MSW STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THEIR FIELD PLACEMENTS: THE ROLE OF PREPAREDNESS AND SUPERVISION QUALITY

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A path model predicting students' satisfaction with their field placement was tested on 144 MSW students at a northeastern university. The results showed that supervision was related to satisfaction both directly and indirectly through its influence on efficacy in the field and strain. Amount of preparation for the field affected satisfaction only indirectly by its relationship to higher efficacy. There was no indication that supervision buffered the presumed negative effect of poor preparation on dissatisfaction, strain, or efficacy. Limitations imposed by the cross-sectional design and single-school sample are considered, and recommendations are made to continue attempts to enhance field supervision and increase student preparation. Particular emphasis is given to implementing procedures that address the mediating roles of student strain and efficacy.

FIELD EDUCATION within the school of social work is critically important for increasing the quality of service provided by professional social workers. The quality of social work and of social workers depends in part on the availability and effectiveness of field education opportunities provided within schools of social work. Field placement has a particularly significant role in the MSW program, requiring a student to work in the field for 900 hours while training to become an advanced practitioner who can apply knowledge and skills at the highest level in specialized areas (as outlined in the 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards by the Council on Social Work Education [CSWE, 2008]). Consequently, students need to receive excellent training in their field placements. Yet, there is some evidence that students often enter their placements with apprehension, stress, anxiety, and unclear expectations, negative emotions that may well interfere with effective learning (Barlow & Hall, 2004; Barlow et al., 2006; Gelman, 2004; Rompf, Royse, & Dhooper, 1993).

Students may enter the field with low confidence in their skill level to work with certain clients, experience role confusion or conflict, and undergo emotional strain as a result of their work (Gelman, 2004). The Gelman review reported empirical evidence and a theoretical rationale for a number of variable relationships studied and discussed in relation to the field placement training experience. These include associations of negative emotion with deficient field preparation, anxiety or strain with poorer performance, and supervision with strain and low satisfaction.

Anxiety and Negative Student Emotions in the Field Setting

According to previous literature, the foundation-year MSW student has significant anxiety about beginning the first field placement (Royse, Dhooper, & Rompf, 2003; Sun, 1999). Rompf and colleagues (1993) studied the anxiety levels and major concerns of 255 BSW and MSW students before starting placement assignments. Gelman (2004) assessed foundation-year MSW students' anxiety regarding their field placements. In addition, students may be distressed by client reactions of outrage and grief that they may encounter in their field placement (Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996, cited by Barlow et al., 2006). It might be suggested that students may suffer the type of strain commonly referred to as burnout, compassion fatigue, or emotional exhaustion, reactions commonly found among human service workers who experience intense involvement with clients in their work role.

Some MSW students may experience conflicts with their supervisors in their placements. Barlow et al. (2006) described a case of a student who experienced physical illness in the final weeks of her placement, apparently arising from conflicts in the field context. Thus, mental and physical symptoms and illness might arise as a consequence of field placement stressors, just as it is known to occur from the stress of full-time work.

There is some evidence that negative emotions arising from the workplace might impair learning and work performance (Firth-Cozens & Mowbray, 2001; Haslam, Atkinson, Brown, & Haslam, 2005; Waghorn, Chant, White & Whiteford, 2005). According to Haslam and colleagues (2005), who explored the effects of anxiety on workplace performance through focus group interviews with 74 employees from a range of occupations, research shows that the employees' anxiety symptoms impaired their work performance. Applying this to the field placement context, students with higher anxiety and strain will not learn as effectively or perform as competently.

