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The retention of social work practitioners at Child Protective Services in San Bernardino County

Peggy Sue Little

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THE RETENTION OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTITIONERS AT CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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

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

By
Peggy Sue Little
September 1999
THE RETENTION OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTITIONERS AT CHILD
PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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Approved by:

[Handwritten signatures and dates]

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Cathy Cimbals, Director Children’s Services,
San Bernardino County

Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Chair of Research
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This study examined the practices that are currently being utilized by San Bernardino County for Social Work Practitioners in Child Protective Services (CPS) concerning retention of social workers. This study used the role conflict model as a guide. The design used a self-administered questionnaire. The rationale for using this design was to insure the anonymity of all respondents taking part in the study. The sample included all professionally trained social workers in CPS from seven regional offices in San Bernardino County. The size of the sample was determined by the surveys returned. The total number of potential survey respondents was 300. This study showed what beliefs and attitudes social work practitioners have for remaining in employment at CPS in San Bernardino County. This survey studied three areas: individual needs, job characteristics and work environment. With this information, management can begin to construct and implement new ways to retain social workers in CPS. This will be a benefit to the agency, other entities, and the clients.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the following people who helped make the completion of this project possible: Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, my project advisor; Dr. Morley Glicken, the second reader of this project; Cathy Cimbalo, Director, Department of Children’s Services, San Bernardino, for permitting this study, without whom this project would not have been possible.
PROBLEM FOCUS:

The demands on public social services, and CPS workers in particular, have increased rapidly and dramatically in the last two years. CPS workers have traditionally been trapped in the juggling act of "treater" of families and children and "authoritarian" who is responsible for possibly life-changing decisions for those families. Often those decisions must be made and carried out in crisis situations within a very short time frame. Recent state legislation has increased those demands and shortened those already crucial time frames.

Additionally, shrinking public funds and the Welfare Reform Acts limited the time and amount of financial aid to families to 24 months of benefits within a five year time span. Clients have been placed in sometimes desperate situations due to the Welfare Reform Acts. Hostile or resistive clients may appear not motivated when in reality they are often reacting the only way they know to stressful and depressing situations. They need the professional skills of committed and experienced social workers to guide them through the maze of restrictions and responsibilities placed upon them by the courts and the agency.

At the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), we have recently been undergoing heated and lengthy contract negotiations. In the contract presented, the perquisite for Social Service Practitioners (SSP), was a one-time only $500.00 check which would be given as an incentive to continue
employment at CPS. The stipulation to this is that one had to have worked as an SSP from January 1, 1999 till July 1, 1999. According to the "Voice," which is the San Bernardino Public Employees Association newspaper, this contract passed with a 94% approval (Prado, 1999). But, is money alone really enough to maintain loyal and committed CPS workers?

In a general staff meeting on February 25, 1999, Thomas Moore, Deputy Director of Rancho Cucamonga District Office, stated that there were 45 openings for SSP's in CPS. He also related that in addition to the high turnover, recruitment has been an ongoing concern (Moore, 1999). The fact that the county has to pay practitioners to stay on a six-month basis caused interest in my learning why practitioners continue in their job. Learning why SSP's continue employment with CPS, will help management in the training provided and the recruitment of workers for CPS.

There are three main clusters of variables that directly affect morale and motivation: 1) Variables that are unique to the individual worker, such as attitudes, interests and specific needs like achievement motivation; 2) Job related characteristics such as, variety, autonomy and responsibility; 3) Work environment such as co-worker comradery, supervision support and organizational climate. (Poulin, 1995; Um, Harrison, 1997; Finley, Martin, Roman, 1995; Rauktis, Koeske, 1994). These variables may interact, overlap and compliment each other as do the major theories on motivation. While each major
approach provides one important perspective from which to view motivation, these perspectives are not necessarily contradictory, but rather provide a comprehensive viewpoint on motivation.

Nancy Stevenson, the Child Welfare Supervising Manager (CWSM), was interviewed by telephone on March 1, 1999. At that time, she stated that this specific topic (retention of SSP's) had not been researched before (Stevenson, 1999). A similar study was done by Mario Cabrera in 1998. He studied the level of job satisfaction among CPS workers by comparing two district offices in San Bernardino County; Rancho Cucamonga and one of the two San Bernardino City offices. In his study he defined "job satisfaction as a worker's overall happiness or contentment with overall aspects of the work involved in performing the job." His study revealed some distinct differences in perceptions and attitudes between the two offices. His work did not address the particular theories and variables presented here. This researcher has surveyed all seven offices to learn if there is any difference in their attitudes and beliefs concerning retention of SSP's at CPS.

