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JOB RETENTION AMONG CPS SOCIAL WORKERS
IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Donald Davis
June 2001
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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in an effort to identify variables most important to social workers in their decisions to remain on the job or to seek alternative employment. In addition, the study asked if those variables identified, as the most important, existed on the job.

A sample of 233 social workers was chosen from the Department of Public Social Services, Child Protective Services, of Riverside County, California. Out of the sample of 233 social workers 97 responded to the survey.

The survey consisted of eight questions regarding demographics and twenty-six questions relevant to the profession of social work and the environment.

The six most important variables identified by social workers as influential in their decisions to remain on the job, as well as, their existence on the job were mental health care, challenging/interesting work, encouraging/empowering supervisor, pleasant physical work environment, promotional opportunity, legal liability protection, sufficient resources, and pleasant physical work environment.

Another area explored was the differences in gender in regards to job retention. The study addressed each variable in regards to gender and found no significant differences.
The study explored differences between the six regions within the county and was unable to determine significant differences.

Levels of education were examined in an effort to determine if there were significant differences in the decision making process and one's education. Levels tested were Bachelors and Masters. Findings indicated no significant differences.

Results of the study indicated that Riverside County, Child Protective Services Workers are, for the most part, satisfied with their work environment. Findings indicated that the agency is doing a relatively good job maintaining social workers in an environment conducive to the social workers' professional expectations.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to think the admissions committee of California State University, San Bernardino, Masters of Social Work Program, for accepting me into the program and having faith that I could and would be a credible representative of the university and the profession of social work.

I would like to thank each professor as they welcomed my attendance in their classrooms and shared in my endeavor to earn a masters degree in social work. I love you all and look forward to working with you.

I would like to thank Ms. Chani Beeman, who helped me to understand the SPSS System, the statistical layout and the formatting of my research project. Your time and assistance has been greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank Mrs. Nancy Lopez for her patience and understanding as she assisted me in my efforts to complete this project. Thank you sincerely.

To my mother, your duties as my mother have been more then fulfilled. When I went to bed at night you were there to tuck me in. When I woke up in the morning you had already prepared for me a nice warm breakfast. On many occasions, you gave me your last thirty-five cents so that I would have lunch. When I came home in the afternoon, you were there for me and the door was always open. When I had surgery on my eye, you were there. When I had surgery on my
legs, you were there. When I went to therapy to relearn some degree of walking, you were there. When I had problems in school, you were there. When I had the worst attitude of anyone on earth, you were there for me. I realize, with all of my problems being quite outside the ordinary, I was a difficult child to raise. I deeply regret anguish that I have caused you over the years and I realize that what you have done for me was for my own good. I will never be able to thank you enough. I have tried to be a good son and I hope that I have made you proud. I love you.

To my father, your duties as my father has also been more than fulfilled. You have always been the greatest provider and role model for me. You made me the man I am today. When I was a child and could not walk you carried me until I had the strength to carry myself. When I was a child and not yet capable of making sound decisions, you made decisions on my behalf and in my best interest. As I grew older and began to walk, and would occasionally fall, you no longer carried me but encouraged me to get up and keep going. When I felt like I had done enough and deserved a token of good deed, you reminded me that many people do much more than myself and that I was just getting started and that there was much more to be done. You have given me the ability to recognize and acknowledge my limitations, the intellect to think through decisions and commitments that were expected of me and the ability to meet those
responsibilities without reservations. You have taught me to be humble in recognition of my accomplishments as there is much to be done. I owe you my deepest gratitude for I am the man I am today and, I hope, have made you proud. I love you.

To my twin brother, Ronald, I fulfill this small accomplishment in dedication to you and every person who possesses a willingness and/or desire inside themselves to commit to such a goal. But, for whatever the reason may be, is unable to do so. Ronald, you are my twin brother, you are always with me and I'll always be there for you. I love you.

To my brother, Randy, who has always been there for me. You are the brother that everyone wants. Randy, when we were kids and, even though I'm older then you, things got too heavy for me, you carried my share and never complained. When I got in trouble you did not criticize or forsake me. When everyone forgot me, you remembered, asked if you could help, and never complained. When we were together and I had drawn attention to myself, you protected me and never complained. As a brother, you are representative of all that is good in the world. I am blessed and are forever thankful that you are my brother and in this world today. I love you.

In memory of my sister, Janice, I want to thank you for teaching me how to tie my shoes. Thank you for helping
me dress when I was unable to dress myself. Thank you for helping me put those leg braces on when it was impossible for me. Thank you for being so patient when mom and dad had to spend so much of their time caring for me. Thank you for bringing two little girls in this world. I do cherish them and are blessed that they are here with me. Thank you for being my sister. I love you. I miss you and you will always be with me.

To my wife, Barbara, words can not express the love I feel for you. The endless hours you spent alone while I continued to work in solitude. The faith, encouragement and understanding has been ongoing and never ending. I am lost for words or even expression in my ongoing and never ending effort in expressing my love and gratitude to you. Your giving spirit, your caring touch, your soft sweet voice, those words of commitment and compassion, at just the right time, is a prescription for the most perfect relationship in the world. You will always be with me and I will always love you more than I'll ever be able to say. I will spend a lifetime trying. I couldn't have done it without you. I love you !!!!!!!!

To my son, Joe, you have been such a good son. I want to thank you for being so patient with me while I was growing up. I want to thank you for maintaining such a sweet disposition while I was expecting you to be a grown up. I want to thank you for letting me share, with you,
things that were important to me. I want to thank you for putting up with me when I was so difficult to deal with. I want to thank you for all the good times we had together, all those greasy hamburgers and French-fries we cooked up in Arkansas. For you, I'd do it all over again. I couldn't have done it without you. I love you.

