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Student Assessment of Supervision in Social Work Field Practice in the Caribbean and Southern Africa: A Comparative Study and Commentary *

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a comparative assessment of social work field practice in the two most established schools of social work in the Caribbean (University of the West Indies – Mona and the University of Guyana) and the School of Social Work in Zimbabwe. The research is based on a self-administered questionnaire which gathered details on supervision and instruction procedures of the respective practicum in each institution. Analysis of the responses of the sample provide information on the field practice conferences, delivery of supervisory functions, the role of the Faculty or School Coordinator and the value of student assignments. A wide-ranging set of suggestions for improving students' practicum experience are then made.

Introduction

The role of the practicum/field education course in social work education programmes is recognised as an integral part of the student's professional preparation, with significant structured practice experiences being provided in field agencies under the supervision/instruction of a qualified social work practitioner (or, in some instances, persons with closely related qualifications). A recent endorsement of its significance is the view expressed by Dean Schneck of the School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison, that:

"without a doubt, it is the primary means by which we prepare the next generation of social workers who will engage and assist people who live in a complicated ever-changing and problematic world" (Thomlinson, et al, 1996: Foreword).

* Presented at the Joint World Congress of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) Jerusalem, July 1998. This paper is an expansion of an earlier one which focused on experiences in the two major social work programmes in the English-speaking Caribbean and which was presented at the 3rd Caribbean & International Conference of Social Work Education in Trinidad in July 1997.

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It is important to evaluate not only the students' performance, but also the process of the field learning experience to ensure that they are being given optimum opportunity to develop professional knowledge and skills. (This is all the more so as the other social work courses benefit from validation and accreditation measures carried out for the academic classroom offerings in the University). To achieve this latter objective, the students' assessment of the roles and functions of the agency supervisors'/instructors' and the educational institutions' practicum coordinators or liaisons is of major importance.

This piece of research represents a beginning attempt to address this need by way of a small exploratory study carried out in 1995 among senior undergraduate students in two comparable developing regions – the Caribbean and Southern Africa. The former involved the two longest-serving social work programmes in the English-speaking Caribbean, these being at the University of the West Indies (UWI)-Mona Campus in Jamaica (started in 1961) and the University of Guyana (commenced in 1970). The latter involved the School of Social Work in Harare (instituted in 1964), which is affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe. The students at UWI (Mona), one of three Caribbean regional campuses, are predominantly from Jamaica, but include a few from the Eastern Caribbean Islands. Along with those from the University of Guyana (UG), they will be collectively referred to as "the Caribbean sample." The students at the Harare School, while predominantly Zimbabwean, include some from nearby Eastern and Southern African countries. These will be called "the Harare School sample."

The institutions involved in the study all have programmes whose curricula require students to take social work methods courses and engage in field practice from the first year of studies. The sample of 30 final year Caribbean undergraduate students (which represented 60% of the class at UWI Mona and 75% of the class at UG), and 25 final year undergraduates at Harare (representing approximately 75% of the class), had therefore been through more than one practicum and were reporting from their most recent experience. The size of the sample hardly justifies reporting in percentages, but for the convenience of making comparative observations this is done.

The instrument of measurement was a self-administered questionnaire with 17 questions, of which 6 were to gather general background information, 10 sought data on supervision and instruction procedures throughout the practicum and the final question requested proposals for improving the practicum experience.

Description of the sample

Of the 30 Caribbean students, 18 (60%) were from UWI-Mona and 12 (40%) were from UG. All were female except one of the Guyanese students, this being but an

extreme example of what is popularly accepted to be an overwhelmingly high proportion of females in the social work student population in the English-speaking Caribbean (numbers usually no less than 75%). At the Harare school, there was a radically different distribution by sex as only 7 of the 25 (28%) were female.

Three-quarters (75%) of the Caribbean sample were in the 30-45 age range, with the other students being between 20-29. While the Harare sample had less than one third (32%) in the older range, almost half of the 68% in the 20-29 age group were 28 or 29. The maturity of the group was further reflected in the prior occupations, with 80% of the Caribbean students and 72% of the Harare students having worked in social work jobs or as certified non-graduate teachers.

While all institutions offer a generic undergraduate programme, the practicum experiences of the students in the Caribbean were heavily weighted to casework and groupwork (60-70%) with only one-third (33%) reporting community work as part of their experiences and half that number (17%) also having had social policy and administration assignments. The Harare students had a more uniform distribution of practice experiences, with 80% having casework and community work while 60% also had group work and policy/administration assignments.

