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The Empathic Accuracy of Subordinate and Superordinate in the Social Work Bureaucracy

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THE EMPATHIC ACCURACY
OF SUBORDINATE AND SUPERORDINATE
IN THE SOCIAL WORK BUREAUCRACY

A Thesis
Presented to
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In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the social roles occupied by social workers and social work supervisors with the aim of discovering the extent to which they both accurately perceive the other's response to positions on role-related items. An empathic accuracy score was derived from a difference between the assumed similarity (perception by one level of the other level's response to questionnaire items) and actual similarity scores (the degree of congruence between organizational levels). The resultant score became one of the principal variables in the analysis of morale and perceived conflict within agencies.

The respondents answered a questionnaire which included demographic information as well as a range of questions dealing with the performance of their roles as social worker or supervisor. Generally, it was found that the supervisor appeared to have greater empathic accuracy and lower morale than the social workers. Low morale and low empathic accuracy was associated with a feeling that divergent views led to intra-agency conflict and high worker turnover. Empathic accuracy also increased with age, professionalism, productivity, and length of employment. Morale, conflict, and empathic accuracy were highly interactive and inversely related.

A separate analysis of the smallest, most democratic agency from the sample displayed a higher level of morale, higher assumed similarity, longer employment, greater job enjoyment and higher productivity. From these findings the importance of organizational structure and size was postulated, particularly as it related to the need for further research in this area of organizational behavior.

THE EMPATHIC ACCURACY OF SUBORDINATE AND SUPERORDINATE
IN THE SOCIAL WORK BUREAUCRACY: AN INVESTIGATION INTO
THE PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL ROLES OCCUPIED BY SOCIAL
WORKERS AND THEIR SUPERVISORS

CHAPTER I

DEFINING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

Although the public social service organization has been deemed by some to not best exemplify the generally-pictured bureaucratic structure, the organization does fit into the frame to a degree which will enable the researcher to view it through mainly standard lenses. According to Merton, bureaucracy is an "ideal type" of formal organization. In such an organization there is

> integrated a series of offices, of hierarchical statuses, in which inhere a number of obligations and privileges closely defined by limited and specific rules. Each of these offices contains an area of imputed competence and responsibility. ...The system of prescribed relations between the various offices involves a considerable degree of formality and clearly defined social distance between the occupants of these positions. ...Ready calculability of others' behavior and a stable set of mutual expectations is thus built up. Moreover, formality facilitates the interaction of the occupants of offices despite their (possibly hostile) private attitudes toward one another. (Merton, 1952: 361-362)

Max Weber has likewise dealt with this in his specific treatment of bureaucracies in which he indicates that

> bureaucracy involves a clear-cut division of integrated activities which are regarded as duties inherent in the office. A system of differentiated controls and sanctions is stated

in the regulations. The assignment of roles
occurs on the basis of technical qualifications
which are ascertained through formalized, im-
personal procedures. Within the structure of
hierarchically arranged authority, the activi-
ties of "trained and salaried experts" are
governed by general, abstract, clearly defined
rules which preclude the necessity for the
issuance of specific instructions for each
specific case. The generality of the rules
required the constant use of categorization,
whereby individual problems and cases are
classified on the basis of designated criteria
and are treated accordingly. (Merton, 1952: 362)

Some exceptions to this bureaucratic pure-type have

been made recently, as it pertains to the social work

agency. Jerry Jacobs hypothesizes that unofficial change

(Blau's term) does not "save" (Weber's) bureaucracy, as it

then evolves easily into a "symbolic bureaucracy" (Jacob's

term) in which hierarchy of authority, specialization,

impersonality and rule adherence (pivotal points for the

bulk of the bureaucratic mechanism) are outwardly in

operation, but actually defunct. (Jacobs, 1969: 413-422)

Along these same lines, the "profession" of social

work has come under attack. The social caseworker in a

bureaucratic setting is far less secure of his professional

status due to the numerous inconsistencies within the

agency. A worker is far more strictly supervised than the

relatively autonomous professional in other areas of work.

He undergoes a shorter training period (if indeed he under-

goes any at all) and draws from a comparatively unestab-

lished body of knowledge. Likewise, if a need is judged

to be present (usually by a supervisor), the worker is not

allowed to refuse his services. These shortcomings of the

"professional" in the social work bureaucracy would appear
to result in considerable conflict of role expectations and
precarious value positions, due to the contradiction of the
professional ideals and the actual demands of social work.
(Smith, 1970: 25-26; see also Elliott Jacques, 1964:
131-135)

This probable confusion of roles and role expectations
has been well substantiated in the literature. The concept
of "role" is likewise one of the basic tools for studying
the bureaucratic structure. To begin with, it helps to
depict the basic content and processes present in the bureau-
cracy through focusing attention on the statuses involved.
That individual personalities and the roles they occupy
are intertwined has been thoroughly investigated. The study
of roles may also serve to synthesize information from other
relevant areas. The empathic responses of subordinates and
superordinates in a bureaucratic setting is one such area.
(Reissman, 1949: 260-261)

The study of conflict, cooperation and empathy has
been mainly limited to industrial organizations. However,
considering the pervasive position which a supervisor in a
social work agency occupies and the very personal nature of
the job which they supervise, it is an area in need of inves-
tigation. It is the aim of this research project to explore
the concept of empathy within the various social service
agencies as it applies to a certain understanding by the
supervisor or subordinate (social worker) of the other's role

and function in the bureaucratic structure. It is hoped by exploring the mutual and individual thoughts and emotions in this area that some insight into the hierarchical processes and resultant conflicts might be discerned, concerning not only the relationship between supervisor and the supervised, but also between social workers and their clients.

Statement of the Problem

The main focus of this study is on the relationship between social workers and their supervisors in the social work agency. When supervisor and subordinate are operating within the same organization, charged with different responsibilities and role functions, what is the understanding of each towards the other? Do supervisors have a better formulation of the tasks performed and the attitudes held by their workers, or do social workers have a more accurate idea of their supervisor's tasks and attitudes as regards the practicing of social work and the values surrounding this practice? If one of these positions results in a superior understanding of the other, does this consequently reduce the conflict within the agency that is perceived by the member(s) of this group? Is the rate of turnover affected by this perception of conflict? Are any of these variables associated with the degree of morale possessed by a supervisor or a social worker?

The above problems are addressed in this research project. Specifically, the author will investigate (1) the re-

lationship that exists between organizational echelon level
and accuracy of understanding (hereafter referred to as
empathy) of a supervisor towards his workers or of a worker
toward his supervisor; (2) the extent to which this empathy
is associated with perception of conflict and turnover
within the agency; (3) whether the morale of either grouping
has any bearing on the empathic ability of, or conflict
perceived by, a supervisor or his social workers; (4)
what intervening variables affect these relationships.

The above concerns promise to contribute to the exist-
ing literature on occupational roles, organizational struc-
ture, empathy, and the profession of social work. A study
such as this also calls attention to some important aspects
of social work: the rate of turnover, the structure of the
agency, the communication flow, and the improvement in
worker-supervisor and worker-client relations.

Review of the Literature

Empathy

In order to explore the relationships which exist be-
tween empathy and echelon level, conflict, and morale, empathy
has to be defined. Rosalind Dymond was the first to attempt
a definition of this term. In an article published in 1953,
she offered the following explanation: "the imaginary trans-
posing of oneself into the thinking, feeling and acting of
another and so structuring the world as he does." (Bender
and Hastorf, 1953: 503-506) Some investigators have

identified empathy in the more strict, clinical psychological
sense and used it only when it related to one individual
putting himself in another individual's place and exper-
iencing the other person's thoughts and emotions. (Browne
and Shore, 1956: 112) Another definition of empathy reads
as follows:

> Empathy is a set of predictions we make as
> to the probable responses of another person.
> Based in part on our expectations as to how
> people in this person's role will respond
> and in part on our hypotheses as to how this
> particular individual will respond. (Berlo,
> 1960: 135)

Basically, however, empathy theories can be divided
into two groups: (1) psychologically oriented inference
theory (stressing that individuals express similar emotional
states similarly and that one can know another's reaction
best by having experienced that same reaction); and (2)
sociologically oriented role-taking theory (utilizing Mead's
developmental stages of the self-concept as a basis for
communication with others). All definitions and theories
agree, however, that man's predictions of others are based
on observable behaviors and that man makes these predictions
by manipulating symbols in communication. (Berlo, 1960:
116-129) Empathy will be incorporated into this research
project as an objective understanding of another's role in
a bureaucratic setting. After first answering for themselves,
respondents will be asked to answer general, job-related
attitudinal questions in the way they think that their
supervisor or subordinates would answer them. This neutral-
ity of definition will not preclude the possibility that

increased accuracy of understanding in such circumstances often
leads to a more emotionally satisfying, mutually rewarding,
and conflict reducing relationship with those occupying
another hierarchical position. In turn, a more convivial
working atmosphere should lead to lower turnover, increased
organizational stability and prolonged and rewarding rela-
tionships within and outside of the agency.

Echelon level

The impression received from the available literature
suggests that there is slightly more evidence existing for
the hypothesis that echelon level and empathic ability are
positively correlated. In a study dealing with "The Relative
Abilities of Leaders and Non-Leaders to Estimate Opinions of
Their Own Groups," Chowdhry and Newcomb found that leaders
were superior in their ability to evaluate group opinion.
The issues dealt with in Chowdhry and Newcomb's study were
those having high relevance to the group. Opinions were
sought on work rules and regulations and attitudes towards
the tasks which had to be performed. Although some may ques-
tion the similarity between leaders in Chowdhry and Newcomb's
study and supervisors in this research, we are still con-
cerned with superordinate and subordinate relations.
(Chowdhry and Newcomb, 1952: 51-57)

A strong case for those at the supervisory level pos-
sessing a greater degree of empathic ability was presented
by C.G. Browne and Richard P. Shore. Their study (set in a
Detroit metal tube manufacturing company) was concerned with

two hypotheses: (1) predictive abstracting (taking details from an event which influence areas to be predicted) is a function of leadership; and (2) a direct relationship exists between an individual's predictive abstracting ability and his echelon level (in an industrial organization). A group-administered questionnaire consisting of 24 statements on job satisfaction, economic issues and social issues was used to determine the accuracy with which one echelon predicted the attitude of another. A predictive abstraction score (PRAB) was computed for each statement. (PRAB score = difference between the value of a predicted response and the actual mean response value of the group on whom prediction was made.*) A non-parametric, ordinal level test of signif-icance was used to determine whether two echelons differed significantly in this ability to abstract the responses of another echelon. The echelons of department manager, non-supervisory personnel, general foreman, and assistant foreman were incorporated into their study. The results showed that the supervisory personnel predicted more accurately than the nonsupervisory. Further, those occupying the higher organ-izational echelons, particularly department managers, predicted more accurately than those in the lower organizational positions. The only instance in which the nonsupervisory personnel predicted the department managers more accurately was on job satisfaction items, although this difference was

