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Social Work with Minority Clients : an Attitudinal Survey

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SOCIAL WORK WITH MINORITY CLIENTS

AN ATTITUDINAL SURVEY

by

TWILA SOUERS

A practicum submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF

SOCIAL WORK

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1978

APPROVED:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As a member of one of America's ethnic minority groups
and a graduate student in social work, I have become increas-
ingly concerned about the practice of social work with ethnic
minority clients. It has been said that social work serves
as an agent of social control within a racist society, and as
a tool of further oppression of an already oppressed population.
However, in response to the social upheavals of the 1960's,
social workers led the helping professions in calling atten-
tion to social ills resulting from majority-minority interac-
tions. Certainly, social workers examined the state of their
own art regarding their practice with ethnic minority popula-
tions. Much of the resulting legislative and programmatic
efforts to improve the status of ethnic minority groups was due
in part to the efforts of concerned and dedicated social workers.

These efforts were supported by policy statements em-
anating from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW),
and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), considered
the major governing bodies within the profession of social
work. Their call to action on the part of the profession,
recognized the need for increased efforts in social work
practice and education to ameliorate the effects of discrim-
ination and to enhance the opportunities of all ethnic

minority groups for a better life.[1]

Nearly a decade has passed since those turbulent years, and despite much good effort and many dollars, society has not solved the "minority problem". Blacks, Chicanos, and Native American Indians are still to be found in a dire state of poverty by every socioeconomic indicator. Affirmative action efforts have resulted in only small gains in employment, education, and social mobility for these groups. Social work in particular has received much criticism from ethnic minority spokespersons for a lack of awareness and sensitivity to minority peoples. Blacks and Native Americans in some urban areas have rejected local social services and established alternative agencies to serve their respective groups. How are we in social work responding to this criticism as a profession?

Past research efforts in social work with minority groups has been primarily concerned with the Black population. Poor and "disadvantaged" groups have undergone considerable scrutiny, mostly in search of the causes of poverty. Studies which attempt to describe practice with minority clients, however, are few and far between.

I feel a responsibility, both as an Indian and as a social worker, to enlarge my own awareness of the practice of social work with ethnic minority groups, and hope to

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[1]Joseph S. Gallegos, "A Reconceptualization of Pluralism in Social Work Education," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Denver, 1978.)

provide some information which might lend itself to further research in this area. It is to that end that this project has been dedicated.

The study is a survey of attitudes among social work practitioners and educators, both ethnic minority and non-minority, regarding social work with minority clients. Chapter II presents a statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Chapter III is a review of pertinent literature. Chapter IV discusses the design and methodology for the research project. Chapter V discusses the findings and limitations of the study, and Chapter VI provides a summary and further recommendations for research and practice.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL WORK PROBLEM

Although there is a considerable body of literature regarding the status of ethnic minority groups in America, very little attention has been paid to researching social work <u>practice</u> with minority clients.[1] The largest part of past research efforts involved urban Blacks and was in response to urban riots. Since that time, legislative reforms and program efforts to resolve economic, educational, and social problems of the "disadvantaged" have achieved a somewhat uneasy peace and national attention has turned towards more pressing issues. Social Work as a profession has also undergone major shifts in direction and values. Each year new areas of responsibility are defined for social workers with new groups competing for shrinking support dollars. Social Work has come under considerable scrutiny and criticism for what it attempts to do and how it attempts to do it. In this process of growth and change, concern with ethnic minority populations has not been a priority in social

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[1]Joseph S. Gallegos and Olita D. Harris, "Toward a Model for the Inclusion of Minority Content in Doctoral Social Work Education," (paper presented at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, Phoenix, Arizona, February, 1977.)

work research.[2]

The "minority problem" has not been resolved, however, as minority people are well aware. Efforts by Blacks, Chicanos, and Native American Indians to provide alternative social service systems for their populations indicate their dissatisfaction with existing agencies. Racial unrest simmers across American society, with eruptions such as the recent Chicano riots in the Southwest. "White, Black, and Brown" warfare among young people in big city schools indicates attitudes in the coming generations have not been changed by programs or legislation. Neo-Nazism with its racist ideology and the public appearances of the Ku Klux Klan in the South point to the willingness of "white" Americans to again take a public stand in favor of discrimination towards American people of color.

It is important to know what part social work and its practitioners are taking and will take in this struggle. Social work is one of the primary interfaces between our society and its ethnic minority poor. How clients are perceived influences how the profession is practiced. Practice in turn influences the policies governing social work. Are social workers part of a system and society which oppresses a significant part of its people because of their poverty and their color? Or are they, despite their best and most

[2]Ismael Dieppa, "Ethnic Minority Content in the Social Work Curriculum: A Position Statement!" Perspectives on Ethnic Minority Content in Social Work Education, ed. C.W. McCann (WICHE, 1972) pp. 5-15; Gwendolyn C. Gilbert and Robert M. Ryan, Beyond Ain't It Awful, Ohio State University 1976, pp. 3-6.

humanitarian intentions, part of an inherently racist social structure and practitioners in a profession based upon a theoretical structure of pathology within the individual?

The purpose of this study was to establish preliminary and descriptive information regarding the practice of social work with minority clients for the purpose of further hypothesis development and testing in this research area. The descriptive data from this research consists of an attitudinal survey of practitioners and educators which provides preliminary information with regard to the ideological references of social work practitioners.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A survey of pertinent literature provides a review of
the sources related to social work with the minority client.
Also considered are the theories of social control, and
individual and institutional racism within the profession.
Warren's Paradigms I and II provided the theoretical frame-
work for this process.

The literature review revealed that most publications
would fall somewhere within four categories posited by
Gallegos: historical, methods (how to), commitment (recruit-
ment and demands for social justice), and more recently,
pluralism in social work education.[1]

Early social workers in the United States did demon-
strate a concern for Negroes and Native American Indians,
as evidenced by Bruno's report of two conferences sponsored
by the National Conference of Social Work in 1887 and 1892
devoted to social conditions and treatment of these groups.[2]
An article entitled "Social Work Among Negroes" appeared in

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[1]Gallegos, op. cit., pp. 83.

[2]Frank Bruno, Trends in Social Work as Reflected in the
Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1874,
1946, pp. 34.

1928 in the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences.[3]

Cannon and Klein developed an outline for a social casework curriculum in 1933 which recognized that "the culture of a people (race or nation) influences the behavior of individual members, and to know the culture helps the worker to understand the reactions of the member of the cultural group."[4]

The 1950's involved a brief upswing of interest in casework with minority or cultural groups, as evidenced by the "New York Cultural Project". Under the sponsorship of the Council on Social Work Education, the project produced a casebook of seven ethnic case studies for use in C.S.W.E. member schools.[5]

Brown concluded from a study of forty social service agencies having both Negro and white caseworkers with racially mixed caseloads that difficulties in worker-client relationships formerly attributed to racial difference were those which could be found in any casework relationship and amenable to the experience, skill and professional security of the worker.[6]

[3]Eugene K. Jones, "Social Work Among Negroes," Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 40(229), Nov. 1928, pp. 287-293.

[4]Mary A. Cannon and Philip Klein, eds., Social Casework: An Outline for Teaching, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1933) pp. 23.

[5]The New York Cultural Project, Socio-Cultural Elements in Casework: A Case Book of Seven Ethnic Case Studies, CSWE, 1955.

[6]Luna Bowdoin Brown, "Race as a Factor in Establishing a Casework Relationship," Social Casework, 31(3), 1950, pp.96.

Mier, however, recognized and commented on the effect of racism on practice in her 1959 article in <u>Social Work</u>,

> On the other hand, for a social worker or any other helping professional to ignore or negate the degree to which racism affects the atmosphere in which blacks develop is ludicrous. What we must do is explore the possibility of expanding, not replacing, existing concepts to include such variables as race. Then and only then, can we look forward to a better understanding of our black clients.[7]

Mier goes on to state

> Since treatment techniques and the goals to which such techniques are directed develop out of thorough understanding of the person-in-situation, examination of these sociocultural and cultural determinants of personality will produce clues for more effective casework treatment.[8]

The period of the 1960's and early 1970's was one of racial tension and conflict. The literature mirrors the societal response with a surge of articles and books referring to social action, community development, and advocacy for the "poor", "disadvantaged", and minority groups.

