

Organizational and Individual Factors Associated  
with Job Satisfaction and Burnout of  
Community Social Service Workers  
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Abstract

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Job satisfaction and burnout are important areas of study because of the social and economic effects of job satisfaction and the damaging physical/psychological impacts of burnout. 200 family/children and psychiatric workers of seven social service organizations were surveyed in the spring of 1990. Instruments used were the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals. Reported levels of job satisfaction and burnout are within normal limits. Psychiatric and family/children workers report equal job satisfaction levels, but the latter group reports significantly higher burnout levels. Both groups are particularly satisfied with the amount of praise delivered by supervisors and are reportedly dissatisfied with salary levels and promotional opportunities. Praise delivered by supervisors, promotional opportunities, and salary satisfaction are strongly associated with job satisfaction levels of both groups. Correlates of burnout for psychiatric workers are dissatisfaction with amount of praise delivered by supervisors and dissatisfaction with salary; correlates for

family/children workers are limited social services employment and dissatisfaction with amount of praise. Findings have practical implications for social service administrators and practitioners. Correlates of satisfaction and burnout can be altered in order to maintain employee satisfaction and reduce burnout, absenteeism and turnover.

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ORGANIZATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH JOB  
SATISFACTION AND BURNOUT OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

CHAPTER I  
QUESTION/PROBLEM

Job satisfaction and burnout are integral elements of social service organizations, particularly those organizations in which daily contact with difficult populations and recurrent crises are involved. These are important issues which have implications for social administration as well as direct practice. The purpose of this study is to delineate those factors which have a significant influence on community social service workers' levels of job satisfaction and burnout.

Despite the significance and impact of job satisfaction in the social services, the majority of research has been conducted in the field of business. Within the social work literature, comparatively little research has focused specifically on community social service workers. This investigation thus lends additional insight into the critical factors leading to job satisfaction and burnout.

**Significance**

The importance of job satisfaction is evidenced by its consistent correlation with increased absenteeism and turnover rates (Barber, 1986; Freudenberger, 1975). Hiring,



orienting, and training new employees again and again is inefficient and expensive for administrators and detrimental for clients. Another organizational issue is that the most talented and highly trained workers will often be drawn to those jobs which offer the highest potential for job satisfaction. Clearly, an organization must offer more than a salary; reasonable working conditions, challenging tasks, and the opportunity for advancement should be offered or the field will become an "employment slum" (Sarason, 1974).

As Herzberg stated:

The problem of peoples' relationship with their work continues to be a basic one...for each man who sits at a desk or stands at a bench, the day and the task are completely different if feelings about the job are good or if they are bad. Why study job attitudes? To industry, the payoff for a study of job attitudes would be in decreased turnover, decreased absenteeism, and smoother working relations. To the community, it might mean a decreased bill for psychological casualties and the proper utilization of human resources. To the individual, an understanding of the forces that lead to improved morale would bring greater happiness and greater self-realization.

(Herzberg et al., 1959, p. ix)

Freudenberger (1975), Koeske & Koeske (1989), and others have linked job satisfaction with turnover rates. Futrell (1984) noted that "Companies are beginning to realize that turnover is a sleeping giant, inconspicuously swallowing a significant portion of their productivity and profits." (p. 33). As indicated above, losing employees and hiring new ones can be a repetitive and extraordinarily expensive process. In the field of social work, where reliance on a consistent therapist or the maintenance of a strong worker-client relationship is essential for the client and fundamental for the smooth running of the organization, employee turnover is particularly hazardous.

Since the mid-1970's the topic of burnout has become popularized. It has been characterized as a negative affective response to work stress, and incorporates a sense of physical and emotional exhaustion. This syndrome affects millions of human service workers and millions of their clients (Farber, 1983).

An enhanced understanding of burnout is particularly relevant to social work. The preponderance of the phenomenon appears to be heightened in this field, where comparatively low salaries, role ambiguity, resistant clients, and stressful environments prevail, and the demands of the "helping role" are multiple and substantial (Brager & Holloway, 1978).

The symptoms of burnout have been categorized into five specific areas: Health, behavior, emotional adjustment, relationships, and attitudes (Carroll & White, 1981). Details of this classification are presented in the following chart.

#### Burnout Symptoms

Health	Behavior	Emotional Adjustment	Relationships	Attitude
Fatigue	Increased use of drugs & alcohol	Emotional distancing	Isolation from or overbonding with staff & clients	Cynicism
Headaches		Depression		Boredom
Insomnia or Over-sleeping	Proneness to accidents	Decreased emotional control	Increased conflicts with staff	Hyper-critical of clients, staff, or agency
Ulcers	Under and overeating	Anxiety		
Muscular Tension		Martyrdom	Increased problems in relationships outside of work	Distrust of staff
		Increased tension & anger		

Advancement of knowledge in the areas of job satisfaction and burnout will enable social work professionals to address and improve employee attitudes. As satisfaction increases and absenteeism and turnover decrease, fewer financial and human resources will be spent on staff recruitment and training, and clients will be afforded greater continuity of social services.

The goal of this investigation is to ascertain levels of job satisfaction and burnout in community social service workers. Personal and organizational factors associated with these variables are also investigated, in order to advance theoretical knowledge and stimulate practical implications. The use of job satisfaction and burnout theories enables a theoretical application, and the following research questions serve as vehicles of inquiry in attaining the research goal.

- 1) Is there a significant difference between the general job satisfaction levels of community mental health and child and family service workers?
- 2) Is there a significant difference between burnout levels of community mental health and child and family service workers?
- 3) Is there an association between tenure and job satisfaction levels of workers?

4) Is there an association between the perceived availability of promotions and job satisfaction levels of workers?

5) Is there an association between satisfaction with verbal reinforcers received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers?

6) Is there an association between perception of verbal punishments received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers?

## RELEVANT LITERATURE

## Theoretical Literature

Various conceptual papers, case studies, and empirical analyses have evolved in the areas of job satisfaction and burnout. Both Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory (1974) and Hackman & Oldham's job-characteristics theory (1980) highlight the importance of job performance feedback. Herzberg argued for providing performance feedback on a regular basis; Hackman & Oldham postulated that the presence of this and other job characteristics elicit positive emotional states from employees.

The motivator-hygiene theory proposes that one set of factors (challenging tasks, responsibility) creates a positive opinion of, and positive feelings connected to one's employment; a second set of factors (company policies and procedures) can lead to job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1968). However, research (Daley, 1979, Gruneberg, 1979) has not lent support to this conceptual theory (in fact both factors are related to job satisfaction). Herzberg later elaborated on his original theory and included such variables as promotions and increased responsibilities as correlates of job satisfaction.

The job characteristics model is one of the most precise and applicable theories in this area of research. This theory proposes that skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job (labeled "core job characteristics") create "critical psychological states" (i.e. - experienced meaningfulness of the work, responsibility for its outcomes, and knowledge of task results). These states cause decreased or increased job satisfaction levels, in addition to employee absenteeism.

Burnout has historically been investigated within the human service arena. It has often been conceptualized in the literature as a negative adaptation to stress which includes a pervasive mood of alienation, with features of depression and a loss of idealistic spirit (Farber, 1983).

Cherniss (1980) formulated a three-stage transitional theory of burnout. The first stage involves an imbalance between resources and demands (stress). The second includes an immediate emotional response to this imbalance, characterized by feelings of anxiety and fatigue (strain). The final stage consists of changes in attitude and behavior, such as a tendency to treat clients in a detached and mechanical manner (defensive coping). Specifically, burnout can be viewed as a process in which a worker disengages from his work in response to stress experienced on the job.

Jayarathne (1984) detailed a useful theoretical model of burnout. The absence of such job facets as comfort, financial rewards, and promotions leads to depersonalization and exhaustion, with accompanying psychological and physical symptoms. These include anxiety, illness, irritability, withdrawal, and depression. Thus burnout is a syndrome which occurs when the latter symptoms result from poor job facets and unmanaged strains. Obviously, these features can be devastating to clients served, staff, and the organization as a whole.

#### Empirical Literature

Dehlinger & Perlman (1978) discussed various job-satisfaction measures. Self-report measures are viewed as superior to inferential methods. Those tests which survey several areas of work (i.e.- tasks, salary, promotions, etc.) and are easily administered and scored are recommended.