To my best friend, Bill, You are really the man of the hour. You are truly my best friend in the world. You have always been there for me. When I couldn't walk, you walked for me. When I am unable to accomplish a task, due to my physical limitations, you always make sure that task is accomplished. Your compassion, empathy and understanding is steadfast and faithful. Your level of commitment, determination and dedication to me has not changed in forty years of friendship. I want to thank you for all of your words of wisdom, insight and optimism as we philosophize about the ways of the world on a daily basis. Bill, in all honesty, I don't know how to thank you for all the things you have done for me and I can't even begin to try. Actually, there is no one like you and there is no comparison. You are truly my best friend and I could not have done it without you and I want to thank you sincerely.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

This project explored the problem of job retention in the social work profession, specifically child protective services in Riverside County. This study examined variables of the workplace and environmental factors that influenced social workers decisions to leave their job or to remain on the job. The problem is a paradox that continues to exist even though numerous studies have examined the topic. There is a need for additional studies to examine alternate solutions.

In 1909, the White House held its first conference on children and family issues. At the conclusion, a manifesto was released which stated that children were not to be removed from their parents because of financial hardship. Congress enacted Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) in 1935, providing financial assistance to mothers as a matter of right. Congress authorized financial grants in an effort to attract professionals to child welfare as a novel and superior practice. Research suggested that social workers, in this era, were expected to be an elite group, only to deal with a small number of children and families who faced problems other than financial. Foster care was used as a
temporary solution to family hardships during their most difficult times.

The concept of "Child Welfare had strong public support. The U.S. Children's Bureau was formed and Child Study Committees were organized in cities throughout the country. These organizations recruited women who did not have an opportunity to pursue a career. Many influential women were active in this movement. Those women included Eleanor Roosevelt, Martha Elliot, Grace Abbott and Frances Perkins. In practice, however, welfare would be comprised of class structured programs where poor families received care from lower-middle/middle class staff and foster parents.

The 1960's witnessed the decline of the Child Study Committees and less influence from the U.S. Children's Bureau. The higher educational degree required for social workers was abandoned and income maintenance workers and social workers were integrated into the same administration. Further, factors such as single-parent families, identification of child abuse, substance abuse, larger caseloads and the steady decline of income for poorer families, beginning in 1973, all contributed to an increase in the numbers of children in foster care. This was accompanied by increasing public mistrust of social workers. As domestic problems of society became more complex, social workers' roles and responsibilities were
increasingly more difficult. Particular roles of the social worker, in their complexity, were difficult to define, setting the stage for burnout and job dissatisfaction which effects retention.

During the past thirty years, there has been considerable interest and research on burnout and job dissatisfaction in the profession. This is a major factor which effects retention of the employee. Social work is a client oriented profession. According to research, social workers become emotionally involved with their clients (Acker, Gila, 1999). Other factors contributing to the problem include public mistrust, a lack of funding, continual client contact and responsibility for meeting their needs, organizational demands and restraints, high caseloads, the lack of community resources, no rewards or incentives, role conflict and role ambiguity and displaying the illusion of authority when, in reality, there is limited power to make necessary decisions when immediate intervention may be needed.

The social worker experiences conflict caused by the struggle to provide adequate services to the client and satisfy the needs of the agency. This creates a high level of stress on the practitioner. Administrators, aware that a social worker's role in providing human services requires emotional involvement, views this as a weakness, distracting from objectivity. For the agency, providing
adequate and appropriate services requires that the financial support from federal and state governments continue. Retaining trained and educated workers is important to administrators to sustain an acceptable level of care and services.

Clients are concerned about receiving appropriate services from the agency. Development of a "helping relationship" is valued by the client and is a necessary element in the delivery of services. In the profession, there will always be individuals and families in need of assistance.

Social workers chose this career because of a desire to help others. The demands of the organization on the social worker, the lack of a team approach and the lack of resources are reoccurring obstacles to human service agencies.

Studies conducted on burnout and job dissatisfaction have not resolved the problem at a level of satisfaction that is acceptable to all within the agency. As problems within the workplace become more difficult and demanding, complicated by automated documentation and depersonalization of the worker, research reveals that burnout and job dissatisfaction is inevitable (Um, Myung-yong; Harrison, Dianne F., 1998).

The social worker serves as an agent of change. Access to available and suitable services are limited and creates
stress between the client and the worker (Myung-yong; Harrison, Dianne, 1998). Frustration is created for the clients who are requesting needed services and for the social worker who wants to provide services that are not available.

In an effort to understand the problem, administrators need to explore innovative ways of providing services to clients with a goal of reducing stress and lengthening the professional career of the social worker. Agencies promote less experienced social workers into supervisory and administrative positions. This creates morale problems for the agency. Supervisors who lack the knowledge and experience of a seasoned social worker may make devastating mistakes resulting in irreversible credibility problems for the agency.

Additional research on the subject may appear redundant, however, it is viewed as necessary to address the problem of job retention. Innovative approaches must be examined and should be welcomed by agencies. Many agencies have made changes in the social worker's environment, such as state of the art computers and community based offices.

Problem Focus

The focus of the research identified the individual and collective needs of the human services organization and the social worker. Conflict that occurs when the individual
needs of the social worker and the organization are not congruent, are discussed. Additional focus was placed on exploring solutions to the problem.

Organizational needs are numerous. They include a need to retain educated and competent staff. They must maintain a positive public image, meet federal and state guidelines on a consistent and on-going basis, and maintain an open dialog and communication with the courts. The organization must have a clearly defined mission statement with policies and procedures developed to accomplish the goals and purpose as defined by legislative mandates. Organizational needs require a management style that focuses on the agency as a whole as opposed to the individual needs of the various entities involved. Administrators need to have a structured system where responsibilities and duties are delegated in such a manner that the goals of the agency are fulfilled. The organization also has a responsibility to have good communication between the various entities of the agency. The need for this communication is essential for the overall effective function of the organization.