Findings on Supervision in the Practicum

a) Regularity and Duration of Supervision Conferences

The report on the regularity and duration of supervisory sessions was seen as an indication of the level of commitment to the task of supervision, whether this was

TABLE 1: Supervisor - Student Supervision Conferences

A.	<u>Regularity</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>Harare</u>
	Weekly	14(47%)	14(56%)
	Fortnightly	10(33%)	6(24%)
<	Fortnightly	<u>6(20%)</u>	<u>5(20%)</u>
		30(100%)	25(100%)
B.	<u>Duration</u>		
>	1 Hour	15(50%)	7(28%)
<	1 Hour	12(40%)	11(44%)
	N.A.	<u>3(10%)</u>	<u>7(28%)</u>
		30(100%)	25(100%)

determined by the supervisor's judgement or by the circumstances imposed by the agency workload. The period of time spent in the practicum experience reported on was comparable – 300-350 hrs.

As indicated in Table 1 on the previous page, only 47% (14) of the Caribbean and 56% (14) of the Harare students had weekly conferences and a significant 20% in each setting had less than fortnightly meetings. 50% (15) of the Caribbean sample and only 28% (7) of the Harare group had conferences that averaged an hour or more in duration. This suggests a less than desirable investment in supervisory time, although there would be need to establish the amount of other supervisor-supervisee interaction before making a judgement.

b) Delivery of Supervisory Functions

The supervisory function in relation to agency workers – and as it may be applied to students in their practicum – is identified by Alfred Kadushin, the foremost writer in North America on the theme of social work supervision, as follows:

“A social work supervisor is an agency administrative staff member to whom authority is delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance and evaluate the on-the-job performance of the supervisee for whose work he is held accountable. In implementing this responsibility, the supervisor performs administrative, educational and supportive functions in the context of positive relations.” (Kadushin 1992:22-23).

In assessing the nature of supervisory/instructional assistance, respondents were asked to indicate the nature of administrative, educational and emotional support roles that were performed by their supervisors (see Table 2 opposite). The expected administrative functions of outlining agency policies and procedures and offering directives re student workers' task roles and responsibilities were acknowledged. But, in the Caribbean locations, there were two supervisors who failed to perform these elementary duties.

In relation to performing the educational supervisory role, 80% of the agency supervisors in both programmes were credited with facilitating students to develop the professional practice competence, with somewhat more than half of that number – 47%, (Caribbean) and 48% (Harare) – engaged in the more professionally demanding role of helping the supervisees to integrate theory with practice.

The function of emotional support for students, which is particularly significant in helping supervisees deal with job-related stress and increase motivation (Kadushin 1992:228), was demonstrated to a lesser extent in the Caribbean – 54%, but 72% of the Harare sample reported supervisory action which helped them deal with their

TABLE 2: Type of Supervisory Support

<u>Supervisory Support</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>		<u>Harare</u>	
<u>Administrative</u>				
-Re policies & procedures, role and responsibilities	27(90%)		22(88%)	
None	<u>3(10%)</u>		<u>3(12%)</u>	
	30(100%)		25(100%)	
<u>Educational</u>				
-Facilitating learning of practice roles	10(33%)}	80%	8(32%) }	80%
	}		}	
-Helping integrate theory with practice	14(47%)}		12(48%) }	
None	<u>6(20%)</u>		<u>5(20%)</u>	
	30(100%)		25(100%)	
<u>Emotional</u>				
-Assistance re personal feelings and reactions	16(54%)		18(72%)	
None/No information	<u>14(46%)</u>		<u>7(28%)</u>	
	30(100%)		25(100%)	

personal feelings and reactions in handling on-the-job challenges. (There was one instance in each of the two Caribbean locations where respondents specifically identified their supervisors as good professional models).

The overall helpfulness of supervisory functions in assisting the development of students' professional knowledge and skills was assessed as quite helpful or very helpful by 70% of the Caribbean and 84% of the Harare students. Suggestions for improving the helpfulness of the supervisors offered by half of the Caribbean sample proposed more educational assistance and direction with regard to practice, with some implications also for more emotional support. Proposals by approximately 25% of the Harare students were, variously, for better quality and longer duration of supervision sessions, and better planning and allocation of work assignments to maximise practice experience.

c) Evaluation of Student Performance

In relation to the evaluation exercise 70% of Caribbean and 68% of Harare students indicated that they were at least "mostly satisfied" with the evaluation process. 33% of the Caribbean group did not have the opportunity of reading through and discussing the evaluation report, which was in breach of what is required by their Universities. At the Harare School, 76% did not participate in the evaluation exercise, suggesting that this may not have been a requirement of that institution. Other factors reported (one to three instances of each) that contributed to the dissatisfaction of some Caribbean students were poor relations between supervisor and supervisee, disagreement with the grade awarded, and (opinions shared also by a few Harare students) a lack of regard for the supervisor's professional knowledge and the limited availability of (or opportunity for) discussions with the supervisor.