Wright, King, & Berg (1985) found that perceived opportunities for promotion within the organization, fewer job-related stressors, and positive performance evaluations are positively correlated with job satisfaction. Another study of 2,500 social service workers revealed that verbal reinforcers (praise) and higher salaries were strong predictors of job satisfaction. Furthermore, the latter was associated with lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Barber, 1986).



Other research supports the relevance of positive evaluations and praise to job satisfaction (McNeely et al., 1986). Beck (1987) demonstrated results indicating that the availability of promotional opportunities, positive feedback from supervisors, and dealing with higher functioning clients are significant indicators of the variable. Butler (1990) surveyed social service workers and found that higher salaries and greater lengths of social services employment were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction.

A longitudinal study was conducted by Szilagyi (1980). The relationship between supervisory reinforcers and punishments was investigated. Findings indicated that verbal reinforcement delivered by supervisors was a strong predictor of job satisfaction, and verbal punishment was a strong predictor of job dissatisfaction.

Financial rewards also have a significant impact on employee satisfaction. Fossum (1979) reported that those workers receiving greater financial rewards are significantly more satisfied.

Butler (1990) used Hackman & Oldham's job characteristics model as the theoretical base for a study of social workers' job satisfaction. It appears that greater financial rewards,

social services tenure, and job feedback are significant correlates of job satisfaction.

Cherniss & Egnatios (1978) found that one of community mental health workers' major sources of frustration and dissatisfaction was a lack of direct and immediate feedback concerning work results. A study by Pines & Maslach (1978) produced findings demonstrating that the longer mental health workers worked in the field, the less satisfied they were, the less they liked working with patients, and the less humanistic were their attitudes toward mental illness.

In studying organizational determinants of satisfaction, McNeely (1983) validated the importance of performance feedback and praise. In a more recent study, Brush, Moch, & Pooyan (1987) found that job satisfaction is correlated with greater tenure, and less propensity to quit.

Fried & Ferris (1987) performed a meta-analysis of Hackman & Oldham's job characteristics model. As noted above, this model postulates that enriched jobs and feedback are correlated with increased job satisfaction and motivation. The validity

of Hackman & Oldham's model was assessed by a review of nearly 200 studies of the model. Evidence indicates that the correlational studies are valid and lend strong support to the theory. Specifically, job characteristics are related to psychological as well as behavioral outcomes. Job feedback appears to have the strongest relationship with overall job satisfaction. This meta-analysis appears to validate the relevance and usefulness of the job-characteristics model in the present study.

Evidently several studies have highlighted the existence of associations between the variables included in the present study and job satisfaction. Praise and perceived promotional opportunities apparently have a significant influence on satisfaction levels. However, further research is indicated in order to further investigate these and other influential factors.

Christina Maslach has completed extensive research in the area of burnout. Her description of the phenomenon follows:

Burnout involves the loss of concern for the people with whom one is working. In addition to physical exhaustion (and sometimes even illness), burnout is characterized by an emotional exhaustion in which the professional no longer has any positive feelings, sympathy, or respect for clients or patients. A very cynical and dehumanized perception of (clients) often develops...consequently, there appears to be a deterioration in the quality of care or service that they receive. (in Jones, 1982, p. 32)

Burnout was also clearly described by Freudenberger (1975). He referred to employees who work long hours for low salaries. Gradually (usually after one year of employment) their idealism fades and they may become angry, denigrating clients, staff, and the organization. Psychological features associated with burnout have been delineated by the same author. These include withdrawn and paranoid behavior, cynicism, and the resistance of new concepts and programs.

Lamb (1979) researched staff burnout in psychiatric workers. It was revealed that many workers, especially those with limited social services experience, have unrealistic expectations and hopes for their clients. The slow progress of psychiatric clients, and the poor prognosis for rehabilitation for a percentage of them is often discouraging to staff. This often leads to frustration, and ultimately the sense of boredom and cynicism that mark burnout.

Burnout in family/children workers was examined by Freudenberger (1977). The syndrome apparently propagates negative feelings and exhaustion in workers and diminishes the worker/client relationship. Such workers are often required to alternate between the roles of counselor, role model, and guardian. Additionally, the volatile atmosphere and frequent home visits/court appearances involved with this work often set the stage for burnout.

The present study is a quasi-replication of one by Jayaratne & Chess (1984). Both studies involve a comparison of social service workers in organizations servicing families and children, and those servicing a psychiatric population. The differences between the two studies are as follows:

---Jayaratne & Chess utilized a large national sample; the present study focuses on several organizations within the New York metropolitan area.

---Jayaratne & Chess divided the sample into three sub-groups: Workers servicing the mentally ill, families, and children. The present study combines the latter two groups.

---Although both studies include subjective, self-report measures, and similar demographic data, different measures were used in the present study. Jayaratne & Chess used a global index of job satisfaction and a single burnout measure. The present study utilized the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and two burnout measures.

---Jayaratne & Chess mailed surveys nationwide to members of N.A.S.W. The present study involved the distribution of surveys to subjects at their work-sites.

---Although some of the proposed research hypotheses are identical to those researched by Jayaratne & Chess (i.e. -

the effect of organizational type on job satisfaction and burnout, the effect of promotional opportunities on job satisfaction), others were not included in the original study (i.e. - the effects of supervisor's verbal reinforcers and punishments on job satisfaction).

Results of the original study revealed similarities in levels of the dependent variables among community mental health, child welfare, and family service workers, although the determinants varied by field of practice. The best predictor of job satisfaction for all three settings was the availability of promotional opportunities. Child welfare workers reported lower levels of satisfaction in several areas. The data suggest that a universal approach for increasing job satisfaction may be ineffective; interventions should be conducted within each setting and should be relevant to the population and work-site.

Jayarathne & Chess (1986) also examined the differential effects of job stressors and job deficits on satisfaction. This study validated previous findings relating certain factors (i.e. - promotional opportunities) to the variable. Data also substantiated the premise that emotional support and verbal reinforcers delivered by others are associated with greater job satisfaction.

Finally, unpublished data gathered and analyzed by Jayaratne (1989) indicate that verbal punishments delivered by supervisors are salient in determining job satisfaction. Verbal punishments are significant because they can create decreased job satisfaction, according to Jayaratne.

#### Conclusions

It is apparent that the variables associated with burnout and job satisfaction are significant and complex, and need to be further delineated. As reflected in this literature review, additional research is necessary in order to substantiate hypothesized relations between certain variables and levels of job satisfaction. The study's conceptual definitions, independent and dependent variables, and research questions are outlined in the following section.

### Conceptual Definitions

#### Job satisfaction

The conceptual definition to be used is one proposed by Locke (1976): The degree of positive emotions resulting from an appraisal of one's employment.

#### Burnout

The conceptual definition to be used is one proposed by Maslach (1976): A syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion involving the development of negative job attitudes and perceptions, a non-professional self-concept, and a loss of concern for clients serviced.

### Independent/Dependent Variables & Their Operationalization

#### Independent Variables

##### Job Characteristics Variables:

--Employment Site (Community mental health, Child and Family services)

--Job tenure (number of years with agency)

These variables will be operationalized through self-report measures.

--Availability of promotional opportunities

--Verbal reinforcers received from supervisors

--Verbal punishments received from supervisors

These variables will be operationalized by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire



### Dependent Variables

#### --Job satisfaction

This variable will be operationalized by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

#### --Burnout

This variable will be operationalized by the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals.

### Research Hypotheses

- 1) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences between general job satisfaction levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.
- 2) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences between burnout levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.
- 3) There is a positive correlation between tenure and job satisfaction levels of workers.
- 4) There is a positive correlation between perceived availability of promotional opportunities and job satisfaction levels of workers.

- 5) There is a positive correlation between satisfaction with verbal reinforcers received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.
- 6) There is a negative correlation between perception of verbal punishments received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.

Details of the research design are discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the design and methodology of the study. The theoretical base of the study is delineated, followed by an outline of the research design. A description of the sample and its selection process is offered, and the chapter concludes with an explanation of the data collection and analysis.