The overt expressions, both verbal and physical, of anger and hostility on the part of Blacks towards whites appeared to shock social workers into new considerations of the dynamics of race in social work.

Simmons, in "'Crow Jim', Implications for Social Work," understates the following:

[7]Elizabeth G. Mier, "Social and Cultural Factors in Casework Diagnosis," <u>Social Work</u>, July, 1959, 4:25, cited by Barbara E. Shannon, "The Impact of Racism on Personality Development," <u>Social Casework</u>, 54(9), November, 1973, pp. 519.

[8]Ibid., pp. 524.

"Crow Jim" as it is used in this paper, may be considered a form of Jim Crow in reverse. It is the animosity, hostility, and bitterness felt by Negroes toward whites and a predisposition of Negroes to discriminate against them. <u>There is ample evidence to support the position that such anti-white prejudice by Negroes has developed in this country.</u>[9] (emphasis mine)

Several articles written in the mid-sixties by practicing social workers acknowledge the tensions and emotional strains involved in black/white interactions in casework.[10]

Curry (1964) states

There is no getting around the fact that a great deal of emotion is interwoven in the fabric of interracial relationships. The Negro worker and the white client (and the white worker and the Negro client as well) will find that their interactions are highly charged with emotions that they may not be completely aware of or not able to handle...[11]

Hallowitz raised the issue of whether or not a white therapist could be effective with the black client. He states that the white therapist "must examine with self awareness and try to resolve subtle, subconscious prejudicial feelings about working with poor black clients."[12]

[9]Leonard C. Simmons, "'Crow Jim': Implications for Social Work," <u>Social Work</u>, 8(3), July 1963, pp. 24.

[10]Ibid., pp.26; Jean S. Gochros, "Recognition and Use of Anger in Negro Clients," <u>Social Work</u>, Vol. 11(1), 1966, pp. 28-34; Esther Fibust, "The White Worker and the Negro Client," <u>Social Casework</u>, Vol. XLVI(5), 1965, pp. 271-277.

[11]Andrew E. Curry, "The Negro Worker and the White Client: Commentary on the Treatment Relationship," <u>Social Casework</u>, XLV(3), 1964, pp. 131-136.

[12]David Hallowitz, "Counseling and Treatment of the Poor Black Family," <u>Social Casework</u>, 56(7), 1975.

In one of the few controlled studies reported in the literature, Santa Cruz and Hepworth asked the question,

> Do clients in helping relationships with workers of the same cultural orientation perceive the relationship more favorably than clients in relationships with workers of a different cultural orientation?[13]

The results suggested that having a commonality in cultural background facilitates developing a working relationship; however, competence in communication is more important.[14]

Hallowitz commented

> Although working with poor black families is different from working with poor white families, there is a great similarity: basic counseling and treatment principles, concepts, and methods apply to both groups. (Blacks and whites)[15]

One of the references on social services and minorities at this time (early 1960's) was the publication by the National Social Welfare Assembly in 1962, The Impact of Racial Factors on Casework Services. In the foreword, Fishzohn declared

> Improved race relations continues to be a top priority for the American people. Social welfare agencies, concerned with the wellbeing of all people, have a special responsibility to take leadership in the elimination of prejudice and discrimination. There is an imperative to look at agency practice, to test if our actions bear out our words, and to decide to learn where we can and must do more.[16]

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[13]Luciano Santa Cruz and Dean H. Hepworth, "Effects of Cultural Orientation on Casework," Social Casework, 56(1), 1975, pp. 53.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Hallowitz, op. cit., p. 458.

[16]Samual S. Fishzohn, foreword to The Impact of Racial Factors on Casework Services: A Report of the Intergroup Relations Clinic, (NSWA, N.Y. 1962) pp. 5.

Other practitioners, however, did not respond to this
call to look at agency practice, but instead chose to follow
the model of practice at the time: looking for pathology
within individuals and their familial networks. Typical of
this approach is H.S. Maas's Five Fields of Social Service:
Review of Research. He stated therein

> Ethnic and religious subgroup patterns of family life
> have received somewhat less systematic attention than
> class variations...one conspicuous gap in this area
> is knowledge about family patterns in different racial
> groups, and especially among Negroes...Several writers
> on social work practice have stressed the importance
> for the practitioners of knowledge about subcultural
> patterns of family life - especially in the lower
> classes and among Negroes. As yet, however, social
> work research has not made any major contributions in
> this area.[17]

Social workers, however, were practicing as though
there was a basic knowledge of Black family life. Their
belief systems were very likely profoundly influenced by the
publication of the Moynihan Report on the Negro family.
Moynihan's thesis is best summarized by Ryan

> Moynihan was able to take a subject that had
> previously been confined to the Sociology Department
> seminar room, filled with aromatic smoke from judi-
> ciously puffed pipes, and bring it into a central
> position in popular American thought, creating a
> whole new set of group stereotypes which support the
> notion that Negro culture produces a weak and dis-
> organized form of family life, which in turn is a
> major factor in maintaining Negro inequality.[18]

[17]Henry S. Maas, ed., Five Fields of Social Service:
Review of Research, (National Association of Social Workers,
Inc., New York, 1966), pp. 42-43.

[18]William Ryan, Blaming the Victim, (rev. ed., 1976)
(Vintage Books, New York, 1972) pp. 64.

Ryan labels this process "Blaming the Victim," placing responsibility on the individual for "his plight" rather than examining the society for the conditions which cause and maintain that "plight".

Therapists had become sensitized to racism and to the two-edged sword of its effects. Cooper wrote in 1973 that

> Clearly racism bites deeply into the psyche. It marks all its victims - blacks and whites - with deep hurt, anger, fear, confusion and guilt. Precisely for this reason, clinicians must examine their own thinking with special care, since their efforts to acknowledge and deal with racial and ethnic factors are affected by highly emotional attitudes.[19]

She proposed that therapists could be influenced either by color blindness or ethnocentricity to the point that patients "might tend to lose their individual richness and complexity".[20]

An encouraging trend in the 1970's has been the appearance in the literature of articles related to social work with minority clients written by minority practitioners. Their recommendations suggest the importance of an awareness of the client's cultural and racial background, sensitivity to their norms and value systems, the down-to-earth approach in practice, (i.e., concrete assistance initially, "therapy" later), a shared client/practitioner control balance, and nontraditional practice settings, hours, and approaches. The picture that is beginning to emerge is

[19]Shirley Cooper, "A Look at the Effort of Racism on Clinical Work," Social Casework, 54(2), 1973, p. 76.

[20]Ibid.

one of action-oriented casework with an emphasis on
short-term treatment and concrete gains. These authors
suggest that social work be more cognizant of the special
needs of these clients.[21] The resources listed are not
all inclusive, but do represent the spectrum of opinions
across different minority populations.

Although the sources revealed differing opinions
regarding the impact of racism within practitioner/minority
client relationships, it was acknowledged as a potent dynamic
in social work practice. The work reviewed appears to
present a continuum of philosophy, at one end, an action/
change orientation, and at the other, a pathology/social
control orientation. The concepts of individual and
institutional racism and the function of social control
are examined in the following sections.

INDIVIDUAL/INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

The American Heritage Dictionary briefly defines
racism as "The notion that one's own ethnic stock is

[21]Dorcas Bowles, "Making Casework Relevent to Black
People: Approaches, Techniques, Theoretical Implications,"
Child Welfare, Vol. XLVIII, (8), October, 1969, pp. 468;
Man Keung Ho, "Social Work with Asian-Americans," Social
Casework, March, 1967, Vol. 57 (3), pp. 189-201; Herbert
Locklear, "American Indian Myths," Social Work, Vol. 17,
(3), May 1972, pp. 72-80; Inez M. Taylor and Sophie D.
Thompson, "Cultural Factors in Casework: Treatment of a
Navajo Mental Patient," Social Casework, XLVI (4), 1965,
pp. 215-220; Harriet P. Trader, "Survival Strategies for
Oppressed Minorities," Social Work, Vol. 22 (1), January
1977, pp. 10-13.

superior."[22] William Newman defines racism in terms of

society:

> ...any instance in which social beliefs and conduct
> based upon alleged racial differences are a major
> part of the stratification system in society.[23]

He goes on to say

> ...racism as both a social doctrine and as a
> pattern of social conduct, is a social reality
> in contemporary American society.[24]

Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton defined

racism from a Black perspective. In their book "Black

Power" they state

> Racism is both overt and covert. It takes
> two closely related forms: individual whites
> acting against individual blacks, and acts by
> the total white community against the black
> community. We call these individual racism
> and institutional racism.[25]

Institutions in this context are described as

"fairly stable social arrangements and practices through

which collective actions are taken", (i.e., political,

economic, religious, educational, and legal).[26]

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[22]William Morris, ed., The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, (American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., and Houghton Mifflin, Co., New York, 1973), pp. 1075.