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*higher PRAB scores = less accurate predictive abstracting ability

not significant. It therefore can be suggested that one source
of conflict in such a setting of differential roles and hier-
archical ranking may be due to a lack of understanding of
supervisory personnel by nonsupervisory personnel rather
than the reverse. The use of predictive abstraction is
similar to our rather broad definition of empathy. The oper-
ationalization of Browne and Shore's predictive abstraction
score is the same as the author's in that a separate score
is arrived at for an actual response by an individual or
group, and a predicted response for that group by another
group. The difference is then arrived at and a third score
computed. As this is an effective mechanism for countering
projection as well as a workable method for empathy
measurement, Browne and Shore's study is highly relevant to
this research. (Browne and Shore, 1956: 112-116)

Another investigation of subordinate-superordinate
relations was undertaken by Hjalmar Rosen, who attempted to
study the interactions of one level of organizational struc-
ture (division managers) with its superordinates (plant man-
agers) and subordinates (section managers). The technique
used was a multiple ranking device. The rank data (on 16
occupational role prescriptions) were combined into an average
rank for each role variable and the resultant interrelation-
ships were analyzed by Spearman's rho. Six aspects of man-
agerial role and communication were analyzed. Of focal interest
to empathy and echelon level, however, were those results

centering on the prediction of demands versus the actual demands among organizational levels. The division managers' predictions of his superiors' demands were not significant, while his predictions of subordinates' were significant at the .05 level. A higher level of significance was obtained from section managers' and plant managers' predictions: the section managers' predictions of superiors' demands were significant (at the .01 level), while the plant managers' predictions of subordinates' demands were clearly not significant (less than .05) (see Table 1, below)

Table 1

Prediction of Demands among Three Organizational Levels
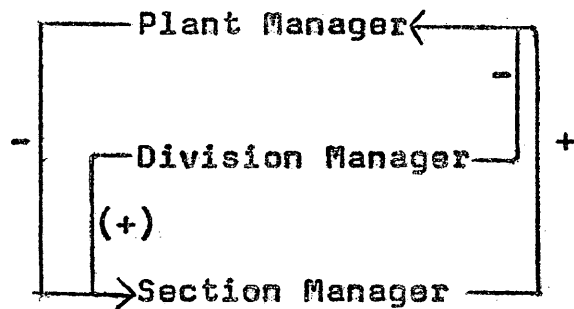
+ = significant (.01)

- = not significant (less than .05)

(+) = significant (.05)

The researchers also found that personal role evaluations (given as role prescriptions) and predictions of demands are significantly related for both the section managers and the plant manager. Rosen, although primarily studying the role

of the division manager in an industrial organization, has
shed considerable light upon the subordinate-superordinate
interaction which may by transferable to our investigation
of empathy in a bureaucratic setting. Browne and Shore's
and Rosen's results are similar only with regard to Browne
and Shore's job satisfaction variables. However, since
Browne and Shore found that the only instance in which the
subordinates predicted more accurately than the superordin-
ates was in the area of job satisfaction; for the remaining
findings, the two studies are divergent. Since Rosen is con-
cerned with predictions of demand rather than with attitudinal
items, Browne and Shore's study is more applicable to our
research.

Morale

Another concern of this research is the relationship
between empathy and morale. In a study by R.L. Johnson, the
morale of employees was considered in relation to empathic
ability of supervisors and employees. Her results demon-
strated that employees with high morale were better predic-
tors of supervisory response than those with low morale.
(Morale = number of times subordinates selected the most
favorable response category on a 20 question survey of How
Supervise, a questionnaire designed to reflect the various
styles and methods of supervision.) Although the variables
of prediction and morale were interactive, it would appear
that morale would certainly be an important factor in dealing
with empathy findings. If a subordinate/supervisor had high

morale, i.e., enjoyed his job a great deal and did not think that his superordinates or subordinates were doing them a personal or job-oriented injustice of some type, then it would be likely that an individual at one level would be more open to communication with those at another level. Increased communication should result in a higher degree of understanding. (Johnson, 1954: 320-323)

In another research project, Browne and Neitzel investigated disparity scores among three supervisory levels in a utilities company (female employees). Of interest to the authors were three factors, which were used as a measure of unsatisfactory or incomplete communication: (1) Authority ("A"); (2) Responsibility ("R"); and (3) Delegation of authority ("D"). Disparity scores were the measured differences between the individual's estimates of R, A, and D for herself and her estimates of her supervisor or assistants, as appropriate. Browne and Neitzel found that (1) there was no agreement on the three scales at varying levels of supervision; (2) there existed a negative correlation between morale scores and disparity scores; and (3) morale scores were positively related to the echelon level of the supervisor. (Browne and Neitzel, 1952: 86-91) The possible implications based on this research would appear to be the following: that since the echelon level positively correlated with morale, and morale was negatively correlated with disparity scores (and therefore positively correlated with some type of empathic concept) the superordinate seemed to have achieved

a somewhat better communication with his subordinate(s), as opposed to the subordinate(s) with the supervisor.

In summary, the literature indicates that the relationship between echelon level and empathy is positive. Those in a supervisory position, according to Chowdry and Newcomb and Browne and Shore (and supported indirectly by Browne and Neitzel), have a more accurate assessment of subordinates' responses on certain attitudinal dimensions.

The few studies of morale and empathy indicate that a positive relationship exists between these two variables. Those who have higher morale are better able to predict the responses of others either superordinate or subordinate to their position.

Although not reviewed in the literature, the correspondence between the degree of empathic understanding of a group, their perception of conflict among the echelon levels, and their belief that this conflict contributes to a high rate of turnover is an important consideration. Most of the literature in this area revolves around conflict reduction, the need for increased cooperation and superordinate goals. If an individual is able to know and understand the opinions that his subordinates or supervisor hold on a series of attitude questions, cooperation and conflict reduction would seem to be a logical result.

Hypotheses

Based upon prior reviewed research concerning empathy and its relationship to echelon level, perception of organizational conflict, and morale, several hypotheses can be derived:

Hypothesis One: Those in a superordinate position in a
                   social work agency predict the responses
                   of their subordinates more accurately than
                   the subordinates predict the responses of
                   their superordinates.

Hypothesis Two: As empathic accuracy (at the superordinate or
                   subordinate level) increases, perceived
                   conflict and turnover of that level de-
                   creases. (No separate relationship
                   between turnover and conflict is implied.)

Hypothesis Three: As empathic accuracy (at the superordinate
                   or subordinate level) increases, the level
                   of morale of that group also increases.

Discussion of Hypotheses

The results of the first hypothesis need to be known in order to proceed with the investigation into a consideration of other salient variables. If the accuracy of predicting another's response to items independent of one's own reaction to those items is skewed to one end of the supervisor-social worker hierarchy, then numerous implications can be drawn regarding the communication flow within the organization

For instance, if the supervisor does possess a higher degree of empathic accuracy when answering items according to how he believes his subordinates would answer them, then it is likely that lack of understanding between the two levels is confined primarily in the ranks of the social worker.

When there exists a low degree of empathy within a group, it is probable that a higher degree of conflict and a higher rate of turnover within the agency results. If negative feelings increase, then the frequency with which individuals leave their position should increase.

If feelings such as just described result from a lack of empathy, then the morale level will likewise decrease. Not being able to accurately predict your supervisors or your subordinate's attitudes is an uncomfortable position in itself. Further, if an individual does not have a good attitude towards his work situation, he may not care to understand how others around him operate.

Intervening Variables

Professionalism should be included among those variables having an effect upon empathy. A professionally oriented as opposed to a bureaucratically oriented individual operates according to a code of ethics which is highly internalized. His values are supported and monitored by his peers. Discipline emanates from his colleague group. Bureaucratic personalities, on the other hand, very often have a distinctly different orientation. They are

organizationally oriented and adhere to the rules and regu-
lations set forth by their organization. Discipline is
passed down directly through those in successively higher
authority positions, and performance is controlled by directives
from superiors. Since many of the questions of this research
are concerned with explicit role orientations of those working
within a social work organization, the accuracy with which
an individual is able to predict another's response should
increase with his degree of professionalism. (Scott, 1969:
8-9)

Productivity and supervisor sensitivity to the desires
of their subordinates were found to be negatively correlated
in a study by Nagle (when higher scores meant lower sensi-
tivity). Productivity, employee attitude, and supervisor
sensitivity were examined. Pearson "r" correlations indi-
cated that attitude toward supervisor and productivity
correlated .86 and that supervisor scale sensitivity and
productivity measured -.82. Higher sensitivity (for our
purposes to be used in the same context as empathy) was
therefore related to higher productivity. (Nagle, 1954:
219-233)

Another variable expected to affect the degree of
empathy is the length of time an individual has been em-
ployed in his position. According to the study done by
Chowdry and Newcomb (1952), the longer one has been a
member of a group the greater the ability to evaluate group
opinion accurately. This can be considered a variation of

the "contact" hypothesis - if an individual is in contact with another individual/group his understanding and accurate assessments of that group will tend to increase with the length of contact.

Although Maier, Hoffman and Read (1966) found no consistent differences between the ability of supervisors to predict their subordinates' responses if they had or had not previously held that subordinate's position, it is the opinion of this author that empathy would be greater among those supervisors who had formerly been social workers than those who had not been.

It is expected that most of the supervisors and subordinates working within the social work organization will be female. According to Livensparger (in Smith, 1966) those of the same sex displayed disproportionately greater empathic ability. Therefore, it is predicted that females will achieve a greater empathy scoring when the supervisor is female or when the social worker group is composed mostly of females. (This assumes that there will be enough males in the sample to make this distinction.)

One last variable which is expected to have an effect upon empathy is the size of the group headed by one supervisor. Berlo postulated that as the size of the group increased, the empathy level decreased. This relationship restates the theme of personalism. In a small organization or in a small group, individuals are in closer contact with one another and thus are more understanding and knowledgeable of one another's beliefs. Higher quality, more honest relationships

have a greater chance of developing higher levels of empathy.

The above variables which enter into our consideration of empathy shall be treated as intervening variables in this research project. Their possible relationships to the indices of empathy and conflict and morale will be elaborated in the study.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH DESIGN

Construction of the Questionnaire

The instrument utilized to collect the data in this research was a questionnaire (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was delivered by the author to the various social work agencies included in the study and picked up by the author after a period of two to three weeks had elapsed. The author had obtained information on the number of supervisor-social worker groupings and packages were prepared with the appropriate number of questionnaires. These were kept together so that each worker-supervisor group analysis could be kept intact. Each worker was predicting responses on his or her supervisor and each supervisor was predicting the responses of those in her subordinate group. The method will be discussed in greater detail in the section concerning data collection.