For the purpose of this study, motivation has been defined as that which energizes, directs and sustains behavior. Burnout is defined as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced feelings of accomplishment. Morale itself encompasses the values of workers in both intrinsic and extrinsic levels, i.e. the meaningfulness of work, personal
need levels and the overall climate of the work environment. Ultimately, loyalty and commitment are a direct function of morale.

The purpose of this study was to answer the question: How can conditions be improved to retain SSP's at CPS in San Bernardino County? It was hypothesized that the County's "carrot-on-a-stick" process of offering a one-time $500.00 check for longevity of an employee will not suffice to increase or maintain job satisfaction, motivation or morale.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The children's welfare field has long been the most demanding and difficult vocational path in the human service arena (Drake, Yadama, 1996). Society has depicted social workers as "do-gooders" or as interfering. Children who are abused need to be protected. There is a misnomer in society that social workers take children out of their homes when if fact law enforcement is the only facet in our society with that power. When social workers take custody from law enforcement of children who have been abused, the parents and others in the home may become violent and threatening to the social worker. Law enforcement is called before social workers go to the home to protect the children, the social worker and to attempt to de-escalate the parents' feelings of anger and violence. Social work in the child protective field is a very stressful and at many times, a very unrewarding job.

Drake and Yadama (1996) cite "inadequate pay, difficult
and sometimes dangerous working conditions, lack of recognition, chronic stress and overwork as some of the negative job characteristics that have led to a continuing crisis in child welfare worker retention" (p.181). Drake and Yadama (1996) found a two-year turnover rate ranging from 46 to 90 percent. This crisis is very serious considering the complexity and breadth of skills required for effective child welfare practice. The needed skills and competencies may take many months or years to develop. The turnover in agencies means a relative lack of skills and competencies in a large percentage of the children's welfare workforce. The loss of committed child welfare workers must be reduced to ensure a workforce with the skills to perform very difficult and critical functions.

The motivation to go into the field of social work is the desire to help others as defined by Auguste Comte (1851), who first defined the term "Altruism." The personal gain from helping others is obvious as we get material rewards, public praise and self-rewards. Knowing that one is helping another person can cause one to congratulate oneself for being kind and caring which increases one's self-esteem. Many times social workers in the children's welfare arena have lost or misplaced their altruistic behavior in favor of an egocentric one. Social workers are often required to make decisions that have implications not only for their own welfare but also for the welfare of those around them. The decisions made can instill
one with a sense of power. The positivist approach (Peile, 1993) encourages people to act on their environment and other people in powerful self-assured ways. This approach to power does not corrupt others but instills in one the idea of power. Social workers have the power to intervene in people's lives. Social workers need to address the feelings of altruism, egocentricism and power among themselves individually, with co-workers and supervisors to restore the original work spirit that they began with. The work spirit is the "spark and vitality people express when they love what they do" (Connelly, 1996). Perceptions and attitudes people have about their jobs affect their work performance as well as their personal lives, the agency where they are employed and their clients (Koeske, Kirk, and Rauktis; 1992). Additionally, the particular characteristics of their jobs, the clients they deal with and the climate of the organization of employees also affects work performance and motivation. Just as the relationship between work and family is bidirectional, so is the relationship between the individuals' needs and expectations with the practices of the organization and the particular job of the individual.

Work is important in the lives of individuals. This is because there is the notion of reciprocity or exchange of an extrinsic nature such as salary. Overall, individuals have certain expectations regarding the type and amount of rewards received for services rendered. The perceptions of the
individuals' reciprocity can affect his or her performance level as well as the ultimate decision to remain in or leave a position. "Work related attitudes such as satisfaction factors are commonly the focus in turnover and absenteeism" (Blau & Boal, 1987). There is also the factor that work provides a social function for meeting new people and developing new friendships. Status and rank in the community provide another dimension to the meaning of work. One's job often affects how one perceives one's own self worth as well as how others in the community respect the individual. Following along the notion of status and rank comes the element of personal meaning. One's work is often the individuals' primary source of identity and self-esteem, perhaps even self-actualization. Ideally, "work" should provide a sense of purpose to life. However, when individual needs are not being met, work can be the arena for frustration, boredom and meaninglessness.