[23]William M. Newman, American Pluralism: A Study of Minority Groups and Social Theory, (Harper & Row, New York, 1973), pp. 276.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America, (Vintage Books, New York, 1967), cited in Louis L. Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, Institutional Racism in America, (Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey, 1979), pp. 1.

[26]Knowles and Prewitt, op. cit., pp. 5.

Blauner speaks of the fact that

> Men of goodwill help maintain the racism of
> American society and in some cases even profit
> from it. This takes place because racism is
> institutionalized. The processes that maintain
> domination--control of whites over nonwhites--
> are built into the major social institutions.[27]

Individual and institutional racism are not the only

forms of racism, however. Newman posits that

> ...prejudice and discrimination may be either
> intended or unintended. The term subjective
> racism may be used to refer to instances where
> prejudice and discrimination are conscious and
> intended. Objective racism refers to situations
> in which racial prejudice and discrimination
> result as unintended or unconscious outcomes of
> human action.[28]

Few social workers would admit to or practice

consciously racist acts. Knowles and Prewitt have addressed

this issue in their text. They state

> Both the individual act of racism and the racist
> institutional policy may occur without the presence
> of conscious bigotry. and both may be masked inten-
> tionally or innocently.[29]

Barry Schwartz and Robert Disch have labelled these

practices "White Racism." Bennett states in their book

by the same name,

> The problem of racism in America...is a white pro-
> blem. And in order to solve that problem we must seek
> its source, not in the Negro but in the white Amer-
> ican (in the process by which he was educated, in
> the needs and complexes he expresses through racism)
> and in the structure of the white community (in

[27]Robert Blauner, Racial Oppression in America,
Harper & Row, New York, 1972, pp. 10.

[28]Newman, op. cit., pp. 276-7.

[29]Knowles and Prewitt, op. cit., pp. 5

the power arrangements and the illicit uses of racism
in the scramble for scarce values: power, prestige,
income).[30]

Schwartz and Disch provide a qualification to this
statement by Bennett. They point to the function of racism
within the society:

> To speak of white racism in America does not
> mean that everyone who is white believes that
> the white man possesses some innate superiority.
> It does mean that American society operates
> as though this were the case, that the nature
> of American society is the same as if this
> belief were held by all whites.[31]

Racism, therefore, can be individual or collective,
intended or unintended. As Crawford states,

> Americans support racism and perpetuate its
> accompanying system of privilege through a net-
> work of practices, values, attitudes, and roles,
> touching every major social institution in the
> United States.[32]

If that is the case, then we have all been influenced
in some fashion by racism. Schwartz and Disch describe
this process:

> We learn the predominant cultural patterns
> through imitation of parents, peer group rela-
> tionships, language, and endless interactions with
> our environment. In racist America, one of the
> "truths" etched into the psyches of each newly
> born generation confers superiority on whites
> while relegating blacks and other nonwhites to
> the status of a lesser humanity.[33]

[30]Lerone Bennett, Jr., in White Racism: Its History,
Pathology, and Practice, Barry N. Schwartz and Robert Disch,
eds., (Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1970), p. 251.

[31]Schwartz and Disch, op. cit., p. 65

[32]Lorraine Crawford, "Privilege and Racism: Institu-
tional Racism in America Examined," (unpublished paper,
Portland State University, 1978), p.1.

[33]Schwartz and Disch, op. cit., p.1

Whether we do or do not hold conscious or unconscious racist attitudes; whether we are aware of racism within the educational, economic, legal, social welfare, political, and religious institutions of our society; racism has been identified and described by both blacks and whites. The literature is replete with examples.

Perhaps it can be concluded that racism operates as an effective form of social control for non white populations. The concept of social control is the next topic for discussion.

SOCIAL CONTROL

Carol Meyer, in her book <u>Social Work Practice</u>, states that

> The provision of human services by the public or private sector of a community may be an indicator of social responsibility or of social control, depending upon who is providing the services and toward what end.[34]

Galper observes how services exhibit this factor of social control within agencies,

> In all programs, a variety of notions about the ways in which people are expected to behave are structured into the rules and regulations. It is very difficult to think of any social service which is available to people simply as a consequence of their human existance.[35]

Public welfare is described by Knowles and Prewitt as controlling even minute issues in day-to-day living,

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[34]Carol H. Meyer, <u>Social Work Practice: The Changing Landscape</u>, 2nd ed., (The Free Press, New York, 1976), pp. 79.

[35]Jeffry H. Galper, <u>The Politics of Social Services</u>, (Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey, 1975), pp. 52.

The bureaucratic structures operate on the assumption that if you are poor, especially poor and black, you are not capable of managing your own affairs.[36]

Murray Edelman states that even the language used within the social work profession serves a political purpose. He says

Because the helping professions define other peoples statuses (and their own), the special terms they employ to categorize clients and justify restrictions on their physical movements and of their moral and intellectual influence are especially revealing of the political functions language performs and of the multiple realities it helps create...The special language of the helping professions, which we are socialized to see as professional and as nonpolitical, is a major example of this level of politics...Unexamined language and actions can help us understand more profoundly than legislative histories or administrative or judicial proceedings how we decide upon status, rewards and controls for the wealthy, the poor, women, conformists and nonconformists.[37]

Gilbert and Specht appear to state that social control is necessary to some degree in a civilized society. They comment

In general, social welfare professions find social control a disagreeable element of policy. We mention this point because the objectionable functions associated with, and the resistive feelings aroused by, the term social control should not paralyze our facility to weigh the case for provisions in kind. Social controls are required to regulate a complex and highly interdependent society. Regulation that replaces the power of the individual by the power of the community, Freud observed, 'constitutes the decisive step of civilization.'

[36]Knowles and Prewitt, op. cit., pp. 159.

[37]Murray Edelman, "The Political Language of the Helping Professions," Politics and Society, 4 (3), 1974, pp. 296-297.

> The issue is not whether we will have controls
> but whether they will be deliberately designed
> to realize our ideals of human dignity and jus-
> tice or to serve pernicious ends, to soothe or to
> tame the spirit.[38]

Opinions vary as to the intent and the effect of social control over clients in the social services, however, it does appear to be an acknowledged factor in practice. Perhaps social workers are as controlled by policy as they are controlling. Galper observes that

> Thus the general message to the client that is
> contained in the fact of underfinanced, inadequate,
> and inappropriate services is also a message to the
> worker...The message must necessarily be that if the
> worker does not remain properly at work and properly
> within the accepted standards of behavior, he or
> she may someday be forced to accept the very kind
> of inadequate service being provided to present
> clients.[39]

In contrast to this notion of social control is the notion of social change. One (social control) has been associated with a rigid social ideology and in the helping professions, equated with a pathology-in-individual model; while the change perspective is considered to reflect a problem orientation which gives more acknowledgment to extra-psychic phenomena.

Roland Warren has posited a paradigm framework which encompasses these two views. He states

[38]Neil Gilbert and Harry Specht, Dimensions of Social Welfare Policy, (Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey, 1974), pp. 84.

[39]Galper, op. cit., pp. 62.

Two alternative paradigms are available for diagnosing poverty as a basis for conceptualization, strategy, and technology. Although both are fairly familiar in the poverty literature, one is clearly preferred when it comes to the moment of strategy choice. These two paradigms can be called, respectively, the approach based on 'individual deficiency', and the 'dysfunctional social structure' approach.[40]

Warren elaborates on these constructs:

The one paradigm takes as its point of orientation the particular situation of the individual-in-poverty, emphasizing that his poverty, as well as other attendant problems, is associated with his ability to function adequately within the accepted norms of American society. We call this Diagnostic Paradigm I. The other paradigm takes as its point of orientation the aspects of the social system which purportedly produce poverty as a system output. We call this Diagnostic Paradigm II.[41]

According to Warren, Paradigm I puts the focus for change on the individual, Paradigm II on the social structure. He states that Paradigm I is incorporated in the "institutionalized thought structure" that guides social work.[42] Hussman provides an example

Within this paradigm, the concept of a residual proglem population (the poor, the delinquent, etc.), is accepted. There are some people who just don't make it, and if they don't, it's their own fault because everyone basically has the same rights and opportunities. This principle, which grows out of our heritage of 'rugged individualism,' also applies to minority or special interest groups within the population. If they don't organize to press for their needs, it's their fault too, because they certainly have the right to do so.[43]

[40]Roland L. Warren, "The Sociology of Knowledge and the Problem of the Inner Cities," Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 52 (3), 1971, pp. 472.