The questionnaire contained two types of questions, each designed to gather distinct types of information from the respondents. The first section incorporated the background information and the demographic and intervening variables which have previously been discussed. These were contained in questions 1-11 of the questionnaire. The relevant

demographic variables, as revealed in the empathy literature, were measured. Such variables included age (Chowdhry and Newcomb, 1952), sex (Livensparger, 1966), race (Pellett, 1972), educational background (Miller and Remmers, 1950; Johnson, 1954), productivity (Nagle, 1954), length of employment (Chowdhry and Newcomb, 1952), size of group headed by one supervisor (Berlo, 1960), whether or not the supervisor previously held the subordinate position (Hoffman, Maier and Read, 1963), echelon level (Chowdhry and Newcomb, 1954; Browne and Shore, 1956; Rosen, 1961), job enjoyment (as one indicator for morale - Johnson, 1954; Browne and Neitzel, 1952), and professionalism (Scott, 1969; Pellett, 1972).

All of the above items are straightforward. The only item which requires further explanation is the professionalism indicator. In this item respondents were asked to indicate their customary sources of social work stimulation and education upon which they rely in doing their jobs. It was the assumption of Scott (1969) that social workers who relied upon those others within the social work agency and upon in-service training programs for guidance and knowledge were more agency (and therefore bureaucratically) oriented. Those who turned to outside-the-agency sources such as professional books and journals and professional colleagues outside the agency were more professionally oriented. Although in some instances those supervisors or other agency-connected personnel may be professionally competent and able to offer professional guidance equalling those outside of the agency, the

fact that an individual relies upon his immediate surroundings and does not respond to independent investigation is considered to be evidence of a bureaucratically as opposed to a professionally oriented person. Since the responses included in this item allowed the opportunity for supervisors as well as social workers to respond fully, the question was also made available to supervisors. Only one item was answered only by social workers - that item relating to social work supervisors as being the source of information. (For an explanation of the coding of this item, refer to Appendix B, item 9.)

The second part of the questionnaire (questions 12-34) contained the attitudinal information - the empathy scoring for each individual. The respondents were asked to answer each item according to how they would answer the item and then answer each item according to how they believe their supervisor (if a social worker) or their social workers (if a supervisor) would answer the item. For the most part, the items used were taken from past questionnaires and from content analysis of the literature. These items dealt with the job-related aspects of occupational roles (Rosen), role conceptions (Reissman), job objectives (Berlo), and job factors (Merton). Questions relating to these same concerns that were utilized by Lea Pellett (1972) in her M.A. thesis were also used. Items relating to morale and to perceived conflict and high turnover (as a result of supervisor-subordinate lack of agreement) were also incorporated in this attitudinal section. When all answers were completed, the author was able to

ascertain an individual's responses to these attitudinal items, his supervisor or subordinates' answers, and the predictions of one towards the other. These three scores were used to determine the last item incorporated into the data analysis, that of empathic accuracy. The details of this scoring procedure are contained in Appendix B.

In arriving at this format to depict an empathy score, several factors were taken into consideration. Past literature was examined to see what contaminating factors generally are connected with studies of empathy. Of primary relevance were the factors of similarity and projection. In studies by Halpern (1955) and Hastorf and Bender (1952 and 1953) the problems posed by the similarity of the respondent to the one toward whom he is predicting responses were discussed. In the later study by Hastorf and Bender, this prediction of one's score by another without regard to projection or similarity was referred to as "raw empathy." Their second technique took into account the existence of projection and was referred to as "refined empathy." This score was the answer to the question of whether the prediction score was closer to the associate's score (indicating empathy) or the predictor's own score (indicating projection). Further investigations into a proper format and scoring device utilized a refined measurement technique. A format for depicting empathic ability devised by Henry Clay Smith clarifies the issues involved.

```
 _____1_____              actual                _____2_____
My feelings, thoughts         similarity             Your feelings,
and behavior                    score                thoughts and
 _____             (taken in-            behavior
                               dependently)          _____
```

```
                              _____3_____
                              My assumptions        empathy score
                              about you             (assumed sim-
                                                     ilarity)
                              _____
```

(2-1) = actual similarity

(3-2) = assumed similarity

(3-2) - (2-1) = empathic accuracy score

The higher the subtrahend in proportion to the minuend,
the higher the empathic accuracy. (Smith, 1966: 113)

In my questionnaire and data analysis these data bases
were used:

1. actual similarity between social worker and social
work supervisor (arrived at by a separate analysis of responses
to the attitude items of supervisors and social workers).

2. assumed similarity between social worker and social
work supervisor (arrived at by analysis of the predicted re-
sponses of one group on another and that other group's actual
responses).

3. empathic accuracy between social worker and social
work supervisor (arrived at by analysis of the difference

of 1 and 2 above. (For further elaboration, refer to the coding of this variable (#33) in Appendix B).

The questionnaire pretest was composed of the background information, the intervening variables and the attitudinal items. It was presented to a small group of social workers and one supervisor in a preliminary investigation to validate the questions and clarify any discrepancies.

Pretest

A brief pretest was administered to several social workers at the Yorktown, Virginia agency and to the supervisor and the two social workers at the Williamsburg agency. The questionnaires to the Yorktown workers were hand delivered and all were mailed back promptly with numerous written comments and elaborations which aided tremendously in editing the final edition of the questionnaire. The Williamsburg agency likewise returned all its questionnaires. The questionnaire was gone over on a face-to-face basis with one of the workers who was quick to tell the author the questions which were not clear or stereotypic in nature, causing a response pattern in a given direction.

The problems found with the pretest were not insurmountable. However, many of the suggestions made either verbally of written by these initial respondents were incorporated into the final form of the questionnaire. The items which were consistently problematical to the respondents were those which had within them an inherent bias and therefore urged the respondent to answer them on either extreme of the continuum.

Some of the questions were changed which were pointed out to be too similarly worded and thereby tipping them off as a reliability measure. Others were eliminated because the scoring techniques they required would have been inconsistent with the format needed to arrive at the empathic accuracy score. In some instances an item was eliminated when it was problematical to several respondents rather than changed. This was due to the frequent comment that the questionnaire could be improved by shortening it somewhat.

The five degree Likert scale did not appear to cause difficulty. For the most part, respondents did not cluster around either extreme of the scale. The five response possibilities therefore remained in the final questionnaire. The middle, neutral response was altered, however, from "No Opinion" to "Uncertain," due to the recognition that the latter response category is a more accurate reflection of educated, working people's mode of thought. The required responses to the attitudinal items were removed from their placement after each item to a separate response sheet where all items were first answered according to how the respondent would reply and then turned over and answered again according to the predicted way the respondent's supervisor or social workers would answer the items. This was done to reduce the tendency that a respondent would have to project his response onto the other group member(s) were the response made immediately after indicating one's own position on the response sheet.

The Study

Population

Originally, social workers and social work supervisors
from the Newport News, Virginia; Hampton, Virginia; and Rich-
mond, Virginia agencies were to compose the population of this
research project. However, the results of the pretest based
on the Williamsburg and Yorktown responses, which revealed a
high degree of cooperation and understanding between the two
echelon levels, suggested that agency size was an important
intervening variable. Therefore, the research was recast to
take account of this. The smaller, more rural and personalis-
tic Yorktown agency was introduced as a counterpoint to the
urban Newport News and Hampton agencies and substituted for
the Richmond agency. The Yorktown, Newport News and Hampton
agencies were thus the total research population (Hampton,
8 supervisors and 55 workers; Newport News, 9 supervisors and
55 workers; Yorktown, 3 supervisors and 10 workers). These
three agencies are all located in the Tidewater area of Vir-
ginia and display basically the same educational and employ-
ment patterns. All likewise share the same procedural guide-
lines, available services, rules and regulations, and their
in-service training sessions. The Newport News and Hampton
agencies are similar in number of employees, urban location,
and areas serviced. The differences in size (smaller), lo-
cation (more rural) and area serviced (smaller, more rural)
in the Yorktown agency are the variables which were perceived
to be of greatest importance compared to the other agencies.

The overall enthusiasm which the Yorktown group displayed was remarkable. The employees were more verbose and articulate than those in the other agencies. Their answers were expanded beyond the initial scope of the questions asked of them. They likewise answered the last open-ended question more often than other agencies and in a more positive manner. While a number of the elaborations coming from Hampton and Newport News centered around the shortcomings of supervisors, Yorktown answers told of the rapport and "give and take" relationship between supervisor and social worker. This item, although not included in the data analysis, served as verification that the questions were interpreted as intended and that real differences were emerging qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

The Respondents

The respondents in this research project consisted of all social workers and social work supervisors in the Newport News, Hampton, and Yorktown social service agencies. The social worker and the social work supervisor are both located in the middle of the organizational structure. Beneath the social worker is the eligibility worker whose job it is to determine eligibility and financial needs of people applying for assistance. Above the social work supervisor is the director, who is charged with the higher level administrative responsibilities and community relations work. It is therefore the social workers and the social work supervisors whose responsibility it is to see that the client's needs are met.

Since this study is designed to extend to possible improvements
of client-worker relations as a corollary to its investiga-
tion of superordinate-subordinate relationships, only social
workers and social work supervisors were included. For pur-
poses of simplification, several classes of social workers were
considered as one. In actuality, a social worker trainee is
one who has just entered the field of social work (less than
one year of service experience). The minimum qualifications
for a trainee is graduation from an accredited college or
university with a baccalaureate degree. A social worker is
one who has graduated from an accredited college or university
with a degree in social work or with a baccalaureate degree
and one year of field experience. A senior social worker has
at least two years of field experience in addition to a bac-
calaureate degree. Due to the similarities in client contact
and supervisor relationship, however, and the inclusion of
length of employment and educational level in the questionnaire,
it was decided that it would aid the simplicity of the re-
search design if these three categories could remain as one.

Data Collection

Information on supervisor-social worker groupings with-
in the agencies was obtained through administrative secre-
taries. The questionnaires were then counted to correspond
with these groupings and secured together. They were then de-
livered to the directors along with instructions to keep the
respective bundles together and to instruct the supervisors
to do the same.

The cover letter which accompanied each questionnaire was mainly to present intent and to instruct. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix A. At the time of the questionnaire distribution, a date was set for their deliverance to the administrative secretary from whom they were collected. Eighty-eight percent of the supervisors of the Hampton agency and only 47% of the workers returned their questionnaires. Seventy-eight percent of the supervisors and 64% of the workers from the Newport News agency returned their questionnaires. The Yorktown agency cooperated fully and had a 100% response rate. A follow-up appeal was issued to the directors who then made another attempt to collect questionnaires. Many workers in the Hampton agency were on vacation; thus, only a few more questionnaires were returned. From the appeal to the Newport News agency, two groupings were mailed to the author. All of these follow-up attempts were invalidated due to non-separation of the appropriate workers with the appropriate supervisor.