Adams, King and King (1996) and Poplin, (1992) identified at least three negative aspects of work that can be the result of an unfavorable bidirectional relationship between work factors and expectations: 1) Emotional Exhaustion is defined as the depletion of emotional resources and the feeling that one has nothing to give psychologically; 2) Depersonalization occurs when a worker develops negative and callous attitudes toward his or her clients and begins to treat clients as objects rather than people; 3) Decreased feelings of personal accomplishment result when a worker develops a negative view of
his or her work, their achievements on the job or begins to believe that personal expectations are not being met.

Meanwhile, clients in the child welfare system, whose families and children's safety often depend on the worker's ability to intervene, are not getting the level or quality of service they need (Drake, Yadama, 1996). The outcome of providing inadequate services places children at greater risk of abuse and neglect.

The demand for social workers in the Child Protective Service (CPS) arena is continually rising. To recruit and retain professionals, CPS would hope to know more about the factors that attract and retain them in this field of practice, as well as the obstacles and deterrents that discourage their entry and continuation. There are two major streams of service delivery to children and their families in which social workers are employed: Public agencies, such as offices of the county and state social welfare department, funded through tax revenue and Voluntary, nonprofit funded through community funds, religious organizations, donations and client fees based on a sliding scale fee structure. Child welfare services (CWS) agencies struggle to meet the challenges and the increasing demand for public social services. Workers struggle to meet the increasing demands of their jobs against endless bureaucracy, paperwork, the latest in technology demands and increasing caseloads.

In this exploratory study, this research has provided the
reader with correlational findings on motivation and job satisfaction among CPS workers as a function of individual needs, job characteristics and work environment based on their attitudes and perceptions. If significant, the findings may be implemented by management in the retention, training and future recruitment of CPS workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Past research shows what the currently employed social workers at CPS in San Bernardino County are experiencing. Working in CPS is very stressful and much has been written on the subject of burnout and job satisfaction.

There is much empirical research available on retention of service workers in human service agencies (Ewalt, 1991; Harrison & Poulin, 1995; Rautkis & Koeske, 1994). According to Ewalt, the birth rates since 1960 have declined and the total labor pool is expected to diminish significantly. The competition of the social work profession along with other professions for a quality labor force will be high (Ewalt, 1991). This means that the importance of the social work profession will rise and the retention rate may decrease.

Social work research suggests that both job stresses and deficits have an impact on burnout (Rautkis & Koeske, 1994). There appears to be little known about the impact of various types of job stresses on satisfaction and the role that supportive supervision plays in alleviating the effects of stress. Stress in the form of excessive work load has been
associated with greater job dissatisfaction and feelings of tension, anger and strain. "Workers are burned out, not organizations" (Powell, 1994).

The roles that SSP's are faced with were incorporated in this research project. This project showed how the different roles affect the social workers, individual needs, job characteristics and work environment. The role conflict theory was utilized because it encompasses the reality of the work load and work environment that the social worker must meet daily. This theory shows how the individual's needs are being shelved due to work environment and job characteristics. There are many negative aspects to the job that SSP's do for CPS and little positive reinforcement from co-workers, clients and supervision. To retain and hopefully recruit professionals, it would help to know more about the factors that attract and retain them in this field of practice, as well as the obstacles and deterrents that diminish their entry and continuation (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). The high level of stress and turnover may diminish the social work field to new recruits.

According to Jayaratne, Tripodi, Chess; (1993), "literature is mixed regarding role conflict's effects on individuals." It was further stated that common wisdom ties role conflict closely to high levels of burnout. Role stress is defined in Jones article as when "a role contains excess expectations" or interpreted more simply a "having too many things to do" (Jones, 1993). The caseloads that social workers
are given and the time that policy and the courts demand makes it impossible to meet expectations. Role ambiguity is defined as "a situation in which the role expectations are unclear." This occurs when a worker is confused and/or disagrees with the implementation of policy and has to constantly change work schedules and habits. Role conflict is described as when an "individual is sent messages to fulfill two or more roles that are incompatible or in conflict with one another." This can occur when a social worker who has their own caseload is asked to either take on more work or do a job for their supervisor who they know will be angry at them for not meeting their deadlines. "Social workers involved in Child Protective Services at the government level exhibit more depersonalization, less worker comfort, more role ambiguity and conflict and more role conflict than workers in community mental health or family service agencies" (Drake, Yadama, 1996).