Also, one of the negative emotions arising from the workplace among social workers, burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment), has been extensively examined by researchers. The work of helping professionals tends to be demanding due to intensive encounters with people, and social workers may experience burnout as a consequence of their work (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Pines, 1993), resulting in negative job performance (Kim & Lee, 2007). However, evidence has indicated that receiving good quality of workplace support, including positive supervisory communication, can reduce social workers' level of burnout feelings

(Ben-Zur & Michael, 2007; Kim & Lee, 2007; Koeske & Koeske, 1989; Mor Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001). Also, there is evidence that being well-prepared for the field, including participating in clinical skill-development training, contributes to alleviating social workers' level of burnout, since enrichment of clinical skills can enhance social workers' level of self-efficacy (Cohen & Gagin, 2005; Corrigan, McCraken, Edwards, Kommana, & Simpatico, 1997; Ewers, Bradshaw, McGovern, & Ewers, 2002). Further, social workers' age and years in practice have been recognized as predictors of their level of negative effect (Schwartz, Tiamiyu, & Dwyer, 2007). Within the field placement context, students with higher burnout would not be able to learn effectively in the field. Students advantaged by certain conditions, such as receiving positive supervision, might be partially insulated from experiencing negative effect.

Lack of Adequate Preparation for the Field Placement

One of the main factors possibly responsible for negative fieldwork experiences is the students' level of preparation when they enter the field (Gelman, 2004). In the absence of adequate preparation, the student may enter the field with apprehension and anxiety and become at risk for burnout/strain. Rompf and colleagues (1993) found that the farther along students were in their academic program, the better prepared they were and the less anxiety they experienced about entering the field. They also found greater preparedness and less anxiety occurred for more advanced students who were older and had

more volunteer or work experience than other students. Gelman (2004) also found less anxiety about entering the field among better prepared students.

Quality of Supervision and the Field Experience

Researchers have focused infrequently on how the quality of supervision and the strength of the supervisory relationship affect the social work students' anxiety and strain occurring in the field setting. However, some researchers have found that the quality of supervision that social work students receive in their field placement is related to their overall satisfaction with the placement (Alperin, 1998; Bogo & Vayda, 2000; Giddings, Vodde, & Cleveland, 2003; Knight, 1996, 2000, 2001; Raskin, 1982). In addition, there is some evidence that strong supervisory relationships between students and their supervisors affect the students' satisfaction with the field (Cohen & Cohen, 1998; Fernandez, 1998; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Fortune et al., 1985; Freeman, 1985; Siporin, 1982). Fortune and Abramson (1993) found that the quality of field instruction was the most powerful predictor of MSW students' satisfaction in their field placement. In contrast, some research has found that conflicts occurring between supervisors and students were associated with problems within the general fieldwork experience (Benson, 1995; Sawa, 1995). And, problems or conflicts associated with the supervisor–student transaction were related to greater student distress in their fieldwork (Barlow & Hall, 2003; Barlow et al., 2006; Giddings et al., 2003; Tepper, 2000).

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to organize the variables that have previously been studied at an essentially bivariate level into a multivariate path model in which satisfaction with the field experience was predicted as the final outcome variable. This causal path model was tested with cross-sectional or static data and the temporal ordering of the variables is based on our conceptualization and presumption, so strong causal inferences are not possible. We can, nonetheless, subject the proposed model to possible falsification, based on the data collected. We will occasionally use causal terms to avoid stilted verbalization, while acknowledging here the limitations of our design and tentativeness of inferences.

A secondary purpose was to evaluate the possibility that supervision quality acted as a moderator of the preparedness-satisfaction relationship. If this were the case, poor preparation for the field would be expected to result in dissatisfaction with the placement, but only or more markedly when supervision was of low quality. High-quality supervision would buffer the negative consequences of poor preparation. This type of buffering relationship was also explored for the relationships of preparedness with efficacy and student burnout as well. Quality of supervision has not been tested in this buffering role, but the expectation of such an effect is grounded in the vast literature on the buffering role of social support in the relationship of stress to negative outcomes (Kim & Stoner, 2008; Lincoln, Chatters, & Taylor, 2005; Madhavappallil & Choi, 2006; Scott & Beth, 2008; Ying, 2008). In this context, supervision is viewed as a resource similar to social support, poor preparedness as a type of stressor, and dissatisfaction as a negative outcome.

Model

We propose that quality supervision and higher preparedness for the field experience will increase satisfaction with the field experience, both directly and indirectly, through their salutary effects of perceived efficacy in fieldwork and lessened strain or burnout. Supervision quality and preparedness are independent variables that are not expected to be correlated; efficacy and student strain are co-mediators that are expected to be associated. This model was tested controlling for four background variables: year in the program, current employment, age, and student gender. Year in the program and employment may alternatively be perceived as part of preparedness, but we opted to treat them as separate background variables that were entered as statistical controls.