Data Analysis and Coding

The initial step in the data analysis was to obtain a descriptive picture of the responses to all of the questions. This was accomplished through incorporating frequency distributions with the accompanying descriptive measures of means, modes, medians and standard deviations. A separate profile of the Yorktown agency was derived in order to test our assumption that there would be substantial differences occurring in the profile of this agency. Other than singling out of the

Yorktown agency, this frequency distribution procedure allows
for a general grouping of responses to ascertain at a glance
the directionality and skewness of the data.

The remainder of the analysis was concerned with ordin-
ally scaled (ranked) variables. Accordingly, the majority
of statistics used in obtaining the correlations among these
ranked variables were those used in comparing two ordinal
level scales. Since Kendall's tau c is a convenient statistic
to employ when a large number of ties are present on two
series of ordinal measures, this was the main measure of re-
lationship used in the study. The only exception to this was
where the correlation coefficient of Pearson's product moment
was utilized. Due to the similarity of results obtained plus
precedence for such mixing, this procedure was felt to be
legitimate. (See Pellett, Appendix C, Table 6)

All of the crosstabulations were used to establish
directionality of relationships and trends. Any statistically
significant relationships among the variables were reported.
Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the small N
(87) this was felt to be a realistic objective.

The background variables contained mainly in the first
part of the questionnaire were subjected to chi-square analysis
in order to evaluate whether or not observed frequencies dif-
fered from those which would have been expected under the
theoretical assumptions of randomness and independence of the
variables as well as the null hypothesis.

The questionnaire was coded to the specifications re-
quired by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

computer program. A graduated scale with lower numerals representing lower values was incorporated wherever possible. Recategorization of several items was done to facilitate the grouping of the raw data, and, in this instance, to render the responses more discrete. The coding process is reported in Appendix B.

All of the demographic and descriptive variables involved a straightforward reporting method. The various response categories were each numbered and this number was then transferred onto the individual keypunch card for computer analysis. The attitudinal items (questions 12-33) were each subjected to an individual scoring procedure whereby a value ranging from ±4 was obtained for each item, depending upon the accuracy of the respondent's prediction of his supervisor's or worker's score and taking into consideration (controlling for) the respondent's own score (i.e. assumed similarity). A middle position (0) indicated that a respondent was assuming his "other" would answer in the same way that he did; a -4 indicated the highest empathic accuracy score and a +4 indicated the lowest empathic accuracy score. The resultant empathic accuracy score for each item was added together and averaged for a separate empathic score for each respondent. This was then incorporated as the last variable on each card and recoded to increase the differences, proportionately, and place them into discrete categories of (-1.0 to -.5), (-.5 to 0.0), (0.0 to +.5), (+.5 to 1.0). These were, in turn, scored

from 1 to 4.

More details on these variables and their resultant correlations, strengths and directionality will be presented in the discussion that follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Distributions

The first phase of data analysis consisted of array-
ing the data into frequency distribution tables. Once the
relative frequencies of the individual items were ascer-
tained, an overview of the items was available and the
varying trends of the data were clearly seen. Further
elaboration of these trends is presented in the section on
correlations in the latter part of this chapter. For all
agencies (N=87), the marginal distributions appeared as
follows:

Age (Q. #1)

25 or under	51.7%
26-30	28.7%
31-35	5.7%
36-45	3.4%
46 or over	6.9%
No response	6.9%
	100.0%

The majority of the respondents were 25 years of age
or under, with the second largest category being those be-
tween the ages of 26 and 30.

Sex   (Q. #2)

    Female   77%
    Male   23%
               100%

Race   (Q. #3)

    Caucasian   86.2%
    Negro   13.8%
                100.0%

Education   (Q. #4)

    B.A./B.S.   92.0%
    M.A.   5.7%
    M.S.W.   2.3%
    PhD   0.0%
                100.0%

An overwhelming majority held only a B.A. or B.S.
degree. Eight percent held masters level degrees and no
respondent held a PhD degree.

Length of employment   (Q. #5)

    0-.9 years   29.9%
    1-2.9   34.5%
    3-4.9   23.0%
    5-7.9   6.9%
    8-9.9   5.7%
                 100.0%

The majority of respondents had been working for under
three years with only a few who had been working over five
years.

Position   (Q. #6)

    Supervisor   19.5%
    Social worker   80.5%
                   100.0%

Previous position   (Q. #7)

All 17 supervisors had previously held the position of social worker. This item was therefore eliminated in further statistical operations.

Number of workers supervised   (Q. #8)

9 workers   6%
7 workers   12%
6 workers   41%
5 workers   17%
4 workers   12%
3 workers   6%
1 worker   6%
            100%

Variation in response to this item was small; therefore it was eliminated in further operations with the data.

Professionalism   (Q. #9)

people rely upon:

agency-centered, no external source   31.0%
agency-centered, one external source   49.5%
external-centered, one agency source   19.5%
external-centered, no agency source   0.0%
                                       100.0%

No respondent was shown to rely exclusively upon external sources for guidance or information on the job. The greatest number of respondents relied upon two agency and one external source.

Productivity   (Q. #10)

number of client to social worker contacts per month:

0-50   15%
51-100   40%
101-150   30%
151-200   15%
           100%

Job enjoyment   (Q. #11)

only as a means of making a living	4.6%
as a worthwhile endeavor	49.4%
a great deal	36.8%
uncertain	9.2%
	100.0%

Almost half of the respondents considered their job as a worthwhile endeavor, while only about 5% thought of their work as only a means of making a living. A slight 10% answered they were uncertain how they felt (see Table 2).

Variable 12   (Q. #12)

This was an attitudinal item designed to aid the determination of the empathic accuracy score. Therefore, frequency distribution analysis was not undertaken.

Morale indicator - variable 13   (Q. #13)

strongly disagree	33.3%
somewhat disagree	16.1%
uncertain	11.5%
somewhat agree	14.9%
strongly agree	24.1%
	100.0%

One-third of the respondents answered that they did not think their supervisor or subordinates should take more responsibility upon themselves; twenty-four percent thought they should do so; thirty percent held a moderate position, and 11.5% were uncertain.

Morale indicator - variable 14   (Q. #14)

strongly disagree	10.3%
somewhat disagree	8.0%
uncertain	16.1%
somewhat agree	23.0%
strongly agree	42.5%
	100.0%

Table 2

Percentage Distribution of Job Enjoyment

for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies and for the Yorktown Agency

Agency	Variable	Median	Mean	S.D.	Percentage Distribution Job Enjoyment				
					1	2	3	4	Total
Newport News - Hampton	job en- joyment	2.35	2.68	.981	5.4	52.7	10.8	31.1	100.0%
Yorktown	job en- joyment	3.35	3.38	.961	0.0	30.8	0.0	69.2	100.0%

1 = only as a means of making a living
2 = as a worthwhile endeavor
3 = uncertain
4 = a great deal

Forty-two percent were high in morale (thought that their supervisor or subordinates investigated each problem thoroughly before making a decision). Ten percent strongly disagreed with this; twenty-three percent moderately agreed and 16% were uncertain.

Morale indicator - variable 15 (Q. #15)

strongly disagree	3.4%
somewhat disagree	1.1%
uncertain	10.3%
somewhat agree	20.7%
strongly agree	64.4%
	100.0%

Sixty-four percent of the respondents thought their supervisors or subordinates to be cooperative regarding suggestions made to them; while only 3.4% disagreed strongly with this item. Altogether, 85% either showed that they strongly agreed or moderately agreed with this item.

Variables 16-25 [see variable 12 (p.37) for explanation]

Morale indicator - variable 26 (Q. #27)

strongly disagree	2.3%
somewhat disagree	6.9%
uncertain	8.0%
somewhat agree	21.8%
strongly agree	60.9%
	100.0%

Eighty-two percent of the respondents either strongly or moderately agreed that the discrepancy between social work theory and practice was large; eight percent were uncertain and the remainder disagreed somewhat.

Morale indicator - variable 27   (Q. #28)

strongly disagree	2.3%
somewhat disagree	3.4%
uncertain	3.4%
somewhat agree	17.2%
strongly agree	73.7%
	100.0%

A full 90% of the respondents believed that rules and regulations interfered with a social worker's ability to help his/her clients, while 3.4% were uncertain.

Variables 28-30 [see variable 12 (p.37) for explanation]

Conflict indicator - variable 31   (Q. #31)

strongly disagree	16.1%
somewhat disagree	12.6%
uncertain	11.5%
somewhat agree	23.0%
strongly agree	36.8%
	100.0%

Sixty percent of all respondents thought that (moderately or strongly) divergent views on the various items relating to social worker roles, job performances, etc. between themselves and their supervisor or subordinates led to intra-agency conflicts. Twenty-eight percent did not agree with this statement.

Conflict indicator - variable 32   (Q. #32)

strongly disagree	14.9%
somewhat disagree	14.9%
uncertain	23.0%
somewhat agree	23.0%
strongly agree	24.2%
	100.0%

Forty-seven percent either moderately or strongly

felt that divergent views (as above) led to a high rate of

worker turnover within the agency; twenty nine percent dis-

agreed with this statement while the remainder were uncertain.

Empathic accuracy indicator - variable 33

-1.0 to -.5	2.3%
- .5 to 0	48.3%
0 to .5	42.5%
.5 to 1.0	6.9%
	100.0%

Ninety percent of the respondents fell between the

average scorings of a -.5 to a +.5 for their empathic ac-

curacy scores. Seven percent had an average score of +.5

to +1; while 3% had their score between the values of a -1

and -.5. Although individuals displayed far more individual

variations than these small range scorings might appear to

indicate, the fact that an average score for each individual

was obtained (which entailed averaging some 20 responses)

placed these final scores in less dramatic light. For

this reason, a median calculation would perhaps have made

any differences more evident. For ease in crosstabulation,

these (mean) scores were placed in a category system ranging

from 1 (holding those average scores from -1 to -.5), to 4

(holding those average scores from .5 to 1). The range of

possible empathic accuracy scorings on each item answered

for another person as well as for oneself was between -4

and +4 (where -4 indicated the highest score and +4 the

lowest score). The answers to all given attitude questions

(12-32) were considered individually. The answer of the
respondent was designated as score number 1; the answer of
the "other" on that same item was designated as score number
2; and the answer that the respondent assumed the "other"
would make was designated as score number 3. A subtraction
was then obtained by placing the difference between score
number 3 and score number 2 as the minuend (assumed similar-
ity) and the difference between score number 2 and score
number 1 as the subtrahend (actual similarity). The
higher the subtrahend in relation to the minuend the lower
the difference or derived score, and the higher the em-
pathic accuracy.