Increasing job satisfaction and reducing work turnover are among the critical issues facing human organizations today. Poulin states that worker turnover is costly and it has negative consequences for clients (Poulin, 1995). It is very confusing for a client who has a social worker for a few months and then has another and this pattern continues. Turnover is very difficult on the social worker who has to take over a case from a previous worker who may not have done what needed or what policy dictates.
Social workers carry a variety of inherent stressors such as untreatable combined problems, hard-to-reach clients, sometimes unobservable outcomes of their work, and diminishing resources. Combined with the inherent stressors of the social work profession, role stressors such as role conflict and role ambiguity in social work settings appear to have much greater impact on job strain that do role stressors in any other occupation (Um, Harrison, 1998). It is stated that “employment in structured organizations increased employee satisfaction by lessening role ambiguity” (Finley, Martin, Roman, 1995).

“Deskilling is the breakdown and destruction of a worker’s generalized body of knowledge and professional skills as a result of the rationalization of skills, the division of labor, specialization and the reliance on the technology epidemic to the bureaucratization organization of work” (Arches, 1991). Isolation, fragmentation and deskilling are the consequences of bureaucratization. The compartmentalization into narrowly defined tasks and knowledge areas eliminates the potential for any one worker or group to gain too much control over total output.

Social work research suggests that job stresses and deficits have a strong impact on burnout (Rauktis & Koeske, 1994). In a longitudinal study done by the California Social Work Education Center (CALSWEC) through the Title IV-E Program, of the 224 participants who had completed their
contractual agreement to work in a public agency, it was learned that 33 who had left employment did so because of emotional exhaustion. This emotional exhaustion appeared to be related to crisis calls (Cooper, 1999). This study continued to state that "respondents' perception of their supervisors, support from co-workers and levels of emotional exhaustion appeared to have the greatest effect on job exit." This researcher sought to learn what conditions are needed by SSP's in CPS in San Bernardino County so that management can learn and hopefully implement new ways to retain social workers. This leads to more loyal and committed workers at CPS who will continue employment there and will increase services to the clients.

**STUDY DESIGN:**

This research has explored morale and job satisfaction among social work practitioners at CPS in San Bernardino county. Only SSP’s were surveyed.

The quantitative method of design was used because the data was analyzed statistically and the formulated hypothesis tested. The quantitative approach uses the hypothetico-deductive method of knowledge building. By using this method, this research attempted to establish through correlational findings that motivation and job satisfaction among CPS social workers were significantly related to individual needs, job characteristics and work environment based on attitudes and perceptions.
A possible limitation to this study might be the inclusion of a question concerning supervision. A worker may feel intimidated or unsupported by their supervisor and not feel free to answer the question.

Another limitation may be the truthfulness of the answers given. Social workers may feel intimidated if they answer how they really feel about their jobs and the staff they work with. Management and supervision may also feel threatened by the questions.

Implications from this study may include the following:
(1) The screening of newly recruited workers for possible sources of stress and low job satisfaction as part of the employment process. (2) The need for classes on burnout and how to relieve it. (3) Supervision can be utilized and supervisors trained to be more supportive to their workers. (4) There will be more SSP’s who will retain employment at CPS. (5) There will be more job satisfaction, higher morale and less stress among SSP’s. (6) There will be more comradery among staff.

The researcher has surveyed and analyzed data which determined whether the morale, job satisfaction and motivation of SSP’s can be improved so they will retain their employment. The agency is concerned when there is low morale among the workers. This low morale and poor job satisfaction leads to fewer effective services to the families that are served.

**SAMPLING AND PROCEDURE:**

There are approximately 300 SSP’s in the seven San
Bernardino county district offices. The districts are comprised of Child Abuse Hotline, Rancho Cucamonga, Mill St., E St., Victorville, Barstow and Yucca Valley.

All SSP's were sent a survey through interoffice mail to the Child Welfare Supervising Managers (CWSM), who distributed them to the workers. Attached to the survey was the letter of consent and a debriefing statement (See Appendix A). These survey's were returned to the researcher individually through interoffice mail to ensure confidentiality. Of the approximate 300 social workers, 95 surveys were returned.