Social worker's needs are also numerous. Manageable caseloads that meet federal and state guidelines are essential. There is a need to maintain a salary base that is compatible with the cost of living and, at least, at parity with surrounding counties. They need adequate and on-going resource development so that appropriate services
can be provided to clients in a timely manor. The worker also needs the authority to provide referrals to services in emergency situations, absent the chain of command for approval. There is need for a career ladder which supports a reasonable expectation that promotional advancement will occur at some point in their career, based on education and experience. The worker is in need of guidance from administration and training that enhances promotability. There is a need for the worker to feel that he or she is contributing to the organization and other issues directly related to morale.

Practices that lead to conflict include caseloads that are much higher than federal and state guidelines. Riverside County social workers' salaries are less than those of surrounding counties. Resource lists provided are often outdated or not available to the practitioner without prior approval and there is not a career ladder that is feasible, realistic, or attainable. There is a perception, due to poor communication, that administration is not in touch with worker's needs and erroneous conclusions are often made by both the administration and the worker.

Administration encourages employees to pursue a higher education but does not provide the avenue to accomplish this endeavor. In fact, there is federal funding through Title IV-E which allows social workers to attend graduate school. Riverside County Child Protective Service Workers,
presently, do not receive time off work to attend graduate school. However, this will be remedied in September, 2001, when employees will be allowed to work a 20/20 schedule to accommodate their pursuit of a masters degree. San Bernardino County Child Protective Service Workers have a modified work schedule to assist in completing this goal. Riverside County Mental Health allows selected employees twenty hours a week, paid leave, to attend school. The Board of Supervisors authorized administration to offer new employees cash bonuses for choosing to work for Riverside County while, at the same time, offered older employees, who have been on the job for at least five years, no incentive to remain other than cost of living increases.

The research questions presented to employees focused on what factors contributed to job satisfaction and to what degree those variables existed in the social worker's workplace and/or environment.

The questionnaire was derived, and modified, from a study conducted in the state of Florida, by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA).

The target population was those social workers who were actually providing services to families, monitoring the care and maintenance of children, maintaining records and documentation on the case worker's system/case management system (CWS/CMS), collaborating with service providers and reporting to the court on a routine basis.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

The majority of social workers are employed by human service agencies. The larger agencies have examined the problem of burnout and job dissatisfaction among social workers. Research reveals that there has been significant agency concern regarding the alarming number of social workers who experienced the demands of their job as overwhelming during the past thirty years, (Akcer, 1999).

One local empirical study has been conducted over the past five years. The study was completed by the Child Welfare League of America (1995). This prompted the Department of Public Social Services/Child Protective Services to make four major changes in their daily operations in regards to expectations of social workers and services to clients. The Child Welfare League of America recommended that caseload size for social workers be reduced to state standards of thirty-five to forty minors per social worker, depending on the type of caseload maintained by the worker. The team recommended that the number of social workers supervised by one supervisor be lowered to the state standard of six or seven per supervisor. They recommended that administration hire additional regional managers and create smaller, more manageable regions and create offices in more localized,
community based areas that are closer to the clients served. Additional empirical studies are being conducted by the Child Welfare League of America, through Riverside County. This information will be made available to the public or social workers.

Relevant studies conclude that role conflict, role ambiguity, the responsibility of constantly having to meet the emotional needs of clients and anxiety were directly related to burnout and job dissatisfaction. Others studies found that a variety of changes in tasks were positively associated with job dissatisfaction. Research reflects that it is not uncommon for social workers, who suffer from burnout, to chronically complain of flu like symptoms, headaches, fatigue, poor self-esteem, poor interpersonal relationships, impaired performance, low morale, absenteeism and high turnover (Acker, 1999) Harrison, 1996; Shamai and Sharlin, 1998).

Additional literature reveals that administrators are critical of workers who are empathetic, sensitive and tend to be people oriented. These same people are also anxious, introverted and over enthusiastic. Additional factors that contribute to burnout include a lack of autonomy and organizational resources. Research suggests that social workers expect insight of themselves and demand positive progress and change. Social workers, in many cases, expect too much of their clients, set unrealistic goals for
themselves and their clients, become too emotionally involved and often arrange their own failure which is defined by research, as a major factor of burnout among clinicians (Acker, 1999).

Another study by the University of California at Berkley, (Dickerson and Perry, 1998), found several variables to be positively associated with the retention of social workers on the job. These variables include the age of the worker when they started with agency, duration with the agency, and possession of a masters degree. This study also concluded that those students that participated in the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program did not remain with the human service agency any longer then those who did not participate in the program. Other researchers claim that job dissatisfaction and burnout are associated with low monetary benefits and the fear of layoffs due to budget restraints (Dickerson and Perry, 1998).

Isolated studies suggest that child protective service workers experience higher levels of work related stress and role conflict than social workers employed in other public or private agencies (Parras-Montes, 1998). One particular study focused on the importance of social support within and outside the workplace, rewards, promotional opportunities and caseload size. The study, in reference to those aforementioned variables, concluded that there were no significant difference, using those variables, between
workers who remained on the job and those who left with expectations of a greater degree of job satisfaction among those who stayed (Dickerson and Perry, 1998).

The article, "The New Workforce" estimated that by the year, 2000, there would be a new workforce (Rifkin, 1995; Krugman and Lawrence, 1995). The authors described this as the first time in history that human labor was systematically eliminated from economic process. When the automobile was invented and the horse and buggy was eliminated, the manufacturing of the automobile created jobs. Computer technology has revolutionized the modern workplace. In the 1950's, thirty-three percent of the United States workforce was employed in manufacturing. Today, approximately seventeen percent of the workforce is employed in blue-collar industries. The computer has basically eliminated jobs. From 1979 to 1992, productivity increased thirty-five percent while the workforce was reduced by fifteen percent.