[41]Ibid., pp. 472-473.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Trudy Hussman, "Social Workers' Attitudes About Poverty," (unpublished paper, Portland State University, 1976).

Paradigm II theory would maintain that social structures are unsound and operate to produce problems for and within individuals. Changing these structures rather than trying to mold individuals into conformity would be the logical operation.

Social institutions have not proved very malleable to change, however. Paradigm I values are more consistent with the theories of Social Darwinism and the Protestant Ethic, which have profoundly influenced the development of our society. Paradigm II would challenge those institutions, groups, and individuals who have a great deal invested in the present structure.

The concepts of individual/institutional racism, social control, and Warren's diagnostic paradigmatology all have particular implications for the practice of social work with minority clients. Social workers by the nature of the theory, policy, and technology that guide practice, look to the individual for pathology when he appears not able to "make it" in society. Although Paradigm II has been proposed as an alternate theory, the difficulties in operationalizing it in the face of a resistant status quo have been formidable. Social work appears to incorporate a strong measure of social control within its programs and methodologies, which is consistent with Paradigm I. Lastly, whether conscious or unconscious, direct or indirect, individual or institutional, racism, and particularly "white"

racism, has been identified as a consistent theme throughout our history to the present. As individuals, it is unlikely that social workers have gone untouched by it.

Social work practitioners and educators, then, are in a double bind situation. Practicing in a profession primarily within Paradigm I, in a society described as racist, social workers must wind their way through their own conscious and unconscious attitudes about the poor, and particularly the minority poor. Humanitarian values within social work collide with institutional and individual racist thought structures; whether intended or unintended they are said to touch everyone.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to survey attitudes of
social work educators and practitioners toward minority
clients to establish preliminary and descriptive informa-
tion for further hypothesis testing. This chapter describes
the research design and methodology used in the develop-
ment of the project.

Following established procedures for exploratory
research as noted in Selltiz et al, Kerlinger, Fellin et
al, and Fisher,[1] a study was designed to clarify the nature
of social work practice with minority clients. For the
purposes of this work, one aspect of the study, the attitu-
dinal survey, is reported herein.

The following method describes the approach and design
of the entire study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research studies of an exploratory-descriptive nature

[1]Claire Selltiz, Lawrence A. Wrightsman, Stuart W. Cook,
Research Methods in Social Relations, 3rd ed., (Holt, Rinehart,
and Winston, Inc., New York, 1976), pp. 95-101; Fred N. Kerlin-
ger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, 2nd ed., (Holt, Rine-
hart, and Winston, Inc., New York, 1964) pp. 414-422; Phillip
Fellin, Tony Tripodi, Henry J. Meyer, Exemplars of Social
Research, (F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1969), pp. 139-141;
Joel Fisher, Analyzing Research: A Guide for Social Workers,
(University of Hawaii, 1975), p. 3.

have as their purpose to "gain familiarity with a phenome-
non or to achieve new insights into it, often in order to
formulate a more precise research problem or to develop hy-
potheses."[2]

Ideally, the design will attempt to provide a careful
and systematic gathering of the data so that the research
project can be useful in further efforts. A randomized
sample of the population to be studied helps to insure its
representativeness and is necessary to formulate relation-
ships among the variables, if that is the purpose of the
study. A pretest of the survey instrument can aid in deter-
mining the uniformity and clarity of the questionnaire
items. Followup letters, cards, or telephone calls can result
in an improved response rate, which is usually low (between
10-50 percent) for mailed questionnaires. A combination of
questionnaire and interview has the advantage of enlarging
the scope of the available data, reducing confusion over
items, and guaranteeing a better response rate. However,
there is a concomitant loss of anonymity for the respondent,
increased cost in terms of travel and investigator time,
and the possibility of intervening variations from interview
to interview.[3]

[2]Selltiz, op. cit., pp. 90.

[3]Ibid., pp. 294-298.

The above delineates an ideal procedure. However, given cost and time limitations, it was elected to use a mailout questionnaire to survey attitudes of 1) members of the Oregon and Washington chapters of NASW, 2) a selected group of educators in Oregon and Washington undergraduate and graduate schools of social work, and 3) a selected group of Black, Chicano, and Native American professionals and paraprofessionals in social service agencies.

The results from the survey were then subjected to descriptive statistical techniques for the purpose of providing initial information as to the scope of responses in relation to Warren's Paradigms I and II and the concept of institutional racism. The findings provided part of the initial groundwork for further research in this area. It was decided that due to the state of the art of social work research with minority clients, hypothesis formulation and testing would be inappropriately premature for this study.

THE SAMPLE POPULATION

Initially, the intent was to obtain a randomized sample of practitioners from the membership lists of the Oregon and Washington chapters of NASW. However, it was felt that the NASW membership lists might not include representative samples of all the groups which we felt should be a part of the study (minority and non-minority practitioners

and educators).* Selected lists of Black, Chicano, and

Native American Indian professionals and paraprofessionals

in social service agencies from Oregon and Washington were

also compiled. Although there are other ethnic minority

groups among the clientele of Oregon and Washington social

service agencies who might have been included in the study,

it was decided to focus only on Blacks, Chicanos, and

Native American Indians. Population ratios within the North-

west reflect that these three groups are the most highly

represented of minorities of color.**

A selected list of educators in graduate and under-

graduate schools of social work in Oregon and Washington

was compiled because it was felt that they, too, would be

underrepresented in NASW chapters. These lists and the

membership lists from the NASW chapters formed the popula-

tion to be surveyed.

The three categories of groups surveyed were defined

as follows:

The category "practitioner" included all non-minority

direct service providers, supervisors, administrators, stu-

dents and student practitioners, mixed roles (i.e., direct

service provider/administrator), and other (unemployed,

retired, etc.).

*For example, the ONASW chapter reported that 460 of 741
members indicated ethnicity, and 15 of the 460 were either
Black, Chicano, American Indian, Asian or Puerto Rican.

**For example, Oregon: Total Population - 2,091,385;
Blacks - 26,211; Chicanos - 34,500; American Indian - 13,210.
Washington: Total Population - 3,409,169; Blacks - 70,859;
Chicanos - 70,734; American Indian - 30,824

The category "educator" included all non-minority social work faculty persons. Anyone listing a combination of roles which included teaching was considered to be in this category.

The category "minorities" included minority group members, self-defined under the Ethnic/Racial Affiliation item on the questionnaire. The categories were Asian American, Black Afro American, Native American Indian/Alaskan Native, Spanish Speaking/Surname, European Ancestry, and Other (specify). For the sake of simplicity, those in the Other category (i.e., those responding as Jewish) were subsequently treated as members of the European Ancestry category.

For ease in describing groups, all ethnic minority groups in the following chapters will also be referred to as "minorities" or "minority groups", although it is recognized that these terms have taken on additional meanings. Also, in all further discussions, Native American Indians/ Alaskan Native respondents will be referred to as "American Indians", although technically they are not members of the same ethnic grouping.

A total of 1,400 questionnaires were mailed to this population, 1,140 (81 percent) to Oregon and Washington NASW members, 140 (10 percent) to minority professionals and paraprofessionals, and 120 (9 percent) to social work educators.

Of the 1,400 questionnaires mailed out, a total of 201 responses were received. Of the 201, 139 (69 percent) were from practitioners, 25 (12 percent) were from educators, and 37 (9 percent) from ethnic minorities.

The relatively low return rate, (14 percent) is consistent with averages noted in a previously cited research text[4] and within allowable limits for the purposes of the study.

Among the total respondents, 79 (39 percent) were men and 116 (58 percent) were women. Nine declined to respond to this item.