The Role of The Faculty Coordinator/School Supervisor (1)

The success of the student practicum, while for the most part dependent on the effectiveness of the supervision and instruction offered by the agency supervisor, is also influenced by the role played by the university practicum coordinator and/or school supervisor who has overall responsibility for the practicum as a part of the educational institution's social work education programme.

In reporting on the faculty coordinator/school supervisor's activity, 80% of the Caribbean students had one visit, with others having two, except for one instance each at UWI (Mona) and at UG where there was none. All Harare students had one visit. The average duration of most visits was an hour or less (Caribbean - 75%, Harare - 72%). While less than half (47%) of Caribbean students considered that these visits contributed to ensuring satisfactory learning experiences, the responses from the two institutions were in fact UG at 66% and UWI-Mona at 33%. By comparison, the responses from the Harare students indicated that 96% found the visits to be, at least, somewhat helpful.

In inquiring as to the helpfulness of assignments undertaken for the university coordinator/liaison which were planned to contribute to the students' learning from their practicum experience, respondents from Harare reported a greater level of satisfaction with the assignments (see Table 3 opposite). 80% found the presentation and analysis of a case study or other practice experience very or quite helpful. 88% commented similarly on the placement report and 72% did so on the required self-assessment of their practice role. Caribbean students were less impressed with the helpfulness of their assignments, recording 57% satisfied with the presentation and analysis of a case or other programme experience, 70% for the report on the placement and 67% for the self-assessment exercise.

Table 3: Learning Assignments By Students For University Coordinator/School Supervisor

	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>Harare</u>
	<u>Presentation and Analysis of Case Study/Practice Exp.</u>	
V. Helpful	9(30%) } }57%	13(52%) } }80%
Quite Helpful	8(27%) }	7(28%) }
Little/None/No Response	<u>13(43%)</u> 30(100%)	<u>5(20%)</u> 25(100)
	<u>Report on Placement</u>	
Very Helpful	11(37%) } }70%	13(52%) } }88%
Quite Helpful	10(33%) }	9(36%) }
Little/None/No Response	<u>9(30%)</u> 30(100%)	<u>3(12%)</u> 25(100%)
	<u>Self Assessment of Professional Development</u>	
Very Helpful	9(30%) } }67%	7(28%) } }68%
Quite Helpful	11(37%) }	11(44%) }
Little/None/No Response	<u>10(33%)</u> 30(100%)	<u>7(28%)</u> 25(100)

Suggestions for Improving Students' Practicum Experience

Proposals made that were common to students in both programmes were the following:

- a) more and better training for supervisors in all aspects of the supervisory role;
- b) supervisors to have an adequate social work background;
- c) more resources to assist students in their placement (from university and/or agency);
- d) more agency visits to be made by the university coordinator/school supervisor;

Additional proposals made by Caribbean students were for:

- e) better preparation of students for entering the practicum;
- f) better communication and interaction between the universities and the field agency (ie, Coordinator function);

And the Harare students also proposed:

- g) more supervision time to assist students; and
- h) increased placement time.

Review and Commentary

This short study has indicated what appear to be areas of relatively satisfactory performance as well as some evident weaknesses in the supervision and field instruction of social work students in the two most established educational programmes in the English-speaking Caribbean and the major social work school in Southern Africa (excluding South Africa). A fuller study would need to examine in more detail supervisory performance in relation to specific components of the supervisory role. An example of an approach to this is suggested in Kadushin's proposals for evaluation of supervision (Kadushin, 1992:390-394). There it is recommended that assessments be made of relationship skills, attitude towards supervision, knowledge of social work, pattern and consistency of behaviour, as well as evaluation of the handling of a number of specific administrative, educational and emotional support functions.

Within the limitations of this more superficial enquiry with a small sample, the following observations and recommendations are offered.