The author stated, however, that the upside to change in the workforce was that workers may enjoy a shorter workweek and have the opportunity to have flexible schedules and telecommunicate and work from home on a permanent basis. (http://www.chiatday.com/raw-materials/f-and-f/new-workforce.html). The author of this article seems to be suggesting that the labor force is changing and that if people are to be maintained as a viable labor force
employers are to have to be flexible in their allowances of how and where the work is accomplished. In reference to child protective service agencies, it is suggested that flexibility and alternative work schedules may be necessary in an effort to promote job satisfaction and prevent burnout of their employees.

In the article, "Margin: Space Between Ourselves and Our Limits", (Whitworth, 1999), the author identifies the challenges of crossing oceans and deserts, fighting the Indians to claim their own land, harsh weather conditions and loss of life of past generations to make our lives better. The author asks the question: "Do we have the right to complain?" We should be grateful. He says we are grateful but today we are crossing frontiers, like generations before us, that we know nothing about. Once it was understood that the night was for sleeping and the day was for working. Now, with the invention of the light bulb there are cities that never sleep. People work three shifts. The author tells us that people are confused and technology is progressing at such speed that people are out of margin, between themselves and their limits. Technology today has taken people beyond limits as they are known. Further, because there are no limits there is no safe place a person can confine themselves as protection from our fast moving society.

The author of this article suggests that we are confused. We work all of the time and are no longer able to recognize our limits. This analogy could be parallel with the child protective service worker who struggles, day and night, to meet the demands of the job. The social worker not only feels responsible for meeting the needs of families and children that they serve but, also feels a responsibility to meet the needs of managers and administrators.

Another study, (Acker, 1999), was conducted in which a questionnaire was administered to 128 mental health workers. This questionnaire asked questions that formed three scales: worker involvement scale, a job satisfaction measurement, and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The results revealed that greater involvement was related to higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The literature offers a model of burnout presenting the intentions of individuals, organizations, and societal factors. Information expressed was that human service agencies attract people who are empathetic and sensitive but are also anxious, introverted, and overenthusiastic.

Research, (Harrison, 1998; Shamai Sharlin, 1998), suggests that there are many work related stressors that can lead to burnout and job dissatisfaction. These stressors include a lack of autonomy, role conflict, a lack of organizational resources, and a lack of social support.
This research tells us that social workers expect insight, progress and change to be evident in short periods of time which does not often happen or is very slow to occur. This phenomenon is leading to or reinforcing the worker's low self-esteem and sense of failure.

There were two strategies in the study. One was to select a mental health agency and administer the questionnaire to all eligible mental health workers. The other was to administer the questionnaire to MSW graduate students who had experience in the mental health setting.

The sample was represented as follows. Geographically, thirty were from urban areas and fifteen were from rural areas. Ninety-two worked in community mental health clinics, twenty in out-patient hospitals, eleven in community support programs, and three in day treatment settings. The majority of respondents were white and female. Their ages ranged from forty to forty-nine years. Eighty were married, twenty-three were single, and twenty were divorced. There were twenty-five new MSWs and the median length of time respondents had occupied a position was seven years.

The results of the study revealed that there is a positive correlation between a worker's involvement with the severely mentally ill and emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The research, however, did not show a correlation between involvement, job satisfaction and
accomplishment. The overall conclusion to this study was that social workers who work with the severely mentally ill are affected negatively by this type of work (Acker, 1998).

Studies need to be replicated and include inner-city social workers who work with the poor urban populations and the severely disadvantaged. There is a need for more longitudinal studies of social workers throughout their career development to evaluate their attitudes and feelings toward the clientele over the span of their career. Is there a group of social workers who report burnout and job satisfaction sooner than others? If so, what population are they working with? Is the social worker dealing with issues of child abuse and neglect? Is the social worker working with the chronically mentally ill? And, is there a correlation between a social worker's early childhood and family relations that can help us to understand those variables that contribute to burnout? Researchers suggest that organizations continue their pursuit for answers to the problem. If not, without resolution, employees may view social work as a short term profession with less of an investment by the social worker with the clients they serve.

A study ordered by the Florida Legislature and directed by the Child Welfare Training Council in November of 1989, asked that recommendations be made in regards to salary structure, career ladder and turnover rate of Child
Welfare Staff in their dependency program. The study researched the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The Child Welfare League of America, (CWLA), was contracted to analyze the issues. The Child Welfare League's findings revealed the need for more competitive salaries and greater career opportunities, more manageable caseloads, additional agency support for worker liability, to guarantee the personal safety of CYF employees, improve the quality of CYF supervision and provide better service alternatives for children and their families.

In keeping with the subject of job retention, CWLA found that turnover was highest during the first year of employment. Three factors identified as most influential in regards to turnover of first year employees were high caseloads, a trainee period that was too short for employees to feel able to handle the job, and personal safety and worker liability.

In regards to retaining experienced employees, a major frustration noted was an inability to be successful with clients. In addition, career mobility and competitive salary were noted as significant. (Child Welfare Standards and Training Council and Child Welfare League of America, 1989).

The interactional perspective theory focuses on individuals and the processes of everyday social interaction. The focus is not as much on the individual's
reaction to larger organizational structures such as education, religion and economics, but how the individual is effected by them. Interactionist theory believes that behavior is a product of each individual's social relationships. Interactionalists believe that the socialization process forms the foundation for human interaction (Grinnell, 1997).

Occupational theory, or "goodness of fit", focuses on the organization's needs and a person's needs, values and interest as they are compatible with organizational needs. Under the right circumstances this theory may prove to be very helpful in prevention of burnout and job dissatisfaction (Kamaludin, 1999).

The two aforementioned theories are good and may help answer the questions surrounding burnout and job dissatisfaction.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine factors that social workers identify as most influential in their decision to remain on the job. In addition, it examined to what degree those factors existed in the work environment.