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire consists of five sections: (see Appendix A)

Section 1 - Demographic Data

This section includes sex, age, ethnic/racial affiliation, education, salary, work setting, work role, and percent of time spent either working with minorities or on minority-related issues.

Section 2 - Hypothetical Case Study

Each questionnaire posed a hypothetical case study involving either a Black, Chicano, or Native American Indian woman. Respondents were provided with an open-ended format

[4]Selltiz, op. cit., pp. 297.

by which they could provide a problem assessment and an action plan for the client.

Section 3 - Diagnosis/Assessment Statements

The respondent was given a choice of twenty-one possible assessment statements. The six-point scale ranged from Completely Relevent to Completely Irrelevent, with a No Opinion option. For example:

difficulties in forming inter-
personal relations   CR R SR SI I CI NO

(Scale: CR - Completely Relevent, R - Relevent, SR - Slightly Relevent, SI - Slightly Irrelevent, I - Irrelevent, CI - Completely Irrelevent, NO - No Opinion.)

Section 4 - Action Plan

Respondents had a choice of eighteen possible action proposals to meet the client's assessed needs. Again, the six-point scale items ranged from Completely Relevent to Completely Irrelevent with a No Opinion option. Respondents were provided with an open-ended format for any additional comments regarding the diagnosis/assessment and action plan sections. For example:

Obtain psychological evaluation CR R SR SI I CI NO

Section 5 - Attitude Survey

This section consisted of fifteen attitude statements related to social work practice with minority clients. Res-

pondents were provided a six-point scale ranging from Agree
Completely to Disagree Completely. A No Opinion option was
again provided. For example:

    Social service programs have been
    effective with racial minorities   AC A AS DS D DC NO

(Scale: AC - Agree Completely, A - Agree, AS - Agree Slightly,
DS - Disagree Slightly, D - Disagree, DC - Disagree Completely,
NO - No Opinion.)

The statements in all three sections, Diagnosis/Assess-
ment, Action Plans, and Attitude Survey, were designed to
fit into a Paradigm I or a Paradigm II category.

Although the data from the entire questionnaire is
enlightening, only Sections 1 and 5, the demographic data
and attitudinal survey, were analyzed in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The final draft of the questionnaire was critiqued
by a small group of graduate social work students. Their
suggestions were included in the final instrument. This
was not, however, considered a formal pretest.

The questionnaire was printed on a single sheet and
incorporated the cover letter, the actual questionnaire
items, space for recipient's address, and a pre-addressed/
pre-stamped return format. It was only necessary to com-
plete the questionnaire, refold it with return address
showing, and mail it back. Overall it was attractive, a

distinctive format, simple to use and return, and profes-sional-appearing, as recommended by Selltiz.[5]

There was no follow-up procedure due to financial and time constraints; however, it was felt the return rate was within acceptable limits for the purpose of the study.

Since this was an explorative research design invol-ving nonprobability data, no hypotheses were proposed. The study results were considered purely descriptive and not subject to further generalization. This project suggests areas or hypotheses for further study.

SUMMARY

Research in social work practice with ethnic minority clients is a relatively undeveloped field. An exploratory research design aimed at assessing the range of social work practitioners and educators toward minority clients was pre-pared and implemented by means of a survey questionnaire. The sample population for the study included members of the Oregon and Washington chapters of NASW, a selected group of faculty from Oregon and Washington undergraduate and graduate schools of social work, and a selected group of minority professionals and paraprofessionals in Oregon and Washington social service agencies. The return rate was within allowable limits and the findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

[5]see Selltiz on factors influencing rate of question-naire return, p. 297.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The study surveyed 1,400 social work practitioners and educators, both minority and non minority, to determine the range of attitudes concerning social work with minority clients. This chapter is a discussion of the findings, the conclusions drawn from the data, and the limitations of the study design and results.

Although the survey questionnaire consisted of five sections assessing demographic data, hypothetical case study, diagnosis/assessment, action plan, and attitudes, only the first and last will be considered here.

The demographic data section consisted of eight items: 1) sex, 2) age, 3) ethnic/racial affiliation, 4) education, 5) approximate salary. Items related to practice were: 6) work setting (agency, school, or other), 7) work role (educator, practitioner, supervisor, administrator, student, mixed roles, and other), and percent of time spent working with minorities or on minority related issues, including supervision, administration, and teaching.

The sample groups consisted of:

Educator - Any respondents who included teaching as their work role or one of their work roles.

Practitioner - All other respondents were grouped
within this category.

Minorities - All respondents indicating either a Black,
Chicano, or American Indian ethnic affiliation were grouped
in this category. (The assumption being that minority
representation in the above categories would be so small as
to be insignificant for discussion.)

Table I shows the breakdown of all three groups by
sex. A total of 201 responses were received, and only in
the minorities category are there more males than females.
Nearly twice as many females as males responded to the sur-
vey in the educator and practitioner groups. Perhaps female
respondents identified with the case study and thus were
more motivated to return the questionnaire.

TABLE I

GROUP BY SEX

Group	Total	sex/percent		
		M/%	F/%	9/%*
Practitioners	139	48/35	86/62	5/4
Educators	25	8/32	17/68	0/
Minorities	37	23/62	13/35	1/3

*9 indicates the percent of nonresponse.

Table II presents the three groups according to
their age groups. Nearly half the total practitioners (49%)
were between 30-39 years; educators showed 36% of the res-
pondents between 50-59 years; and minorities had the greatest
number in the 39 and under brackets (a total of 68%). A
possible explanation for the high number of minority prac-
titioners in these age groups could be the recent emphasis
on affirmative action within graduate schools, particularly
social work graduate schools.

Table III demonstrates the three groups according to
educational level. Of the practioners category, 84% had
completed a master's degree. Approximately half the educa-
tors had a master's, and 36% had a Ph.d. Of the minorities,
65% had completed the master's degree.

Table IV is a breakdown of the three groups by approx-
imate salary. The bulk of the responses from practitioners
indicated the largest percentage earned anywhere from $15,000
to 19,999. Minorities, however, had fairly even percentages
in the first three salary categories, ranging from $10,000
and under to 19,999. Educators were fairly evenly dispersed
over categories 2, 3, 4, and 5, indicating a wide range of
income from $10,000 to 25,000 and up.

Table V indicates the percent of respondents in agency,
school, or other work setting. Practitioners showed 75%
in agency settings; educators with equal percentages in agency
and school settings, (40-40%). (Perhaps this is an indica-

tor of the prevalence of mixed roles for social work educa-
tors.) Minorities appear to have the greatest percent of
respondents in agency settings (70%).

Table VI gives a breakdown by work role. Approximately
half (50%) are direct service providers (coded "practi-
tioners"), with 29% in administrative roles. Over two-thirds
of the educators indicated mixed roles (68%). Nearly half
(49%) of the minorities group were direct service providers,
with 24% in administrative roles.

Table VII demonstrates the percent of time spent on
minorities-related issues. Forty percent (40%) of the
practitioners responded that they spent from approximately
1-10% of their time on these groups, with 60% of the educa-
tors falling into the same category. Nearly half of the
minority respondents (49%), however, spent over 50% of their
time on minorities/minority issues.

For ease of presentation, Tables II - VII appear on
pages 37 - 42.

