | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a responsible person          |
| 11. When I learn:       | <input type="checkbox"/> I get involved                       | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to observe             | <input type="checkbox"/> I evaluate things                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to be active                |
| 12. I learn best when:  | <input type="checkbox"/> I am receptive and open minded       | <input type="checkbox"/> I am careful                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I analyze things                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> I am practical                     |
| TOTALS:                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Column 1                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Column 2                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Column 3   | <input type="checkbox"/> Column 4                           |

# LEARNING STYLES



Appendix 4

**SUPERVISION CONTRACT**

1. **Workers training needs as identified in the Individual Training Needs Assessment.**

<b>Training Need</b>	<b>Knowledge/Execution Issue</b>	<b>Barriers</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

<b>2. Training Activities</b>	<b>By When/Timeline</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3. **Readiness Level/Why?** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Supervisor's Role/Why?** \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Dominant Learning Style** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Weak Learning Style** \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Self-Development Activities** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4 (continued)**

8. **Dominant Work Style?** \_\_\_\_\_

9. **Supervisor's Response?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. <b>Performance Discrepancies</b>	<b>Knowledge/Execution Issue</b>	<b>Barriers</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

11. <b>Steps/Activities</b>	<b>By When/Timeline</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Worker's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Supervisor's Signature**

# WORK ENVIRONMENT SCALE FORM R

Rudolf H. Moos and Paul N. Insel

- 74. Employees function fairly independently of supervisors.
- 75. People seem to be quite inefficient.
- 76. There are always deadlines to be met.
- 77. Rules and policies are constantly changing.
- 78. Employees are expected to conform rather strictly to the rules and customs.
- 79. There is a fresh, novel atmosphere about the place.
- 80. The furniture is usually well-arranged
- 81. The work is usually very interesting.
- 82. Often people make trouble by talking behind others' backs.
- 83. Supervisors really stand up for their people.
- 84. Supervisors meet with employees regularly to discuss their future work goals.
- 85. There's a tendency for people to come to work late.
- 86. People often have to work overtime to get their work done.
- 87. Supervisors encourage employees to be neat and orderly.
- 88. If an employee comes in late, he can make it up by staying late.
- 89. Things always seem to be changing.
- 90. The rooms are well ventilated.

## Instructions

There are 90 statements in this booklet. They are statements about the place in which you work. The statements are intended to apply to all work environments. However, some words may not be quite suitable for your work environment. For example, the term *supervisor* is meant to refer to the boss, manager, department head, or the person or persons to whom an employee reports.

You are to decide which statements are true of your work environment and which are false. Make all your marks on the separate answer sheet.

If you think the statement is *true* or *mostly true* of your work environment, make an X in the box labeled T (true).

If you think the statement is *false* or *mostly false* of your work environment, make an X in the box labeled F (false).

Please be sure to answer every statement.