Demographic Profile of Sample

1. The population of social work students in both settings are of mature age, and relatively experienced in human service occupations. This represents a particular challenge in terms of the design of the practicum by comparison with the approach for young, inexperienced students. Not only do the experiences of these mature individuals need to be specially regarded, but sensitivity in helping them to accept new learning and sometimes to "unlearn" ingrained practices will call for supervisors who are particularly well prepared in the androgogic skills most effective in helping the adult learner (ref: Knowles, 1990).

2. The distribution by sexes however shows a very significant difference between the Caribbean student population and those at the Harare School. As noted in the presentation of the data, the Caribbean sample, while skewed, is indicative of a massive representation of women in the student social work population which is, in turn, reflective of the personnel in the social services. The fact that the overall student population across all disciplines at the University of the West Indies is over 70% female is a statement on the significant change in the role of women in administrative and professional services in the region, within the past generation. (No elaboration can be made on this in this paper).

The male dominance among the sample from the Harare School, if even also somewhat skewed, is indicative of an overall male majority among social work students. A speculation made, without the benefit of fuller demographic information, is that the situation in Southern African countries is reflective of a more traditional mode in which males still have greater access to professional training opportunities.

Field Practice and Supervision

3. The practice experiences reported by the two regional samples indicated that community work and social policy/administration placements were less utilised (less available?) for Caribbean students than for those at the Harare School who, overall, experienced a more balanced offering of casework, groupwork, community work, policy development and administration practice settings. Casework was, not surprisingly, the most commonly experienced practice opportunity. If, as it has been strongly advocated by Midgley (1981), Mupedziswa (1992), Osei-Hwedie (1995) and others, developing countries can best optimise their social work service delivery by placing greater emphasis on macro practice (ie, community work, social planning and administration), then the Caribbean programmes especially need to address the issue of a more effective distribution of the practicum experiences between micro and macro practice.

4. The commitment by the field agency and the designated supervisor to ensuring effective administrative supervision, educational instruction and emotional support for the social work student, must be a serious one if there is to be a meaningful partnership between the educational institution and the agency in the professional preparation of social workers. Given the available resources in regions such as the Caribbean and Southern Africa, this is the only approach that can be envisaged. (The educational institutions are never likely to be able to provide the necessary on-site supervision). Competent persons must be assigned to work with the students and it is critically important to allow adequate time for supervisor-supervisee conferences. Neither of the samples reported satisfactory levels of frequency (Caribbean: 47%, Harare: 56%), or duration (Caribbean: 50%, Harare: 28%) of supervisory sessions. A minimum of an hour for an estimated 16-20 hrs of practicum time (the average weekly time spent on concurrent placements), or two hours for a 35-40 hour week during block placements, is recommended as a realisable objective. It is also anticipated that there will be additional meaningful interaction (consultation) at other times.

5. Performance of the administrative elements of the supervisory role are doubtless the most straightforward ones to be recognised, as borne out by the wide acknowledgment of their occurrence by the respondents (near 90%). However the definition of administrative functions and the extent to which some of them may be very facilitative of effective educational and supportive supervisory functions will also be important for a more detailed study. The supervisor's roles as an advocate where necessary, as an "administrative buffer" in dealing with client problems, and as an organisational change agent to address issues in the service agency itself, all have special implications for the professional development and the comfort level of the supervisee (Ref: Kadushin, 1992: 69-77).

6. The educational function, while satisfactorily performed for a great majority in so far as it was interpreted to include helping students learn professional practice roles (80% in both samples), was far less widely carried out at the more challenging level of helping them to integrate theory with practice (less than 50%). Bogo & Vayda (1986:2) observe that,

"all too frequently this statement stands without further definition. Integration of theory and practice (ITP) without examination, may be a kind of magical incantation, through which educators, like alchemists, hope to transform a social work student into a professional social worker."

They continue to develop a model to operationalise the process of integrating theory and practice, offering it as the major theoretical construct in their book on *The Practice of Field Instruction in Social Work* (2). This underscores the importance of preparing our supervisors/instructors for, especially, the educational component of their role.

7. The emotional support function of the supervisor was less in evidence as reported by the respondents from the Caribbean (54%), and while 72% of the Harare students acknowledged this element, a number of them gave limited evidence of the way in which it was demonstrated. The fact that suggestions solicited for improving the helpfulness of supervisors did not focus much on this area implied either a failure to interpret in full the question as it was posed on the questionnaire or a lack of expectation that this was a significant area for supervisory input. There is evidently the need to promote supervisors' awareness that they have, *"the responsibility of sustaining worker morale, helping the job-related discouragements and discontents, and giving supervisees a sense of worth as professionals, a sense of belonging in the agency, and a sense of security in their performance"* (Kadushin 1992:19).