The design of the study was quantitative in nature. A questionnaire was used to gather data from child protective service workers who may experience burnout and/or job dissatisfaction. The study addressed key issues, as identified in the literature, which contribute to the problem.

Out of approximately three-hundred social workers in the agency, the questionnaire was distributed to a sample group of two-hundred and thirty-three with an expected return rate of fifty percent. Participants were chosen from social workers who were actually providing services to children and families.

Strengths of this research included clear and concise questions that were relevant to the research, the questionnaire was written in familiar language and the questions were written to permit free responses, although somewhat limited. Some "closed" questions were used and phrased in a manner that responses were general in nature.
and created no concern from the participants. The study was conducted at a minimal cost.

The study may be biased by limitations. The data obtained were not as detailed as preferred. Answers to questions were not objective in response. Subjective responses may have been based on erroneous assumptions rather than fact. The perspective and outcome could vary, based on a particular region. Inter-departmental politics may have influenced the outcome and the sample was limited to child protective service workers of Riverside County as opposed to all social workers in general.

Limitations of the questionnaire included that the subject area and scope of questions were broad. The size of the target group may have been too large or too small. The questions of the survey may not be valid and/or reliable. These limitations were addressed through careful selection of the sample group, selecting those social workers who were in the field performing the actual duties of the protection of children. Selecting a large enough sample that assured adequate feedback was important. A pretest was not necessary and additional contributors and/or concerns in regards to job satisfaction and/or job retention were not solicited due to time restraints.
Research Statement

This study examined factors that social workers identify as most influential in their decision to remain on the job. The study targets social workers with Child Protective Services of Riverside County who are performing the duties of protecting children. It was hoped that this researcher would be able to determine what areas of concern social workers identify as critical to job satisfaction and influential in their decision to remain on the job or seek other employment.

Sampling

At the onset, authorization to conduct the study was requested from administration. In addition, administration was provided a letter of explanation and intent of the study. Administration was asked to become a participant and present issues that they felt may be relevant to the study. The authorization and approval process was completed in approximately one week.

The sample for this research was 233 social workers employed with Riverside County Child Protective Services and actually performing the duties of protecting children.

Data Collection and Instrument

Data collected, through the use of a questionnaire, asked participants for demographics in regards to gender,
age, years of service, level of education, (Bachelors or Masters) and the specific program in which they worked. These programs included Emergency Response (ER), Family Reunification/Family Maintenance (PR/FM), Family Maintenance Voluntary (FMV) and Permanent Placement, Long Term Foster Care (PPL). In addition, the questionnaire outlined twenty-six concepts identified, through studies conducted by the Child Welfare League of America, as pertinent variables of concern to the profession. Social workers were asked two questions in regards to each of the twenty-six variables. (1) How important is each of the following factors to your staying on the job? (2) To what extent does it currently exist? Social workers were asked to rate their responses on a Likert Scale. On question number one, responses were as follows: 1-Not Important, 2-Somewhat Important and 3-Very Important. On question number two, responses were as follows: 1-Not at all, 2-Once in awhile, and 3-Most of the time. This method was utilized as a way of obtaining a multitude of information in a concise and confidential manner that would allow for a clear interpretation. Along with each survey was an explanation of the purpose of the study, an informed consent and a debriefing statement. Those who returned the survey were participants in the study. Based on the accuracy of the questionnaire, validity and reliability of the study depends on the quality of the questions asked and how
accurately they addressed job satisfaction and, ultimately, job retention.

The questionnaire, as an instrument, was modified slightly to address issues pertinent to Riverside County, Child Protective Services. Changes were made in regards to demographics. The names of the programs in which social worker monitor were changed along with the title of social worker positions, utilizing familiar terminology for Riverside County, Child Protective Services. The questionnaire was the only instrument used in the study.

Variables rated included the following: pleasant work environment, adequate financial compensation, culturally responsive work environment, opportunity to use skills and abilities, physical safety, promotional opportunity, experience success with clients, medical/dental care, mental health care, retirement plan, encouraging/empowering supervisor, legal liability protection, cooperative environment, realistic work load, staff development/training, clarity of agency mission and purpose, sense of accomplishment, sufficient resources, participation in decision making, time off/leave, flexible scheduling, challenging/interesting work, CWS/CMS technical support, opportunity for personal growth, being informed of policies/procedures, and encouragement to initiate/problem solve.
Procedures

The procedure for data collection consisted of several steps. A list of social workers who were providing services to adjudicated children (dependents of the court) was obtained over a period of approximately two weeks. A letter explaining the research project, along with a statement asking for their participation and signature of authorization, was provided to each of those workers. This task was accomplished through the mail with a return envelope. The surveys were sent by inter-departmental mail to a centralized drop point. The questionnaires were anonymous as to the identity of participants.

It was estimated that completion of the survey would take approximately ten minutes and the time frame for the initial collection of data would take three to four weeks.

Protection of Human Subjects

This study was undertaken with the cooperation and participation of Riverside County, Child Protective Services Administration, with coworkers as participants. A letter describing the purpose of the study was provided. This included a statement requesting social workers' participation with a mark acknowledging that they understood the purpose of the study. It also included statements that names of participants would not be necessary, participation was voluntary and that they may
choose to stop their participation in the study, at any time, without fear of reprisal.

This research project was the study of people in their work environment, therefore, this researcher took precaution to maintain anonymity of participants. This was accomplished by informing participants, in the letter describing the project, that only their mark indicating their understanding of the project and their willingness to participate was necessary. Participants were informed that their identity would not appear on the questionnaire and that supervisors and administrators would only have access to aggregated results. At the very top of the questionnaire, there was a statement directing participants not to put their name on the survey. In addition, there was a statement telling the participant that if there was a question that they felt may reveal their identity, to leave it blank. The return envelope that participants were provided contained a return address only and appeared as a regular county mailer with no revealing marks, maintaining the participants anonymity.