Method

Sample and Procedure

One hundred fifty-four MSW students volunteered to complete an in-class survey in 17 different classes at the University of Pittsburgh. The study received exempt status after review by the school institutional review board official. Data were analyzed for 144 cases with full data on the test and control variables. The 72 first-year MSW students were roughly in the middle of their foundation field placement experience when they were asked to complete the "Survey of MSW Students' Perceptions of Their Field Placement." The 72 second-year students were approximately in the middle of

their second (concentration) field placement when they were surveyed. Overall, 81% of the students were female; their median age was 25 years. Most students (86%) were in the direct practice concentration and were full-time students (90%), whereas 65% of the students were employed either full- or part-time.

The researcher visited the classes to describe and distribute the survey to students currently in field placements. She described the general purpose of the study and explained that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be made anonymously. No students refused participation. Although the survey distribution procedure resulted in a convenience sample, the diverse and large assortment of participating classes should have produced a roughly representative cross-section of the school's MSW students participating in fieldwork.

The Survey Instrument

The survey consisted of four sections. Section 1 addressed the students' level of preparation, including questions on BSW/BASW program experience, previous course work, attendance at a field orientation, and previous work experience. In Section 2 ratings of quality of supervision in the field context were solicited. Section 3 contained items measuring "Feelings About My Field Placement," which assessed burnout/strain, perceived efficacy in the field, and satisfaction with the placement. Section 4 provided demographic information, including gender, age in years, type of concentration (direct practice/Community Organization and Social Administration), full- or part-time student status, current employment status, and parental status.

Index of formal preparation for the field. An index was developed to reflect the amount of field preparation based on school, volunteer, and work experience. The work of Gelman (2004) influenced aspects of the index development. The index score was obtained by counting/summing 11 dichotomously scored items. A case received a tally or count for the following responses: (1) having obtained the BSW/BASW degree; (2) having completed or being enrolled in at least 2 of 7 listed required skill courses; (3) completion of or enrollment in at least one second-level research course; (4) completion or enrollment in 3 or more skill electives from a list of all such courses in the curriculum; (5) participation in at least one field orientation; (6 through 9) having a past or current position as an intern, volunteer, part-time staff, or full-time staff position in a social service agency; (10) having worked, interned, or volunteered in a human service agency in the same practice area as the current field placement; and (11) having worked with the same type of client population as currently engaged with in the field placement.

Convergent validity for the index was supported by a moderate size (see Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991) correlation of .32, $p< .001$, between the index score and a self-rating of perceived (subjective) preparation. The subjective rating ("How prepared did you feel when entering your field placement?") was adapted from Gelman (2004) and given on a 10-step scale from 1=*not at all prepared* through 5=*moderately well prepared* to 10=*extremely well prepared.*

Supervision quality. An 11-item Quality of Supervision scale was derived from Shulman

(1981, 1982, 1992) by revising item wording to refer to the field instructor–student relationship that is relevant to the current application. The items were rated on a 5-point frequency scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very frequently*). Higher scores reflected higher perceived quality of the supervisory relationship. Sample items are "My field instructor explains how we would work together and discusses the kind of help s/he would provide me," "My field instructor is able to sense my feelings without my having to put them in to words," and "My field instructor encourages me to explore my strengths and weaknesses." The alpha reliability of the scale was .95 in the current study, comparable to homogeneity reliability estimates reported by Shulman (1981, 1992) for the original application in the worker–supervisor context.

Satisfaction with the field placement. Respondents rated the direct report item, "How satisfied are you overall with your field placement?" on a 5-step scale from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*). This direct rating provided the measure of the dependent variable. Single-item global measures of satisfaction have been found to be valid indicators, sometimes outperforming multi-item facet measures that may omit .critical facets from the selected item set (Patrician, 2004; Wanous, Reichers, and Hurdy, 1997).