From all of the above information, then, we can compile
a profile of the responding worker as being approximately
24 years of age, female, white, holding a B.S. or a B.A.
degree, employed at the job for 1½ years. She averages
51-100 contacts on a monthly basis, falls a little below the
middle of the professionalism scale (relying upon two agency-
centered and one external source for guidance in her job),
and thinks of her job as "a worthwhile endeavor."

As mentioned at an earlier point, the Yorktown agency
proved to be a divergent case as most often the respondents
varied considerably from the above profile. From an inves-
tigation of the data contained on the thirteen questionnaires
from the Yorktown employees, the following profile emerged:
the "average" employee was 27 years of age, female, white,
averaged 150 contacts monthly, had been employed for a
period of 3½ to 4 years with the agency, was more strongly

dependent on inside agency sources for guidance and infor-
mation, and enjoyed her job "a great deal."

Differences centering around the Yorktown agency were
reflected also in other variables. Variables 13, 14, and 15
all displayed the Yorktown employee as having morale, where
the focus was upon employer-employee relations. (See Table 3b,
p. 45) Morale items 26 and 27 did not figure significantly
into any of the results (perhaps because they were not con-
cerned with morale as related to relationships with others).
Therefore, the author relied more upon variables 13, 14, and
15 as morale items. Variable 31 was elaborated upon by
several Yorktown respondents who, through separate attached
comments, indicated a greater flexibility where varying
viewpoints were concerned. The respondents did not indicate
that divergent feelings on the response items would lead
(no need lead, in any causal connection) to agency strain
or conflict. The identical response likewise was attributed
to variable 32. (See Table 4b, p. 47) The mean for variable
33, the empathic accuracy scorings, did not significantly
differ among the agencies. (The mean for all agencies was
2.54, and for the Yorktown agency, 2.33). The percentage of
respondents falling into category 2 (relatively high empathic
accuracy) did vary, however, with 48.3% of all respondents
in this category as opposed to 76.9% of the Yorktown workers.
The low overall empathic accuracy score for Yorktown
(worker = -.05, supervisors = .06) barely varied from 0.
On reviewing the raw data, this was due to the very high

Table 3a

Percentage Distribution of Independent Morale Variables (13, 14, 15)*
for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

				Percentage Distribution Morale Variables (13, 14, 15)*					
Variable	Median	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	Total
13*	3.0	2.99	1.63	29.7	13.5	13.5	14.9	28.4	100.0%
14*	4.1	3.72	1.39	12.2	8.1	16.2	23.0	40.5	100.0%
15*	4.4	4.36	1.01	4.1	1.7	12.2	18.9	63.5	100.0%

*See Appendix D

1 = strongly disagree
2 = somewhat disagree
3 = uncertain
4 = somewhat agree
5 = strongly agree

Table 3b

Percentage Distribution of Independent Morale Variables (13, 14, 15)*
for the Yorktown Agency

| Variable | Median | Mean | S.D. | Percentage Distribution Morale Variables (13, 14, 15)* | | | | | |
				1	2	3	4	5	Total
13*	1.8	1.77	1.09	53.8	30.8	0.0	15.4	0.0	100.0%
14*	4.1	4.23	1.01	0.0	7.7	15.4	23.1	53.8	100.0%
15*	4.7	4.69	.480	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.8	69.2	100.0%

*See Appendix D

1 = strongly disagree
2 = somewhat disagree
3 = uncertain
4 = somewhat agree
5 = strongly agree

Table 4a

Percentage Distribution of Independent Conflict Variables (31, 32)*
for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

Variable	Median	Mean	S.D.	Percentage Distribution Conflict Variables (31, 32)*					
				1	2	3	4	5	Total
31*	4.09	3.68	1.43	13.5	9.5	13.5	23.0	40.5	100.0%
32*	3.33	3.30	1.35	12.2	17.6	24.3	20.3	25.6	100.0%

*See Appendix D

1 = strongly disagree
2 = somewhat disagree
3 = uncertain
4 = somewhat agree
5 = strongly agree

Table 4b

Percentage Distribution of Independent Conflict Variables (31, 32)*
for the Yorktown Agency

Variable	Median	Mean	S.D.	Percentage Distribution Conflict Variables (31, 32)*					
				1	2	3	4	5	Total
31*	2.44	2.62	1.56	30.8	30.8	0.0	23.1	15.3	100.0%
32*	3.60	3.08	1.55	30.8	0.0	15.4	38.5	15.3	100.0%

*See Appendix D

1 = strongly disagree
2 = somewhat disagree
3 = uncertain
4 = somewhat agree
5 = strongly agree

occurrence of perfect "assumed similarity" scorings for these respondents. (A full 74% of the items were answered in this manner). Perfect assumed similarity is given a score of 0). See Table 5, p. 49).

These results show the importance of similarity in morale, job enjoyment, length of employment, tolerance of divergent viewpoints, and most likely, the resultant more effective dealings and relationships with clients. The question of whether the Yorktown respondents were actually more tolerant or merely in a more sheltered framework of "sameness" which made for better performance remains unanswered. As far as relationships with others in the agency and with clients are concerned, however, this makes little difference.

The Correlations

In the following summary of the significant findings, only those relationships which were shown to indicate a definite trend when considered individually or in combination with the other variables, are presented. Either Kendall or Spearman correlation coefficients are incorporated, not for statistical accuracy, but for summarizing and clarifying the relationships. These relationships are seen in Table 6, p. 50). The entire range of the relevant relationships and their corresponding coefficients of correlation are presented in Appendix C of this research.

Table 5

Percentage Distribution of Dependent Variable - Empathic Accuracy (33)*
for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies and for the Yorktown Agency

| Agency | Variable | Median | Mean | S.D. | Percentage Distribution Empathic Accuracy | | | | | |
					1	2	3	4	5	Total
Newport News - Hampton	33*	2.59	2.60	.680	2.7	43.2	45.9	8.2	0.0	100.0%
Yorktown	33*	2.25	2.23	.440	0.0	76.9	23.1	0.0	0.0	100.0%

*See Appendix D

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Table 6

Rank-Ordered Correlations among the Demographic and Intervening Variables

	posi-tion	profes-sion-alism	produc-tivity	job enjoy-ment	morale (13-15)*	conflict (31,32)*	empathic accuracy (33)*	age
length of employment	+	+		+	+		+	+
position		+		+	+	+	+	+
profession-alism			+	-	+	-	+	+
produc-tivity				+				
job en-joyment					+			
morale (13-15)*						-	-	+
conflict (31,32)*							-	
empathic accuracy (33)*								+

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

Variable 1:   positively related to supervisory posi-
(age)   tion, professionalism, empathic accuracy,
               morale items 13 and 15, and job enjoyment.

Variable 2:   almost all respondents were female,
(sex)   hence not a differentiating item.

Variable 3:   not a discriminating item.
(race)

Variable 4:   Ninety-two percent had either an A.B. or
(education)   B.S. degree, thus not a differentiating
               item.

Variable 5:   positively related to supervisory posi-
(length of   tion, morale items 13 and 15, job
 employment)   enjoyment, professionalism and empathic
               accuracy.

Variable 6:   supervisory position negatively related
(position)   to morale items 13 and 15, professional-
               ism, length of employment, age, job
               enjoyment, conflict item 32, morale
               item 14, and empathic accuracy.

Variable 7:   eliminated; all supervisors had been
(previously   social workers previously.
 a social
 worker)

Variable 8:   generally not a discriminating item.
(number sup-   in one instance, however, variable 8
 ervised)   was positively related to empathic
               accuracy (more supervised, higher
               empathic accuracy).

Variable 9:   positively related to morale items 13,
(profession-   14, 15, empathic accuracy, supervisory
 alism)   position, productivity; negatively with
               conflict item 31 and job enjoyment.

Variable 10:   positively related to professionalism
(productiv-   and job enjoyment; negatively to morale
 ity)   item 14.

Variable 11:   positively related to length of employ-
(job enjoy-   ment, supervisory position, age, vari-
 ment)   able 13, and conflict item 32; and
               negatively to professionalism.

Variables 13-15:   positively related to professional
(morale items)   ism, length of employment, age,
                          supervisory position; negatively
                          related to conflict items.

                          controlling for morale: still
                          slight relationship was found
                          between low empathy and conflict
                          (except with Yorktown agency when
                          31 and 33 increased when morale was
                          controlled); and changed from em-
                          pathic accuracy being positively
                          related to being a supervisor to
                          being negatively related to being
                          a supervisor. Therefore, high
                          morale led to high assumed similar-
                          ity and therefore low empathic
                          accuracy.

Variables 31-32:   positively related to low morale,
(conflict/   low empathic accuracy, supervisory
turnover)   position, length of employment;
                          negatively to professionalism and
                          empathic accuracy.

All of the above relationships are in the expected

direction, although as indicated most of the relationships

offer nor more than trends in the data rather than statistical

certainty. (See Tables 7a and 7b, pp. 53-54)

The negative relationships between professionalism and

perception of conflict and job enjoyment perhaps is attrib-

utable to the same phenomenon. Since our measure of

professionalism is a measure of agency orientation versus

external orientation, an individual who is agency oriented

receives a low professionalism score. Therefore, if he is

looking towards the agency and its resources for guidance

and information in his work, he is more likely to be aware

of conflicts existing due to lack of agreements or under-

standing among agency personnel. Similarly, he is able to

Table 7a

Correlations for Key Variables using Tau C Statistic
for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

	produc-tivity	job enjoy-ment	profes-sion alism	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*	33*
age				$-.221^a$					
length of employment		$.051^b$							
position			$-.201^c$	$.156^a$					
profession-alism				$.187^c$					
13*					$-.211^c$	$-.332^c$	$.243^c$	$.260^b$	
14*							$-.167^c$	$-.254^b$	$.289^a$
15*								$.222^a$	$-.197^a$
31*									$.205^d$

Significance levels are for chi square values a .10 c .01

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively b .05 d .001

*See Appendix D

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Table 7b

Correlations for Key Variables using Tau C Statistic for the Yorktown Agency

	posi-tion	produc-tivity	13*	14*	15*	32*
length of employment			$-.159^b$			$.194^a$
job enjoyment	$.284^a$					
position			$-.639^c$			
33*					$.284^b$	

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

^{a} .10 ^{c} .01
^{b} .05 ^{d} .001

*See Appendix D

enjoy his job more if he focuses his attention toward the agency and is more involved with his peers and supervisors.

In conclusion, with all agencies considered, the supervisor appears to have greater empathic accuracy and lower morale (morale was operationalized by items 13, 14, and 15 which dealt with the assessment by one level concerning the job performances of the other level). The only exception to this occurred in the Yorktown agency (when being a social worker was controlled for through a partial correlation measure).