#### Theory

The theoretical rationale of the present study is based on Hackman & Oldham's job characteristics model (Hackman, 1980). This theory postulates that core job characteristics (specifically skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job) generate critical psychological states (i.e., experienced meaningfulness of the work, responsibility for its outcomes, and knowledge of task results). These psychological states in turn create high or low levels of job satisfaction, as well as levels of absenteeism. Thus workers' assessments of the five core job characteristics determines job satisfaction.

Task variety denotes the variety of different activities involved in the job. Task identity describes the extent to which the job encompasses the completion of a whole piece of

work. Task significance relates to the amount of significant impact the job has on other people. Autonomy focuses on the amount of freedom one has in determining the manner in which work is completed. Feedback refers to the degree of information workers receive regarding job performance. Hackman & Oldham theorize that complex or enriched tasks and feedback are associated with greater job satisfaction. Glicken (1980) and others report that the task variety, task identity, and task significance are substantial and satisfying in social services employment, but the characteristics of autonomy and feedback need to be greatly improved, and are target areas for research. The job characteristics model is a comprehensive, innovative theory which has been applied to numerous scientific analyses.

Jayarathne (1984) developed a theory of burnout which stipulates that the lack of promotional opportunities, financial rewards, and other incentives causes an array of burnout symptoms. These symptoms include emotional (anxiety, irritability, depression) and behavioral (withdrawal, absenteeism) characteristics.

For purposes of the present study the theories previously reviewed will be empirically applied to the job satisfaction and burnout of social service workers.

#### Design of Study

An ex-post facto study which utilizes a cross-sectional survey design was conducted. Employees of several large social service agencies were surveyed regarding job satisfaction and burnout. Because of the range of information collected and the need for a large sample of participants, the survey design is believed to be the most efficient, yet effective method. Several organizations were utilized in order to minimize the variability of organizational environment factors, yet increase the sample size and generalizability of the study.

The approval for the study and procedures were obtained from agency executives. In order to expedite the research process, encourage compliance, and ensure confidentiality of responses, those subjects willing to participate were asked to read and sign an "informed consent" form (see Appendix A). Because the study involved questionnaires regarding work, Human Subjects Review requirements for Columbia University as well as the participating agencies were satisfied.

The confidentiality of participants' responses was assured through a blind numbering system on each questionnaire. Identifying data such as names and birthdates were omitted from the questionnaires. Individual confidentiality was further assured by reporting only aggregate data to the agency executives. The organizations' identities are protected through anonymity in the results of the study.

The survey questionnaires were distributed to subjects through mailboxes at their work-sites. They were instructed to complete the survey within a two-week period and return the completed instruments to the researcher in a self-addressed stamped envelope marked "Confidential".

#### Sample Size/Selection

All "front-line/direct-service workers" (i.e. - social workers, caseworkers, case aides, etc.) at the selected program sites were invited to participate in the study, and those who responded compose the sample. Thus the study incorporates a non-probability (purposive) sample. Employees were recruited until a total of 200 subjects were surveyed, as indicated by power calculations. It was expected that a broad range of age and ethnic groups would be represented.

### Statistical Power

Statistical power is an indicator of the confidence with which one fails to reject the alternative hypothesis. A power analysis therefore determines the sample size required in order to allow one to fail to reject the alternative hypothesis (Kraemer & Thiemann, 1987). The statistical analysis of the present study's data will involve two-tailed, two cell tests, reflecting the earlier stated hypothesis (comparing mental health vs. child and family service workers). Based on this information and the results of power calculations, a minimal sample size of 190 is necessary, at two-tailed alpha equal to .01 and power equal to .80, to detect cell differences of .25. Alternatively, a two-tailed test at the .05 alpha level (.80 power) allows a comparison of .20 differences with 190 subjects.

### Data Collection

Demographic and job characteristics data were collected using self-report measures. Job satisfaction and burnout data were collected via the standardized instruments described below.

### Job satisfaction

The shortened version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was developed by vocational psychologists at the University of Minnesota (1977). It is a 20-item instrument composed of three subscales measuring intrinsic, extrinsic, and general job satisfaction. Subjects rate their satisfaction with a variety of work-related areas on a scale of one (Very dissatisfied) to five (Very Satisfied). Total (summed) survey scores range from 20-100; a high score reflects a high level of job satisfaction. Used extensively in the field, the questionnaire has Hoyt reliability coefficients ranging from .87 to .92. Test-retest correlations of .70 to .89 have further substantiated its reliability. Face, construct, content, and convergent validity have also been established (Weiss et al., 1977). Additionally, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is easily read, can be completed within a few minutes, and is easily scored.

### Burnout

The Maslach Burnout Scale was developed by Maslach & Jackson (1976). This instrument has 22 items and three subscales measuring emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. A high score on the first two subscales and a low score on the latter reflects



a high degree of burnout. Test-retest reliability coefficients have ranged from .80 to .82., and face, construct, and convergent validity have been established for this instrument (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). It is easily read and completed and is labelled "Human Services Survey" to avoid any negative connotations associated with "burnout".

The Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals was developed specifically for this population (Jones, 1980). This is a 30-item inventory which measures emotional and psychological burnout symptoms. Ten questions constitute a "Lie Scale" which detects a propensity for "faking" good or acceptable answers. The SBS-HP differs slightly from the MBI in that the latter assesses subjects' psychological or emotional experience of burnout, and the SBS-HP focuses on cognitive (e.g., "I often think about finding a new job"), emotional (e.g., "I frequently get angry at and irritated with my patients"), psychophysiological (e.g., "I experience headaches while on the job"), and behavioral ("I avoid patient interaction when I go to work") reactions which comprise burnout. Face, content, and construct validity have been established for this instrument, as has test-retest reliability (.93).

Normative data for all of the above scales have been collected for health care/human service personnel.

### Data Analysis

Frequency distributions (i.e.--means and standard deviations) and were obtained for the entire sample and for the two sub-groups. The following procedures were also used to test the research hypotheses.

- 1) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences between general job satisfaction levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.

Two-sample independent t-tests which compare each group's scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire were used.

- 2) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences between burnout levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.

Two-sample independent t-tests which compare each group's scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals were used.

- 3) There is a positive correlation between tenure and job satisfaction levels of workers.

Pearson r correlation coefficients on findings from the job satisfaction questionnaire were used.

- 4) There is a positive correlation between perceived availability of promotional opportunities and job satisfaction levels of workers.

Pearson r correlation coefficients on findings from the job satisfaction questionnaire were used.

- 5) There is a positive correlation between satisfaction with verbal reinforcers received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.

Pearson r correlation coefficients on findings from the job satisfaction questionnaire were used.

- 6) There is a negative correlation between perception of verbal punishments received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.

Pearson r correlation coefficients on findings from the job satisfaction questionnaire were used.

Additionally, multiple regression analysis was utilized in order to determine which variables are predictors of job satisfaction and burnout.

Results of the study are presented in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III

## RESULTS

The 200 subjects who participated in the study enable the presentation of a profile of community social service workers. A description of subjects' gender, education levels, and tenure follows.

Only four percent of the sample were males. Although this limited number prevents any inferential statistics involving gender, the predominantly female sample is representative of direct-service community social service workers.

As evidenced in Table 1, the average education level of subjects working with families and children is a Bachelor's degree; only nine subjects (eight percent) hold a Master's degree. In contrast, Table 2 illustrates the fact that the average level of those working with psychiatric clients is a Master's degree; a full 63% fall into this category. Subjects appear to be motivated in the area of education - approximately 25% of them are studying for Master's degrees.

Table 1

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
< Bachelor's Degree	3	2.94
Bachelor's Degree	60	58.82
< Master's Degree	30	29.41
Master's Degree	9	8.82
> Master's Degree	0	0
Total	102	100.00

Table 2  
Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
< Bachelor's Degree	3	3.06
Bachelor's Degree	9	9.18
< Master's Degree	19	19.39
Master's Degree	62	63.27
> Master's Degree	5	5.10
Total	98	100.00

Subjects working with a psychiatric population had held their current positions longer than those working with families/children. Mean lengths of employment in current position were 4.0 years and 2.5 years respectively. Very few subjects in either group had held their positions for more than six years. Tables 3 and 4 display tenure data of the two groups.