Student strain/burnout associated with the field placement. Student strain or burnout arising in the field context was assessed using an adapted version of the Koeske (Koeske & Koeske, 1991) Student Burnout Scale, which was based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The respondent

rated how frequently he or she experienced 17 feelings associated with field experience on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). Sample items included "I feel emotionally drained from my field placement," "I feel used up at the end of the day," "I feel 'burned out' from my field work," and "I feel 'under stress' due to my field placement." Higher scores reflected higher strain, emotional exhaustion, or feelings of burnout. The original general student burnout version of the scale had an alpha reliability of .90 (Koeske & Koeske, 1991). In the current adaptation, the alpha reliability was .92. Theoretical construct validity for the original scale was supported by significant correlations of burnout with stressful events and mental health symptoms (Koeske & Koeske, 1991).

Perceived efficacy in field work performance. Two items were totaled to assess the perceived efficacy felt in performing duties in the field placement. The items were "How confident do you feel that you can successfully perform your field duties?" (1=*not at all confident* to 5=*totally confident*), and "How well do you feel you are performing your role in your field placement?" (1=*very poorly* to 5=*very well*). These items correlated .63, resulting in an alpha reliability estimate of .77.

Results

Descriptive Results

The 144 respondents as a whole fell in the middle range of the scales measuring the test variables. The mean for quality of supervision was 3.38 (*SD*=.98), indicating on the 1–5 metric that positive field supervision was perceived to

occur between "some" and "frequently." Burnout or strain-related feelings associated with the field experience were reported "rarely," using the 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*) metric ($M=3.30$, $SD=.97$). Similarly, satisfaction with the current field experience ($M=3.84$, median=4.0) fell closer to the "satisfied" (4) than "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" (3) marker on the 1–5 satisfaction scale. Perceived efficacy ($M=7.67$, $SD=1.46$) was rated somewhat higher than an average or "fair" amount. Finally, the students rated themselves slightly more than moderately prepared ($M=5.84$) on a 1 (*not at all prepared*) to 10 (*extremely prepared*) scale of preparedness for entering the current field placement. The index of objective preparation is difficult to interpret descriptively and specific to the MSW program studied, but it showed a mean in the middle of the 0–11 range ($M=5.31$, $SD=2.17$); this indicated that on about one half of the 11 dichotomous criteria, the typical student did possess the experience or status reflecting preparedness (coded 1) rather than lacking it (coded 0).

Test of Path Model

A conventional path analysis, using least squares multiple regression, was conducted to evaluate the proposed model in which the quality of supervision and amount of preparedness were predicted to relate to higher satisfaction with the field placement, both directly and indirectly (through their impact on greater efficacy and less student burnout/strain associated with the field experience). This model was tested controlling for year in the program (first or second), employment status (any vs. none), gender, and age. Figure 1 shows the path (beta) coefficients of the lines for all relationships that achieved significance at an alpha=.05 criterion. Lines for nonsignificant effects and the intercorrelation of control variables were omitted to enhance readability of the diagram. Given the nearly saturated nature of this test, fit indices are not informative, and the model must be evaluated primarily on the basis of presence or absence of predicted effects. Table 1 shows the bivariate correlations for the variables in the

TABLE 1. Pearson Intercorrelations of Control and Test Variables (*N*=144)

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gender (Female=1, Male=2)	—						
Age	.21**	—					
Year (1=1st, 2=2nd)	.02	.16*	—				
Employment (0=no, 1=yes)	−.09	.19*	.19*	—			
Preparation index	.16	−.01	.43***	.24**	—		
Quality of supervision	.00	−.00	.13	−.02	-.01	—	
Efficacy	−.01	.01	.06	.06	.18*	.41***	—
Strain/burnout	.05	.13	.16*	.07	.10	−.34***	−.32***
Student satisfaction	.13	−.10	−.06	.00	.03	.50***	.39***