A causal model for these findings would thus appear as follows:

empathic accuracy ⟷ (-) ⟶ conflict

(-)   (-)
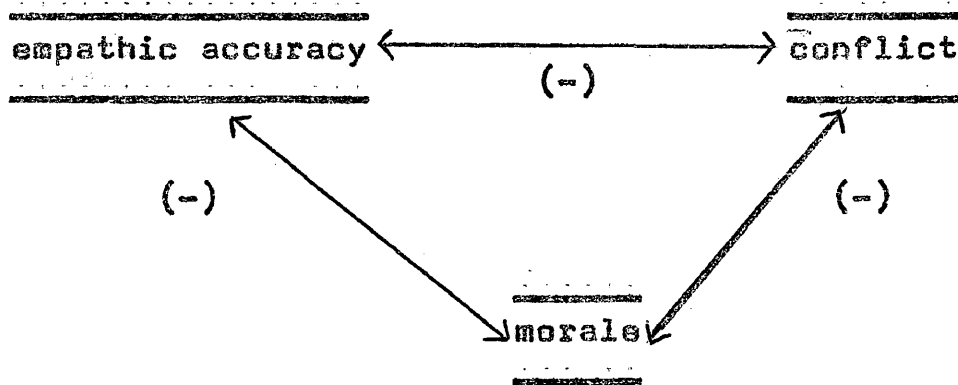
morale

Empathic accuracy was found to decrease as perception of intra-agency conflict increased and also decreased as morale increased (due to an increase in assumed similarity which is negatively related to empathic accuracy). Perception of conflict decreased as empathic accuracy increased and also decreased as morale level increased. Morale decreased as empathic accuracy increased (due to the negative relationship

between assumed similarity and empathic accuracy as explained above) and also decreased as perception of conflict increased.

By way of summary, it can be said that empathic accuracy generally increased with echelon level, the exception being the Yorktown agency supervisors (the morale variables were treated in a partial correlation operation, i.e. morale was being controlled). Browne and Shore's and Chowdry and Newcomb's findings are in agreement with this finding, which likewise confirms hypothesis one.

Lack of empathic accuracy was shown to increase with a belief that divergent viewpoints between subordinates and superordinates led to intra-agency conflicts and a high rate of turnover within the agency. Conversely, when empathic accuracy is higher, there is a higher tolerance of divergence. Thus, hypothesis two was confirmed. As a "corollary" to the above, it was found (in the Yorktown agency particularly) that an assumption of similarity of response led to an even greater tolerance of differing viewpoints among personnel. This assumed similarity phenomenon accounted for many of the low empathy findings in the Yorktown agency. There was a very pronounced feeling of a oneness of purpose expressed throughout the workers' and supervisors' responses, which was manifested through the scoring device for empathic accuracy used in this project. It is felt by this researcher that by isolating this reaction from that of empathy, a significant contribution has been added to studies of this nature.

Hypothesis three stated that empathic accuracy increased with morale. The results suggested that a high morale scoring may be a reflection of a high assumed similarity (believing that your subordinates or supervisor would answer an item the same way in which you did, regardless of the way in which they actually did respond). It is suggested that a feeling of cooperation and openness which was generated in the smaller agency leads to higher assumed similarity and therefore higher morale. Assumed similarity is negatively related to empathic accuracy.

Several intervening variables were discovered to be relevant in our study. Empathic accuracy scores increase with professionalism. However, a cautionary remark should be added. The index of professionalism which was incorporated into this study measured agency orientation versus external orientation of an individual as far as where he looked for sources of information concerning his work. If one's agency affiliations (colleagues and supervisors) were likely to obtain their guidelines from professional journals, etc., dependence upon these persons (indirectly) would classify one as being more professionally oriented than another who depended upon opinions of those who did not base their judgments upon such external sources of information (see Blau and Scott, 1962). This may have been the situation behind the low scorings on this variable for Yorktown social workers.

Empathic accuracy was also found to increase with productivity. This measure is stated by Deutsch as one of the areas of increasing output in a cooperative context. This relationship was also confirmed in the Yorktown agency which was far more productive (in number of contacts made monthly) than the other agencies.

Empathic accuracy was found to increase with length of employment in the Hampton agency. This overlapped with hypothesis one and the results of professionalism. Superordinates were higher on empathic accuracy and were also more professional. However, since those individuals who were more professionally oriented and in the higher echelon level were also those who had been in the agency for a longer period of time, this variable may not be significant by itself.

The relationship between empathic accuracy and sex, empathic accuracy and whether or not the supervisor had previously held the position of social worker, and empathic accuracy and the size of the group that was headed by one supervisor could not be tested due to the homogeneity of the sampled population. All supervisors had previously held the position of social worker; nearly 80% of the population were of the female sex; and almost all supervisors headed groups numbering five to seven workers.

The size of the agency, however, did produce a higher incidence of assumed similarity between workers and super-

visors and a higher level of morale within the agency. This higher level of morale in turn produced an employee who stayed with the agency more than twice as long, was more productive, and enjoyed her job more.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLICATIONS

Many parts of this research project have made reference
to the differences between the Yorktown agency and the
other two agencies. A separate profile of the Yorktown
agency has been compiled to reflect the worker as one who
is more productive, enjoys his job considerably more, and
remains employed twice as long as his counterpart in the
other agencies. All of these characteristics as reflected
in other research are positively correlated with an improved
quality of worker-client relations in an occupation in which
"success" is measured in terms of rapport and mutual trust.
The Yorktown agency has apparently achieved an atmosphere
of trust and cooperation and mutual respect which can be
extended to their clients. Deutsch lists several findings
related to "cooperative groups" which show that they
evidence:

> (a) more cooperation of efforts; (b) more diversity
> in amount of contributions per member; (c) more
> subdivision of activity; (d) more achievement
> pressure; (e) more communication to one another;
> (f) more attentiveness to fellow members; (g)
> more mutual comprehension of communication;
> (i) greater orientation and orderliness; (j)
> greater productivity per unit time; (k) better
> quality of product and discussion; (l) more
> friendliness during discussions; (m) more
> favorable evaluation of the group and its prod-
> ucts; (n) more behavior directed toward helping

the group improve its functioning; (o) greater
feeling of being liked by fellow members; (p)
greater feeling of obligation and desire to win
the respect of others. (Deutsch in Sampson,
1971:   269)

Similarly, Arnheim, et al., in their review of the literature,

arrived at four basic ingredients for organizational

cooperation:

(1)   informal opportunities for interaction

(2)   a "social climate" of acceptance - as
      particularly promoted by those in authority
      positions

(3)   equal status contacts

(4)   similarity of beliefs (Rokeach's hypothesis)
      (This is further elaborated as a "perception
      of similarity" which can pave the way for
      appreciation of differences in intergroup
      relations... which most assuredly fits our
      framework.) (Arnheim, et al., 1972:   555-
      560).

If better client relationships are the objectives

of all social service agencies, the Yorktown agency has

achieved this cooperative context. Reasons for this context

lie within the basic structure of the agency; a structure

which is facilitated by the smallness in which it operates,

as well as the overall emphasis placed on developing and

maintaining free channels of inter- and intra-agency

communication as a problem solving device. The admin-

istration places great value on input from all staff

members in developing policy, suggesting or implementing

new projects and in resolving problems.

This was evidenced in the verbal and written comments

of workers in the Yorktown agency. One worker expressed

her views thusly:

> Divergent views between supervisor and supervised,
> in and of themselves, are not necessarily bad. When
> the supervisor _imposes_ his views, however, on the
> supervisee, a conflict situation is created.

Another worker answered item number 34 (asking for

suggestions as to how the conflict and turnover within an

agency might be helped) by saying that:

> "I do not believe (conflict) exists in this agency."

In a like manner:

> Divergent views need not be bad news. No two people
> agree absolutely, and differing opinions can create
> a healthy atmosphere where mature persons can learn
> from one another and share ideas, even if they in-
> dividually do not alter their opinions.

One worker dramatically pointed out the very differences

which this research has been uncovering:

> I have been in a different, larger social service
> agency than this and feelings between supervisor
> and worker were quite different. In this agency
> my supervisor sets the pace, progressively and
> liberally and gives us much opportunity to do
> our own thing. However, in many other agencies
> supervisors are feared and deceived by necessity
> to accomplish things for clients. Overall, if
> there is not a good feeling between worker and
> supervisor, the going can be very rough.

These comments can be elaborated upon in further

discussions of structure. Terms such as "open communi-

cation," "participatory management," and "transition

management" have been mentioned as desirable goals

for an organization interested in conflict reduction.

Again, from the Yorktown agency come these two opinions:

> No problems within my agency. Our supervisor
> gives full weight to our opinions and suggestions

> plus our ability to do the job. Any conflict in
> the way we view a case is openly discussed; no
> one feels a personal threat if questioned on our
> feelings or actions. We work it out together
> which prevents strain or a high turnover rate.

Also:

> Any divergent views that do exist between myself
> and my supervisor are beneficial to both of us
> as they are expressed openly in an atmosphere of
> honesty and caring. Our views are shared in this
> manner in an attempt to resolve any real conflicts
> within the agency and gain perspective with regard
> to one's own feelings. Each individual is respected
> for their own views, and changes are implemented
> if everyone involved is agreeable and if it is to
> the advantage of our working relationships.

This supervisor-subordinate rapport is expanded to the
more formal procedures as well. Further investigation of the
agency revealed the existence of a task force system in which
the social workers, supervisors, and director get together
once every month in order to discuss any questions as to
procedure, rules or suggestions there might be as far as
possible changes are concerned. If any individual can
justify a change, and it is not against State law or the
HEW regulations, a vote is taken. If the majority are in
agreement, the change is implemented. During these sessions,
there is one-to-one interaction where the director and even
the newest worker are treated with equal status.

This task force system can be more easily formulated
and maintained in a small agency where associates strive for
primary and informal relationships. It would appear that the
increased depth of cooperation and effectiveness which
results from this structure would point towards a reassessment

of large, more bureaucratic city agencies and potentially
a re-structuring of the social service system along the
lines discussed above. The research on formalization,
organizational size, professionalism, and alienation
suggests the need for a "middle point" between freedom
and strict rule adherence for optimal morale and produc-
tivity. This could be accomplished in the large agency
through the establishment of a system of sub-units which
would have the autonomy, personalism and professional
respect needed by the workers. The administrative
bureaucracy would be able to function at the upper level
(with the technological and financial advantages which
accrue to the larger organization) and the worker-super-
visor sub-units would be able to function at the lower
level (with the advantages in higher morale and produc-
tivity which accrue to the smaller organization).
(Hall, 1972:187, 128-131)

Several problems were encountered in the course of this
research. Morale was not measured as accurately as it
might have been. More indices of this variable might be
concentrated upon other aspects than whether or not an
individual believes his workers/supervisor to be doing his
job well. Although morale was also measured by job enjoy-
ment, this item could have been improved to augment the
overall reliability of the variable. Another variable,
"size of caseload," should have been added, which would
have clarified the results, particularly as far as morale

was concerned. It is reasonable to assume that frustration and lack of morale are high when caseload size is too large and too demanding to provide adequate client service. This was reflected in the facts about the various agencies which have been involved with a current governmental merger study of propinquitous agencies. If this had been a variable on the questionnaire, a dimension could have been added to our analysis of these agencies.