Data Analysis

In order to determine the six most important factors, identified by social workers as influential in their decision to remain on the job, frequencies of each pair of variables, "importance and existence" were compared to
determine the most important variables identified by social workers. Frequencies of each variable were compared to gender to determine in what ways males and females were influenced differently in their decision making processes. Differences among employees in the six regions were also explored. These analyses were accomplished by running cross tabulations, tested with chi-square.

Also explored was whether social workers with a Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, or a Doctorate of Philosophy differed in their views as to how these variables influenced their decision to remain on the job. In order to determine the six most important factors, identified by social workers as influential in their decision to remain on the job.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

Of the ninety-seven participants, seventy were female and twenty-six were males. One participant did not respond to the question of gender. In regards to educational levels, of the ninety-seven participants, thirty-eight had Bachelors Degrees, fifty-four had Masters Degrees, two had Ph.D's, and three participants did not respond to the question regarding education. Respondents were from the six regions of Riverside County.

Cross-tabs were computed for gender, levels of education, regions and variables that influence the social worker's decision making process. There did appear to be some differences between variables but, results revealed no significant differences. Tables showing statistics of all comparisons, including those that were not significant are included in the appendix.

The six of the pairs for which there were significant differences, analysis because of there relation to current agency issues. These were availability of mental health care, challenging/interesting work, encouraging/empowering supervisor, pleasant physical work environment, promotional opportunity, legal liability protection, sufficient resources, and pleasant physical work environment. (See Tables 1 through 6) For those variable pairs, cross-tabs
were computed and tested with chi-square. Charts are listed in order from highest to lowest and evident by percentage.

Table 1. Importance of Mental Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Coun 32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Coun 12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coun 44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 1, 26.7% of participants said that mental health issues are very important but that assistance with mental health issues exists only once in awhile.

Table 2. Importance of Challenging and Interesting Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Count 7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Count 19</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count 26</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28
In table 2, 22.1% of participants said that an environment of challenging and interesting work is very important but only exists once in awhile.

Table 3. Importance of Encouraging and Empowering Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Df=1</th>
<th>P=.012</th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important Count</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important Count</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44.8%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 3, 39.8% of participants said that an encouraging and empowering supervisor is very important but exists only once in awhile.

Table 4. Importance of a Pleasant Physical Work Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Df=1</th>
<th>P=.012</th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important Count</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important Count</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in table 4, 13.7% of participants said that this environment is very important but exists only once in awhile.

Table 5. Importance of Promotion Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>Count: 24</td>
<td>Count: 5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Count: 40</td>
<td>Count: 28</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count: 64</td>
<td>Count: 33</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 5, 58.8% of participants said that promotional opportunity is very important but exists only once in awhile.

Table 6. Importance of Legal Liability Protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exist once in awhile</th>
<th>Exist most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>Count: 19</td>
<td>Count: 4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Count: 42</td>
<td>Count: 29</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count: 61</td>
<td>Count: 33</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In regards to legal liability protection, table 6 reveals that 59.2% of participants said that legal liability protection is very important but that this protection only exists once in awhile.

Similar analyses were conducted on gender in relationship to each variable pair. Comparison were also made among regions for the six pairs selected for further analysis. Similar analyses were conducted for workers' level of education. None of these differences were significant.

Regional differences for the six variable pairs are reported in tables 7 through 12.
Table 7. Region and Pleasant Physical Work Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Pleasant Physical Work Environment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in awhile</td>
<td>most of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 7, the majority of participants throughout each region felt that a pleasant physical environment existed most of the time.
Table 8. Region and Promotion Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Promotion opportunity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in awhile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>most of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regards to promotional opportunity, throughout each region, the majority of participants feel promotional opportunity only exist once in awhile.
Table 9. Region and Mental Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mental health care</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in awhile</td>
<td>most of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>% within region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within region</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regards to mental health care, there is almost an even split, in each region, between those participants who feel that assistance with mental health issues is available once in awhile and most of the time.
Table 10. Encouraging and Empowering Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>Encouraging/ empowering supervisor</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>of the awhile</th>
<th>time</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>of the awhile</th>
<th>time</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>of the awhile</th>
<th>time</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>of the awhile</th>
<th>time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>once in most of the awhile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>within region</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regards to encouraging and empowering supervision across regions, participants suggest almost a 50/50 split between those who say this style of supervision exists once in awhile and those who feel that this type of supervision exists most of the time.
Table 11. Legal Liability Protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>legal liability protection once in awhile</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>most of the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the issue of legal liability protection as represented across regions, the majority of participants feel that legal liability protection only exists once in awhile.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within region</th>
<th>% within the time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across regions, the majority of participants indicate that the environment of challenging and interesting work exists most of the time.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore factors that influenced social workers of Riverside County, Child Protective Services to remain on the job and whether those factors existed in the workplace. Out of twenty-six variables, six were identified as important for agency attention. Those six variables were as follows: mental health care, challenging/interesting work, encouraging/empowering supervisor, pleasant physical work environment, promotional opportunity, legal liability protection, sufficient resources, and pleasant physical work environment. These variables indicate areas of concern and may warrant further exploration to better understand issues and initiate positive changes in each area in which those factors were identified influential to remaining on the job. Out of this group of six factors, three that may warrant the most attention are promotional opportunity, encouraging and empowering supervision, and legal liability protection.

There were no significant gender differences. This may indicate the existence of a homogeneous group in which gender has little baring on job retention in the workplace.

Another area of exploration was whether there was a association between levels of education and social workers'
decisions to remain on the job. These results suggest that there is no significant differences between a Bachelors level social worker and a Masters level social worker and their decisions to remain on the job. These results may, again, indicate that this is a homogeneous in which levels of education has little baring on social workers' decisions to remain on the job.