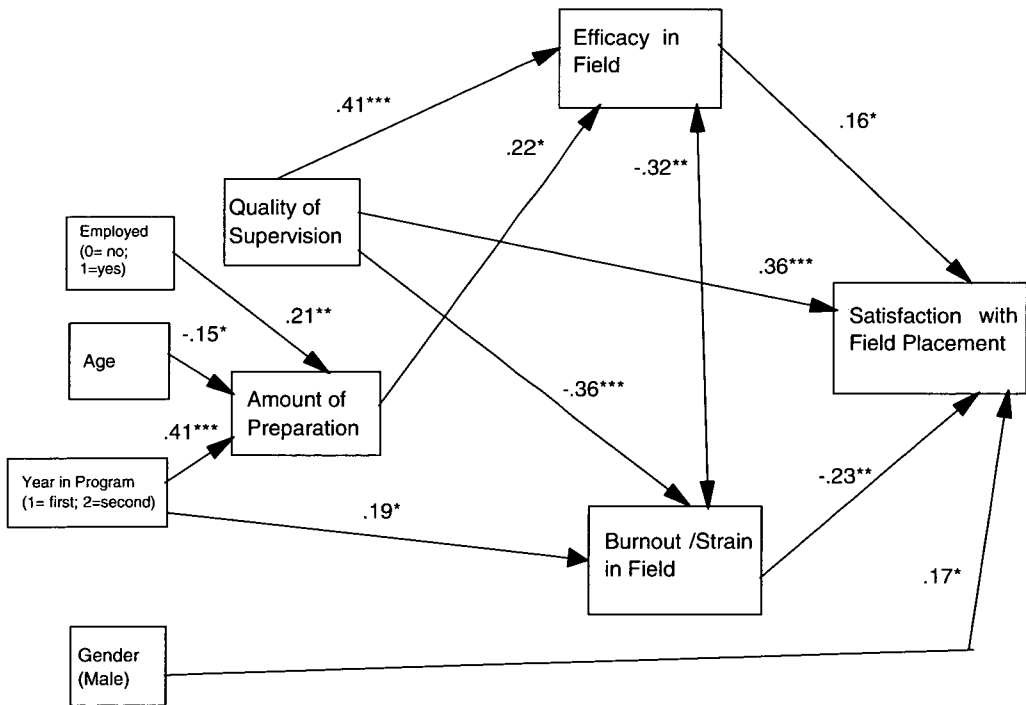*Note.* *p*< .05, **p*< .01, ***p*< .001.

model test. These coefficients were generally consistent with the partial coefficients and a typical redundant system, indicating the system is not complex in the sense of displaying suppressive effects.

Figure 1 shows, as anticipated, that quality supervision seems to facilitate greater satisfaction with the field experience, both directly (β=.36, p<.001) and indirectly through (1) higher efficacy (β=.41, p<.001 and β=.16, p<.05) and (2) less burnout/strain (β=–.36, p<.001 and β=–.23, p<.01). The size of these indirect effects were (.41) $\times$ (.16)=.07 (Sobel z=2.03, p=.04) and (–.36) $\times$ (–.23)=.08 (Sobel z=2.64, p=.008). Given the large direct effect of

supervision on satisfaction (=.36), the model test reflects partial, rather than full, mediation. Unlike supervision quality, the amount of objective preparation did not directly influence amount of satisfaction, but it did significantly relate to higher efficacy (β=.22, p<.01), which, in turn, related to higher satisfaction. This indirect effect was marginally significant (Sobel z=1.69, p=.09). The model test clearly suggested that preparedness—after controlling for age, employment, and year in program (which significantly affect it)—is much less a contributing factor than supervision to satisfaction with the field experience. Students who were working (β=.21, p<.01) and in

FIGURE 1. Tested Model on MSW students' satisfaction with their Field Placement: The role of preparation, supervision, efficacy and burnout

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p=.001.

their first year (β=.41, p<.001) scored higher in amount of preparedness, but older students scored slightly lower (β=–.15, p<.05) in preparedness. The simple correlation of age and preparedness, however, was –.01. It should be noted that these betas estimate the unique effects of each variable and that some of these background variables were moderately inter-correlated. Student gender was the only background variable to directly relate to satisfaction; males reported higher satisfaction than females (β=.17, p<.05). Finally, second-year students reported higher burnout (β=.19, p<.05).