A major weakness also lies in the small data base of this research which makes it difficult to generalize our findings. However, these data point toward a need to divide the responsibility currently assigned to the larger agencies. This would allow smaller, more autonomous units to be formed which have the personnel and the facilities to meet adequately and efficiently the needs of their area while keeping the morale and empathy levels high and the turnover low. The open communication which becomes possible in the smaller unit (with adequate staff to meet their needs) encourages workers and supervisors to make more joint decisions regarding cases which ultimately benefits the client. Since continuous contact with one worker increases trust and honesty between worker and client, another benefit could be gained through low turnover due to increased morale.

Recently a series of studies has been undertaken by the State government to investigate the feasibility of several mergers among the now distinct social service agencies in the Tidewater area. The first merger

proposal was vetoed by all agencies involved (which was to merge Yorktown and Hampton together and Newport News, Williamsburg, and James City County together). The second merger study (merging Williamsburg, Yorktown and James City County) has now been completed, and is waiting a final recommendation. There have been many pros and cons expressed towards this proposal, but the main questions appear to be the following (taken from the information package prepared by the three agencies currently involved):

(1) What would salaries be? Would they be high enough to interest experienced workers in a position in the agency?

(2) What type of mechanism would be devised to transfer cases within the merged agency? Would we still have the problem of clients moving and changing workers?

(3) Would agency cars be provided?

(4) Would caseload size be lowered to the lowest agency individual caseload count or would some agencies have to expect a higher caseload through the merger?

(5) Would specialization of jobs be possible?

(6) What would be the physical and administrative structure of a merged agency?

As some of these questions indicate, if this merger proposal does succeed in combining the agencies of Williamsburg, Yorktown and James City County, many of the questions and suggestions of this research project will be addressed.

For instance, the agency created by this merger would be much larger. Would this tend to lower the morale and increase the agency turnover and conflict? Would any of the former members of the Yorktown agency, who took pride in their cooperative, communicative relations between echelons remain or would services to clients, productivity, and job enjoyment decrease? A modified follow-up study to explore changes in our main variables, particularly among any ex-workers of Yorktown and Williamsburg (shown in our study and pretest) would thus be fruitful.

APPENDIX A

Dear Social Work Supervisor,

Enclosed please find a copy of a questionnaire that I am distributing as part of a research project I am currently undertaking in order to obtain my Master of Arts Degree in sociology from the College of William and Mary.

As a student and former social worker, I am interested in the role that empathy plays within social work agencies between the social workers and their supervisors. As most of the literature pertaining to the study of empathy has been conducted in industrial settings, it is hoped that by operationalizing empathy in social service agencies we will be able to broaden our understanding of the relevance of this concept.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire which is quite short and should take only a few minutes of your time. When you have completed the form, please place it in the attached envelope, seal, and return along with the forms of your social workers to the agency director. I will then pick up all completed forms from your director. Please be assured that absolute confidentiality will be maintained throughout this project. Your responses will remain anonymous and no personal identification is requested or desired. These forms will be collected from other agencies and the data treated collectively.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation in this project. I am personally grateful for your help in allowing me to complete my degree requirements.

Sincerely yours,

Dear Social Worker,

Enclosed please find a copy of a questionnaire that
I am distributing as part of a research project I am cur-
rently undertaking in order to obtain my Master of Arts
Degree in sociology from the College of William and Mary.

As a student and a former social worker, I am interested
in the role that empathy plays within social work agencies
between the social workers and their supervisors. As most
of the literature pertaining to the study of empathy has been
conducted in industrial settings, it is hoped that by oper-
ationalizing empathy in social service agencies we will be
able to broaden our understanding of the relevance of this
concept.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire which is
quite short and should only take a few minutes of your time.
When you have completed the form, please place it in the
attached envelope, seal, and return to your supervisor who
will then return them to your director. I will then pick
up all completed forms from your director. Please be
assured that absolute confidentiality will be maintained
throughout this project. Your responses will remain
anonymous and no personal identification is requested or
desired. These forms will be collected from other agencies
and the data treated collectively.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation in
this project. I am personally grateful for your help in
allowing me to complete my degree requirements.

                                        Sincerely yours,

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age: _____

2. Sex: _____

3. Race: Negro _____ Caucasian _____ Other _____

4. Education:

   a. Highest level achieved: B.S./B.A. _____
      M.A. _____ M.S.W. _____ PhD _____ Other _____

   b. Field: B.S./B.A. _____ M.A. _____ PhD _____
      Other _____

5. How long have you been employed as a social worker/supervisor? _____

6. Are you a supervisor? _____ Social worker? _____

7. (for supervisors only) Have you previously held the position of social worker? _____

8. (for supervisors only) How many people do you supervise? _____

9. Please indicate the three sources upon which you rely most heavily for continued stimulation and education in social work principles. (Mark three of the items.)

   Case work supervisor (social workers) _____
   Agency director _____
   Agency colleagues _____
   In-service training sessions/workshops _____
   Virginia Council on Social Welfare meetings _____
   Professional books and journals _____
   Evening school courses _____
   Professional colleagues outside the agency _____
   Other (please specify) _____

10. (for social workers only) How many client contacts do you average monthly? _____

11. How would you say that you enjoy your job overall?
    Only as a means of making a living _____ As a worthwhile endeavor _____ A great deal _____
    Uncertain _____

Please read the following questions and refer to the enclosed response sheet to answer according to your feelings on the subject. Then turn the response sheet over and answer each according to how you believe that your supervisor/subordinates would reply to the question. To each question, answer whether you and the appropriate other(s) strongly disagree, strongly agree, are uncertain, or occupy a moderate stance on the question. (unless otherwise indicated)

12. The most important role of the social worker is that of administrator rather than that of professional working to ameliorate the problems of others.

13. My supervisor/subordinates should take more responsibility upon himself/themselves.

14. My supervisor/subordinates investigate(s) each problem thoroughly before making a decision.

15. My supervisor/subordinates is (are) cooperative regarding suggestions made to him (them).

16. How much do you actually anticipate being able to alter another (client's) life, goals, etc.?
    Not at all _____ Rarely _____ Somewhat _____
    A great deal _____ Uncertain _____

17. I would derive more satisfaction from being recognized for the work I am performing by the people in my own agency rather than by those in a similar profession.

18. When one is dealing with the public one should insist on a high degree of formality rather than having contacts that are characterized by a high degree of informality.

19. My future aspirations are tinged with concerns for promotion within the agency rather than with attaining greater status among members of my own profession.

20. I would define a "good" civil servant as one who does his job proficiently rather than as one who displays more general qualities such as amiability and sincerity.

21. Which of the following do you deem most and least important in your job?   1=most important
                                                                               3=least important

    (a) credit, recognition, praise
    (b) understanding, empathic ability
    (c) technical competence and aptitude

22. A social worker has a responsibility to act in what he perceives to be the best interests of the client even if this means violating routine agency operating procedures.

23. It is a legitimate function for a social worker to circulate petitions designed to call attention to client needs.

24. A major goal of social work within a social service agency is to free the client from anxiety and inner conflicts.

25. An important duty of the social worker is to help the client recognize when his troubles are the result of structural, and not personal inadequacies.

26. Teaching a client to effectively agitate against poverty conditions is as important a function of social work as teaching him how to live on a poverty budget.

27. The discrepancy between social work theory and actual social service practice is large.

28. Some of the regulations and procedures of public assistance programs interfere with the social worker's ability to help clients.

29. Social workers do have a professional obligation to seek social reform through political channels. (letters to congressmen, public support of proposed bills, etc.)

30. For the field of social work as a whole, seeking equality of opportunity is just as important a goal as seeking improved personal functioning of a client.

31. It is at least as important for social workers to assist clients in organizing social reform activities as it is to help them to secure personal goods, services, etc.

32. Do you agree that any divergent views held on these questions between yourself and your supervisor/subordinates concerning the role of the social worker and the social work supervisor contributes to intra-agency strain?

33. Do you believe that divergent views between yourself and your supervisor/subordinates on these questions might contribute to the high rate of turnover of social workers in the social service agencies?

34. Do you have any suggestions as to how this problem might be helped? If so, please mention in the space provided on the answer sheet.

Thank you very much for your cooperation on this research project!

RESPONSE SHEET

YOUR ANSWERS:

12. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    strongly   uncertain   strongly
    disagree   agree

13. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

14. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

15. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

17. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

18. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

19. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    strongly   uncertain   strongly
    disagree   agree

20. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

21. _____ _____ _____
            (a)   (b)   (c)

22. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

23. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

24. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

25. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    S.D.   U.   S.A.

26. <u>_____</u>
      strongly   uncertain   strongly
      disagree   agree

27. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

28. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

29. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

30. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

31. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

32. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

33. _____ S.D. _____   _____ U. _____   _____ S.A. _____

34. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now please turn to the back of page one of the response
sheet and answer the questions the way you believe your
supervisor/subordinates would answer them.

RESPONSE SHEET

OTHERS ANSWERS:

12. _____ _____ _____
      strongly   uncertain   strongly
      disagree   agree

13. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

14. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

15. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

17. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

18. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

19. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

20. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

21. _____ _____ _____
              (a)   (b)   (c)

22. _____ _____ _____
      strongly   uncertain   strongly
      disagree   agree

23. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

24. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

25. _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

26. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
    strongly   uncertain   strongly
    disagree   agree

27. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

28. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

29. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

30. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

31. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

32. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

33. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
          S.D.   U.   S.A.