The Evaluation Process

8. In commenting on the response to the evaluation process, it has to be acknowledged that there is a significant difference in the procedure between the two groups studied. In the Caribbean, the major part of the assessment (65%) is an evaluation of the students' performance by the agency supervisor with the collaboration of the University Coordinator, which is then reviewed with the student, and the remaining 35% toward the determination of the grade is comprised of the assignments (seminar presentations, final report) undertaken for the Coordinator. At Harare, the School Supervisors visit the placements for a performance assessment (40%), and the remaining 60% is made up of seminar presentations (20%) and a detailed fieldwork report (40%). An agency supervisor's report also recommends a performance grade which is given some consideration by the Fieldwork Director in the final determination of the grade.

While a reasonable proportion of students (Caribbean: 70%; Harare: 68%) were quite positive in their assessment of their respective evaluation experiences, the particularly challenging nature of this aspect of the practicum is to be noted.

For the Caribbean students, unlike the more objectively exercised assessment of classroom courses (structured course assignments, controlled examinations), the expectation of an open assessment, even given the guidelines of the evaluation instrument and criteria for performance rating, is a potentially stressful encounter for both supervisor and student. (It is significant that 33% did not have the expected "open" evaluation). Recognition of the stress factors, as discussed by Gitterman & Gitterman (1979:103), Bogo & Vayda (1986:102) and Kadushin (1992:348-352), (3) and attempts to maintain objectivity as recommended by Wilson (1984:164-165), as well as the importance of using an evaluation instrument that is effectively designed to measure competencies, are all necessary steps in attempting to achieve not only student satisfaction, but, equally important, fair and equitable performance assessment. The coordinator in at least one of the Caribbean settings (UWI-Mona) has, in recent years, been expected to play a standardising role by sharing in the evaluation exercise with supervisors and students.

With regard to the experience of the Harare students, as very few were involved in any review of their evaluation (24%), and this assumedly with the agency supervisors' report which is not a central part of the assessment, the same observations cannot be made. As so few respondents even

commented on the absence of an opportunity to participate in the process in the manner outlined above, this would seem to suggest their acceptance of a more controlled performance appraisal. While the approach taken is one which retains total responsibility for grade determination with the school's faculty and minimises the subjectivity factor that has to be addressed when a variety of agency supervisors play a significant role in performance assessment, can the students' actual demonstration of competencies in practice be as effectively assessed through information gathered at *one* agency visit and through written work/seminar presentations by the students? This issue of the practicum evaluation would seem to warrant more detailed examination.

Role of the Educational Institution's Practicum Coordinator/ School Supervisor

9. Faculty practicum coordinators and/or school supervisors who may variously be representing the educational institution may be required to play a greater or lesser role in carrying out the objectives of the practicum, depending on the professional standard of agency-based supervisors, their preparation for their instructional role with students and the measure of support given by the field agencies. In situations such as those in which programmes operate in the English-speaking Caribbean and in Southern Africa the University faculty representative needs to play a significant administrative and instructional support role and to be, in effect, an agent of quality control. Meaningful monitoring and assessment of placements, both through regular visits (as much as the staffing of the programme will permit) and the nature of the interaction with supervisors and students, is of great importance. While detailed information was not gathered on the nature of agency visits and meetings with supervisors undertaken by the University Coordinator/School Supervisor, the frequency and duration of such visits was not adequate – usually one visit lasting no more than one hour. Among the Caribbean students who indicated less satisfaction with the helpfulness of these visits, the high level of dissatisfaction by the UWI-Mona group is particularly noteworthy as only 33% said they were satisfied. (A mitigating circumstance is known to be the situation at the Mona Campus, during the 1994-95 academic year only, which is the period of the practicum experience reported on by the sample, when one staff member was called upon to coordinate and liaise with all the student placements for nearly 100 students). By comparison, the relatively high satisfaction of the

Harare students (over 90%) may be a function of how the School supervisors performed their role, as well as the perceived importance of the one visit by them as a major part of the performance assessment of the students. More detailed information is necessary to support any valid comment.

It is apparent that the respective programmes need to give greater priority in terms of faculty involvement to ensure the organisation and maintenance of standards of the practicum. In the metropolitan countries the accreditation of social work education programmes gives central consideration to the quality of the field learning experience.