TABLE II

GROUP BY AGE

| | | Age in Years | | | | | | |
Group	Total	1 Less than 29	2 30-39	3 40-49	4 50-59	5 Over 60	8*	9**
Practitioners	139	23/17	49/35	22/16	30/22	10/7	5/4	
Educators	25	4/16	5/20	5/20	9/36	2/8	0	
Minorities	37	14/38	13/30	3/8	6/16		0	1/3

*8 indicates "unable to code"

**9 indicates percent of nonresponse

TABLE III

GROUP BY EDUCATION

Educational Level of Sample Groups

Group	1 H.S. or less	2 Some College	3 Comp College	4 Some P.G. Work	5 Comp M.S. Deg	6 Some Toward Ph.d.	7 Ph.d.	9* No Resp.
Practitioners	0	4/3	1/1	5/4	117/84	6/4	2/1	4/3
Educators	0	0	0	1/4	14/56	1/4	9/36	0
Minorities	0	6/16	2/5	2/5	23/62	2/5	2/5	0

*9 indicates percent of nonresponse

TABLE IV

GROUP BY SALARY

Group	Approximate Salary Ranges						
	1	2	3	4	5	8*	9**
	Less than 10,000	10,000-14,999	15,000-19,999	20,000-24,999	Over 25,000		
Practitioners	25/18	35/25	45/32	20/14	4/3	2/1	8/6
Educators	3/12	5/20	5/20	5/20	6/24	1/4	
Minorities	10/27	10/27	9/24	6/16	2/5	0	0

*8 indicates "unable to code"

**9 indicates percent of nonresponse

TABLE V

GROUP BY WORK SETTING

	Work Settings of Sample Groups				
	1	2	3	8	9
Group	Agency	School	Other	Unable to code	No Response
Practitioners	106/76	14/10	11/8	0	8/6
Educators	10/40	10/40	5/20	0	0
Minorities	26/70	8/22	2/5	0	1/3

TABLE VI

GROUP BY WORK ROLE

Work Roles of Sample Groups

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Group	Educator	Practi-tioner	Super-visor	Adminis-trator	Student	Mixed Role	Other: Unempl. Retired	Unable to Code	No Resp.
Practitioners		69/50	14/10	40/29	5/4		4/3	1/1	6/4
Educators	8/32	0	0	0	0	17/68	0	0	0
Minorities	5/14	18/49	0	9/24	3/8	2/5	0	0	0

TABLE VII

PERCENT OF TIME SPENT WITH MINORITIES
OR ON MINORITY ISSUES

Percent of Time/Percent of Total Response

	1	2	3	4	5	8	9
Group	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	Over 50%	Unable to Code	No Resp.
Practitioner	36/26	56/40	15/11	5/4	16/12	1/1	10/7
Educators	3/12	15/60	6/24	1/4	0	0	0
Minorities	4/11	6/16	5/14	4/11	18/49	0	0

The section assessing attitudes about social work with minority clients consists of fifteen statements. Respondents could indicate whether they agreed, disagreed, or had no opinion. An item analysis was performed with the responses from each group, and the findings are as follows:

ATTITUDE SCALE

1	2	3	4	5	6
Agree Completely	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree	Disagree Completely
(AC)	(A)	(AS)	(DS)	(D)	(DC)

A No Opinion option was also provided, (7) NO. Using this scale, an item analysis was carried out comparing the mean response for each attitude statement among all three groups.

STATEMENT	MEAN RESPONSE	
(1) Social service programs have been effective with racial minorities	Practitioners Educators Minorities	4.132 4.600 4.054
(2) There is a special knowledge base for assessing/understanding problems presented by racial minorities.	Practitioner Educators Minorities	2.072 2.160 2.229
(3) Good, professional social work, not special technologies, is all that is needed for effective service to racial minorities.	Practitioners Educators Minorities	4.360 4.240 4.36I
(4) Social services will succeed only when their programs and policies meet the social change needs of racial minority clients.	Practitioners Educators Minorities	2.496 2.680 2.056

(5) Without a thorough understanding of institutional racism, it is impossible to understand the problems of racial minority clients.

Practitioners	2.640
Educators	1.880
Minorities	2.595

(6) Bureaucratic problems such as red tape and high caseloads are chiefly responsible when services fail.

Practitioners	3.871
Educators	4.080
Minorities	3.405

(7) Fundamental to understanding the problems presented by racial minorities is knowledge about sub-cultural values and traditions.

Practitioners	2.000
Educators	1.680
Minorities	1.784

(8) Unless more effective methods of helping racial minorities are found, services to them are doomed to failure.

Practitioners	3.029
Educators	3.160
Minorities	2.405

(9) Effective social service to racial minorities does not depend on understanding the particular psycho-social nature of each individual's problem.

Practitioners	4.511
Educators	4.320
Minorities	4.108

(10) Family related problems such as unwed parenthood are not the most significant problems faced by racial minorities.

Practitioners	2.485
Educators	2.360
Minorities	2.432

(11) Problems of mental health including alcohol and drug abuse are the worst problems experienced by racial minorities.

Practitioners	4.569
Educators	4.917
Minorities	3.811

(12) Economic problems such as unemployment and poverty are without doubt the major problems confronted by racial minority peoples.

Practitioners	2.130
Educators	1.960
Minorities	2.270

(13) Problems of racial discrimination and prejudice are not as serious a problem as many believe.

Practitioners	4.986
Educators	5.480
Minorities	5.378

(14) Racial minorities could get ahead if they would only motivate themselves to look for work, work hard, and keep their jobs.

Practitioners	5.079
Educators	5.360
Minorities	5.378

(15) Educational problems such as poor schools are the chief obstacles confronted by racial minorities.

Practitioners	3.775
Educators	3.760
Minorities	3.250

An analysis of the mean response of each group to the attitude statements is as follows. A mean response is considered significant if it differs by .5 or more. Statements with a significant difference among the groups are indicated with an asterisk (*).

*Statement 1 - Educators indicate a significantly greater amount of disagreement, with all groups disagreeing slightly.

Statement 2 - No significant difference with all groups agreeing.

Statement 3 - No significant difference with all groups disagreeing slightly.

*Statement 4 - All groups agreed with this statement; however, minorities and educators show the most significance with minorities agreeing less.

*Statement 5 - The responses differed significantly to this statement, with educators showing complete agreement, minorities and practitioners agreeing.

*Statement 6 - This item produced significant differences, with educators disagreeing and minorities and practitioners disagreeing slightly.

Statement 7 - There is no significant difference with all groups showing agreement.

Statement 8 - No significant differences with all groups agreeing to this item.

Statement 9 - No significant differences, with all groups disagreeing.

Statement 10 - All groups in agreement with this statement. No significant differences.

*Statement 11 - This item shows a significant difference in responses with educators disagreeing more so than minorities.

Statement 12 - No significant differences with all groups agreeing.

Statement 13 - No significant differences with all groups disagreeing.

Statement 14 - No significant differences with all groups disagreeing.

*Statement 15 - There were significant differences, on this item, with educators and practitioners closer to disagreeing.

It appears from this analysis that all groups disagree with the statement that social services have been effective with minority clients; however, educators have the greatest degree of disagreement.

On the statement referring to social change needs, again educators show a significantly greater degree of agreement than minorities or practitioners.

Understanding institutional racism in order to work with minority clients again got the highest rate of agree- ment from educators, with minorities and practitioners closer to the same mean response.

Minorities and practitioners agreed somewhat that bureaucratic problems were responsible for service failures; however, educators disagreed somewhat with this statement.

Minorities agreed that more effective methods were necessary in working with their groups; however, practitioners and educators were more qualified in their agreement.

Educators and practitioners disagreed that alcohol and drug problems were the main problems experienced by minorities; however, minority respondents agreed somewhat with this statement.

All three groups agreed somewhat that educational problems are the chief obstacles faced by minorities; however, minorities showed the least amount of agreement with this statement.

No significant differences were demonstrated on the other responses.

To examine the data from another perspective, the mean responses and standard deviations for the fifteen items were compared for the three sample groups. Table VIII demonstrates the results of that comparison. Again, only the previously noted items appear to show any significant difference. (Please refer to Table VIII, page 48.)

An attempt was made to look at the data in terms of Warren's Paradigms I and II (individual pathology/conformity model vs. societal/change model). Statements which appeared to focus upon individuals/families as sources of pathology were grouped under Paradigm I; those with a societal focus were grouped under Paradigm II. The mean responses for all groups to each item were compared within this framework. A

TABLE VIII

MEAN RESPONSES TO ATTITUDE STATEMENTS

Items		(139) Practitioners			(25) Educators			(37) Minorities	
Variable Labels	N	Mean Resp	Stand Devia	N	Mean Resp	Stand Devia	N	Mean Resp	Stand Devia
Effective Social Services (1)	136	4.132	1.310	25	4.600	1.080	37	4.054	1.433
Knowledge Base (2)	138	2.072	0.885	25	2.160	0.943	35	2.229	1.629
Good Social Work (3)	136	4.360	1.364	25	4.240	1.665	36	4.361	1.869
Social Change Needs (4)	137	2.496	1.318	25	2.680	1.600	36	2.056	1.120
Institutional Racism (5)	136	2.640	1.320	25	1.880	0.833	37	2.595	1.691
Bureaucratic Problems (6)	139	3.871	1.301	25	4.080	1.222	37	3.405	1.589
Subcultural Values (7)	139	2.000	1.022	25	1.680	0.690	37	1.784	0.917
Services Doomed (8)	139	3.029	1.393	25	3.160	1.748	37	2.405	1.607
*Psycho-Soc (9) Understanding	137	4.511	1.389	25	4.320	1.376	37	4.108	1.745
*Family Related Problems (10)	136	2.485	1.393	25	2.360	1.497	37	2.432	1.482
Mental Health Problems (11)	137	4.569	1.181	25	4.917	0.974	37	3.811	1.613
Economic Problems (12)	138	2.130	1.119	25	1.960	0.889	37	2.270	1.367
*Prejudice (13)	138	4.986	1.081	25	5.480	0.872	37	5.378	0.893
Motivation(14)	139	5.079	1.029	25	5.360	0.952	36	5.194	1.167
Education Problems (15)	138	3.775	1.273	25	3.760	1.091	36	3.250	1.402