Table 3

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to Tenure

Tenure	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	42	42.00
2-4 years	43	43.00
4-6 years	10	10.00
6-8 years	2	2.00
8-10 years	0	0
10-12 years	1	1.00
12-14 years	0	0
14-16 years	0	0
16-18 years	1	1.00
18-20 years	0	0
20-22 years	1	1.00
Total	100	100.00



Table 4

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to Tenure

Tenure	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	30	30.93
2-4 years	25	25.77
4-6 years	30	30.93
6-8 years	2	2.06
8-10 years	1	1.03
10-12 years	2	2.06
12-14 years	2	2.06
14-16 years	2	2.06
16-18 years	1	1.03
18-20 years	0	0
20-22 years	1	1.03
22-24 years	0	0
24-26 years	1	1.03
Total	97	100.00

Psychiatric workers have nearly twice as much social services work experience as family/children workers. Tables 5 and 6 illustrate social services tenure data for both groups. 5.4% of family/children workers and 23.0% of psychiatric workers have more than ten years of social services work experience.

Table 5

Distribution of Family/Children Workers Recording to  
Social Services Tenure

Social Services Tenure	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	26	26.00
2-4 years	22	22.00
4-6 years	32	32.00
6-8 years	1	1.00
8-10 years	4	4.00
10-12 years	2	2.00
12-14 years	1	1.00
14-16 years	1	1.00
16-18 years	1	1.03
18-20 years	0	0
20-22 years	1	1.00
Total	91	100.00

Table 6  
Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Social Services Tenure

Social Services Tenure	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	10	10.31
2-4 years	16	16.49
4-6 years	10	10.31
6-8 years	11	11.34
8-10 years	25	25.77
10-12 years	6	6.19
12-14 years	4	4.12
14-16 years	4	4.12
16-18 years	4	4.12
18-20 years	3	3.09
20-22 years	1	1.03
22-24 years	0	0
24-26 years	2	2.06
Total	96	100.00

Psychiatric workers reportedly intend to remain in their current positions 50% longer than family/children workers. Mean lengths of anticipated tenure are 4.5 years for psychiatric workers and 3.0 years for family/children workers. Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the sample distributions according to anticipated tenure.

Table 7  
Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Anticipated Tenure

<u>Anticipated Tenure</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Don't Know	7	7.00
0-1 year	5	5.00
1-2 years	13	13.00
2-3 years	17	17.00
3-4 years	31	31.00
4-5 years	24	24.00
> 5 years	3	3.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 8

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Anticipated Tenure

<u>Anticipated Tenure</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Don't Know	13	12.74
0-1 year	6	5.88
1-2 years	2	1.96
2-3 years	11	10.78
3-4 years	7	6.86
4-5 years	35	34.3
> 5 years	24	23.52
Total	98	100.00

Overall job satisfaction data for each group are presented in tables 9 and 10. 97% of family/children workers and 91% of psychiatric workers report being satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs. None of the workers identify themselves as being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.



Table 9  
Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Neutral	3	3.00
Satisfied	72	72.00
Very Satisfied	25	25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 10  
Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Neutral	7	7.14
Satisfied	62	63.27
Very Satisfied	29	29.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Tables 11-14 display burnout data for both groups. Results of Burnout 1 (as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory) demonstrate that burnout is more prevalent among family/children workers than psychiatric workers. Results of Burnout 2 (as measured by the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals) indicate a similar trend—none of the psychiatric workers report severe burnout levels.

Table 11

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Burnout I

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	28	27.45
Moderate Burnout	64	62.75
Severe Burnout	10	9.80
Total	102	100.00

Table 12

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to Burnout 1

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	41	41.84
Moderate Burnout	47	47.85
Severe Burnout	10	10.31
Total	98	100.00

Table 13

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According toBurnout 2

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	20	19.61
Moderate Burnout	78	76.47
Severe Burnout	4	3.92
Total	102	100.00

Table 14

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to Burnout 2

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	31	31.64
Moderate Burnout	67	68.36
Severe Burnout	0	0.00
Total	98	100.00

As illustrated in Tables 15 and 1C, 48% of psychiatric workers are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their salary levels, while 81% of family/children workers fall into this category. Only seven workers in the two groups report being very satisfied in this area.

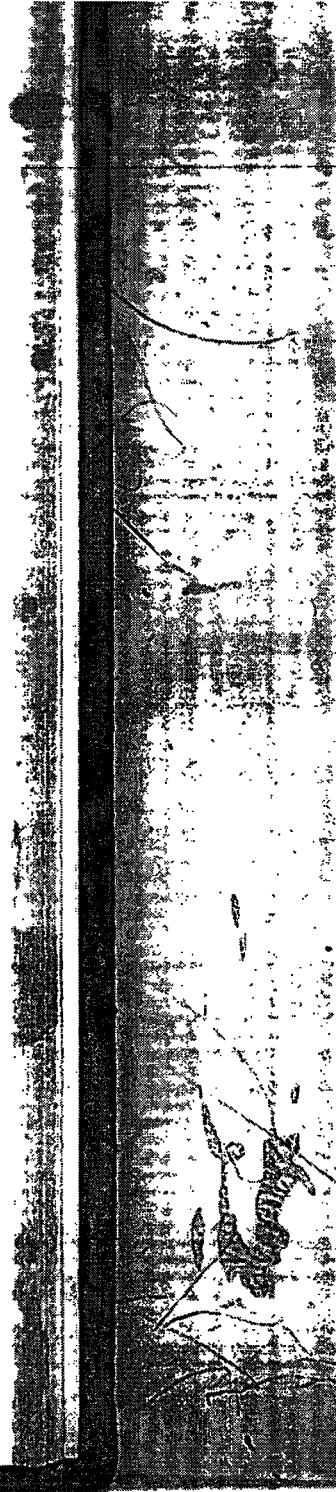


Table 15

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to Salary Satisfaction Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	29	29.00
Dissatisfied	52	52.00
Neutral	7	7.00
Satisfied	10	10.00
Very Satisfied	2	2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 16

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to Salary Satisfaction Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	15	15.31
Dissatisfied	33	33.67
Neutral	22	22.45
Satisfied	23	23.47
Very Satisfied	5	5.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As exemplified in Tables 17 & 18, levels of satisfaction with praise delivered by supervisors is similar for each group.

Table 17

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to Satisfaction with Praise Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	4	4.00
Dissatisfied	12	12.00
Neutral	22	22.00
Satisfied	46	46.00
Very Satisfied	16	16.00
Total	100	100.00

Table 18

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to Satisfaction with Praise Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	8	8.16
Dissatisfied	9	9.18
Neutral	16	16.33
Satisfied	47	47.96
Very Satisfied	18	18.37
Total	98	100.00



Tables 19 and 20 contain data regarding subjects' satisfaction with the amount of harsh criticism delivered by supervisors. Apparently most subjects are fairly satisfied with this variable level. Only 6% of subjects in both groups report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the amount of harsh criticism received.

Table 19

Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Satisfaction with Criticism Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	3	3.00
Dissatisfied	1	1.00
Neutral	4	4.00
Satisfied	22	22.00
Very Satisfied	70	70.00
Total	100	100.00

Table 20

Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Satisfaction with Criticism Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	2	2.04
Dissatisfied	6	6.12
Neutral	3	3.06
Satisfied	18	18.37
Very Satisfied	69	70.41
Total	98	100.00

Tables 21 and 22 illustrate subjects' levels of satisfaction with promotional opportunities. Approximately 43% of family/children and psychiatric workers report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied in this area. Only 5% of psychiatric and 4% of family/children workers are very satisfied with this facet of their jobs.

Table 21  
Distribution of Family/Children Workers According to  
Satisfaction with Promotional Opportunities

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	13	13.00
Dissatisfied	30	30.00
Neutral	30	30.00
Satisfied	23	23.00
Very Satisfied	4	4.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 22  
Distribution of Psychiatric Workers According to  
Satisfaction with Promotional Opportunities

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	8	8.16
Dissatisfied	34	34.69
Neutral	25	25.51
Satisfied	26	26.53
Very Satisfied	5	5.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In Table 23 a correlation matrix associates the variables investigated in the group of family/children workers. Here the analysis examines four of the major research hypotheses (among other correlations):

- 1) There is a positive correlation between tenure and job satisfaction levels of workers.
- 2) There is a positive correlation between perceived availability of promotional opportunities and job satisfaction levels of workers.
- 3) There is a positive correlation between satisfaction with verbal reinforcers received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.
- 4) There is a negative correlation between perception of verbal punishments received from supervisors and job satisfaction levels of workers.