DATA COLLECTION:

Since this was an initial exploratory study, a survey was designed based on the specific employment experiences of SSP's. The survey was pretested at the Child Abuse Hotline (CAHL) where there are approximately 15 SSP's and 12 were returned. It was pretested for time to complete questions asked and relevancy to the topic.

Attached to the job satisfaction survey was a demographic page. Independent variables included the general demographics: gender, age, type of degree, if a student currently, length of time on the job, education, marital status, children in the home, ethnicity, place of employment and program the social worker works in. These data were recorded using categorical measures except for number of children and age.

The survey had three categories of job satisfaction
dependent variables: Individual Needs, Job Characteristics and Work Environment. An original survey of 12 questions was used with questions addressing each category of satisfaction rewards, i.e. individual, work, and job characteristics (See Appendix).

Individual Needs were measured by the following questions: (3) My primary reason for working is the meaningfulness of the work. (9) The intrinsic rewards and satisfaction I feel from my work outweigh the salary offered for my services. (10) I am doing the kind of work I had always planned and wanted to do. (12) My job allows me sufficient freedom and control to adequately balance my personal/family life and work life. These questions measure the indication of personal reward feelings and if they outweigh any desire for monetary rewards and perhaps balance out any negative feelings regarding the characteristics of the particular job of the general work environment ultimately created by management.

Job Characteristics are measured by the following questions: (1) The training program offered by the county adequately prepared me for the work I am doing. (2) My academic education was relevant and prepared me for my current work expectations. (4) I have a manageable caseload. (8) My job expectations prior to my hire correlate strongly with my real work experience. These questions relate more to the day-to-day expectations of the job and reflect not only job satisfaction by expectations versus reality.

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Work Environment questions include the following: (5) I am satisfied with the level of communication between myself and my supervisor. (6) CWS workers should be allowed more participation and input to management decisions. (7) My co-workers are supportive. (11) I believe the current "reward" system of receiving a $500.00 check for retainment of employment is a good way to motivate employees. These questions relate to supervisor support, co-workers support and respect for the professionalism of social workers versus feelings of being a production line worker.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS:

The consent form (See Appendix A) for this project that was stapled to the survey with a request a check mark of consent or not and was returned with the completed survey (See Appendix B). There was nothing on the survey or the consent form to breach anyone's identity or confidentiality. A debriefing statement (See Appendix C) was enclosed with instructions that it is to be retained by the respondent.

DATA ANALYSIS:

A univariate analysis included a frequency distribution of the data on the independent variables. Frequency distributions were calculated for the dependent variables Individual, Job Expectations and Work Environment.

Bivariate analysis was conducted to learn if there are associations between the dependent and independent variables Individual Need, Job Expectations and Work Environment. A
correlational analysis was also performed to determine the validity of the three categories included in the job satisfaction survey.

**FINDINGS:**

In the category of Individual Needs 4 out of 6 inter-item correlations were significant. On the other hand, few inter-category co-variates were significant (6 out of 32).

In the category of Job Expectations 6 out of 32 inter-item correlation were significant. About half of the inter-category co-variates including Individual Needs were significant (15 out of 32). In the category of Work Environment 2 out of 6 inter-item correlations were significant. (13 of 36) Inter-category survey items measuring Individual Need and Job Expectations appear to be valid, while those measuring Work Environment form a more questionable category.

The sample of 95 workers had an age range from 25 to 64 years. The mean was 43 years and the standard deviation was 8.7412. There were 24 males (25.5%) and 70 females (74.5%). The degrees achieved were 18 with a B.A. (19.6%); 47 with a M.S.W. (51.1%); 25 with a M.A. in another field (27.2%) and 2 with a Ph.D. (2.2%). The degrees earned included 16 with a Psychology degree (17.0%), 50 with a degree in Social Work (53.2%), 8 with a degree in Sociology (8.5%), 9 with a MFCC (9.6%) and 11 with degrees in other fields (11.7%).

Eight social workers in the sample were currently students (8.5%). On marital status of the social workers
surveyed 17 were single (18.1%), 50 were married (53.2%), 23 were divorced (24.5%) and 4 are widowed (4.3%). Forty four have no children (46.8%), 21 have one child (22.3%), 12 have two children (12.8%), 11 have 3 children (11.7), 3 have 4 children (3.2%), 2 have 5 children (2.1%) and 1 has 6 children (1.1%).