10. While agencies are requested to assign experienced and qualified supervisors and the coordination and management of the practicum by a Coordinator/School Supervisor are essential, the educational institution has a responsibility to deliver training to the agency supervisors in the skills of social work supervision and field instruction – as has been implied in the foregoing recommendations.

11. The assessment by the students as to how well the standardised assignments that they are required to do for the University/School representatives contributed to learning from their field practice also showed a high level of satisfaction (70 and 85% by the Harare students and those from the University of Guyana among the Caribbean group respectively). The significantly lower acknowledgment by the UWI-Mona students (approximately 57% overall) is likely to have been influenced by the circumstances concerning coordination of the Mona practicum reported above. Given the varied nature of placements in social work field practice and the lack of a standardised cadre of trained supervisors in either of the regions in which this study was carried out, this centrally controlled element of the assessment process, which constitutes a proportion of the total evaluation of the practicum is particularly important as it helps to provide significant quality control. When added to the assessment of practice performance in a wide variety of settings, it can certainly reduce the degree of subjectivity which may otherwise be obtained if only agency evaluations were done.

12. The proposals offered by the students for improving the particular experience have, for the most part, underscored the implications of the findings discussed above. The suggestion that students need better preparation for entry into the practicum speak to the importance of the classroom preparatory sessions – including an orientation to placement meetings and the support of a good practicum manual: a noted shortcoming of the Caribbean programmes. The School in Harare has the advantage of a local

publication, namely, *Social Work Training in Africa: A Fieldwork Manual* (Hall, 1990), which gives a comprehensive coverage of the place of the practicum in social work education. Possibly a more 'user friendly' approach to preparing the student and guiding her/him through various 'developmental stages' is a Canadian text: *The Social Work Practicum: An Access Guide* (2nd Ed, Thomlinson, et al, 1996). The orientation of this publication to the North American student and social service agency scene does however offer a challenge for some adaptation to settings such as those which are the focus of this study.

Conclusion

This exploratory research exercise which has looked at two samples of social work students in regions which may be claimed to be comparable in terms of their level of social and economic development, has identified areas of similarity as well as some differences. However, the principal conclusions which can be drawn are:

- a) that there is need for greater investment by the educational institutions in the direction and standardisation of supervision of the practicum;
- b) agency supervisors need to be better prepared to handle especially the educational and emotional support components of the role;
- c) students need to be given better orientation to the practicum;
- d) there is need to review the evaluation procedures to try and ensure that the assessment of students is indeed a valid appraisal of their practice competence;
- e) while acknowledging constraints imposed by limited personnel, the importance of the practicum in the achievement of an accreditable social work education programme is such as to demand that more priority be given to its total administration and management.

The quality of social work graduates from the English-speaking Caribbean and from Southern Africa will certainly be benefited if these principal regional institutions which have been the subject of this study can prove to be worthy models.

Endnotes

(1) In the Caribbean programmes, the institutions' personnel responsible for the students' practicum are referred to as *Coordinator*. At Harare, a Director of Field Work is assisted by faculty members who are designated *School Supervisors* in their role with students in their practicum.

(2) Referred to as the ITP Loop, the process starts with *retrieval* of a particular practice experience, *reflection* on the effectiveness of the retrieval interaction or intervention, *linkage* (after a search) with the professional knowledge base that makes a specific response to a situation possible and, finally, the *professional response* selected and its effects – which then becomes the focus of the next cycle of what is described as an ongoing “looping” process (adapted from Bogo and Vayda [1986: 3-5).

(3) With reference to Supervisors/Field Instructors, (Gitterman & Gitterman 1979: 103), Bogo & Vayda (1986: 101-102) and Kadushin (1992: 348-352) identify a range of stress factors. These include:

- a) defining criteria for assessment,
- b) assessing student practice,
- c) engaging the student in the evaluation process,
- d) being reminded of the status differential between supervisor and supervisee,
- e) perceiving the evaluation as an indirect evaluation of supervisor's effectiveness,
- f) concern about displeasing the supervisee with possibly negative assessment,
- h) reflection and self-doubt about the thoroughness with which the supervisory/instructor role may have been performed,
- i) uncertainty about the limited objective criteria for evaluating student performance.

(It will be of interest to examine to what extent Caribbean and Southern African supervisors/field instructors share these reactions. The writer's impression over a 25-year period as a Practicum Coordinator, is that several of the same stress factors are experienced by many Jamaican supervisors).

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