All of the above variables except tenure were found to be significantly associated with job satisfaction. Regarding job satisfaction, the strongest relations were seen between promotional opportunities and job satisfaction ( $r = .66, p = <.01$ ).

The next strongest correlate was praise delivered by supervisors ( $r = .62$ ,  $p = <.01$ ). Burnout 2 (as measured by the SBSHP) ( $r = -.56$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), burnout 1 (as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory) ( $r = -.41$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), satisfaction with salary ( $r = .40$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), and criticism delivered by supervisors ( $r = -.35$ ,  $p = <.01$ ) were also strong correlates of job satisfaction. Apparently neither education level nor tenure were correlated with job satisfaction, and the latter had no impact on how long subjects planned to remain in their jobs (anticipated tenure).

A strong correlation exists between findings measured by the MBI (burnout 1) and the SBSHP (burnout 2) ( $r = .75$ ,  $p = <.01$ ). Burnout 2 is also strongly correlated with promotional opportunities ( $r = -.33$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), praise by supervisors ( $r = -.31$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), and criticism by supervisors ( $r = .35$ ,  $p = <.01$ ). Burnout 1 is also negatively correlated with social services tenure ( $r = -.28$ ,  $p = <.01$ ). Both measures of burnout revealed strong negative correlations with anticipated tenure.

Tenure is correlated with social services tenure ( $r = .77$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), anticipated tenure ( $r = .42$ ,  $p = <.01$ ), and criticism by supervisors ( $r = .30$ ,  $p = <.01$ ). Satis-

faction with promotional opportunities was correlated with praise by supervisors ( $r = .46, p = <.01$ ), and the latter was also negatively correlated with criticism by supervisors ( $r = -.44, p = <.01$ ). Education level was not strongly correlated with any variables.

Clearly, those subjects who were satisfied with promotional opportunities and praise by supervisors reported higher general job satisfaction levels. The same variables were also strong correlates of burnout. Those who were more satisfied were less burnt out, and vice-versa. Additionally, harsh criticism by supervisors is strongly associated with burnout, as is limited social services tenure.

Although job satisfaction does not seem to influence anticipated tenure, burnout appears to -- those who are more burnt out plan to leave their jobs much sooner. Two other variables closely associated with anticipated tenure are tenure and length of time worked in the social services field. Those who have held their jobs longer plan to keep them longer.



Table 23

Correlation Matrix of Investigated Variables for  
Family/Children Workers

	Job Satisfaction	Burnout 1	Burnout 2	Education	Tenure
Job Satisfaction	1.00				
Burnout 1	-.41	1.00			
Burnout 2	-.56	.75	1.00		
Education	.01	-.07	-.03	1.00	
Tenure	-.08	-.11	-.06	.07	1.00
Soc. Services Tenure	.07	-.28	-.20	.13	.77
Anticipated Tenure	.10	-.38	-.33	-.12	.42
Salary Satisfaction	.40	-.06	-.12	.09	-.19
Promotional Satisfaction	.66	-.13	-.33	-.14	-.10
Praise Satisfaction	.62	-.21	-.31	-.07	-.09
Criticism	-.35	.06	.35	.12	.30
	Soc. Services Tenure	Anticipated Tenure	Salary Satis.	Promo. Satis.	Praise Satis.
Soc. Services Tenure	1.00				
Anticipated Tenure	.45	1.00			
Salary Satisfaction	-.08	-.09	1.00		
Promotional Satisfaction	-.05	.10	.45	1.00	
Praise Satisfaction	-.02	.06	.16	.46	1.00
Criticism	.23	.01	-.08	-.18	-.44

Note: "Burnout 1" = results measured by the M.B.I. "Burnout 2" = results measured by the SBSHP.

In Table 24 a correlation matrix associates the variables investigated in the group of psychiatric workers. Here the analysis again examines the four major research hypotheses cited earlier (correlations between job satisfaction and tenure, perceived availability of promotional opportunities, satisfaction with verbal reinforcers received from supervisors, and perception of verbal punishments received by supervisors).

Regarding job satisfaction, the strongest relations were seen between praise delivered by supervisors and job satisfaction ( $r = .79, p = <.01$ ). The next strongest correlate was Burnout 1 ( $r = -.71, p = <.01$ ). Burnout 2 ( $r = -.68, p = <.01$ ), satisfaction with promotional opportunities ( $r = .49, p = <.01$ ), satisfaction with salary ( $r = .42, p = <.01$ ), and criticism delivered by supervisors ( $r = -.36, p = <.01$ ) were also strong correlates of job satisfaction.

A strong correlation exists between findings measured by the MBI (burnout 1) and the SBSHP (burnout 2) ( $r = .76, p = <.01$ ). Findings of both measures were positively correlated with criticism by supervisors and negatively correlated with satisfaction with promotional opportunities and praise by supervisors. Results of both measures were

negatively correlated with satisfaction with salary (unlike the family/children group in which there was no significant correlation). Additionally, those with greater tenure reported being less burnt out.

Table 24

Correlation Matrix of Investigated Variables for  
Psychiatric Workers

	Job Satisfaction	Burnout 1	Burnout 2	Education	Tenure
Job Satisfaction	1.00				
Burnout 1	-.71	1.00			
Burnout 2	-.68	.76	1.00		
Education	.08	-.04	-.09	1.00	
Tenure	.16	-.30	-.21	.17	1.00
Soc. Services Tenure	.02	-.21	-.08	.05	.71
Anticipated Tenure	.26	-.25	-.23	.05	.37
Salary Satisfaction	.42	-.35	-.35	.16	.15
Promotional Satisfaction	.49	-.34	-.48	.09	-.00
Praise Satisfaction	.79	-.66	-.60	.01	.21
Criticism	-.36	.34	.43	-.11	-.18
	Soc. Services Tenure	Anticipated Tenure	Salary Satis.	Promo. Satis.	Praise Satis.
Soc. Services Tenure	1.00				
Anticipated Tenure	.32	1.00			
Salary Satisfaction	.12	.30	1.00		
Promotional Satisfaction	-.10	.16	.41	1.00	
Praise Satisfaction	.12	.24	.24	.33	1.00
Criticism	-.15	-.09	-.00	-.11	-.41

Note: "Burnout 1" = results measured by the M.B.I. "Burnout 2" = results measured by the SBSHP.

Table 25 displays the means for the two sub-groups. Data appear to be similar for both groups, except in the categories of social services and anticipated tenure. Psychiatric workers report twice as many years of work experience in the social services as family/children workers (means are 8.1 and 4.2 respectively). Psychiatric workers also anticipate remaining in their current positions for longer than family/children workers (respective means are 4.5 and 3.0).

Norms for the measures used in the present study can be compared to those displayed in the table. Normative data for the measures are as follows:

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire:	<u>M</u> = 77.2	<u>SD</u> = 7.5
Maslach Burnout Inventory:	<u>M</u> = 59.7	<u>SD</u> = 15.6
Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals:	<u>M</u> = 59.0	<u>SD</u> = 28.3

Job satisfaction and burnout levels of the present sample appear to be within normal limits.

Table 25

Mean Variable Levels for Psychiatric and  
Family/Children Workers

Variable	n	Psychiatric Workers		n	Family/Children Workers	
		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Job Satisfaction	98	75.1	9.93	100	75.0	8.81
Burnout 1	98	50.7	19.59	102	57.9	24.65
Burnout 2	98	54.3	14.15	102	59.4	15.43
Soc. Services Tenure	98	8.1	5.85	100	4.2	3.41
Anticipated Tenure	98	4.5	2.97	100	3.0	2.38
Salary Satisfaction	98	1.6	1.14	100	1.0	.97
Promotional Satisfaction	98	1.8	1.06	100	1.7	1.07
Praise Satisfaction	98	2.5	1.13	100	2.5	1.02
Criticism	98	3.5	1.00	100	3.6	.95

Note: "Burnout 1" = results measured by the M.B.I. "Burnout 2" = results measured by the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals. These variables and Job Satisfaction are reported in the form of scores; tenure is reported in years; remaining variables are reported on a scale from 0 (low) to 4 (high).

Two-sample independent t-tests were used in order to discern differences between the two groups in the areas of job satisfaction and burnout. Here the analysis examines two of the major research hypotheses:

- 1) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences among general job satisfaction levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.