*These statements were phrased in the negative

mean of the means was then calculated to determine the aver-
age of the responses within each Paradigm for each sample
group. The results are shown in Table IX. Two items (Nos.
11 and 6) indicated the only areas of disagreement among
the samples. Item 11 stated "Problems of mental health
including alcohol and drug abuse are the worst problems
experienced by racial minorities." Minorities tended to
agree somewhat while educators and practitioners disagreed.
Item 6 read "Bureaucratic problems such as red tape and high
caseloads are chiefly responsible when services fail." Prac-
titioners and minorities agreed somewhat; however, educators
disagreed. Overall, all groups tended to agree with the
items within the Paradigm II orientation, but responses were
mixed within the Paradigm I framework. (Please refer to
Table IX, page 50.)

A study specifically designed to test this framework
would provide a picture of whether or not attitudes such as
these are actually carried over into practice. The results
from this attitude survey are very preliminary, however,
since the intent was to explore issues for possible further
research.

CONCLUSIONS: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The demographic data and the attitude responses do
provide a tentative sketch of the overall group who responded
to the survey. Nearly two times as many female educators

TABLE IX

MEAN RESPONSE WITHIN PARADIGMS I & II

	Practitioners (n=139)	Educators (n=25)	Minorities (n=37)
Paradigm I Items	Mean Response	Mean Response	Mean Response
1	4.132	4.600	4.054
3	4.360	4.240	4.361
7	2.000	1.680	1.784
8	3.029	3.160	2.405
10	2.485	2.360	2.432
*11	4.569	4.917	3.811
13	4.986	5.480	5.378
14	5.079	5.360	5.194
Paradigm II Items	Mean Response	Mean Response	Mean Response
2	2.072	2.160	2.229
4	2.496	2.680	2.056
5	2.640	1.880	2.595
*6	3.871	4.080	3.405
9	4.511	4.320	4.108
12	2.130	1.960	2.270
15	3.775	3.760	3.250
Mean of the Means	2.67	2.60	2.49

*Items indicating opposite viewpoints

SCALE

1	2	3	4	5	6
Agree Completely	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree	Disagree Completely

and practitioners responded as did males. The minority educators and practitioners reversed that ratio, however, with 65% males and 35% females responding. It was tentatively proposed that perhaps this comparatively large response among nonminority female practitioners and educators was due to an identification with the case study involving a female. Perhaps females would have a stronger motivation to respond to the survey. The exact opposite response occurred in the minorities category, with twice as many male as female respondents. It would be interesting to note whether or not this high minority male to female ratio exists in practice.

As a group, practitioners were to be found slightly more often within the 30-39 years age group (35%), with educators more often within the 50-59 years bracket (36%). Minorities were generally younger (38% were 29 and under). All three samples had consistently high representation in the master's degree bracket. Although there were paraprofessionals among the selected minority sample who were known to have had high school diplomas, the GED, or less education, they evidently did not respond to the questionnaire. There were no responses within the high school or less category among all three groups.

Practitioners and minorities had the greatest representation in the first three salary brackets ($10,000 and under to 19,999), while educators were within the mid-range to

high ($10,000 to 25,000 and over) brackets.

Practitioners and minority respondents were mainly working within agencies in direct service roles; educators reported a prevalence of mixed roles.

Nearly half of the minority group spent 50% and over of their time working with minorities or minority-related issues. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the practitioners, and 75% of the educators spent less than 10% of their time on minorities or minority-related issues.

CONCLUSIONS: ATTITUDINAL INFORMATION

Overall, the three groups exhibited consistently similar agreement or disagreement with the attitude state- ments. Only on two items related to the cause of service failure and chief problems faced by minorities did the three groups show a basic disagreement. All three groups agreed with attitude statements focused upon the social system as the source of pathology and the arena for change.

It should be noted again that the intent of the study was to do some preliminary research regarding social work with minority clients. The data is preliminary and of a nonprobability nature, therefore hypothesis formation and testing are not appropriate at this time. The study did suffer some limitations, and those will be discussed in the following section.

LIMITATIONS

The fact that minorities are underrepresented in easily-sampled social work groups such as NASW creates a problem in identifying an adequate random sample from the population. It was necessary to tap information networks among the three minority communities, (i.e., contacting resource persons within the community for names and addresses of possible recipients). This process introduces bias into the study once respondents become aware of who is studying whom.

The questionnaire was also limited by the lack of a pretest to determine its validity and reliability. The fact that educators had a 100% response rate to all 15 items and few, if any minority paraprofessionals responded might suggest that the questionnaire was couched in language and concepts which had more meaning to educators. A pretest of the questionnaire would have encouraged refinement along these lines and might have determined that the questionnaire-interview format might have received a better response from minority paraprofessionals.

A follow-up process, i.e., letter, postcard, or telephone call would probably have insured a larger return rate.

The survey does provide some groundwork and initial data, and it is hoped that the results might provide areas for further exploration.

This chapter assessed the findings from the demographic

and attitude survey sections of a questionnaire study. All
three groups, educators, practitioners and minorities, were
consistent in their mutual agreement or disagreement with
thirteen of the fifteen items. All appeared to agree with
attitude statements which focused attention upon the social
structure as the source of social problems for minority
peoples. The study was limited somewhat by the difficulty
in getting an adequate sample of minority practitioners
and educators as well as the lack of a pretest and follow-up
process. A summary of the survey report and the implica-
tions for social work education and practice are discussed
in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to obtain some exploratory and descriptive information about social work practitioners' and educators' attitudes towards working with minority clients. A questionnaire survey assessing the attitudes and practices of],400 minority and nonminority social work practitioners and educators was carried out.

A survey of the relevent literature revealed many resources on the topics of poverty, black/white relationships, social problems of minority groups and the concepts of individual/institutional racism, but few were directly related to social work with minority clients. Fewer still involve research and the testing of the theories proposed in the literature. The concepts of social control/social change were reviewed, and these provided the theoretical framework for the study. (See Chapter III)

The research design involved a survey questionnaire format which is described in Chapter IV. The Washington and Oregon chapters of NASW provided the population to be studied. However, additional Black, Chicano, and Native American Indian social work professionals and paraprofessionals were selected to be surveyed as these groups were not adequately represented in these chapters of NASW.

The findings from the demographic data and attitudes survey sections of the questionnaire were analyzed and reported in this study. The demographic information revealed, among other information, that the majority of all respondents held at least a master's degree; that the majority of the categories "practitioners" and "minorities" were to be found in agencies in direct service roles; that educators appear to show a prevalence of "mixed roles", (i.e., teaching and direct service), and that approximately twice as many non-minority females as males responded to the questionnaire. The "minorities" group showed just the opposite, with twice as many males as females responding. Educators tended to be older and in higher salary brackets than practitioners and minorities. The majority of the "minorities" sample was 29 and under years of age and in the lower salary brackets. Minorities spent 50% or over of their work time on minorities or minority related issues; whereas the majority of the non-white practitioners and educators spent 10% or less of their time with these concerns. Also, the minority respondents showed a significant percentage of Asian-Americans, 19% of the sample, and this group should be considered in further studies.

The results of the attitudinal survey revealed a con-sistency of agreement among all three groups with the attitude statements focusing on the social system as the source of pathology and the object of action for change. Here minor-ities and educators had the highest degree of overall agree-

ment with practitioners a close third. All three groups
were generally mutual in their agreement or disagreement
with thirteen of the fifteen items. Educators had a 100%
response to all items, which perhaps indicates that the for-
mat and orientation appealed to them the most.