In regards to differences between regions, the research did indicate that there may be differences between regions and social workers' perceptions of what influences their decisions to remain on the job or seek alternative employment. Those results, however, did not indicate significant differences. These results suggest that things are done slightly different in each region but not so different that it seriously effects the worker's perception of job performance and/or willingness to remain on the job.
CHAPTER SIX
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

This project explored the problem of job retention in the social work profession, specifically, Child Protective Services of Riverside County. This study examined workplace variables and environmental factors that influenced social workers' decisions to leave their job or remain on the job. According to past research, the problem is a paradox that continues to exist even though numerous studies have examined the topic. In an effort to understand the problem, administrators need to continue exploration of the problems with a goal of reducing stress and extending the professional life of the social worker.

The study suggests that mental health services are available in Riverside County and that the majority of social workers are aware of those services. The Employee Assistance Program is a counseling service that employees can go to voluntarily and/or be referred by their supervisor. Problems and/or issues discussed include, and are not limited to, legal issues, personal problems, drug and alcohol abuse, marital and family problems, interpersonal relationships and medical problems.

Riverside County employees are also provided a choice of medical insurance policies, for themselves and their families, at a group rate, which includes mental health
services from several major hospitals such as Arrowhead Regional Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente.

In regards to challenging and interesting work, there is no policy that says that the Department of Social Services of Riverside County must provide challenging and interesting work. The study reveals that 77.9% of participants feel that this environment exist most of the time. This appears to be an indication that the majority of social workers are experiencing challenges that peak their interest.

The study suggests, in regards to encouraging and empowering supervisors, that they do exist and that over half of the participants surveyed expresses that this style of supervision exist most of the time. There were, however, half of the participants who said this was the case only once in awhile.

The Department of Social Services/Children's Services trains staff on a regular and ongoing basis. Children's Services has implemented training units in which new social workers are assigned until their skill level and competencies are at a level that the social worker, as well as management, feels comfortable. In conjunction with the training units there are also mentors who are assigned to the training units as helpers in an effort to raise and/or improve the new worker's skill level and confidence. This training and delegating duties to mentors is a technique of
empowering and encouraging staff. Indications are that the department is doing a good job in this area. The study suggests that only half of the staff are receiving encouraging and empowering supervision.

According to participants a pleasant physical work environment exists most of the time. Over the past five years, the Department of Children's Services has acquired occupancy in several small buildings throughout county. This was done in an effort to become more accessible to clientele. As a result, many of these buildings have been redecorated with the most modern color schemes of comfort. In addition, computers and equipment are being updated on a regular and ongoing basis. According to the study, these changes have made for a very comfortable physical work environment.

One area of the research that appears to be of major concern to social workers is promotional opportunity. Policies and procedures for promotions within the Department of Children's Services are written and adhered to through due process. The basis for process is that one who applies for a position and meets the minimum qualifications will be considered for that position. It appears however, in reference to the study, that social workers, in spirit, feel that they have opportunity for promotion but, in reality, the spirit of promotability does not dictate practice.
Administrators need to promote the more experienced social workers into supervisory and administrative positions in an effort to raise morale and create an atmosphere of promotability for social workers. Research indicates that promoting more experienced social workers to supervisory and/or administrative positions can lessen the likelihood that devastating mistakes will be made and the agency's credibility can be maintained and not compromised.

Another major concern of social workers as indicated by the study is legal liability protection. The policy of Children's Services, surrounding the issue of legal liability protection, is clear, in that, if a social worker is following policy as it is written, liability protection for the social worker exist. If a social worker is not following policy, liability protection may not exist. This writer believes that there are times when interpretation of policies and procedures differ from social worker to social worker, social worker to supervisor, supervisor to supervisor, and supervisor to management. It is for the aforementioned reasons that the policy on legal liability protection of social workers may warrant review and revision in an effort to reflect the reality of legal liability issues.

This study suggests that Riverside County, Child Protective Services, is doing a relatively good job of recruiting and retaining social workers. This is a good
thing, as administration and management staff has worked very hard over the past five years to reach this goal. These efforts are evident as revealed in the study. However, the study of recruitment and retention of social workers needs to continue. This is a field in which environments can change rather quickly. It seems we may always struggle in our efforts to find that environment where levels of comfort and flexibility are consistent.
APPENDIX A:

INFORMED CONSENT
January 23, 2001

Dear Social Worker,

I am a social worker employed by Riverside County and a student in the MSW Program at California State University, San Bernardino.

Job retention is an issue of concern for not only child protective service workers but administration alike. I am asking social workers to voluntarily participate in my study. I will need your "mark" indicating your consent to participate in this survey. I deeply appreciate your willingness to voluntarily participate in this research project.

The questionnaire should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. My objective is to elicit your views on the nature of job retention as a child protective service worker. You have my assurance that I will maintain absolute confidentiality with respect to views expressed by you. Administration/supervisors will only have access to aggregated results. Your identity is not necessary and will not appear on the questionnaire. Results will be reported in group form only.

With respect to research publications resulting from this study, specific views and/or opinions will not be ascribed to you without your prior written consent.

Your mark below indicates that you have understood, to your satisfaction, the information regarding your participation in my research project. Should you decide not to participate or should you wish to withdrawal at a later date, this will in no way affect your position in the agency nor will your responses affect your employment
in any way. If you have any further questions about the study, please contact my faculty supervisor, Rosemary McCaslin, Ph.D., at California State University, San Bernardino, Graduate School of Social Work at (909) 880-5507. Your concerns and/or questions will be addressed as expedient as possible.

Sincerely,

Don Davis, M.S. Student

California State University, San Bernardino.

Yes; I am willing to participate in the research project and do understand that my confidentiality will be protected and that I may withdraw from the program at any time.