Contrary to research hypotheses, there were no significant differences between psychiatric workers ( $\bar{M} = 75.1$ ) and family/children workers ( $\bar{M} = 75.0$ ) in job satisfaction levels,  $t(196) = -.08, p = .46$ .

- 2) Due to organizational structures and procedures, there are significant differences among burnout levels of community mental health and child and family service workers.

In accordance with research predictions, there was a significant difference between psychiatric workers ( $\bar{M} = 54.3$ ) and family/children workers ( $\bar{M} = 59.4$ ) in burnout levels,  $t(198) = 2.43, p < .01$ .

Apparently the surveyed psychiatric and family/children workers have virtually identical job satisfaction levels. The latter group, however reports higher levels of job burnout. T-test results are displayed in Tables 26 and 27.

Table 26

A Comparison of Psychiatric & Family/Children Workers'  
Job Satisfaction Scores

	Psychiatric Workers	Family/Children Workers	Difference
<u>M</u>	75.1	75.0	(-.112)
<u>SD</u>	9.93	8.81	(-1.122)
<u>n</u>	98.0	100.0	

t = -.08      prob: .466



Table 27

A Comparison of Psychiatric & Family/Children Workers'  
Burnout Scores

	Psychiatric Workers	Family/Children Workers	Difference
<u>Burnout 1</u>			
<u>M</u>	50.7	57.9	(7.21)
<u>SD</u>	19.59	24.65	(-5.06)
<u>n</u>	98	102	
<hr/>			
<u>t</u>	= 2.09	prob:	.018
<hr/>			
<u>Burnout 2</u>			
<u>M</u>	54.3	59.4	(5.12)
<u>SD</u>	14.15	15.53	(1.37)
<u>n</u>	98	102	
<hr/>			
<u>t</u>	= 2.43	prob:	.007

Note: "Burnout 1" = results measured by the M.B.I. "Burnout 2"  
= results of the Staff Burnout Scale for Health Professionals.

As evidenced by the correlation matrix, five variables are closely associated with the job satisfaction of family/children workers: promotional satisfaction, praise satisfaction, "burnout 1", "burnout 2", and salary satisfaction. A stepwise multiple regression demonstrated that promotional satisfaction is highly predictive of job satisfaction, accounting for 44% of the variance. Burnout 2 explains 23% of the variance.

The correlation matrix for psychiatric workers indicates that the same five variables listed above are closely associated with the job satisfaction of psychiatric workers. For this group, a stepwise multiple regression revealed that praise delivered by supervisors is the strongest predictor of job satisfaction, explaining 63% of the variance. Satisfaction with salary was the second strongest predictor, explaining 29% of the variance. Results for both groups are displayed in Table 28.

Table 28  
Predictors of Job Satisfaction

<u>Family/Children Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	$r^2$	F
Promotional Opportunities	.66	.44	72.6
Burnout 2	.42	.23	29.4
<u>Psychiatric Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	$r^2$	F
Praise Satisfaction	.79	.63	142.9
Salary Satisfaction	.82	.29	16.9

Tables 29 and 30 illustrate predictors of burnout for each group. Clearly job satisfaction level is the strongest predictor of burnout level for both family/children and psychiatric workers. Criticism delivered by supervisors is also highly predictive of burnout for psychiatric workers, and less social services tenure is predictive of burnout for family/children workers.

Table 29  
Predictors of Burnout 1

<u>Family/Children Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	r <sup>2</sup>	F
Job Satisfaction	-.40	.16	19.6
Tenure	-.26	.15	7.2
<u>Psychiatric Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	r <sup>2</sup>	F
Job Satisfaction	-.56	.31	44.9
Criticism	.35	.29	12.7

Table 30  
Predictors of Burnout 2

<u>Family/Children Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	$r^2$	F
Job Satisfaction	-.56	.31	44.9
Social Services Tenure	-.30	.20	4.7
<u>Psychiatric Workers</u>			
Variable	Multiple R	$r^2$	F
Job Satisfaction	-.69	.47	88.3
Criticism	.36	.19	9.4

CHAPTER IV  
DISCUSSION

The previous chapter outlined a profile of community social service workers as well as an identification of the variables associated with and predictive of their job satisfaction and burnout. A summary of these findings follows.

Evidently, this predominantly female group is well-educated (97% hold at least a Bachelor's degree), and reports a "normal" level of job satisfaction and burnout (compared to similar subjects). As a group, these workers are fairly satisfied with the amount of praise delivered by supervisors, and are particularly dissatisfied with salary levels and promotional opportunities.

Psychiatric workers are more highly educated and have worked in their current positions (as well as in the social services field) longer than family/children workers. 48% of the psychiatric workers report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their salary levels, as compared to 81% of the other group. Psychiatric workers report being less burnt out, and anticipate remaining in their current positions approximately 50% longer than family/children workers. The two groups report similar job satisfaction levels.

For both groups, job satisfaction is strongly positively correlated with praise delivered by supervisors, promotional opportunities, and salary satisfaction. It is strongly negatively correlated with burnout and criticism delivered by supervisors. Multiple regression analysis revealed that praise is the strongest predictor of job satisfaction for psychiatric workers, and promotional opportunities for family/children workers.

Barber (1986), Freudenberger (1975) and others have noted the consistent negative correlation of job satisfaction with turnover and absenteeism. These behaviors cause disruption in the provision of services to clients as well as excessive tasks for remaining staff and financial burdens for the organization. Subjects in the current study have kept their jobs for an average of 3.2 years and anticipate keeping them for another 3.7 years.

Findings can be compared and contrasted with those of the original, related study (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984). Results of the original study revealed that salary level is associated with job satisfaction for psychiatric workers but not family/children workers--furthermore, salary was the only significant predictor of anticipated tenure. The present study found a strong association between salary and job satisfaction for both groups; salary was a significant predictor of antic-



ipated tenure only for psychiatric workers. Tenure and social services tenure were other strong associates of anticipated tenure. Salary levels are generally depressed within the social services arena, often particularly for family/children workers. This may explain the discrepancy between the two worker groups in their perceptions of salary as a satisfier (in the original study) or an incentive for remaining in current position (in the present study). Tenure and social services tenure may be associated with anticipated tenure for two reasons. The longer one has remained within the field or employed in current position, the more reluctant one is to change professions. Alternately, one may be choosing to continue to remain because one is satisfied and relatively free of burnout. The latter explanation is supported in this study by correlations between anticipated tenure, job satisfaction, and burnout.

35% of all workers in the original study were reportedly "very satisfied", and 40% planned to leave their jobs within one year. Comparatively, 27% and 15% are the figures for the current study. As noted above, salary, tenure, burnout, and job satisfaction levels appear to be strong determinants of anticipated turnover.

Jayaratne & Chess found similar burnout levels for psychiatric and family/children workers, but the latter group reported being under greater stress. As noted by Jayaratne & Chess (1984):

Given the nature of child welfare work, the higher levels of (stress) are perhaps to be expected... working in the best interests of the child may be at odds with court-ordered prescriptions and directives...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)

Perhaps for these reasons family/children workers in the present investigation reported significantly higher burnout levels. Additionally, social services tenure is negatively correlated with burnout for family/child workers but not psychiatric workers. Perhaps social services experience is a buffer against burnout, and results indicate that family/child workers have less experience than psychiatric workers.

Results of the original study indicate that the best predictor of job satisfaction (regardless of client population) is promotional opportunities. This finding was mirrored in the current results of family/children workers, but praise received from supervisors is the strongest predictor for psychiatric workers.

Results of the present study reflect those of other studies (Beck, 1987, Jayaratne & Chess, 1986) which have found that promotional opportunities and praise delivered by supervisors are two of the strongest predictors of job satisfaction.

Limitations of the study are discussed in the next section.

### Limitations of the Study

Survey research employing self-administered questionnaires has several limitations, most notably response rate, reliability, and self-selection. Regarding response rate, subjects were encouraged to participate, and were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of responses. The use of reliable instruments decreased the likelihood of problems of low reliability. All direct-care clinicians of selected work-sites were encouraged to participate, thereby reducing the occurrence of self-selection. Although the sample size is less than optimal, surveying additional organizations would have introduced additional confounding variables.