The ethnicity of the 95 social workers included 65 are Caucasians (69.1%), 18 are Blacks (19.1%), 5 Hispanics(5.3%), 3 Asians (3.2%) and 3 of other ethnicity (3.2%). The programs the social workers were currently employed in included 21 are in intake (22.3%), 45 who are carrier (47.9%), 12 who at the child abuse hotline (12.8%), 13 who are currently in adoptions (13.8%) and 3 who are in special services-foster care (3.2%).

The length of employment of social workers was 4 who had worked 0-6 months (4.3%),17 have worked from 6 months to 2 years (18.1%), 27 worked 2-5 years (28.7%), 29 worked 5-10 years (21.3%), 20 worked 10-20 years (21.3%) and 6 have worked 20 + years (6.4%).

Almost all 91 were full time workers (96.85%). Their work location included 12 at the hotline (12.8%), 14 on E Street (14.9%), 18 at Mill Street (19.1%), 21 in the Rancho office (22.2%), 13 in Victorville (13.8%), 4 in Barstow (4.3%), 3 in the Yucca Valley office (3.2%), 8 at Hospitality Lane (8.5%) and 1 at the Court (1.1%). The urban region offices including Rancho Cucamonga, E Street, Mill Street, the Hotline, Hospitality Lane and the Court accounted for 76.5% of
responses. The Desert region which includes, Victorville, Barstow, and Yucca Valley provided 23.5%. In the offices at E Street there are 18 workers doing intake and 31 in carrier. At Mill Street there are 12 intake workers and 20 carrier. In Rancho Cucamonga office there are 27 workers in intake and 31 in carrier. In Victorville there are 16 workers in intake and 20 carrier. Barstow has 4 workers in intake and 10 in carrier. In Yucca Valley there are 6 in intake and 6 in carrier.

Demographic questions and the items from the individual needs, job expectations and work environment were compared half of the associations were significant. By redefining age into two categories of younger as 25-43 years and older as 44 and older and redefining training were significantly associated with a chi square of 6.665, df=1, p=.010 (See Appendix D). The older the worker the less training they received from the county and, accordingly, the less satisfied they were with the training.

There is a significant association between being a student and co-workers support a chi square showed 13.482, df=3, p=.004 (See Appendix E). Students working for the county tended to feel unsupported by their co-workers while non-students overwhelmingly did feel supported by co-workers.

Two items that were especially relevant to the question whether monitory perquisites would encourage retention were meaningfullness of work (Q #3) and intrinsic rewards (Q #9) such as salary. These items were significantly correlated
The item that directly questioned the motivating influence of a $500.00 check (Q #11), showed little support from any workers (See Appendix F). This suggests that the meaningfulness of work is associated with how much salary one receives for some people.

**DISCUSSION:**

This research has shown what currently motivates and provides job satisfaction for the social workers employed by CPS in San Bernardino County. These are relevant training for more experienced workers, co-worker support for employees returning to school, and for some workers, salary.

The original question of whether the check for $500.00 was enough to maintain and retain loyal employees was clearly answered "no." Since the researcher is a social worker at the County of San Bernardino, the question has been asked informally of others. The answer has been that they will take the money but, they would have liked to have been asked what they wanted. They also would like respect for their professionalism and the work they do and not to feel as if they are production workers who have to keep up statistics on how many referrals are take, cases open, cases closed etc. They need more resources to work with clear and concise directions on what is needed to obtain the resources for their clients.

The SSP's are in a very dangerous and strongly interactive job with people who many times see the social worker as an intruder or someone who will break their family
up. They need more support and to be made to feel like they can make a difference in someone's life for the good, not to be made to feel like it is the same thing day in and day out with no new opportunities on the horizon. The social workers need hope just like our clients and their families do.
Appendix A: INFORMED CONSENT

Please check on bottom and return with questionnaire

The study in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate the retention of social work practitioners at Child Protective Services in San Bernardino County. This study is being conducted by Peggy Little, Masters of Social Work student under the supervision of Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Professor of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino California (909/880-5507). This is an exploratory study which has been approved by the Department of Social Work sub-committee of the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino.

In this study you will answer questions regarding your attitudes and beliefs concerning individual needs, job characteristics and work environment along with a few demographic questions. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. This survey is designed to maintain your complete anonymity. At no time will you be asked to identify yourself. Any information you provide will be held in strict confidence and will be reported in group form. Please understand that your participation is voluntary, and that you are under no obligation to respond. You may withdraw your participation at any time.