Test of the Buffering Effect of Supervision

The preceding analyses revealed clear direct and indirect effect of quality supervision on student satisfaction with the field experience. We also expected supervision would buffer the effect of inadequate preparation on low satisfaction. The preceding analyses showed that preparedness did not have a significant direct effect on satisfaction. Moderated multiple regression analyses were done to test the interaction effect, which could reflect buffering by supervision. In this hierarchical regression, the control variables were entered in block 1, followed by the main effects of supervision and preparation in block 2, and the interaction of supervision X preparation was entered in block 3. The interaction (F (1,138)< 1.0) was not significant, and less than 1% of satisfaction variance was explained. Similarly, tests for possible buffering interactions of the preparation—efficacy and preparation—burnout relationships yielded no significant interaction effects. Consequently, there was no evidence that quality supervision acted as a buffer in the process by which preparation might affect satisfaction.

Discussion

The study provided only very modest support for the expectation that preparation for the field experience would facilitate higher student satisfaction with the field experience, and this contribution was apparent only indirectly when operating through its influence on perceived efficacy or competence. This finding, though attenuated, was consistent with some earlier research (Alperin, 1998; McPherson & Barnett, 2006).

More pronounced was the direct and indirect effect of quality of supervision in the field context on student satisfaction. The results suggest that, when the MSW students working with difficult clients do not have adequate supervision providing concrete instructions and supportive feedback, they are more vulnerable to work-related emotional exhaustion resulting in less satisfaction with the field experience. However, with capable supervision providing helpful directions and positive feedback, they might feel empowered and have a higher level of confidence and efficacy, resulting in better work performance and a sense of satisfaction in the field. Some earlier research had shown a similar benefit of quality supervision to satisfaction in the field (Cimino, Cimino, Nuehring, Raybin, & Wisler-Waldock, 1982; Cole, Panchanadeswaran, & Daining, 2004; Fortune et al., 1985; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Raskin, 1982), but the current study identified for the first time the

process by which this enhancement to satisfaction might occur. Some elements of the process were evident in earlier work on the relationships of efficacy to satisfaction (Cole et al., 2004; Sharma & Ghosh, 2006), and amount of field preparation with efficacy (Gelman, 2004; Rompf et al., 1993). The role of burnout (strain, emotional exhaustion) in the field of human service has been studied in relation to anxiety (Jayaratne, Chess, & Kunkel, 1986; Wheeler, 1987), satisfaction (Penn, Romano, & Foat, 1988; Rimmerman, 1989; Ursula & Steven, 1998) and supervision (Abu-Bader, 2000; Itzhaky & Aviad-Hiebloom, 1998; Mena & Marguerite, 2001), but it had not formerly been placed in an explanatory context with the other variables identified in the current study.

Our secondary purpose—to examine the possible buffering role of supervision quality—yielded no evidence for a moderating role for supervision in either its relation to satisfaction or the mediating variables of efficacy and strain. Correlational designs lack power in detecting moderated effects, but our sample size was moderate, and the interaction effects sizes were very small and did not approach significance. It would seem that supervision acts prominently only in the direct and indirect manner previously reviewed. In essence, supervision quality was a critical factor in the process by which student satisfaction was determined, but it may not buffer whatever negative consequences occur due to poor preparation for the field. The data suggested, however, that those negative consequences attributable to poor preparation were small relative to the benefits derived from effective supervision of the student.

There were some unpredicted statistically significant effects arising in the model test that were small (<.18) and complex, in that the corresponding simple correlations were not significant. Three such occurrences involved lower preparedness scores for older students, higher preparedness scores for employed students, and higher satisfaction for male students. Since these effects were small, complex, and unpredicted, no attempt will be made here to interpret them. On the other hand, the finding that second-year students reported higher burnout/strain in the field may be theoretically and practically meaningful and is consistent with known increases in exhaustion occurring as work involvement increases and accumulates.