The existing confounding variables include the different administrative styles, organizational structures, and personnel policies of the organizations. Perhaps the varying supervisory styles and personalities of administrators and the presence or absence of attractive employee benefits impacted the dependent variables under study. Although these factors may have influenced satisfaction or burnout levels, the use of several agencies was necessary in order to increase the study's sample size and generalizability.

Age of subjects may be another confounding variable. Perhaps younger employees new to the field are more enthusiastic and satisfied; perhaps older employees are more satisfied and have therefore remained in the field. However, the majority of subjects were apparently incorporated into one or two age categories, minimizing the confounding effect.

Interviewing subjects in order to enhance the quantitative data would have improved the study, yet this technique was impractical and would not have been permitted by agency administrators.

The investigation has one limitation in the area of external validity. The sample is not strictly representative since some employees refused to participate. The overall response rate was 40%. It is possible that the responses of a representative segment of the most satisfied (or dissatisfied) employees are not reflected in the results. Thus obtained results may present satisfaction or burnout levels which are higher or lower than actual levels.

A concern regarding internal validity is the accuracy of responses. Despite assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, subjects may have been apprehensive about being

identified and reprimanded, thus suppressing their negative responses. The same response might also have occurred due to subjects' reluctance to criticize their agencies. Consequently, due to organizational loyalty or fear of negative repercussions, reported job satisfaction levels may be greater than actual levels.

Strengths of the study are outlined in the following section.

### Strengths of the Study

The present study utilized valid, reliable, multiple measures which have been used extensively in the research arena. The inclusion of a "lie scale" bolsters the study's credibility. Subjects' average lie score ( $\bar{M} = 2.8$ ) is within normal limits ( $\bar{M} = 2.7$ ), and is well below the criterion point (4.0) above which subjects are presumed to be falsely reporting socially appropriate responses. It is therefore assumed that results reflect honest, accurate responses.

An appropriately large sample size was used, based on power calculations. The relative lack of missing data is another positive factor--the majority of subjects responded to all questionnaire items.

The inclusion of several organizations throughout the New York metropolitan area increased the study's generalizability, as did the range of subjects' tenure, job titles, and education levels. External validity is thus strengthened; findings are applicable to a wide variety of workers.

Surveyed workers had worked in the social services field for a fairly lengthy period ( $\bar{M} = 4.2$  years for family/children workers; 8.1 years for psychiatric workers). . . Seven percent of all responding workers had worked in this field for more than eight years. It is therefore assumed that they are

familiar with and can serve as experienced reporters of the satisfying and dissatisfying elements of social service employment.

The foregoing presentation of research findings stimulates an array of implications. Theory, policy, practice, and research implications are delineated in the following section.



### Theoretical Implications

Results of the present study support Hackman & Oldham's job characteristics model. Job feedback appears to have a strong influence on job satisfaction levels. This finding mirrors results of related studies (Fried & Ferris, 1987, Hackman, 1980), and strengthens the theoretical concept that feedback is a salient factor in determining job satisfaction levels.

Jayarathne's burnout model is also supported by the present study. Results confirm that the absence of certain integral job facets (promotional opportunities, financial rewards, etc.) is associated with staff burnout. Current findings are in accordance with those of previous research (Jayarathne & Chess, 1984, Daley, 1979); those subjects who report minimal satisfaction with promotional opportunities and salaries report significantly higher burnout levels. Results of the present study also present additional facets which are powerful influences on employee burnout: verbal reinforcers and punishments delivered by supervisors.

A strong negative association between burnout and social services tenure, combined with a strong negative association between both variables and anticipated tenure suggests that

burnout and limited social services tenure are significant determinants of staff turnover. Perhaps limited social services employment puts workers at risk for burnout and increases the likelihood of turnover.

### Policy Implications

Research findings illuminate several areas in which organizational policies can be altered or restructured in order to increase job satisfaction and decrease burnout. Salary level is one target area, particularly in the social services sector, where salaries are notoriously low. Governmental funding agencies need to be petitioned to allocate greater financial resources to this sector. On the intra-organizational level, staff salaries need to be given high priority in budgeting decisions. Union negotiations can also be used to address salary levels. Unfortunately, as budgetary constraints often dictate policy, the feasibility of increasing salaries is often limited.

Evidently, agency policy regarding promotional opportunities is critical in affecting job satisfaction levels. Diligent efforts should be made to promote employees from within. Organization charts can be re-evaluated to assess whether additional supervisory slots can be created. Efficient direct-service employees who are interested in advancing within the agency should be groomed for higher-level positions. Job vacancies need to be posted and publicized within the agency, and personnel directors need to actualize policy in this area.

It is advisable for employee health benefit plans to be revised to address the organizational problems of burnout and job dissatisfaction. Reimbursement for psychotherapy and attendance at stress reduction workshops should be mandated.

Social service organizations also need to establish a formal policy to offer frequent conferences and seminars, and encourage employees to attend such events at other agencies. Attendance at professional conferences can provide both temporary breaks from the job and intellectual stimulation, activities which Freudenberger (1977) maintains may reduce staff burnout levels.

### Practice Implications

It is clear that verbal reinforcers and punishments delivered by supervisors have a significant effect on employee satisfaction and burnout levels. Koeske & Koeske (1989) suggest that praise and a socially supportive work environment "may forestall social worker burnout in social service settings. Such interventions may be important for providing emotional relief and reducing social worker turnover." (p. 247).

The hiring of future supervisors should include an assessment of the candidate's skills in recognizing and commending employee efforts and accomplishments. Existing supervisors should be encouraged and trained to focus on praising workers. Negative feedback should be delivered only when necessary, and in a constructive, nonthreatening manner. Verbal reinforcers are powerful managerial tools, and they are available at no cost to the organization. Praise must be delivered in sufficient quantity, quality, and frequency for optimal impact.

Several applied suggestions can be derived from the job characteristics model. Job characteristics can be improved in order to facilitate increased employee satisfaction. It would seem advisable to increase the feedback of job results.

Job feedback can be accomplished on an individual, group, or organizational level. Weekly supervisory sessions should include a task-feedback component. Depending on job title and description, this may include feedback about progress notes, client trips, diagnostic evaluations, foster home studies, recreation groups, and other areas.

The same feedback can be delivered to staff during group supervision, along with information concerning staff progress as a group. Employees responsible for orienting, teaching, and supervising others can be trained to effectively and personably communicate pertinent information.

On the organizational level, an intra-agency newsletter or posted announcements can serve as vehicles for task feedback. This may include statistics regarding audit results, foster home placements, or program successes. As the present study's results indicate that praise is a strong predictor of job satisfaction, positive feedback should be emphasized. Fried & Ferris (1987) maintain that absenteeism can also be reduced by focusing on the feedback of job results.

Burnout can be prevented or alleviated through a variety of tactics. The prevalence of burnout within organizations can be identified through burnout measures such as those utilized in the present study. Constructive feedback from

peers or supervisors can also alert staff members to the possibility of burnout. Another method of detecting burnout is the monitoring of absenteeism, turnover, and other correlates of the syndrome.

Attempts should be made to prevent staff burnout. Social work students need to be informed and prepared for the potential stressors of the profession (high caseloads, loss of clients, etc.). Newly hired workers should be offered an orientation program during which they are given accurate information regarding positive as well as potentially stressful areas of the job, and realistic treatment goals for their clients. This can aid new workers in recognizing and coping with stressors, as well as avoiding unrealistic expectations of clients.

Once burnout is identified, several remedial options exist at the organizational and individual level. Job tasks and responsibilities should be analyzed to pinpoint areas in which they elevate or reduce stress. Results of such an analysis may yield influential changes such as altered work hours, intermittent employee parties, or peer supervision.

Maslach (1978), Sandroff (1989), and other researchers have found that burnout rates are lower in professionals who actively express, analyze, and share their personal feelings

with colleagues. Peer support groups can accomplish this purpose as well as provide staff with brief breaks from work and feedback about potential solutions to work-related difficulties.

In-service training on burnout needs to be offered to administrators as well as line workers. This can help staff comprehend and cope with burnout symptoms. Exercise programs and regular rest breaks can decrease the physical and emotional symptoms of burnout. Employees should also be encouraged to take regular vacations.