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1. The work is really challenging.
2. People go out of their way to help a new employee feel comfortable.
3. Supervisors tend to talk down to employees.
4. Few employees have any important responsibilities.
5. People pay a lot of attention to getting work done.
6. There is constant pressure to keep working.
7. Things are sometimes pretty disorganized.
8. There's a strict emphasis on following policies and regulations.
9. Doing things in a different way is valued.
10. It sometimes gets too hot.
11. There's not much group spirit.
12. The atmosphere is somewhat impersonal.
13. Supervisors usually compliment an employee who does something well.
14. Employees have a great deal of freedom to do as they like.
15. There's a lot of time wasted because of inefficiencies.
16. There always seems to be an urgency about everything.
17. Activities are well-planned.
18. People can wear wild looking clothing while on the job if they want.
19. New and different ideas are always being tried out.
20. The lighting is extremely good.
21. A lot of people seem to be just putting in time.
22. People take a personal interest in each other.
23. Supervisors tend to discourage criticisms from employees.
24. Employees are encouraged to make their own decisions.
25. Things rarely get "put off till tomorrow."
26. People cannot afford to relax.
27. Rules and regulations are somewhat vague and ambiguous.
28. People are expected to follow set rules in doing their work.
29. This place would be one of the first to try out a new idea.
30. Work space is awfully crowded.
31. People seem to take pride in the organization.
32. Employees rarely do things together after work.
33. Supervisors usually give full credit to ideas contributed by employees.
34. People can use their own initiative to do things.
35. This is a highly efficient, work-oriented place.
36. Nobody works too hard.
37. The responsibilities of supervisors are clearly defined.
38. Supervisors keep a rather close watch on employees.
39. Variety and change are not particularly important.
40. This place has a stylish and modern appearance.
41. People put quite a lot of effort into what they do.
42. People are generally frank about how they feel.
43. Supervisors often criticize employees over minor things.
44. Supervisors encourage employees to rely on themselves when a problem arises.
45. Getting a lot of work done is important to people.
46. There is no time pressure.
47. The details of assigned jobs are generally explained to employees.
48. Rules and regulations are pretty well enforced.
49. The same methods have been used for quite a long time.
50. The place could stand some new interior decorations.
51. Few people ever volunteer.
52. Employees often eat lunch together.
53. Employees generally feel free to ask for a raise.
54. Employees generally do not try to be unique and different.
55. There's an emphasis on "work before play."
56. It is very hard to keep up with your work load.
57. Employees are often confused about exactly what they are supposed to do.
58. Supervisors are always checking on employees and supervise them very closely.
59. New approaches to things are rarely tried.
60. The colors and decorations make the place warm and cheerful to work in.
61. It is quite a lively place.
62. Employees who differ greatly from the others in the organization don't get on well.
63. Supervisors expect far too much from employees.
64. Employees are encouraged to learn things even if they are not directly related to the job.
65. Employees work very hard.
66. You can take it easy and still get your work done.
67. Fringe benefits are fully explained to employees.
68. Supervisors do not often give in to employee pressure.
69. Things tend to stay just about the same.
70. It is rather drafty at times.
71. It's hard to get people to do any extra work.
72. Employees often talk to each other about their personal problems.
73. Employees discuss their personal problems with supervisors.

Appendix 6

**JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY (MODIFIED)**

**HOW SUPPORTIVE ARE YOUR COWORKERS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very unsupportive
- \_\_\_\_\_ unsupportive
- \_\_\_\_\_ minimally supportive
- \_\_\_\_\_ supportive
- \_\_\_\_\_ very supportive

**OVERALL RATING OF YOUR PHYSICAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very good
- \_\_\_\_\_ good
- \_\_\_\_\_ average
- \_\_\_\_\_ poor
- \_\_\_\_\_ very poor

**HOW SECURE DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR JOB?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very secure
- \_\_\_\_\_ insecure
- \_\_\_\_\_ average
- \_\_\_\_\_ fairly secure
- \_\_\_\_\_ very secure

**HOW INTERESTING IS THE WORK YOU DO?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ never interesting
- \_\_\_\_\_ not often interesting
- \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes interesting
- \_\_\_\_\_ often interesting
- \_\_\_\_\_ always interesting

**AVAILABILITY & QUALITY OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES TO DO YOUR JOB.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very good
- \_\_\_\_\_ good
- \_\_\_\_\_ average
- \_\_\_\_\_ poor
- \_\_\_\_\_ very poor

## Appendix 6 (continued)

**HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE YOUR WORKLOAD?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ too high/unmanageable  
 \_\_\_\_\_ high but manageable  
 \_\_\_\_\_ average  
 \_\_\_\_\_ low  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very low

**HOW FAIR IS YOUR WORKLOAD AND THE REWARDS YOU RECEIVE (financial, recognition, etc.) COMPARED TO OTHER PEOPLE IN YOUR WORKPLACE?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very unfair  
 \_\_\_\_\_ unfair  
 \_\_\_\_\_ neither fair or unfair  
 \_\_\_\_\_ fair  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very fair

**HOW MUCH INDEPENDENCE AND CONTROL DO YOU HAVE OVER HOW YOU DO YOUR JOB?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ some  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount  
 \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot

**HOW MUCH PARTICIPATION DO YOU HAVE IN MAJOR DECISION MAKING IN THE OFFICE?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ some  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount  
 \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot

**HOW MUCH STRESS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING IN YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE OF WORK?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a little  
 \_\_\_\_\_ some  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount  
 \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot



**Appendix 6 (continued)**

**HOW MUCH STRESS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING IN YOUR JOB?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little
- \_\_\_\_\_ a little
- \_\_\_\_\_ some
- \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount
- \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot

**HOW COMPETENT DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR JOB?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very competent
- \_\_\_\_\_ somewhat competent
- \_\_\_\_\_ competent
- \_\_\_\_\_ somewhat incompetent
- \_\_\_\_\_ incompetent

**OVERALL RATING OF JOB SATISFACTION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very low
- \_\_\_\_\_ low
- \_\_\_\_\_ moderate
- \_\_\_\_\_ high
- \_\_\_\_\_ very high

**WHAT WOULD YOU IDENTIFY AS YOUR PRIMARY SOURCES OF JOB SATISFACTION?**

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**WHAT WOULD IDENTIFY AS YOUR PRIMARY SOURCES OF JOB DISSATISFACTION?**

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**Appendix 6 (continued)**

**WHAT WOULD YOU IDENTIFY AS YOUR PRIMARY SOURCES OF JOB STRESS?**

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**WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING IN YOUR JOB?**

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**WHAT DO YOU FEEL WOULD CONTRIBUTE MOST TO YOUR STAYING IN YOUR PRESENT JOB?**

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Appendix 7

**SUPERVISION QUESTIONNAIRE**

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little
- \_\_\_\_\_ a little
- \_\_\_\_\_ some
- \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount
- \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR INVOLVE YOU IN DECISION-MAKING?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ always
- \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally
- \_\_\_\_\_ rarely
- \_\_\_\_\_ never

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM WHEN APPROPRIATE?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ always
- \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally
- \_\_\_\_\_ rarely
- \_\_\_\_\_ never

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR APPRECIATE AND RECOGNIZE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ never
- \_\_\_\_\_ rarely
- \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally
- \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ always

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR ADVOCATE FOR YOUR NEEDS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ always
- \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally
- \_\_\_\_\_ rarely
- \_\_\_\_\_ never

## Appendix 7 (continued)

**HOW APPROACHABLE IS YOUR SUPERVISOR?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very approachable
- \_\_\_\_\_ approachable
- \_\_\_\_\_ somewhat approachable
- \_\_\_\_\_ unapproachable
- \_\_\_\_\_ very unapproachable

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR PROVIDE YOU WITH ENOUGH REGULARLY SCHEDULED, UNINTERRUPTED SUPERVISION TIME?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very little
- \_\_\_\_\_ a little
- \_\_\_\_\_ some
- \_\_\_\_\_ a fair amount
- \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot

**ARE YOU ABLE TO ACCESS YOUR SUPERVISOR WHEN YOU REQUIRE IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ always
- \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally
- \_\_\_\_\_ rarely
- \_\_\_\_\_ never

**HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE YOUR SUPERVISOR'S KNOWLEDGE/SKILL LEVEL?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very poor
- \_\_\_\_\_ poor
- \_\_\_\_\_ average
- \_\_\_\_\_ good
- \_\_\_\_\_ very good

## Appendix 7 (continued)

**DOES YOUR SUPERVISOR PROVIDE YOU WITH THE TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES YOU NEED TO DO YOUR JOB?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ always  
 \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time  
 \_\_\_\_\_ occasionally  
 \_\_\_\_\_ rarely  
 \_\_\_\_\_ never

**HOW SUPPORTIVE IS YOUR SUPERVISOR IN THE OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF YOUR CASELOAD?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ minimally supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ unsupportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very unsupportive

**HOW SUPPORTIVE IS YOUR SUPERVISOR WHEN YOU ARE EXPERIENCING STRESS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ minimally supportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ unsupportive  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very unsupportive

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very poor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ poor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ average  
 \_\_\_\_\_ good  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very good

**OVERALL RATING OF SUPERVISION?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ very good  
 \_\_\_\_\_ good  
 \_\_\_\_\_ average  
 \_\_\_\_\_ poor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ very poor

**Appendix 7 (continued)**

**WHAT ARE YOUR SUPERVISOR'S STRENGTHS?**

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**WHAT ARE YOUR SUPERVISOR'S WEAKNESSES?**

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**WHAT WOULD YOU IDENTIFY AS YOUR SUPERVISION NEEDS?**

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**WHAT ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS THAT WILL HELP YOUR SUPERVISOR MORE EFFECTIVELY MEET YOUR NEEDS?**