Mark__________________________  Today's Date ______________

Results of this study will be posted in your local offices on or about June 20, 2001.
APPENDIX B:
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT
The study you have just participated in has been undertaken in an effort to assist Riverside County, Department of Public Social Services, in determining what is important to social workers in regards to the issue of job retention.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the project advisor, Dr. Rosemary McCaslin at (909) 880-5507, California State University, San Bernardino.

If the questionnaire should raise personal issues for you which you feel you need more assistance to address, please contact me at the Department of Public Social Services, Central Street Office, Riverside, California, (909) 358-3421.

If you would like a copy of the results of the study, please contact me at this same address.

Thank you for your time.

_________________________
Don Davis,
Social Service Worker V
APPENDIX C:

RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY,
SAN BERNARDINO
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

Student(s)  
Proposal Title

Your proposal has been reviewed by the Department of Social Work
Sub-Committee of the CSUSB Institutional Review Board. The
decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

Proposal is:

X approved

✓ approved pending revisions listed below

forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

✓ faculty signature missing

✓ missing informed consent debriefing statement

✓ revisions needed in informed consent debriefing

✓ data collection instruments missing

✓ agency approval letter missing

✓ revisions in design needed (specified below)


Instructor Signature:  
Date:  

Research Coordinator Signature:  
Date:  

Distribution: White-Coordinator, Yellow-Supervisor, Pink-Student, Goldenrod-613 Instructor
APPENDIX D:

APPROVAL LETTER FROM RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
January 8, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to formally provide approval for Don Davis, an MSW student and department employee, to conduct a research project entitled "Job Retention Among CPS Social Workers in Riverside County".

We are pleased that Don has decided to do his research project here and look forward to gaining valuable insight into those issues which contribute to job satisfaction among our staff.

Sincerely,

[signature]

Dave Demers
Acting Assistant Director
Children's Services

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to formally provide approval for Don Davis, an MSW student and department employee, to conduct a research project entitled "Job Retention Among CPS Social Workers in Riverside County".

We are pleased that Don has decided to do his research project here and look forward to gaining valuable insight into those issues which contribute to job satisfaction among our staff.

Sincerely,

[signature]

Dave Demers
Acting Assistant Director
Children's Services
APPENDIX E:

QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTED TO SOCIAL WORKERS
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Do not put your name on this survey.
If there is a question that you feel may reveal your identity, leave it blank.

1. Gender: Male □ Female □
2. Age: □
3. Level of education: BA □ MA □ Ph.D □
4. Period of time employed with the Department of Public Social Services: ______ years ______ months
5. Period of time employed with Child Protective Services: ______ years ______ months
6. What is your current position: SSW III □ SSW IV □ SSW V □
7. Region: □
8. What programs do you currently manage: ER □ FR/FM □ FMV □ PPL □

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW IMPORTANT IS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS TO YOUR STAYING ON THE JOB?</th>
<th>TO WHAT EXTENT DOES IT CURRENTLY EXIST?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not Important</td>
<td>1 = Not at All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = Somewhat Important</td>
<td>2 = Once in a While</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Very Important</td>
<td>3 = Most of the Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Please circle one)</td>
<td>(Please circle one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pleasant physical work environment</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adequate financial compensation</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Culturally Responsive Work Environment</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Opportunity to use skills and abilities</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Physical Safety</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Promotion Opportunity</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Experience Success with Clients</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Medical/Dental Care</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Mental Health Care</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Retirement Plan</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Encouraging/Empowering Supervisor</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Legal Liability Protection</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Cooperative Environment</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Realistic Work Load</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Staff Development/Training</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Clarity of Agency Mission/Purpose</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Sense of Accomplishment</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Sufficient Resources</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Participation in Decision Making</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Time off/Leave</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Flexible Scheduling</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Challenging/Interesting Work</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. CWS/CMS technical support</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Opportunity for Personal Growth</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Being Informed of Policy/Procedures</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged to Initiate/Problem Solve</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please return by February 20, 2001
APPENDIX F:

CHI-SQUARE TABLES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>14.908</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>13.346</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>15.359</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher's Exact Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear</td>
<td>14.747</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N of Valid Cases 93

**Footnotes:**

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.29.
Table 2. Challenging and Interesting Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>8.579</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>6.592</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.010</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>7.522</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher's Exact Test</td>
<td>8.491</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fisher's Exact Test

Linear-by-Linear Association

N of Valid Cases: 97

a Computed only for a 2x2 table
b 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.95.
Table 3. Encouraging and Empowering Supervisor Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>6.278</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>4.865</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.027</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher's Exact Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.013</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>6.212</td>
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<td>.013</td>
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</table>

N of Valid Cases: 96

a Computed only for a 2x2 table
b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.82.
Table 4. Pleasant Physical Work Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chi-Square Tests</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2-sided)</td>
<td>(1-sided)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>6.347</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012</td>
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<td>.017</td>
<td>.012</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>6.188</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N of Valid Cases: 96

a Computed only for a 2x2 table
b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.78.
Table 5. Promotion Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig.</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio Fisher's Exact Test Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>5.586</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.034</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.87.
Table 6. Legal Liability Protection

<table>
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a Computed only for a 2x2 table
b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.07.
APPENDIX G:

FREQUENCY TABLES
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### Clarity of Agency Mission/Purpose

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### Clarity of Agency Mission/Purpose

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### Challenging/Interesting Work

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### Being informed of Policy/Procedure

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REFERENCES

Acker, Gila M., May 99, Vol. 24 Issue 2, p.112, 8p Title: The Impact of Clients' Mental Illness on Social Worker's Job Satisfaction and Burnout.

Nancy S. Dickerson, M.S.S.W., Ph.D. and Robin Perry, M.S.W., Title: Do M.S.W Graduates Stay in Public Child Welfare ? Factors Influencing the Burnout and Retention Rates of Specially Educated Child Welfare Workers.


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