Although the study was somewhat limited by sampling
problems and the lack of a pretest and followup procedure,
it did highlight several issues which pose questions for
further research.

The data suggests that these questions be considered
for exploration:

(1) Although educators had a high rate of agreement on
items related to a Paradigm II framework (social struc-
tures as sources of pathology) and items referring to
special knowledge about minority groups, how does that
relate to the fact that few schools of social work incl-
ude minority content in their curriculum?

(2) If the majority of the "white" sample of practi-
tioners indicates they are directly responsible for
service delivery, yet spend less than 10% of their work
time on minorities or minority-related issues, then the
question becomes "Who is serving the minority poor?"

(3) If practitioners and educators in our sample believe
the emphasis for change should be within the social struc-
ture, is this true of the larger population? And if so,

how is it that social work continues to practice within the Paradigm I framework of individual pathology?

(4) If institutional racism is recognized as a potent variable within practice as our sample indicates it might be, why isn't it acknowledged in the training of social work practitioners?

(5) How long can the profession wait to address such basic issues which have been recognized within social work for at least three decades, if not more?

This author recommends the consideration of these questions in further research, and particularly recommends that Portland State University fulfill its stated obligation to minority populations and assume the leadership in taking up this research task.

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APPENDIX A

1

CASE STUDY

The following is a hypothetical case study concerning a racial minor-ity client. The case is very short and obviously any real decisions about it would necessitate the inclusion of far more information. Neverthe-less, please read it carefully and answer the questions which follow from it.

2

THE CASE OF MARIA SANTOS

As a direct service worker in a multi-service center you receive the case of a 19 year old Mexican American woman named Maria Santos.

During your first interview you learn that Maria came to your area from Texas some five years ago. She is now the mother of a three year old asthmatic son and she left high school when she became pregnant. She is separated from the father, who she still sees on and off, but who con-tributes very sporadically to their economic support. Furthermore, they recently quarreled about his jealous temper and Maria stated that she wasn't counting on seeing him again.

Maria has never applied for public assistance, although her mother has re-ceived ADC payments since they have been in the city. Till now Maria has managed by working at odd jobs but during the past year she has not worked steadily because of a series of minor illnesses. She stated she didn't want to end up as another Mexican failure.

She lives in a two room apartment, is three months behind in her rent, and has received a notice of eviction. Her mother and younger sister live nearby. They babysit for her now and then but she stated that they had their own problems to worry about and couldn't be worried about her.

During the interview she did not express a great deal of emotion although she did express her unhappiness about her predicament. She stated a num-ber of times that she didn't know what to do or where to turn and hoped that the services offered by the center could help her.

3

A. Thinking about this case, how might you assess the problems being pre-sented by Maria Santos? That is, what do you see as the chief problem?

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Thinking about this case, what are some of the things you might try to do to help Maria?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4

Direct service workers are expected to define and assess the problems presented by their clients. Below are listed a number of possible assessments which may be appropriate to the hypothetical case you just read. Re-gardless of your response to part 3, questions A & B, please indicate whether you believe the assessment is completely relevant (CR), relevant (R), somewhat relevant (SR), somewhat irrelevant (SI), irrelevant (I), or completely irrelevant (CI). In those instances where you have no opinion circle NO.

	1 CR	2 R	3 SR	4 SI	5 I	6 CI	7 NO
difficulties in forming interpersonal relations	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
negative or poor self image	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
difficulties in handling finances	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of racial and cultural pride	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of familial support	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
economic exploitation	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
day care problems	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
psychopathology	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
a victim of discrimination because of her sex	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
problems of unemployment and low wages	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
breakdown of traditional family values	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
the harm of making it too easy to get public assistance	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of knowledge of community resources	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of good low cost housing	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
a victim of racial prejudice and discrimination	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
problems in receiving good medical attention	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
learned negative cultural values	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
below normal intelligence	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of knowledge about rights	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of marketable employment skills	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
lack of independence and initiative	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO

5

Direct service workers are also expected to put into effect (always mindful of client self-determination) some plans or proposals for dealing with the assessed problem of the client. Below are listed a number of possible approaches to dealing with the problems presented in our hypothetical case. For each possible plan please in-dicate whether you believe the plan to be completely relevant (CR), relevant (R), somewhat relevant (SR), somewhat irrelevant (SI), irrelevant (I), or completely irrelevant (CI). In those instances where you have no opinion, circle NO.

	1 CR	2 R	3 SR	4 SI	5 I	6 CI	7 NO
obtain psychological evaluation	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
recommend parent training program	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
encourage awareness of welfare programs and how to use them advantageously	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
encourage a sense of self worth and ability to counteract negative stereotypes about minorities	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
initiate conjoint counseling with mother and sister to overcome interpersonal problems	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
encourage participation in political activities to advance the cause of racial minorities	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
propose vocational training or high school equivalence to make her more competitive in the job market	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
foster reconciliation with father to strengthen nuclear family	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
help her locate social clubs where she might participate in community activities	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
recommend participation in welfare rights organization if these are available	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
suggest separation of child from mother for the long range good of both	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
involve in mutual support, mother's group to help overcome isolation	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
assist in day care arrangements to make it easier to continue working	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
foster awareness of underlying personality dynamics leading to her personal problems	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
build her capacity to cope and adapt to social realities	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
help her to understand the social injustices contributing to her difficulties	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
foster the value and dignity of work	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO
suggest a women's consciousness raising group	CR	R	SR	SI	I	CI	NO

6

Now that you have had a chance to react to some possible assessments and intervention strategies with regard to our hypothetical case, are there any additional comments you wish to make?

NO_____ YES_____ With respect to the assessment of the problems presented:_____

_____

_____

_____

YES_____ With respect to possible intervention strategies:_____

_____

_____

_____

Below are listed a number of attitude statements. Consider each one carefully and indicate whether you agree completely (AC), agree (A), agree somewhat (AS), disagree somewhat (DS), disagree (D), or have no opinion (NO) by circling the appropriate category.

- Social service programs have been effective with racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- There is a special knowledge base for assessing and understanding problems presented by racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Good, professional social work, not special technologies, is all that is needed for effective service to racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Social services will succeed only when their programs and policies meet the social change needs of racial minority clients. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Without a thorough understanding of institutional racism, it is impossible to understand the problems of racial minority clients. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Bureaucratic problems such as red tape and high caseloads are chiefly responsible when services fail. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Fundamental to understanding the problem presented by racial minorities is knowledge about sub-cultural values and traditions. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Unless more effective methods of helping racial minorities are found, services to them are doomed to failure. AC A AS DS D DC NO

- Effective social service to racial minorities does not depend on understanding the particular psycho-social nature of each individual's problem. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Family related problems, such as unwed parenthood are not the most significant problems faced by racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Problems of mental health, including alcohol and drug abuse are the worst problems experienced by racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Economic problems such as unemployment and poverty are without doubt the major problems confronted by racial minority peoples. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Problems of racial discrimination and prejudice are not as serious a problem as many believe. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Racial minorities could get ahead if they would only motivate themselves to look for work, work hard and keep their jobs. AC A AS DS D DC NO
- Educational problems such as poor schools are the chief obstacles confronted by racial minorities. AC A AS DS D DC NO

PERSONAL INFORMATION

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER OR FILL IN THE BLANK:

SEX: Male   1
     Female   2

AGE: 29 or under 1
     30 – 39   2
     40 – 49   3
     50 – 59   4
     60 or over   5

ETHNIC/RACIAL AFFILIATION:
     Asian American   1
     Black/Afro American   2
     Native American Indian/Alaskan Native   3
     Spanish Speaking/Surname   4
     European Ancestry   5
     Other (specify)_____   6

EDUCATION:
     High School Diploma or Less   1
     Some college   2
     Completed College   3
     Some Post Graduate Work   4
     Completed Masters Degree   5
     Some work toward doctorate   6
     Completed Doctorate   7

YOUR APPROXIMATE SALARY:
     10,000 or under   1
     11,000 – 14,999   2
     15,000 – 19,999   3
     20,000 – 24,999   4
     25,000 or over   5

Please indicate the Agency/University/or College in which you are presently employed: _____

_____

Please indicate your title and chief duties: _____

_____

What % of your time is spent either working with minorities or on minority related issues, including supervision, administration and teaching?
     under 1%   1
     1 – 10   2
     11 – 30   3
     31 – 50   4
     more than 50%   5