The University requires you give your consent before participating in this research project. By placing a check mark in the space below: I acknowledge that I have been
informed of, and understand the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I further acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.”

Indicate your consent to participate by placing a checkmark here. Today’s date is: ___/___/___ and return with survey.
Appendix B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

RETENTION OF SSP’S AT CPS IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE CHECK OR FILL IN THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

1. What is your age? ____ years.
2. What gender are you? ____ male. ____ female.
3. What is the highest degree you completed in school? ____
4. In what area ____ Psychology, ____ Social Work,
   ____ Sociology, ____ MFCC, ____ Other.
5. Are you a student now ____ yes, ____ no.
6. Marital Status ____ Single, ____ Married, ____ Divorced,
   ____ Widowed, ____ Other.
7. How many children in the household ____.
8. Ethnic Background ____ Caucasian,
   ____ Black, ____ Hispanic, ____ Asian, ____ Other, ____.
9. In what program do you work ____ Intake ____ Carrier ____
   CAHL ____ Adoptions,
   Special Services ____
10. Length of Employment ____ 0-6 months ____ 6 months to 2
    yrs ____ , 2-5 yrs ____ 5-10 yrs ____
    10-20 yrs ____ More than 20 yrs ____.
11. Work ____ full time ____ part time.
12. What office do you work in: CAHL ____ E ST. ____ MILL ____,
    RANCHO ____, VICTORVILLE ____, BARSTOW ____, YUCCA VALLEY ____.

25
PLEASE RATE HOW YOU FEEL EXPRESSED BY THE FOLLOWING

STATEMENTS.

PLEASE CIRCLE:

(I.E.. STRONGLY AGREE- MILDLY AGREE- MILDLY DISAGREE- STRONGLY DISAGREE)
(1)SA (2)MA (3)MD (4)SD

1. The training program offered by the County adequately prepared me for the work I am doing?
   SA, MA, MD, SD

2. My academic education was relevant and prepared me for my current work expectations?
   SA, MA, MD, SD

3. My primary reason for working in CWS is for the "meaningfulness" of the work?
   SA, MA, MD, SD

4. I have a "manageable" caseload?
   SA, MA, MD, SD

5. I am satisfied with the level of communication between myself and my supervisor?
   SA, MA, MD, SD

6. CWS workers should be allowed more participation and input to management decisions.
   SA, MA, MD, SD

7. My co-workers are supportive.
   SA, MA, MD, SD

8. My job expectations prior to my hire correlates strongly
with my real work expectations.

SA, MA, MD, SD.

9. The intrinsic rewards and satisfaction I feel from my work outweigh the salary offered for my service

SA, MA, MD, SD.

10. I am doing the kind of work I had always planned and wanted to do.

SA, MA, MD, SD.

11. I believe the current "reward" system of a $500.00 check for retention of employment is a good way to motivate employees.

SA, MA, MD, SD.

12. My job allows me sufficient freedom and control to adequately balance my personal/family life and work life.

SA, MA, MD, SD.
Appendix C: DEBRIEFING STATEMENT
Please Keep For Your Records

The study you participated in was conducted to examine why social worker practitioners retain their employment at CPS in San Bernardino County. This study will encompass the seven districts within the county. A quantitative analysis will be performed to interpret the data collected. A cross comparison will be done to analyze any differences among the seven offices. The researcher anticipates that the findings will assist management in implementing new procedures to assist in recruiting new social workers who will retain employment with CPS in San Bernardino County.

This study was developed for a research project by Peggy S. Little, M.S.W. student, at California State University in San Bernardino California. If you have any questions regarding your participation in this study, please feel free to contact me through the Social Work Department at the University, by calling (909)880-5501. You may also contact my research advisor Dr. Rosemary McCaslin at the University at (909)880-5507.

I thank you for your participation in this study. Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Peggy S. Little
### Appendix D

**AGE COMPARED TO TRAINING GIVEN: CROSS TABULATION COUNT**

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Pearson Chi-Square: 6.665

1.010
## Appendix E

STUDENTS SUPPORTED BY THEIR CO-WORKERS CROSS-TABULATION COUNT

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30
### APPENDIX F

**BONUS CHECK COMPARED TO SUPPORT OF WORKERS**

**A CROSS TABULATION COUNT**

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Pearson Chi-Square 1.939
REFERENCES