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Appendix 8

<b>BASELINE WORK ENVIRONMENT SCALE (raw scores)</b>											
Staff #	Involvement	Coworker Cohesion	Supervisor Support	Autonomy	Task Orientation	Work Pressure	Clarity	Managerial Control	Innovation	Comfort	
1	9	8	6	8	5	8	6	4	9	9	
5	9	8	5	8	6	6	4	4	3	8	
6	8	6	3	8	5	9	1.5	5.5	4	7.5	
7	5	3	1	5	3	8	5	7	1	8	
9	9	9	8	9	7	8	6	4	6	8	
10	8	4	7	6	4	7	5	6	1	6	
11	8	8	7	9	7	9	3	3	2	9	
2	6	5	3	5	8	9	7	6	1	8	
3	9	8	4	8	7	9	1	1	4	8	
<b>Average</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>	
<b>SS</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>84</b>	
<b>FOLLOW-UP WORK ENVIRONMENT SCALE (raw scores)</b>											
Staff #	Involvement	Coworker Cohesion	Supervisor Support	Autonomy	Task Orientation	Work Pressure	Clarity	Managerial Control	Innovation	Comfort	
1	8	8	2	8	5	7	4	6	0	9	
5	8	8	3.5	6	6	6	3	2	1	6	
6	9	6	5	8	6	6	6	1	5	6	
7	7	3	0	6	8	8	4	6	2	7	
9	8	7	6	8	6	9	4	4	6	9	
10	9	8	7	6	7	7	5	1	0	9	
11	4	6	2	9	4	9	1	4	2	7	
2	8	6	5	6	7	9	6	6	0	9	
3	9	9	4	8	8	9	2	0	7	7	
<b>Average</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>	
<b>SS</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>84</b>	

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Appendix 9

BASELINE JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE													
Staff #	Coworker Support	Physical Environment	Job Security	Interesting Work	Equipment & Supplies	Workload	Fairness of Rewards	Independence & Control	Participation in Major Decision Making	Stress Outside of Work	Stress at Work	Perceived Job Competence	Overall Job Satisfaction
1	1	5	5	4	4	1	3	4	4	4	5	2	4
5	4	4	2	4	3	1	3	3	1	5	3	3	3
6	5	4	4	5	3	2	4	5	1	3	2	5	5
7	5	4	5	4	4	2	4	4	3	5	5	4	4
9	5	4	3	5	3	2	3	3	2	1	3	3	3
10	4	4	4	3	5	1	3	3	3	1	3	2	2
11	4	4	4	5	3	2	4	5	2	3	3	3	3
2	4	5	3	5	5	2	4	5	3	4	3	5	5
3	5	4	3	5	4	1	2	4	2	4	5	3	3
Average	4.1	4.2	3.7	4.4	3.8	1.7	3.3	4.0	2.3	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.6
FOLLOW-UP JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE													
Staff #	Coworker Support	Physical Environment	Job Security	Interesting Work	Equipment & Supplies	Workload	Fairness of Rewards	Independence & Control	Participation in Major Decision Making	Stress Outside of Work	Stress at Work	Perceived Job Competence	Overall Job Satisfaction
1	5	5	2	4	4	1	2	4	3	5	1	4	4
5	5	5	3	5	5	1	3	3	2	5	3	3	3
6	4	4	3	5	2	2	5	5	1	5	4	4	4
7	5	4	4	5	4	2	4	4	3	5	3	4	4
9	4	3	3	4	4	1	3	3	2	3	2	3	3
10	4	4	3	3	4	2	3	3	2	2	3	4	4
11	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	5	3	4	3	4	4
2	5	5	3	4	5	1	4	5	2	5	2	5	5
3	5	5	3	5	4	1	2	4	1	2	2	3	3
Average	4.6	4.3	3.1	4.3	4	1.4	3.3	4.0	2.1	4.0	2.6	3.8	3.8