Stress-reduction techniques such as progressive muscular relaxation, deep breathing exercises, meditation, and cognitive reappraisal are potent resources for preventing or alleviating stress. Individual or group psychotherapy is another tool for combatting the damaging effects of burnout.



### Research Implications

60% of employees asked to participate in the study did not respond. Perhaps those who were less satisfied declined to respond. Of those who responded, some did not answer all of the questions, perhaps due to fear of being identified or unwillingness to criticize the work-site. In addition to ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of responses, future research studies can include the use of reinforcers (monetary or otherwise) to increase participation levels. It is advantageous to survey fairly large organizations (as were those in the present study) both to increase sample size and decrease employees' fears of being identified. Another recommendation for assuring the candor of subjects' responses in future investigations is to survey employees who have recently left their agencies. This would introduce subjects who presumably have no fear of being identified, and fewer inhibitions about honestly appraising work-sites.

Scores obtained by the two burnout measured are strongly correlated with each other --  $r = .75$  for one group and  $.76$  for the other,  $p < .01$ . This finding supports the validity of these instruments, and promotes their use in future burnout research.

As satisfaction is a subjective and affective reaction, it is understandable that the majority of studies have employed self-report measures. Yet because of the inherent difficulties with this type of measure (i.e.--under or over-reporting of data, low response rates, etc.) perhaps the use of reports by others (family members, supervisors, etc.) can complement self-report measures.

Longitudinal studies, and the measurement of job satisfaction levels before and after critical events (i.e.-- promotion, relocation, or performance appraisal) would also have theoretical and applied implications. Such designs would offer greater comprehension of the manner in which job satisfaction develops and alters during specific time frames.

Based on the findings of the present study, additional research needs to be designed in order to further clarify the determinants of job satisfaction and burnout within the two study groups. Cross-sectional studies need to be implemented to explore additional factors which impact employee satisfaction levels within other areas of the social services (i.e.--medical social workers, substance abuse counselors, etc.). Factors such as organizational structure and organizational change need to be researched to determine their influence on job satisfaction and burnout.

Finally, future research needs to focus on intervention strategies for increasing job satisfaction and preventing and alleviating burnout. Stress reduction workshops and in-service training programs need to be implemented and evaluated to assess their effectiveness. The introduction of expanded promotional opportunities or salary increments should be carefully measured to determine their influence on workers. Such studies will increase theoretical and applied knowledge in the areas of job satisfaction and burnout.

### Conclusions

This investigation has led to an increased understanding of job satisfaction and burnout, and has stimulated certain theoretical, policy, practice, and research implications.

Research indicates that job satisfaction and burnout are multi-faceted constructs which are greatly influenced by the supervision one receives, promotional opportunities, and the social and concrete rewards exchanged for work.

Results are in accordance with those of the original study (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984) regarding the reasonably high job satisfaction levels reported, and the alarmingly high prevalence of anticipated turnover. Apparently, even when workers are relatively satisfied, the low salaries, lack of promotional opportunities, and presence of burnout interfere with their intentions to remain in their current positions.

Promotional opportunities are confirmed as a significant predictor of job satisfaction in the original and present studies. However, current results indicate that praise received from supervisors, and low or non-existent levels of criticism are also essential in determining satisfaction.

Both studies articulate different sources of burnout depending on client populations served. It is therefore advisable to continue investigations of the phenomenon, and tailor proposed interventions to employees' area of practice.

The present study demonstrates a strong interactive relationship between burnout, criticism delivered by supervisors, social services tenure, and the anticipated tenure of community social service workers. These associations need to be recognized and addressed by social service agencies, as turnover has a disastrous effect on clients, staff, and organizations.

It is imperative that agency administrators recognize the major social and financial impacts employee satisfaction and burnout have on the organization. Satisfying and consequently retaining employees is desirable, as they form the foundation of social service agencies, and often constitute an organization's most precious resource.

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## Appendix A: Consent Form

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
622 WEST 113TH STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025

**Purpose:** This study is analyzing job satisfaction levels of community social service workers.

**Procedures:** The study will involve your completing three brief questionnaires.

**Risks & Benefits:** By participating in this study, you may feel hesitant to reveal feelings about your job. All information you provide in this study will be confidential. Your responses are not identifiable with your name. The information you provide will help to identify areas of your job that are positive and negative. This may help your agency make changes that will make workers' jobs more satisfying.

**Participation:** In order to participate in this study, you must sign and return this form along with the questionnaires. If you do not sign and return this form, you cannot participate in the study. You will not be penalized if you do not participate in the study.

**Questions:** If you have any questions about your participation in this study, please call Ursula Martin collect at (516) 568-1247.

Ursula Martin Principal  
Investigator

**Employee's Statement:** I give my permission to participate in this study.

**Employee's signature:**

## Appendix B: Auxiliary Data Tables

Table 31

Distribution of Workers According to Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Dissatisfied	2	1.01
Neutral	8	4.05
Satisfied	134	67.63
Very Satisfied	54	27.31
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 32

Distribution of Workers Recording to Burnout 1

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	69	34.50
Moderate Burnout	111	55.50
Severe Burnout	20	10.00
Total	200	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 33

Distribution of Workers According to Burnout 2

Burnout Level	Frequency	Percent
Slight Burnout	51	25.50
Moderate Burnout	145	72.50
Severe Burnout	4	2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 34

Distribution of Workers According to Satisfaction  
with Praise Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	12	6.08
Dissatisfied	21	10.59
Neutral	38	19.16
Satisfied	93	46.98
Very Satisfied	34	17.19
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 35

Distribution of Workers According to SalarySatisfaction Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	44	22.16
Dissatisfied	85	42.84
Neutral	29	14.72
Satisfied	33	16.73
Very Satisfied	7	3.55
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 36  
Distribution of Workers According to Satisfaction  
with Criticism Level

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	5	2.52
Dissatisfied	7	3.56
Neutral	7	3.53
Satisfied	40	20.18
Very Satisfied	139	70.21
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/  
children & psychiatric workers).

Table 37

Distribution of Workers According to Satisfaction  
with Promotional Opportunities

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	21	10.59
Dissatisfied	64	32.34
Neutral	55	27.76
Satisfied	49	24.76
Very Satisfied	9	4.55
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/  
children & psychiatric workers).



Table 38

Distribution of Workers According to Anticipated Tenure

Anticipated Tenure	Frequency	Percent
Don't Know	20	9.87
0-1 year	11	5.44
1-2 years	15	7.48
2-3 years	28	13.89
3-4 years	38	4.93
4-5 years	59	29.15
> 5 years	27	13.26
Total	198	100.00

Note: Distribution includes total sample (family/children & psychiatric workers).

Table 39  
Correlates of Job Satisfaction

Family/Children Workers

<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Promotional Opportunities	.66
Praise delivered by supervisors	.62
Burnout 2	-.56
Burnout 1	-.41
Satisfaction with Salary	.40
Criticism delivered by supervisors	-.35

Psychiatric Workers

<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Praise delivered by supervisors	.79
Burnout 1	-.71
Burnout 2	-.68
Promotional Opportunities	.49
Satisfaction with Salary	.42
Criticism delivered by supervisors	-.36

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Note:  $p < .01$  for above variables

Table 40

Correlates of Burnout 1Family/Children Workers

<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Burnout 2	.75
Anticipated Tenure	-.38
Social Services Tenure	-.28
Praise delivered by supervisors	-.21

Psychiatric Workers

<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Burnout 2	.76
Praise delivered by supervisors	-.66
Satisfaction with Salary	-.35
Promotional Opportunities	-.34
Criticism delivered by supervisors	.34
Tenure	-.30
Social Services Tenure	-.21

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Note:  $p < .01$  for above variables

Table 41

Correlates of Burnout 2

<u>Family/Children Workers</u>	
<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Burnout 1	.75
Criticism delivered by supervisors	.35
Promotional opportunities	-.33
Anticipated Tenure	-.33
Praise delivered by supervisors	-.31
Social Services Tenure	-.20

<u>Psychiatric Workers</u>	
<u>Variable</u>	<u>r</u> <sup>2</sup>
Burnout 1	.76
Praise delivered by supervisors	-.60
Promotional Opportunities	-.48
Criticism delivered by supervisors	.43
Satisfaction with Salary	-.35
Anticipated tenure	-.23
Tenure	-.21

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Note:  $p < .01$  for above variables