Limitations

We noted at the outset that causal path analyses based on static data provide weak inference power regarding causation. Nonetheless, we feel that overall satisfaction with the field placement is logically more persuasive as a consequent of the test variables of supervision quality, preparation, efficacy, and burnout that it is an antecedent. Similarly, efficacy and burnout/strain are conceptually and logically more credible as effects of supervision and preparation than as their antecedents. In other words, alternate ordering of the variables in the model seems not to produce credible alternatives to the causal flow that was tested. And, straightforward controls were entered in the model test. Only two direct paths were disconfirmed by the data: amount of preparation did not directly affect satisfaction, nor did it influence burnout/strain directly. It is possi-

ble that strain affects satisfaction through mechanisms unspecified in this model test, such as the acquisition of coping skills or the formation of a realistic perspective of what can be accomplished by the practitioner. It may also be the case that preparation, either as occurring in practice or as measured herein, does not provide resources to the student for controlling work exhaustion and strain. Thus, preparation, differently engineered and/or assessed, might be directly or indirectly contributory, but not manifested in this test. Preparedness was, of course, somewhat beneficial through the enhancement of felt efficacy in the field.

Given that the critical test measures were derived from self-reports, and all but one (preparation) was a subjective report of feelings or attitude, shared method (self-report) variance might be considered to inflate bivariate estimates of relationship. However, the multivariate regression analyses performed to obtain the path coefficients act to remove such shared explanation when estimating the effect sizes. Even with this built-in control for shared method variance, most of the critical and anticipated coefficients were statistically significant, and some were substantial by behavioral standards.

There is some concern that the effect of preparedness might be underestimated, because we opted to include year in the program and current employment as separate (control background) variables rather than as definers of amount of preparation. Indeed, year in the program and employment status directly affect preparation level. We might consider the effect of preparation on efficacy,

in particular, to be more substantial than the .22 estimate reflects, since that effect size reflects its influence independent of class seniority and current work experience. We, therefore, retested the model after removing year in program and employment status as controls and incorporating them into the preparation index. Preparedness continued to be not significantly related to either satisfaction or burnout/strain. Consequently, at least in these data, preparedness plays only a secondary role in the process explaining student satisfaction with the field placement.

A final threat to inference arises from low external validity. The model test occurred on a single sample from one school of social work. Part of the preparedness measure was specific to this particular school and its curriculum. The model would have to be tested on a larger and more diverse sample, or retested on numerous diverse additional samples, to gain support for its general relevance. The support found for the model in this one test does serve, however, as a starting point for later investigation and extension.

Implications and Applications

There has long been an awareness that field education, and therefore social work education generally, would be enhanced by high quality supervision in the field and by a higher level of preparedness among the students who enter the field. Some previous research (Freeman, 1985; Gelman, 2004; Rompf et al., 1993; Siporin, 1982) and the findings of this study have empirically documented this awareness. The implication is clear that we should continue to strive to monitor, evaluate,

and improve the type of supervision students receive in their field settings. In addition, we should continue to endeavor to send well-prepared students into their placements, where our data show that they should derive a greater sense of efficacy and feel a sense of satisfaction with the placement.

The current study adds to our knowledge a better sense of *why* quality supervision may generate higher feelings of satisfaction with the field. It seems to achieve its benefits by strongly increasing a sense of effective and efficacious fieldwork performance and reducing felt strain and burnout symptoms. Awareness of these operative mechanisms enriches our plans for implementation of effective field education. Not only should we directly work to increase students' sense of efficacy in their field practice, but also we should try to construct supervisory input and our curricula to facilitate perceived and validated efficacy. Students might be considered "prepared" to enter the field when they can be expected to have a sense of efficacy or at least anticipatory efficacy regarding their work role. Supervision might be regarded as "quality supervision" when it induces a sense of empowerment or a sense of efficacy in the student, and when it anticipates and is programmed to deal with likely feelings of anxiety, strain, and even exhaustion.

The significant direct effect of supervision on satisfaction found in the model test suggests there are other unspecified paths through which supervision quality enhances eventual satisfaction. That is, efficacy and strain are not the whole story. Subsequent research might be directed to identifying these other mecha-nisms through which quality supervision has its benefit for student attitude toward the placement. This additional knowledge could provide us other bases for designing better placement experiences.

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