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Appendix 10

<b>BASELINE SUPERVISION QUESTIONNAIRE</b>														
	Encourages	Involve in	Provides	Recognizes	Advocate		Provides			Provides	Supportive	Supportive	Overall	Overall
Staff #	Independence	Decisions	Constructive	Accomplish	for Needs	Approachable	Sufficient	Accessible	Skill Level	Sufficient	in Caseload	When	Relation with	Rating of
			Criticism				Supervision			Training	Management	Stressed	Supervisor	Supervisor
1	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	3
5	3	2	3	3	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	5	5
6	5	4	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
7	3	4	4	3	2	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
9	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	5	4	4	5	4	4
10	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	4	4	3	4	4
11	4	3	3	2	4	3	5	3	4	3	4	5	4	4
2	5	5	4	3	2	5	2	3	5	2	5	3	4	4
3	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	5	4	3	3	4	4
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>FOLLOW-UP SUPERVISION QUESTIONNAIRE</b>														
	Encourages	Involve in	Provides	Recognizes	Advocate		Provides			Provides	Supportive	Supportive	Overall	Overall
Staff #	Independence	Decisions	Constructive	Accomplish	for Needs	Approachable	Sufficient	Accessible	Skill Level	Sufficient	in Caseload	when	Relation with	Rating of
			Criticism				Supervision			Training	Management	Stressed	Supervisor	Supervisor
1	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
5	4	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	5	3	3	3	3	4
6	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
7	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
9	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4
10	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	4
11	5	3	2	2	2	3	5	3	4	2	4	3	4	4
2	5	4	3	2	4	5	1	2	5	4	3	3	4	4
3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	2	5	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.3</b>

## Appendix 11

**COMPARISON OF BASELINE AND FOLLOW UP WES SCORES****Standardized Self-Report Test: Data Reported are Standard Scores with Mean = 50 & s.d. = 10**

	<b><u>Baseline Score</u></b>		<b><u>Follow up Score</u></b>	
	<b>Raw Scores</b>	<b>Standard Scores</b>	<b>Raw Scores</b>	<b>Standard Scores</b>
<b>Involvement</b>	7.9	63	7.8	68
<b>Coworker Cohesion</b>	6.5	56	6.8	67
<b>Supervisor Support</b>	4.8	46	3.8	36
<b>Autonomy</b>	7.3	70	7.2	70
<b>Task Orientation</b>	5.7	50	6.3	55
<b>Work Pressure</b>	8.1	77	7.8	77
<b>Clarity</b>	4.2	41	3.9	36
<b>Managerial Control</b>	4.5	48	3.3	32
<b>Innovation</b>	3.4	43	2.6	34
<b>Comfort</b>	7.9	84	7.7	84

**COMPARISON OF BASELINE AND FOLLOW UP JOB SATISFACTION SCORES**

	<b><u>Baseline Score</u></b>	<b><u>Follow up Score</u></b>
<b>Coworker Support</b>	4.1	4.6
<b>Physical Environment</b>	4.2	4.3
<b>Job Security</b>	3.7	3.1
<b>Interesting Work</b>	4.4	4.3
<b>Equipment &amp; Supplies</b>	3.8	4.0
<b>Workload</b>	1.8	1.4
<b>Fairness or Rewards</b>	3.3	3.3
<b>Independence &amp; Control</b>	4.0	4.0
<b>Participation in Major Decision Making</b>	2.3	2.1
<b>Stress Outside of Work</b>	3.2	4.0
<b>Stress at Work</b>	3.4	2.6
<b>Perceived Job Competence</b>	3.6	3.8
<b>Overall Job Satisfaction</b>	3.4	3.6

## Appendix 13

**COMPARISON OF BASELINE AND FOLLOW UP SUPERVISION SCORES**

	<b><u>Baseline Score</u></b>	<b><u>Follow Up Score</u></b>
<b>Encourages Independence</b>	3.8	4.1
<b>Involve in Decisions</b>	3.2	3.7
<b>Provides Constructive Criticism</b>	3.6	3.3
<b>Recognizes Accomplishments</b>	3.0	2.9
<b>Advocates for Needs</b>	3.2	3.1
<b>Approachable</b>	3.6	3.8
<b>Provides Sufficient Supervision</b>	3.0	3.0
<b>Accessible</b>	3.2	3.2
<b>Skill Level</b>	4.3	4.2
<b>Provides Sufficient Training</b>	3.4	3.0
<b>Supportive in Caseload Management</b>	3.7	3.6
<b>Supportive when Stressed</b>	3.5	3.3
<b>Overall Relationship with Supervisor</b>	3.7	3.9
<b>Overall Rating of Supervision</b>	3.4	3.7