34. _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

APPENDIX B

Coding of the Questionnaire

1. Age: 25 or under=1   26-30=2   31-35=3   36-45=4
   46 and over=5

4. Education: highest level achieved B.A./B.S.=1   M.A.=2
   M.S.W.=3   PhD=4   Other=5

5. Length of employment: 0-9 years=1   1-2.9=2   3-4.9=3
   5-7.9=4   8-9.9=5

8. (for supervisors) Number of workers supervise: open
   ended question

9. Professionalism: people rely upon

case work supervisor	agency-centered
agency director	agency-centered
agency colleagues	agency-centered
in-service training sessions/workshops	agency-centered
Virginia Council on Social Welfare meetings	external
professional books and journals	external
evening courses	external
professional colleagues outside the agency	external

   1=3 agency-centered, no external source
   2=2 agency-centered, 1 external source
   3=1 agency-centered, 2 external sources
   4=no agency-centered, 3 external sources
   Thus, the lower the numerical score, the less
   actively the respondent reportedly pursues
   professional as opposed to agency sources of
   knowledge regarding his discipline.
   (Pellett, 1972: 20)

10. (for social workers) Number of client contacts monthly:
    0-50=1   51-100=2   101-150=3   151-200=4

11. Enjoyment of job: only as a means of making a living=1
    as a worthwhile endeavor=2
    uncertain=3   a great deal=4

12-19:   strongly disagree=1   somewhat disagree=2   uncertain=3
         somewhat agree=4   strongly agree=5

20.   Importance in job of:

                (a) credit, recognition, praise
                (b) understanding, empathic ability
                (c) technical competence and aptitude

                    1=most important
                    2=somewhat important
                    3=least important

        (a=1, b=3)=1   (a=1, c=3)=2   (a=3, c=1)=3
        (a=3, c=1)=4   (b=1, c=3)=5   (b=3, c=1)=6

21-32:   (see 12-19)

33. Empathic accuracy score: The range of possible empathic
    accuracy scorings on each item answered for another per-
    son as well as for oneself was between -4 and +4
    (where -4 indicated the highest score and +4 the lowest
    score). The answers to all given attitude questions
    (12-32) were considered individually. The answer of
    the respondent was designated as score number 1; the
    answer of the "other" on that same item was designated
    as score number 2; and the answer that the respondent
    assumed the "other" would make was designated as score
    number 3. A subtraction example was then obtained by
    placing the difference between score number 3 and score
    number 2 as the minuend (assumed similarity) and the
    difference between score number 2 and score number 1
    as the subtrahend (actual similarity). The higher the
    subtrahend in relation to the minuend, the lower the
    difference or derived score, and the higher the em-
    pathic accuracy.

    For example, the highest empathic accuracy situation
    would occur when score number 1=1 (strongly disagree);
    score number 2=5 (strongly agree); and score number 3=5.
    In this instance an individual strongly disagrees with
    the item, believes that his subordinates or supervisor
    would strongly agree with the item, and in fact the
    subordinates or supervisor does strongly agree. The
    resultant difference would be (5-5)-(5-1) = 0-4 = -4.

    Likewise, the lowest empathic accuracy situation would
    occur when score number 1=1 (strongly disagree); score
    number 2=1; and score number 3=5 (strongly agree).
    In this instance, an individual strongly disagrees
    with an item, believes his subordinates or supervisor
    would strongly agree also with the item, and in fact
    the subordinates or supervisor strongly disagrees.
    The resultant difference would be (5-1)-(1-1) = 4-0 = +4.

An indicator of 0 is derived by this same coding device
whenever the similarity obliterated what may have been
a high empathy score. A "0" was scored whenever the
respondent indicated the "other" as scoring the same
as he did on an item, i.e. whenever score number 1
and score number 3 are the same.

Scores:

      -4 to +4   individual empathic accuracy responses
                         to each item

      -1 to +1   average individual responses to each
                         item

      1 to 4   categories derived from average
                         individual responses to each item
                         (used in frequency distributions)

Explanation of method for finding empathic accuracy and
average for supervisors and social workers:

1. Empathic accuracy found for each item for each worker
   in a given social worker/supervisor group (scores
   averaged)

2. Responses of all workers in that group averaged*
   for each item. (*mode used where applicable)

3. This average response used as indicator of "others"
   responses for the supervisor of that group in
   determining empathic accuracy

4. Averages taken for empathic accuracy for workers
   on all items together (compiled from 2)

5. Averages taken for empathic accuracy for supervisors
   on all items

6. Averages found for each worker (from their individual
   responses to the items) = total empathic accuracy
   score.

7. Average empathic accuracy for all workers in that
   agency computed.

8. Average empathic accuracy for all supervisors in
   that agency computed

Explanation of respondent number coding system:

Each questionnaire was given a separate and unique
number. This was a 3-digit number in which the city occupied
the first space (Hampton=1, Newport News=2, Yorktown=3);
the group number (and consequently the number attached to the
supervisor who headed that group) occupied the second space;
and the social worker's number occupied the third space.
An 0 was an indication that no category was relevant (e.g.
where a supervisor's questionnaire was concerned, the third
place would be given a 0). Thus, a number appearing on a
questionnaire of 241 would indicate that it belonged to the
social worker 1 in group 4 (headed by supervisor number 4)
of the city of Newport News.

APPENDIX C

Table 8a

Correlations for Key Variables using Pearson R Statistic for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

	Empathic Accuracy
number supervised	$-.276^a$
31*	$.264^c$
32*	$.286^d$

Empathic Accuracy is scored negatively

*See Appendix D

[a] .10 [c] .01

[b] .05 [d] .001

Table 8b

Correlations for Key Variables using Pearson R Statistic
for the Yorktown Agency

	position	profession-alism	job enjoy-ment	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*	33*
age	-.394[a]	.376[a]	.400[a]			-.305[a]		-.438[a]	-.438[a]
length of employment	-.438[b]					-.425[b]			
position			-.365[a]	-.817[d]	.318[a]	.426[b]		-.461[b]	-.300[a]
profession-alism			-.386[a]		-.220[a]		.484[b]		-.446[b]
produc-tivity		.408[a]							
job enjoyment				.330[a]			.370[a]	.601[c]	
13*									.468[b]
14*						.329[a]			.396[a]
15*									-.524[c]
33*							.281[a]	.274[a]	

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

* See Appendix D

a .10   c .01
b .05   d .001

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Table 9a

Correlations for Key Variables using Spearman rho Statistic for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

	position	profession-alism	job enjoy-ment	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*	33*
age	-.446^c			.323^a					
length of employment	-.465^a	.234^b	.378^a						
position		-.277^b							
profession-alism				.422^b					
13*					-.290^c	-.252^c	.253^c		
14*							.413^c		
15*								-.317^b	
31*								.548^c	.222^b
32*									.231^b

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

a .10	c .01
b .05	d .001

Table 9b

Correlations for Key Variables using Spearman rho Statistic for the Yorktown Agency

	position	profession- alism	job enjoy- ment	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*	33*
age	$-.295^a$	$.437^b$	$.359^a$			$-.332^a$			$-.325^a$
length of employment	$-.390^a$	$.330^a$				$-.382^a$			$-.268^a$
position			$-.365^a$	$-.730^d$	$.267^a$	$.426^b$		$-.485^b$	
profession- alism			$-.386^a$		$-.316^a$		$-.491^b$		$-.398^b$
produc- tivity			$.250^a$						
job enjoyment				$.320^a$					
13*								$.686^d$	
14*									$.542^d$
15*								$-.536^c$	$.317^a$

a	.10	c	.01
b	.05	d	.001

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

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Table 10a

Correlations for Key Variables using Kendall Tau B Statistic for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

	position	job enjoy-ment	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*
age	$-.382^c$						
length of employment	$-.426^d$	$.334^a$					
profession-alism	$-.263^b$		$.356^a$				
13*				$-.246^c$	$.219^c$	$.209^c$	
14*					$.369^c$		
15*						$-.287^c$	
31*							$.490^c$

a .10   c .01
b .05   d .001

Variables 13 and position are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

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Table 10b

Correlations for Key Variables using Kendall Tau B Statistic
for the Yorktown Agency

	posi-tion	profes-sion-alism	job enjoy-ment	13*	14*	15*	31*	32*
age	$-.256^a$	$.379^b$	$.312^b$			$-.293^a$		$.32*$
length of employment	$-.365^b$	$.309^b$				$-.357^b$		
position			$-.365^b$	$-.670^d$	$.251^a$	$.426^b$		$-.448^c$
profession-alism			$-.386^b$		$-.297^b$		$-.451^c$	
produc-tivity		$.408^b$	$.250^a$					
13*							$.620^c$	
14*								
15*						$.279^a$		$-.495^c$
33*		$-.350^b$			$.394^b$			

Variables 13, position, and 33 are scored negatively

* See Appendix D

a .10   c .01
b .05   d .001

Table 11a

Partial Correlation Coefficients of Morale Variables
(13, 14, 15, 26, 27)*
Conflict Variables (31, 32)*
and Variable Empathic Accuracy (33)*
for the Newport News and Hampton Agencies

	14*	15*	26*	27*	33*
13*	$-.318^d$	$-.319^d$			
14*		$.484^d$			
26*				$.326^d$	
31*			$.318^d$	$.318^d$	$.280^{c1}$
32*					$.259^{d1}$

[1]Controlling for 13, 14, 15

Variables 13 and 33 are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

[a] .10 [c] .01
[b] .05 [d] .001

Table 11b

Partial Correlation Coefficients of Morale Variables
(13, 14, 15, 26, 27)*
Conflict Variables (31, 32)*
and Variable Empathic Accuracy (33)*
for the Yorktown Agency

	position	13*	14*	15*	31*
13*	$-.817^{d}$				
14*	$.318^{a}$				
15*	$.426^{b}$		$.329^{a}$		
32*	$-.461^{b}$ $-.225^{a1}$	$.601^{c}$		$-.524^{b}$	
33*	$.296^{a}$	$-.468^{b}$	$.396^{a}$		$.415^{a1}$ $.281^{a}$

[1]Controlling for 13, 14, 15

Variables 13, position and 33
are scored negatively

*See Appendix D

[a]	.10	[c]	.01
[b]	.05	[d]	.001

APPENDIX D

Key Variables – Explanation Chart

Question-naire Number	Variable	Questionnaire Item
9	Professionalism	Please indicate the three sources upon which you rely most heavily for continued stimulation and education in social work principles (mark three of the items).
10	Productivity	How many client contacts do you average monthly?
11	Job enjoyment	How would you say that you enjoy your job overall?
13	Morale (13)	My supervisor/subordinates should take more responsibility upon himself/themselves.
14	Morale (14)	My supervisor/subordinates investigate(s) each problem thoroughly before making a decision.
15	Morale (15)	My supervisor/subordinates is (are) cooperative regarding suggestions made to him (them).
27	Morale (26)	The discrepancy between social work theory and actual social service is large.
28	Morale (27)	Some of the regulations and procedures of public assistance programs interfere with the social worker's ability to help clients.
32	Conflict (31)	Do you agree that any divergent views held on these questions between yourself and your supervisor/subordinates concerning the role of social worker and the social work supervisor contribute to intra-agency strain?
33	Conflict (32)	Do you believe that divergent views between yourself and your supervisor/subordinates on these questions might contribute to the high rate of turnover of social workers in the social service agencies?

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